



Background on Cara Plus

Since 1991, [Cara Collective](#) – a leading national workforce development organization based in Chicago – has helped untapped talent obtain, retain, and advance in 14,600+ quality jobs at 65% same-firm, one-year retention rates – 15 points higher than the national average. [Cara Plus](#), our national expansion and advisory arm, takes these learnings to help other organizations build a more inclusive economy – having worked with 80 non-profits and 40+ companies since 2019.

As part of our workforce development portfolio, Cara Plus partners with existing organizations that serve communities hardest hit by poverty to co-develop a workforce development model that translates Cara’s methodology to their existing model, population, and needs. At present, we have affiliates in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Atlanta, Georgia, who have collectively achieved 600+ job placements this year since they started, after adapting our model to their local contexts.

What We Hope to Learn

As we explore how we can best support communities around the country, we are using the RFI to understand what is most needed. While this may include our affiliate model, it may also include the expansion of our social enterprises, [Cleanslate](#) or [Cara Connects](#), or more targeted assistance to accelerate partners’ growth and impact.

This RFI is for informational purposes only and will help inform if we move forward with a more formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which may make awards up to \$100,000. As such, an organization’s response to the RFI will have no impact on the evaluation of responses to any subsequent RFPs. Responses to this will be used solely for information and planning purposes, and as such, no contract will be awarded because of submission.

cara
PLUS

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Who We Are Looking to Partner With

Cara Collective evaluates new markets by looking at the following variables:

- Vision and mission alignment
- Strong reputation and history for getting results within their community
- Serving similar populations with barriers to employment
- Infrastructure to support workforce development efforts:
- A variety of employers with repeatable entry/mid-level jobs with opportunities for growth
- A network of funders who have demonstrated a commitment to workforce efforts
- Reliable mass-transit system for job seekers that is accessible to job opportunities
- Fiscal and operational capacity to support workforce development efforts

Cities We Are Prioritizing

- **East Coast:** Baltimore, MD; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Washington, D.C.
- **Midwest/Mountain States:** Cleveland, OH; Denver, CO; Kansas City, MO; St. Louis, MO
- **South:** Dallas, TX; Houston, TX
- **Southwest:** Las Vegas, NV
- **West Coast:** Portland, OR; Sacramento, CA; San Francisco/East Bay, CA; Seattle, WA

**Please note that while we are prioritizing these cities for RFI submissions, we encourage organizations from any location to submit an RFI.*



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Submission Details

If your organization has questions regarding the RFI, **please direct them to the Director of National Workforce Solutions, Monica Yoo** myoo@carachicago.org indicating the name of your organization, contact information, and your questions by April 25.

Answers to the RFI must be completed by 05:00 PM CT on April 30