



**Employ Prince George's, Inc. Operations Division**  
**MOBILE CAREER EXPLORATION LAB**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**RFP No.: EPGRFP-006**

**Important Dates**

**RFP Release Date:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024

**Virtual Information Session:** Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 1:00 PM EST  
[Click here for the Microsoft Teams Conference Link](#)

**Proposal Due Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024, at 4:00 PM EST

Proposals must be submitted via Employ Prince George's online grant application portal which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). **PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER 4:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD TIME (EST) ON MONDAY, MARCH 11TH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Employ Prince George's is not responsible for any errors of omission. Mailed, faxed, or emailed proposal(s) will not be accepted.

Employ Prince George's, Inc. does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against any Bidders or Proposer(s) because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

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## **INTRODUCTION & INTENT**

Employ Prince George's, Inc. (Employ Prince George's or EPG), serving as the principal workforce development service provider for Prince George's County and a career services provider of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board. EPG is committed to providing workforce support to jobseekers, business, and the Prince George's County community at large.

## **ISSUING INTITY**

Employ Prince George's is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Prince George's County, Maryland. Employ Prince George's administers a menu of workforce development services for job seekers and businesses. The mission of Employ Prince George's is to improve the local economy by creating a demand-driven workforce system with workforce development programs that deliver qualified workers to businesses, improves the productivity of businesses, and provides job seekers with opportunities for careers in high demand/high growth industries.

Employ Prince George's, Inc. (Employ Prince George's or EPG), serving as the principal workforce development service provider for Prince George's County and a career services provider of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, is the recipient of diverse sources of funding to support workforce development efforts within Prince George's County. This Mobile Career Exploration Lab is funded by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and will be operated by the Youth Career Connections program.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 to transform public education in the state into a world-class education system. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future includes five pillars, with Pillar 3 including Maryland's thirteen local Workforce Development Boards. Pillar 3, College and Career Readiness, sets a new College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard that prepares graduates for success in college and the workforce. The Blueprint aims to have all students meet the CCR standard by the end of their 10th grade year, develops CCR-Support pathways to support students in meeting the standard, enables students to enter a Post-CCR pathway that builds on the student's strengths, develops a Career and Technical Education (CTE) system that is aligned with industry's needs, and ensures that prekindergarten through 12th grade curriculum, standards, and assessments are all aligned with the new CCR standard.

Further, Pillar 3 requires a career counseling program for middle and high school students to help each student choose one or more post-college and career readiness pathways. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future requires Pillar 3 be administered by one of Maryland's thirteen Local Workforce Development Boards. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Employ Prince George's, serving as the In-School Youth Career Services Provider on behalf of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board), Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), and Prince George's Community College (PGCC) are partnering to deliver the required services of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Pillar 3. The services are being delivered through

Employ Prince George's Youth Career Connections program and include career counseling. The partnership has established the following foundational elements:

1. The Blueprint allocated funding to PGCPS for the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board (administrative functions and programming operations conducted by Employ Prince George's) to establish a robust career counseling program for students in all PGCPS middle and high schools (6th grade – 12th grade).
2. The goal of this career counseling program is that the counseling is aligned with the in-demand industries and in-demand industry clusters identified by the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, through the Board's Local Plan and State of the Workforce Report.
3. Along with aligning the Youth Career Connections and its career counseling programming with the career pathways of Prince George's County's in-demand industry clusters, identified by the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, the career counseling will identify the educational training options (secondary and post-secondary) within each career pathway.
4. The long-term goal of this career counseling program, led by the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, is that PGCPS will see increases in CTE enrollments, CTE program completers, and CTE credential attainment rates, along with increases in PGCPS registered apprenticeship programming and participation.

