



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Industry Sector Partnership Support

Issued: September 14, 2018

Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC)

A Proud Partner of America's Job Center of California Network

525 Wall Street, Chico, CA 95928

(530) 892-9600

NoRTEC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provider of employment and training programs.

Michael Cross, Executive Director

mcross@ncen.org

SECTION 1: PURPOSE, FUNDING AND BACKGROUND

RFP PURPOSE AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

The Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) seeks the services from qualified individuals, organizations, non-profit agencies, existing Industry Sector Partnerships and companies to help develop and/or enhance regional partnerships within the 11-county NoRTEC region utilizing the Next Generation Industry Partnership model. The purpose of supporting Sector Partnerships is to identify common resources and needs for particular industries that provide employment opportunities with upward mobility and also have the greatest potential for economic growth in the region. By bringing together employers within one industry sector, the workforce system can better align, and leverage regional workforce investment to meet the needs of employers. The development and/or enhancement of Industry Sector Partnerships will be used to assist NoRTEC in designing, improving and targeting workforce development services that will respond to employer needs in order to build and shape the regional workforce.

Proposals may be developed by more than one applicant that partner to do certain tasks within the project; however, the proposal must indicate a lead applicant. These individuals or firms must indicate how the partnership will produce the desired product(s). Applicants should be knowledgeable or experienced in working with the targeted regional industry sector, preferably in the NoRTEC region. The lead applicant must be capable of bringing together multiple partners to achieve the overall plan goals, preferably via existing relationships and trust with industry, workforce development programs, education institutions and economic development organizations in the NoRTEC region.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL AND DUE DATE

NoRTEC will receive proposals until October 1, 2018. If all funds have *not* been expended after the RFP process, a follow-up RFP will be publically noticed and published at www.ncen.org. Proposals may be mailed, hand-delivered or e-mailed to:

NoRTEC
Attention: Andrea Campos, Director of Program Administration
525 Wall Street
Chico, CA 95928
(530)892-9600, x205
E-mail: acampos@ncen.org

E-mailed proposals must be formatted as PDF. Proposals in other file formats will not be reviewed. Faxed proposals will not be accepted.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

RFP Release Date	September 14, 2018
Bidder's Informational Meeting	As requested. All questions and responses will be posted on NoRTEC's website at www.ncen.org .
Proposal Deadline	October 1, 2018
Formal Review of Proposals	October 5, 2018
Award of Contract	October 12, 2018
Awardee Informational Webinar	TBD. Please check website for updated schedule of events. This will be a call-in meeting.
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 14, 2018

**This schedule is subject to change, please continually check NoRTEC's website at www.ncen.org*

RFP CONTACT

RFP Contact Person and mailing address for questions about the proposal process or technical issues:

Andrea Campos, Director of Program Administration
Industry Sector Partnership Coordinator
NoRTEC
525 Wall Street, Chico CA 95928
acampos@ncen.org
(530) 892-9600 x209

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

OVERVIEW OF NORTEC

The Northern Rural Training & Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) headquartered in Chico, California, administers Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs in eleven Northern California counties. Established in 1983, NoRTEC is led by a Governing Board and Workforce Development Board (WDB) that oversee a broad range of programs and initiatives. The WDB includes representatives from small, medium and large businesses, labor organizations, education, economic development, community based organizations and one-stop partners.

NoRTEC is a special district organized under a Joint Powers Agreement to provide United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) services and has established contracts with nonprofit agencies in eleven counties to ensure job seekers and businesses have access to a comprehensive array of job training and employment services. The counties in NoRTEC service area are Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta,

Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity. Additional information about NoRTEC can be obtained at www.ncen.org.

WIOA REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS

Consistent with WIOA, NoRTEC has adopted a Regional and Local Plan that includes the following:

- A. An Analysis of regional economic conditions:
 - i. Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - ii. the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations;
- B. An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- C. An analysis of the workforce in the region i.e., labor market information (LMI), including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment;
- D. An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region.

