



Dear Prospective Bidder:

Kinexus Group is a 501c3 private non-profit organized in 1983 to provide workforce and business development services to the tri-county region of Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties. It is governed by a board consisting of private industry, community-based organizations, education, labor, non-profits, and governmental officials from the three county area. Kinexus Group's family of subsidiaries for which we may be conducting an RFP process include: Michigan Works! Berrien-Cass- Van Buren, Market Van Buren, Bridge Academy of Southwest Michigan, Bridge Academy of Southwest Michigan (BASM) and Youth Solutions.

We are seeking proposals from qualified bidders to provide Apprenticeship Training Development.

Request for Proposal (RFP) applications as well as an Intent to Bid form will also be available immediately online at <https://www.miworks.org/public-information>. Intent to bid forms are important to submit so that your organizational representative receives future communication regarding this bid process including questions and answers during the process.

If you have questions regarding the specifications in the RFP, please e-mail stacy@kinexus.org no later than the deadline listed in the included timeline. Please note that **no** verbal Q & A will be permitted regarding product specifications, and all proposers who wish to e-mail questions are encouraged to file an Intent-to-Bid form with Kinexus Group.

During the bid rating process, Kinexus Group staff may contact you for clarification or additional information.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacy Neidlinger', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Stacy Neidlinger
Procurement Specialist



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) TIMELINE

Date	Action
By 1/24/2025	Notice Sent to Bidders List with RFP
By 1/24/2025	Kinexus Group has RFP application available on miworks.org
By 1/23/2025	Legal Notice sent to Newspaper for publication
2/4/2025	Deadline for receipt of Bidder Questions at 8:00 AM Eastern
2/7/2025	Response to Bidder Questions by 5:00 PM Eastern
2/21/2025	Proposals due at Kinexus Group by 12:00 Noon Eastern
2/25/2025	Approximate Bidder Notification

The dates set forth above are for informational purposes. Kinexus Group reserves the rights to modify the dates.

 kinexus group
Request for Proposal
Apprenticeship Training Development

Statement of Need

Kinexus Group aims to develop and expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship occupational pathways to support local employers and career seekers. The requested curricula will align with industry standards and employer expectations while fostering workforce readiness.

Scope of Services

The developer will create and provide training module curriculum for in-person/virtual or hybrid learning settings in one or more industries / occupations such as, but not limited to:

- **Healthcare Occupations**
- **Manufacturing Occupations**
- **Hospitality Occupations**
- **Agriculture Occupations**
- **Soft Skills Development**

The above occupations are listed as examples, but subject to change based on industry demand. The intent of this RFP is to maximize resources and not duplicate existing curriculum specific to occupations.

Curricula must include:

- Detailed lesson plans with objectives, activities, and assessments.
- Supplemental materials such as multimedia content or handouts.
- Alignment with local, state, and federal occupational standards.
- Must lead to the attainment of an industry recognized certificate, credential and/or college credit.

The designed curriculum must be grounded in best practices, aligned to the apprenticeship “learn and earn” model with pathways and on ramps at various stages, be able to meet the needs of diverse learners through flexible delivery styles and content. Target trainees are expected to include:

- System involved populations
- Adult learners and adults with low education functioning levels
- Youth (16-24)
- Incumbent workers and career seekers

- Non-English speakers
- Underrepresented populations

Bids will be evaluated and awarded based on review of proposals rated against the rating criteria listed in this RFP. You may bid on part or all of the request. Multiple bidders may be awarded from this request after being evaluated against the rating scale in this RFP.

Kinexus Group will not duplicate existing curriculum at local community colleges. Kinexus Group is seeking vendors who can integrate new curriculum with what is already in place. The examples provided in the RFP will pertain to curriculum that is not currently available.

Contract Period

The contract period is two years and dependent on the scope of work. The contract may be extended up to two additional years depending on price, performance, and scope of work. The anticipated start date is March 2025. Contract can be cancelled by either party with 30 day written notice.

