



Request for Proposal for the Redevelopment of the SWANA Manager of Landfill Operations Certification and Course

Project Overview

Headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) seeks a consultant group to serve as the Contract Project Manager (CPM) for one project with two objectives:

1. Redevelopment of the Manager of Landfill Operations (MOLO) Certification in keeping with the responsibilities and knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) required of today's managers of landfill operations; and
2. Redevelopment of SWANA's MOLO Course in keeping with current standards, practices, technologies, and guidelines for the management of landfill operations.

A key aspect of the redevelopment efforts involves working with SWANA staff and subject matter experts (SME) with expertise managing active and open municipal solid waste landfills, some of whom currently hold the MOLO certification and teach the MOLO course.

With SWANA staff assistance, the CPM will arrange for the participation of SMEs in the area of landfill operations to form two distinct bodies:

1. Certification Exam Redevelopment Group (ERG)
2. Course Redevelopment Group (CRG)

SWANA will take the lead in populating both bodies and work closely with the CPM to ensure both groups have the expertise, experience, and knowledge needed to successfully complete the two objectives.

The CPM will assign at least one representative to lead the activities of each group. SMEs and CPM representatives serving in one group may not serve on the other, which will help SWANA adhere to the standards requiring separation between certification, training, and course development activities.

This exciting project represents a major departure from how SWANA has traditionally developed its certification-related training. Past course development efforts have resulted in one very large course manual of several hundred pages that offered a comprehensive look at a field of study, like the management of landfill operations. If a student required training on one aspect of the field, he/she had to take the entire course.

With this project, SWANA is developing a more personalized and customized learning experience. The new MOLO course will be available as individual learning modules, each of which will provide a stand-alone educational experience about the primary topic(s) covered in that module. Depending on their educational needs, students will have the option to access one or multiple modules to fill knowledge gaps selectively or consume the modules as a set for a comprehensive education on the management of landfill operations. Further, the MOLO course in its entirety or as individual modules will be available in digital and live, instructor-led formats.

Key Deliverables

Generally, the CPM will work with the **Certification Exam Redevelopment Group** to review and update, as needed, the current MOLO Certification exam items and create a bank of at least 250 new and updated exam items that align to the role, responsibilities, and KSAs required of today's managers of landfill operations.

The key deliverables include:

1. Implementing CPM's collaboration tool of choice and training ERG members on how to use it
2. Updating the MOLO Body of Knowledge (Attachment I), a joint effort of the ERG and CRG*
3. Training ERG members on how to write exam items
4. Producing a bank of at least 250 exam items per the standards for developing professional certification exams

Generally, the **Course Redevelopment Group** will review and update, as needed, the current course content and create new course content to reflect today's standards, practices, technologies, guidelines, and requirements (regulatory and otherwise) for the management of landfill operations.

The new course will include fresh and updated content, not simply a reformatting of the current course content. However, content from the current MOLO course may be adopted. Content should be presented in a way that engages students in the learning process through interactive activities, including problem-solving exercises and discussions of real-world, workplace issues and scenarios.

The key deliverables include:

1. Implementing CPM's collaboration tool of choice and training CRG members on how to use it
2. Updating the MOLO Body of Knowledge, a joint effort of the ERG and CRG
3. Finalizing the course outline as a detailed and ordered list of the learning modules and overall course framework that identifies the learning objectives for the modules and overall course, module descriptions, and module transition points, as appropriate
4. Creating a Student Course Manual
5. Creating an Instructor Course Manual
6. Creating a common course module template for course materials, including the PowerPoint presentation slide deck
7. Creating a PowerPoint slide deck that guides the presentation of the new course via the modules and live presentation of the course
8. Creating a robust set of supplemental activities that engages students during the live presentation of the course
9. Creating supplemental materials that further the students' learning and experience with the course concepts
10. Delivering final course materials, to include:
 - Distinct learning modules that, as a set, provide a complete education on the management of landfill operations
 - Course and Module Outlines
 - Lesson Objectives for Modules and Overall Course
 - Descriptions of Modules and Overall Course
 - Module and Course Agendas and Schedules
 - Lesson Plans
 - Student Course Manual
 - Instructor Course Manual
 - Presentation (PowerPoint slide deck)
 - Course Preparation Checklist
 - All Supplemental Materials, including case studies, activities and exercises, graphs, charts, references, bibliography, etc.

