



State of New Jersey

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Request for Proposal

All submissions are due by Friday, June 18, 2021 at 5 pm EST to
FinanceDocs@OSHE.nj.gov

The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) seeks to advance New Jersey’s state higher education and economic plan by enhancing support to students and institutions within the state. OSHE is seeking proposals from professionally qualified vendors to provide technical assistance in establishing an effective data collection process of real-time labor market information to inform students and institutions on the workforce demand for existing programs of study. One function will be to improve academic program and workforce alignment through evaluation. OSHE invites interested vendors to submit a proposal to assist OSHE with developing best practices quality assurance standards and establishing effective labor market information systems that help inform students and institutions on the labor market demand for existing programs of study.

Project Title	Launch Pilot Utilizing Labor Market Information
Agency Name	Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE)
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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

New Jersey’s State Plan for Higher Education outlines clear steps the state, colleges, and other stakeholders must take to ensure that every New Jerseyan, no matter their life circumstances, has the opportunity to obtain a high quality credential that prepares them for life after college. This vision aligns with our state’s attainment goal, set in 2017, that 65% of our residents aged 25-64 should have a postsecondary credential by the year 2025. Achieving this goal will require improving access to higher education among low-income students, students of color, and adult learners.

Indeed, more than a million adults in the Garden State aged 25 and above have some college and no degree.¹ Ensuring these New Jerseyans receive a high quality credential is critical not only

for their personal economic mobility, but for the strength and vitality of our state as a whole. By the year 2032, the supply of high school graduates is projected to drop by 15%, which means that our state's employers and colleges alike need to proactively focus on retooling the skills of adults already in the workforce.² Focusing our attention on the needs of adult learners will require a collaborative effort among college leaders, communities, and state agencies.

The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) has established a firm foundation to both implement transformative change for New Jersey students and set an example for the rest of the nation. Governor Phil Murphy has made higher education a top priority. He signaled his commitment with his first signature higher education initiative, the Community College Opportunity Grant Program, New Jersey's tuition-free community college initiative.

As evidenced by this firm foundation, New Jersey is poised to continue its support of the postsecondary aspirations of adult learners in creative and effective ways. We favor two broad approaches: supporting adult learners in covering the non-tuition expenses of postsecondary education and developing a standard outcomes-based quality assurance process for all credentials, both degree and non-degree.

All students potentially suffer from dead-end credentials and lack of market-relevant information on programs of study. But adult learners are more vulnerable to these dysfunctions because of their greater desire for market-relevant programs of study. If a non-degree credential does not stack to any other credential or next step on a career pathway, or if the student enrolls in a program of study that does not yield an income boost, the consequences can be dire. It is imperative for New Jersey to improve the quality of its credentials, particularly for adult students who cannot afford a second chance.

To ensure the quality of our credentials, we are interested in establishing effective real-time labor management information systems to inform both students and institutions on the labor market demand for existing programs of study, supplemented by direct employer input.

II. SCOPE OF WORK (SOW) REQUIREMENTS

A. Project Description

The following Scope of Work (SOW) describes and applies to the Tasks that will be completed by the vendor to assist OSHE with the best practices in developing quality assurance standards and establishing effective labor market information systems that help inform students and institutions on the labor market demand for existing programs of study, through the following tasks:

1. Identify and, in conjunction with OSHE, select pilot participants through surveys and interviews about data capabilities and access
2. Develop intake survey to assess existing data for participating programs and conduct a gap analysis of existing data
3. Lead a series of webinars to introduce pilot participants to the outcomes data collection process, providing reporting tools and providing technical assistance throughout the process

4. At the conclusion of the pilots, analyze data for, write, and design a report on the outcomes information from the pilots.
5. Compile a toolkit of best practices, lessons learned, and implementation steps to enable other programs who were not in the pilot to collect and analyze their own outcomes data.
6. Convene stakeholders, including institutional partners and employers, to share data and information

B. Specific Performance Milestones/Timelines/Standards/Deliverables

1. All deliverables, including the implementation of the pilots as well as the creation of the toolkit and final report must be completed by February 28, 2022.
2. The vendor shall have weekly meetings via Microsoft Teams with the Policy Advisor to discuss any issues that may need to be resolved and to keep her apprised of the progress of the pilots.
3. Pilots should be set up and running in July 2021 to enable pilot participants to collect student outcomes immediately upon graduation. The toolkit and final report should be submitted to the Policy Advisor for review in December 2021.

III. Proposal Content

At minimum, the vendor's proposal shall include the following:

- 1) Vendor official name, address and Federal ID number;
- 2) A specific contact for the proposal including name, phone and email address;
- 3) A detailed proposal with a detailed breakdown of the cost of per hour and staff classifications needed to meet the objectives and deliverables of the scope of work, describing how the vendor intends to accomplish each component of the scope of work;
- 4) A detailed budget to perform the scope of work;
- 5) A schedule identifying the deliverables to be submitted under this Request for Proposal; and
- 6) Identification of any potential conflicts of interest regarding the delivery of services for the scope of work under this Request for Proposal.