

Career Readiness Service Provider

Questions and Answers

All questions due by Friday, April 28, 2023

Responses posted Wednesday, May 3, 2023

- **How many job placements have been secured?**
 - Employer partnerships are an ongoing process. The Tech Alliance has fostered many critical employer partnerships, including Electrolux, Hascall Steel, and EPIC Games. Our first cohort of applicants will not be ready to be placed into jobs until 2024.
- **Will there be other partnerships beyond those listed in Persevere's original proposal?**
 - We are always working on forming all kinds of new partnerships—with employers, community agencies, local government, etc.
- **Will the program be expanding beyond tech jobs?**
 - As of right now, we intend to continue operating primarily within the tech space. We will be offering a project management pathway starting late summer/fall 2023 that would be designed for participants who are interested in tech-based project management positions.
- **What are the job descriptions or environments of the positions?**
 - Some of the positions that our pathways may prepare participants for include: Web Developer, IT Support Specialist, Information Security Analyst, Web Designers, Web Administrators, Software Developer, and Software QA Analyst. These positions are typically offered either in an office setting or remotely.
- **Are there any unique KSAs that need to be considered?**
 - Tech-related knowledge, skills, and abilities are established within the tech curriculum. In terms of the career readiness component, the proposal should include those addressed by the proposed curriculum. They should be grounded in research. If an evidence-based program or set of practices is included, it should be described, along with the level of effectiveness.
- **Will we have access to the content that is currently being used?**
 - The content that is currently being used is outdated. We can share the content that has been used historically with the selected Career Readiness service provider.
- **What is the ratio of male to female learners, other resident demographics? (Please provide a deeper understanding than what is offered on page 5)**
 - In our proposal to the EDA, we projected that approximately 30% of our participants would be women; however, we are currently enrolling participants and do not have a way to predict the demographics in our community classes. In terms of our services in correctional facilities, our program operates in four male facilities and two female facilities. Keep in mind, though, that the majority of our participants will be served in the community. We are looking for a solution that

can be applied in both an institutional setting and in the community. Proposals should address your agency's capacity and, as stated in Part B of the Form D (Budget proposal), include the costs per participant. We expect our program to span all ages eighteen and up.

- **What are the current assessment guidelines for the portion of curriculum the participants have already completed; is the new program intended to adhere to the same assessment framework (for example is there a percentage threshold for passing etc)?**
 - Tech Alliance is a new grant, so there are no Tech Alliance participants who have already completed any portion of the Career Readiness curriculum. An assessment framework may be included as part of your proposal.
- **Can we have access to any engagement data from participants on their coaching experience in the current 12-month program?**
 - Classes in the Tech Alliance program will begin in May. Therefore, we have no historical data to share.
- **How will the evaluation process differentiate the effectiveness of the different programs or is the goal to measure the effectiveness of the entire program?**
 - The goal is to measure the effectiveness of the entire program. The evaluation process will include evaluation of each component of the program as it contributes to student success—including coding classes, career readiness curriculum, Technology Employment Specialist support, etc. Our evaluator will conduct an evaluation that includes both qualitative and quantitative data for both formative and summative purposes. Outcome data from the career readiness component of the program will be included. The selected service provider(s) will be expected to provide participation, progress, and outcome data as specified by the program evaluator.
- **Instructional staff - virtual engagement through secure messaging and secure video allowable?**
 - Yes. All of our classrooms are equipped with an instructor computer and a large TV to stream video. This includes classrooms in correctional facilities and the community.
- **All programs designed to be self-paced, is this a preferred model?**
 - We are open to proposals in regards to pacing. We do not have a preferred model.
- **Will learners have access to laptop/tablet out of a computer lab/classroom?**
 - In the community, all participants will receive a laptop as part of the program and will have the technical ability to access resources outside the facility. Within the facilities, participants will only be able to access computers during class time.
- **If yes to the previous question, will the device have internet access?**
 - The laptop provided to community participants will have internet access. Within the facilities, participants will have access to whitelisted sites only.

- **If yes to the previous question, assuming secure/locked down internet access?**
 - Within the community, the laptops do not have limited internet access. Within the facilities, participants will have access to whitelisted sites only.
- **Is it required for the complete curriculum to be attached to the RFP?**
 - Per the RFP, we require a complete description of the proposed curriculum and a sample of a course syllabus (see p. 8 of the RFP). However, applicants are permitted and encouraged to provide more materials (sample lessons, etc.) than are required.
- **Can selected Career Readiness provider(s) content be placed on Persevere's Learning Management System?**
 - Yes. We are currently using Google Classroom with the possibility of switching to a new LMS in the future.
- **Can Persevere's Teaching Assistant be incorporated into setting up the TV for Zoom or Microsoft team capabilities and passing out materials during the weekly sessions? Can a certain budget of what a potential provider asks for incorporate their assistance as a TA?**
 - Teaching Assistants in correctional facilities can assist with technology set up for virtual interactions. Any Career Readiness provider who needs Tech Alliance staff assistance in facilities (i.e. Teaching Assistants) would not be expected to reimburse Tech Alliance for that employee's time performing virtual class setup. However, applicants must be very clear about their expectations for Persevere employees, in terms of specifically what they would be expected to do and the projected time required to do it.
- **How is the \$380,000 broken up per subject area that is listed in the RFP over the period of the grant? Will there be drawdowns, and invoicing of services and what is a turnaround for payment?**
 - There is no predetermined plan for the distribution of costs by programming components. The distribution of funds may vary with each proposal. Each applicant should propose their pricing structure, and final determination will be made as the contract is negotiated. Monthly invoicing by the Career Readiness provider is expected and payment turnaround will average thirty to forty-five days. Direct deposit through ACH is available.
- **Will there be a joint press release for the provider(s) and Persevere Tech Alliance team?**
 - Yes. This would be agreed upon between the selected provider and Persevere.
- **What is expected as of June 1st for a winning provider(s) to have tangibly as it relates to this project in partnership with Persevere Now?**
 - We expect the provider to be prepared to launch with a minimum of 95% of curriculum in place by June 1. A small amount of modification and curriculum development can be made over time, as proposed in the application and negotiated prior to execution of the contract. In addition, a timeline of proposed career readiness instruction and its delivery throughout the year-long software

development course is expected. Any additional requirements are stipulated in the RFP.

- **How many case managers does Persevere currently employ?**
 - The Tech Alliance grant currently employs nine case managers across the state of Tennessee. There are three case managers in each region of the state.
- **Do you have an in-house instructional designer to see how things might work together if we have multiple options?**
 - Yes, Persevere has a Director of Education and a Lead Instructor. The Tech Alliance Program Manager also has a background in education.
- **Is there a referral process from Persevere to the Career Readiness provider?**
 - There is not a referral process. All participants will receive career readiness instruction. A proposal for how and when each participant accesses career readiness instruction should be included in your proposal as part of your instructional plan. The details will be worked out between the selected provider and Persevere Tech Alliance management staff.
- **How many locations are we talking about across the state for in person instruction?**
 - Anybody in any of the 95 counties can access remote instruction. If there is demand for in-person instruction in a certain city then we will try to have some amount of in-person instruction, even if it's just office hours. You may propose whatever you think will work for our participants and your organization—in person vs. remote, staggered in-person sessions, etc.