Beginning with youth in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Employ Prince Georges' *Youth Career Connections* provides career assessment, career exploration, and career exposure services that allow students to draw a direct correlation between their classroom studies and career opportunities in the DC Metropolitan Region. To support these efforts and create meaningful experiences for students, the partnership seeks to purchase a specialty vehicle equipped to provide career exploration activities.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the selection, purchase, and delivery of a specialty vehicle, a Mobile Career Exploration Lab for the Youth Career Connections program.

The product furnished must be of high quality and the workmanship must conform with industry best practices. All essential parts and details that make the vehicle fully serviceable or operational, even if not explicitly mentioned in this specification, are required. The design and features of the vehicle should prioritize safety, efficiency, and driver visibility under all driving conditions. Strict compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as all state and federal laws, regulations, and standards, is mandatory. Preference shall be given to the utilization of industry-standard parts and components. Custom design items should only be considered in the absence of readily available standardized alternatives.

1. Bidder must propose the vehicle option, in their capacity as a subject matter expert on specialty vehicles, that is best suited for the application described in this RFP.
2. A customized full exterior wrap is required.
3. Warranties are required in alignment with industry norms.

4. Delivery is to be made to 1801 McCormick Drive Largo MD 20774 by a vendor driver who will make any minor adjustment to the vehicle as well as explain and train on the complete operation of vehicle and any miscellaneous components which may be part of the final build specification.
5. The vehicle must include state-of-the-art interactive activity stations providing physical hands-on experiences as well as virtual reality experiences. Those proposals whose activity stations are at least 50% virtual reality, immersive simulators, AI, or advanced career exploration technology are preferred.
6. The stations must allow students to explore opportunities in at least four (4) of Prince George's County's six (6) in-demand industry clusters. Proposals that do not include a detailed plan for activity stations in related industries or occupations will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.
  - a. Required:
    - i. Information Technology and Cyber Security
    - ii. Healthcare and Social Assistance
    - iii. Construction and Real Estate (including Rental & Leasing)
    - iv. Transportation, Logistics and Warehousing: transportation, logistics, automotive, warehouse, and distribution
  - b. Desired but optional:
    - i. Professional Services: professional, scientific, technical, education, government, finance, and business services
    - ii. Hospitality & Accommodation: recreation, tourism, hospitality, accommodation, food & beverage, retail, customer service and entertainment

## **ELIGIBLE BIDDERS**

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, private career schools, community-based organizations, consortiums (with an identified fiscal lead) and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state, and local law, and must have been in business for at least five years. Applicants must be an incorporated organization. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the state and federal government. Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City, or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or the WDB are ineligible to apply.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium but EPG will award only one contract in a consortium application to the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All entities, whether directly contracted or subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent, will be held to the requirements of Federal, state, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All selected applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Providers will be expected to ground their organization within the communities they serve with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successful workforce development programming.

An entity may submit multiple applications for funding; however, only one application from any single entity may be funded.

### **SCHEDULE FOR RFP SUBMISSION, REVIEW & AWARDS**

With exception of proposal submission deadline, EPG reserves the right to make changes to the timeline below.

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DATE</b>
RFP Published	<b>February 14, 2024</b>
Virtual Information Session	<b>February 22, 2024 1:00 PM EST</b>
Deadline to Submit Written Questions	<b>February 26, 2024 END OF DAY</b>
Responses to Questions posted on or around	<b>March 1, 2024</b>
Deadline to submit Proposal	<b>March 18, 2024 4:00 PM EST</b>
Selection of Successful Bidder on or around	<b>April 20, 2024</b>
Contract to begin	<b>May 1, 2024</b>

### **MINIMUM CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS:**

Contractors must:

- Possess a minimum of five years' experience building custom specialty vehicles.
- Provide three references from clients who have received a similar product.

### **COST REQUIREMENTS**

The Bidder may propose costs associated with performing the scope of work by providing a proposed budget and narrative. The Bidder must submit a description of the payment schedule and terms.