The Plans can be accessed on the following links:

[NoRTEC Regional Plan](#)

[NoRTEC Local Plan](#)

SECTOR STRATEGY APPROACH

As part of the Regional Plan process, NoRTEC utilized a Sector Strategy approach that includes, among a host of variables, an analysis of data on historical growth, projections of future industry needs, industry concentration, industry competitiveness, export orientation, job multiplier effects, earnings multiplier effects, industry average wage, and workforce compatibility. Priority industry sectors that were identified in the Regional Plan are industries that provide significant overall employment opportunities, above-average wages and benefits and have the greatest potential for economic growth and regional impact.

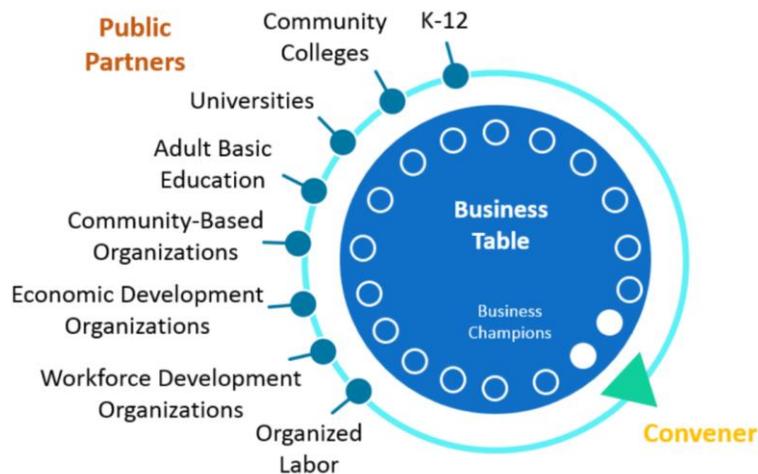
Regional priority industry sectors that were identified include:

- 1) Health Care
- 2) Agriculture
- 3) Manufacturing

- 4) Information Technology
- 5) Hospitality/Tourism

NEXT GENERATION SECTOR PARTNERSHIP DEFINED

Next Generation Sector Partnerships are partnerships of businesses from the same industry and in a shared labor market region who work with education, workforce development, economic development, organized labor and community organizations to address the workforce and other competitiveness needs of the targeted industry. Next Generation Sector Partnerships are employer-driven and put business at the center of the table. This leads to business driving the agenda of the partnership, not public partners (workforce development, economic development, education, etc.). This does not mean that public partners do not play a role in a Next Generation Sector Partnership. Once business determines the priorities of the partnerships, public partners from workforce development, economic development, education and others work together to convene and support these priorities. Since Next Generation Sector Partnerships are organized around the topics that impact business leaders most, they are sustainable over time. The Next Generation model is shown in the image below.



Next Generation Sector Partnerships vs. Traditional Industry Partnerships

Next Generation Sector Partnerships vs. Traditional Industry Partnerships

Next Generation Sector Partnerships center on strong industry leadership. In order to be committed and engaged for the long haul, it is critical that business leaders define their own agenda that will improve the regional economy on their own terms. As long as public partners (workforce development, economic development, education, organized labor etc.) are only engaging business people around their agendas (i.e. “What are your worker training needs?”

“What will it take for you to hire re-entrants?”), business participation will be limited and partnerships will be less likely to be sustained without public funding. Public partners may also miss the big opportunities to spur growth and competitiveness if they don’t engage in broader, industry-driven conversations about what the industry needs to grow and thrive. In focusing solely on worker training through the Industry Partnership Grant Program, Industry Partnerships are setting the agenda (worker training) for their business partners. Workforce development, and specifically worker training offered through Industry Partnerships, may not necessarily be a priority for all next generation partnerships. For most partnerships, it will be a top priority. However, for others, worker training may be a priority to be addressed after more important, non-workforce related issues (such as infrastructure, supply chain, access to capital or permitting problems in their region) are resolved that contribute to industry competitiveness within an economies of scale approach. Next Generation Sector Partnerships thrive by requiring business to be engaged, set priorities and champion them personally. Next Gen partnerships do not advance initiatives unless business leaders are committed to them. The public, quasi-governmental and community sectors serve as critical partners and resources to business, labor representatives and workers; however, business confidence in these services are lacking. The Next Gen model utilizes its “demand-driven” approach and decision-making to ensure that limited public and private resources are invested in a way that strengthens the economy and connects people to jobs.

