



**Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**

**Job Opportunity Data  
Request for Information (RFI)  
R-89-10-0819  
October 2007**

## Request for Information R-89-10-0819

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) releases this Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of identifying any qualified vendors whose main business strategy is electronic job opportunities, and who would be willing to provide ODJFS with access to its job opportunity data and search tools through a no-cost agreement.

ODJFS will consider responses to this RFI only from vendors currently providing these services, so that only minimal start-up time would be needed before operations could begin. Further ODJFS will only consider responses which unconditionally offer to provide these services with no charges, costs, or fees to ODJFS throughout the agreement/contract period. **Vendors not immediately capable of fulfilling this need or not expressly stating that they would require no payment of any sort from ODJFS will be deemed non-responsive and rejected from any consideration.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

In recent history, workforce development has become enamored with technology as the solution for the brokering of human capital. The characteristics of recent computer technology - efficiency, volume, universality, self-access – became the fundamental characteristics of labor exchange. If we build upon these characteristics, so the thinking went, we could build the system that not only would attract the entire labor market (the totality of business and labor), but the market would self-actualize to the optimal relationships. It was no more than building a big enough portal that would allow labor exchange to find its own equilibrium.

Unfortunately, job banks assume that each player comes to this portal relationship with full knowledge and resources to maximize the results. The fact that they do not is the substantive issue that has been neglected.

It is not so much that you bring a job order or a resume to the table, but rather an understanding of the talent and skills to build your business or career and the resources available to assist you in your efforts. It is not the matrix of job orders and job seekers that is important, but rather the matrix of critical talents or skills and career paths or credentialing that grow our economy. The emphasis and substance needs to be on articulating the talent needs and the resources available for their development. Rather than being a portal, workforce development needs to be a talent bridge.

This fundamental shift in focus recasts the role of technology. Here technology serves as a crucible for a skill and talent knowledge base and aids in the alignment of community and regional services in the promotion of talent development. In short, economic development, educational service and workforce development provide substantive services in the growth of business and worker talent.

To achieve this Talent Bridge in Ohio, the Governor Strickland's Administration will embark on Phase 1 of their enhancements to the technology for employers, job seekers and community stakeholders whose programs assist in bringing the skill and talent to the needs of Ohio's economy. This will help the immediate need and focus of dealing with the dislocations occurring throughout Ohio.

Phase 1 has two separate but distinct features to enhance the "self-service" functionality for employers, job seekers while setting the foundation to build upon. These enhancements are:

- Re-branding and user functionality enhancements of the existing "self-service system." This will allow for a greater ease of use, ability for branding of multiple target groups and truly one place for employers to go to find the talent they need and job seekers to go for job opportunities.

- A technology that centrally captures electronic job openings for a complete and current assessment of the job opportunities and labor market. This technology feature will allow for a wider understanding of salaries and trending of the labor market as it relates to electronic job openings. This can be done in many different ways, however, hereinafter will be referred to as “job opportunity data.”

### **SCOPE OF WORK:**

Appendix A. contains a DRAFT high level site map of the system design and describes the functionality proposed for Phase 1. The subject of this RFI is limited to the technology for centrally capturing the job opportunity data.

The purpose of this RFI is to identify any qualified vendors fully capable of providing these services, characterized by the following mandatory features and capabilities, and willing to do so at no cost to ODJFS (the following items are not listed in priority order):

- Ability to allow an “Ohio brand” banner to be displayed while viewing job opportunity data. This banner will be active with drop downs that will link back to ODJFS functionality.
- Ability to offer a basic and advanced search.
- Offer employers, commercial job board sites, associations, education institutions, and government a simple and efficient way to include their job opportunities in job opportunity data source with no/minimal effort. NOTE: Important that the vendor describe the anticipated timeframe from request to job opportunity data part of the on-line listing.
- Ability to display salary and trend data based upon a particular job title and location.
- Ability to quickly search job opportunity data by:
  - Relevance factor
  - Date (most current)
  - Company with the most listings
  - Job type (some examples: full-time, part-time, temporary, internship, contractor)
  - Further location breakdown
- Ability to display job opportunity data that comes from the ODJFS self-service job posting system first (on search criteria).
- Ability to accept a data feed from our self-service system of job title (the “what”) and location (the “where”) in order to display the job opportunity data. The location information will also contain a further breakdown based upon Ohio’s Economic Regions, Workforce Areas or WIRED Region. This data feed will need to be accepted and present back to the user the search criteria selected.
- Ability to allow the system user, based upon the search criteria selected, to review all job opportunities meeting that search criteria and after making a selection, immediately and directly link the user to the exact location where the user can apply for that particular job opportunity.
- Ability to filter out and reject job opportunity data based upon certain keywords, to conduct such filtering on a routine and daily basis, and within two days of notification by ODJFS, to filter out and reject particular employers, websites and/or a particular job opportunity.

