



CITY OF BOSTON WORKER EMPOWERMENT CABINET

Request for Grant Applications: WIOA Supportive Service Providers

Issue Date: March 4, 2024
Bidders' Conference: March 20, 2024
Proposals Due: April 30, 2024

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I. RFGA TIMELINE

RFGA TIMELINE	
ISSUE DATE	March 4, 2024
BIDDERS' CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM	March 20, 2024 at 11:00 AM EST Register Here
LETTER OF INTENT DUE	April 4, 2024 upload to LOI upload link by 5 pm
INQUIRIES	April 11, 2024 Email: tatiana.joyce@boston.gov
GRANT PROPOSALS DUE	April 30, 2024 Upload to proposal upload link by 5 pm
ANTICIPATED CONTRACT START DATE	June 1, 2024

II. OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is the City of Boston's workforce development agency. OWD administers funding from various sources for the purpose of supporting a broad range of services, including education and training, career development, job training, adult basic education, and youth employment services.

This Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) is a one-time opportunity to make use of approximately \$700,000 from previous fiscal years of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funding. This RFGA is a special release opportunity to identify supportive service provider(s) to improve the retention of participants already enrolled in OWD's WIOA Youth-funded programs. Current providers cite the need for stronger referrals and resources in the areas of affordable housing, behavioral health, and childcare. When the basic needs of participants are unmet, participants struggle to complete job training or education. Our theory of action is that providing these resources will lead to better program outcomes for WIOA Youth.

Priorities for Funding

Within the WIOA Youth portfolio, OWD envisions an integrated and coordinated system of services that stabilizes marginalized youth and transitions them towards career-oriented education, training, and employment. Consistent with WIOA federal guidelines, OWD partners with programs and services that place out-of-school youth ages 18-24 on a pathway towards post-secondary attainment or career-level employment.

With this RFGA, OWD seeks to identify providers who specialize in direct service or resource referral in the areas of **affordable housing, behavioral health, and childcare** to support youth already enrolled in WIOA Youth funded partnerships. Because this available funding is one-time, we seek providers proficient at leveraging state and other funds to connect youth with public benefits that might sustain access to services over the long term.

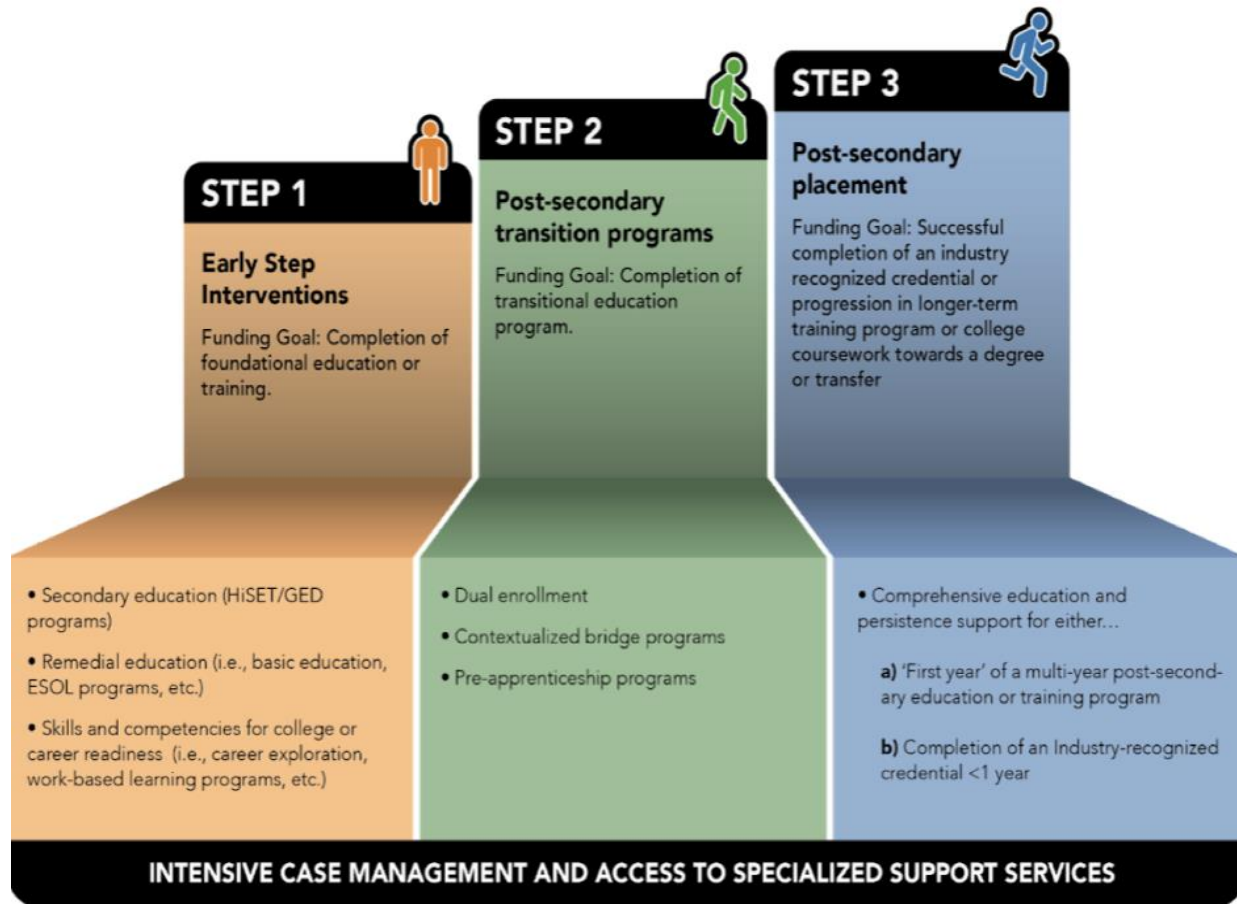
This RFGA seeks to:

- Identify providers who specialize in direct service or resource referral in the areas of affordable housing, behavioral health, and childcare;
- Connect supportive services providers directly with the WIOA Youth portfolio;
- To improve the retention of over 100 participants already enrolled in OWD's WIOA Youth-funded programs.

For general context, Figure 1 illustrates the ideal configuration of the multi-step intervention for WIOA Youth funded programs. The program activities associated with each step can be structured in a sequential, concurrent, or non-sequential manner. OWD's Career Pathway model prioritizes program models that move youth through at least **two complete steps** with the key component being that youth are supported holistically and not provided one-off services. We encourage formal partnerships and collaborations that draw on the strengths of multiple partners/experts to meet the needs of different populations. Each step must have a clear strategy and direction, along with well-defined

metrics and transition points into the subsequent program or post-program step. Intensive case management and access to specialized support services must be provided throughout the program. A set of example activities supports the objectives that correspond to each step in Figure 1.

Figure 1:



OWD's current WIOA Youth partners include:

- ABCD: Level Up
- More Than Words
- Mujeres Unidas Avanzando
- Notre Dame Education Center
- X-Cel Community Education

Funding Availability and Period of Performance

At the issuance of this RFGA, the total funding available is approximately \$700,000. OWD does not predetermine the amount of funds to be dedicated. The type and quality of proposals submitted will determine the funds and the amount of funding awarded.

Contracts resulting from this RFGA are *anticipated* to commence July 1, 2024, and end on June 30, 2025.

III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible Type of Entity

Entity Requirements	Non-profit organization (holding 501c3 status or with fiscal sponsor holding 501c3 status) OR institution of higher education. Must serve low-income Boston residents ages 18-24.
Award Amount	There is no ideal maximum grant award. Applicants should not apply in excess of the available \$700,000 available funds.

Participant Eligibility and Target Population

Applicants must demonstrate that they can serve WIOA Youth participants which meet all the eligibility criteria below:

- Boston resident
- 18-24 years old
- Out of school
- Facing barriers to employment

OWD is especially interested in reaching individuals with limited English proficiency, historically marginalized and/or underrepresented communities, women, and populations from low-income backgrounds.

Out-of-School Youth Eligibility
<p>a) Resident of Boston</p> <p>b) Not attending any school (as defined under State law)</p> <p>c) Not younger than 18 or older than age 24 at time of enrollment. Because age eligibility is based on age at enrollment, participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 24 once they are enrolled in the program; and</p> <p>c) Applicants can also prioritize young adults who are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A school dropout 2) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner 3) An offender 4) A homeless individual 5) In foster care, aged out of the foster care system, or eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act 6) Pregnant or parenting 7) An individual with a disability 8) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

V. SERVICES REQUESTED

Program Design

1. **Intake:** Programs should conduct thorough assessments of prospective participants to ensure they receive appropriate services. Applicants should explain the process they use to assess potential participants including the steps and tools involved.
2. **Service Delivery:** Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the target population and how to best engage that population.
3. **Case Management and Support Services:** Proposals must outline the organization's strategy for connecting with students being served by WIOA Youth providers. Effective case management identifies concrete steps to overcome barriers to success. Case management should include partners for referral for issues falling outside the organization's scope of expertise, including mental health referrals and other social services as needed.