Transitioning to the Next Generation Industry Partnership Model

Traditional Industry Partnerships are a great starting point for establishing a Next Generation Industry Partnership as businesses and the public partner support team are already engaged in the IP. The main objective in moving to the Next Gen model is to expand the partnership in an effort to meet the overall competitiveness needs of the industry. This is done by convening the partnership, placing business at the center, and having them define their own priorities that addresses this objective. Each priority requires a business champion and public partner support team to address the issues. In the end, the goal of the Next Generation Industry Partnership model is to expand on the work already being done and create a shared table where business can come to meet all of their competitiveness needs over the long-term.

For this funding cycle, NoRTEC requires bidders to follow the model for Industry Sector Partnership development and enhancement as described at following link: [Next Generation Industry Sector Partnerships](#)

Next Gen Industry Sector Partnership activities and best practices include:

- Assess industry needs, including challenges facing the industry as a whole.
- Assess employers’ infrastructure dynamics supply chain and limitations.
- Identification of current resources/services available.
- Assess industry training needs and skill gaps, including:
 - Challenges facing the sector /industry as a whole;

- Specific sector/ industry training needs of both the current and emerging workforce;
 - Current resources/services available;
 - Additional information and resources needed to address gaps in the understanding of the sector/industry; and
 - Types of available communication networks between firms, managers, workers and education/training partners in the sector.
- Address the issues of business contraction and business expansion that impact the training, support and education needs of workers.
 - Help educational and training institutions to align their curriculum and specific programs toward unique and specific industry demand, particularly for higher skill occupations.
 - Develop and apply models of work-based learning that meet industry-specific needs for a skilled workforce.
 - Development of additional information and resources needed to address gaps in the understanding of the industry; and
 - Facilitate, collaborate or coordinate with industry sectors in the region to address the issues of business.

This is NoRTEC's 3rd Industry Sector Partnership funding cycle. Differences from previous solicitations include requirements for regular industry-driven convenings, project deliverables and metrics around industry involvement.

Previously funded Industry Partnerships will be evaluated on additional criteria such as leveraged funding, sustainability efforts, technical assistance participation and previous Industry Sector Partnership grant accomplishments.

SECTION 3: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical Assistance during Grant Development:

An informational meeting to provide program overview, technical assistance and opportunities for proposers to ask questions will be scheduled as requested. Notification for such meeting will be posted on the NoRTEC website when scheduled for each Bidder. Questions and responses will then be posted on NoRTEC's website (www.ncen.org).

The Industry Partnership Coordinator and experienced staff will be available to take questions related to this grant during regular business hours and via email. Email questions are preferred.

Technical Assistance during the Life of the Grant Award:

NoRTEC will provide coaching and facilitation assistance from national experts throughout the life of the grant for both awardees and all other proposers. Technical assistance may include:

- Coaching and advising on planning, launching and organizing the Next Gen Sector Partnership
- Conference calls
- Regional convening meetings
- Guest speakers
- Best practices from other regions and states
- Applicable research on other related initiatives/approaches
- Facilitation assistance for the partnership launch meetings
- Helping to develop strategies for sustaining the partnership beyond the organizational stage
- Helping the partnership to align with economic development, educational, human services and community partners for maximum effectiveness
- Networking and making connections statewide to other partnerships with successful best practices to share
- Aligning with statewide sectorial strategies

NoRTEC has established a series of peer-to-peer calls and/or in person meetings for next gen partnerships. The peer networking meetings will be an opportunity for partnerships to share experiences, ask questions of peers, and exchange ideas and strategies for successfully launching and sustaining partnerships. All Partnerships are required to participate in all Technical Assistance activities provided by NoRTEC throughout the funding cycle.