Bidder Qualifications

To be considered for award of this RFP, the proposing individual or company must meet the following minimum qualifications and:

- Proven experience in curriculum development across specified industries, specifically for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.
- Deep understanding of industry standards, regulations and licensure requirements.
- Ability to incorporate hands on learning activities and real-world scenarios.
- Familiarity with workforce development initiatives.
- Strong communication and collaboration skills to work with industry partners, community colleges and stakeholders.
- Ability to meet with employers and /or industry consortiums to refine curriculum as needed.
- Proof of insurance and organizational stability.

Proposal Requirements

Kinexus Group reserves the right to request additional information for clarification purposes or to allow corrections to errors or omissions provided errors or omissions do not provide a competitive advantage to any proposer.

The selected proposal may be subject to further negotiation if deemed, at Kinexus Group's sole discretion, to be advantageous to Kinexus Group.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance of all terms and conditions set out in this solicitation.

Proposers **may** be requested to appear before the Chief Executive Officer or any designated Senior Management Staff to further discuss the submitted proposal.

Prior to execution of a written Agreement, Kinexus Group may request applicable certificates of insurance.

Any contract awarded under the RFP is subject to available funding and can be canceled by either party with 30 days written notice.

Closing and Submission Date

Electronic **or** hardcopy proposals must be received by Kinexus Group no later than the time listed in the included timeline. Late proposals will not be considered. Electronic proposals must be submitted in PDF or MS Office file formats.

Electronic proposals preferred:

stacy@kinexus.org

Note: It is your responsibility to ensure that your bid/questions have arrived. Please confirm receipt of electronic proposals and questions by contacting Stacy Neidlinger at 269-215-4899.

***Mail Hardcopy proposals to:**

Stacy Neidlinger
Procurement Specialist
Kinexus Group
330 W. Main Street, Suite 110
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Inquiries

If you have specific questions regarding the goods and services requested in this RFP, submit them via email to Stacy Neidlinger at stacy@kinexus.org no later than the deadline listed in the included timeline. **Verbal Q&A will not be permitted.** To ensure equitable dissemination of information, responses to e-mailed questions will be forwarded to all proposal offerors who identify themselves as interested bidders.

Cost of Proposal Preparation

All costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP will be at the responsibility of the offeror and will not be reimbursed by Kinexus Group.

Right to Reject

Kinexus Group reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, to waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposals received, and to accept any proposal in whole or in part that is deemed most favorable to Kinexus Group.

RFP Evaluation Scoring Criteria:

This competitive request will be open to all bidders and all complete proposals will be evaluated on their respective merit. The scoring for all proposals will be judged against a weighted matrix of these factors, and must score a minimum aggregate score of 75 total points to be considered.

Criteria	Max. Points Possible
Experience – Qualifications – Samples	35
Proposed Approach	20
Timeline for curriculum development and implementation	20
Cost	10
Linkages to accreditation bodies or industry recognized organizations	5
Collaboration	10
Total Possible points	100

Definitions:

- 1. Experience and qualifications:** A summary of relevant projects, client references, and sample curricula. Strong collaboration with community colleges local to our service delivery area (Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties).
- 2. Proposed approach:** Methodology for curriculum design
- 3. Timeline for curriculum development and implementation.** Please include milestones and availability to begin service delivery.
- 4. Cost:** Include a detailed budget based on specific training credentials and length of time associated with each training. Please identify cost per training pathway and the relevant credential – ex. certificate, associates, credit based.
- 5. Linkages to accreditation bodies or industry recognized organizations:**
Describe your linkages to accreditation or industry recognized organizations.

6. **Collaboration:** Ability to demonstrate strong collaboration with community colleges, specifically, Lake Michigan College and Southwestern Michigan College.

THE PROPOSAL COVER PAGE AND FORMAT BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE.

ATTACHMENT I

Request for Proposal – please fill in this form

1. – General Information – COVER PAGE

Applicant Organization Federal ID Number

Street Address

City State Zip Code

Printed Name and Title of Applicant’s Authorized Representative

Telephone Number Fax Number

E-mail address

Certification

I certify that I have been authorized to submit and sign this proposal on behalf of the submitting organization(s). In addition, I certify that the entire proposal is true and accurate and to the best of my knowledge the projected costs are reasonable and necessary for the proposed Service and do not duplicate other funds already available, or which will be available, to pay the projected costs. I also certify that my organization will implement this project in compliance with the stipulations and guidelines set forth by Kinexus Group.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

ATTACHMENT II.

