

Request for Proposal: Strategic Planning Expert for Annual Consortium of Federally Funded Employment Technical Assistance Centers

About the LEAD Center

Led by [National Disability Institute \(NDI\)](https://NationalDisabilityInstitute.org), the [LEAD Center](#) –formally known as the National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) – is a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Technical Assistance (TA) Center. The LEAD Center helps states, workforce development professionals and American Job Centers (AJC) implement WIOA, in service to Americans with disabilities. Through its resources, tools and TA, the LEAD Center:

1. increases career pathways and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities,
2. ensures employers have the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy and
3. improves disability data reporting by WIOA programs.

Request

National Disability Institute (NDI) is seeking proposals from qualified firms and individuals with demonstrated expertise in designing and facilitating strategic planning processes for cross-sector groups. Experience with federal workforce systems, WIOA-related programs, ODEP-funded initiatives or disability employment initiatives is preferred.

At the request of the LEAD Center's federal funder, the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the LEAD Center will convene and facilitate the 2026 Knowledge Translation (KT) Consortium Annual Session. This session is tentatively scheduled to occur virtually in April 2026.

The KT Consortium is a collaborative network of approximately 15-25 federally funded training and TA centers. Each center with their own unique mission addresses different aspects of employment, career readiness and development, transition from school to post-secondary options, and accessibility for youth and adults with disabilities. KT Consortium members come together to: 1) meet and interact; 2) share information on each center's focus, funding and use of KT tools; and 3) develop a framework for sharing resources and training opportunities to collectively improve employment and economic advancement outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The KT Consortium annual session serves as a critical forum for shared learning, cross-system dialogue, coordinated planning and alignment among grantees and federal partners. Its purpose is to ensure that federally funded insights, tools and promising practices are effectively translated into actions that improve workforce access, participation, opportunities and outcomes for people with disabilities —ultimately strengthening the on-the-ground impact of federal policies across programs and communities.

Project Scope and Timeline

The selected Contractor will partner with NDI to design, facilitate and support the successful execution of the 2026 KT Consortium Annual Session. The scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

1. Project Planning and Design

- Consult with NDI project leadership to understand project goals, stakeholder needs, constraints, desired outcomes and expectations from the project funder, ODEP.
- Conduct a pre-session assessment of the current KT environment, including existing processes, challenges, opportunities and stakeholder perspectives, to inform the session design.
- Develop a comprehensive design plan for a half-day strategic planning session, with flexibility to adjust based on funder direction.
- Create a session framework that supports meaningful cross-system engagement, knowledge exchange, and strategic alignment among the participating training and TA centers.
- Recommend facilitation approaches, activities and tools that promote collaboration and inclusive participation.

2. Facilitated Strategic Planning Session

- Co-lead and co-facilitate the 2026 KT Consortium Annual Session, utilizing methods appropriate for a multi-stakeholder national audience.
- Guide participants through structured strategic planning exercises that support:
 - Shared learning across federally funded TA centers,
 - Identification of collective priorities,
 - Systems-level coordination and alignment and
 - Strengthening of knowledge and evidence translation across the public workforce system.

3. Development of Materials and Deliverables

- Co-design all facilitation materials, including agendas, presentation content, worksheets, templates and activity guides, with attention paid to accessible design.
- Provide pre-session briefing materials to prepare participants for effective engagement.
- Develop post-session deliverables such as:
 - A synthesized summary of themes, insights and decisions;
 - Recommendations for action steps and alignment for the KT Consortium; and
 - Facilitator reflections to inform future collaborative activities and continuous improvement.

4. Coordination and Communication

- Participate in planning meetings with NDI staff and ODEP representatives, as requested.
- Provide timely updates, respond to feedback and adjust design components in alignment with federal expectations.
- Support NDI in ensuring that the session aligns with the overarching mission of ODEP and the objectives of federally funded programs represented within the KT Consortium.

Please note that the project will go through a U.S. government approval process.

Contractor will be required to acknowledge its responsibility, both during and after the term of its appointment, to use all reasonable efforts to preserve the confidentiality of any proprietary or confidential information or data developed by Contractor on behalf of NDI or disclosed by NDI to Contractor.

Contractor will be required to acknowledge that NDI is the owner of all materials designed or developed to create the completed work.

Proposal Requirements

NDI will provide all necessary documentation to the Contractor. In addition, key NDI staff will be available throughout the contract to ensure the Contractor has the information necessary to complete this contract.

Proposal Content:

1. A description of the Contractor and its experience working with 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations, government agencies and any experience working with disability-focused organizations. (10 points)
2. A description of any experience the Contractor may have working with clients who are federal grantees or contractors. (6 points)
3. A description of the Contractor's experience and approach conducting and facilitating strategic planning processes. (10 points)
4. A discussion of how the Contractor intends to do the work and the approach taken. This description should include how adjustments or considerations will be made for the specific business environment of the LEAD Center. (20 points)
5. A discussion of how the work will be managed and how the Contractor will communicate with NDI, including the frequency and type of communication, as well as a description of the types of information that will be requested from NDI. (14 points)

Contractors are asked to submit a cost outline as part of their response. NDI has allocated up to \$6,000 for this scope of work. The cost outline has no page limit and should include:

- An estimate of the cost for doing this work, including a budget broken down by labor and other direct costs. (20 points)
- Brief descriptions of Contractor's expertise and experience. (15 points)
- Provide at least three references from former or current clients for whom the Contractor has produced work of similar complexity or scope, a brief description (about a paragraph long) of the work performed for them and a contact along with their contact information (5 points)

Total possible score: 100 points

NDI will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria:

1. **Overall proposal suitability:** Proposed solution(s) must meet the scope, requirements and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner.
2. **Organizational Experience:** Bidders will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project.
3. **Previous work:** Bidders will be evaluated on examples of their work.
4. **Value and cost:** Bidders will be evaluated on the cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project.
5. **Facilitation expertise:** Bidders must provide descriptions/documentation of expertise facilitating strategic planning with groups.

Proposal should not exceed five (5) pages plus attachments (attachments are not counted in the five pages).

Submit proposals to Shajira Brown, NDI Director, Community Partnerships (sbrown@ndi-inc.org) no later than Wednesday, December 31, 2025, COB (midnight in your USA time zone). Proposal review and decisions are anticipated to be completed by January 22, 2026.

Please note, this work will be completed using funds that do not allow for foreign entities (those entities that are not based in the U.S.A.) to be eligible to apply.

Please note, this work will be completed using federal funding. Chosen contractor will be required to complete the following attestation and certification.

1. **Attestation** - Entity is not organized under the laws of, and does not have a principal place of business in, a foreign country.
2. **Certification** - Entity certifies that to the best of its knowledge and belief that neither it, its principles, nor any individual to be supported by this proposal:
 - Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
 - Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements or receiving stolen property;
 - Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses identified in this certification; and
 - Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.

NDI reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals.
- Request additional information from any applicant.
- Modify the scope of work based on available funding or project needs.
- Not enter into and/or terminate contracts with any entity unable to meet the required attestation or certification standards.