- Review Questions for Each Module
- 11. Delivering an abbreviated presentation of the course to the CRG and Staff Team as a two- to three-hour, live, online presentation
- 12. Developing and delivering two Train-the-Trainer workshops
 - The first will be an online, live series of four, approximately two-hour presentations on the various MOLO modules. The online training series will be recorded for subsequent use.
 - The second will be an in-person presentation of a full-day (8-hour) workshop at a SWANA educational and/or training event
- 13. Delivering the live, pilot presentation of the new MOLO course

All deliverables require final approval by the SWANA Staff Team.

* Other than working on the BoK, the ERG, CRG, and CPM representatives assigned to each group will not work together.

Budget

The budget for this project does not exceed \$130,000. Included in the \$130,000 budget are all costs attendant to in-person and virtual meetings with SMEs, including costs associated with SME and CPM travel, lodging, meals, and transportation for in-person meetings; delivery of Train-the-Trainer workshops; and the pilot presentation of the course.

Schedule

The Exam Redevelopment effort kicks off in September and concludes in February 2021.

The Course Redevelopment effort kicks off in September and concludes in April 2021.

Response Due Date

Proposals are due by 8 pm EDT on Friday, August 28, and must follow the guidelines established in the following Request for Proposal.

About SWANA

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) is an organization of more than 11,000 public and private sector professionals committed to advancing from solid waste management to resource management through their shared emphasis on education, advocacy and research. For more than 50 years, SWANA has been the leading association in the solid waste management field. SWANA serves industry professionals through technical conferences, certifications, publications, and a large offering of technical training courses. For more information, visit SWANA.org.

Questions & Contact

Please direct questions concerning the RFP to:

Arminda Valles-Hall
Director, Member Learning & Education
avalles-hall@swana.org
240.494.2251

Request for Proposal

Since the MOLO course and exam were last updated, the field of management of landfill operations has steadily evolved in keeping with growing environmental concerns, worker safety requirements, a changing regulatory landscape, technological advancements, and movement for more sustainable means of waste management.

These changes, singly and jointly, drive managers of landfill operations to adjust their perceptions of the field; keep pace with and incorporate new technologies, job requirements, and practices; and seek professional and career development that help them obtain and demonstrate competencies required of today's managers of landfill operations. Maintaining the currency of its MOLO programs helps SWANA effectively meet the evolving needs of these professionals.

Through the redevelopment of the MOLO certification and course, SWANA will define what it means to be a manager of landfill operations today. The project includes validating and updating, as needed, the Body of Knowledge (BoK) for Managers of Landfill Operations, resulting in a detailed list of the areas of responsibility and KSAs required of individuals currently in this role. The updated BoK will serve as the foundational document for the redevelopment of the MOLO certification exam and course.

Required Outcomes

The CPM will guide the redevelopment efforts and, more specifically:

1. Work with SWANA staff to populate the ERG and CRG with 7-8 SMEs in each group who have experience and expertise in the management of landfill operations. SWANA will take the lead in populating both teams and work with the CPM to fill any competency, expertise, and knowledge gaps. Each group will be required to participate in pre-set in-person and online meetings.
 - Ideally, the ERG and CRG will each include:
 - Up to three (3) SWANA-certified MOLOs who currently manage active and open municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills located in the United States and Canada;
 - Up to three (3) individuals with 5-7 years of landfill management experience who currently manage active and open MSW landfills and are not yet SWANA-certified MOLOs;
 - At least one (1) representative of the SWANA Landfill Management Technical Division; and
 - At least one (1) Young Professional (<35 years old) who currently manages an active and open MSW landfill.
 - Further and ideally, the ERG will include:
 - Up to three (3) SWANA-certified MOLO course instructors who currently manage active and open MSW landfills in the U.S. or Canada and agree not to teach the course for two years post the redevelopment of the exam
 - Further and ideally, the CRG will include:
 - Up to three (3) SWANA-certified MOLO course instructors who currently manage active and open MSW landfills in the U.S. or Canada
 - The Chair of the SWANA Landfill Management Technical Division Training Committee
 - An individual may satisfy multiple criteria, e.g., a young professional who serves as a SWANA-certified instructor and is a member of the Landfill Management Technical Division satisfies three criteria.

