



**Request for Proposals for:
Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition**

Career Counseling Learning Community

RFP Issue Date: April 2, 2021

Response Due Date: April 30, 2021

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Invitation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition (MVMC) is extending an invitation for proposals to create and execute strategies that will build awareness, opportunity, and workforce development capacity to support manufacturing career pathways, including those in emerging manufacturing technology. The result will be a more robust, effective, and unbiased approach to career guidance related to opportunities in manufacturing and advanced manufacturing in the tri-county region of Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull counties in Ohio.

This project is funded by General Motors Mahoning Valley Community Support Funds.

NOTE: MULTIPLE PROPOSALS MAY BE AWARDED UNDER THIS RFP.

NOTICE!

In order to receive any addenda or supplemental information, you MUST register with the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition by email to Sue@mahoningvalleymfg.com

The following information is required to register:

- Organization Name
- Contact Name
- Street Address
- City, State Zip
- Telephone
- Email address

INTERESTED PARTIES MUST REGISTER BY APRIL 19, 2021

Background Information and Overview

The Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition (MVMC) won a portion of the General Motors \$12 million Community Support Fund in the Mahoning Valley, established as part of the settlement for GM's repayment of its Job Creation and Retention Tax Credit incentives. The state of Ohio required that GM refund tax credits and make these investments following the company's decision to close its Lordstown assembly facility. The intended purpose of the Community Support Funds is to "build awareness, opportunity, and workforce development capacity in emerging manufacturing technology."

MVMC has directed a portion of the funding to improving career counseling to area students, career switchers, and the existing workforce by establishing the Career Counseling Network (CCN), a learning community for individuals who advise middle, high school, and post-secondary students and those in or seeking to reenter the workforce. Through the CCN, MVMC aims to enhance the Mahoning Valley's leadership in innovative manufacturing career pathways through professional development forums and resources to support neutral career counseling tailored to the prospective trainee, not biased towards any particular education or training program. This strategy would improve the way career advice is most commonly given today and ensure that career or education seekers would be assessed, guided and advised without bias and directed toward the education or training resources that are the best fit for them individually. Furthermore, the CCN will cultivate a subset of career counselors as " Fellows" dedicated to further expansion of expertise related to manufacturing career pathways. MVMC manufacturing partners will provide additional professional development opportunities for these Fellows.

The establishment and subsequent operations of the Career Counseling Network will benefit from and build upon other programs funded by MVMC. One such program will produce an asset map of career counseling resources and identify barriers to neutral career counseling in the region by September 30, 2021. The asset map will inform the establishment of the CCN by providing essential information about the organizations and individuals delivering career counseling services, and the specific tools and resources they use. Another project supports collaborative grassroots outreach to target populations, including people of color, women, veterans, and returning citizens. The collaborative outreach activities are intended to improve and standardize recruitment, career counseling, and enrollment efforts related to manufacturing training and education programs. These outreach activities may provide opportunities for CCN members and Fellows to provide services and gain professional development through mentored on-the-job training, for example.

NOTE: MVMC defines career counseling broadly and inclusively, referring to work done by people in positions such as guidance counselor, career counselor, case manager, academic advisor, career coach, career advisor, employment specialist, job developer, school psychologist, and even community residents who serve as a resource.

The Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition seeks bids from qualified applicants experienced in strategic

planning, professional development, academic and career counseling, and coalition-building with knowledge of best-in-class career counseling tools and techniques. Experience in education and training programs that accelerate manufacturing career pathways may also be helpful.

The Scope of Work is divided into two parts. Part A focuses on establishing the career counseling professional development forums and Fellows' curriculum and assisting the development of the CCN through assessment and strategic planning activities. Part B focuses on the actual establishment, coordination, and leadership of the CCN.

A total of \$150,000 is available to fund Part A of this RFP.

A total of \$100,000 is available to fund Part B of this RFP.