SECTION 4: NEXT GENERATION INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Next Gen Industry Partnership funds will be available as seed grants to support the development, launch and facilitation of next generation sector partnerships for new Next Gen IPs and existing partnerships. Partnerships may apply for up to \$50,000.

For previously funded Partnerships, this funding cycle will be available for partnerships to address the priorities determined by businesses (worker training, infrastructure, supply chain issues, access to capital, permitting issues, expansion/relocation, etc.).

Please note, grant awards for funding will be contingent on the availability of funds and subject to change. Grant amendments to increase funding amounts will be considered based on successful progress of the project.

SECTION 5: ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PARTNERS

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The following entities are eligible to serve as lead applicants as long as the conditions described below are met:

- Qualified individuals and/or consulting firms
- Business consortia and/or associations, including entities such as chambers of commerce, economic development departments
- Economic development authorities, agencies or private consultants
- Non-profit organizations or associations serving as regional or local workforce intermediaries
- Labor/management partnerships
- Intra-regional or inter-state partnerships
- Educational and workforce development agencies
- Local government organizations

LEAD APPLICANT

Existing entities referenced above should be knowledgeable or experienced in working with the targeted regional industry sector and in the NoRTEC region. The lead applicant must be capable of bringing together multiple partners and “champions” to achieve the overall plan goals, including but not limited to:

- Pulling together and evaluating data that describes the regional economy, including current, past, and projected employment, average wages and specialty industries in the region;
- Identifying the geography of the partnership;
- Ongoing facilitation of industry partners to develop a plan;
- Coordination of the design of the plan;
- Development of an appropriate budget;
- Collection of performance management measures;
- Coordination of the activities of the plan;
- Identification of public and private resources available for workforce development relevant to the work being proposed by the partnership;
- Development of a plan to access those resources on behalf of the partnership; and
- Draft/Development of a strategic plan.

PARTNERS AND ROLES

Partnerships must collaborate with local workforce, education and economic development entities and must be industry led. Partnerships should also collaborate with the following partners if available in the region and industry:

1. Businesses/Employers
2. Economic Development Partners
3. Industry Associations
4. AJCC Centers
5. Business Service Teams
6. Education Community
 - a. K-12
 - b. Career & Tech Education
 - c. Community Colleges
 - d. Colleges and Universities
 - e. Adult Basic Education
7. Human Services Partners
8. Criminal Justice Partners
9. Community-Based Organizations

Not all public partners must be involved in all activities of the partnership. Once business priorities are established, the partnerships should form action teams to address each priority. The formation of action teams is a critical step that requires as much care as preparing for the original sector partnership launch. Over time, this includes selecting the right public partners, thoughtfully meshing the business and community partners to form an effective team and taking steps to sustain the team over the long-term to get results.

SECTION 6: APPLICATION CONTENT AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applicants are required to submit one electronic copy of all application materials. The following format requirements apply:

1. **Organization:** The application should be organized using the numbered format outlined below. Applicants are advised to address each sub-criterion in the section where it is requested in order to facilitate reviewer evaluation of the application.
2. **Type of Proposal:** Applicants are invited to submit either a Partnership Development or Partnership(s) Enhancement Proposal. Applicants may propose to support one or more existing Industry Sector Partnerships. All application sections apply to either type of proposal.
3. **Content:** The applicant must present a clear and well-conceived overall approach to the project.

All Partnership proposals are required to follow the [Next Generation Sector Partnerships](#) model and toolkit.

See list of additional grant resources at the end of this document.

