

# VENDOR SELECTION PROCESS





NATIONAL **WORKFORCE** INSTITUTE

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# National Workforce Institute Vendor Selection Criteria

National Workforce Institute (NWI) will provide one-stop access to a variety of training services and products. These products and services will be offered through an NWI vendor network that includes non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, and degree-granting educational institutions. Sufficient vendors will be identified in each workforce board area to ensure adequate resources for delivering training in multiple formats (traditional classroom instruction, web-based training, CD-ROM, etc.). NWI vendors must meet the requirements described below.

## Non-Profit Organizations

- Non-profit 501C3 organizations must provide proof of 501C3 status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
- Non-profit private or proprietary schools must be licensed by the state in which they are operating.
- Non-profit organizations (all) will be approved for a period of two (2) calendar years. At the end of the two-year period, providers must reapply for approved status.
- Non-profit organizations (all) must agree to adhere to the vendor standards established by NWI. Courses submitted for review must meet NWI standards for courseware and must support development of universal or functional competencies.
- Non-profit organizations (all) must submit an application for approval that includes:
  - Organizational information – Name, purpose, and structure of organizational entity; length of time in operation; resumes of key personnel; list of clients/references, experience in workforce development.
  - Course descriptions – Providers must furnish descriptions of all courses submitted for approval. Course descriptions must include:
    - Performance objectives
    - Target audience



- Prerequisite skills required
- Content outline
- Delivery method (web-based, classroom, self-study, etc.)
- Time required for completion
- Participant costs for enrollment
- Participant costs for materials
- Assessment methods – Providers must describe assessment methods used to evaluate customer satisfaction (Level 1) and achievement of learning objectives (Level 2).
- Technical requirements – Providers must describe technical requirements for hosting and delivery of e-learning programs or for PC requirements to run CD-ROM programs (memory, processing speed, etc.).
- Non-profit organizations providing courses or events offered for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) must specify the requirements and costs of granting CEUs. Normally, CEU credits are awarded on an hour-for-hour basis for time spent in the educational activity.
- Non-profit organizations are required to pay vendor registration and course review fees.

**Note:** TWC and Texas board areas that are members of NWI are exempt from these fees.

### For-Profit Training Providers

- For-profit organizations will be approved for a period of two (2) calendar years. At the end of the two-year period, they must reapply for approved status.
- For-profit private or proprietary schools must be licensed by the state in which they are operating.
- For-profit organizations must agree to adhere to the vendor standards established by NWI. Courses submitted for review must meet NWI standards for courseware and must support development of universal or functional competencies.

- For-profit providers must submit an application for approval that includes:
  - Organizational information – Name, purpose, and structure of organizational entity; length of time in business; resumes of key personnel; list of clients/references, experience in workforce development.
  - Course descriptions – Providers must furnish descriptions of all courses submitted for approval. Course descriptions must include:
    - Performance objectives
    - Target audience
    - Prerequisite skills required
    - Content outline
    - Delivery method (web-based, classroom, self-study, etc.)
    - Time required for completion
    - Participant costs for enrollment
    - Participant costs for materials
  - Assessment methods – Providers must describe assessment methods used to evaluate customer satisfaction (Level 1) and achievement of learning objectives (Level 2).
  - Technical requirements – Providers must describe technical requirements for hosting and delivery of e-learning programs or for PC requirements to run CD-ROM programs (memory, processing speed, etc.).
- For-profit organizations providing courses or events offered for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) must specify the requirements and costs of granting CEUs. Normally, CEU credits are awarded on an hour-for-hour basis for time spent in the educational activity.
- For-profit organizations are required to pay vendor registration and course review fees.



## Degree-granting Educational Institutions

- Educational institutions (public and private universities, community colleges, and other post-secondary degree granting institutions) must be accredited by a national accrediting body that is recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation.
- Educational institutions will be approved for a period of two (2) calendar years. At the end of the two-year period, educational institutions must reapply for approved status.
- Educational institutions will be required to pay vendor registration and course review fees ONLY for courses that are provided through a for-profit or continuing education unit of the institution. Educational institutions will NOT pay vendor registration or course review fees for degree-related or for-credit classes.
- Degree-related or for-credit classes should support achievement of universal or functional competencies. Content and methodologies should be appropriate for adults and delivered by professionals who have content expertise and experience.
- Courses or events offered for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) must support achievement of universal or functional competencies. Classroom sessions must meet standards established for traditional (classroom) training. Online or correspondence courses must meet standards established for independent study and online training. Normally, CEU credits are awarded on an hour-for-hour basis for time spent in the educational activity.

## Vendor Fees

The following fee structures apply to all vendors that provide training services/products through National Workforce Institute.

**Vendor Subscription Fee** – a flat fee of \$300 for processing vendor applications and marketing vendor courses in the NWI system.

The vendor subscription fee must accompany vendor applications submitted by:

- For-profit or continuing education units of educational institutions; educational institutions will NOT pay vendor registration or course review fees for degree-related or for-credit classes.
- Non-profit organizations (other than TWC or Texas board areas that are members of NWI)
- For-profit training providers

This fee must be submitted **annually** by each participating vendor.

**Note:** TWC and Texas board areas that join NWI are exempt from these fees.

**Vendor Course Review Fee** – a fee based on the number of courses submitted for review as reflected in the table below.

Number/Courses Submitted for Review	Course Review Fee
1-5	\$100
6-25	\$20/course
26+	Determined based on number

This fee must be submitted **every two years by non-profit organizations and for-profit vendors**, so that products/services can be reviewed to ensure updating and effectiveness of training materials.



**Vendor Tuition Fee** – a fee of 5% of the total tuition costs paid to a vendor for coordinating course schedules/enrollments and facilitating vendor invoices and payments. This fee will be assessed with the delivery of each course.

**Note:** TWC and Texas board areas that join NWI are exempt from these fees. Degree-related or for-credit courses provided by accredited educational institutions also are exempt from this fee.

## National Workforce Institute Vendor Courseware Standards

National Workforce Institute is designed to offer professional development opportunities through a variety of vendors who provide training in different delivery formats. Workforce professionals seeking certification need access to:

- Traditional, instructor-led courses/workshops
- Web-based asynchronous courses (self-paced)
- Web-based synchronous courses (instructor-led, online)
- CD-ROM-based training or other self-study courses

Because of the great number of resources available to support NWI certification, the following standards for evaluating training vendor organizations and courseware have been established.

### Standards for Traditional, Instructor-led Training

#### 1.0 Course Objectives

Course materials must include course objectives that provide participants with a “road map” for learning. Course objectives should be measurable, performance-based, and directly tied to universal or functional competency skill sets. Course materials may include both terminal and enabling objectives, if appropriate.

#### 2.0 Methodology

The course design should include methodologies that are appropriate for the type of learning that is involved (cognitive, skill-based, or affective) and address the needs of different learning styles. Participants should have opportunities to hear, see, and experience new concepts in ways that draw on previous life experiences and actively involve them in the learning process.



### **3.0 Participant Manuals**

Participant manuals should support classroom learning activities and provide a resource that can be used for future reference. Participant materials should include a table of contents, content materials to support all course objectives, appropriate graphics and illustrations, appropriate reading level and use of white space, list of additional references and resources, and any worksheets required to support classroom activities. Examples and illustrations used to support new learning should reflect the workforce organization environment.

### **4.0 Instructor Guides**

The purpose of instructor guides is to ensure consistency and quality of training delivery throughout the system. Instructor guides should include table of contents, course purpose and objectives, scope and sequence of course activities, instructions and icons to prompt instructor actions, suggested text for delivery of content, answer keys for labs/exercises/activities and pre-post tests, timing cues, specifications (or checklists) for room set-up and consumables, equipment requirements, and requirements for instructor pre-work. Instructor packets (if applicable) should include sign-in and attendance sheets, course evaluation forms, and any other administrative documents required.

### **5.0 Visual Aids**

The purpose of visual aids is to enhance learner understanding of new concepts, information, or skills. Visual aids used for training (PowerPoint slides, overhead transparencies, videotapes, demonstrations, flipcharts, wall charts, etc.) should be easy to read and reflect a mixed media approach that addresses a variety of adult learning styles. All visual aids should directly support course activities and be developed according to professional standards.

### **6.0 Activities**

Training should provide opportunities for learners to discuss and apply new knowledge to workplace situations. For performance-based courses, learners must have opportunities to practice new behaviors/tasks. All activities (role plays, simulations, case studies, demonstrations, guided group discussions, etc.) should be tied to support the achievement of course objectives.

## **7.0 Evaluation**

A Level I evaluation will be administered online by NWI to measure customer (participant) satisfaction. A Level II evaluation (a pre-post test or a performance-based checklist) should be used by the training provider to assess improvement in learner knowledge/skills and achievement of course objectives. Training providers are expected to furnish NWI with course completion data.

## **8.0 Delivery**

Classroom training should be delivered by qualified, experienced professionals who are familiar with adult learning theory. Instructors should be prepared to deliver course materials by their sponsoring organization (university, community college, private supplier, etc.).



## Standards for Web-based Asynchronous Training

### 1.0 Course Objectives

Online training should begin with a welcome, an introduction, and a statement of course objectives. Course objectives should be measurable, performance-based, and directly tied to achievement of universal or functional competency skill sets. There should be terminal, performance-based objectives for the course and may be performance-based enabling objectives for each module of training.

### 2.0 Course Content

Course content must be related to universal or functional competencies and be organized in a manner that makes it easy for learners to follow the sequence of learning activities. Content should be presented in segments (modules) that are appropriate for adult learning and include transitions that move the learner from module to module in a logical manner. Language should be clear, concise, and free of technical terminology or jargon that is not explained/defined.

### 3.0 Methodology

The course design should include methodologies that are appropriate for the type of learning that is involved (cognitive, skill-based, or affective) and address the needs of different learning styles. Presentation of new content should be followed by interactive exercises that increase learner interest and maintain learner motivation. Interactive exercises can be used to provide practice of new skills, application of new concepts, and meaningful feedback to learners. Online training should incorporate a number of tools for providing learner feedback and assessing learner progress. Tools can include multiple choice questions, matching drag and drop, clickable image maps, or forms that require users to enter appropriate data.

#### **4.0 Technical Features**

Technical features of online training should support learners who are comfortable with accessing the Internet and using Windows-based personal computers. Training should include learner instructions for moving through web-based content and activities, completing assessments that provide feedback on learner progress, and submitting results of completed training to system records. Screens should include headers that identify course or module titles, navigation buttons that allow learners to move through program content (next, back, main menu, help, exit, etc.), and icons/graphics used to enhance understanding of new content.

#### **5.0 Media Elements**

Media elements can include audio, video, PowerPoint slides, graphics, hyper links to other media (web to CD, CD to web, etc.) and web sites. Media elements also may include demonstrations, simulations, interactive exercises and web-based bookmarks that allow learners to stop and resume training at their own convenience. The use of media elements must be appropriate for the standard capabilities of Texas Workforce Network hardware/software (Windows 2000 operating systems or higher). They also must be compatible with standard plug-ins (Flash, Acrobat, Shockwave, Quicktime, Real Media, etc.). We recommend the use of Internet Explorer with a Flash plug-in, because it is the established standard for many board areas. NWI cannot guarantee that users will have the ability to download other plug-ins.

#### **6.0 Evaluation**

A Level I evaluation will be administered online by NWI to measure customer (participant) satisfaction. Online Level II evaluation instruments that measure achievement of course objectives must be clear and easy to follow. Training providers may incorporate Level II assessments into course materials or they may choose to utilize NWI's online testing services. Training providers are expected to furnish NWI with course completion data.

#### **7.0 Technical Requirements**

Online courses must be SCORM compliant. They must use HTML, Javascript, or Flash architectures.



## Standards for Web-based Synchronous Training

### 1.0 Course Objectives

Course objectives should be clearly stated in course descriptions or participant materials and should support universal or functional competencies. Objectives should be measurable, performance-based, and sequenced to support delivery of content in online training.

### 2.0 Methodology

The delivery of web-based synchronous training (real-time, instructor-led learning in which all participants are logged on at the same time and communicate directly with one another) should be appropriate for the type of learning that is involved (cognitive, skill-based, or affective) and provide opportunities for participants to ask questions, offer comments, and participate in online activities that allow them to demonstrate understanding or practice new skills.

### 3.0 Participant Manuals

Participant materials used to support synchronous online training delivery should be available for downloading and printing prior to the scheduled training time. Files should be in MS Word or PDF format to ensure compatibility with user computer systems. Vendors are responsible for notifying participants about the availability of online materials and supporting the dissemination of any such materials. However, NWI can upload participant materials and make them available through a link on the LMS course description page.

### 4.0 Support Media

Support media can include any electronic media that Internet Explorer supports (e.g., JPEG, JPG, .GIF). It also could include MS Word, PowerPoint, or Excel files used to support program content. Specific support media used for the delivery of any online synchronous training depends on the synchronous communication software selected by the training provider.

## **5.0 Technical Features**

NWI can assist training providers that offer synchronous course delivery in a number of ways. NWI will list courses in the NWI catalog, accept online enrollments, establish links to downloadable participant materials, and provide a hyperlink that allows participants to launch a course. Training providers are responsible for providing the hardware and software infrastructure to conduct synchronous training sessions. They also are responsible for providing user technical support.

## **6.0 Evaluation**

A Level I evaluation will be administered online by NWI to measure customer (participant) satisfaction. Synchronous web-based training should include online tools for assessing achievement of learning objectives. Some synchronous communication software programs have integral testing capabilities that allow printing of course completion information. In these cases, training providers will be expected to provide NWI with these results. In other cases, training providers are expected to furnish NWI with course completion data.



## Standards for CD-ROM Based or Other Self-Study Courses

### 1.0 Course Objectives

Course objectives should be clearly stated in participant manuals/handbooks and should support universal or functional competency skill sets. Objectives should be measurable, performance-based, and sequenced to support content in each module of training.

### 2.0 Methodology

The course design should include methodologies that are appropriate for the type of learning that is involved (cognitive, skill-based, or affective) and suitable for self-study or independent learning. Course materials should include a mix of content and individual activities that involve participants in the learning process, provide opportunities to practice/apply new skills, and allow learners to assess progress toward achievement of learning objectives.

### 3.0 Participant Manuals

Participant manuals/handbooks should be structured to support individual learning and provide clear instructions for completing all learning activities, including appropriate use of any support media. Instructions should be clear, easy to see and read, and supported by visual prompts (e.g., graphics or icons). Participant materials should include a table of contents, content materials to support achievement of course objectives, appropriate graphics and illustrations, worksheets or white space for completion of learner activities, and notation of additional resources available for future reference. Text should be written at an 8-10<sup>th</sup> grade reading level, and white space should be used liberally to enhance readability. Graphics and illustrations should be appropriate for adults and reflect demographic diversity. Examples and applications used to support new concepts should reflect the workforce organization environment.

#### **4.0 Support Media**

Support media could include videotapes, audiotapes, or text resources used to introduce or support new information. Videotapes or audiotapes used to support self-study courses should include instructions or prompts for appropriate use (e.g., stopping and resuming tapes at various points to complete related activities). Videotapes should be appropriate for adults and reflect the demographic diversity and workplace environment of the workforce organization. Audiotapes should be clear, recorded at a pace that is easy to follow, and free of acronyms, jargon, or slang terms that may be unfamiliar to learners.

#### **5.0 Activities**

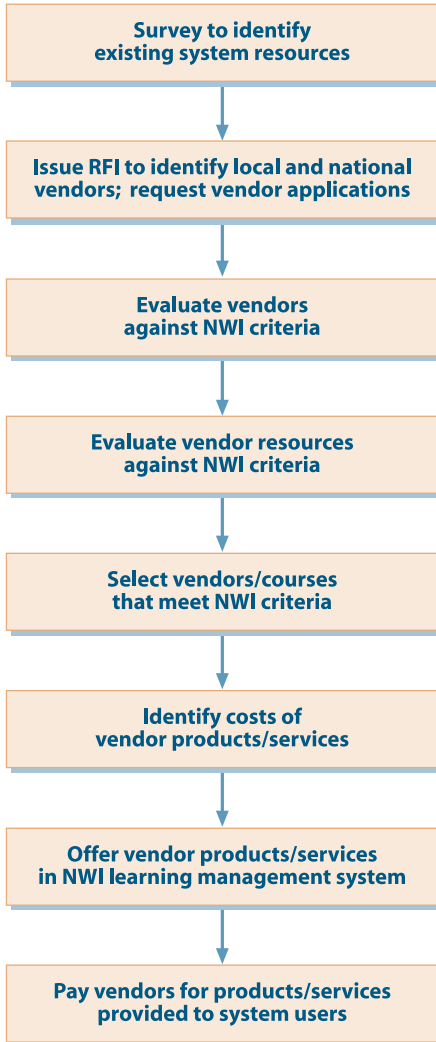
Self-study courses should include a variety of activities to increase learner interest, involve learners in the learning process, and allow learners to assess progress toward learning objectives. Activities may be independent, (e.g., matching new terms to appropriate definitions, filling in blanks, adding captions to flowcharts, etc.) or they may require learners to complete tasks that involve others (gathering data through interviews, preparing and distributing a survey for validation, requesting specific information about a local procedure, etc.). When activities or worksheets are used to test understanding or result in a “right” answer, answer keys should be provided in learner manuals/handbooks. Answer keys should be placed on the back of worksheets or in an appendix at the back of the student manual.

#### **6.0 Evaluation**

A Level I evaluation will be administered online by NWI to measure customer (participant) satisfaction. Self-study materials should include a Level II evaluation tool to measure achievement of learning objectives. Training providers are expected to furnish NWI with course completion data.



## National Workforce Institute Vendor Identification & Evaluation Process



## Vendor Payment

Vendors will invoice NWI for payment upon completion of scheduled training/services. NWI will pay training providers within 10 days of receipt of customer payment.





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