Program Description / Scope of Work

In recognition of the importance of individual-centered career assessment, advisement, guidance, and counseling to effective recruitment, development, and retention of employees, MVMC is soliciting proposals to establish, develop, coordinate and lead a Career Counseling Network capable of delivering professional development forums to career counselors and neutral career counseling to individuals interested in modern manufacturing training programs. The Career Counseling Network proposals should work towards establishing and implementing a community resource to provide high quality career counseling centered on the needs and interests of the individuals, steering them toward the most appropriate programs.

FOR PART A, Career Counseling Network Professional Development and Strategic Plan, the proposal should clearly and concisely describe a plan and strategies that will:

- Recommend a format(s) that would be desirable to the CCN as a forum to exchange best practices and ideas, learn about the manufacturing industry and career pathway opportunities, and take part in additional professional development opportunities.
- In collaboration with the CCN coordinator, facilitate a strategic planning process to establish and stabilize the CCN by, for example, identifying shared interests and goals, needs and resources, and topics and approaches that will add value.
- With input from targeted institutions and individual career counselors, identify resources necessary to support and incent involvement of career counselors in the CCN. This could include continuing education units, Masters level college credits, stipends, reimbursements to the institution for on-the-schedule release time, or others as identified by targeted institutions.

- In collaboration with the CCN coordinator, establish a two-year operational plan for the Network including recommendations for additional investments to enhance the work.
- Evaluate the assessment instruments and other tools that organizations are currently using, identify gaps and make recommendations for instruments and tools that would add value.
- Evaluate existing, and develop new material resulting in content for CCN forums and curricula for Fellows. Align some components with MVMC manufacturing partners’ professional development opportunities for Fellows.
- Deliver content and curricula to support CCN Forums and develop Fellows.
- Identify and align professional development with any appropriate industry recognized credentialing and continuing education requirements for various types of career counselors, including on-the-job apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities.
- Identify leveraged and / or matching funds that will be used to support the project.

FOR PART B, Career Counseling Network Coordination and Operation, the proposal should clearly and concisely describe a plan and strategies that will:

- Create and manage the Career Counseling Network (CCN) that will develop the skills of those who advise middle, high school, and post-secondary students, as well as those who work with adults in or seeking to (re)enter the manufacturing workforce or change careers.
- Engage entities and individuals as CCN members.
- Facilitate the CCN forums.
- Coordinate and track implementation of professional development activities.
- Collaborate with grassroots outreach programming.
- Track implementation and results of neutral career counseling by CCN members.
- Identify a subset of counselors to develop into CCN Fellows.
- Sustain the CCN and Fellows after the funding period.
- Identify leveraged and / or matching funds that will be used to support the project.

Deliverables and Milestones

PART A

Deliverables	Timeline
Recommendations for format and forum topics for Career Counseling Network	July 2, 2021
Final schedule for strategic planning sessions	July 2, 2021
Strategic Plan, including identified format, content, incentives, and key performance indicators. Include recommendations for additional investment	November 19, 2021
Curricula for Fellows professional development and content for CCN forums including assessment and counseling tools	December 10, 2021

Deliverables	Timeline
Monthly Implementation Progress Reports summarizing activity and outcomes. Include expenditure reports	First Friday of each month July 2021 thru November 2022
Final Report with total metrics including the number of individuals served, types of training delivered, credentials earned (if applicable) and recommendations for next steps. Include additional training developed. Include expenditure reports	December 2, 2022

PART B

Deliverables	Timeline
List of Career Counseling Network members	September 30, 2021
Schedule for delivery of counselor professional development / forums	September 30, 2021
Preliminary report on collaboration with grassroots outreach activities	December 2, 2021
List of Fellows	July 2, 2022
Monthly Implementation Progress Reports summarizing activity, participation, and outcomes	First Friday of each month from July 2021 – November 2022
Final Report summarizing CCN activity, participation, and key performance indicators resulting from the strategic plan such as the number of individuals that have become “Fellows”. Describe the number of collaborative partners, successes and challenges experienced as well as qualitative outcomes achieved and sustainability plan. Include final expenditure report Include the number of individuals (and related demographic information) reached, recruited, enrolled; completing training, hired and the destination businesses, as a direct result of CCN activity.	December 2, 2022

Submittal Requirements

(1) Inquiries and Information Requests Prior to Submission

MVMC will act as the clearinghouse for all inquiries and information requests.

