Request for Proposals
Community Development Block Grant – Public Services FY 2023

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BIDDER'S CONFERENCE	February 25, 2022 12:00 PM Register Here
LETTER OF INTENT DUE *Strongly encouraged but not mandatory*	March 4, 2022 BY: 5:00 PM EST
PROPOSALS DUE	April 1, 2022 BY: 5:00 PM EST

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I. OVERVIEW

RFP OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is the City of Boston's workforce development agency. Under the leadership of Mayor Michelle Wu, OWD administers funding from various sources to support a broad range of services including education and training, career development, job training, adult basic education, and youth employment services leading to greater economic security. One such funding source is the Community Development Block Grant – Public Services (CDBG-PS).

Each year, the City of Boston receives CDBG-PS funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Mayor's Office of Housing (formerly the Department of Neighborhood Development). The funds are primarily used for affordable housing and economic development activities. However, up to 15% of the funds can be used for "public services" related to economic development. As the City's workforce development agency, OWD manages this portion of the funding on behalf of the Mayor's Office of Housing. The public services component of the CDBG-PS provides services for low-income individuals and families with the goal of moving them out of poverty towards economic security.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) solicits competitive proposals for services under CDBG-PS. As a division of the Boston Planning and Development Agency/Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (BPDA/EDIC), OWD will handle all questions concerning this RFP, review all submissions, and prepare funding recommendations.

PRIORITIES FOR CDBG-PS FUNDING

The priorities for funding in this RFP were developed through a planning process conducted over the past several months. A draft statement of policy priorities was issued for comment on December 12, 2022. Comments received were taken into consideration in finalizing the policy principles, which can be found on the OWD website at owd.boston.gov.

For FY 2023, OWD will prioritize programs and services aimed at placing low-income Boston residents on a continuum of quality education, training, workforce development, and economic security programs. This continuum is defined as high school diploma/GED/Hi-SET attainment, matriculation into post-secondary education or industry-recognized training programs, placement into jobs with demonstrated career paths, and/or access to income maximization programs that stabilize individuals and families with barriers. OWD has developed a visual of this economic opportunity continuum, which can be found in Appendix C.

Preference will be given to programs offering employment in a job along a career pathway, education/training, and economic security as a continuum with an integrated approach, where individuals can take advantage of multiple services to help them become economically self-sufficient. Employment programs, when combined with post-secondary education/training and critical economic security services, are capable of promoting sustained, significant change in the lives of low-income individuals.

For certain populations, including seniors and individuals with disabilities, OWD will support economic security programs that allow individuals to retain their current employment and/or allow them to lead stable, economically self-sufficient lives. OWD defines economic security programs as income maximization programs that allow individuals to access public and private benefits. Programs emphasizing the economic security component on the continuum pathway must indicate in their narrative the specific dollar amount in public and private benefits that participants will obtain to maximize their income. Applicants successfully integrating the three program components that include employment, education, and economic security programs, if funded, will likely be funded at the higher range of the grant.

CDBG funding has also been used to supplement the funding from the Commonwealth's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the main source of substantial funding for adult basic education in the state. Boston has a history of ABE services provided by a broad network of community-based providers that has served the needs of specific communities at the same time as serving the greater community. While there has been a variety of different strengths and gaps in services, this RFP prioritizes ABE services that address the following: 1) the lack of funding for the higher levels of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) that would help them to prepare for and obtain their High School equivalency through a GED or HiSET test; 2) the general scarcity of programming that would support adult students who have obtained their high school diploma to go further in their education by taking classes and obtaining credentials such as post-secondary degrees or industry-recognized certificates/credentials; 3) a need for more collaboration between adult education providers and employers to determine the kinds of skills and competencies that will make students more marketable for jobs that pay above the living wage and have pathways to advancement. Ideally, there should be a clear connection and a concrete synergy between the educational path an adult student takes and the development of their employment and career.

Program design must be based on at least one of the categories of activities leading to stronger economic situations for participants: placement in jobs along a career pathway, placement in job training and/or post-secondary education leading to a career, or economic security through strategies to maximize cash-equivalent benefits. Preference will be given to programs that combine more than one of these broad categories.

