



**CLEVELAND COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COALITION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Cleveland County Futures
Workforce Development Initiative**

Serving Lexington, Moore, Noble, Norman, Slaughterville, South Oklahoma City, and unincorporated Cleveland County



**Countywide Talent Retention and Attraction Program
for
Employers, Employees, and Educators**

August 3, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1.1 PROGRAM GOALS	3
1.2 SCOPE OF WORK.....	4
1.3 PROJECT BUDGET AND TIMELINE.....	4
1.4 KEY REQUIREMENTS	4
1.5 SUGGESTED METRICS.....	5
2.0 SUBMITTAL CRITERIA AND TIMELINE.....	6
2.1 SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS AND RUBRIC	7
2.2 SUBMISSION DEADLINE.....	8
3.0. STANDARD PROPOSAL INFORMATION.....	9
4.0. FEDERAL PROVISIONS	11
5.0 AFFIDAVITS.....	13
5.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST	13
5.2 DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION STATEMENT.....	14
5.3 BYRD ANTI-LOBBYING CERTIFICATION	15
5.4 STATEMENT OF NON-COLLUSION	16
5.5 CONTRACTS AND PAYMENTS.....	17
6.0 APPENDICES.....	18
6.1 CLEVELAND COUNTY FUTURES PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	18

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cleveland County Economic Development Coalition (CCEDC) is seeking proposals to support the implementation of the Cleveland County Futures (CCF) program, an innovative workforce development initiative aimed at addressing post-pandemic economic challenges and fostering sustainable talent retention and attraction in Cleveland County. [See Appendix A for the Program Description.](#)

Cleveland County Futures is a two-part approach consisting of:

1. Startup 405, a countywide business incubator located in Norman at 425 W. Main Street, where the CCF program will be housed, including software and physical equipment, if any.
2. The CCF Program is primarily an online platform leveraging AI technology to inform, inspire, and connect residents with education, training, and employment opportunities in Cleveland County. The online program will be promoted and marketed to workforce development groups, educational institutions, residents, and employers through strategic, collaborative partnerships and traditional marketing channels. Collateral Marketing Materials, both digital and print, are to be included in your proposal. CCEDC will be responsible for distribution through its established networks and channels.

This project is partially funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal dollars. As such, additional requirements and restrictions exist on our use of these dollars. The selected applicant will endeavor to execute the program in adherence to the ARPA guidelines, project budget, and schedule.

CCEDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at its sole discretion.

1.1 PROGRAM GOALS

The primary goal of Cleveland County Futures is to establish a countywide, scalable model for workforce development that:

1. Builds unprecedented awareness of Cleveland County employers and available workforce training and assistance programs.
2. Informs, inspires, and connects human talent with job and career opportunities in Cleveland County.
3. Addresses ongoing workforce challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, including remote work arrangements, mental health concerns, talent retention and recruitment, and skills gaps.

1.2 SCOPE OF WORK

The selected contractor will be responsible for executing the workforce development plan, which includes but is not limited to:

1. Developing and implementing the Cleveland County Futures online platform using AI technology.
2. Creating partnerships with local employers, educational institutions, and community organizations that can either use the program directly or promote it to the two primary end users – employers and potential employees.
3. Designing and delivering targeted programs for various stakeholders, including employers, workers, educators, and students.
4. Implementing performance tracking metrics and reporting systems for local, state, and federal jobs.

The scope emphasizes creating a model that addresses current workforce gaps while inspiring sustainable economic growth. Proposals should demonstrate innovative approaches to inform, inspire, and connect human talent with local opportunities, leveraging ARPA funds strategically, to create a robust AI online platform.

1.3 PROJECT BUDGET AND TIMELINE

The total budget for this project is approximately \$1 million. Program execution must be completed before December 31, 2026. Sustainability of the program and metric tracking must be in place by January 1, 2027. Provide a quarterly schedule of activities and actions needed over the next 30 months to set this program up for success.

