



Administrative Offices
117 East High Street, 4th Floor
Mount Vernon, OH 43050 - 3400
Tel: 740-397-7177 Fax: 740-392-1249

Scott Boone, MSW
Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Knox County Career Quest 2025

Issued by:
Knox County Job & Family Services (KCDJFS)
OhioMeansJobs Knox County (OMJ Knox)

Date of Issue: March 1, 2025

Deadline: April 1, 2025

Submit Proposals to:

Office of the Board of Knox County Commissioners
117 East High Street, Suite 161
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

Faxed or emailed proposals will not be accepted.

Overview

Knox County Job & Family Services (KCDJFS) is accepting proposals from qualified event planners to assist our workforce division at OhioMeansJobs Knox County (OMJ Knox) in organizing and coordinating a large-scale Comprehensive Case Management Employment Program (CCMEP) outreach event known as Career Quest 2025. The purpose of the event is to identify Knox County youth who are eligible/interested in receiving CCMEP youth employment services and exposing them to career opportunities previously unknown or unfamiliar to them. An event steering committee composed of local stakeholders including OMJ Knox staff, industry sector leaders, educators, youth providers, and community leaders has been developed to guide and direct the planning and execution of the event.

The desired term of the agreement between KCDJFS and the selected vendor will be April 15, 2025 – November 30, 2025, with an option for renewal for two (2) years at the conclusion of the initial agreement. Either party may terminate the agreement following a thirty (30) day written notice.

The event details, scope of service, and proposal requirements are listed below.

Event Details

This event is an opportunity for the emerging workforce to explore industries through hands-on activities provided by employers, training providers, and other youth program providers. The objective of Career Quest 2025 is to bring awareness to the next generation of workers in Knox County about available youth employment programs, education opportunities, and provide career exposure to begin forming an established pipeline of workers to local and regional career opportunities. The event will feature OhioMeansJobs Knox County youth programs, employers from a wide range of industries, education providers, apprenticeship programs, and other youth service providers. There will be 35-50 exhibitor stations representing the 15 career clusters outlined by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (some clusters will be combined to streamline the event). At least 4 soft skills stations staffed by OMJ Knox County employees will be included. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor to provide staff for their station (we will recommend 4-6 staff members per station). There will be approximately 10-15 additional event volunteers present to ensure the event runs smoothly. The event will serve approximately 1,200 Knox County youth and is planned to take place on a weekday in early fall 2025. The event will be held at the Mount Vernon Energy Fieldhouse, located at 896 S. Division Street, Mount Vernon, OH, and will operate from approximately 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM. There is no cost associated with use of the venue and KCDJFS will be insured for the venue and event.

Exhibitors will register for participation in advance. Exhibitors are required to present a hands-on activity at their stations to engage youth participants and allow them an interactive experience in their industry. During registration, exhibitors will identify the number of staff they plan to have on-site and indicate resources needed to operate their exhibit activities (number of tables, outdoor space, access to electricity, access to water, etc.). Exhibitors will be responsible for providing their own supplies and materials for their activities with the exception of access to utilities (if needed) to operate their exhibit. Activities having the potential to cause damage to the venue floors, walls, etc. or those that propose a danger if held indoors (such as gas-powered equipment, etc.) will be required to set up their stations outdoors. The event planner will arrange outdoor set up and availability of large event tents for exhibitor stations.

Exhibitors will be asked to set up their stations the day before the event. For purposes of set-up, the venue will be available to the event planner and exhibitors beginning mid-afternoon through early evening hours on the day before the event.

Individual and group event attendees must register in advance. To maximize the experience, attendees will complete a short career exploration curriculum (developed and provided to them by the steering committee members) prior to the event. After registration, attendees will be assigned a time to attend to ensure equal distribution of attendees throughout the day. The event structure

allows for attendees to be on-site for approximately 90 minutes to rotate through the various exhibitor stations. A new cohort will arrive, and a completed cohort will exit every 30 minutes. Upon arrival, attendees will receive event materials, including a venue map including the location of the various career clusters and soft skills stations, an activity card (e.g., a scavenger hunt or bingo card), and a pen. All event materials shall be branded with OhioMeansJobs Knox County standard logos with recognition given to the businesses/entities represented in the steering committee. Attendees will be required to visit the top 3 career clusters identified in their pre-work curriculum. They will also be required to visit an undetermined number of the soft skills stations.