We are also looking for innovative practices that address the extra barriers many low-income participants face to obtain quality jobs as defined in this RFP and acquiring the skills and credentials needed for career level, family-sustaining wages. These innovative designs meant to solidify the career pathways of "next steps" are not mandatory but will give applicants a chance to accrue extra points contributing to their reading scores.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

At the issuance of this RFP, the City has not been informed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) of the allocation of CDBG-PS funds for Fiscal Year 2023. The total allocation for the current FY 2022 is approximately $2.3 million. To optimize our grant dollars, OWD intends to award fewer grants in larger amounts ranging from a minimum of $35,000 to a maximum of $100,000 for a period of one year to successful applicants.

OWD does not predetermine the amount of funds to be dedicated toward each program model. The type and quality of proposals submitted will determine the funds awarded. Open and competitive procurement typically occurs on a two-year cycle. Contracts resulting from this RFP are anticipated to commence July 1, 2022, and end on June 30, 2023. Contracts are awarded for a one-year period, and a re-funding process determines the second year of funding. Re-funding for FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) will be contingent upon satisfactory program performance, approval of a re-funding application, and the availability of federal funding. Only awardees of this RFP, providing Boston services for CDBG-PS during FY 2023, will be eligible for this refunding during the second year.

II. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This is an open and competitive procurement process. Eligible applicants must hold 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code, be in the process of receiving such status, or have an identified fiscal sponsor holding 501(c)(3). In addition, OWD is interested in proposals with the following:

- OWD gives priority to community-based organizations with a track record of providing services to low-income residents of the city while maintaining high standards of program management and accountability. Faith-based organizations proposing to provide services in a secular manner are eligible to apply; however, public resources cannot be used to promote a particular religious point of view.

- OWD gives priority to proposals that incorporate partnerships and collaborations under this RFP. Partnerships focusing on seamless integration of services are strongly encouraged to ensure that there are no gaps in the continuum of programs and services. Partnerships are urged to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to employers, institutions of higher education, one-stop career centers, adult basic education providers, and community-based organizations.

- Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal. Applicants may be members of more than one partnership under this RFP. Applicants may also serve as a fiscal agent for more than one organization.

ALLOWABLE USE OF CDBG-PS FUNDS

- CDBG-PS funds must be used to provide direct services as outlined in this RFP.

- CDBG-PS funds may not be used to replace local or state government funds. Funds may be used to provide <u>new or expanded services</u>, but not for specific activities which have lost local or state funds within the past twelve months.

- CDBG-PS funds may not be used to fund political activities.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBLITY AND TARGET POPULATIONS

All participants served with CDBG-PS funds must meet <u>all the</u> following eligibility characteristics:

- Documented residents of the City of Boston. Non-residents *cannot* be served with these funds.

- Individuals, including youth, adults, and seniors with <u>household incomes</u> below the 80% of area median income for Boston, as defined by HUD[1]. The current 80% of median figures for Boston are shown in Appendix B. CDBG-PS funds are required by law to benefit individuals with this income level. Programs are also required to report on how many participants fall below 50% and 30% median income.

- Preference will be given to re-entry or court-involved individuals; out-of-school youth; seniors; persons with disabilities; homeless individuals; documented immigrants; English Language Learners; adult basic education learners; dislocated workers; long-term underemployed or unemployed individuals.

III. SERVICES REQUESTED

OWD seeks proposals for programs offering a continuum of services that create a pathway to a career and/or economic stability that includes education and/or training; job readiness and job placement; and economic security components. Preference will be given to proposals incorporating these components in a convincing way with tangible outcomes. Individuals with limited education or job skills find it difficult to attain higher wages or skills for advancement. Therefore, we encourage programs that lead to the attainment of a high school diploma/GED/HiSET, post-secondary education and/or training.

The goal of this RFP aligns with the city-wide economic opportunity agenda that tackles income inequality for Bostonians. OWD is aware that there are not enough funds to go around to support multiple continua of programs and services – so under this RFP, OWD will be looking for organizations to work together to build a structure to provide a full set of education, employment, and economic security programs. **OWD encourages applicants to partner to provide a career pathway continuum and clearly define each partner's strengths, roles, and responsibilities under this RFP.**

OWD defines a career pathway continuum as an effort that provides a clear sequence of activities and a connection between education, training programs, and economic security services that leads to employment. Career pathways allow participants to progress from one level to the next to build skills that lead to improved career prospects. Career pathways prepare and place individuals into jobs in high-demand and high-wage industries with increased earning opportunities by providing industry-recognized credentials, certificates, and degrees.