1.4 KEY REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should address the following key aspects of the Cleveland County Futures program:

1. **AI Integration:** Demonstrate expertise in developing AI-powered platforms for workforce development.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Outline strategies for engaging various stakeholders, including employers, workers, educators, and students. Provide a representative sample of organizations and institutions
3. **ARPA Compliance:** Ensure all proposed activities align with ARPA funding guidelines and address pandemic-related workforce challenges.
4. **Inclusivity:** Provide insights into how this program will support vulnerable populations, including women, veterans, minorities, and Native Americans.
5. **Performance Metrics:** Propose comprehensive metrics for tracking program success, including employer engagement, worker outcomes, and educational impact.
6. **Sustainability:** Present a plan for CCEDC program sustainability beyond 2026, potentially through subscriptions and advertising revenue.

1.5 PERFORMANCE METRICS

Performance metrics are quantitative and qualitative measurements used to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization's activities, processes, and employees. These metrics provide valuable insights into various aspects of business performance, including sales, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and overall quality. By tracking performance metrics, organizations can evaluate their progress towards specific goals, identify areas for improvement, and make data-driven decisions to enhance their operations. Performance metrics are often represented as key performance indicators (KPIs) or objectives and key results (OKRs) to standardize success criteria across different roles and departments. While financial measurements like return on investment and profit have traditionally been key indicators, non-financial metrics such as customer satisfaction, process excellence, and employee engagement are increasingly recognized as crucial for holistic performance evaluation.

The Cleveland County Futures initiative will employ robust data collection and analysis methods to track progress and measure impact. Surveys, transactional tracking, and interviews will be used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data on workforce trends, skills gaps, and program effectiveness. The selected partner will implement a comprehensive measurement system, clearly defining metrics and training observers to ensure reliable data collection. Advanced analytics tools will be utilized to process and visualize the data, enabling evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement of the program. Regular analysis of this data will inform adjustments to the workforce development strategies, ensuring the initiative remains responsive to Cleveland County's evolving economic needs and aligns with ARPA fund objectives.

To reflect the goals of the Cleveland County Futures program, the following metrics should be considered in the RFP, but we are open to substitutes or replacements as well:

1.5.1 For Employers:

- **Number of Registered Employers:** Track the number and location of employers registered and actively using the Cleveland County Futures platform.
- **Job Placements:** Measure and track the number and salary levels of skilled workers hired by registered employers.
- **Employer Satisfaction:** Collect feedback from employers on the effectiveness of the platform in meeting their talent needs on both a short-term and long-term basis.

1.5.2 For the Employed or Unemployed Worker:

- **Platform Engagement:** Track the number of Cleveland County citizens, by zip code and census tract, accessing the Cleveland County Futures platform.
- **Employment Outcomes:** Track the percentage of citizens employed or re-employed through the system and whether they improved their personal income.
- **Training and Upskilling:** Measure the number of citizens CCF connected with Moore-Norman Technology Center or other job-training institutions for upskilling or reskilling programs.
- **User Satisfaction:** Gather feedback from users on the platform's effectiveness in providing career guidance and opportunities in a timely fashion.

1.5.3 For Educators:

- **Educational Engagement:** Track the number of education professionals and institutions engaging with the Cleveland County Futures platform.
- **Student Outcomes:** Measure the number of students who participate in and benefit from the platform's educational resources and career pathways.

1.5.4 Overall Program Impact:

- **Economic Impact:** Assess the overall economic impact of the program on Cleveland County, including job creation, business growth, and increased local spending.
- **Community Reach:** Evaluate the program's reach within the community, including the number of partnerships formed with local organizations and the diversity of participants.
- **Sustainability Metrics:** Track the program's progress towards financial sustainability through subscriptions, advertising revenue, and other funding sources.

2.0 SUBMITTAL CRITERIA AND TIMELINE

The Cleveland County Economic Development Coalition will make the final decision on the selected vendor for the Cleveland County Futures initiative through a rigorous evaluation process. After a thorough review and scoring of proposals, the top candidates may be invited for in-person presentations or interviews to further assess their capabilities. The final selection will be based on the overall quality of the proposal, alignment with program objectives, and potential for long-term impact on Cleveland County's workforce development goals. Once a decision is reached, all applicants will be notified of the outcome via email. The selected vendor will be contacted to begin contract negotiations and project planning. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their proposals to understand areas for improvement. The Coalition aims to complete the selection process and notify applicants within 2 weeks of the proposal submission deadline, subject to the volume and complexity of submissions received.

