



**Imperial County Workforce Development Board
Valley Works Lithium Valley Workforce and
Economic Development
Needs Assessment
Request for Proposals**



Proposers' Questions and ICWDB Answers

January 12, 2024 Q&A Publication

- Q.1 Have "other locations" been identified as models for planning around significant economic shift?
- A.1 "Other locations" have not been identified by ICWDB as models for planning. Proposers are encouraged to conduct research on other counties, regions, or local areas that may serve as models for workforce and economic development in Imperial County, given anticipated economic shifts arising from the Lithium Valley opportunity.
- Q.2 Can you elaborate on your vision for "input from communities, stakeholders, and individuals"? Do you expect this to include focus groups, surveys, and/or interviews?
- A.2 ICWDB anticipates that the needs assessment and corresponding recommendations will take into account community input. While proposers should consider input already gathered by ICWDB and other local sources, proposals should indicate the approaches and strategies that proposers believe will provide the greatest benefit to the project.
- Q.3 What challenges did you encounter with scheduling and participation in your previously held community sessions (e.g., discussions at libraries, etc.)?
- A.3 Level of community participation was a challenge. However, engagement with individuals attending these sessions resulted in substantive and insightful input. ICWDB's community forums were most effective when "community champions" (e.g., city council members, community alliance committees) provided support in broadcasting the events to their constituents. ICWDB anticipates that proposers will leverage their expertise and past experience in devising approaches to gathering input from the community members and others.
- Q.4: Will the County be available to support translation for engagement activities?
- A.4 Costs for any translation services required by a proposer's approach should be incorporated into the proposal budget and explained in the budget narrative.

Q.5 In addition to English and Spanish, are there other prominent languages or dialects that the consultant should consider for inclusive engagement?

A.5 Traditionally, ICWDB has conducted community engagement discussions in English and Spanish. Based on demographic information available for Imperial County, respondents to the RFP may propose other approaches.

Q.6 Does the county have established/trusted connections to undocumented workers in the county?

A.6 Services of many types are available for immigrants through various community organizations. Proposers should conduct research to identify organizations providing services and support to immigrants and other vulnerable groups throughout Imperial County.

Q.7. Was a consultant hired to help develop the Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Investment Plan? Who was that consultant?

A.7 The County of Imperial Board of Supervisors engaged Development Management Group, Inc. to develop the Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Plan. Contact information published on the web is:

Development Management Group, Inc.
41-625 Eclectic Street, Suite D-2
Palm Desert, CA 92260
Ph: 760-346-8820
Info@dmgeconomics.com

Q.8: For community engagement, how has County leadership focused on locations? What are sub-county areas that have worked for holding engagement meetings?

A.8 The project should take into account needs and opportunities throughout Imperial County. Therefore, communities across the county should be engaged. In the process of developing the RFP, ICWDB's approach included sessions in: 1) communities adjacent to the KGRA and surrounding the Salton Sea; 2) the cities with the greatest populations: El Centro, Calexico, and Brawley; and 3) outlying communities.

Q.9 In Section III. A., under "Eligible Proposers", the RFP lists "Private Firm" as an entity that can bid for the project. However, "private firm" could be a for-profit entity or a non-profit entity. Also, in Appendix B, for-profit entities are not included in the table and have no entity type column, but they are listed in the checklist on Form A. Could you please confirm whether for-profit entities are eligible to submit bids?

A.9 For-profit entities are eligible to submit proposals in response to the RFP.

Q.10 Could you please provide a sample agreement that would include terms and conditions applicable to a for-profit contractor?

A.10 The contract for this project is under development. However, following proposal evaluation, including an assessment of proposed costs/prices, and after negotiations with the recommended proposer, Imperial County intends to execute a fixed fee contract, with pay points and amounts tied to negotiated deliverables.

Q.11 Can you provide a list of companies/individuals that attended the webinar?

A.11 ICWDB is preparing to reach out to all individuals who participated in the informational webinar to ask if their names and company affiliation can be shared with others. In a future Q&A publication, ICWDB will share the names of those who provide permission.

Q.12 Will the recording and slides from the Informational Webinar be shared?

A.12 The slides from the informational webinar are now available in the Lithium Valley Workforce and Economic Development Needs Assessment section of <https://www.ivworkforce.com/funding-opportunities>.

Q.13 Who is on the Valley Works Steering Committee which will be evaluating proposals?

A.13 A list of organizations and members serving on the Valley Works Steering Committee, has been uploaded to the Lithium Valley Workforce and Economic Development Needs Assessment section of <https://www.ivworkforce.com/funding-opportunities>.

Q.14 Would ICWDB be interested in a county-wide regeneration strategy (through improved environmental quality and natural amenities) to not only improve the quality of life for residents and support businesses, but also to retain and recruit talent to the area?

A.14 ICWDB anticipates that proposers will offer approaches that will provide the best workforce and economic opportunities for residents and businesses in the County. Strategies to retain and recruit talent and businesses are of interest to the ICWDB.

Q.15 What major economic development strategies has the county already conducted or attempted so far? Do any have an international/border component to them?

A.15 The RFP's informational appendices provide links to material about various economic development initiatives. Proposers are encouraged to research these and other initiatives and to determine how and if they will affect the proposer's approach to the project.

- Q.16 Does Imperial County have any ideas/opinions/strategies on the type of industry diversification? For example, looking at industries beyond lithium since it is a finite resource.
- A.16 The RFP addresses possible secondary industries, such as manufacturing and logistics, that may be developed in the County as a result of the Lithium Valley opportunity. The expert services sought through the RFP should address opportunities for industry diversification.
- Q.17 Is there any publicly-available information on residents' opinions on lithium mining in Imperial County?
- A.17 ICWDB has included information in the RFP that was obtained through a series of community conversations its representatives led on the jobs and the economy. Other groups in the County have held community forums touching on various aspects of the Lithium Valley. ICWDB representatives are not aware of publicly available information of this type, but encourage proposers to research the topic if it helps to inform their approach to the project.
- Q.18 Who will be the contracting entity on the county side for this project – Imperial County or ICWDB?
- A.18 ICWDB activities are administered by the Imperial County Department of Economic and Workforce Development. The successful proposer's contract will be with the County of Imperial.
- Q.19 As the funding for this effort is being sourced from the WIOA Title I Governor's Discretionary Grants, we understand that WIOA Title I funding has an administrative cost limit of 10% as described in Technical Appendix C and referred to in [20 CFR 683.215](#) that includes both direct and indirect charging. Is this administrative cost limitation applicable as the objectives of the RFP are not administrative in nature? In other words, the scope of this RFP is to provide an assessment of x and does not meet the definition of [20 CFR 683.215\(c\)\(1\)](#): Awards to subrecipients or contractors that are *solely for the performance of administrative functions* are classified as administrative costs. Given the above, would this cost limitation still be applicable to applicants responding to this RFP?
- A.19 After carefully reviewing this question, ICWDB representatives have determined that the 10% administrative cost limit does not apply to this project. ICWDB will be issuing a formal amendment to the RFP concerning this matter.