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[1] *HUD income guidelines change every year. Successful FY 2023CDBG applicants will receive the most current HUD income guidelines.*

To show that a program is aligned with labor market needs, applicants must present data documenting need in the occupations they are targeting and provide evidence of strong employer involvement in the form of a detailed Memorandum of Agreement/Letter of Support. Multiple employer partners are encouraged.

Under this RFP, OWD seeks innovative models or approaches which respond to the needs of target populations and employers in today's changing economy. Described below are allowable program types under the three pillars of a career pathway continuum:

- **_Employment:_** Employment programs can include occupational skills training, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, career exploration, on-the-job training, and transitional employment programs. These programs provide individuals with specific skills needed for a particular occupation with living wages, and opportunities for advancement and wage progression. Employer engagement may be demonstrated through involvement of employers in the development of curricula and agreement to interview program graduates. In addition, employer engagement can include job shadowing and mock interviews. Employment programs include job readiness services as well. Re-entry programs will need to demonstrate the involvement of committed employers willing to hire ex-offenders. If the target population requires evening or weekend programming, applicants should design programs with hours meeting that need.

- **_Education:_** Education programs can include alternative education, HiSET or GED programs, adult basic education (ESOL and pre-GED or pre-HiSET) and post-secondary education programs. These programs provide individuals with credentials, certificates, and degrees necessary to obtain a career. OWD understands that post-secondary education can take more than two years for target populations to complete. OWD is interested in seeing proposals that not only provide opportunities for individuals to enroll in post-secondary education, but also provide support services that help them persist and complete the program. The training should incorporate basic education and soft skills development to meet the needs of the target population. If the target population includes documented immigrants, English Language Learners, long-term underemployed or unemployed individuals, bridge programs and adult basic education programs can also be included as part of the continuum to accelerate credentials and skills building, but generic, stand-alone bridge programs unconnected to employment and/or post-secondary education/training will not be considered responsive to this RFP. ABE providers should be familiar with and able to implement most if not all of the following indicators of program quality developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: 1) Program Design; 2) Access and Equity; 3) Career Pathways Collaboration; 4) Curriculum and Instruction; 5) Student Progress 6. Advising and Student Support Services; 7) Organizational Support; 8) Educational Leadership; 9) Professional Culture; 10) Fiscal and Data Accountability.

- **_Economic Security:_** Economic security programs include income maximization services, defined as any public or private benefits that are not earned through wages from employment. These can include but are not limited to SNAP, TAFDC, EITC, SSI, SSDI, alimony, child support, unemployment insurance, pension/retirement, and disability benefits. Income maximization programs provide individuals with cash-equivalent benefits that allow them to stabilize their

economic situations. In addition, economic security programs also include increases in income due to wages from employment. Asset building strategies and financial literacy programs to help individuals manage their finances that lead to greater economic security are also considered responsive to this RFP.

OWD prioritizes programs that incorporate **all three critical components** of a career pathways model – employment, education/training, and economic security. These three components can **all be provided in-house from the lead applicant or can include collaboration with other organizations that can provide one or two of the three components.** However, for certain populations, like seniors and individuals with disabilities, emphasis will be placed on economic security programs that allow them to retain their current employment and/or allow them to lead economically stable lives.

SET OF PROGRAM DESIGN PRINCIPLES

In funding career pathways continuum services, OWD adheres to a set of principles, which include:

- Provision of a career pathways continuum that leads to family-sustaining that pay living wages, or jobs or at a minimum Boston's official Living Wage, currently at $15.87/hour. [2]
- Innovations in program design to address the needs of a wide range of individuals.
- Sound recruitment strategy.
- Coordination between programs and partners to provide sequences of activities in employment, education, and economic security.
- A high degree of coordination of wrap-around support services to address a wide range of individual and family needs.
- Partnerships that include employers and institutions of higher education in program development and implementation activities.
- Investment in comprehensive assessment processes that value a high degree of customer direction in program choice.
- Clarity on specific steps in the program which begin or continue successful employment, education and/or training, or economic security steps that lead to a pathway of economic stability and success.