2. Launch the project, introducing ERG and CRG members to the process and scope of responsibilities outlined for each group.
3. Validate and update, as needed, the BoK for Managers of Landfill Operations.
4. Train ERG members in how to develop exam items for professional certification exams.
5. Develop a pool of at least 250 exam items. SWANA expects the majority of the 250 items submitted as the final bank of exam items will be new. However, the CPM will have access to all current exam items to review and update, as needed, to ensure compliance with item-writing guidelines and formatting. Current exam items may be used if still relevant.
6. Redevelop MOLO course, creating distinct, stand-alone learning modules that, when combined, provide an A-Z education on the management of landfill operations. The CDM should strive to make each module equivalent to approximately one hour of live or electronic content. SWANA recognizes the length of modules will vary depending on the amount of time needed to provide a stand-alone educational experience on the topic(s) covered within a module.

Each module will include:

- Materials for a Student Course Manual
 - Materials for an Instructor Course Manual
 - A course presentation consisting of PowerPoint slides
 - Supplemental materials that enhance the learning experience, such as: case studies, handouts, charts, tables, references, and bibliographies
 - Review questions relevant to the topic(s) of the module
 - Interactive exercises, as appropriate
7. Develop outline for overall course and each module. The outline maps the course content. It delineates its major topics, sub-topics, and details, and defines the content delivery flow. The CPM and CRG should review the current MOLO course Table of Contents (Attachment II) and current Instructor Course Manual in preparation for the development of the content outline for the new MOLO course. The CPM may adopt that which is appropriate, eliminate that which is not, and add to the outline based on the recommendations and consensus of the CRG. SWANA anticipates CPM will rely on multiple sources to develop the outline, including:
 - Newly updated MOLO BoK
 - Existing MOLO course manual
 - SMEs' experience and expertise
 - CPM's internal experience and expertise
 - Industry resources, including books, case studies, and research
 8. Create common templates for the Student Course Manual, Instructor Course Manual, and course slides, and deliver same to Staff Team for review and comment. The CPM will use the approved SWANA Course Style Guide to develop all templates or request pre-approval of an alternative approach. A consistent template must be used throughout all course outputs.
 9. Create course content. SWANA expects the CPM to write the copy for all modules/course and use CRG members to review, validate, and offer amendments to it.
 10. Create a Student Course Manual and an Instructor Course Manual that include the learning modules that, when bundled, deliver a comprehensive education on the management of landfill operations.

The draft course manuals and all supplemental materials must be created in Microsoft Office applications 2010 or later – Word, PowerPoint, Excel or others – and provided to the SWANA team in formats that can be readily edited. All materials must conform to the SWANA Style Guide. The final course and outputs must be designed in Adobe InDesign to ensure all files are print ready.

The Student Manual will include:

- Title page with SWANA logo
- Acknowledgements page
- Table of Contents
- Lesson content in narrative format that identifies the objectives of each module. A PowerPoint presentation must be provided for each module and the content of the PowerPoint slides may not repeat verbatim the written narrative.
- Resources and References
- Bibliography
- Module review questions
- Exercises
- Cover for Student Course Manual that represents the overall theme of the course

The Instructor Manual will include:

- The information in the Student Course Manual
- Instructor Facilitation Guidance, including the recommended time allowance for each lesson and exercise, key points, references, flip chart/whiteboard activity instructions, answers to the review questions, etc.
- Icons and symbols to indicate tips and when an action is required
- Cover for the Instructional Course Manual that represents the overall theme of the course
- Goals of individual modules and their relation to the overall course goals
- Learning Outcomes – what a student should know and be able to do as a result of the training course
- Optimal Class Size – optimal class size for achieving course goals and learning objectives
- Course Agenda and Schedule – time schedule of course presentation, breaks, etc.
- Event Preparation Checklist, including audio/visual and instructional tools, such as flip charts; ideal room set-up; and items related to student preparation, including pre-requisite readings and what students need to bring
- Lesson Plans for Each Module – including key messages, background information, activities and notes

Resources and References are important supplemental materials for the student and instructor manuals and may be provided in either the core narrative or as appendices. Materials may include, but are not limited to:

- References to other sources of information
- Schematics and flow diagrams
- Real-world examples, such as case studies
- Fact sheets, specifications, and photos
- Additional readings and article reprints
- Both metric and standard English units of measurement must be used throughout

The training course materials should convey information in a manner and format that are interesting and attractive to students. The materials should incorporate photos, pictures, video,

and/or audio aids, as appropriate, and should include group exercises and discussions in each lesson to encourage student engagement and feedback.