All inquiries and information requests must be submitted electronically to Sue Watson, OWMP Region 12

Project Manager: Sue@MahoningValleyMFG.com

The answers to all inquiries will be provided to all registered parties by the MVMC. All answers will be

electronically distributed to all those registered as being in receipt of the RFP documents. Addendums will also be posted on the MVMC website (www.mahoningvalleymfg.com) with the original Proposal document. Any other responses to questions not via MVMC are considered casual and not binding.

(2) Timeline

The tentative schedule for evaluation, product selection and implementation is as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Issuance of RFP | April 2, 2021 |
| • Registration deadline (see page 3) | April 19, 2021 |
| • Last day for question submittal | April 19, 2021 |
| • Final Addendum issued | April 26, 2021 |
| • Submittals Due - | April 30, 2021 |
| • Notification of Vendor/Vendors Selection | May 10, 2021 |
| • Commence work | May 17, 2021 |
| • Funding period ends | December 31, 2022 |

Key dates may be altered by the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition; registered parties will be updated via Addendum should any alteration occur.

(3) Proposal Instructions:

NOTE: Separate proposals are to be submitted for Part A and Part B. Bidders may submit proposals for one or both parts.

Each bid should be completed entirely, should not exceed 10 pages, and be typed in 12-point font, single-spaced, 1" margins on all sides. Bids should include page numbers and table of contents. The cover page, table of contents, and attachments will not count against the page limit.

Proposals will clearly and concisely describe:

- **Background:** Understanding of the MVMC scope of work, outcomes, and timelines.
- **Organizational capacity:** including fiscal management, experience in the work required to plan and implement activities described in the Project plan(s). Provide examples of similar prior work and outcomes and references.
- **Project plans:** for carrying out the work, including goals and objectives, activities, person(s) responsible, expected outcomes, major milestones, and timelines.
- **Budget:** Reasonable costs commensurate with the scope of work and available funding, supported by budget narrative. Describe the quality and quantity of leveraged and matching funds.

Organize the proposal in the following manner:

- Attachment A: Cover Page
- Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form
- Attachment C: Budget Form & Narrative
- Attachment D: References (Provide 3 references specific to each part.)
- Documentation of registration for private, for-profit, or non-profit organizations (if applicable)
- Organizational Chart
- Proposal (Clearly indicate to which part (A or B) the proposal responds)

- (4) Complete Submittals:** Respondents shall electronically submit their proposal containing all the requested information to MVMC: Sue Watson at Sue@mahoningvalleymfg.com by April 30, 2021, 5 p.m. Local Time.
- a) Late responses may be deemed unresponsive. At its sole discretion, MVMC reserves the right to reject any proposal not deemed satisfactory and to waive any and all irregularities in the procedure. Omission, inaccuracy, or misstatement may be sufficient cause for a proposal to be deemed unresponsive and/or irresponsible.
 - b) There will be NO public opening; submittals may be viewed by appointment with MVMC.

Selection Process

(1) Evaluation of Proposals

Scoring by the evaluation committee will be via the Proposal Evaluation Form included in the Appendix.

Disclaimers and Disclosures

Disclaimers

Applicants must not be on the OFCCP List of Debarred Companies.

See <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/debarred-list>

Recipient agrees to comply with all federal laws blocking property and prohibiting transactions with persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; and with federal law, embargos and trade sanctions regulating international transactions, unless a court of competent jurisdiction has adjudged such prohibitions invalid.

In its sole discretion, MVMC may withdraw the RFP either before or after receiving submissions, may accept or reject submissions, and may accept submissions which deviate from the RFP as it deems appropriate and in

MVMC's best interest. In its sole discretion, MVMC may determine the qualifications and acceptability of any party or parties submitting in response to this RFP.

