

Announcement

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Date: August 2, 2011
To: All Interested Parties
From: Center For Employment Training (CET)
Subject: **RFQ for Evaluation of the Green Jobs Innovation Fund Grant**

CET is seeking a qualified evaluation contractor with the capacity and experience to develop a comprehensive evaluation of the Green Jobs Innovation Fund (GJIF) project. Applications for funding must be received no later than 5:00 pm on August 16, 2011. Any responses to this RFQ received after that time and date will not be considered for funding.

Request for the RFQ application package and questions should be directed to: Mary Jane Smith, Contracts, Planning and MIS Director, Center For Employment Training, 701 Vine Street, San Jose, CA 95110, (408) 534-5258, fax (408) 534-5273, mjsmith@cet2000.org .

Submit Letters of Qualification and required documentation by US Mail to:

Mary Jane Smith
Center For Employment Training
701 Vine Street
San Jose, CA 95110
Or via email to: mjsmith@cet2000.org .

Background

CET is a private, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). CET is dedicated to fighting poverty and dependence on public aid by making hands-on job training available to youth and adults of all educational levels and backgrounds, but especially to those most in need and hardest to serve. The mission of CET, an economic and community development corporation, is to promote human development and education by providing people with marketable skills training and supportive services that contribute to self-sufficiency. For each CET student, the goal is to obtain a permanent, unsubsidized, well-paying entry-level position with benefits, and continued growth potential. In order to assist our students in attaining this goal, there are four very distinct aspects to how CET operates.

- *Training:* Training is accessible, flexible, timely, affordable, hands-on, highly individualized and self-paced. Vocational skills training is integrated with basic skills, Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), GED, human development, and pre-

employment skills training. CET does not conduct testing as a pre-requisite to entry. With its open entry/open exit program design, CET offers individuals the opportunity to begin training at any time during the year and exit at his or her own pace. CET skill training programs are determined by demands in local economies of each community we serve. Currently, CET has a total of 17 centers, 14 in California, and 1 each in El Paso, TX, Chicago, ILL., Durham, N.C., and Alexandria, VA.

- *Support:* Upon application, students are assessed to determine any barriers to training and employment. These barriers may include transportation, housing, medical, food or other needs. CET utilizes existing community resources as well as limited internal resources to meet the supportive services needs of students prior to entering training. As additional barriers arise, CET Student Liaisons and instructors continue to address student supportive needs to ensure successful completion of training. This essential aspect of our CET model sets us apart from many vocational training institutes as we make our resources available to assist our students in eliminating barriers to success and fully preparing them to transition into the workplace.
- *Industry Partnerships:* Our curriculum is carefully developed in partnership with local industry employers in the form of local Industrial Advisory Boards and Technical Advisory Committees. With the input from these employer advisors, CET training programs are kept abreast of technological advancements and of the current requirements of industry for entry-level positions in each industry.
- *Job Placement:* CET Job Developers and Instructors work closely with employer recruiters and human resources representatives to match job-ready students to employer needs.

CET currently offers the following job training programs:

- Accounting Clerk
- Automotive
- Business Office Technology
- Computer Applications Technology
- Culinary Arts
- Custodial Services
- Early Childhood Teacher Assistant
- Electrician
- Green Building Construction Skills
- HVAC and Green Awareness
- Machine Tool Operator
- Medical Administrative Assistant
- Medical Assistant
- Retail Specialist
- Shipping and Receiving Warehouse Operator
- Truck Driver
- Welding Fabrication

Green Jobs Innovation Fund Grant

The Department of Labor (DOL) has funded six national and statewide organizations with affiliate programs and existing career training programs to provide technical and basic skills training that leads to green job opportunities. The GJIF grants support DOL's performance goal to increase the attainment of industry-recognized credentials by American workers. The GJIF was authorized as a Pilot and Demonstration Project under Section 171 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 to support competitive grant opportunities that help workers receive job training in green industry sectors and occupations and access green career pathways. The GJIF is designed to equip workers with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to succeed in green jobs with the understanding that green-related job skills are transferable across industry sectors.