PROPOSAL

Please be sure to address the following:

1. Experience and qualifications: A summary of relevant projects, client references, and sample curricula. Note experience in development across pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.
2. Proposed approach: Methodology for curriculum design and development. Can you incorporate hands on learning activities and real world scenarios in the curriculum?
3. Timeline for curriculum development and implementation. Please include milestones and availability to begin service delivery.
4. Cost proposal: Include a detailed budget based on specific training credentials and length of time associated with each training. Please identify cost per training.
5. Describe your linkages to accreditation or industry recognized organizations.
6. Collaboration: Describe how your organization will collaborate with community colleges that serve the Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren county population?
7. Portray your understanding of workforce development initiatives, apprenticeship industry standards, regulations, and licensing requirements.
8. Describe your communication and collaboration skills when working with stakeholders. Are you willing to meet with employers and/or industry consortiums to refine curriculum as needed?
9. Provide proof of insurance.
10. Illustrate your organizational stability.

ATTACHMENT III

**CERTIFICATIONS
Debarment and Lobbying**

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING
DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION
Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

This certification is required by the regulations implementing 2 CFR Part 180.300; Executive Order 12549 and 12689 Debarment and Suspension; 29 CFR Part 98, Section 98.510, Participants' Responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 26, 1988 Federal Register (pages 19160-19211).

BEFORE COMPLETING CERTIFICATION, READ ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION.

(1) The prospective recipient of federal assistance funds certified, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.

(2) Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Printed Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature of Authorized Representative

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds is providing the certification as set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the Department of Labor (DOL) may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds shall provide immediate written notice to the person to whom this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms "covered transaction", "debarred", "suspended", "ineligible", "lower tier covered transaction", "participant", "proposal" and "voluntarily excluded", as used in this clause have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any low tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized the DOL.
6. The prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds further agrees by submitting his proposal that it will include clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions", without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitation for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it know that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each

participant may, but is not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Procurement or Nonprocurement Programs.

8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishing a system of records on order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntary excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the DOL may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

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CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement.
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants and contract under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all Subrecipient shall certify and disclose accordingly.
4. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL	TITLE
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION:	DATE:

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT
State of Michigan - KINEXUS GROUP**

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO ALL PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY THE Workforce Development Agency, State of Michigan and Kinexus Group. It is the policy of the State of Michigan and Kinexus Group to assure that equal opportunity will be provided under any contract, program, or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available by or through any state department, institution, or agency. All recipients of financial assistance are required to assure the equitable treatment of all persons in the opportunity for employment as well as their access to and receipt of, program services without discrimination based upon religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, marital status, arrest record, handicap, or other non-merit factors.

This policy applies to all programs administered by the State, subgrantees, contractors, and subcontractors. All personnel will actively promote equal employment opportunity within their respective organizational units. This policy extends to the active recruitment of female and minority-owned enterprises in the delivery of services related to employment and training.

This policy will affect all employment and training practices including, but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, transfer, promotions training, compensation, benefits, layoffs, placements, and selection of subgrantees and contractors.

To ensure compliance with the established policy, a goal-oriented program has been structured with specific targets and timetables. Failure on the part of subgrantees and contractors to comply with this policy will jeopardize initial, continued, or renewed funding under federal and state-funded programs. The Workforce Innovation Act(WIOA) further requires for all programs receiving WIOA funds the following assurance:

As a condition to the award of financial assistance under WIOA from the Workforce Development Agency, State of Michigan the grant applicant assures, with respect to operation of the WIOA-funded program or activity and all agreements or arrangements to carry out the WIOA-funded program or activity, that it will comply fully with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, as amended; including the nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR Part 38. The United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

Issued by: Workforce Development, State of Michigan

Signature of Contractor Authorized Representative