Partnerships must complete the following sections in the listed numerical format, but the information must be relevant to its existing structure.

All proposals must include:

I. Proposal Overview/Executive Summary – 15 points

Provide a brief description of the proposed work to be done by the regional team in forming a new Next Gen IP or expanding an existing partnership to align with the next gen model. Briefly describe the regional and industry need for a Next Gen IP.

II. Partnership Demonstrated Need – 15 points

A summary describing the regional/local area's demonstrated need for the Partnership including, but not limited to:

1. How the Partnership will support a growing and/or vital regional or local industry sector. Explain how the industry sector was selected.
2. How the Partnership will strengthen coordination between the local workforce board, workforce development partners, economic development agencies and secondary and post-secondary institutions (see list above).
3. How the Partnership will boost or expand Employer commitments, activities and/or leverage additional resources/funding partnerships.
4. How the Partnership will boost workforce and economic development and education commitments, activities and/or developed, tailored, piloted industry recognized credentials.

III. Project Design Narrative – 40 points

Industry Partnership proposals will be considered for two types of activities: 1) Industry Partnership Development for new Partnerships; and 2) Industry Partnership Enhancement, where a sector partnership (or multiple partnerships) exists and is expanding. This could also include transitioning an existing partnership to a Next Gen IP model. Proposals must clearly identify as one of these types of activity.

For **Partnership Development**, project design narrative will be evaluated on the extent to which they incorporate the following:

1. Qualifications of the existing and/or proposed staff that will implement and manage the Partnership (partnership member roster).
2. A plan of action that is clear and detailed that describes the recruitment and partnership-building steps required to create an Industry-driven partnership: The

- Plan must include regularly scheduled industry-driven planning/input sessions with documented outcomes and work plans that address industry direction. Of significant importance is identification of industry critical competencies and occupations.
3. A description of activities already completed related to building a diverse and connected “community-support” team of education, workforce development, economic development and other organizations that will be organized to respond to needs of industry as the partnership grows.
 4. Description, as much as is possible, of roles and responsibilities of lead applicant compared to other support partners in assuring that the to-be-developed, industry-driven work plan will be carried out and methods to be used assure maximum participation of the industry members of the Partnership and related support organizations.
 5. Include clear performance indicators that will measure the progress made toward proposed goals and objectives.
 6. List of industry members and “champions” involved or anticipated to participate.
 7. A proposed sustainability plan to develop multiple and diverse funding sources to reduce the Partnership’s dependence on a single revenue stream and increase the potential for long-term sustainability.
 8. Capacity building and recruitment strategy that explains the strategy for establishing or increasing business and public partner membership in the partnership. Describe what commitments made to date (from business leaders and public partners) for launching and sustaining a Next Gen IP after launch.

For **Partnership Enhancement**, project design narrative will be evaluated on the extent to which they incorporate the following:

1. Description of how the Partnership is identifying and meeting the needs of businesses, workforce and economic goals of the NoRTEC region.
2. Qualifications of the existing and/or proposed staff that will implement and manage the Partnership (partnership member roster).
3. A plan of action that is clear and detailed and meets the requirements of Industry – driven (e.g. evidence of an industry steering committee and boarder industry membership, and industry-led work groups), and community-supported (evidence that an array of support partners in education, workforce development, economic development and other organizations are organized to respond to the needs of industry). The Plan must include regularly scheduled industry-driven planning/input sessions with documented outcomes and work plans that address industry direction.
4. Description of when and how each task in the work plan will be carried out and methods to be used to assure participation of the members of the Partnership and related organizations.
5. Include clear performance indicators that will measure the progress made toward proposed goals and objectives.

