

Request for Proposals
Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan

Background

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board (CCWDB) serves as the advisory body for the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Department of Workforce Development. The CCWDB oversees the public workforce system – helping employers find and develop the skilled workers they need and helping jobseekers find good paying jobs and new careers. The Board currently serves 10,000 people a year –helping businesses grow, families thrive, and the region prosper. The CCWDB fulfills the functions outlined in the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including providing public policy guidance and exercising oversight of local programs of workforce activities being delivered through OhioMeansJobs | Cleveland-Cuyahoga County (OMJ|CC).

The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan that has guided this organization’s work is ready for a refresh, consistent with new leadership, a new operating structure, and an evolving labor market. The CCWDB is in the process of a transition of the operating structure, to a nonprofit model, which is creating opportunity for a broader vision and bigger impact. The CCWDB seeks a consultant to lead this planning process, facilitate difficult discussions and choices, and produce a new Strategic Plan for 2025-2027 to guide this important work.

Scope of Work

1. Review and synthesize existing information, assets, data, and reports (listed below) that form an existing information base.
2. Propose and execute a stakeholder engagement process that will efficiently gather perspectives, new information and fill gaps in existing information base, to ensure all necessary viewpoints are included.
3. Summarize and present all external inputs to CCWDB leadership, Board members, and Strategic Function Committee stakeholders, to align to CCWDB expectations and objectives.
4. Facilitate needed discussions with staff leadership, Strategic Functions committee and/or full Board to achieve alignment on most critical decisions within the strategic plan
5. Write a new strategic plan (contents identified below) to be presented in the form of a draft Strategic Plan to CCWDB leadership, Board members, and Strategic Function Committee stakeholders.
6. Produce long-form and one-page versions of the approved plan for different audiences. The full plan should include a road map for execution and a proposed monitoring mechanism.
7. Conduct period check-ins with the simultaneous strategic planning process of the Workforce Funders Group.

Existing Inputs:

- CCWDB 2019-2023 Strategic Plan
- CCWDB 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Impact Report dated October 2022
- Qualitative Findings on OMJCC’s work and potential structure transition by Collaborative Endeavors, Dr. Jimeka Holloway dated April 2023
- DEI Principles submitted by the DEI Subcommittee of the CCWDB created in September 2022
- Maher & Maher report on OMJCC’s business services dated 2021
- Maher & Maher report on OMJCC’s jobseeker services dated 2021
- OMJCC Values dated 2021

The CCWDB would like to see the following content addressed in the new Strategic Plan for the calendar years 2025, 2026, and 2027:

- Assertion of mission, vision, values, and role. Related to role, the plan should be clear about roles within the ecosystem, and value of existing and potential partnerships.
- The most important strategies for achievement or progress given the mission, vision, and role
- The plan should be grounded in the available data (listed above).
- It should include a perspective on how to address disparities, reduce inequity in the system, and achieve racial equity.
- The plan should propose both annual measurable and long-term outcomes and metrics, including those strategies that would address racial and other disparities. The plan should also define “job quality” and indicate which of the outcomes or metrics reflect job quality outcomes.
- Any new or modified organizational capabilities needed to execute the new Strategic Plan
- There should be a proposed vision of how CCWDB will operationalize these strategies to ensure quality and interoperability within the system.
- The plan should provide strategic guidance on outreach, communications, and marketing towards goals, as well as a hypothesis on whether a potential brand/name change would be beneficial.

Timeline

The CCWDB would like this work to primarily be conducted in the first half of 2024, with the goal of the Board vote approving a new strategic plan at its Q3 meeting in August.

Submission Requirements and Desired Qualifications

The Request for Proposal (RFP) response, at a minimum, should include:

- A brief introduction to the organization or individual and an expression of interest of assisting CCWDB and its strategic planning process.
- A description of the individual consultant or firm, including information regarding its primary business, its background and history, and its organizational structure.
 - The consultant must have considerable, primary experience with strategic planning. It is highly desirable that the consultant have a strong understanding of the workforce system, nonprofit Boards, economic development, and/or social services. Ideally, the consultant has an understanding of both the workforce system locally and nationally.
 - CCWDB will give considerable weight to strategic planning experience with: nonprofit workforce boards, organizations undergoing major strategic or operational transitions, or startups / new organizations.
 - CCWDB will also welcome examples of experience facilitating stakeholders through questions and discussions, in addition to drafting and proposing strategies.
- The consultant’s proposed approach to this project, including experience (and examples) of similar, relevant work. This should include:
 - a stakeholder engagement plan, identifying specific types and names of stakeholders, number of expected engagements, and also articulating how stakeholders will provide input.
 - a proposed approach for using existing data and/or accessing relevant data, as well as an assessment of forward-looking data about the labor market, future of work trends, and ecosystem changes, and how the CCWDB should be positioned to respond.

- a sense of timeline, including key milestones / deliverables, expected frequency of communication and updates, and how any unforeseen delays or issues will be communicated and addressed. The Board (or a subset of the Board) would like to have live discussions with the consultant :
 - following the initial discovery / situation assessment (to include a summary of all external inputs)
 - a presentation and discussion of draft recommendations / findings
 - a presentation and discussion of the final recommendations
- The proposed fee for the services – either a fixed rate, or hourly rate and total estimated hours to fulfill the scope of work.
- Willingness and ability to sign a conflict of interest form.

Please note that CCWDB will consider a collaboration, multi-party response, or responses on a subset of the work, in order to achieve the desired outcomes of this process. Individuals with lived experience in the workforce system are encouraged to propose.

Electronic submissions may be sent to Laura Chalker at laura.chalker@jfs.ohio.gov with the subject line "Proposal for CCWDB Strategic Plan." Submissions are due by January 24, 2024. Firms or individuals that are likely to submit a proposal are encouraged to send a brief, non-binding email letter of intent to Laura Chalker at laura.chalker@jfs.ohio.gov by January 15, 2024. Respondents may also ask clarifying questions via this email address during the solicitation period.

A group of Workforce Development Board staff, Board members, and community members will be reviewing submitted proposals and may ask follow-up questions via email or interview prior to making a decision. All respondents will receive confirmation of receipt and any necessary follow ups, as well as notification of the decision and selection.