Failure to sign an agreeable contract with CCEDC within 15 business days of selection will be grounds for rescinding the selection, and CCEDC reserves the right to make an alternate selection.

The anticipated schedule for the selection process and subsequent contract negotiation is as follows:

1.	Request For Proposals Open	August 4, 2024
2.	Request For Proposals Due Date	August 23, 2024, 4:30 PM
3.	Interviews (if required)	August 27-29, 2024
4.	Contract Negotiation and Final Selection	August 30, 2024

2.1 SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS AND RUBRIC

The criteria to be used as a basis for evaluating Proposals shall include:

- 2.1.1. Compliance with RFP:** Mandatory. [See Section 4.0 for Federal Provisions.](#)
- 2.1.2. Qualifications/References:** Qualifications of the firm and key staff. Stability of key staff and project team. Describe what steps your firm has taken during recent years to be innovative and progressive in the development of AI Technology and workforce initiatives, including possible government grants received.
- 2.1.3. Project Understanding and Approach:** Respondents should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the project scope and develop an approach, methodology and quarterly task list timeline consistent with the project scope.
- 2.1.4. Relevant Experience and Technical -** Respondents should illustrate Innovative approaches to workforce development using AI technology. A description of special resources or capabilities your firm could employ on the project, which would enhance the value your firm would bring to the project.
- 2.1.5. Cleveland County Workforce -** Respondents should illustrate an Understanding of Cleveland County's unique industry clusters and workforce challenges and opportunities.
- 2.1.6. Cleveland County Partners -** Respondents should illustrate how they will engage and serve diverse stakeholders across the county.
- 2.1.7. Metrics and Evaluation Criteria:** Describe the metrics you would use to track the goals of the program.
- 2.1.8. Program Sustainability –** Please provide one or more examples of ways CCEDC can ensure the longevity of this program once ARPA funds expire.
- 2.1.9. WEIGHTED RUBRIC USED BY THE SELECTION COMMITTEE**

Points will be assigned to each proposal based on the following weighted criteria:		
#	CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
		100 points
1	Compliance with RFP/ARPA Guidelines	(Mandatory)
2	Qualifications of the Team/References	20 points
3	Project Understanding and Approach	20 points
4	Innovative approaches to workforce development using AI technology. Unique Resources you provide	20 points
5	Understanding of Cleveland County's unique industry clusters and workforce challenges and opportunities	10 points

6	Ability to engage and serve diverse stakeholders across the county. Include a listing of potential partner organizations	10 points
7	Proposed metrics and program evaluation methods	15 points
8	Proposed budget and sustainability of the program after ARPA funds expire, i.e. 2027 and beyond	5 points

These weighted criteria are provided to assist Proposers in the allocation of their time and efforts during the proposal preparation process. The criteria also guide the Selection Committee during the short-listing and final ranking of proposers by establishing a general framework for those deliberations. Once the Proposals are evaluated, a "short list" may be selected to make presentations to the Selection Committee, prior to a recommendation for award.

The Selection Committee will evaluate all responsive proposals based on the information, forms, and attachments contained in the proposals as submitted.

In the event there is a tie in the rubric for an individual project, the ranking for the tied vendors will be broken based on the volume of work previously awarded to each firm by CCEDC. The object is to affect an equitable distribution of contracts among qualified firms, provided such distribution does not violate the principle of selection of the most highly qualified firms.

This scoring rubric aligns with best practices recommended by procurement associations like ISM and NASPO, ensuring a fair and thorough evaluation process. It is designed to identify proposals that offer the most promising solutions for Cleveland County's workforce development challenges while adhering to ARPA fund guidelines.

