



The Center for Rural Development

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Independent Subject Matter Experts and Instructors to develop and deliver curriculum for training programs through The Center for Rural Development

Introduction/Project Overview

The Center for Rural Development (hereafter, The Center), is seeking qualified Subject Matter Experts (SME) to assist with the development and/or delivery of training programs or courses.

The purpose of this solicitation is to identify individuals who can provide one or more of the following:

- 1) Develop curriculum for training programs as listed within this RFQ or others to be developed.
- 2) Deliver training, designed to be delivered in a classroom setting at locations of our selection throughout the southern and eastern Kentucky regions.
- 3) Provide updates/revisions to curriculum as needed.

Qualified individuals may submit responses to this RFQ to develop and/or deliver instructor-led training for any or all of the trainings listed below.

The person(s) or companies awarded the contract must have a proven track record of developing curricula, managing groups and instructing in a classroom setting. This person or company will need to demonstrate experience and knowledge, as well as provide professional references.

Company Background

The Center, established in 1996 as a 501(c)3 non-profit community and economic development organization, primarily serves 45 counties throughout Southern and Eastern Kentucky largely consisting of distressed rural Appalachian communities.

Originally developed by a group of community leaders including Kentucky 5th District Congressman Harold Rogers, The Center has led the way in developing new and innovative programs to serve the citizens in this region. We are governed by an independent board of directors.

Headquartered in Somerset, KY, The Center's mission is to provide leadership that stimulates innovative and sustainable economic development solutions and a better way of life for citizens in our service region.

The Center's programs and services center around four Focus Areas: Public Safety, Arts & Culture, Leadership, and Technology. While The Center's programs largely serve residents in our primary service area, we are also committed to constantly expanding our capabilities in order to deliver a range of key services throughout Kentucky and the nation.

Purpose of RFQ

The Center is issuing a Request for Qualifications for the solicitation of qualified independent SMEs/instructors to develop and/or deliver Instructor Led Training for any or all of the following certifications programs and/or modules.

Development and Delivery of a Broadband Certification Program

Receiving a Broadband Certification involves completing the four core modules and three elective modules. Please give your estimated time for each classroom session/module.

Core Modules:

1. **Broadband Technologies and the Basics of the Internet** – Participants will begin to develop an understanding of the origin and basic characteristics of the Internet. This module will:
 - Introduce the concept of packet-based communications – a method that groups data that is transmitted over a digital network into packets. Data in the header is used by networking hardware to direct the packet to its destination where the payload is extracted and used by application software.
 - Define broadband and investigate the various transport mediums in use today.
 - Familiarize participants with the acronyms and language of internet technology, making it easier to converse with consultants, technicians and vendors.
2. **Teleworking** – Participants learn how the concept of work is quickly changing from a centralized activity to a vastly decentralized opportunity to work from anywhere broadband is available and reliable. This module will:
 - Explore opportunities, discuss case studies, and learn the economic impact teleworking can have for rural and distressed communities.
 - Look at the incredible success Eastern Kentucky telework training hubs have had in creating hundreds of new employment opportunities.
 - Explore how to telework effectively and learn teleworking best practices.
3. **Cybersecurity and Privacy** – Cybersecurity is at the forefront of discussion both locally and nationally. Understanding the vulnerabilities and mitigation procedures for our IT systems is now a basic requirement for technology professionals. This module will:
 - Delve into several high-profile data breaches and how they could have been prevented.
 - Explore the privacy element and the responsibilities associated with using and storing private information.
4. **Broadband Technology and E-Commerce in Business** – Understanding the internet and IT systems is essential to engaging in daily business. This module will:
 - Explore how high-speed, high capacity broadband, cloud computing, and digital currency will take business to an entirely new level.

- Discuss how local access to global markets is the new reality and how communities without adequate broadband access will be at a significant disadvantage in the marketplace.
- Survey online commerce and the vital communication needs of the business community.

