

Promise Soft Skills RFA Initial Questions & Answers – Updated 9/11/2014

1. Can an applicant apply for just one WDA?

Yes

2. As a current Job Developer working in WDA 5 Green Bay do we need to stay just in this district or can we expand to other districts?

Applicants need to determine where they will provide training. Applicants should consider their capacity when determining where they will provide training, keeping in mind that the fees for service include all costs associated with providing training.

3. I have a strong youth trainer and would like to build in a mentor model for a mentee to shadow during the training process; with the train the trainer model in place along with the learning community support it seems to support this approach. Question is can we submit an application with 3 trainers, selecting both youth and adults 2 who are strong and experienced and 1 newbie.

There are no specific requirements in terms of the experience level of the trainers. Reviewers will be considering the overall ability of an applicant to meet the “Scope of Work” (Attachment A) the “Responsibilities and Qualifications” (Attachment B).

4. Are there any education/degree requirements for the Soft Skills Trainer? Page 2 references understanding, qualifications, experience, capacity, other.

No, there are no specific education/degree requirements for Soft Skills Trainers. Also see response to #3.

5. Past experience working with DVR, providing services to youth. Does this mean past experience working with DVR, youth in general or, DVR youth; specifically?

This could include working with DVR, with youth, and/or working with youth who are also DVR consumers.

6. So if you were teaching a module to 6 participants the fee would be: \$450 + \$375 (5 x \$75) = \$825?

No, the minimum fee of \$450 is based on 6 participants at \$75/participant. If 6 participants are signed up for a module, but only 5 attend, the fee would still be the minimum of \$450. Additional participants beyond the minimum fee would be \$75 each. For example, the fee for 7 participants would be \$525 or \$450 (minimum of 6) + \$75 for the 1 additional participant. There are a total of 6 modules. The same fee structure would apply to each module. Providers who complete all six modules would be guaranteed \$2,700 minimum (\$450 minimum x 6 modules).

- 7. The payment: We get \$450 per module with 6 participants plus an addition \$75 for each participant over 6?**

That is correct. Also see response to #6.

- 8. What if folks are signed up for the class, but then do not show up-we will only get payment if folks actually come?**

The minimum fee would still be \$450. Also see response to #6.

- 9. I have one question related to the fee schedule for services. I am unclear about the payment of \$450.00 guaranteed per module with a minimum of 6 participants to hold a training module. Is that a flat \$450.00 per module and \$75.00 per participant enrolled per module OR is the \$450.00 per module per participant and the \$75.00 for any additional participant such as a family member or guardian?**

Please see response to #6.

- 10. The guaranteed minimum fee is \$450 per module. Is this for 6 people?**

Please see response to #6.

- 11. Where is the training held and who is responsible for paying for the costs associated with attending the training? (This question was asked in relation to the training SVRI will be providing to trainers approved through the RFA process.)**

Locations for training will be determined once the trainers have been approved and their locations are known. The SVRI Soft Skills Team will make every effort to find locations that minimize travel for trainers.

SVRI will cover the cost of materials and any costs associated with the venue. SVRI will provide coffee and rolls in the morning and an afternoon snack; lunch will not be provided. Trainers will need to provide their own transportation and lodging, if needed. Every effort will be made to provide training in locations that will not require participants to travel more than 100 miles one way.

- 12. The RFA states that participation in the training and learning community is mandatory for each individual who will provide Soft Skills training. Will provider be paid for staff time and possibly travel to participate in the training?**

No, staff time and costs associated with participating in the mandatory training will not be reimbursed. Please see response to #11 for additional information.

- 13. Are there any administrative fees associated with reporting and data collection responsibilities?**

At this time, no administrative fees associated with reporting and data collection are anticipated. Trainers approved through this RFA will need to have access to the Internet to participate in the online learning communities. Access to the Internet will also be needed at training sites to allow Promise participants to complete the online, pre- and post-tests.

- 14. Does the service provider pay for the costs of the logistics or is there funding for travel and related costs?**

Providers will be responsible for costs related to the logistics. These costs are part of the fees for the service.