As attendees exit, they will be asked to complete a short survey (developed by the steering committee) about their experience. At the conclusion of the event, exhibitors will be asked to complete a short survey (developed by the steering committee). Feedback collected through surveys will be analyzed by the steering committee and used for future event planning.

Attendees will have the opportunity to be entered into drawings to win prizes, such as gift cards or other age-appropriate incentives for completing specific event related activities (undefined at this time) during and following the event. Drawings will be conducted at the conclusion of the event and winning participants will be notified. (there will be approximately 20-22 winners)

We seek an experienced event planning partner to ensure the seamless execution of this impactful event.

Scope of Service/Deliverables

The selected vendor shall:

- Attend steering committee meetings either in person or via Teams, as scheduled and commencing the month following contract ratification. The meetings will be approximately one time per month with frequency increasing, as needed, the closer to the event date. Meetings typically last for one hour but, are typically shorter in length as frequency increases.
- Access and utilize Google sheets and documents containing event information, registrations, etc. and shared between steering committee members and the selected vendor to ensure all parties have access to the same data regarding the event.
- Schedule a visit to the venue with members of the steering committee and formulate a plan-o-gram for placement of exhibitors within their cluster and ensure they have access to the utilities they indicate a need for when they registered. Typically, each exhibitor station is 12' x 12'. If the available venue space does not allow for 12'x12' stations, the vendor and steering committee will review the plan-o-gram and floor space and determine the dimensions of each station to ensure equitable space for exhibitors.
- Assist steering committee in making assignments for registered exhibitors into the various career cluster categories. Several exhibitors could be considered for more than one category. Vendor will make assignments to ensure an equal (or close) number of exhibitors in each category.
- Assist steering committee in assigning 10-15 event volunteers to duties and training them ahead of the event via in-person or by Teams meeting.
- Provide a means of identification for 10-15 volunteers, approximately 14 OMJ Knox staff, 8 event steering committee members, and an undetermined number of vendor personnel to ensure they are easily recognizable by event attendees. This may include, but is not limited to event branded t-shirts, vests, badges, lanyards, or other another visible identifier. The identification method should be consistent and clearly distinguishable to attendees. Vendor will be reimbursed actual cost for identification items. Personnel/volunteers will retain their identification item at the conclusion of the event, unless the nature of the item is that it can be reused at a later event. If so, OMJ Knox will retain those items at the conclusion of the event.
- Assign floor space to exhibitors arranging for access to requested utilities. Provide extension cords and portable power stations, as needed. Vendor will be reimbursed actual cost of rental or purchase of power station equipment. If purchased, equipment will be retained by OMJ Knox at the conclusion of the event. (Previously, several exhibitors required access to

electricity. The venue is very large, and does have outlets; however, there are typically more exhibitors who need access than available outlets. Previously were short approximately 5-10 outlets)