Elective Modules:

1. **Intelligent Communities** – Participants learn how communities will benefit from improved efficiencies through the use of smart devices and artificial intelligence systems. This module will:
 - Explore smart devices.
 - Provide a glimpse into the future of community services management.
 - Examine the ways social media can maximize communication within communities.
2. **Broadband Technology in Healthcare** – Visiting the doctor is becoming more of an online activity than a face-to-face encounter. This module will:
 - Discuss that from videoconferencing to home health monitoring, telehealth is changing our healthcare options at an accelerating rate.
 - Explore the future for medicine and how community broadband access can not only affect the quality of life but can also save lives.
3. **Broadband Technology in Law Enforcement/FirstNet** – AT&T is in the process of deploying FirstNet, the largest private wireless communications system that law enforcement has ever utilized. This module will:
 - Help understand how this came about and what this unified communications system can do for community policing and disaster recovery efforts.
 - Examine online training options for public safety professionals through the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium.
4. **Broadband Technology in Agriculture** – From intelligent irrigation systems and smart cow technology to online livestock trading, farming is increasingly becoming more and more dependent on fast and reliable internet access. This module will:
 - Look at today’s agricultural opportunities and the increasing integration of connected devices and online technology.
 - Explore current uses of technology in agriculture and importance of the broadband roll.
5. **Broadband Technology in Education** – Colleges have already moved virtually every undergraduate course to the internet. We are now seeing graduate level and advanced degree programs requiring little to no “on-campus” time. This module will:
 - Help participants understand what this means for future education.
 - Discuss how broadband is re-shaping K-12 and facilitating authentic professional learning experiences.
6. **Our Youth and Their Broadband Needs** – Broadband internet access is vital to economic development but just as important is using the Internet for personal development. Our youth have an opportunity to learn and grow like no generation before them. This module will:
 - Discuss the challenges faced by youth with broadband access and learning how to effectively use that access to achieve their goals.

7. **The Internet of Things (IoT)** – The internet is becoming more pervasive and transparent in our daily lives thanks to an explosion of internet enabled devices. This module will:
 - Highlight the vast influence smart and connected devices have in everyday life.
 - Explore the need for bandwidth and connectivity required to utilize everything from smart thermostats and lights to fully interactive devices powered by digital assistants.
8. **Social Media and Marketing** – Social media is available at our fingertips and can serve as a powerful marketing tool. This module will:
 - Discuss how to create and share content through the various social media platforms.

Help Desk Certification

The goal of the Help Desk Certification is to provide real world training that will meet the workforce demands of the call center and help desk employers throughout our region. This program will strive to provide both employment leads to participants as well provide a pool of trained individuals for employers in the region. Please give your estimated time for each classroom session/module. If you can combine modules, please give your recommendation based on your materials and previous experience.

Core Modules:

1. **Listening Skills** – This module will teach active listening skills in order to best serve the customer.
2. **Questioning Skills** – This module will help participants learn how to ask questions to gain the knowledge needed to solve customer issues.
3. **Communicating Professionally** – This module will teach the importance of maintaining professionalism when communicating with callers.
4. **Call Management** – This module will incorporate basic phone skills with a positive and optimistic approach to problem solving. It will also teach best practices for greeting callers, building rapport, presenting solutions, closing a call, and diffusing situations with emotional or challenging callers.
5. **Email and Virtual Chat Skills** – This module will teach email and virtual chat etiquette and how to concisely and effectively use written communication.
6. **Team Building** – This module will teach skills to foster a sense of teamwork and shared goals.

Elective Modules:

1. **Stress management** – This module will teach tips to reduce and cope with workplace stress to work with efficiency and maintain a positive workplace attitude.
2. **Productivity and time management** – This module will teach time management skills to boost productivity.
3. **Incident management** – This module will teach skills to remedy caller situations once the customer frustration has been elevated.
4. **Basic computer skills** – This module will be designed to enhance computer skills and will include toggling between screens, utilizing searchable knowledge bases, and general computer skills.
5. **Keyboarding** – This module will teach basic keyboarding skills to improve accuracy and speed.

Information Technology Certifications

The purpose for this solicitation is to identify a trainer(s) who can provide an all-inclusive quote for any/all of the IT certifications listed below. Successful proposals will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Deliver training in a boot camp style (when applicable) in a classroom setting at locations of our selection in the southern and eastern Kentucky region.
2. Provide necessary equipment, software, books and/or supplies to conduct training (The Center will provide computers for trainings).