### **VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION**

All organizations intending to bid either as a sole applicant or as the lead of a consortium proposal are encouraged to attend the [Virtual Information Session](#) scheduled for **Thursday, February 22nd, from 1:00 pm until 1:45 pm EST via Microsoft Teams**. EPG has selected this forum to present detailed noncompetitive information regarding the RFP. The session will provide an overview of the RFP and bidding process and will be recorded for reference.

Information for the Virtual Information Session will be provided on EPG's RFP webpage <https://www.employpg.org/rfps/>

## **PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals must be submitted via our online grant application portal no later than **March 18th, 2024**, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Proposals not received by the deadline will be automatically disqualified from competition – no exceptions. Mailed, faxed, or hard copy proposals will not be accepted.

Proposals should be prepared in a professional manner, providing a complete and detailed description of the proposed program. Emphasis should be placed on clarity of content and completeness. Bidders must include all the required attachments listed within the submission portal that pertain to the proposal. Failure to include required attachments will disqualify the proposal. No additional attachments are allowed. Bidders may submit the required attachments as part of their electronic submission.

## **COMPLETED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Proposals must be received no later than date and time listed in the Schedule of Events. Proposals not submitted through the on-line application portal will not be considered. Individual Proposals will not be read in public or available for public inspection until after an award determination has been made and agreement is executed. Note: Technical questions and technical support regarding the on-line application will be accepted and answered individually up to the proposal submission deadline listed above in the schedule of events.

## **TERM OF CONTRACT**

EPG is the administrative and fiscal agent of the WDB, responsible for the management of the WDB's funds received from various sources including the U.S. Department of Labor, Maryland Department of Labor, Prince George's County Government, and others. Funding for the project described in this RFP is anticipated to originate from the Maryland State Department of Education. EPG anticipates that total funding of **up to one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00 USD)** for a specialty vehicle will be available for the contract(s) awarded through this RFP. Funding for this RFP is expressly contingent upon final budget approval.

Respondents selected as a result of this solicitation must participate in contract negotiations with EPG and may be required to submit programmatic, financial, or other revisions which may have resulted from such negotiation. The award of any contract or agreement shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion of contract negotiation. Please note that EPG is not obligated to award the full amount requested by an applicant; based on the competitiveness of applications received, EPG may elect to partially fund a proposal.

EPG anticipates awarding funding to **one (1) entity** that demonstrate an ability to effectively deliver the product(s) as described within this RFP. EPG reserves the right to accept other than lowest cost proposals and to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof. Agreements are

anticipated to have terms effective **May 1, 2024 with vehicle delivery expected within 18 months.**

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP will be paid through cost reimbursement unless otherwise specified. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations or policies required by the funding sources. EPG reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed because of this RFP, including but not limited to funding levels, the scope of services, performance standards, and period of performance, as it deems necessary.

## **QUESTIONS**

All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing via email to Employ Prince George's Contracts & Operations Department at [rfpsubmissions@co.pg.md.us](mailto:rfpsubmissions@co.pg.md.us) no later than end of day **February 26th, 2024** as no questions will be taken during the [Virtual Information Session](#). Answers to written questions will be posted and sent via email on or around **March 1st, 2024**. Interested bidders are strictly prohibited from directly contacting members of the Workforce Development Board and EPG staff regarding this RFP.

## **EX PARTE COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Each Bidder shall ensure that no improper, unethical, or illegal relationships or conflicts of interest whether actual or apparent exist between or among the Bidder, the WDB, and any other parties to this RFP. The Bidder is responsible for disclosing at the point of proposal submission or as soon as the situation arises of any such relationships. This includes interests that they may have with any individual or entity doing business with or proposing to do business with the Workforce Development Board or Employ Prince George's (EPG). An employee or official may not be employed by or have a financial interest in any entity subject to their authority or of the Prince George's County agency, board, or commission of which they are affiliated; or entity that is negotiating or has a contract with that agency, board, or commission; or hold other position that may impair their judgment or impartiality.