VI. TERMS OF PROCUREMENT

Cost Reimbursement Contracting

Funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. Grantees will be required to submit invoices quarterly using an invoice template supplied by OWD. Grantees will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Grantees are required to maintain and submit back-up documentation for expenses.

If funded, the submitted application will provide the basis for contract negotiations. Awarded grantees will work with OWD during the contracting phase to determine specific deliverables and outcome indicators based on the amount awarded and the scope of work. Post-award, organizations will complete a contract negotiation with OWD staff. This discussion will determine the final number of individuals to be served. When negotiating final terms for approved awards, OWD will review all proposed costs to ensure they are necessary and reasonable.

OWD makes no commitment to refunding but reserves the right to refund programs based on the availability of funding, program performance, organizational capacity, administrative responsiveness, and service to target populations.

Program Monitoring/ Reporting

OWD will monitor and evaluate selected programs to ensure program compliance and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the service strategies. Monitoring activities may take the form of administrative record reviews, site visits, interviews of staff and/or participants, and general observations of the facilities and operations. Technical assistance will be provided to support programs to develop the necessary capacity to perform administrative responsibilities, including maintaining records of participants and submitting program reports and invoices in a timely manner. Funded agencies will be required to submit status reports documenting enrollment and services at a mutually agreed upon frequency.

Proposal Submission

Full proposals, submitted in a single PDF format, are due no later than **5:00 PM EST on Tuesday, April 30, 2024**. Proposals must be uploaded as a single PDF document with all relevant appendices included to [this link](#).

It is the sole responsibility of the responder to ensure their proposal is complete and submitted on time.

Bidders' Conference

Organizations interested in bidding on the RFGA are strongly encouraged to participate in the scheduled Bidders' Conference on **Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 11:00 AM EST**. All questions and answers from the conference will be made available to the public in a Q&A document on the OWD Website. The Bidder's Conference will be conducted via Zoom. Please register at [this link](#).

Submission of Inquiries

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Tatiana Joyce, Assistant Deputy Director of Grants and Procurement, via email: tatiana.joyce@boston.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. The deadline to submit questions is **Thursday, April 11, 2024, by 5:00 PM**.

Responses to questions received during the procurement process will be posted on the OWD website at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/workforce-development/funding-opportunities>. It is the bidders' 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

In response to this RFGA, all proposals must include:

- Cover sheet (Appendix A) (included at the first page of your proposal submission),
- Budget forms including budget summary, and Cost Detail and budget narrative (please use the excel workbook provided in Appendix B)
- OWD Program Diversity (Appendix C)
- Application Questions (Appendix D)
- A response to each section of the RFGA is required and should fully respond to the questions
- Copy of 501(c)(3) letter from IRS or letter from fiscal agent

Applicants should ensure their proposals comply with the following requirements:

- The proposal narrative may not exceed 10 pages, not including attachments (cover sheet, budget forms, or any required attachments).
- Pages should be numbered.
- All required attachments must be completed, including the cover sheet.
- The entire application package must be submitted as a single PDF file with the cover sheet form as the first page.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposal, congruence with the goals of this RFGA, past program performance, geographic distribution of services, and appropriateness of services to target populations. Proposals will be scored based on narrative and attachments provided and readers will not review hyperlinked materials. A point value will be allocated to each section of the proposal narrative:

1. Agency Background -----
2. Statement of Need and Target Population -----
3. Program Design-----
4. Staffing -----
5. Budget -----

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 RFGA, to amend without consult any proposal, and to effect any agreement deemed to be in the best interest of the city and its residents.

VII: PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please respond to the following in your technical narrative as appropriate:

Stipends and Wages

Programs may include reasonable stipends and other forms of participant support that are tied to program benchmarks or participant outcomes.

Letters of Support

Letters of support from key partners, particularly employers, are strongly encouraged but not required. Only attach letters of support attesting to partnerships and relationships with other organizations you plan to involve directly in your program model, as described in your proposal. Although not required, letters of support may be considered in proposal evaluation to the extent that they strengthen the sections of your proposal scored by evaluators, as described below.