- Provide large outdoor event tents for outdoor exhibitors and ensure placement works with the flow of the event and is arranged within reasonable proximity of the indoor exhibits and activities. We anticipate having approximately 8-10 outdoor exhibitors. Tents will be placed on a blacktop surface and should be secured with means other than drilling into or causing any damage to the asphalt surface. KCDJFS will not reimburse purchase of event tents. If the vendor does not have event tents for rent, they will be reimbursed the actual cost for the rental of them.
- Provide 8 foot tables for each exhibitor station as well as plain tablecloths in a neutral color. Each station will be provided up to 2 tables (some exhibitors request 1 and others will request 2; most exhibitors will bring their own tablecloths). Provide 2 chairs for each exhibitor station. KCDJFS will not reimburse purchase of tables and chairs. If the vendor does not have tables and chairs for rent, they will be reimbursed the actual cost for rental of this equipment.
- Set up tables, chairs, tents, and other event equipment the day before the event, and take them down immediately at the conclusion of the event. We will need to be out of the venue as quickly as possible at the conclusion of the event because after school programs will be taking place. Each exhibitor will be responsible for providing, setting up and taking down the event materials and supplies used for their exhibit.
- Develop an arrival and departure schedule for registered groups 90 days prior to the event, so groups can plan ahead for transportation. The schedule shall be designed in a manner to avoid overcrowding at the event, accommodating group requests for time slots, when possible.
- Develop a plan for traffic flow of drop-off, pick-up, event entry, and event exit (several groups will arrive via bus).
- Be present on-site for the entire duration event set-up, the actual event, event teardown, and will assist/direct where needed to ensure smooth event operations.
- Provide professionally printed, OMJ Knox branded signage for the event including welcome signage, outdoor drop off and pick up signage (sandwich boards), soft skills station signage, etc. Vendor will be reimbursed actual cost for purchase or rental of these items. Signage and other items purchased for the event will be retained by OMJ Knox at the conclusion of the event.
- Provide a means of communication between vendor and volunteers during the event (such as walkie talkies, etc.). There will be an overhead PA system provided by the venue for use to announce arrivals/departures of attendee groups, and other general announcements. Vendor will be reimbursed actual cost of purchase or rental of communication devices. Any communication equipment purchased for the event will be retained by OMJ Knox at the conclusion of event.
- Provide professionally printed, OMJ Knox branded venue maps clearly outlining the career clusters and exhibitor names as well as activity cards for approximately 1,200 attendees. Maps shall be professionally printed on glossy, heavy weight paper and participant activity cards shall be professionally printed on matte cardstock to allow for ease of writing by attendees. Vendor will be reimbursed for the actual cost of the printed materials.
- Coordinate and provide morning refreshments such as coffee, bottled water, donuts or pastries, etc. as well as boxed lunches for approximately 225-250 exhibitors and volunteers. Vendor will be reimbursed the actual cost of these items. Note: the event will not likely start with the full number of exhibitors. We recommend and it is likely that stations will begin the event with 2-3 exhibitors. Mid-day, alternate exhibitor staff will present to relieve those already at the event. Those coming in will have a boxed lunch upon arrival and those leaving will have a boxed lunch before leaving. This allows exhibitor stations to run continuously without interruption and have full coverage throughout the duration of the event.
- Coordinate and provide 20-22 incentives in the price range of \$20 each for attendee drawings. Vendor will be reimbursed the actual cost of these items.
- Attend a debriefing with the event steering committee, as scheduled within 30 days of the conclusion of the event. The purpose of the debrief is to review survey results and share feedback of the event from all perspectives.

Steering Committee Responsibilities

- Recruit and register exhibitors and document them and their station needs on shared Google documents/sheets.
- Promote the event, register attendees and document registrations and scheduling requests on shared Google documents/sheets.
- By exhibitor request, provide ideas and assist exhibitors in developing age-appropriate, hands-on activities for their stations.
- Develop, distribute, and instruct (as requested) pre-event career exploration curriculum to registered attendees.
- Provide 15-foot-tall feather banners identifying the career clusters for use at the event.
- Provide hands-on activities for 4-6 soft skills stations.
- Provide vendor with PDF files for the event materials with enough advance to allow for professional printing.
- Provide OMJ branded bags and pens for attendees.
- Recruit 10-15 event volunteers.
- Work in tandem with the selected vendor to train volunteers for their assigned duties at the event. Training shall occur prior to the event.
- Provide to the vendor logos for Career Quest, OMJ Knox, and steering committee representative companies for branding materials and signage.

Response Requirements

Responses to this RFP must include the following:

1. Proposers should provide a summary of business background, including number of years in business, mission statement (if applicable), and types of services they provide.
2. Proposers should explain in detail prior experience planning, organizing, and executing large-scale events and provide reference contact information (name and phone number or email) for a minimum of one prior customer that had a large-scale event coordinated and executed by the proposer.
3. The number of employees that will be utilized in the performance of this project.
4. Confirmation statement that vendor is appropriately licensed (if applicable), bonded, and insured and that all employees for this project have a clean background free of any offenses that would bar them from working with children.
5. Vendor must specifically disclose if it is proposing to subcontract out any portion of the work to a third party. If so, submission must specify which parts are proposed to be outsourced and who will perform such work. If the subcontract worker(s) will be present during the event, a confirmation statement that the subcontractor(s) have a clean background free of any offenses that would bar them from working with children.
6. Itemized list of proposed cost, including but not limited to, vendor schedule of fees for services; fees for rental of vendor owned supplies/equipment (list out equipment and rental cost for each item); anticipated cost of non-vendor owned materials/ supplies/equipment that will be rented for the event (list out anticipated rental cost for each item); anticipated cost of all materials/supplies/equipment that will be purchased for the event (list out anticipated purchase cost for each item); and any other anticipated costs (list out cost for each item and provide details).