REQUIRED PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- **Career pathways continuum structure.** Applicants must describe a clear career pathways continuum model, indicating what services will be provided and by whom for program participants, including education, training, employment, and/or provision of economic security services. The description includes specific job(s) that program participants are expected to obtain upon successful completion of a pathway. Career pathways must identify specific steps of activities that lead to placement into jobs or post-secondary education/training.

- **Recruitment.** In their proposal, applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the target population they have chosen. Applicants must be capable of executing a comprehensive

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[2] https://owd.boston.gov/wage-theft-living-wage-division/

recruitment strategy for the target population and must show how the strategy they propose will lead to the desired level of enrollment.

▪ **Participant assessment.** To ensure participants are successful and receive appropriate services, a thorough and in-depth assessment of each prospective participant is essential. Applicants should explain the process they use to assess potential participants, the steps and tools involved, and how their assessment protocol improves the service model. Intake and assessment should flow into and directly inform case management and the delivery of services. Individuals found to be not ready for the program must be referred to appropriate services. Attendance, conduct, and termination policies must be consistent.

▪ **Partnership plan.** A strong partnership is critical for collaborative proposals. Applicants must establish a plan that clearly identifies which organization is providing which service for program participants, including educational, training, and employment services, provision of case management programs, provision of economic security services, and/or job placement and retention services. Partnerships can include but are not limited to employers, higher education institutions, and other community-based organizations with expertise in serving the target population.

▪ **Case management and wrap-around support services.** A clear case management strategy for a coordinated response to participants' needs is essential to their success. This begins with one-on-one case management and the development of an individual service plan based on a thorough assessment of the individual's assets and aspirations, as well as any barriers to employment/education/economic security. The plan must be jointly developed with the participant, and regularly reviewed by the service provider team and the participant. The plan should have clearly stated education, training, employment, and/or economic security goals with projected start and end dates for all activities. Applicants should clearly demonstrate how case management is integrated into their service model. Effective case management assists participants in overcoming multiple barriers to success, including but not limited to scheduling difficulties, immigration issues, transportation problems, childcare issues, and financial challenges. Case managers should monitor participant attendance and performance and problem-solve with them as necessary. After placement into jobs or post-secondary education/training, staff should continue to provide support as needed to ensure retention and to address concerns participants may have.

▪ **Remote service delivery.** If any portion of the program is to be offered remotely/virtually, programs must address how participants will be assessed for their digital literacy skills and supported during remote instruction.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The intent of this RFP is to place Boston residents on a continuum of services in employment, education, and economic security. The outcomes for programs funded under this RFP are organized those three components.

For certain populations or certain occupations, temporary, part-time, or subsidized jobs may be a strategic first step – these interim/intermediate outcomes will be considered successful short-term or mid-term outcomes. Placement into bridge programs may also be a strategic first step towards employment. Applicants proposing such strategies, however, must make a compelling argument in their favor and demonstrate a continuum of career pathways to better jobs (i.e., increased hours, unsubsidized jobs, etc.). Placement into post-secondary education/training, with a strong likelihood of it leading to jobs, will be considered a successful outcome. Applicants proposing economic security outcomes must identify the specific dollar amount that participants will obtain as a result of income maximization services and/or employment. Applicants are not required to produce all the outcomes listed below within the scope of this RFP – however, applicants must demonstrate how their career pathways continuum will eventually lead to long-term outcomes of attaining jobs at livable wages.

There are a variety of outcomes that can be achieved with CDBG funding, including:

Employment Outcomes

- o Number of participants who obtain employment. Employment can include part-time jobs and subsidized jobs that lead to full-time unsubsidized jobs with benefits.
- o Number of participants who retain their jobs for at least 30 days.

Educational Outcomes

- o Number of participants who obtain a high school diplomas/HiSET or GED.
- o Number of participants who obtain post-secondary degrees and industry-recognized certificates.
- o Number of participants who are placed into industry-recognized skills training programs, such as occupational training, pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship programs.
- o Number of participants who are placed into post-secondary education, including community colleges and universities.