15. Is there any reimbursement available for travel costs related to training or to service provision?

No, the fees for this service cover all costs associated with providing the training.

16. Regarding Travel Expenses: Will Service Providers be reimbursed for mileage, meal, hotel accommodations, etc.?

Travel expenses are not reimbursable.

17. Attachment B states: “Soft Skills Trainers must be willing and able to perform travel that is necessary to carry out the responsibilities outlined in this RFA.” This may affect which staff are selected. Please elaborate.

- a. Frequency of travel
- b. Distance of travel
- c. What time of day will travel occur?
- d. Is overnight travel required?
- e. Is travel for training or provision of services?

At this time it is impossible to provide an exact response. We are anticipating providers will be available in all WDAs so that no overnight travel is anticipated and that it will be near a provider's location.

18. What is the criteria when selecting a location to provide training in?

Training locations should be large enough to accommodate 6 – 15 participants. We recommend that the location be flexible in terms of room arrangement and not be set up in a traditional classroom style (teacher at the front with rows of desks). Access to a flip chart, blackboard, or white board is recommended. Internet access is also recommended to allow Promise youth participants to complete online, pre- and post-tests for ~~each module~~. (Correction – pre- and post-tests will be given at the beginning of the soft skills training and at the end of the training, not at the beginning and end of each module.)

Additional criteria will be discussed during the training SVRI provides to approved trainers.

19. What time of day are the services expected to be provided?

While we do not have specific expectations in terms of when the training will be provided, Saturdays are the most likely choice during the school year. In the summer, other days might be feasible depending on the availability of the youth being referred.

20. Will classes be offered during standard business hours or will there need to be flexibility in scheduling?

Flexibility will be needed. Please see response to #19.

21. Will students be able to do this as part of their school day?

No, students will not be participating in this training as part of their school day.

22. Since the participants noted in the RFA will be youth (at least for now), will the classes need to take place outside of the school day, or can they be within the school day?

Please see responses to #19, #20, and #21.

23. If within the school day, is there a method of transportation?

N/A

24. Will students be bused to the training locations?

Transportation will be dependent upon the participant. Promise may reimburse participants for transportation.

25. How many days per week will students attend?

The training is designed to be delivered in one session for each module. The length of the sessions may vary depending on the number of youth in the group and other factors, but we anticipate each session lasting 3 – 4 hours.

26. Is there a recommended length of time each module should be completed within? For example, 1 hour a day for 4 days, or 2 hours a day for 2 days? This cannot be found on the website or in the curriculum materials.

Please see response to #25.

27. The information states that each module in the curriculum takes 3-4 hours to deliver. Will each module be done in one session or is each module expected to be covered over multiple sessions?

The training is designed to be delivered in one session per module. Also see response to #25.

28. Who sets up the training...completes the logistics, event planning registration, lunch accommodations, special meals (for full day training) etc.?

Providers who are approved to be Soft Skills Trainers will be responsible for setting up the training.

29. Will youth and adults ever be combined in classes?

The “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum is meant for youth. This curriculum is being adapted for use with adults and additional training will be made available to those providers who indicate in their applications that would like to provide training to adults.

30. Where will the training be held?

Providers approved to be Soft Skills Trainers will be responsible for finding a suitable location for training. Please see response to #18 for additional information.

Please see response to #11 for information about the training SVRI is provided to trainers approved through this RFA.

31. What are the responsibilities of the Administrative contact?

The main responsibility of the administrative contact is to be available if there are questions or concerns related to the Soft Skills training being provided, the trainer(s) from that contact person’s agency or business, etc.

32. Will training be available after the initial training if a trained staff member leaves employment with our agency?

At this time, no training sessions are planned beyond the initial training that will be provided to trainers approved through this RFA. The SVRI Soft Skills Team will monitor the programming needs across the state and work with the statewide Promise team to ensure youth and families are able to access the service.

33. How many providers will be chosen from each WDA?

No specific number of providers per WDA has been set.

34. How many prospective students do you anticipate in our WDA 8 area?

We have not yet started full recruitment of participants in the WDA 8 area. We expect to hire staff in the area late this fall. WDA 8 represents 4.5% of the potential target population which would be the equivalent of 45 in the treatment group to enroll over a 2 year period. However, exact numbers depends on where and when individuals enroll.

