



Workforce Development Board Area 1

4057-A Gallia Pike
Franklin Furnace, OH 45629
(740) 259-6943

Crystal Keaton, Executive Director
Holly Johnson, Board Chair

www.omjwda1.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AI-Enabled Participant Support Platform for WIOA-Funded Programs

OVERVIEW

Workforce Development Board Area 1, serving Adams, Brown, Pike, and Scioto Counties in southeastern Ohio, seeks an experienced vendor to design and implement an AI-enabled participant support platform. This platform will enhance service delivery for WIOA Special Project for PORTS Recruitment & Career Center project by providing adaptive barrier mitigation, real-time engagement monitoring, and human-centered intervention workflows.

Project Background

Rural workforce programs face persistent challenges: participants navigate multiple employment barriers simultaneously, traditional case management often detects crises after they've escalated, and staff capacity limitations restrict individualized support. This demonstration project seeks to deploy technology that reduces administrative burden, enables earlier intervention, and improves participant engagement and employment outcomes while preserving human decision-making at every critical juncture.

Funding and Governance

This project is funded through a Special Projects Grant to Workforce Development Board Area 1 from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). WDB #1 serves as the fiscal agent. The Workforce Development Board, comprised of Chief Elected Officials from Adams, Brown, Pike, and Scioto Counties, holds ultimate authority over project approval and contract award. Max award is \$50,000.

PROJECT GOALS AND REQUIREMENTS

The platform must include the following core capabilities:

1. Daily Engagement and Micro-Learning: A mobile-accessible daily engagement system that delivers brief, targeted lessons via SMS and web interface on topics including professional communication, financial foundations, workplace readiness, health and wellness, digital skills, interview preparation, workplace safety, career planning, family stability, and barrier-specific content. The system must track participant engagement patterns and flag declining participation for navigator review.
2. Structured Barrier Assessment and Support Pathways: Examples of barriers and support include financial and housing instability, employment seeking, workplace issues, education and digital literacy,



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Locations: Adams County

19221 St. Rt. 136
Winchester, OH 45697

937-695-0316
800-233-7891

Brown County

406 W. Plum Street
Georgetown, OH 45121

937-795-0316
800-553-7393 Ext 261

Pike County

941 Market Street
Piketon, OH 45661

740-289-2371

Scioto County

433 Third Street
Portsmouth, OH 45662

740-354-7544

healthcare access, childcare, transportation, parenting, mental health and wellbeing, social support systems, and substance use recovery.

3. Navigator Dashboard and Alert System: A real-time case manager interface displaying assigned participants. All participant outreach must remain under human navigator control.
4. Mobile-First and Accessible Design: The platform must be fully functional on mobile devices via SMS and web interface. It must operate 24/7 and function reliably across limited broadband connectivity typical of rural Appalachian geography.
5. HIPAA and Data Security Compliance: Cloud-based, HIPAA-compliant storage with encryption at rest and in transit, role-based access controls, audit logging, and compliance with 42 CFR Part 2 (substance use treatment confidentiality) and WIOA data protection requirements.
6. Automated Communication: Configurable, consent-based automated reminders and notifications for appointments, training dates, and documentation deadlines, with full communication history recorded in the system.

VENDOR SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must include:

1. Design and Implementation Plan: Detailed approach to each requirement above, including technology stack, data architecture, security implementation, and timeline. Include plan for at least two in-person facilitation sessions with WDA 1 case managers and program staff in southeastern Ohio. WDA 1 will provide accommodation.
2. Cloud Infrastructure and Costs: Estimated annual costs for hosting, storage, encryption, backup, disaster recovery, HIPAA compliance certification, SMS/communication infrastructure, and system monitoring.
3. Staff Training: Training curriculum, delivery methods, train-the-trainer support, user documentation, and post-launch staff support strategy.
4. Implementation and Launch Plan: Data migration, parallel testing, pilot launch, and full go-live approach with cutover support.
5. One-Year Post-Launch Support: System troubleshooting, bug fixes, security patching, supplemental staff training, quarterly check-ins, and help desk support with documented response times.
6. Relevant Experience and References: Description of three similar projects with outcomes, plus three professional references (name, title, email, phone).
7. Key Staff Resumes: Resumes and specific roles.
8. Vendor Information Sheet: Complete Attachment A with organization details and authorized signatory.
9. Required Certifications: Signed, notarized Attachment B documents.
10. Detailed Budget and Narrative: Itemized, line-item budget with costs clearly distinguished as one-time or ongoing annual costs (see Budget Requirements below).