The WDB reserves the right to determine the pertinence of such relationships, when discovered or disclosed, whether intended or not, and to decide whether the Bidder's disqualifications and/or cancellation shall be at no fault or liability whatsoever to the WDB. The WDB's determination regarding any question of conflict of interest will be final. All WDB members, EPG Board members, officers, and staff are precluded from entertaining questions concerning the completion of the proposal or the procurement process outside the confines of the Pre-Proposal Bidders' Conference. Potential Bidders are asked to respect these conditions by not making personal requests for assistance, except at the conference.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Responsive proposals will be reviewed and rated by a qualified review committee. The following is the total weight for this RFP. Bidders **must have a total of 80% or higher** in the scoring methodology to be considered for selection.



<b>SCORING METHODOLOGY</b>	
Organizational Background/Demonstrated Experience	15
Vehicle Quality and Specifications	25
Career Exploration Modules	25
Delivery Timeline	10
Cost and Payment Terms	25
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS</b>	<b>100 POINTS</b>

**BONUS POINTS**

In alignment with our goals to enhance educational and vocational opportunities through innovative means, EPG is seeking proposals for the procurement of a specialty vehicle tailored to facilitate interactive learning experiences. This RFP aims to identify and select a solution that not only meets our high standards for quality, safety, and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but also transcends traditional expectations through the integration of customized features and educational activity stations.

We are particularly interested in proposals that demonstrate a deep understanding of our needs and propose vehicles that are not just functional and compliant, but also innovative, offering hands-on and virtual reality experiences aligned with Prince George’s County’s in-demand industry clusters. Proposals should clearly articulate how the vehicle will serve as a dynamic educational tool, capable of engaging students in sectors critical to our community's economic future.

To recognize and reward submissions that exceptionally meet and exceed these specifications, we are introducing a Bonus Points Scoring Methodology. Proposals that showcase outstanding creativity, effectiveness in educational engagement, and superior adherence to safety and efficiency will be eligible for additional points. This system is designed to highlight proposals that offer the most impactful solutions, prioritizing features such as:

1. Custom design that provides a compelling and safe learning environment while ensuring ease of use and accessibility.
2. Interactive activity stations that cover a broad spectrum of Prince George’s County’s priority sectors, enhancing the educational value of the vehicle.
3. Innovative use of technology and design to maximize the educational impact and operational efficiency of the vehicle.

By incorporating these criteria into our evaluation process, EPG aims to foster a competitive environment that encourages bidders to think creatively and propose vehicles that truly meet the

needs of our community, not just in functionality but as a beacon of innovation and educational excellence.

### **Bonus Categories for Scoring Methodology**

1. **Innovative Learning Technologies:** Proposals that integrate cutting-edge technologies such as virtual reality (VR), immersive simulators, artificial intelligence (AI), or other advanced technologies specifically designed for career exploration. This category rewards solutions that offer students a dynamic and engaging way to explore potential career paths through interactive, hands-on experiences, providing a deeper understanding of the skills and knowledge required in various industries.
2. **Professional Services Career Exploration:** This category focuses on proposals that specifically address career exploration within Professional Services sectors, including but not limited to, Information Technology and Cyber Security, Professional, Scientific, Technical Services, Education, Government, and Business Services. Proposals should detail how the vehicle will facilitate an understanding of these occupations, highlighting interactive stations or activities that simulate real-world tasks and challenges faced by professionals in these fields.
3. **Hospitality & Accommodation Career Exploration:** Proposals that excel in presenting career exploration opportunities in the Hospitality & Accommodation sectors, including recreation, tourism, hospitality, accommodation and food services, and retail trade. This category seeks proposals that creatively engage students in the vibrant world of hospitality and accommodation through interactive experiences that simulate actual industry environments, offering insights into the diverse career paths available within these sectors.