35. What is the anticipated referral timeline?

This will depend upon actual enrollments in each area.

36. How long will a prospective students be asked to wait for each class to be filled?

This will depend upon actual enrollments in each area and readiness of participant for the training.

37. How will the class size minimums affect the start of the program?

This will depend upon actual enrollments in each area. Currently, we have staff and enrollments in WDA 1, 2 (also covering WDA 3), 4, 5, and 10 (also covering 11). We have some enrollees in the Western areas even though we have not started full recruitment in those areas. We will be recruiting in other areas after we have staff in place.

38. How is WI Promise identifying potential youth participants?

Potential participants may only be from a list that is supplied to Wisconsin from Social Security. This list is updated periodically.

39. Who does the marketing for the training?

DVR/Promise staff will provide coordinate referrals to approved Soft Skills Trainers when sufficient numbers are available for a class.

40. How is WI Promise being promoted in WDA 7?

WDA 6, 7, 8, 9 and western half of WDA 11 will begin being actively promoted late fall after staff are in place in those areas. Below is a chart of the potential pool for the state to meet our maximum of 2,000 enrollees with 1,000 in treatment:

WDA	SSI Target Population	%
1	1213	10.1%
2	5028	41.7%
3	328	2.7%
4	816	6.8%
5	1027	8.5%
6	526	4.4%
7	180	1.5%

8	540	4.5%
9	426	3.5 %
10	1147	9.5%
11	595	5%

41. What is the anticipated number of youth participants for WDA 7?

From the above chart, approximately 15 would be anticipated if those enrolling exactly matched the %.

42. How many dedicated WI Promise directors and counselors are assigned to WDA 7?

WDA 7 and 8 will be combined with one staff person. Location is still to be determined during recruitment.

43. Are the WDA 7 assigned directors and counselors also responsible to other WDAs?

Please see response to #42 above.

44. What do we know about the need and the frequency of the referrals for youth and their families? Is there a waiting list for this training? What is the projected need? Projected time commitment for the trainers etc.

Please see the above chart for potential numbers – assume 1,000 in treatment.

45. Can our trainers train others who may be interested in the soft skills training that may not come from a DVR referral? If an industry is interested in the training for example or other youth programs such as the boys and girls club, YMCA programs, special education classes in high school, Hand n Hand of Northeast Wisconsin (provides services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth and families etc.)?

Once trained, vendors may market their skills and knowledge of the training to any other group. DVR may also have other participants that are not Promise or combined with Promise participants who would be referred as a group.

46. It sounds like all referrals for the Skills to Pay the Bills modules will come through DVR, is that correct? Would the modules be available to only WI Promise participants, or could a provider include youth who were not part of WI Promise in the classes (not reimbursed by the grant for non-Promise participants, of course)?

DVR will coordinate a class which may include other DVR consumers; however, DVR could also coordinate with the providers if they have others who were not part of DVR or Promise that might make sense to fill a class or enhance the number of trainees.

47. Can other program participants be included in the training in order to fill up the classes? For example, could we offer this to other WIA youth program participants?

Please see response to #45 and #46.

48. What if areas that have smaller populations cannot come up with 6 people for each module?

DVR will organize the minimum size group. Regardless of size, the trainer is guaranteed \$450 per module, with any participants above 6 at an additional \$75 per module.

49. What is the anticipated time commitment for reporting and data collection?

Minimal - requirement is primarily to confirm attendance and then any notes regarding participants' participation in the group that would be of interest to the counselor.

50. I am a DVR provider, but the person I would like to work with me is not. Would that person need to be a Provider or a Sub-Contractor with my agency?

That person would be considered a sub-contractor and would need to have a background check like any other DVR provider.

51. At what ages would the youth enrolled be enrolled in Skills to Pay the Bills? 14-16 or older than 16?

Youth who enroll in Promise are 14 – 16 years old. Depending on when youth are referred for Soft Skills training, they may be older than 16.

52. Can work experience be included with the Soft Skill training, for instance after the modules are completed? Or, will there be separate RFPs for this?

