REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL REP PART 3 OF 3

Appendix B

ARES Implementation RFP

Legal Name of Grant Applicant: Iowa Department of Corrections

Title of Project: "Iowa Reentry and Employment Training Project" (IRETP)

Project Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to implement a comprehensive, multi-agency strategic plan to address reentry and employment readiness for adults being released from lowa prisons. Working closely with the technical assistance provider, a thorough review of existing policies, practices, and programs was conducted during the twelve-month strategic planning phase from October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019. The goal was to learn from and replicate the BJA pilot project the "Integrated Reentry and Employment Strategies" initially piloted in Wisconsin and Florida to devise a plan that uses collaborative strategies to address barriers faced by incarcerated adults reentering their communities and the workforce. We will be devoted to the execution of the strategic plan and implementation of policies, practices, and programs within.

Target area and population:

The target area and population will be all moderate- to high-risk offenders as identified by the Iowa Violence and Victimization Instrument (IVVI) who will be released from any of the primary releasing institutions in Iowa (listed below) and reentering the community in the Des Moines, Iowa metro area. Below is a snapshot of this population distribution throughout the four listed institutions using a tentative discharge date of 12/1/2020 to 12/31/2024 (6-36 months):

- Iowa Correctional Institution for Women/Minimum Live Out Facility (ICIW MLO): High Risk = 34 offenders; Moderate Risk = 64 offenders
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Grand Total of High and Moderate Risk offenders currently housed in the four releasing institutions (at the time of this application) that are likely to be released to the target area of Polk county within the next 6-36 months: High Risk = 361 offenders; Moderate Risk = 369 offenders.

Utilize grant funding to:

- 1. Hire (1) Grant Project Manager to oversee the strategic implementation process, ensuring all measurable and deliverables are well-documented and provided to the DOJ/OJP/BJA in a timely manner.
- 2. Address gaps found in the planning phase (i.e., job readiness assessment) and identify a job readiness assessment to utilize.
- 3. Enhance community connections with employment partners and leverage resources with Iowa Workforce Development.
- 4. Strengthen the Executive Level Steering Committee, Cross-Disciplinary Working Group, and Advisory Group.

5. Work with technical assistance to appropriately and effectively implement comprehensive processes and to address gaps identified in the strategic planning process.

This program will meet all of the priority considerations set forth in the grant guidelines while employing evidence-based practices and an assessment-driven process to effectively improve offender reentry outcomes and implement a strategy for sustainment and replication throughout the state.

Statement of the Problem

In lowa, as in every state and region, offenders face serious challenges and difficulties in making the transition from a life of incarceration to life in society at large. While state agencies and government at all levels attempt to provide programming and responsive services to individuals in need, whether those individuals are recently-released from incarceration, are uniquely challenged in making use of those opportunities.

Individuals who have been newly released from prison often find themselves with virtually no resources to reestablish a life congruent with the rest of society. Worse, many "returning citizens" have never had a lifestyle that would contribute toward healthy, functional participation in the economy or community at large. Even the most basic needs—such as shelter, sustenance, and transportation—are typically difficult to establish upon release from incarceration.

As a result, it is not uncommon for returning citizens to find themselves faced with an easier alternative in simply returning to their prior lifestyle and unwise choices. These choices plainly did not have positive outcomes when first applied, and usually have similar consequences when repeated.

Therefore, a cycle is established in which the returning citizens finds that they go from long or short-term incarceration to long or short-term freedom and back again, with little or no progress toward productive citizenship. Each period of incarceration adds additional difficulty to their overall situation, and reduces their likelihood of eventually getting out of the cycle.

Returning Citizens are typically not attuned to making every prudent choice in social or civic interactions, and have a tendency to be less inclined to plan ahead, at least relative to the population in general. This is simply part of the nature of finding oneself in the circumstance of incarceration. That said, there are many examples throughout society of individuals who have reversed their misfortunes and past decision-making failures, and have become productive citizens of their communities. Often, those individuals needed additional help and resources in order to get them to that point. Iowa desires to expand upon what we as a state can offer our returning citizens in order to assist them in reintegration into society and becoming proud, working members of their community to their full potential.

The Iowa Department of Correction's Reentry Philosophy is based on utilization of evidence-based practices to create opportunities for client success and safer communities. Within the Reentry Philosophy framework, the Iowa Department of Corrections takes a comprehensive approach to reentry, emphasizing the importance of interagency and cross-system collaboration to support reentry, beginning at the time of sentencing and running through the time leading to and following release and beyond.