Economic Security Outcomes

- o Number of participants who have obtained or experienced an increase in cash-equivalent benefits, with specified dollar amount.
- o Number of participants who have experienced an increase in income through wages from employment.
- o Other financial/asset-building metrics, defined by applicant.

In Appendix E, applicants should provide outcome projections for indicators that are applicable to the program model.

PROGRAM MONITORING/REPORTING

OWD will conduct site visits to monitor compliance and quality of services. Monitoring may be in person or virtual. This includes:

- Achievement of objectives in accordance with proposal and contract
- Integrity of administrative systems and eligibility determination; and,
- Quality of service evaluation through observation and informal interviews

These monitoring activities may take the form of administrative record reviews, interviews of staff and/or participants, and general observations of the facilities, operations, and training activities. Participants not adequately documented as CDBG-PS eligible will not count towards outcome measures. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to perform administrative responsibilities including: maintaining records of participant eligibility, attendance and progress; tracking participation; and submitting program reports and invoices in a timely manner.

FINANCIAL MONITORING/REPORTING

Site visits will also be used to monitor financial compliance with CDBG-PS and other applicable regulations.

If your agency expended $750,000 or more in federal financial assistance, from any and all funding sources during the most recent audit period, you are required to have an audit prepared in accordance with the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance or "UG"). The complete text of this audit guidance can be found at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F in the Code of Federal Regulations. A complete copy of the UG-compliant audit report must be submitted, along with a copy of any management letter (if one exists). Agencies subject to the Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report (UFR) filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may use the UFR format.

If you expended less than $750,000 in federal funds, and are exempt from the UG audit requirements, then a statement attesting to that fact must accompany your audited financial statements.

If you expended less than $750,000 in federal funds but are subject to the UFR filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then you should submit a complete copy of your agency's UFR.

Applicants are encouraged to share this information with appropriate fiscal staff to ensure that the audit report submission is correct and complete. Proposals that do not contain a complete audit report submission will be considered incomplete.

IV: PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please complete and include the Proposal Cover Sheet provided in Appendix D. This does not count toward the 15-page limit. Items #1 - #9 below do count toward the 15-page limit.

1. **One-Page Proposal Summary 5 Points**

   a. Briefly describe your proposed program, including specific target population.
   b. Number of participants to be served, program site(s).
   c. Start and end dates.
   d. Industry sectors, employers, and positions to be trained for, educational, employment, and/or economic security outcomes, and other key features of your program.
   e. Identify any partners with whom you will collaborate to offer key components of the program design.
   f. Include a weekly schedule of activities.

2. **Agency Background and Organizational Capacity 15 Points**

   a. Briefly describe your agency's overall history and its previous experience in providing the specific services proposed.
   b. Describe your experience and expertise in any or all three critical components of career pathways: employment, education/training, and/or economic security. Provide a description of your organization's track record in the service you are proposing. Include size of service population and any performance outcomes, including secondary, post-secondary education/training credential achievement, job placement and retention, and financial security achievement.
   c. Include information about your partnerships, briefly describing each partner's roles and responsibilities under this RFP – indicate your partnership's positive impact on your service to target populations in the past, if applicable. If you are counting on a partner to provide one or more of the required priority components – employment, training/education, or economic security – make sure this is stated explicitly in this section.
   d. If you were to receive a contract, would it expand existing capacity or support a new feature in your program?

3. **Target Population 10 Points**

   a. Please describe the characteristics and needs of the specific populations you intend to serve, assuming the reader is unfamiliar with the population. If more than one group is targeted, provide information for each group.
   b. What are the challenges and opportunities for these individuals?
   c. How does this population differ from the general population?
   d. What direct experience have you had with members of this population and how did you accommodate their needs? Include data supporting your agency's ability to achieve successful outcomes with the target group.
   e. Which aspects of your program are designed specifically to address the challenges faced by this population?

4. **Program Design 30 Points**

Describe in detail your proposed design for offering each of the following required components. Explain how these functions, as designed, are appropriate for your target population and its needs.

