Abstract
Workforce Innovation Fund Application

Applicant Name: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Applicant Category: State Workforce Agency

Lead Applicant City/State: Columbus, OH

Areas Served: State of Ohio

Project Name: e-OMJ (electronic Ohio Means Jobs)

Funding Level Requested: $10.5 million technical costs
                               $1.5 million evaluation costs

Project Type: C

   Description of Proposed Project: Ohio operates 77 separate workforce programs that are spread across 13 different government agencies, resulting in a complex maze of competing priorities and agency missions.   These agencies include workforce, education, social services, and economic development. Customers must navigate a complicated web of federal programs and state agencies that have overlapping missions and clients, and lack standardized processes and consistency of services.   This cumbersome bureaucracy is extremely inefficient; duplicating efforts, wasting resources, and confusing customers.   In looking for an adaptable solution to this problem, ODJFS has determined that in at least 17 states and 37 regions, customers are able to "virtually" access some level of workforce services using state-of-the-art technologies.   Additionally, ODJFS has researched and learned how the private sector is effectively using dynamic websites to actively engage customers and offer services.   We propose to build on these proven approaches through the new electronic Ohio Means Jobs (e-OMJ) system that will provide customers with an Internet-based gateway for standardized access and consistent services. The goal of our project is to transform Ohio's confusing and expensive public workforce system in a cost-effective manner by creating a virtual approach that uses state-of-the-art technology to increase customers and their usage by delivering

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standardized access to consistent services among multiple programs that are fully supported by a broad array of high-tech customer service tools including chat lines, video conferencing, etc. This fully aligns with the Workforce Innovation Fund's (WIF) goal of greater efficiency in delivery of quality services through technology-supported learning environments and virtual case management.

Our proposed e-OMJ system will expand access to Ohio's workforce services by providing a variety of online resources and tools that customers can use from the comfort of their own home, office, school, library, military base, or any other Internet-connected location or device. With a simple click of the mouse, they will virtually access primary services available at traditional One-Stop offices. Customers can opt in and out at their own pace, every day, at any time of day.

As customers move through the service mix, they will create valuable employment portfolios, called e-Folios, containing their specific needs, requests, and interests. Using Artificial Intelligence coupled with advanced technology, online tools will be intuitive and self-directed, so that customers can easily transfer from one to activity another. Information will be written on an eighth grade reading level to further promote ease of access. Additionally, Customer Service Representatives will be available to assist and guide both employers and job seekers as needed. Customers can use their completed e-Folio to apply for a variety of services, including funding for training, supportive services, scholarships, foundations, internships, and community programs, including and beyond USDOL programs. All customers will be able to electronically submit required documentation by emailing scanned documents or completing on-line forms to apply for funding from multiple workforce programs. At any time, customers can go on-site for One-Stop assistance.

The proposed e-OMJ service structure will fully complement our existing One-Stop system, allowing us to provide standardized access and consistent services while serving greater numbers and better leveraging our funding investments to sustain the jobs of today and prepare for the jobs of tomorrow.   Most importantly, e-OMJ will enable our public workforce services to remain useful and relevant in today's

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technology-based society.

Description of Proposed Evaluation Strategy: Because our e-OMJ strategy represents service delivery innovation under Project Type C, we are proposing to use a random assignment technique for evaluating the results of our project. The implementation of e-OMJ is a dynamic process, occurring in consecutive, planned stages over a series of years; therefore, our study will be conducted in conjunction with the key implementation phases of the project. Our subject groups (described below) will be categorized into specific cohorts based upon their entry date into the system, providing assurance that the evaluated individuals are receiving similar services. Upon entry into either the e-OMJ or traditional One-Stop system, customers will be queried about their interest in participating in the evaluation study. We will randomly assign those who are agreeable into one of two groups: (a) the program group that will use e-OMJ services or (b) the control group that will use traditional One-Stop services.

ODJFS will evaluate the program based on the following criteria: (1) implementable, (2) based on effective principles, (3) customer satisfaction, (4) change reports, (5) random assignment, (6) longitudinal impact, (7) multiple site replication, (8) dosage analysis, and (9) meta-analysis, expert review, and consensus.

Results. We have established clear and quantifiable measures to evaluate the effectiveness of our e-OMJ project. Using the evaluation study, we will measure our program results against our control results to fully determine the impact of our One-Stop transformation efforts.

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END OF ABSTRACT

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