All interested vendors MUST describe how it could achieve the work described in this RFI, and must address, describe and/or acknowledge the following as part of their formal response to this RFI, or risk disqualification:

- What type of Backup, Recovery and Disaster Recovery plans are currently place?

- What are your current performance metrics (number of hits, response time, etc.)?
- Do you support secure sessions (https)?
- At no time while displaying job opportunity data will any advertisement and/or sponsorship be viewable. The only allowable will be some acknowledgement (via logo or phrase) of the vendor's partnership with ODJFS in this initiative.
- ADA compliance.
- Quality of job opportunity data (refresh, duplications, etc.)
- Provide number of Ohio job opportunities currently in your job opportunity data source.
- Need to get at a minimum two (one which needs to be the main vendor's site) URLs where the vendor has partnered with a public entity in a similar size and scope to what is being requested within the RFI.
- The job opportunity data source must have demonstrated proven abilities to gather job data via authorized means and generally accepted practices from the internet.
- Additionally, vendors may describe other features that would be available at no additional charge should they be selected.

### **RESPONSE INFORMATION:**

During the evaluation phase, the Department will rate the merits of the proposals based upon the responses and acknowledgements from the Scope of Work section of this RFI as well as reviews from the URLs the vendor offered as examples of similar size and scope. The evaluation factors and their order of importance are as follows:

Factor 1 - Features and Capabilities

Factor 2 - Vendor Experience

#### **Factor 1**

The features and capabilities will be evaluated in terms of the vendor's understanding of the ODJFS requirements, problems to be resolved, and the timeliness, realism, feasibility, and likely success of the proposed approach. Experience and success with efforts of similar size and scope will be considered.

#### **Factor 2**

Experience in similar size and scope engagements for job opportunities and real-time salary and trend data along with the past/current job opportunities in Ohio.

Each vendor must submit five (5) complete and signed copies of its response. The vendor must clearly mark the exterior of the envelope "**Job Opportunity Data RFI R-89-10-0819.**" The vendor must describe how the features and capabilities described in the Scope of Work can be accomplished by the vendor at no cost. The majority of the validation will be done by the review of the URLs listed in the vendor's response.

The vendor must provide an electronic copy of everything contained within its response on CD-ROM in Microsoft Word 2000, Microsoft Excel 2000, Microsoft Project 2000, and PDF format, as appropriate. If there is any discrepancy between the paper copy and the electronic copy of the response, the paper copy will control, and the Department will base its evaluation of the vendor's response on the paper copy, however the electronic copy is required for storage purposes.

Each vendor's response must include a cover letter identifying the vendor, providing background information on the vendor's organization, and naming the vendor representative, including title and full contact information, who is responsible for submitting the vendor response.

All vendor responses must be received by ODJFS no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 11, 2007. Faxes or e-mailed submissions will not be accepted. **Proposals must be addressed to:**

**Office of Contracts & Acquisitions  
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services  
30 East Broad Street, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414  
ATTN: RFP/RLB Unit**

All proposal submissions must be received, complete, at the above address, via mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery by the above date and time. Material components received separately will not be collated by ODJFS, nor considered in the review and scoring process. Materials received after the due date and time as stated above will not be included in any previous submissions, nor will they be considered. ODJFS is not responsible for proposals incorrectly addressed or for proposals delivered to any ODJFS location other than the address specified above. No confirmation of mailed proposals can be provided.

ODJFS may reject any response that is not in the required format, does not address all the requirements of this RFI, or that the Department believes not in its best interests to consider or accept. The Department may also cancel the RFI at any time. ODJFS reserves the right to waive any minor errors or omissions when, at the sole discretion of ODJFS, the meaning of the response is not unreasonably obscured. ODJFS also reserves the right to request clarification from vendors for any information provided by vendors or requested by ODJFS through this RFI.

The Department may reject any responses or unsolicited modifications that it receives after the deadline. A vendor mailing its response must allow for adequate mailing time to ensure its timely receipt.

#### **RFI CLARIFICATION OPPORTUNITY:**

Potential vendors or other interested parties may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFI via the Internet during the Q&A Period as outlined in the Anticipated RFI Timetable provided. To ask a question, potential vendors must use the following Internet process:

- \* **Access the ODJFS Web Page at <http://jfs.ohio.gov//>**
- \* **Select “About Us” on the front page;**
- \* **Select “Doing Business with ODJFS;”**
- \* **Select “Requests for Proposals, Letterhead Solicitations, and Other Invitations;”**
- \* **RFP Number [R89100819](#);**
- \* **Select “Ask a Question about this RFP” function; and**
- \* **Follow the instructions to send an e-mail question.**

Questions about this RFI must reference the relevant part of the document. The potential vendor must also include the name of the representative of the potential vendor, the company name and business phone number. ODJFS may, at its option, disregard any questions which do not appropriately reference an RFP provision or location, or which do not include an identification for the originator of the question. ODJFS will not respond to any questions submitted after **10:00 a.m.** on the date the Q&A period closes.