Reentry is an integrated part of the total correctional involvement, designed to protect the citizens of the state of lowa while improving the prospect of a successful return to the community by released clients, a

process of preparing clients to manage their lives in a prosocial manner without correctional supervision. Constructive and contributive social and societal independence are the ultimate goals.

Establish a cross-disciplinary, executive-level steering committee

During the November 2017 lowa Workforce Development (IWD) State Board meeting, IWD Director Beth Townsend requested that a committee be formed to improve collaboration between agencies. The State Board took action, and the new committee created at that time was the Offender Reentry Standing Committee. The Committee is focused on aligning efforts by state and local entities to give returning citizens a better opportunity to start a new career and find self-sustaining employment to help them successfully re-enter their communities. The committee has formed work groups focused on employer engagement, the reentry process and returning citizens in communities. The objective is to increase collaboration between the various entities with which returning citizens may interact, while creating higher-quality opportunities to help them succeed upon release.

Since its inception, three committee meetings have been held. Those serving on the committee include leaders and Directors who represent the Department of Workforce Development, Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Labor Apprenticeship, Department of Education, Economic Development Authority, Department of Human Rights, Community Outreach and Goodwill. During those meetings, the committee members have created work groups that include Engaging Employers, Re-entry Progress and Returning Citizens in Communities.

For the purpose of this grant opportunity, the above current Offender Re-entry Committee will serve as the executive level structure. It is our position that this existing committee, given its core objectives, is well-positioned to pursue and achieve the objectives stated in the grant announcement. The committee will meet once a month starting in October of 2018, with a sunset meeting date of September 2019. The committee chair will always be a leader of business and industry, as this will help drive the objective toward creating and sustaining opportunity.

The priorities of the committee are to identify and address policy programmatic barriers to successful employment after reentry. We currently have three subgroups within the committee that include Engaging Employers, Reentry Progress and Returning Citizens in Communities. We believe these working groups will help us identify the greatest barriers. Identifying the specific barriers and challenges for reentering returning citizens is absolutely crucial to maximizing progress and ensuring the efficient use of resources.

Further, not every offender in every geographical area of lowa will have the same needs, so the trifurcated focus of these three subgroups will assist in assessing the cross-section of challenges across the population.

Going back as far as 2010, IWD and DOC have had an ongoing partnership wherein IWD has placed Offender Reentry Workforce Advisors in the correctional facilities around the State of Iowa. As of today, IWD has four Reentry Workforce Advisors, and they are located in the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women (ICIW), Newton Correctional Facility, Mt. Pleasant Correctional Facility and North Central Correctional Facility. In each location, reentry advisors work with inmates to help them find placement in correctional registered apprenticeship programs, write resumes, practice interviews, participate in job fairs, find placement for employment and prepare for being released to ideally have a fulfilling and productive, law-abiding life.

An exciting model authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 is the Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs. IET is adult education and literacy, workforce preparation, and workforce training "each of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available, especially with respect to improving reading, writing, mathematics, and English proficiency of eligible individuals" that "occur simultaneously," "use occupationally relevant instructional materials," and are "organized to function cooperatively" with "a single set of learning outcomes" (34 CFR §463.37). IET represents a wide spectrum of services to build foundational, employability, and occupational skills.

This model is a collaboration of services that needs to include incarcerated participants and adults that are re-entering the community in providing a concurrent learning experience that does not require sequential completion to acquire contextually relevant skills aligned to sector partnership needs and career pathways. This education model includes the incorporation of hard skills, or workforce training which includes stackable credentials, Registered Apprenticeships, and On-the-Job Training programs that meet industry demands. As these programs begin to ramp up – expanding to employer driven customized training the strategic involvement of lowa's Community College Partners, lowa's Workforce Development, is critical to include for continuous improvement and greater involvement of participants. These IET programs focus on building different kinds of skills for participants, engage with employers to help build the relevant skills, and thereby reduce the gap in the workforce needs by eliminating a mismatch of skills. The integrated education model puts the skills, which are in demand and highly valued at the forefront of learning through these workforce training opportunities.

Establish a cross-disciplinary working group

The working group structure will consist of the following stakeholders and will meet on a monthly basis.