2.2 SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Proposals must be submitted electronically by 4:30 PM, August 23, 2024, to Info@SelectNorman.com. Responses not received by this time may not be considered. Shortlisted applicants may be invited to present their proposals to the CCEDC Executive Committee on August 27th or 28th. A decision is expected no later than August 30, 2024.

Norman Economic Development Coalition
Attn. Lawrence McKinney
424 West Main Street
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

All proposals are to be sealed and clearly marked "Cleveland County Futures Workforce Initiative."

CONTACT INFORMATION

For inquiries related to this RFP, please email Info@SelectNorman.com. We look forward to receiving innovative proposals that will help establish Cleveland County as a leader in workforce development and economic resilience.

3.0. STANDARD PROPOSAL INFORMATION

3.1. Authorized Signature

An individual authorized to bind the Offeror to the provisions of the RFP must sign all proposals.

3.2. CCEDC Not Responsible for Preparation Costs

CCEDC will not pay any cost associated with the preparation, submittal, presentation, or evaluation of any proposal.

3.3. Conflict of Interest

The Proposer must disclose any instances where the firm or any individual anticipated to be working on the project has a possible conflict of interest and, if so, the nature of that conflict (e.g., employing anyone affiliated with CCEDC). CCEDC reserves the right to cancel the award if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance of a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the proposal.

3.4. Discrimination

The Proposer must not engage in discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, or marital status, including marriage to someone of the same sex, religion, creed, age, or disability. It shall be grounds for termination of this contract should the Proposer have been found to have engaged in a discriminatory practice in the course of performing under a contract with the state or any governmental entity.

3.5. Offeror's Certification

By signature on the proposal, the Proposer certifies that it complies with:

- a. The laws of the state of Oklahoma.
- b. All applicable local, state, and federal laws, codes, and regulations.
- c. All terms, conditions, and requirements set forth in this RFP.
- d. All representations, warranties, and other information set forth in the proposal is truthful and accurate after a diligent investigation by the Offeror, as CCEDC may rely on information contained within the proposal.

- e. A condition that the proposal submitted was independently arrived at without collusion.
- f. A condition that the offer will remain open and valid for the period indicated in this solicitation and any condition that the firm and/or any individuals working on the contract do not have a possible conflict of interest.

3.6. Amendments to Proposals and Withdrawals of Proposals

The Offeror may amend or withdraw proposals prior to the deadline set for receipt of proposals. No amendments will be accepted after the deadline unless they are in response to CCEDC's request.

3.7. Rights of Rejection

CCEDC reserves the right to reject any proposals, in whole or in part. Proposals received from debarred or suspended firms will be rejected. CCEDC may reject any proposal that is not responsive to all of the material and substantial terms, conditions, and performance requirements of the RFP. CCEDC reserves the right to reject any proposal determined to be nonresponsive and to reject the proposal of any Offeror determined to be non-responsive. CCEDC also reserves the right to refrain from making an award if it determines it to be in its best interest.

CCEDC may waive minor informalities that:

- Do not affect responsiveness
- Are merely a matter of form or format
- Do not change the relative standing or otherwise prejudice other offers
- Do not change the meaning or scope of the RFP
- Are insignificant, negligible, or immaterial in nature
- Do not reflect a material change in the work
- Do not constitute a substantial reservation against a requirement or provision

3.8. Execution Clause

Except as otherwise provided by law, within the period of time, not to exceed sixty (60) days, specified in the bid notice by CCEDC, a contract embodying the terms set forth in the bidding documents shall be executed by CCEDC and the successful bidder.

4.0. FEDERAL PROVISIONS

4.1. Veteran, Woman-owned, Native Americans, and Minority Businesses

CCEDC will take affirmative steps to solicit and include veteran, woman-owned, Native American, and minority businesses in an effort to encourage participation and fair competition in providing supplies/services described in this solicitation. Alternatively, if this specialized and unique proposal does not lend itself to such targeted groups, CCEDC will ensure these groups are indeed beneficiaries of the work to be performed.