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

1. Line Item Budget: 1 page max; total cannot exceed \$50,000.
2. Budget Narrative: 1 page max and must provide detailed justification for each line item.
All costs must be directly allocable to project delivery.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Page Limit: Maximum 12 pages (including budget and narrative; excluding attachments, resumes, and certifications)

Format: Submit electronically to wda1rfp@gmail.com with subject: "AI-Enabled Participant Support Platform RFP Response"

Deadline: May 18, 2026, 12:00 PM EST (No late submissions accepted)

Required Information: Proposals must be complete, answers honest, all directions followed.

Misinformation or unauthorized contact may result in disqualification.

PROPOSAL REVIEW SCHEDULE

Action	Date
RFP Released	April 27, 2026
Pre-Bid Meeting	May 5, 2026, 2:00 PM EST (Virtual)
Questions Deadline	May 11, 2026, 5:00 PM EST
Answers Posted	May 13, 2026
Proposals Due	May 18, 2026, 12:00 PM EST
Initial Review	May 19-25, 2026
Selection	May 28, 2026
Contracted Period	June 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- Vendor Qualifications & Experience (15 points): Demonstrated experience with similar projects and strong references.
- Program Design & Technical Approach (35 points): Clear plan addressing all requirements; realistic outcomes; understanding of rural WIOA context.
- Staff Capability (15 points): Key personnel have appropriate experience and relevant certifications.
- Evaluation & Quality Assurance (15 points): Clear outcome measurement, milestone tracking, and continuous improvement processes.
- Budget Reasonableness (20 points): Itemized, justified costs representing good value; realistic resource requirements.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

WIOA Compliance: All services and costs must comply with WIOA, OMB Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), DOL regulations, and ODJFS policies.

Data Privacy: Vendor must comply with HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, and WIOA data protection requirements. A Business Associate Agreement (BAA) must be executed prior to handling participant data.

Equal Employment Opportunity: Vendor shall not discriminate based on race, creed, gender, age, veteran status, disability, national origin, or ancestry. Written affirmative action program required.

Record Retention and Audit: All project records and participant files must be maintained for three years following contract completion. WDA 1 and ODJFS retain audit rights.

Amendments: Any RFP amendments will be posted to the WDA 1 website. Vendor responsibility to monitor for updates.

RESERVED RIGHTS

WDA 1 reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Request clarification or evidence of capability
- Negotiate individually with qualified sources
- Attach conditions to approval
- Cancel the RFP if not in public interest

Appeals: Rejection notices will be provided. Written protests must be postmarked within five (5) business days and mailed to:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Crystal Keaton, Executive Director
Workforce Development Board Area 1
Email: wda1rfp@gmail.com
Phone: 740-259-6941

All questions and proposals should be directed to wda1rfp@gmail.com with subject line reference to this RFP.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Vendor Information Sheet

Attachment B: Required Certifications and Assurances

This RFP was prepared on behalf of Workforce Development Board Area 1, Adams, Brown, Pike, and Scioto Counties, southeastern Ohio. RFP released April 27, 2026. Proposals due May 18, 2026.

Proposal Cover Sheet/Signature Page
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) -Special Project
SFY 26/27

Workforce Investment Board | Adams ▪ Brown ▪ Pike ▪ Scioto
4075A Gallia Pike
Franklin Furnace, OH 45629

Bidder Name: _____
Street address: _____ P.O. Box: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Person authorized to represent the bidder: Name: _____ Title: _____ Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____
Total Funds Requested \$ _____ In-School Youth Funds Requested \$ _____, # of clients to be served _____ Out-of-school Youth Funds Requested \$ _____, # of clients to be served _____ Organization Status: Not-for-Profit _____ Corporation _____ Private For-Profit _____ School District _____ Unit of Government _____ Educational Service Center _____ Other _____
Tax, Tax exempt, or non-profit I.D. number: _____ In compliance with the RFP and subject to the conditions thereof, the undersigned offers to furnish the services requested and certifies he has read, understands, and agrees to all term, conditions, and requirements of this proposal and is authorized to contract on behalf of the firm named above. Typed/Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date _____ Title: _____