Each of these bonus categories is designed to encourage proposals that not only meet the technical and functional requirements of the specialty vehicle but also enrich the educational experience it provides. By focusing on these areas, EPG aims to foster a deep, impactful understanding of key industry sectors among students, equipping them with the knowledge and inspiration to pursue meaningful career paths.

<b>BONUS POINTS</b>	
Innovative Learning Technologies	5
Professional Services Career Exploration	5
Hospitality & Accommodation Career Exploration	5
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE BONUS POINTS</b>	<b>15 POINTS</b>

### **BIDDERS CONDITIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS**

By submitting its proposal, each Bidder understands, represents, and acknowledges that:

A Bidder or his/her authorized representative may withdraw or modify his/her proposal by written notice received, at the Issuing Office's address, prior to the exact hour and date specified for proposal receipt.

The Bidder's information and representations in the proposal are material and important, and the Issuing Office may rely upon the contents of the proposal in negotiations, contractual obligations, and awarding the contract(s). The Bidder agrees that the proposal will remain firm for a period of one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after the date specified for receipt of proposals or until a sub-recipient agreement is fully executed.

The Bidder selected is a sub-recipient of a Federal award and thus are required to follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200)

Each Bidder, by submitting its proposal, authorizes the WDB to release to the State of Maryland information concerning the Bidder's Maryland taxes, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation liabilities, and total compensations for individuals charged to the subrecipient agreement. The Bidder has arrived at the cost(s) and amount(s) in its proposal independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Bidder or potential Bidders. The Bidder shall not disclose any of these items on or before the proposal submission deadline specified in this RFP.

The Bidder has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting a proposal on this sub-recipient agreement, or to submit a proposal higher than this proposal, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive proposal or other form of complementary proposal.

The Bidder has not made, under separate sub-recipient agreement with the WDB, any recommendations to the Issuing Office concerning the need for the goods and services described in its proposal or the specifications for the goods and services described in the proposal.

The Bidder is not currently under suspension or debarment in the State of Maryland, any other State, or the Federal government and, if the Bidder cannot so certify, then it shall submit along with its proposal a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.

The Bidder must clearly identify and describe the services being offered in response to this RFP. Bidders are cautioned that the organization, as well as the thoroughness of the response, is critical to the evaluation process.

The Bidder's Proposal forms must be legible and complete in their entirety, with all required supplemental information presented in an organized, comprehensive, and easy-to-follow manner.

The WDB is not liable for any costs the Bidder incurs in preparation and submission of its proposal, in participating in the RFP process, or in anticipation of award of the sub-recipient agreement.

The WDB reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by the Bidder proves

the Bidder is not qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFP and to complete the Project as specified.

The WDB may make investigations (including on-site visits and contacting any or all references) as deemed necessary, to determine that the Bidders competence, number of qualified employees, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform per the RFP.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder, the Bidders, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Bidder has disclosed in its proposal.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder and unless the Bidder has otherwise disclosed in its proposal, the Bidder has no outstanding, delinquent obligations including, but not limited to, any Federal and State tax liabilities not being contested on appeal or other obligation of the Bidder that is owed.

Until the selected Bidder receives a fully executed and approved written sub-recipient agreement from the Issuing Office, there is no legal and valid sub-recipient agreement, in law or in equity. The WDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any sub-recipient agreement executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the sub-recipient agreement period, as it deems necessary in the interest of the Board and its programs, pending availability of funds.

The fully executed Agreement will require the selected Bidder to assume responsibility for all goods and services offered in its proposal whether it produces them itself or through subcontract. Additionally, if the Bidder uses any subcontractor, the proposal should be clear on the roles, responsibilities, and outcomes of each. The substitution of one subcontractor for another must be made at the discretion and prior written approval of the Issuing Office. The WDB considers the selected Bidder to be the sole point of contact regarding all contractual matters.

Bidders shall not issue press releases, internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of the Issuing Office, and then only in coordination with the Issuing Office.