✓ Career pathways continuum structure:
   o Describe your career pathways continuum structure, including what services will be provided for program participants, whether it is education/training, employment, or provision of economic security services – or as an integrated program containing all three components.
   o What are the specific job title(s) (with wages) that program participants might obtain upon successful completion of your pathway? Provide job descriptions for each job title that program participants are expected to obtain upon successful completion of a pathway. Career pathways must identify specific steps of activities that lead to placement into jobs or post-secondary education/training.
   o Cite appropriate labor market information supporting your choice of targeted occupations.
   o What is the economic significance of sector(s) to the regional economy?
   o What are advancement opportunities for your choice of targeted occupations/sectors and how will participants advance from one step to the next to move closer to the final outcome of job attainment?
   o Describe how employers will work with your program.
   o Describe your education/training component. What specific education/training programs will participants enroll in?
   o Describe how your proposed education/training programs will lead to jobs with livable wages.
   o Describe your economic security programs and how your programs are helping target populations retain employment and/or lead financially secure lives. For income maximization programs, describe public and private benefits your participants are expected to obtain and indicate average benefits dollar amount per person per specific time period.
   o For all 3 models (employment, education, economic security programs), describe your proposed program schedule describing the duration, intensity, and location of key components of your program design.
   o Describe remote or hybrid learning or service components and any other instructional delivery methods that your program will implement to increase the accessibility and quality of programming for clients.
   o Indicate if the program/service was operating remotely or in a hybrid format prior to the pandemic. If it was not, and would be during the period of your proposal, indicate any advantages or benefits for the population and your organization from a remote or hybrid model.
   o What is the balance between synchronous and asynchronous instruction (if applicable)?

✓ Recruitment:
   o Discuss your plan for recruitment, including the specific target group you will recruit, the neighborhoods they live in, the organizations and audiences with which you will communicate, and the tools and methods you will use.
   o How large a pool of recruits will you need to bring into your intake process in order to identify the cohort of enrolled participants you propose to serve?

✓ Assessment:

- o Describe the initial interview and assessment process you will use to determine individuals' education/training, employment, and economic security needs and to develop an individual service plan for each participant. Identify the specific skills assessed and the tools used.
- o What happens to individuals who are determined to be unready or ineligible for your program? How will you ensure smooth and supported referrals?
- o How will you know if your participants are attaining the appropriate competencies?
- o Describe how you will work with the individual to reach agreement on the service plan and make modifications as necessary.

- ✓ Partnerships:
- o Describe in detail the ways in which your partnership will contribute to the success of your program.
- o Clearly define the roles and activities of the partner organizations. Attach a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Letter of Support between your organization and the partners outlining the responsibilities and contributions of partner organizations. The MOA/Letter of Support must be signed by the CEO of each organization or a designee who has senior operational authority.

- ✓ Case management and wrap-around support services:
- o Discuss your organization's case management system, including the range of services participants will receive through case management, and how you will maintain a strong, effective presence for participants during the assessment and follow-up periods.
- o Who will provide case management? How often?
- o Who will offer career counseling and job placement services?
- o What system do you use for documenting, tracking, and sharing case management information?
- o How do you increase retention and persistence of students?
- o Do you have post-placement (education, training, or employment) follow-up? What does it entail?

5. Staffing 10 Points

a. Please describe the staffing plan for the proposed program. Identify by name the staff members responsible for this program, briefly describing their experience and qualifications, as well as their roles and responsibilities.
b. Identify the staff who will manage the participant tracking system. Attach job descriptions and resumes for all positions involved in the project.
c. Identify which staff and/or functions are direct service, and which are administrative.
d. Describe organizational policies and practices designed to support equitable opportunities for employment and advancement at your organization.
e. Have your staff participated in implicit bias, intercultural competence, and/or anti-racism training? If yes, please describe the types of training received and in how many current programs staff participated. If your organization has not provided this type of training, please describe any plans to do so.
f. To the best of your ability, share information about the diversity of your staff and leadership using percentages. In addition to race/ethnicity, diversity may include age, gender, disabilities, and other attributes or lived experience relevant to the targeted population groups.

