



**NORTH CAROLINA'S  
EASTERN REGION**

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

## **North Carolina's Eastern Region WorkKeys Assessment and Career Readiness Certification Project**

### **Bidders' Conference Date**

**April 16, 2008**

**10 am - noon**

**TransPark Center, 3802 Highway 58 S  
Kinston, NC**

*Please respond if you plan to attend to [howard@nceast.org](mailto:howard@nceast.org)*

### **Release Date**

**April 2, 2008**

### **Due Date**

**May 8, 2008 by 4:00 pm**

### **Projected Contract Date**

**June 2008**

This RFP does not commit North Carolina's Eastern Region to award a contract. North Carolina's Eastern Region reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received and the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in offers received. All solicitations are contingent upon availability of funds.

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted to Kathy Howard via e-mail or in writing by **May 2, 2008**. Responses will be posted at [www.nceast.org](http://www.nceast.org), under the Latest News Section of the website. North Carolina's Eastern Region will not accept questions by telephone. Staff will not respond to any questions asked by e-mail or in writing after **May 2, 2008**

**Narrative Limit:** Prefer a proposal 10 pages or less

To receive an electronic copy or hard copy of the Request for Proposal contact: Kathy Howard-[howard@nceast.org](mailto:howard@nceast.org)

**Proposals will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m., on May 8, 2008**

**North Carolina's Eastern Region –NCER  
WorkKeys Assessment and Career Readiness Certification Project  
March 19, 2008**

**North Carolina's Eastern Region Commitment:**

North Carolina's Eastern Region has committed \$250,000 a year for three years specifically for Workforce Development initiatives using WorkKeys Assessment and Career Readiness Certification.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit innovative competitive proposals for projects that will expand and accelerate the use of WorkKeys Assessments and Career Readiness Certifications in the Eastern Region via the vertical and horizontal integration of workforce proponents such as, but not limited to, K-12 schools, Community Colleges, Workforce Development Boards, Universities, Economic Development Organizations, Non-profit Groups, and Businesses and Industry.

**Focus:**

Our focus is the implementation of the WorkKeys assessment system workforce for high growth industries such as the Construction Industry, Life Sciences (Healthcare), and Advanced Manufacturing (to include Marine Trades) in Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Edgecombe, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Nash, Onslow, Pamlico, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson counties.

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Major increase in WorkKeys testing and certifications
- Increased participation by business and industry to identify qualified workers
- Creation and/or expansion of delivery system networks
- Establish permanent vertical and horizontal integration of workforce proponents
- Improved efficiencies in the region's workforce delivery system
- Template for replication across the region and the state
- Identification of education and training gaps
- Documented justification for workforce development program funding
- Credible workforce capability data to support business recruitment
- More competitive and marketable workforce

**What We Are Looking For In Your Proposal:**

- Plans that expand and accelerate the use of WorkKeys/CRC's Assessment System in the region
- Vertical and horizontal integration of existing and/or new workforce proponents. The higher the degree of integration, the more attractive the proposal.
- Template that can be replicated across the region and the state

- Focused on the Construction Industry, Life Sciences (including Healthcare and Biotechnology), Advanced Manufacturing (to include Marine Trades)
- Clear concept of management, implementation, timelines, goals and costs
- Flexibility to work with other bidders if called upon by the NCER. (Integrating two or more proposals may produce greater efficiencies and regional impact)

#### **What We Are Not Interested In:**

- Funding a single entity, such as a Workforce Development Board or Community College, to do more of what they are already doing
- Proposals lacking at least some degree of vertical or horizontal integration
- Concepts that do not address the target industry sectors
- Pilot or stand alone programs
- Unwillingness to partner with others

#### **What We Are Offering:**

- Expectation is to fund multiple projects for a total commitment up to \$250,000 per year for three years, but potentially could fund one single highly integrated proposal that maximizes efficiency and has wide-spread impact on workforce development using the WorkKeys Assessment.
- Great flexibility in preparing your proposal
- Opportunity to define your own challenge and submit your solution
- Partnering with others to gain efficiencies of scale and greater impact
- Establish a region wide integrated workforce delivery system
- Improve competitiveness and marketability of the regions workforce
- Bidders conference to answer your questions

***The selected contractor will be required to be familiar with and to strictly comply with all terms and conditions of any grant agreements between NCER and grant funding agencies underwriting the WorkKeys initiatives.***