CET received a three-year GJIF grant effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014. Under this grant, CET will serve low-income unemployed workers and dislocated workers. Among these categories, CET may serve a wide range of individuals, such as individuals receiving public assistance, high school dropouts, new entrants to the workforce, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and individuals with Limited English Proficiency. CET will offer GJIF services in six centers located in San Jose, Sacramento, Watsonville, San Bernardino, San Diego and Alexandria, VA. The level of services will vary from center to center as each center offers a unique schedule of programs. However, all centers will offer at least one of the following green vocational skill training programs:

- Green Building Construction Skills
- HVAC and Green Awareness
- Electrician

It is CET's plan to enhance these programs with the addition of green certifications as follows:

- North American Board of Energy Practitioners (NABCEP)
- BPI Building Analyst Professional Certification
- BPI Envelope Professional Certification
- NCCR Proficiency Standards
- EPA/HUD Lead Abatement Certification
- Green Awareness Certificate
- EPA 410, 608, 609 Certifications
- WASC Certificate of Completion (skills competencies completion)

CET will provide core and intensive services (orientation, assessment, eligibility determination, and job placement services) to 800 individuals. 450 of the 800 individuals will also receive vocational skill training services. Performance measures include:

- 390 students will complete 100% of green course competencies
- 305 graduates of green courses will be placed in unsubsidized employment
- 275 graduates will retain employment for the first and second quarters after exit
- 420 individuals will receive supportive services
- 390 students will receive 2 or more certificates
- CET will recruit and retain 18 Green Technology Advisory Committee (GTAC) members and employer invested partners. (Each center will establish a GTAC whose role will be

to make recommendations regarding course curriculum and competencies and provide employment opportunities for students.)

- Coordinate closely with local WIA One Stops for the recruitment of students in green technology programs and to benefit from the services One Stops can provide, especially supportive services
- Prepare a sustainability plan for submission to DOL

Project Scope

This RFQ seeks to identify a contractor to plan, design, and implement an evaluation of GJIF and to provide related training and technical assistance to CET sites.

The primary objectives of GJIF evaluation services for CET are to:

- Provide formative and summative feedback regarding GJIF funded efforts
- Support CET in implementing site readiness assessments
- Inform program management practices and services through capacity building and technical assistance about evaluation planning, data collection and results
- Improve CET's ability to use data to improve the design and delivery of services
- Support CET in meeting federal reporting requirements
- Assist sites with training and technical assistance to execute evaluation requirements
- Prepare monthly/quarterly progress reports and a final report and presentation

Evaluation Period and Grant Funding: *Up to* a total of \$200,000 for a period of three years.

Minimum Qualifications

In order to be eligible to apply, all applicants must have a minimum of eight years of demonstrated knowledge and experience in providing evaluation services and/or professional consultant services to nonprofit agencies.

Requirements of the Statement of Qualifications

Cover Letter

The cover letter should be addressed to Mary Jane Smith, Contracts, Planning, and MIS Director, Center For Employment, and specify the following:

- Identification of the applicant
- Statement that applicant meets the minimum qualifications

Narrative: Answer in order and label using question numbers. The Narrative may not exceed 10 pages, excluding attachments.

Provide a description of your organization and your experience providing evaluation services to nonprofits and other social sector organizations that includes:

- a. Professional background of organization and staff

- b. Overall evaluation philosophy and experience
- 2. Describe relevant experience including:
 - a. Providing consulting services to workforce development programs
 - b. Evaluating federally funded nonprofit programs
 - c. Providing culturally competent services relevant to CET students
 - d. Working with staff that have varying levels of evaluation capacity
 - e. Conducting evaluations that support program improvement
 - f. Conducting multi-site evaluations
- 3. Describe your approach to conducting the GJIF evaluation.
 - a. Evaluation approach and key questions
 - b. Methodology
 - c. Workplan and key deliverables
 - d. Estimated Budget
- 4. Describe your proposed staff and each of their roles on the evaluation.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

The following criteria may be used in evaluating and selective the prospective service provider:

- 1. Agency capacity and Experience
- 2. Evaluation approach
- 3. Budget information and justification
- 4. Staff qualifications
- 5. Clarity of submittal and responsiveness to the RFQ
- 6. Any other criteria deemed relevant to selection at CET’s sole discretion

Cover Letter – Minimum Qualifications	10 points
Agency Capacity and Experience	25 points
Evaluation Approach	25 points
Rates and Costs	20 points
Qualifications of Proposed Team	20 points
Total Available Points	100

Tentative RFQ Timeline

Key Actions	Dates
RFQ Release	August 2, 2011
RFQ Responses Due	5:00 pm, August 16, 2011
Interviews with potential candidates, if needed	August 17-18 , 2011
Notification of Selection	August 19, 2011
Proposed Start Date of the Contract	August 22, 2011