Criminal Justice

- 1. Director of Corrections (Chair)
- 2. Director of Reentry and Programs
- 3. Assistant Deputy Director, Community Based Corrections
- 4. Reentry Coordinator from the following correctional facilities
- a. Mt. Pleasant Corrections
- b. North Central Correctional Facility
- c. Newton Corrections
- d. ICIW Corrections
- 5. Apprenticeship Coordinator for the Iowa Dept. of Corrections

Workforce Force

- 6. Director of Iowa Workforce Development (Chair)
- 7. Iowa Workforce Development Administrator
- 8. Iowa Workforce Development Reentry Coordinator
- 9. Iowa Workforce Development Reentry Advisor

State and Local Workforce Development

- 10. Iowa Workforce Development State Board
- 11. Iowa Workforce Development State Board
- 12. Local Board
- 13. Local Board

Employment and Training Service Providers

- 14. Central IowaWORKS
- 15. Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families
- 16. Goodwill of the Heartland
- 17. United Way

Community College

- 18. Iowa Central Community College
- 19. Southeastern Community College
- 20. Des Moines Area Community College

Employers

- 21. Retail
- 22. Restaurant
- 23. Distribution Centers

Work Group Priorities

Increase and broaden training/apprenticeship opportunities within correctional facilities. Review opportunities to help inmates begin preparing for release and employment thereafter, earlier in the incarceration (to enable enrollment and completion of training opportunities).

Provide more career assessment/development for offenders in preparation of release including interview and resume writing skills; increased job searches prior to release; connection with community resources available to assist with job search after release including lowa Works offices and nonprofits.

Increase assistance to those offenders in job searches and resume development currently in halfway houses around the state.

Educate employers about potential pool of previously incarcerated individuals as returning citizens and potential applicants and demystify hiring individuals with a criminal record.

Increase collaboration between departments of correction, workforce development and adult education to develop plans and programs to put returning citizens in a better position to obtain and sustain stable jobs upon release.

Complete a comprehensive process analysis and systems mapping

Iowa's Reentry Philosophy:

The lowa Department of Corrections has embraced a reentry philosophy that begins when an offender first enters the criminal justice system and is rooted in early identification of risk, needs, and responsivity and the use of evidence-based assessments and practices to create opportunities for client success and safer communities. Therefore, reentry is an integrated part of the total correctional involvement designed to protect the citizens of the state of Iowa by preparing clients to manage their lives in a prosocial manner, thus improving the prospect of a successful return to the community. Within the reentry philosophy framework, the Iowa Department of Corrections takes a comprehensive approach to reentry and offers wide range of

treatment and services, both in prison and in the community post-release.

Description of assessment elements:

Risk-needs assessments and job readiness screening tools to determine program or service needs, including who administers the assessments and when, and the processes associated with making program referrals in the correctional facility(ies) and in the community.

The Iowa Department of Corrections utilizes a screening instrument for prisons called the Iowa Violence and Victimization Instrument (IVVI). Every individual who is incarcerated in Iowa receives this assessment

upon intake at our classification center administered by our reception counselors. The instrument examines nine factors to be scored. The scores are grouped into risk categories (low, low/moderate, moderate/high, and high). Moderate/high and above will trigger a dynamic risk assessment (Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Reentry-DRAOR). The DRAOR is a case management tool to identify specific risk domains to target in order to reduce recidivism; therefore, it is administered by case managers. Each staff member that conducts either the IVVI or DRAOR receive training and must be certified in the instrument in order to utilize it with the offender population. Staff receive ongoing training and there is a quality improvement process in place to ensure fidelity to the risk assessments.

Community-based corrections utilizes a screening tool entitled the Iowa Risk Revised (IRR), which is administered within the first 30 days of supervision. The IRR is essentially the same assessment as the IVVI utilized in the prison setting; however, it also includes four community stability factors (employment, housing, substance abuse, past revocations). Risk scores on the IRR translate to levels of supervision that include administrative, minimum, low normal, high normal, and intensive. High normal scores and above will receive a DRAOR.

The Educational Instructors in each of the institutions also administer and utilized the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), which includes a wide variety of assessments approved for Measuring Educational Gain in the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education.

Identification and review of the type and quality of existing correctional and employment programming in the correctional facility(ies) and in the community(ies) of focus to which the target population is being released, which are designed to change criminal behaviors, including the alignment of programs with evidence-based principles and promising practices from the corrections and workforce development fields.

Core programs offered within the IDOC prisons include education/vocational training, sex offender treatment, substance abuse, domestic violence, and cognitive-behavioral programming. All programs are considered evidence-based or promising. IDOC conducts a yearly program inventory on all treatment programs to ensure there are no gaps in service needs, programs remain evidence-based, and to ensure fidelity to the facilitation of core programs.

Educational and vocational programs are facilitated by community colleges and/or Iowa Workforce Development and Sandra Smith, IDOC Director of Education provides oversight to ensure fidelity of statewide educational programs.