Following submission of a RFP, the respondent agrees to deliver such further details, information and assurances, including financial and disclosure data, relating to the response and/or the respondent, including the respondent's affiliates, officers, directors, shareholders, partners and employees, as requested by MVMC in its discretion.

MVMC and its advisors shall have no obligation or liability with respect to this RFP, the selection and award process contemplated hereunder, or whether any award or recommendation will be made. All costs incurred by a respondent in preparing and responding to this RFP are the sole responsibility of the respondent. Any recipient of this RFP who responds hereto, fully acknowledges all the provisions of this disclosure and disclaimer and agrees to be bound by the terms hereof. Any response submitted pursuant to this RFP is at the sole risk and responsibility of the party submitting such response.

All materials produced using this funding will become the property of the MVMC, and may be used by other parties with permission.

Respondents are advised that participation in the design of evaluation strategies might result in exclusion or restriction from participation in other phases.

Disclosures

MVMC is governed by the Ohio "Open Records Law" and all responses and supporting data shall be subject to disclosure as required by the law.

Appendix Proposal Evaluation Form

Organizational qualifications and experience	Possible
Knowledge of MVMC and MVMC’s career pathways and associated education and training programs	10
Organizational capacity, including fiscal management, experience in career counseling curriculum development and delivery, experience n network development and coordination, references	20
Work plan and timeline	
Clearly defined scope of work, including target entities	10
Project Plan to accomplish the scope of work including goals and objectives, activities, responsibilities, outcomes, and timelines	20
Specific strategies to address institutional bias in career counseling	10
Plan to track the number of career counselors trained, the number who become Fellows, the number of individuals receiving neutral career counseling, and the businesses impacted.	10
Plans to sustain CCN beyond the funding period	10
Cost	
Budget submitted is reasonable, narrative includes rationale for funding	10
BONUS: Match provided and funds leveraged to support this project	10
Total	110

Attachment A: Cover Sheet

Please complete this **mandatory** cover sheet accordingly.

Organization Name				
Address				
Phone Number				
Number of Years in Business				
DUNS #				
Acknowledgement that Proposing Entity is up-to-date on taxes and not currently debarred or suspended.		YES		NO
Type of Organization (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community-Based Org.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Organization
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (explain)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor Organization		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Profit		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Service State Agency (Wagner-Peyser)		
Contact Person's Email Address				
Signatory Authority Signature				

Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Form

By submitting a proposal, the authorized signatory authority of the bidding entity certifies to his/her knowledge and belief that there is no conflict of interest (real or apparent) inherent in the bid or in delivering the scope of work if MVMC awards a contract. A conflict of interest would arise if any individual involved in the preparation of this proposal and delivery of services has a financial or other interest or would be likely to gain financially or personally from the award of a contract. The same would hold true for any member of the individual's family, partner, or an organization employing or about to employ any of the above as a direct result of the successful award of a contract under the RFP. MVMC reserves the right to disqualify a bidding entity should a conflict of interest be discovered during the solicitation process.

Signatory Authority Name and Title

Signature

Date

*Note: This form is a **mandatory** required document to be considered for either component. Bidders should only complete this form once per entry.*

Attachment C: Budget

Please complete the **mandatory** budget form and narrative explanation below. In creating a budget, the applicant should provide per unit costs by completing the following table and providing a justification for costs in a budget narrative. Please be as detailed as possible.

Budget Line Item	Cost
Salaries	\$
Benefits	\$
Travel	\$
Equipment	\$
Operational	\$
Contractual	\$
Other	\$
Indirect	\$
TOTAL	\$

Budget Narrative: Please provide an explanation for each budget line item to justify the cost. Please be as detailed as possible.

Matching Cost Line Item	Match
Salaries	\$
Benefits	\$
Travel	\$
Equipment	\$
Operational	\$
Contractual	\$
Other	\$
Indirect	\$
TOTAL	\$

Matching Costs Narrative: Please provide an explanation for each match line item to justify the cost. Please be as detailed as possible.

Attachment D: References

Bidders are **required** to provide three references who can verify their experience, along with a contact phone number and email address. References should be for experience in the past 5 years.

Reference Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Reference Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Reference Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____