As a reminder, the CPM will bundle the content into distinct modules that provide a stand-alone education about the topic(s) covered within each module. As a set, the modules will provide a complete education on the management of landfill operations. Nonetheless, whenever possible, the content should provide a smooth transition from one module to another with limited repetition except as needed to build from one topic to the next.

Further, the content must be presented in a narrative form. Again, while draft versions of all content outputs should be submitted in MS Word and other easily editable formats, the final course and outputs must be designed in Adobe InDesign to ensure all files are print ready. All course materials must conform to the SWANA Style Guide.

11. Ensure copyright approvals are obtained for all materials and appropriately acknowledge sources in a standard citation format.
12. Convene web conferences and in-person meetings of the ERG and CRG through completion and final approval of all project deliverables
13. Deliver two Train-the-Training workshops (one live online series that will be recorded, one full-day workshop at a live SWANA event)
14. Deliver, in person, the pilot presentation of the new course in its entirety, capturing and sharing feedback with CRG, and adjusting, as necessary

Respondents must respond to and build on the Required Outcomes offered above in its Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal, fully detailing the activities associated with all key outcomes. Additionally, respondents should detail their recommended improvements, adjustments, and additions; establish specific time frames for the submission of deliverables; and note comments, concerns, or objections associated with any activity or deliverable.

Process for the Selection of Contract Project Manager

The Staff Team is tasked with:

- Evaluating proposals
- Selecting and managing the Contract Project Manager
- Overseeing the development effort
- Evaluating the performance of the CPM
- Providing direction to the CPM related to deliverables and work product
- Approving deliverables

The Staff Team is composed of select SWANA team members and may change through time. At present, it consists of:

- Meri Beth Wojtaszek, Deputy Executive Director
- Sara Bixby, Deputy Executive Director
- Jeremy O'Brien, Director, Applied Research Foundation
- Arminda Valles-Hall, Director, Member Learning & Education

The Staff Team and any other industry experts it identifies will evaluate proposals based on the following weighted criteria:

- 30%: Respondent's Technical Proposal
 - Quality and thoroughness of Respondent's Technical Proposal outlining ability to carry out the scope of work and time frames for deliverables
- 30%: Cost Proposal Adherence to Available Budget
 - Ability to accomplish scope of work within budgetary constraints
- 20%: Industry Knowledge
 - Knowledge of responsibilities and KSAs required of today's managers of landfill operations
 - Knowledge of the operations and management of landfills, including current standards, practices, technologies, and guidelines for their effective and safe management
- 10%: Certification Exam Development Expertise
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience developing certification exams
 - Experience delivering exam-writing training for professional certification exams
- 10%: Course and Training Development & Delivery Expertise
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience working closely with SMEs through a content development process
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience employing a rapid prototyping instructional systems design process that permits receiving continual or formative feedback while instructional materials are being created, resulting in a savings of time and money by identifying and resolving issues early on
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience developing training for adult learners
 - Experience developing and delivering train-the-trainer programs

Schedule

The CPM is expected to launch the project in September 2020 and end it in April 2021, specifically:

- Exam Redevelopment activities will end and deliverables will be submitted for final approval no later than Friday, February 26, 2021; and
- Course Redevelopment activities will end and deliverables will be submitted for final approval no later than Friday, April 30, 2021.

Submission of Proposals and Mandatory Pre-Proposal Call

SWANA will hold a mandatory pre-proposal conference call to respond to questions from prospective Respondents on **Thursday, August 6, 2020, at 2 p.m. ET**. Dial-in information will be provided to all RFP recipients in advance of the call via the [SWANA MOLO RFP webpage](#). Prospective respondents must have a representative on the call.

Firms that attend the mandatory pre-proposal conference call are eligible to submit a Proposal. The Proposal will consist of a Technical Proposal of no more than 20 pages, a mark-up of the draft Agreement, and a Cost Proposal.

Proposals are due no later than 8 pm ET Friday, August 28. Proposals should be identified with the subject line: **MOLO Redevelopment Project Proposal** and emailed as a PDF to avalles-hall@swana.org.

Proposals should be sent with a "Request a Read Receipt" selected as an option to provide delivery confirmation.