4.2 Equal Employment Opportunity.

During the performance of this contract, the Proposer agrees as follows:

- a. The Proposer will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. The proposer will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: Employment, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The Proposer agrees to post inconspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
- b. The Proposer will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Proposer on this project, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.
- c. In the event of the Proposer's noncompliance with the nondiscrimination clauses of this contract or with any of the said rules, regulations, or orders, this contract may be canceled, terminated, or suspended in whole or in part and the Proposer may be declared ineligible for further Government contracts or federally assisted contracts in accordance with procedures authorized in Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, and such other sanctions may be imposed and remedies invoked as provided in Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, or by rule, regulation, or order of the Secretary of Labor, or as otherwise provided by law.

4.3. Access to Records.

The following access to records requirements apply to this contract:

In compliance with ARPA, CCEDC and the Proposer acknowledge and agree that no language in this contract is intended to prohibit audits or internal reviews by the Federal government or the Comptroller General of the United States.

4.4. Compliance with Federal Law, Regulations, and Executive Orders.

This is an acknowledgment that federal financial assistance will be used to fund all or a portion of the contract. The Proposer will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, federal policies, procedures, and directives.

4.5 No Obligation by Federal Government.

The Federal Government is not a party to this contract and is not subject to any obligations or liabilities to the non-Federal entity, Proposer, or any other party pertaining to any matter resulting from the contract.

5.0 AFFIDAVITS

Please complete the following affidavits as a part of your response to this RFP:

5.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Cleveland County, Oklahoma

AFFIDAVIT. I, the undersigned of lawful age, being first duly sworn on oath say that he (she) is the agent authorized by the bidder to submit the attached bid. Affiant further states that the bidder has not been a party to any collusion among bidders in restraint of freedom of competition by agreement to bid at a fixed price or to refrain from bidding; or with any County Official or CCEDC employee as to quantity, quality, or price in the prospective contract or any other terms of said prospective contract; or in any discussions between bidders and any County Official concerning the exchange of money or thing of value for special consideration in the letting of a contract; that the Proposer has not paid, given or donated or agreed to pay, give or donate to any officer or employee of Cleveland County (or other entity) any money or other thing of value, either directly or indirectly in the procuring of the award of a contract pursuant to this bid. No person, firm, or corporation who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a felony involving fraud, bribery, and corruption or sales to the State or to any of its political subdivisions may make sale of real or personal property to Cleveland County. Affiant further states that full payment shall be made of all indebtedness incurred by such Proposer or his subcontractor who performs work in performance of any contract using labor, and or materials or repairs to and parts for equipment used and consumed in performance of a contract with Cleveland County. False execution of this affidavit shall constitute perjury and is punishable as provided by law.

Bidder's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Bidder's Name and Title: _____

FIRM: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2024

Notary Public (Clerk or Judge)

My commission expires _____

5.2 DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION STATEMENT

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

(Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85) Proposer certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

a) ☐ Are ☐ Are Not

presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;

b) ☐ Have ☐ Have Not

within a three-year period preceding award of this consulting agreement been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

c) ☐ Are ☐ Are Not

presently indicted for or otherwise criminally charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses numerated in Paragraph (b) above; and

d) ☐ Have ☐ Have Not

within a three-year period, preceding award of this consulting agreement had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or Local) terminated for cause or default.

Proposer Signature: _____

Typed or Printed Name: _____

If available, please provide: DUNS# or Sams.gov #: _____

Date: _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2024

Notary Public (Clerk or Judge)

My commission expires _____

5.3 BYRD ANTI-LOBBYING CERTIFICATION

APPENDIX A, 44 C.F.R. PART 18 -CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

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 an 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 contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making 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 contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients 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 \$100,000 for each such failure.
5. The Proposer certifies or affirms the truthfulness and accuracy of each statement of its certification and disclosure, if any. In addition, the Proposer understands and agrees that the provisions of 31 U.S.C. Chap. 38, Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements, apply to this certification and disclosure, if any.