6. A proposed sustainability plan to develop multiple and diverse funding sources to reduce the Partnership's dependence on a single revenue stream and increase the potential for long-term sustainability. If the Partnership has received previous funding, describe success in achieving diverse funding support.
7. Description of regional partners involved in the project and the role(s) the different agencies or institutions will have in the project.
8. List of industry members or "champions" involved.
9. Capacity building and recruitment strategy that explains the strategy for establishing or increasing business and public partner membership in the partnership. Describe what commitments have made to date (from business leaders and public partners) for launching and sustaining a Next Gen IP after launch.
10. Projected outcomes – impact on the Sector Industry.
11. **For previously funded Industry Partnerships**, describe accomplishments including leveraged/matching funding, increase in IP membership over time, impacts to the workforce system and industry challenges that have been addressed since establishment of the IP. In addition, the proposal must include how the funding will help partnerships address the priorities determined by businesses (worker training, infrastructure, supply chain issues, access to capital, permitting issues, expansion/relocation, etc.).
12. **For previously funding Industry Partnerships**, describe industry critical occupations, and competencies identified by industry employers and how the Partnership is working with relevant education, training and workforce programs to meet this need.

IV. Statement of Agreement to Participate in Technical Assistance (5 points)

All organizations awarded a grant will be part of a learning community in the NoRTEC region about sector partnership development and sustainability. As part of this learning community, specific trainings, webinars, promising practices and peer sharing conference calls will be scheduled. Proposals must clearly agree to participation in these activities and must identify at least one learning area or topic of interest (i.e. that applicant wants to learn more about) and at least one area that may be an area of expertise by the applicant that can be shared with others. Previously funded awardees will be evaluated based on past participation and contributions made in Technical Assistance activities.

V. Budget and Project Timeline – (25 points)

All proposals must provide a Next Gen IP Program Development Timeline which outlines partnership development efforts to showcase the level of pre-planning that will be executed in the creation of the project design.

A proposed budget and narrative must be submitted with costs justified in terms of activities related specifically to major expenditures, e.g., salary, travel, etc. In cases where services are to be provided by a subcontractor, consultant or other organization, applicant must provide a detailed basis for the corresponding costs.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW PROCESS

COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Upon receipt of proposals, staff will review submitted proposals for completeness and compliance with the terms and conditions of the RFP. All proposals must adhere to the required format and in order to be competitive, must include all of the requested information. Proposals that do not adhere to these requirements will be determined non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. NoRTEC reserves the right to reject any proposal submitted.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

NoRTEC will put together an RFP Scoring Panel of staff and industry experts who will score and rank all proposals that meet the compliance requirements described below. The RFP Scoring Panel will score and rank all proposals using the criteria described within the RFP, specifically developed to examine the competence of the Respondents and suitability of their proposals. The RFP Scoring Panel may assign each proposal a maximum of 100 points. Panel members will review and rank each proposal and based on their knowledge and assessment of the proposals, recommend respondents for designations and contract negotiation.

REVIEW PROCESS

NoRTEC may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any proposers to clarify or negotiate modifications to the proposals. However, NoRTEC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms the Proposer can provide from both technical and price standpoints. NoRTEC anticipates awarding the contract to the proposers with the highest total points.

ACCESS TO SCORE SHEET AND COMMENTS

Individual score sheets and comments used during the evaluation process may be provided in the form of summaries as prepared by NoRTEC staff. Actual individual scores sheets will not be disclosed. These summaries will be provided to applicants of the RFP who submit a written request. Requests for this information shall be responded to within ten (10) business days of the final contract/agreement recommendations and any appeals submitted. The purpose for releasing this information is for technical assistance and continuous improvement and not for purpose of an appeal.

NEGOTIATION/AGREEMENT

All Respondents shall designate an authorized negotiator. (The name and contact information for this person must be included on the title page of the proposal.) This designated person must be empowered to make binding commitments for the successful Respondent and its subcontractors, if any. NoRTEC reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of the contract/agreement with the successful Respondent(s). Items that may be negotiated include but are not limited to the scope of work, the staff as proposed, the implementation schedule, and the final award amount.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

It is expected that a decision will be made within 60 days of proposal submittal (see schedule in Section 1. above). Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful proposer, all proposers will be informed in writing of the name of the successful firm(s)/individual.