ODJFS responses to all questions asked via the Internet will be posted on the Internet website dedicated to this RFI, for reference by all potential vendors. Potential vendors will not receive personalized or individual e-mail responses. Clarifying questions asked and ODJFS responses to them comprise the “ODJFS Q&A Document” for this RFI. If possible, ODJFS will post an interim Q&A Document, without identifying the vendors asking questions, as well as the final version (in which all vendors that posed questions will be identified).

ODJFS is not responsible for the accuracy of any information regarding this RFI that was gathered through a source different from the inquiry process described above.

## ANTICIPATED RFI TIMETABLE

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFI publication; Q&A period begins	<b>October 5, 2007</b>
Q&A period ends	<b>October 8, 2007</b>
Final ODJFS Q&A document published	<b>October 9, 2007</b>
Response Due Date and Time	<b>3:00 P.M., local time, October 11, 2007</b>
RFI Results Announced	<b>October 15, 2007</b>

## REVIEW OF RFI RESPONSES AND POSSIBLE VENDOR SELECTION PROCESS

ODJFS issues this RFI in order to determine the availability of qualified, ready, and willing vendors. The number and adequacy of vendor responses will determine whether any further competitive opportunity will be provided to the vendor community. If ODJFS determines that a response to this RFI process is fully adequate to meet the needs for this project, and that any further competitive opportunity could not reasonably be expected to result in more or better responses, this RFI will effectively serve as a Request for Proposals (RFP) and the qualified vendor response will be deemed the vendor proposal on which a contractual agreement will be based. Specifically, should ODJFS receive:

- **Only one response**, it will evaluate the response to determine whether the vendor is fully qualified for the ODJFS project. If found to be qualified for the work, ODJFS may determine that any further competitive opportunity would probably not gain additional vendor responses, and proceed to negotiation of an agreement with that one qualified responding vendor. **In such a situation, ODJFS will provide no further notification of a competitive opportunity for this project.**

- **Two or more responses**, it will evaluate each for the qualifications and responsiveness of those vendors. Should more than one vendor be found fully qualified for the project according to the needs, requirements, and expectations established in this RFI, ODJFS may, at its sole discretion, *either*:

- offer those qualified vendors an opportunity to submit further information in a proposal format, which will be formally scored by ODJFS according to criteria to be provided to those vendors at that time, resulting in selection of the highest scoring vendor, or,
- notify all responding vendors that the RFI process is concluded and a formal RFP process will be the probable next step.

**Vendors are hereby notified that additional vendor information (e.g., Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (W-9) Form, Declaration of Material Assistance to Terrorist Organizations Form) would be required of any selected vendor before a contract may be executed, and further terms and conditions regarding contractor performance (compliance with HIPAA requirements, etc.) would be included in that contract.**

## PROTESTS

Any potential, or actual, vendor objecting to the award of a contract or a vendor selection resulting from the issuance of this solicitation may file a protest of the award or selection, or of any other matter relating to the process of soliciting the proposals. Such a protest must comply with the following guidelines:

1. A protest may be filed by a prospective or actual bidder objecting to the award of a contract resulting from this solicitation. The protest shall be in writing and shall contain the following information:
  - a. The name, address, and telephone number of the protestor;
  - b. The name and number of the solicitation being protested;
  - c. A detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds for the protest, including copies of any relevant documents;

- d. A request for a ruling by ODJFS;
  - e. A statement as to the form of relief requested from ODJFS; and
  - f. Any other information the protestor believes to be essential to the determination of the factual and legal questions at issue in the written protest.
2. A timely protest shall be considered by ODJFS, if it is received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services, within the following periods:
    - a. A protest based on alleged improprieties in the issuance of the RLB or any other event preceding the closing date for receipt of responses which are apparent or should be apparent prior to the closing date for receipt of responses shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. of the closing date for receipt of responses as specified in this RFI.
    - b. If the protest relates to the announced intent to award a contract, the protest shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. of the fifth (5th) calendar day after the issuance of the Letter of Intent to Award the contract.
  3. An untimely protest may be considered by ODJFS if ODJFS determines that the protest raises issues significant to the department's procurement system. An untimely protest is one received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services after the time periods set forth in Item #2 of this section.
  4. All protests must be filed at the following location:

Chief Legal Counsel, Office of Legal Services  
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services  
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
  5. When a timely protest is filed, a contract award shall not proceed until a decision on the protest is issued or the matter is otherwise resolved, unless the Director of ODJFS determines that a delay will severely disadvantage the Department. The vendor(s) who would have been awarded the contract shall be notified of the receipt of the protest.
  6. The ODJFS Office of Legal Services shall issue written decisions on all timely protests and shall notify any vendor who filed an untimely protest as to whether or not the protest will be considered.

**Thank you for your interest in this project.**