7. The person signing the proposal as the submitting officer has the authority to do so.
8. The proposing organization must not be on the Federal, State, or local debarment list.
9. The proposing organization agrees to meet Federal, State, and local EEO and WIOA program and fiscal compliance requirements.

Submission Requirements

1. Questions about this proposal should be directed to Brandy Booth, Brandy.Booth@jfs.ohio.gov, 740-399-3647.
2. The Proposal Response page must be signed by an authorized representative of the bidder and submitted along with the specific information identified above.
3. Bids must be addressed and mailed or hand-delivered to:
Office of the Board of Knox County Commissioners, 117 East High Street, Suite 161, Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050
4. Envelopes containing the proposal should be clearly marked with “**Career Quest 2025 Services RFP Response**”
5. Proposals must be submitted by April 1, 2025, at 11:00 am, at which time bid opening will commence. Respondents may be present for bid opening.
6. Electronically transmitted submissions (email or fax) will not be accepted.
7. KCDJFS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any portion thereof.
8. KCDJFS reserves the right to waive minor informalities or technicalities when it is in the KCDJFS best interest.
9. KCDJFS reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to amend or modify any provision of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP at any time prior to contract award. KCDJFS shall not be bound by or liable under this RFP and/or any response thereto until a final written contract has been executed by KCDJFS and the vendor incorporating the terms and conditions of the award.
10. Respondents shall hold their price firm and subject to acceptance by KCDJFS for a period of sixty (60) days from the proposal submission due date.
11. Respondents may be asked to provide proof of business capability, such as evidence of prior projects and additional reference contacts. KCDJFS will make the final determination as to a respondent’s ability.
12. **Unsigned proposals will not be considered.**

Review and Selection Criteria

KCDJFS will use the following criteria to select the most appropriate vendor. The major areas that will be evaluated:

- Price
- Industry expertise and experience
- Performance of prior contract awards with KCDJFS and/or OMJ Knox County

Key Dates

Date	Activity
March 1, 2025	RFP Posted
April 1, 2025	Deadline to submit proposals
April 1-3, 2025	Proposal review period
April 3, 2025	Selection and award notification

Exclusive Representation and Fundraising Restrictions

The selected vendor acknowledges that this event is solely organized and owned by KCDJFS and OMJ Knox County. The vendor is contracted to provide services for this event and shall not represent the event as their own in any capacity. The vendor is strictly prohibited from soliciting funds, sponsorships, donations, or any other financial contributions from third parties, including nonprofit organizations, businesses, or individuals, using this event as a premise for such solicitations. Any unauthorized fundraising or misrepresentation of the vendor's role in the event may result in immediate termination of the contract and potential legal action.

General Terms and Conditions

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee a selection. KCDJFS is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to the RFP. KCDJFS reserves the right to withdraw a selection prior to execution of a contract.

KCDJFS / OMJ Knox shall retain all equipment/materials purchased by the vendor for the purpose of this event and that the vendor has received reimbursement for through the contract.

Proposal Response – Career Quest 2025 RFP
April 1, 2025

Proposer Business Name: _____

Authorized Representative: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Is Proposer appropriately licensed: Yes
 No
 N/A