Signature of Proposal Authorized Official _____

Name and Title of Proposal Authorized Official _____

Date _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2024

Notary Public (Clerk or Judge)

My commission expires _____

5.4 STATEMENT OF NON-COLLUSION

AFFIDAVIT. I, the undersigned, of lawful age, being first duly sworn on oath say that (s) he is the agent authorized by the bidder to submit the above bid. Affiant further states that the bidder has not been a part to any collusion among bidders in restraint of freedom of competition by agreement to bid at a fixed price or to refrain from bidding; or with any state official or employee as to quantity; quality or price in the prospective Contract or any other terms of said prospective Contract; or in any discussions between bidders and any state official concerning exchange of money or other thing of value for special consideration in the letting of a Contract; that the bidder/Contractor has not paid, given or donated or agreed to pay, give or donate to any officer or employee of the State of Oklahoma (or other entity) any money or other thing of value, either directly or indirectly in the procuring of the award of a CONTRACT pursuant to this bid.

Signature of PROPOSAL Authorized Official _____

Please print name of signee _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2024

Notary Public (Clerk or Judge)

My commission expires _____

5.5 CONTRACTS AND PAYMENTS

Cleveland County, Oklahoma

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

COUNTY OF CLEVELAND

The undersigned (architect, contractor, supplier or engineer), of lawful age, being the first duly sworn, on oath says that this contract is true and correct. Affiant further states that the (work, services or materials) will be (completed or supplied) in accordance with the plans, specifications, orders or requests furnished the affiant. Affiant further states that (s)he has made no payment directly or indirectly to any elected official, officer or employee of the State of Oklahoma, any County or local subdivision of the state, or CCEDC, of money or other thing of value to obtain or procure the contract or purchase order.

Proposal signature

Business or Individual name: _____

Address: _____

Contact: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2024

Notary Public (Clerk or Judge)

My commission expires _____

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 CLEVELAND COUNTY FUTURES PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A Workforce Initiative
of the
Cleveland County Coalition

“AI has the potential to revolutionize the way our society operates. The private sector is already finding ways to use it to increase efficiency. Potential exists for the government to use AI to root out inefficiencies and duplicate regulations, and it is an essential piece of developing a workforce that can compete on a global level.”

Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt

Goal

NEDC, dba the Cleveland County Coalition, a current State, City, and County ARPA subrecipient, seeks to establish a regional/national model for workforce development. This model will build unprecedented awareness of Cleveland County employers and the available workforce training and assistance programs. In addition to world-class business incubation, the initiative informs, inspires, and connects human talent with opportunities in Cleveland County using leading-age AI technology and strategies developed with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and supported by the State of Oklahoma.

Problem Statement

Workforce development and employment adaptability have been ongoing issues for over a decade, ever since Baby Boomers began to exit the workforce in unprecedented numbers and were exacerbated by COVID-19. The economic and societal challenges that have persisted after the COVID-19 pandemic include ongoing concerns related to remote work arrangements, mental health and burnout, talent retention and recruitment, skills gaps, and the need for increased flexibility in response to evolving workplace dynamics. These challenges underscore the importance of adaptability and resilience in the post-pandemic economic recovery. Optimal economic recovery must inspire job growth and achieve greater efficiency in matching talent with local economic opportunities.

Status of Cleveland County Workforce 2024 and Beyond

Cleveland County is at a critical juncture. While it is experiencing a historically low unemployment rate, it is also grappling with workforce challenges that are not unique to it but are impacting communities across the United States. The challenges, particularly in health, STEM, manufacturing, and service industry roles, are significant and require immediate attention. The economic growth that is on the horizon, driven by public capital investments and investments by

The University of Oklahoma (OU) as OU/Norman prepares to enter the Southeastern Conference (SEC), further underscores the need for a robust workforce engagement and job growth model.

The Proposed Solution

The Coalition will establish a regional/national model for workforce engagement and job growth to benefit the people, businesses, and economy of Cleveland County. The activities have two component parts:

1. A countywide business incubator located in Norman at 425 W. Main St.
2. The Cleveland County Futures online platform rooted in innovative technology will be deployed to inform, inspire, and connect people with education, training, employment opportunities, and assistance programs available to Cleveland County residents.