6. Outcomes 15 points

a. Please complete and include the Outcomes Form provided in Appendix E.
b. Explain the anticipated outcomes for services described. Applicants must clearly indicate the number of people to be served and expected outcomes in number and percentages for the proposed program.
c. What outcomes will be achieved in year one?
d. Briefly describe what database your agency currently uses to track performance outcomes.
e. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your program?
f. Describe partner commitments to provide data needed to evaluate program effectiveness.

7. Sustainability Plan 5 points

a. Summarize major funding sources for your agency's total budget and describe the source and amount of non-CDBG-PS funds committed and pending for the specific services proposed in this CDBG-PS proposal.
b. Please attach a list of all current program grants and contracts for the specific services, including project title, source, amount, contract period, and status (e.g., pending, committed).
c. Assuming your program is funded, describe your sustainability efforts, including how your agency would deal with a possible reduction of funding in the second year of this two-year funding cycle, and how this would impact your program.

8. Innovation (optional but goes towards total points) 5 points

a. Briefly describe how your program is innovative in how it 1) accelerates the timeline for advancing along a career pathways continuum, and 2) how it enhances your program design built around one of the three required forms of career advancement (job placement in a career pathway job; job training in an industry-recognized occupation or other career-advancing post-secondary education; or economic security). For this section, innovations in your proposal cannot replace one of these pillars but should enhance or extend them. They should represent an advancement to current or past program designs that go beyond the minimum requirement for career advancement.

9. Digital Literacy and Programming 5 points

a. If any portion of the program is to be offered remotely/virtually, describe how your participants will be assessed for their digital literacy skills and supported during remote instruction.
b. How will the program ensure substantial learning gains and accessibility for participants who will access services or training remotely or in a hybrid format?
c. Describe current or proposed strategies for incorporating digital literacy into instruction and service delivery.
d. Describe how your organization will effectively use technology products, tools, and resources in your service delivery.
e. Describe how technology will be used to improve the quality of learning and whether and how clients will be supplied with technology.

Budget (this is not counted in 15-page limit) 10 points

Using the forms provided in Appendix F, present a <u>budget cover page</u>, <u>a cost detail page</u> and <u>a budget narrative</u> for the CDBG-PS funding you are requesting. Each form is a separate worksheet in the Excel workbook. Use the forms provided and use the original formulas of these forms. (Note: forms will round to the nearest dollar). Applications that do not include these forms will not be considered or will be marked down.

These forms should show CDBG-PS funds only. Use the budget instructions page in this RFP as a guide for the requirements under each budget category. The total project budget must reflect the program plans and proposed staffing patterns. The budget narrative should present descriptive detail on all line-item costs in the budget so that readers will not be left with questions about how you propose to use the funds.

Collaborative proposals should submit one set of budget forms that clearly identify the project costs of each agency. The minimum grant award is $35,000. The maximum grant award is $100,000. Do not submit a proposal for less than $35,000 or more than $100,000. Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal.

Total 110 points

V: TERMS OF PROCUREMENT

APPLICATION DEADLINE
Responses to this RFP must be received by **5:00 PM on Friday, April 1, 2022**.

The application must be completed electronically and uploaded to OWD's internal Box site as one PDF. The link below will direct you to the site to upload the application:

[Box Submission Link](#)

Or cut and paste the following link into your browser:
https://bpda.app.box.com/f/72169e5cdafc478c8e8724be4b86b689

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is successfully uploaded into the Box folder. (If it successfully uploaded, you should see the message **"Success! Your file has been uploaded" or "Thanks! Your file was sent"**).

If you have difficulties uploading your file, please email Sarah Soroui, Workforce and Policy Manager, at sarah.soroui@boston.gov. **The deadline for inquiries or assistance is March 25, by 5:00 PM.**

Proposals not received by **5:00 pm on April 1, 2022,** will be disqualified from the competitive process.

LETTER OF INTENT

A letter of intent (LOI) is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Letters of intent allow OWD to plan for the volume of proposals and resources needed. If your organization is submitting a letter of intent, it should be received by OWD by 5:00 PM on March 4, 2022, via Google Forms. Please click on this Google Form link (Appendix A) to complete the LOI.