A. CompTIA Certifications

Training to be delivered through Instructor-Led Training delivered in boot camp style for any or all of the following CompTIA Certifications:

- A+ Certification
- Net+ Certification
- Security+ Certification

B. Microsoft Certifications

Training to be delivered through Instructor-Led, boot camp style for any or all of the following:

- MCSE: Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert
- MCSD: Microsoft Certified Solutions Developer
- MCSA: Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate
- MTA: Microsoft Technology Associate
- Microsoft Certified IT Professional
- Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist

C. Cisco (CCNA, CCDA, CCNA Security)

Training to be delivered through Instructor-Led, boot camp style for any or all of the following Cisco Certifications:

- CCENT
- CCT
- CCDA
- CCNA
- CCDP
- CCNP
- CCDE
- CCIE
- CCAr

D. VMWare

Training to be delivered through instructor-led, boot camp style for any or all of the following VMWare certifications:

- VMware Certified Professional
- VMware Cloud Management
- VMware Data Center Virtualization
- VMware Desktop and Mobility
- VMware Network Virtualization

E. Citrix (Citrix Certified Administrator, Citrix Certified Enterprise Engineer, etc.)

Training to be delivered through Instructor-Led, boot camp style for any or all of the following Citrix Certifications:

- Citrix Certified Associate
- Professional and Expert in both Virtualization and Networking
- Citrix Certified Endpoint Management

F. IT Project and Services Management

Training to be delivered through instructor-led style for any and all of the courses included in IT Project and Services Management.

Other Essential Work Skills Classes

The purpose is to provide various Essential Work Skills trainings to meet the workforce needs of our region. Please give your estimated time for each classroom session/module. If you can combine modules, please give your recommendation based on your materials and previous experience. Essential Work Skills Classes might include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Customer Service** – This course will teach the basic concepts of customer service to include determining customer needs, dealing with challenging customers and retaining customers.
2. **Professionalism in the Workplace** – This course will teach the concepts of maintaining a professional image in the workplace to include personal image, attitude, communication skills and building relationships.
3. **Leadership Skills** – This course will teach the concepts of leadership to include dealing with different personalities and communication styles, inspiring a positive work environment, motivating others and leading with vision and goals.
4. **Supervisory Skills** – This course will teach the concepts of being a good supervisor to include respect and support of employees, coaching others, communicating with confidence and decision making.
5. **Phone Etiquette** – This course will teach the concepts of interacting with the public in a positive and professional manner.
6. **Interview Skills** – This course will teach the concepts of good interview skills to include types of interviews, preparing for interviews, dressing for interviews and negotiating salary.
7. **Communication Skills** – This course will teach the art of good communication to include being believable, eye contact, body language and being a good listener.
8. **Conflict Management** – This course will teach the basics of dealing with conflict in the workplace.
9. **Business Writing** – This course will teach the development of an effective writing style.
10. **Grant Writing** – This course will teach essential skills for grant writing success.
11. **Emotional Intelligence** – This course will identify the benefits of emotional intelligence while increasing and practicing emotional intelligence.
12. **Dress for Success** – This course will teach how to dress appropriately, even on a budget.
13. **Time Management** – This course will teach time management techniques and how to avoid time wasters.

Proposal Requirements:

Please include the following in your response to this RFQ:

- **Name**
- **Company (if applicable)**
 - Provide a brief description of your company (100 words or less. Please include web address)
- **Address**
- **Area code and phone number**
- **Email**

- **Summary of proposal**
 - Provide a brief summary of your proposal
- **Work Plan and Timeline**
 - Provide a timeline for completion of modules(s) to be developed
- **Resume, qualifications, references**
 - Provide a resume that details your qualifications
 - Provide 2 professional references
 - Provide sample of curriculum developed by you or your company

Price quote

- Provide an all-inclusive, itemized cost of developing curriculum and/or leading class.
- The Center may request an interview or teleconference interview. Any travel and/or other costs related to the interview will be the responsibility of the bidder.
- Consultants may provide any additional information he/she feels would assist The Center in the selection process.

Project Timeline:

RFQ Issue Date: 2.8.2019

Due date for proposals: 4 weeks after issue date

Decision and notification: This request is an ongoing process to determine qualified instructors and partners to fulfill the Center for Rural Development's Business Training department needs. Qualified instructors and partners will be contacted within 2-4 weeks of submission to discuss our interest and next steps of development.

The Center for Rural Development owns all rights to material developed through this program. All questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted by email to Patti Simpson at psimpson@centertech.com.

Please send your completed proposals to:
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