SECTION 7: DISCLAIMERS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

At the discretion of NoRTEC, if it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be provided to all known recipients of this RFP and posted on NoRTEC's website. Any clarification will become an addendum to this RFP.

Respondents are responsible for checking the website frequently to remain informed about the procurement process and other information that may affect this RFP (e.g. grant funding availability, changes to industry sectors and revisions to the timeline).

RIGHT TO CANCEL

NoRTEC reserves the right to cancel all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice and reserves the right to modify the RFP process and timeline as is deemed necessary.

NONRESPONSIVE PROPOSALS

Proposals may be judged nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

- The proposal is not received on a timely basis in accordance with the terms of this RFP.
- The proposal does not include all of the specified elements.
- The proposal is not adequate to form a judgment by the reviewers that the proposed undertaking would comply with all of the auditing standards and requirements specified in this RFP.
- The proposal indicates that the audit reports would not be made available to NoRTEC in the time frames outlined in this RFP.

MINORITY BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

NoRTEC, as a recipient of State and Federal funds, subscribes to the practices below and will fully comply with Federal, State and Local laws and directives governing non-discrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action in all activities.

- No person shall be discriminated against whatsoever on the grounds of race, religion, color, age, sex, disability or national origin.
- No person shall because of race, religion, color, age, sex, disability, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded entirely or in part by the City, the State or the Federal Government.
- Affirmative Action shall be taken by all levels of governments, where necessary, to support the underlying objectives of said anti-discrimination policies.

To further support policies relative to affirmative action, equal opportunity and non-discrimination, NoRTEC will make every effort to ensure that Minority Business Enterprises have the maximum practicable opportunity to participate in construction contracts and in the procurement of goods, professional services and supplies. Bidders are encouraged to indicate in their RFP response if they are a certified minority business as certified through the State of California. A listing of certified minority businesses, as well as the services and commodities they provide is available from the Department of General Services 916-375-4940.

THE APPEALS PROCESS

NoRTEC must receive written notice of the Proposer's intent to appeal the decision within five (5) working days of receipt of notice of award. Proposer will have a total of 15 days in which to submit a written appeal of NoRTEC's decisions. All grievances arising out of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or this RFP must be filed according to NoRTEC's established grievance procedures.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is the policy of NoRTEC to prohibit ex-parte communication with any board member, NoRTEC staff, consultants or other persons serving as an evaluator during the procurement process. Respondents that directly contact board members or evaluators risk elimination of their proposals from further consideration.

DISCLAIMERS

1. This RFP does not commit the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board (WDB) to award a contract.

2. No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a contract for services or supplies under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
3. All data, material and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to the NoRTEC and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.
4. Formal notification to award a contract and the actual execution of a contract are subject to the following: results of negotiations between selected proposers and NoRTEC staff; and continued availability funding.
5. NoRTEC may require selected proposers to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during contract negotiations.
10. Additional funds received by NoRTEC may be contracted by expanding existing programs or by consideration of proposals not initially funded under this RFP. These decisions shall be at the discretion of the NoRTEC Executive Director.
11. NoRTEC is required to abide by all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act legislation and regulations. Therefore, NoRTEC reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by state or federal agencies.
15. All grievances arising out of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or this RFP must be filed according to NoRTEC's established grievance procedures.
17. All proposers must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual in the NoRTEC Regional area shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funded program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency, or political affiliation or belief.
18. All proposers must ensure access to individuals with disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
19. The Appeals Process - NoRTEC must receive written notice of the Proposer's intent to appeal the decision within five (5) working days of receipt of notice of award. Proposer will have a total of 15 days in which to submit a written appeal of NoRTEC's decisions.

RESOURCES:

[Next Gen Industry Sector Toolkit](#)

[Next Gen Industry Partnership Criteria](#)