Work experience (or internships) for individuals participating will be handled through the regular DVR authorization process. There will be no separate RFPs for this, and we will use our current approved list of providers for this service.

Questions and Answers from the Conference Call on 9/17/2014

- 1. How should providers address the questions in the RFA about the people who will be providing the training if the provider plans to hire staff to be trainers? Should information about the person who will be supervising the trainers be included?**

In that situation, information about the supervisor would be helpful. Also, information about how you plan to recruit the trainers would also be helpful.

- 2. When is the application due and where is the application? How are applications submitted?**

The timeline is provided on page 4 of the RFA. Applications are due September 24th

The application is more of a narrative. There is a checklist on page 6 of the RFA that can be used to help you determine if you have answered all of the questions in the RFA. Applications should be emailed to Samantha Ninnemann to the email address on page 3 of the RFA.

- 3. How will we be given information for accommodations that the Promise participants may have?**

When DVR puts together a class of participants, they will know what accommodations are needed for the youth and will communicate that to the trainer.

- 4. Who is responsible for paying for accommodations such as interpreting if they are needed?**

DVR will follow the same standard they normally use. If the trainer is from a small entity, DVR will fund it. Larger providers would pay for accommodations.

- 5. Is DVR doing a screening process? If people need a higher level of support such as a personal care worker that would need to be discussed beforehand, so that they are prepared for those type of things.**

DVR will be working with the trainers and will let them know if any accommodations are needed. If someone requires a personal care worker, DVR would follow its usual policies to determine who pays for the personal care worker.

- 6. Who is responsible for transportation?**

DVR will handle the transportation in the same way we normally would. That could include mileage, taxi, bus, etc.

- 7. Are you looking to have multiple vendors in the area?**

Yes, we are looking for choice. This also helps reduce travel for the participants and accommodate the numbers. This could also help with expanding this to other DVR consumers.

- 8. What is the long-term view for trainers?**

The more people that are trained in the WDA areas, the more it will help expand and implement the trainings in transition and prevocational activities such as this.

- 9. Promise is a four-year project. Are you thinking this will be more long term? Is this considered a pilot?**

It is a demonstration grant and we want to see what works for this population. DVR is interested in learning what impact the training has on these families. The more impact we can demonstrate with this training the more the training will be implemented in the future.

- 10. Will this be an ongoing program for DVR?**

It is too early to say, but it is a possibility.

- 11. Regarding the duration of the project, will we need to apply annually, or is this a one-time application?**

This is a one-time application process. Trainers approved through this RFA will not have to apply annually.

12. Will there be more than one vendor chosen in one area? How will you choose which trainers receive referrals?

There may be more than one vendor in one area. We do not have a set number of trainers in mind. The Promise Steering Committee recommended people to review applications and determine which providers will be approved based on the criteria outlined in the RFA. Again, we want to provide choice to the youth and families. We don't have a set number in mind.

13. Once accepted, is there a possibility that a provider will never get a participant or group?

We know the participants are all spread out. We are going to partner with other youth you might benefit from project, especially youth located in the western part of the state. Those areas might have more combined participants in those classes. DVR will be working with trainers, so that the training makes sense for you.

14. How are you recruiting potential individuals to take part in enrolling in WI promise?

Potential participants receive enrollment information through mailings sent by SVRI. They can fill out the enrollment forms or contact the Promise intake coordinator for assistance with filling out the intake and consent forms. Outreach is being done through different agencies and service providers that potential participants know and trust. Completed enrollment forms are mailed to SVRI. The information is entered into the computer system and they are randomly assigned to either the usual services or program services group. Those in program services group are assigned a Promise DVR counselor. The counselor talks with the participant directly about Promise services. As of the time of this conference call, 349 youth were enrolled in Promise. At least one adult family member must enroll with the youth participant. Other family members who 15 years or older can also enroll. *(Please note that detailed information about recruitment and enrollment is available on the Promise website.)*

15. Is only one family member able to enroll in the study?

No, at least one parent/guardian must enroll in the study, but anyone 15 years or older can sign up for the study. Just because a family member is part of a study does not mean the family member will enroll in social skills training. Enrollment in social skills training is dependent on the family member's goals for employment.