Should you subsequently decide not to submit, please inform us via email: sarah.soroui@boston.gov

BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

Organizations interested in bidding on the RFP are strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Bidder's Conference, which will be held virtually on Friday, February 25, 2022, at 12:00 P.M. Questions and answers provided at the Bidder's conference will be made available to the public on OWD's website at owd.boston.gov.

Click here to register for the Bidder's Conference.

SUBMISSION OF INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Sarah Soroui, Workforce and Policy Manager, via email: sarah.soroui@boston.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. The deadline to submit questions is **March 25, 2022, by 5:00 PM.**

Responses to questions received during the procurement process will be posted on the OWD website at: **owd.boston.gov**. It is the Bidder's responsibility to check the website for updates and postings.

OWD is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants should ensure their proposals comply with the following requirements:
- A response to each section of the RFP is required and should follow the guidelines and sequences as specified in the Proposal Guideline section (Section V). Each section should be labeled.
- Every section of the Request for Proposals should be completed in full. If funded, the proposal will provide the basis for contract negotiations, and final negotiated terms will be incorporated within the contract as the Statement of Work.
- Proposals should be typewritten, double-spaced, in 12-point Arial font with one-inch margins. The proposal narrative may not exceed 15 pages. The page limit does not include the cover sheet, budget forms, or any required attachments.
* Some sections require appended material. All forms should be completed in full.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of the proposal, congruence with the goals of this RFP, past program performance, geographic distribution of services, and service to the target population. Point values are allocated to each section of the proposal narrative as follows:

Proposal Summary	5 points
Agency Background and Organizational Capacity	15 points
Target Population	10 points
Program Design	30 points
Staffing	10 points
Outcomes	15 points
Sustainability Plan	5 points
Innovation	5 points
Digital Literacy and Programming	5 points
<u>Budget</u>	<u>10 points</u>
Total	110 points

These values are an evaluation tool; they do not dictate which proposals are ultimately recommended for funding. OWD reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive or modify any requirement contained in this RFP, to amend without consult any proposal, and to effect any agreement deemed to be in the best interest of the City and its residents.

VI. Proposal Checklist

Proposals should follow, in order, the outline below.
Submit online in one PDF:

☐ **1. Proposal Cover Sheet –** *appendix D*

☐ **2. Narrative Submission –** This section has a <u>15-page</u> limit.
- Proposal Summary
- Agency Background and Organizational Capacity
- Target Population
- Program Design
- Staffing
- Outcomes
- Sustainability Plan
- Innovation
- Digital Literacy and Programming

☐ **3. Program Outcomes –** *appendix E*
Use this worksheet to detail your proposed program's goal, services, outcomes, and methods. Outcomes should follow the standardized format described in this RFP. Indicate the number of CDBG-PS beneficiaries you expect to serve and the number you anticipate will achieve each outcome.

☐ **4. Signed Memorandum of Agreement(s)/Letter(s) of Support** (for collaborations requesting funding for more than one agency or programs working in collaboration with employers or other entities). MOA/Letter of Support must be signed by the CEO of each organization or a designee who has senior operational authority.

☐ **5. Applicant Agency's Organizational Chart**

☐ **6. Participant Grievance Procedure:** Your organization's written policy on how they handle complaints or grievances from clients.

☐ **7. Budget Forms and Budget Narrative –** *appendix F*
Develop a budget for the amount of CDBG-PS funds you are requesting. Refer to the budget instructions page for details on how to complete each worksheet.

☐ **Budget cover page** requires signature of person who prepared the budget
☐ **Budget cost detail page:** Totals should match throughout your budget forms. Formulas have been included to calculate totals automatically.
☐ **Budget narrative:** Detail CDBG-PS program costs following guidelines for each section on the budget instructions page.

☐ **8. Federally approved indirect cost letter,** if applicable

☐ **9. Registration in the System for Award Management**
Register for the first time or update your annual registration. You may check on the status of your registration at any time by logging into **www.sam.gov** and clicking on your Entity Record page.

Appendices

a. [Letter of Intent to Bid](#)
b. [HUD Income Guideline](#)
c. Economic Opportunity Model (see attachment)
d. Proposal Cover Sheet (see attachment)
e. Program Outcomes (see attachment)
f. Budget Forms (see attachment)