

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS
FOR
SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

FINDINGS

1. Authorization:

19 DCMR § 4320.7.

2. Minimum Need:

The District of Columbia Public Library Adult Literacy Resource Center has a need for an organization that can provide at least 4 experienced GED tutors to work with adult learners who have taken the GED Practice Test at the DC Public Library and whose scores indicate that they would benefit from short Term (approximately 6 to 12 weeks) tutoring in one GED subject area.

3. Estimated Fair and Reasonable Price:

\$26,375.00.

4. Facts That Justify a Sole Source Procurement:

- A. The Adult Literacy Resource Center (ALRC) provides unique services to the DC Public Library System through the resources and support it gives to a specific population: adults with literacy needs (reading, writing, math, English language skills, learning challenges). Over the past five (5) years, the ALRC has been able to provide subject-specific, short-term tutoring to GED students by contracting directly with experienced GED instructors. This process is no longer allowable in FY2013, but LSTA funding has already been designated for GED subject-specific tutoring. Short-term tutoring in the GED subject areas enables adults who are close to passing to receive needed instruction so that they can take and pass the GED Test within several months. The DC GED Testing Center at OSSE (Office of the State Superintendent of Education) recognizes the critical need for tutoring since obtaining a high school credential is required for entry into college and training programs and for securing living-wage jobs and/or job advancement.
- B. Additionally, the District of Columbia has the lowest GED pass rate in the nation, and given that adult learning and literacy is a core focus area of DCPL, the ALRC is uniquely positioned to help adults who take the GED Practice Test at DCPL and come close to passing to improve their skills and then take and pass the full-length GED Test.
- C. Therefore, DCPL would like to contract with an experienced adult education community-based organization in the District to provide short-term GED tutoring and is requesting a sole-source contract with Living Wages, a non-profit, community-based adult education program located in Ward 8 (www.livingwages.org).
- D. Professional, for-profit tutoring organizations rarely have experience working with adults with literacy needs and have hourly charges greater than the \$20-\$25 per hour budgeted in the scope of work of this project.
- E. Living Wages is a community of adult learners, educators, tutors, volunteers and supporters, located in Southeast Washington, D.C. For more than 12 years, it has been concerned with the

education of low-income and marginalized adults working toward their high school credentials as well as toward a better and more economically sustainable future.

- F. Living Wages has been successfully providing adult education (GED and National External Diploma Program) classes and tutoring since 1999 and is a non-profit organization that can easily work within the fiscal constraints and budget of this project and with staff of the Adult Literacy Resource Center. There would, in effect be a seamless transition from the ALRC's contracting with individual tutors to an established adult education non-profit providing and overseeing the several tutors needed for the project.
- G. The Adult Literacy Resource Center partnered with Living Wages in fiscal years 2008-2011 when a major ALRC initiative explored the possibility of becoming a site for the National External Diploma Program (NEDP). Living Wages was one of only two adult literacy organizations that provided both GED and NEDP assessment and instruction, and the only one that provided subject-specific tutoring in mathematics, writing, social studies, science and language arts reading for GED students. It is critical for this project that the organization providing tutoring has access to tutors with in-depth knowledge of the five GED subject areas and experience in tutoring adult learners in these areas and in the test-taking skills needed to pay the particular subject area GED test. During these years mentioned above, Living Wages also provided valuable technical assistance that helped to shape the ALRC's role in the District's National External Diploma Program Partnership. Second, Living Wages provides most of its instruction through individual tutoring and mentoring so it can easily tap its pool of instructors and recruit others if necessary to implement this project. Third, through its NEXT STEPS program, Living Wages will also be able to offer employment tools and employment test preparation to the students that ALRC will refer for GED tutoring. This will provide a valuable resource to the adult learners who will need more than just a high school credential to access opportunities for future employment and educational advancement. For these reasons, we believe that it is in the best interests of the students, the Library and the District Government to grant a sole source contract to Living Wages Adult Education Center.

5. Certification By the Contract Specialist:

I hereby certify that the above facts are accurate and complete.

Contract Specialist

Date

DETERMINATION

Based on the above findings and in accordance with the DCPL Procurement Regulations, 19 DCMR § 4320.7 I hereby determine that the award of a sole source contract for the services described herein is in the best interest of the D.C. Public Library.

Contracting Officer

Date