

Proposed RFPs

With the evolving economic landscape, many businesses will need to change business models, seek new customers, and hire staff with different skill sets to survive. These studies can help work2future to identify and assist businesses and job seekers to adapt and retool themselves.

Since our inception, work2future (aka Silicon Valley Workforce Investment Network) has conducted various Labor Market and Business studies to gauge the health and direction of our business customers. It is important to periodically review our current status and assess the needs of the community and make course corrections as indicated.

Proposed studies are:

Rapid Response – Best Practices Study at a cost of \$50,000.

- Identify and share most effective outreach methods and services.
- Identify least effective outreach and services delivery methods.
- Identify tools to effectively deal with small non-WARN business layoffs.
- Develop early warning system to identify small businesses in jeopardy of layoffs.
- Develop best practices to serve these businesses.
- Recommend useful improvements to Rapid Response services.
- Identify relevant reporting data and streamline reporting systems.
- Organize facilitated focus groups including employers, dislocated workers, and other stakeholders. Creating these focus groups will include and result in:
 - Participants and questions approved by w2f
 - Analysis and recommended solutions
 - A Final Report

Small Business Study – To understand how small business leads the economy through the bust-and-boom cycle and how to support small businesses through the cycle. Cost to be \$70,000.

Task 1 – Overview of Small Business Community: Provide an overview of the current profile and trends within Santa Clara County's small business community. This profile should include, without limitation, trends by employee size, industry sector, geographic location, education, age of firm, and business ownership profile.

The trend analysis would be for the period 1980 to the present in order to capture multiple recessionary periods and to assess how small business has fared through these economic downturns, and to identify what role they play during these downturns and in the subsequent economic recovery.

One area of particular interest will center upon the development and application of an analytical framework to assess the trends and current profile of the rapidly growing number of sole proprietorships within our local area.

Task 2 – Development and Implementation of the BusinessOwnerSpace.com Small Business Vibrancy Index: The consultant will design an index that measures the overall vibrancy and impact of small business in work2future’s local area.

The index should consist of a composite of key indicators, sourced from primary and secondary research data sources. Relevant indicators may include: birth and death rate of small business, bankruptcies, defaults and foreclosures by small business, access to capital (debt, equity and other), job creation and tax generation, and other relevant indicators that demonstrate and highlight the trends and current status of the impact of (and impediments faced by) small business within our local area.

As currently envisioned, work2future would utilize the results of the Index, to be implemented annually, to inform its board, and relevant stakeholders of opportunities and challenges confronting small business in our community.

Task 3 – Challenges and Opportunities to Foster Small Business Startup and Growth: The consultant will develop an analytical framework and assessment of the impact of small businesses within our local area. Among other things, this should include such factors as job generation, the quality of jobs created, tax/revenue generation, and innovation. A stakeholder group convened by work2future will support the consultant in defining the factors to be assessed under this task.

In addition, the consultant will undertake an assessment of the current impediments to small business start-up and growth. This may include a detailed assessment of current permitting, licensing, general plan development and other practices that impact small business formation and growth in our local area. This analysis should take into account regional, national and international best practices targeted to streamlining and fostering small business’s formation and growth.

Task 4 – Policy Recommendation: The consultant will develop appropriate policy recommendations to address the challenges, impediments and opportunities regarding small business formation and growth within our local area. The recommendations, to the extent practical, should be tailored to recognize the differences between small business as defined and categorized under Task 1 (i.e., different recommendations may be tailored to different types of sole proprietorships).

Task 5 – Report Dissemination and Presentation: The consultant will be responsible for developing a report detailing the study’s methodology, findings and policy recommendations, as described under Tasks 1 - 4 above. In addition, the consultant will a report to the BusinessOwnerSpace working group, the work2future board of directors, the San Jose City Council or a designated body, and at a still-to-be-identified community forum attended by small business and other relevant stakeholders.

Clean and Green Industry Research Study – Cost to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000

- Determine the number of people needed to meet the job demand from local emerging industries and technologies, the green economy sectors, from policies such as the Green Vision strategy and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).
- Determine gaps in needed skills.
- Identify best practices, policy drivers, and the impact on the demand for labor
- Provide case studies from other cities or WIBs who have adopted a green agenda
- Provide an index of work2future's emerging industries and technologies, green economy sectors, businesses, and training providers.
- Additionally, there will be a requirement for stakeholder outreach associated with this study.
- Identify potential areas for entrepreneurship within the clean and green industry.
- Inventory Clean and Green Training providers.

Summary

Total cost for (3) RFPs – \$225,000 or to be funded from Rapid Response allocations.

Expected outcomes: Due the dramatic change in the economy, it is important to understand those changes, identify needs and service delivery methods, and provide appropriate services to businesses and job seekers.

- Identify business lay-off needs.
- Assess and develop business services strategies.
- Implement best practices methodologies.
- Develop and design tools for better business assistance.
- Understand the local emerging industries and economies.

Release dates are anticipated to be in March 2010, with studies to be completed by June 30, 2010. Reports expected to be delivered to board by August Board meeting.