16. Will the people in the usual services group continue to receive the services they are already receiving such as long term care and mental health care? Does life go on as normal?

Yes, participants enrolled in Promise who are placed in the usual services group will continue to receive services that they are already receiving. They can also apply for DVR services if they are not receiving them already.

17. How are the participants being made aware of soft skills trainings?

The participants' Promise DVR counselors will be explaining the various training opportunities to them.

18. How are you promoting Promise and soft skills?

The Promise DVR counselors share information about soft skills training with the participants.

19. Where will the location of the classes be, and do we need to have computers available for all participants?

Trainers will determine the location of the classes. The participants will need to take a pre- and post-test, which are online tests. Participants receive tablets and a data plan, so they should be

encouraged to bring their tablets with them to each session. Another option would be to have the youth take the pre- and post-tests on a computer that you have available. We need them to take the pre- and post-tests because we need the data to demonstrate how effective the modules are.

20. Should the enrollees come to the training with their tablets?

They should. They all have one. If there is a technology failure, another option would be to have paper copies; however, the more we can have them do surveys directly online the better.

21. Is it required that a family member be a part of the training with their child?

No, family members may or may not take the social skills training. The training for youth and adults is separate.

22. Do the approved trainers make their own schedules for the modules or are those given to us?

DVR will put together a group that is ready for Soft Skills training and work with the trainer on scheduling. During school year, the trainings will most likely be on Saturdays. The duration of the session will most likely be 3 – 4 hours.

23. Can modules be scheduled when students are not in school such as when they are on spring break or a holiday break?

Yes, it is possible they can schedule it when they are on holiday break or spring break depending on the participants' availability. Some modules could be held during regular day time hours. Also see the responses to questions 19 – 22 in the initial questions and answers above.

24. Is there a specific timeline in which the training should be completed?

Not really. Once a group of participants is ready for training, DVR will coordinate with the selected trainer to choose a date that is 2 to 3 weeks out to provide time for people to plan. The modules could probably be completed in 6 consecutive Saturdays, excluding holidays that fall during those 6 weeks.

25. What if the activities are not enough for the participants and they need more coaching? Will there be any additional tools provided to them in that case?

The "Skills to Pay the Bills" curriculum is quite thorough. The intention is to provide a foundation for the participants and an opportunity to start practicing these skills. Trainers do not need to supplement the curriculum or provide additional coaching. This would be helpful information to include the report for DVR.

26. Because counselors can choose modules, is it possible that trainers will have a group of 6 but would not have that group of 6 for each module?

It is possible that participants will not enroll in all of the modules. When they are enrolled in modules, we cannot guarantee that they will show up. Trainers would still receive the minimum \$450 fee for the module. DVR will contact a provider then they have at least 6 people for a module.

27. Is there a restriction to where these trainings are held

The room should be able to accommodate up to 15 individuals and should be accessible. Also see the response to question 18 in the initial questions and answers above.

28. Is there 1 trainer to the group of 6 individuals, or can there be more trainers if the group is bigger?

Yes, providers can use multiple trainers. (Please note that the fee schedule will not change if there is more than one trainer.)

29. Will the training the trainer sessions happen periodically? How will training be provided to new staff?

We will provide this initial round of training for trainers approved through this application process and monitor the need for additional training. Also, see the response to question 32 in the initial questions and answers above.

30. What will the Soft Skills trainers come away with after attending the training? Will there be a booklet to refer back to and specific strategies to implement?

The SVRI Soft Skills Team will provide everyone with a tool kit and training tips. The training will cover facilitation skills and provide time to practice those skills. We will also work on the “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum to be sure trainers are comfortable with the material. Trainers will have a chance to learn about the modules and practice delivering them during training.

We will also set up an online learning community where trainers can share information and resources, ask questions, and learn from each other.

31. Will there be a training in Green Bay?

We will know after the trainers are approved where they are located and where training will be scheduled. Also see the response to question 11 in the initial questions and answers above.