Stakeholders Perspective

- For employers: A connection to a pipeline of skilled, evaluated workers, improving employer success in growing and expanding.
- For the underemployed or unemployed Worker: A resource to reevaluate current skills and illuminate new career paths and opportunities.
- For Educators: A partnership to help guidance counselors and middle schoolers anticipate the future employment landscape, providing inspiration and hope for the future.
- For Cleveland County: Enables County leaders to put forward locally focused solutions for citizens and elevate the entrepreneurial capacity of the County's only Oklahoma-certified incubator.

Programming: Cleveland County Futures

- Customized AI for Cleveland County
 - o Customized UI highlighting Cleveland County
 - o Microservices-oriented customization for Cleveland County
 - o Interest Level Analytics
- Partnership Development and Initial Cleveland County Engagement Content:
 - o Career Types/Industries
 - o Employers in Each Industry
 - o Roles in Each Industry
 - o Educational Pathways/Resources
- Management, Administration, ARPA Reports, and Performance Metrics Tracking

- AI Platform Upgrades and Maintenance:

Focus on ARPA Guidelines

Recognizing the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on vulnerable communities, Cleveland County Futures is committed to addressing the unique challenges these populations face. Through strategic partnerships with local employers, educational institutions, and community organizations, the program seeks to create an inclusive and supportive environment that nurtures growth, cultivates talent, and fosters long-term career success. CCF connects residents with organizations in our community that support individuals facing employment barriers. By prioritizing accessibility, equity, and opportunity, CCF will create lasting change and drive economic recovery for those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic: women, veterans, minorities, and Native Americans.

How Cleveland County Futures Relates to the State of Oklahoma’s Workforce Transformation Task Force as well as the Governor’s Task Force on Emerging Technologies

The findings and recommendations of the Oklahoma Workforce Transformation Task Force attest to the fact that Cleveland County is not unique in the staggering workforce challenges we are facing. These challenges persist both statewide and nationwide. Accordingly, the Task Force seeks “significant realignment of coordination and collaboration of the stakeholders involved” in the statewide workforce ecosystem. The Task Force’s vision advances a paradigm change in how our state’s workforce development system is structured and operates. These efficiencies and improved operations will benefit the entire state.

In addition to the improvements Cleveland County will experience because of these statewide efforts, Cleveland County Futures is a program that recognizes Cleveland County’s self-interest to achieve an advantage in relation to other counties, regions, and states. This program represents an innovative, hyper-local strategy to inspire economic recovery, achieve economic development, and capture its societal and financial benefits for Cleveland County. This exhaustive local focus on serving residents and employers in Cleveland County sets this program apart from statewide efforts.

Performance Metrics

For Employers

- Number of registered employers using the Cleveland County Futures platform.
- Number and salary of skilled workers hired by registered employers.

For the Employed or Unemployed Worker

- Number of Cleveland County citizens accessing CCF.

- Number of citizens employed or re-employed through the system.
- Number of citizens connected with Moore-Norman Technology Center for upskilling or re-skilling.

For Educators

- Number of education professionals engaging with Cleveland County Futures.

Sustainability

After 2026, the program will be able to sustain operations through subscriptions and advertising revenue.

Examples of Similar ARPA Fund Allocations in the U.S.

Several counties and municipalities across the United States have successfully allocated ARPA funds to similar workforce development initiatives:

1. Cook County, Illinois: Cook County utilized ARPA funds to create a comprehensive workforce training and development program aimed at reskilling workers displaced by the pandemic and connecting them with emerging job opportunities in high-growth sectors.
2. Hennepin County, Minnesota: Hennepin County invested ARPA funds in a multi-faceted workforce initiative that included job training, support services, and partnerships with local employers to address skills gaps and improve employment outcomes for residents.
3. Maricopa County, Arizona: Maricopa County's ARPA-funded workforce program focused on supporting small businesses, providing training and certification programs, and enhancing job placement services to accelerate economic recovery and job growth.

These examples highlight the effectiveness of targeted workforce development programs in addressing the economic challenges posed by the pandemic and demonstrate the potential for success in Cleveland County through this Cleveland County Workforce Initiative.