Is Proposer bonded: Yes
 No

Is Proposer insured: Yes (provide Workers' Compensation Certificate)
 No

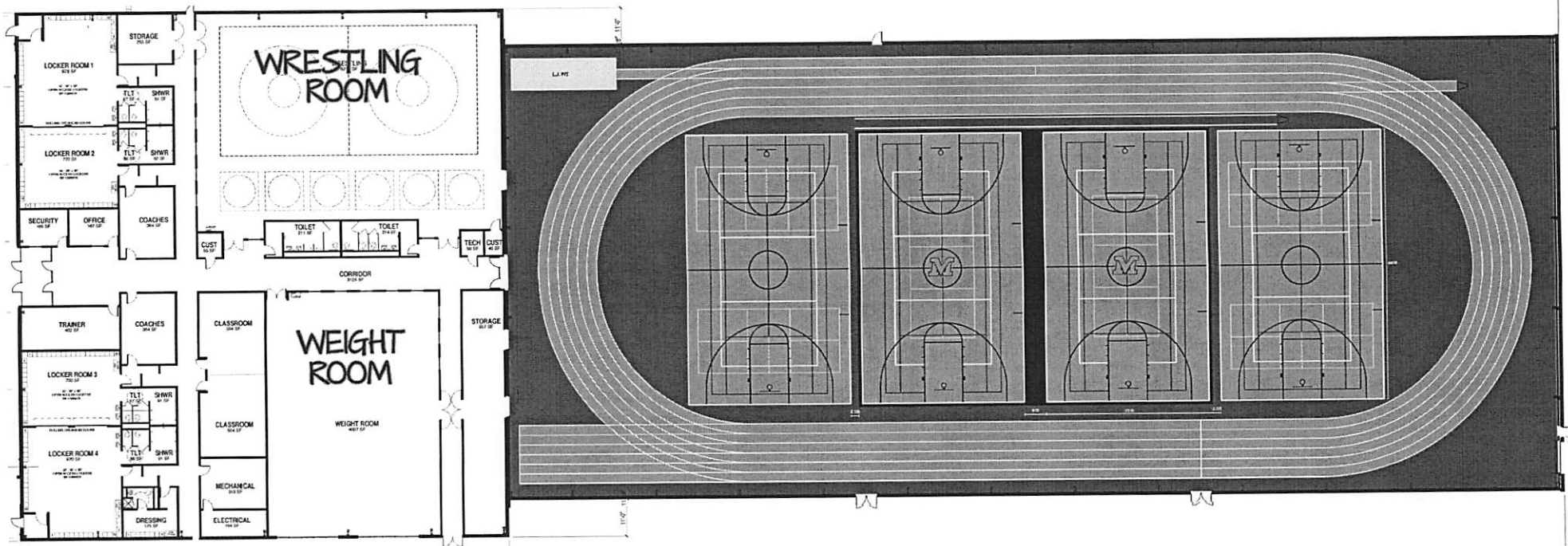
Proposer Representative Signature: _____

Representative Title: _____

Date: _____

Checklist of required information provided in an attached written proposal:

	Statement of proposer's background and experience
	Prior customer reference (minimum of one, must include phone number and/or email)
	Number of employees proposer will utilize in this project
	Certificate of insurance
	Confirmation statement that all vendor employees utilized in this project have a clean criminal background free of any offenses that would bar them from working with children.
	Explanation if any work will be outsourced to a third-party and confirmation statement that all subcontractors utilized at the event have a clean criminal background free of any offenses that would bar them from working with children. (if applicable)
	Proposed cost: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposers fee for services• Rental of Proposer owned equipment (itemized)• Rental of non-Proposer owned equipment (itemized)• Purchase of equipment/materials/supplies (itemized)• Other anticipated expenses (please itemize and explain)
	Signature of authorized representative above.



OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
REVISION 1A

1/16" = 1'-0"



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Career Quest 2025 Event Planner Proposal Scoring Sheet

Knox County Job & Family Services (KCDJFS) – OhioMeansJobs Knox County (OMJ

Knox) Date:

Vendor Organization Name:

Vendor Authorized Representative Name:

Total Possible Points: 100

Evaluation Criteria	Max # of Possible Points	# of Points Rated
Proposal was submitted before closing date and time	Not rated but required	
Proposing vendor is not on the federal state or local debarment list	Not rated but required	
Viability of the Vendor Organization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business background and years in operation. • Established organization with connections that coincide with the scope of the project. • Number of employees available for the project. • Licensing, bonding, insurance, and background confirmation for employees. • Disclosure and details of any subcontracting of services (if applicable) 	25	
Proposed Services Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience organizing and executing large-scale events • References provided and quality of past event execution • Demonstrated ability to work with multiple stakeholders and manage logistics for large events. 	25	
Proposed Service Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed approach to fulfilling scope of services • Demonstrated understanding of event logistics, exhibitor management, volunteer coordination, and schedule planning. 	25	
Budget and Cost Feasibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and transparent itemization of costs (vendor fees, rentals, anticipated purchases, and other expenses as outlined in the scope of service/deliverables). • Reasonableness of proposed costs in relation to services provided. • Cost-effectiveness and feasibility of the budget proposal. 	25	
Total Points	100	

Reviewer Notes: