



Request for Proposals

**For the Preparation of the GO Virginia Northern Region 7 Council
2025 Growth and Diversification Plan**

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The *SkillSource* Group, Inc.
8270 Greensboro Drive, Suite 850
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 827-3782
www.vcwnorthern.com

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STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

GO Virginia is a bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative that is changing the way Virginia’s diverse regions collaborate on economic and workforce development activities. There are nine (9) GO Virginia regions. Region 7 consists of the cities Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park; and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William. The *SkillSource* Group, Inc., under contract from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, provides staffing support for the GO Virginia Northern Region Council. More details about GO Virginia are available at <https://govirginia.org/>

The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. (SSG) supports economic and workforce development initiatives throughout the Northern Virginia region. The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. is a subcontractor to the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to provide staffing and support services for the GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7 in the current and upcoming year. This Request For Proposal has been coordinated with senior officials of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and is being issued and managed on behalf of the Commission. The Final Contract Agreement will be between the selected vendor and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

1.1 Solicitation

The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. hereby solicits proposals, using a competitive bid process, for the establishment of a contract with a vendor to prepare the 2025 – 2027 GO Virginia Growth and Diversification Plan for the GO Virginia Northern Region 7 Council. This RFP does not commit the SSG to accept any proposal submitted, nor is the SSG responsible for any costs incurred by the Respondents in the preparation of responses to this RFP.

The SSG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in the proposal, and to recommend awarding a contract or contracts in whole or in part as it is deemed to be in the best interest of the GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7. The SSG reserves the right to negotiate with any Respondent after proposals are reviewed, if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7.

1.2 RFP Release, Timeline and Questions

Beginning May 14, 2025, the RFP will be available for download from the SSG's website at www.vcwnorthern.com as well as through eva.virginia.com. If you have difficulty downloading the proposal, or have any questions regarding this proposal, please contact SSG by phone at (703) 827-3782 or by email at bids@vcwnorthern.com.

1.3 Submittal of Proposals

To be considered for this contract(s), the proposal must be submitted electronically in Adobe PDF format only, by 5:00 pm EDT on May 27, 2025 at bids@vcwnorthern.com.

All electronic submissions will receive an email acknowledging the date and time that the submitted proposal was received.

All proposals received after that date and time will not be considered. Respondents will be notified if their proposal was received after the deadline, and will not be considered.

Questions regarding this solicitation can be submitted to bids@vcwnorthern.com by 5 pm EDT on May 21, 2025. Responses to questions submitted to SSG will be posted on the SSG website (www.vcwnorthern.com).

The estimated start date of the contract will be June 15, 2025.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The goal of the GO Virginia program is to facilitate regional collaboration and to grow and diversify the economy by supporting projects that lead to growth in traded industry clusters that drive the production of higher-wage jobs. As defined by Board Policy #4, a traded industry cluster is an industry sector(s) where the majority of goods and services are sold or have the potential to be sold outside the Commonwealth of Virginia. Programs and projects recommended by the Regional Councils and approved by the GO Virginia State Board shall be consistent with the strategies and targeted industry clusters outlined in the Regional Economic Growth and Diversification Plans.

The Virginia Growth and Opportunity Act establishes that each Regional Council is required to develop an Economic Growth and Diversification Plan to (i) promote private-sector growth and opportunity in the region; (ii) identify issues of economic competitiveness for the region, including gaps in education and skills required to

meet existing and prospective employer needs within the region; and (iii) outline strategies that the collaborating business, education, and government entities in the region will pursue to expand economic opportunity, diversify the economy, and align workforce development activities with the education and skills needed by employers in the region. According to § 2.2-2489 of the Code of Virginia, each Regional Council must review its Plan at least every two years while receiving grants from the GO Virginia fund.

The 2021 GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7 Growth and Diversification Plan is available at

https://www.gonorthernva.com/_files/ugd/1e2263_896224d24f894a598378e3a6efc05947.pdf

The 2023 UPDATE to the GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7 Growth and Diversification Plan is available at

https://www.gonorthernva.com/_files/ugd/ce78fa_86092f036f82447dbd8614678711181f.pdf

The March 2025 GO Virginia Northern Region Council publication of its Regional Talent Pipeline Report is available at

<https://www.gonorthernva.com/resources/72056e90-930e-4fc6-8238-c77f0becde4d>

3.0 RFP Response Format

3.1 Instructions

All proposals should clearly demonstrate the Respondent's understanding and ability to interpret the GO Virginia Growth and Diversification Plan guidelines and to apply research techniques, small group cohort information sessions and writing capabilities for the Northern Region 7 Plan development. The narrative of the response should be no longer than **10 double-spaced pages**, excluding cover page, table of contents, executive summary, and attachments. Brief proposals are welcome.

3.1.1 Formatting Requirements

To simplify the review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparison, each proposal shall be organized as follows:

- Font size: 12 point
- Font style: Times New Roman
- Line spacing: Double spaced
- Margins: One-inch margins on all sides

- Pages: Single sided
- Page number: Centered at the bottom of each page
- Language: English
- Format: Adobe PDF

3.1.2 Table of Contents

Include a table of contents that identifies the material in the proposal by section and page number.

3.1.3 Executive Summary

The executive summary shall provide a brief overview of the proposal not to exceed one (1) single-spaced page.

3.1.4 Narrative

Description of services shall not exceed **ten (10) double-spaced pages**, excluding cover page, table of contents, executive summary, and attachments.

4.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY OFFEROR(S)

Objectives

The Economic Growth and Diversification Plan is intended to describe specific goals and actionable strategies that will produce measurable results over a two-year period. Additionally, the plan should consider how these efforts can be coordinated and sustained over a 5 to 10-year horizon, and the broad steps to be taken in four GO Virginia investment strategies: workforce development, start-up ecosystems, site development and infrastructure, and cluster scale-up. The selected Offeror must engage a broad range of stakeholders in the Full Review process and should demonstrate stakeholder participation in the plan review process from local and regional economic development organizations, education and workforce training partners, planning district commissions, nonprofits, community groups, workforce boards, as well as coordinators of regional entrepreneurial activities. Moreover, the selected Offeror is encouraged to approach their Plan preparation with consideration for other regional economic development and workforce development plans, including those developed by regional economic development organizations and planning district commissions.

The selected Offeror should develop the following sections in the preparation of the Plan:

1. EVALUATE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL ECONOMY

The selected Offeror shall conduct an evaluation of the performance of the Northern Virginia regional economy, with a focus on the performance of the GO Virginia Northern Region Council’s previously targeted industry clusters. This review shall consider at least the past five years’ economic performance and generally result in a comprehensive assessment of the region’s economic conditions.

This evaluation shall reflect the following:

- a. Employment growth across all sectors
- b. Wage growth across all sectors
- c. Employment growth in targeted traded industry sectors
- d. Wage growth in targeted traded industry sectors
- e. New business formation activity
- f. New business formation in targeted traded sector industries
- g. Economic development announcements (new and expanding businesses)
- h. VEDP Site Inventory Data

The Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) provides a unified, consistent source of analysis for policy development and implementation related to talent development as well as offers resources and expertise related to education and labor market alignment. For this proposal, Offerors are encouraged to use the VOEE website data at [The Virginia Office of Education Economics](#). This data, combined with other labor market information available through the Virginia Employment Commission and Virginia Works, along with the data available through prior GO Virginia Northern Council 7 publications referenced on page 5, provide a solid starting point for data collection by Offerors.

The selected Offeror should prepare the draft 2025 GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7 Growth and Diversification Plan in the following sections:

2. A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS FOR EACH TARGETED INDUSTRY SECTOR: The identification of targeted sectors or clusters must be centered on empirical data and based on results that are realistic given the drivers of the region’s economy. Each Regional Council should consider its current targeted sectors, as well as any potential new targeted sectors identified in the data analysis.

The selected Offeror shall conduct a situational analysis that identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the future economic performance of each sector. Regional Councils should approach this activity with consideration for GO Virginia's four priority investment strategies. Regions should also review their current inventory of sites relative to their targeted traded industry sectors to inform and prioritize future site investments. This analysis must be informed and validated by business leaders and other stakeholders.

3. SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS FOR TARGETED INDUSTRY SECTORS: The selected Offeror shall evaluate labor requirements and regional capacity to train workers, with a particular focus on reaching historically underserved populations. Update the previously identified workforce gaps in the availability of immediately employable talent in the targeted sectors or clusters. The prioritization of workforce gaps to be addressed will serve as guidance to the Regional Council and Board in the evaluation of future funding decisions. If a gap exists in a newly identified target sector, identify current efforts to address this gap, being specific as to the skills/credentialing/experience/education required, and whether these efforts are adequate to address the shortage and to support long-term growth. Councils are encouraged to collaborate with workforce development boards and other workforce/education system stakeholders.

4. IDENTIFICATION OF PLAN GOALS AND ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES: Review the priority goals and strategies in your plan and refine them using the information and data gathered previously. Map your active project portfolio against these strategies, including those in your project pipeline. Use the GO Virginia program's four priority investment strategies – workforce, site and entrepreneurial ecosystem development, and cluster scale up - as a framework to describe the newly prioritized and proposed activities and longer-term efforts that will advance the goals of the GO Virginia Program and the Regional Economic Growth and Diversification Plan. Councils should identify a framework for the evaluation of efforts and the progress made toward the implementation of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan. For example, each strategy shall identify one or more measures of performance that will indicate progress towards achieving the Plan goals.

5. IDENTIFY STRATEGIC PARTNERS FOR COLLABORATION: The Plan review shall identify opportunities for collaboration or complementary efforts for each of the strategies outlined in the Plan. Councils must identify organizations and other non-GO Virginia activities that could/should collaborate to support the goals of the Plan.

Reporting and Check-in Requirements

The Contractor(s) shall submit weekly reports in terms of progress on key deliverables and activities completed. The Contractor(s) must have check-in calls with *SkillSource* Group and Northern Virginia Regional Commission staff at least twice per month, as well as in-person meetings as needed, throughout the duration of the contract.

Work products, including, but not limited to reports, graphics, videos, sound recordings, documents, presentations, and the like, physical and/or electronic, shall be owned by the GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7. The Contractor(s) will not maintain any rights to the work products and shall turn over all work product files upon request and at the end of the contract period.

The Initial Draft of the 2025 – 2027 GO Virginia Northern Council Growth and Diversification Plan is due to State GO Virginia officials no later than Monday, September 15, 2025. The Contractor must coordinate closely with SkillSource and Northern Virginia Regional Commission staff to assure appropriate review of earlier Plan versions and to allow for the full GO Virginia Northern Region Council 7 Board of Directors has sufficient time to review, comment and edit the Plan before submission to State officials. Further follow-on edits to the Plan will be necessary to include State officials review and revisions. The Contractor will be expected to complete the Plan following receipt of State comments on the Draft Plan later in the Fall 2025.

5.0 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

5.1 Offeror(s) must complete and submit a two-part proposal consisting of a technical proposal and a business proposal. **The Technical and Business Proposals must be submitted via e-mail, as outlined in Section 1.3, in two separate Adobe PDF files that are clearly named with the Respondent's Name - Technical Proposal and Respondent's Name - Business Proposal.**

5.2 The Technical Proposal should be concise, yet complete. The Technical Proposal includes the following:

- a. Name and address of the Offeror or company, and if a corporation, when and where incorporated as well as appropriate Federal, State and county Tax ID numbers.
- b. The Technical Proposal should demonstrate an understanding of

the need and the offeror's proposed work plan or strategy for accomplishing the scope of services identified in Section 2, Scope of Services to be Provided by Offeror(s). The Technical Proposal shall not exceed ten (10) pages.

- d. Offeror should describe its past experiences in preparing and conducting economic and workforce development research and labor market analysis, forecasting plans as well as an emphasis and understanding of the Northern Virginia Region and GO Virginia planning guidelines.
- e. Offeror(s) should demonstrate an awareness of the difficulties in the completion of the work and a willingness to work with *SkillSource* staff to provide a high quality research product
- f. Offeror(s) should include a description of the organization and staff experience in providing the services requested. Include resumes of key staff and clearly identify how they will contribute to the provision of the Plan development.

5.3 The Business Proposal should contain the justification for the cost of the service. It should also contain data adequate to establish the reasonableness of the proposed costs. It should delineate personnel costs, travel, supplies, equipment, or other expenses, as appropriate.

- a. The total cost of Plan preparation to the Northern Virginia Regional Commission per hour, and per the entire Project.
- b. Any incentive price breaks, discounts, or free additional services.
- d. Offerors will be evaluated on their ability to offer high quality services while keeping costs reasonable for the services provided.

The Business Proposal will not count against the ten-page proposal limit.

6.0 Insurance

6.1 The Contractor will be responsible for its work and every part thereof, and for all materials, tools, equipment, appliances, and property of all description used in connection therewith whether owned by the contractor or by the SSG. The contractor assumes all risks of direct and indirect damage or injury to any

person or property wherever located, resulting from any action, omission, commission, or operation under the contract, or in connection in any way whatsoever with the contracted work.

6.2 The Contractor shall, during the continuance of all work under the Contract, provide the following:

- a. Maintain statutory Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability insurance in limits of not less than \$100,000 to protect the Contractor from any liability or damages for any injuries (including death and disability) to any and all of its employees, volunteers, or subcontractors, including any and all liability or damage which may arise by virtue of any statute or law in force within the Commonwealth of Virginia, or which may be hereinafter enacted.
- b. The Contractor agrees to maintain Comprehensive General Liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, to protect the contractor, its subcontractors, and the interest of the SSG and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, against any and all injuries to third parties, including bodily injury and personal injury, wherever located, resulting from any action or operation under the contract or in connection with contracted work. The General Liability insurance shall also include the Broad Form Property Damage endorsement, in addition to coverages for explosion, collapse, and underground hazards, where required.
- c. The Contractor agrees to maintain owned, non-owned, and hired Automobile Liability insurance, in the amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, including property damage, covering all owned, non-owned borrowed, leased, or rented vehicles operated by the Contractor. In addition, all mobile equipment used by the Contractor in connection with the contracted work will be insured under either a standard Automobile Liability policy, or a Comprehensive General Liability policy.
- d. The Contractor agrees to maintain insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 to cover each individual professional staff.

- e. The Contractor agrees to maintain liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 to cover its operations.
 - f. Liability insurance may be arranged by General Liability and Automobile Liability policies for the full limits required, or by a combination of underlying Liability policies for lesser limits with the remaining limits provided by an Excess or Umbrella Liability policy.
- f.1. The Contractor agrees to provide insurance issued by companies admitted within the Commonwealth of Virginia, with the Best's Key Rating of at least A: VI. The only exceptions to this are insurers of the London Syndicate and other recognized British and European insurers who are not rated by Best Guide.

Hold-harmless and Indemnification: Contractor shall indemnify, keep and save harmless the SSG, its agents, officials, employees and volunteers against claims of injuries, death, damage to property, patent claims, suits, liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may otherwise accrue against the SSG in consequence of the granting of a contract or which may otherwise result therefrom, if it shall be determined that the act was caused through negligence or error, or omission of the Contractor or his or her employees, or that of the subcontractor or his or her employees, if any; and the Contractor shall, at his or her own expense, appear, defend, and pay all charges of attorneys and all costs and other expenses arising therefrom or incurred in conjunction therewith; and if any judgment shall be rendered against the SSG in any such action, the Contractor shall, at his or her own expense, satisfy and discharge the same. Contractor expressly understands and agrees that any performance bond or insurance protection required by this contract, or otherwise provided by the Contractor, shall in no way limit the responsibility to indemnify, keep and save harmless and defend the SSG as herein provided.

The Contractor will provide an original, signed Certificate of Insurance and such endorsements as prescribed herein, and shall have it filed with the SSG before any work is started.

6.3 No change, cancellation, or non-renewal shall be made in any insurance coverage without a forty-five day written notice to the SSG. The Contractor

shall furnish a new certificate prior to any change or cancellation date. The failure of the Contractor to deliver a new and valid certificate will result in suspension of all payments until the new certificate is furnished.

6.4 Precaution shall be exercised at all times for the protection of persons (including employees) and property.

6.5 SSG, its employees and officers shall be named as an additional insured in the Automobile, General Liability and Professional Liability policies and it shall be stated on the Insurance Certificate with the provision that this coverage is primary to all other coverage the SSG may possess.

6.6 If an “ACORD” Insurance Certificate form is used by the Contractor’s Insurance agent, the words, “endeavor to” and “... but failure to mail such notice shall impose no obligation or liability of any kind upon the company” in the “Cancellation” paragraph of the form shall be deleted.

7.0 Monitoring

7.1 SSG staff may institute such monitoring activities as are reasonably needed to ensure that this contract is performed in accordance with its provisions.

8.0 News Releases by Contractors

8.1 The SSG and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission do not endorse the products or services of a contractor. News releases concerning any resultant contract from this solicitation will not be made by a contractor without the prior written approval of the SSG or the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

9.0 Access to and Inspection of Work

9.1 SSG staff shall, at all reasonable times, have access to the work being performed under this agreement, wherever it may be in progress or preparation. Upon written request, Contractor shall make available to the SSG all reports, records and other documents reasonably required.

10.0 Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Equal Opportunity: Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 1998 (WIOA) prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political

affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. Prohibitions against discrimination are made on the basis of the following:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin, which includes discrimination affecting persons with limited English proficiency;
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
3. The Age Discrimination Act 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
4. And Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs.

11.0 Evaluation Process

11.1 A Review Panel assembled by the *SkillSource* Group, Inc. will evaluate proposals as described in the following table:

Criterion	Weighted %
Cover page (1 page limit)	0%
Table of Contents (1 page limit)	0%
Executive Summary (1 page limit)	0%
Overall quality of the Technical Proposal	35%
Experience of the Respondent in preparing and conducting economic and workforce development research and labor market analysis, forecasting plans as well as an emphasis and understanding of the Northern Virginia Region and GO Virginia State-wide planning guidelines.	20%
Reasonableness of Business Proposal	45%

10.2 Upon receipt of the Technical and Business proposals, the Review Panel will evaluate the responses and rank the Respondent(s). SSG reserves the right to waive any formalities and to reject all proposals in whole or in part.

11.0 Contract Award and Details

11.1 The period of this contract shall be from June 15, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

11.2 The fee(s) will remain firm and will include all charges that may be incurred in fulfilling the requirements of this initial contract. Any additional work will be discussed in the future and the price will be negotiated at that time.

11.3 Payments will be made to the Contractor after acceptance of a properly completed invoice. The Invoices should be sent to the following address no later than 15 days after the last day of the month that services took place.

The *SkillSource* Group, Inc.
8270 Greensboro Drive, Suite 850
McLean, VA 22102
ATTN: David Hunn, President and CEO
Email: david.hunn@vcwnorthern.com
Telephone: 703-827-3782

SSG will ensure that the amounts requested are allowable and will submit the requests to the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, which will complete the process through the ‘Remittance’ function in the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development’s CAMS (Centralized Application and Management System), then providing funds for the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to pay approved expenses.

12.0 Addenda to this Request for Proposal

SSG may, at any time, by written order, require changes in the services to be performed by the Respondent. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be posted on SSG’s website. Any clarification, including responses to questions, will become an addendum to the RFP.

13.0 Right to Cancel

SSG reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue, or cancel all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice. SSG also reserves the right to modify the RFP process and timeline as deemed necessary.