Community-Based Corrections (CBC) conducts cognitive-behavioral, sex offender, and domestic violence programming. Most other services in community-based corrections are provided by local service providers such as One Stop services within the community, including educational/vocational training as well as substance abuse and mental health services.

Description of the information-sharing processes among agencies to identify program needs and programs completed which will support the successful transition from incarceration to the community.

When an individual is released back into the community, counselors (prison), parole and residential (CBC) work together to assist with the offenders' transition back to the community.

CBC has access to the reentry plan, programs completed, risk level information, employment and housing information. The two systems work together collaboratively to ensure a more seamless transition to the

community. In many instances, offenders being released are signed up for services for mental health and substance abuse prior to their release in order to facilitate immediate services upon reentry. Statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and practice-based hurdles to reintegration of offenders into the community.

The biggest hurdle is "hard to place" offenders. These offenders are usually sex offenders that are limited by code because of residency restrictions or offenders who have been difficult placements previously within the community. Our aging population of sex offenders and offenders with dementia that may have assaultive histories are very difficult as often times, they are in need of nursing home level of care and are denied placement in such facilities.

Explanation of the statewide definition of recidivism, including a description of how that rate is calculated on a regular basis and reported to policymakers periodically so that changes can be routinely and effectively tracked over time, and demonstrate the capability to access and obtain data. The applicant must also include a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population.

The lowa Department of Corrections utilizes two reporting metrics for recidivism. The first metric is exits from prison (any individual leaving prison to parole, work release, or discharge) that are re-incarcerated within three years for new conviction or revocation from supervision.

The second metric is target population. The target population includes high normal and intensive probationers and parolees who are incarcerated within three years for new conviction or revocation. The recidivism for prison exits for FY 17 is 35.4%; and 31.5% for the target population. Iowa measures recidivism rate annually. Additionally, Iowa publishes recidivism rate on IDOC's websites and provides executive summaries/one-pagers to policymakers and key stakeholders.

IDOC utilizes several databases to calculate recidivism. IDOC utilizes the Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON), which is an internal, customized database tracking system) and the Justice Data Warehouse that gathers court-level information.

Identification of connections to other reentry and employment programs in the state or tribes that are funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and/or U.S. Department of Education, with a clear explanation as to how the programs will be coordinated to provide complementary—not duplicative—services.

The only federal grant awarded to the lowa DOC at this time is also under the Second Chance Act and will expire September 30, 2018. The lowa DOC has its' own research department and we look forward to sharing data and working closely with the National Reentry Resource Center through both phases of this process. It is anticipated that more intensive technical assistance around examination of statewide policies affecting inter-agency coordination may be of particular value. There are times when a policy or practice within one agency is in conflict with another and more complex work may be necessary to change an agency practice, particularly those that are governed by statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and may present practice-based hurdles to the reintegration of previously incarcerated individuals or "returning citizens" into the community as described in the program narrative of this application. (Example: Legislatively-governed Administrative Rules).

Create an industry-advisory group of employers

The lowa Department of Corrections, together with the lowa Department of Workforce Development, will establish a group of employers to be industry advisors for the lowa Reentry and Employment Training Program. The primary industry we expect to engage is the restaurant and food service sector, as this sector is well-suited to employing and training individuals who may start with limited skills and work history. In addition, in lowa, this sector is experiencing a severe shortage of workers. There are many openings that are not filled in a timely manner. There are businesses that would like to expand or increase their geographical footprint, but cannot due to the lack of staff and available workers. In many cases, incarcerated individuals can obtain the basic work skills necessary to succeed in this industry in a relatively short period, and can become very employable cooks, chefs, waiters, servers and hosts. Furthermore, large-scale food preparation such as wholesale distributors, bakeries and caterers can often employ previously incarcerated individuals in positions which do not necessarily interact directly with the public.

While often not necessary, this factor can tend to sway employers who may be initially apprehensive about hiring a returning citizen. The employer gets an opportunity to assess the situation and recognize the benefits of employing individuals who may have been previously incarcerated, and the employer is likely to expand those opportunities upon recognizing the employees as assets to his or her business operation.

The retail sector—stores and direct-to consumer businesses that deal with the public—is the other sector we expect to primarily focus upon. This industry faces similar shortages and challenges compared to the food service sector, but also cuts across a more diverse cross-section of the economy. Retail can include everything from mail-order businesses, service businesses, chain stores and downtown storefronts. There are a variety of retail businesses of all types in each region of Iowa, including mom-and-pop style stores and large, name-brand stores that have a nationwide presence. This sector is traditionally open to a wider array of workers from a more diverse range of backgrounds, and will welcome the opportunity to employ motivated individuals who are eager for the chance to earn a living and participate in their communities.