32. Should the trainers’ supervisor also attend that training?

It would probably be helpful, but it is not required. For example, supervisors may want to have the training in the event that the trainer is sick on a day that a training session is scheduled.

33. We have a very tight timeline. When are you expecting the first train the trainer event?

We would like to start training trainers no later than November. We need to determine where the approved trainers are located and where we will provide training. It is likely that we will start in the Milwaukee, Racine/Kenosha, Madison and possibly Fox Valley areas since this is where enrollees are located at this time. We will roll out additional training statewide after that.

34. What is the next step for trainers and what are there dates for trainings?

Please see the response to question 11 in the initial questions and answers above.

35. Will there be CEUs available for trainers who attend the training?

No, we will not be providing CEUs.

36. Could you clarify the fees?

Providers are guaranteed \$450 per module and an additional \$75 per participant beyond 6 participants. Also see response to question 6 in the initial questions and answers above.

37. How will providers bill for the training?

DVR will issue one authorization per participant. Providers will have at least 6 participants per module and would still invoice on the \$450 minimum.

38. What if they schedule 8 people and 5 show? Which of the 3 people who did not show up should we invoice for?

You would invoice for the \$450 minimum. You could invoice for any 1 of the 3 people who did not show up. It does not matter which one you choose.

39. It was our understanding that we would be able to invoice for all of the people who did not show up for training.

No, the guaranteed minimum is \$450.

40. When do we get paid?

It is the same payment process that DVR uses for other invoicing. You would receive payment within 30 days after DVR receives the invoice.

41. Will the fee for the adult training be the same as the youth training?

The fees might be different. Those fees will be set once the training for the adults has been adapted.

42. Is there more information regarding the adult training curriculum that you can provide?

No, nothing specific at this time. We are adapting the “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum to be used with adults. We will keep the same six modules, but make adjustments with adult learners in mind.

43. Is the adult Skills to Pay the Bills the same set up as the youth’s sessions?

Yes, but probably limit it to 1 or 1-1/2 hour sessions. The schedule will probably be the same in terms of 6 sessions, one session for each of the modules.

44. Will trainers know the demographics of the adults?

Some adults are working, some are unemployed, and some are underemployed. It is more likely that adults who are underemployed and unemployed will be referred for Soft Skills training since they are the ones who could benefit from it to help them reach their employment goals.

45. For the current curriculum (that Goodwill Southeast WI uses), are the counselors that are on the Milwaukee team aware of the program, and will they refer adults to it as needed?

There is nothing stopping counselors from using other resources that meet the needs of the participants. Trainers will need to work with Promise DVR counselors. Adults do not have to take the adapted “Skills to Pay the Bills” training.

46. We (Goodwill SEW) are not opposed to using “Skills to Pay the Bills”, but should the adults have a longer amount of time so they don’t have to attend 6 different times?

We have not gotten that far with adapting the curriculum, so we are not sure at this time. Skills to Pay the Bills is the curriculum we are using, and we will be working on adapting it to make sure it works for adults.

47. Could adults who are utilizing family care resources be included in this training?

You can market yourself to other groups, but will need to work with DVR on scheduling training.

48. Do the adults have the same expectation to complete pre- and post-tests as the youth?

The adults will complete pre- and post-tests. The tablet that participants receive is for the family, not just for the youth, so they should be encouraged to bring the tablet to the training sessions.

49. Is the training with adults and youth combined or is it separate?

No, the trainings will not be combined. They are meant to be two separate trainings.

50. Is there a different curriculum from the adults and youth?

Yes, there will be a different curriculum for the adults.

51. What is the timeline for adult training?

Our goal is to finish adapting the “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum by the end of this year and start training trainers early next year.

52. Reporting requirements –what will have to be reported, and how much time will it take?

Participants will complete pre- and post-tests. The trainers will only have to write a short narrative about the participants' level of participation for each session. For example, did they attend? Did they seem engaged? You could also document if they struggled with the material or if they demonstrated leadership skills.

53. Will there be additional opportunities to ask questions?

No, the conference call is the last opportunity to ask questions about the RFA. The final set of questions and answers will be posted to the Promise website on September 22nd.