

**Abstract Workforce Innovation Fund (SGA/DFA PY-11-05)**

**Applicant Name:** Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin

**Applicant Category:** Consortium of WIBs

**Lead Applicant City/State:** Madison, Wisconsin

**Areas Served:** State of Wisconsin (all eleven Workforce Development Areas)

**Project Name:** Skills Wisconsin: An Initiative to Improve Industry-Driven Worker Training

**Funding Level Requested:** \$4,800,015 (Technical Costs) / \$1,199,985 (Evaluation Costs)

**Project Type:** B, Promising Ideas

**Description of Proposed Project:** The Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW) (lead applicant) and our state's ten other WIBs, coordinated as a Consortium, propose a new initiative, *"Skills Wisconsin: An Initiative to Improve Industry-Driven Worker Training Services."* The eleven Consortium partners, our economic development partners and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) all face a common set of challenges with relation to **1) management and recentness of labor market and business customer data, 2) coordination of business services among WIBs and workforce areas, 3) coordination between/across workforce development (WD) programs and economic development (ED) entities within and across regions, and 4) the translation and application of business needs to inform the content of skill training**, all critical to delivering high-quality services to businesses and job seekers. These challenges fit into three specific project goals: **1) An immediate need to increase placement outcomes and move large numbers of job-seekers on the caseloads of our workforce development system to gainful, employment leading to self-sufficiency. 2) A need to better match training offerings with business hiring needs. 3) A need to improve tracking of service delivery metrics and management of business customer information in real-time, to more effectively serve individual firms and industry cluster partnerships.**

In order to respond to these challenges, WDBSCW and its ten Consortium WDBs, along *Skills Wisconsin* - Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin and Consortium Workforce Innovations Fund (SGA/DFA PY-11-05) Proposal, March 22, 2012, Page 1 of 3

with WDB association the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA), will partner with the newly created Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and non-profit WI Economic Development Association (WEDA) to reform the way that job seekers are attracted and matched to employment with emerging, expanding, and anchor businesses across the state while expanding technical training opportunities.

The WDBs will procure and utilize a customized Client Relationship Management (CRM) tool, the Salesforce platform of web-based, networked tools (WorkSource, BusinessSource and Chatter) to facilitate gathering of real-time, instantaneous labor market information on Wisconsin firms, coordinate management of relationships with those firms, track a broad array of activities, services and contacts (job profiles, hiring and training needs, broaden economic development and industry information) in order to gain service efficiencies and develop service strategies customized to the needs of firms and industry clusters.

The Consortium will utilize the Salesforce platform as a key tool within a reinvigorated, demand-driven workforce approach built upon a close and coordinated partnership among workforce areas and regional economic development players. We will administer extensive training for WDB Business Service Unit (BSU) staff in new demand-driven approaches to workforce services and deeper insights into targeted industries. This work will strengthen partnerships between workforce area staff from all eleven Wisconsin workforce areas as well as the WEDC working in conjunction with 400 plus economic development entities across the state. Partnerships with business will be strengthened. The effort will enhance and expand Industry Partnerships (formal clusters of firms and WDBs working together to develop scalable training curricula). The energized system and Industry Partnerships will work collaboratively with the WTCS to develop expanded training models, new curricula/common curricula across the state Technical College system, with a

focus on developing more career pathways in manufacturing and, later, other industries) statewide.

Process outcomes will include increasing use of the new online Salesforce tools, expanded coordinated efforts on behalf of business customers, development of new Industry Partnerships and creation/expansion of business-responsive training curricula at WTCS. Key outcomes of the overall project will include improved efficiency and frequency of contact between WDBs and ED partners and across WDBs, efficiencies of curriculum development/training systems, reduced cost per job-seeker participant, increased business customer satisfaction with the workforce system and its ability to deliver skilled workers on time, improved quality and responsiveness of curriculum to industry needs, increased numbers entering employment more quickly and improved job-retention

**Description of Proposed Evaluation Strategy:**

The evaluation will consist of three components: (1) an impact evaluation, (2) a process evaluation, and (3) an outcomes analysis. The impact evaluation will use a rigorous quasi-experimental approach to estimate the effects of Salesforce implementation on jobseeker outcomes using administrative data and unemployment insurance (UI) system data. The process evaluation will use qualitative data gathered from three rounds of site visits to assess how the implementation of Salesforce affected workforce development stakeholders. The process evaluation will involve using social network analysis techniques to prepare network maps that will systematically describe the workforce development network both before and after the implementation of Salesforce. Lastly, outcomes analysis will document progress of Salesforce implementation along key dimensions over the course of the grant period. Data to support the outcomes analysis will come from administrative data sets as well as from two telephone surveys—one of jobseekers and one of employers—each of which will gather two waves of data on the attitudes and experiences of each group.

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