The working group structure will consist of the following stakeholders and meet on a monthly basis: *Criminal Justice*

- 1. Director of Corrections (Chair)
- 2. Director of Reentry and Treatment Services
- 3. Assistant Deputy Director, Community Based Corrections
- 4. Reentry Coordinator from the following correctional facilities
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<u>Develop a plan for integrating best practices</u>

The lowa Department of Corrections and Iowa Department of Workforce Development have an ongoing, positive working relationship. There have been projects between the agencies for decades, and IWD currently utilizes staff to assist DOC with programming in correctional facilities within the state. Given the expertise and subject-matter knowledge of the Department of Corrections, it follows that Iowa Workforce Development will rely upon that expertise in order to identify returning citizens who can best be assisted with reentry programming, and to assess the unique needs of each individual that participates. The DOC will need to rely upon the expertise and relationships of the Iowa Department of Workforce Development to connect each individual with the right opportunity, and to match industry-partner employers to participants that can meet the needs of both. The Iowa Department of Corrections has a long history of best practices and prudent methodologies to help reduce recidivism and identify currently incarcerated individuals with the appropriate motivation and outlook to succeed in post-incarceration opportunities and programming. IWD has a similar history of matching employers and those seeking work, and the resources to not only connect the two, but to follow-through with helping each succeed.

Appendix C ARES Grant Project Abstract

Project Abstract



Part 1: Please identify the applicant point of contact (POC)

OMB No. 1121-0329 Approval Expires 12/31/2018

Applicant POC	
Organization Name	Iowa Department of Corrections
POC Name	Katrina Carter
Phone Number	515-725-5713
Email Address	katrina.carter@iowa.gov
Mailing Address	510 E 12th Street Des Moines, IA 50319

Part 2: Please identify the application

Application Information				
Solicitation Name	Second Chance Act Adult Reentry and Employment Strategic Planning Program (2018-RQ-BX-0011)			
Project Title	Iowa Reentry and Employment Training Project (IRETP)			
Proposed Start Date	10/01/2020			
Proposed End Date	09/30/2021			
Funding Amount Requested	\$230,000			

Part 3: Please identify the project location and applicant type

Project Location and Applicant Type		
Project Location (City, State)	Des Moines, Iowa	
Applicant Type (Tribal Nation, State, County, City, Nonprofit, Other)	State Government - Corrections	



Part 4: Please provide a project abstract

Enter additional project abstract information. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, this information includes:

- · Brief description of the problem to be addressed and target area and population
- · Project goals and objectives
- Brief statement of project strategy or overall program
- Description of any significant partnerships
- · Anticipated outcomes and major deliverables

Text should be single spaced; do not exceed 400 words.

Project Abstract

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Title of Project: "Iowa Reentry and Employment Training Project" (IRETP)

Project Purpose:

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- 2. Address gaps found in planning phase (i.e., job readiness assessment) and identify a job readiness assessment to

- 3. Enhance community connections with employment partners and leverage resources with lowa Workforce Development.
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This program will meet all of the priority considerations set forth in the grant guidelines while employing evidence-based practices and an assessment-driven process to effectively improve offender reentry outcomes and implement a strategy for sustainment and replication throughout the state.



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Part 5: Please indicate whether OJP has permission to share the project abstract

If the applicant is willing for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), in its discretion, to make the information in the project abstract above publicly available, please complete the consent section below. Please note, the applicant's decision whether to grant OJP permission to publicly release this information will not affect OJP's funding decisions. Also, if the application is not funded, granting permission will not guarantee that information will be shared, nor will it guarantee funding from any other source.

not granted

Permission granted (Fill in authorized official consent below.)

On behalf of the applicant named above, I consent to the information in the project abstract above (including contact information) being made public, at the discretion of OJP consistent with applicable policies. I understand that this consent is only necessary to the extent that my application is unfunded; information submitted in an application that is funded (including this abstract) is always releasable to the public consistent with FOIA rules. I certify that have the authority to provide this consent.

Authorized Official (AO) Consent				
Signature		Date		
A		4/30/20		
AO Name	Dr. Beth Skinner			
Title	Director			
Organization Name	Iowa Department of Corrections			
Phone Number	515-725-5704			
Email Address	beth.skinner@iowa.gov			

Note: This document is to be submitted as a separate attachment with a file name that contains the words "**Project Abstract.**"



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