Attachment B

Assurances and Certifications

Workforce Development Board #1 Adams-Brown-Pike-Scioto

By signing this document, the Respondent certifies and assures compliance with all of the following provisions:

1. Federal Debarment Requirements – Respondent certifies that neither it nor any of its principals or subcontractors are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in covered transactions by any Federal department or agency, as set forth in 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 2998. Respondent also affirms that within three (3) years preceding this agreement, neither it nor any of its principals or subcontractors:

a. Have been convicted of, or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or other criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; for violation of federal or state antitrust statutes; for commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements; or for receiving stolen property;

b. Are presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity (federal, state, or local) for the commission of any of the offenses listed in this paragraph and have not had any public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default.

2. Mandatory Disclosures – Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.113, Respondent must disclose in writing, in a timely manner, all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in remedies described in 2 CFR 200.339, including suspension or debarment.

3. Qualifications to Conduct Business – Respondent affirms that it and any and all subcontractors have all of the approvals, licenses, or other qualifications needed to conduct business in the State of Ohio and all are current. If at any time during the Agreement period, the Respondent or its subcontractors, for any reason, becomes disqualified from conducting business in the State of Ohio, Respondent assures it will immediately notify the Board in writing and will take measures to ensure that the disqualified party immediately ceases performance of contracted activities.

4. Unfair Labor Practices – Respondent affirms that neither it, nor its principals, nor any of its subcontractors are on the most recent list established by the Ohio Secretary of State, pursuant to ORC 121.23, which would identify the Respondent as having more than one (1) unfair labor practice contempt of court finding.

5. Finding for Recovery – Respondent affirms that it, its principals, and subcontractors are not subject to a finding for recovery under ORC 9.24; or it has taken the appropriate remedial steps required, or otherwise qualifies under ORC 9.24 to contract with the State of Ohio.

6. Americans with Disabilities – Respondent, its officers, employees, members, and subcontractors hereby affirm current and ongoing compliance with all statutes and regulations pertaining to The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Section 504

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of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including 29 CFR Part 38.

7. Fair Labor Standards and Employment Practices

a. Respondent certifies that it is in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations governing fair labor and employment practices.

b. Respondent does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), national origin, military status, disability, age, genetic information, or any other classification protected by applicable law, in making any of the following employment decisions: hiring, layoff, termination, transfer, promotion, demotion, rate of compensation, and eligibility for in-service training programs.

c. Respondent certifies that it posts notices affirming compliance with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws in conspicuous places accessible to all employees and applicants for employment.

d. Respondent certifies that it collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination requirements and will incorporate these requirements in all of its subcontracts for the workforce development activities funded hereunder.

8. Ethics Laws – Respondent certifies that it has reviewed, knows, and understands the State of Ohio's ethics and conflict of interest laws, which include ORC Sections 102.01 et seq., 2921.01, 2921.42, 2921.421, 2921.43, and 3517.13 (I) and (J) pertaining to ethics. Respondent further affirms that it will not engage in any action(s) inconsistent with Ohio ethics laws.

9. Conflict of Interest – In addition to the restrictions listed in Item 8 above, Respondent affirms it complies with the following, as applicable:

a. Respondent affirms that neither it, nor its principals, nor its subcontractors shall, prior to or during the completion of such work, voluntarily or involuntarily acquire any personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible or in conflict with the discharge or fulfillment of his or her functions or responsibilities with respect to the completion of the work contemplated under the contract. Respondent shall immediately disclose in writing to WDB #1 any such person who, prior to or after the execution of GRIT funds, acquires any personal interest, voluntarily or involuntarily. Respondent shall cause any such person to immediately disclose such interest to WDB #1 in writing. Thereafter, such person shall not participate in any action affecting the work under the contract unless WDB #1 determines that, in light of the personal interest disclosed, his or her participation in any such action would not be contrary to the public interest.

b. Respondent further affirms compliance with 2 CFR 200.318(c)(1) regarding organizational conflicts of interest, and WIOA Section 121(d)(4) regarding training provider conflicts of interest, as applicable.