The Technical Proposal must include:

1. A cover letter that provides Respondent's full contact information and the names, bios, and contact information for Respondent's team members, including sub-contractors, and the sub-group (ERG or CRG) to which each will be assigned.
2. A detailed explanation of Respondent's approach to working with ERG and CRG members to achieve the desired outcomes and schedule.
3. A description of the CPM's and its team members' qualifications and experience in the following areas:
 - Knowledge of responsibilities and KSAs required of today's managers of landfill operations
 - Knowledge of the operations and management of landfills, including current standards, practices, technologies, and guidelines for their effective and safe management
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience developing training for adult learners
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience developing certification exams
 - Experience delivering training in certification exam item-writing
 - Experience developing and delivering train-the-trainer programs
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience working closely with Subject Matter Experts and volunteers throughout a content development process and a certification exam development process
 - Capabilities, skills, and experience employing a rapid prototyping instructional systems design process that permits receiving continual or formative feedback while instructional materials are being created, resulting in a savings of time and money by identifying and resolving issues early on
4. A sample of CPM's work on a past project that illustrates the quality of its work product, particularly its effectiveness in communicating about and educating on technical concepts. A chapter written for a manual or course would be a perfect example. The sample, which may be as short as 4-5 pages, should be submitted as an attachment to the Technical Proposal and its page count will not count against the 20-page maximum identified for the Technical Proposal.

The final Proposal must include a mark-up of the draft Agreement that is included with this RFP. The draft Agreement is not included in the 20-page Technical Proposal limit but is a required proposal element. Proposed changes should be submitted in redline with supplemental comments as needed. If the entire Agreement is acceptable, mark it "Acceptable in Whole." Failure to return the reviewed draft Agreement will be considered submittal of an incomplete proposal.

The Cost Proposal must address the work needed to redevelop both the MOLO course and certification examination. The Cost Proposal must contain a matrix (table) that identifies the responsibilities, topics, and modules assigned to each project team member with the number of hours and billing rate for each project team member for each task. Expenses related to each task must be incorporated in the matrix. The cost proposal must include project management in the matrix. The matrix must summarize all task and project management pricing into a single project price within the budget.

The Cost Proposal should include a written component that describes the project management processes that will be used to keep the project within the available budget per task and in whole. Labor and expenses (telephone, web conferences, printing, etc.) for project management efforts must be included in the matrix. SWANA will not pay additional fees and expenses beyond those shown in the matrix.

The presentation of hours and fees by task is not optional and will need to be carried through into monthly project invoices to support SWANA's reporting on this project.

Option to Waive Irregularities & Reject All Proposals

The Staff Team retains the right to waive any or all irregularities in proposals and/or to reject any or all proposals submitted at its sole discretion. SWANA shall not be liable for any cost incurred in connection with the presentation and submission of any proposal.

Cost Proposal, Budget & Payment Schedule

The maximum amount available for completion of the redevelopment of the MOLO Exam and Certification is \$130,000.

Respondents must submit a fixed price proposal covering development of both the Exam and Course. The Cost Proposal must identify the portion of the proposed budget (hours and fees) assigned to each task by Development Group (ERG and CRG). It must also provide a breakdown of time assigned to providing required deliverables, to addressing feedback, and to project management.

Payments will be distributed only after the Staff Team approves deliverables and will be distributed as follows:

- 10% upon approval of updated Body of Knowledge
- 10% upon approval of course outline
- 10% upon delivery of exam item-writing workshop
- 15% upon delivery of all course content modules to the CRG for their review/comment
- 15% upon approval of new exam item bank consisting of at least 250 items
- 15% upon approval of redeveloped MOLO course, including all supplemental materials and activities
- 10% upon delivery of an online Train-the-Trainer series consisting of four, two-hour online modules
- 5% upon delivery of live, in-person Train-the-Trainer full-day workshop at SWANA event
- 10% upon approval of any revisions to new course following delivery of live pilot presentation of new course

Respondent may suggest an alternative pay schedule.

Questions

Please direct questions concerning the RFP to:
Arminda Valles-Hall
Director, Member Learning & Education
Avalles-hall@swana.org
240.494.2251

Attachments

Attachment I: Manager of Landfill Operations Body of Knowledge
Attachment II: MOLO Course Manual Table of Contents
Attachment III: Draft Agreement to be Marked-up and Returned with Proposal