10. Lobbying Restrictions

a. Respondent affirms that no federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in

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connection with the awarding of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, in compliance with 31 U.S.C. 1352.

b. Respondent affirms that it will include the language of this certification for all subcontracts and that it will require all subcontractors to certify and disclose accordingly.

c. Respondent certifies compliance with the Ohio executive agency lobbying restrictions contained in ORC 121.60 to 121.69.

11. Child Support Enforcement – Respondent certifies to cooperate with WDB #1 and any child support enforcement agency in ensuring that the Respondent, its employees, and subcontractors meet child support obligations established by state and federal law, including present and future compliance with any court or valid administrative order for the withholding of support issued pursuant to the applicable sections of ORC Chapters 3119, 3121, 3123, and 3125.

12. Pro-Children Act – If any activities funded hereunder call for services to minors, Respondent affirms that it will comply with the Pro-Children Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. 7181-7184) that requires smoking to be banned in any portion of any indoor facility owned, leased, or contracted by an entity that will routinely or regularly use the facility for the provision of health care services, day care, library services, or education to children under the age of 18.

13. Drug-Free Workplace – Respondent, its principals, and subcontractors certify compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 8101-8106) and all other applicable state and federal laws regarding a drug-free workplace. Respondent will make a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace and to ensure that none of its officers, employees, members, or subcontractors will purchase, transfer, use, or possess illegal drugs or alcohol or abuse prescription drugs in any way while working or while on public property.

14. Work Programs – Respondent affirms it will not discriminate against individuals who have or are participating in any work program administered by any county department of Job and Family Services under ORC Chapters 5101 or 5107.

15. Jobs for Veterans Act (38 USC 4215), as implemented by 20 CFR Part 1010 – Respondent affirms to provide priority of service to veterans and covered spouses for any qualified job training program, in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act and WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E).

16. Buy American Requirements (41 USC 8301-8305) – To the greatest extent practicable, per WIOA Section 502, Respondent affirms it will use funds provided by WDB #1 to purchase American-made equipment and products.

17. Environmental Protections – Respondent affirms it will comply with all applicable standards, orders, or regulations issued pursuant to the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401-7671q) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251-1387). Violations must be reported to the federal awarding agency, the Regional Office of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and ODJFS. Respondent affirms it will comply with all applicable standards, orders, or regulations issued pursuant to the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 6201.

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18. Transparency Act (2 CFR Part 170) – Respondent affirms it will comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), including Appendix A of 2 CFR Part 170, as applicable.

19. Increasing the Use of Seat Belts in the United States (Presidential Executive Order 13043, April 16, 1997) – Respondent affirms it has in place, or will explore adopting and enforcing, on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for its employees when operating vehicles, whether organizationally owned, rented, or personally owned.

20. Text Messaging While Driving (Presidential Executive Order 13513, Section 4) – Respondent affirms it has in place, or will explore adopting and enforcing, policies that ban text messaging while driving company-owned or rented vehicles, or government-owned, government-leased, or government-rented vehicles when on official government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the government, and to conduct initiatives of the type described in Section 3(a) of the Executive Order.

21. Civil Rights Assurance – Respondent affirms that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.), and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as implemented by 29 CFR Part 38, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbearing, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, on the basis of citizenship or participation in a WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.

22. Data Privacy and Confidentiality – Respondent certifies that it will comply with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and rules regarding data privacy and the protection of personally identifiable information (PII), including but not limited to 2 CFR 200.338 and WIOA Section 116(i)(3). Respondent will implement appropriate safeguards to protect participant data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

23. Certification of Compliance – Respondent certifies that it is in compliance with all other applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and rules and will require the same certification from its subcontractors. Respondent acknowledges that non-compliance with any of these assurances and certifications may result in the termination of any resulting contract.

On behalf of _____ (Organization Name), I hereby agree to the listed Assurances and Certifications.

Name and Title of Authorizing Individual: _____

Signature of Authorizing Individual: _____

Date: _____