Letters of Commitment and MOUs

Supportive Partnership applicants must submit Letters of Commitment or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for each partnering organization. Letters must be signed and on

the partner organization's letterhead and should provide details of the specific roles and deliverables of the organization. Letters should:

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- Provide a description of the relationship of the organization with the Lead Applicant organization
- Support the role defined for the partner in the Project Narrative
- Specify activities, goals, and outcomes to be achieved by the partner, as applicable

Required Attachments

Documents can be [downloaded here](#). Sample forms are provided below. Completed forms should be included in your proposal. Instructions below.

Appendix A, *Cover Sheet*

Appendix B, *OWD Budget Form*

Appendix C, *OWD Program Diversity Chart*

Appendix D, *Application Questions*

Appendix A Proposal Cover Sheet Questions

Please complete the form below. The cover sheet should not exceed 2 pages.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE		
Name of Applicant Organization		
Organization's Address, City, and Zip Code		
Proposed Neighborhood of Service Delivery		
Executive Director's Name and email		
Name and title of primary contact for the grant		
E-mail address and phone number of primary contact for the grant		
Total organizational budget	\$	
PROGRAM SUMMARY		
Total Funds Requested: \$	Funding from Other Sources: \$	Total Program Cost: \$
Total number of participants to be served:		
Target population and age range:		
In 3-5 sentences, please describe your program and services provided.		
Which WIOA Y partners would you anticipate partnering with?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABCD: Level Up • More Than Words • Mujeres Unidas Avanzando • Notre Dame Education Center • X-Cel Community Education 		
We seek to understand how you will connect with the WIOA providers already in place.		

Appendix B

Budget

**EDIC/BOSTON
CONTRACTOR'S PROGRAM BUDGET**

CONTRACTOR: **Name** _____ FUNDING SOURCE: _____

PROGRAM: **Name** _____ CONTRACT PERIOD: _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS TO BE SERVED: _____

DESCRIPTION	CURRENT BUDGET AMOUNT	REVISED BUDGET AMOUNT	INCREASE/DECREASE AMOUNT
I. PROGRAM			
1. Personnel	\$0.00		
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00		
3. Travel	\$0.00		
4. Supplies	\$0.00		
5. Contractual	\$0.00		
6. Other	\$0.00		
6a. Indirect	\$0.00		
TOTAL	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

**MONTHLY
EXPENDITURE PLAN
(12)**

MONTH	PROGRAM
JULY 2024	
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	
DECEMBER	
JANUARY 2025	
FEBRUARY	
MARCH	
APRIL	
MAY	
JUNE	
TOTAL	\$0.00

**CONTRACTOR
SIGNATURE:**

Prepared by: _____
Name Date

**EDIC USE
ONLY:**
Approved by: _____
Name Date

Appendix C

OWD Program Diversity Chart

TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	CEO/ED	Board Members	Full-time Staff	Part-time Staff	Volunteers
TOTAL					

RACE AND ETHNICITY	CEO/ED	Board Members	Full-time Staff	Part-time Staff	Volunteers
Asian/Asian American					
Black/African American					
Hispanic/Latino/Latina					
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian					
White					
Multi-racial or multi-ethnic (2+ races/ethnicities)					
Individual(s) decline to state					
Other - please specify:					
Other - please specify:					
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix D

Proposal Questions

<u>1. Agency Background and Organizational Capacity</u>
A. Provide the current organizational mission.
B. Provide a brief description of the proposed services and describe relevant experience and history in providing the specific services. We encourage applicants to highlight their experience working with the WIOA target population
C. Provide the organization's track record of success with forming partnerships to comprehensively serve clients.

<u>2. Statement of Need and Target Population</u>
A. Describe the target population of the proposed services including participant geographic location and demographics (age, race, gender, employment status). Note: we understand if applicants serve more than just the WIOA demographic.
B. Describe how the problem you are proposing to address shows up in this population. What are the current barriers to youth accessing services? How will you address those barriers?
C. Provide the total number of participants to be served under this RFGA.
D. Describe the sequence of services associated with your program design and how achieving these milestones will meet the needs of young adult clients with barriers to higher education or employment. Be sure to include a description of the assessment of youth – how will you determine which youth are in need of services?
E. How will you monitor and assess participant progress?

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3. Program Design

Identify the proposed program and describe the following program elements:

A. Intake Assessment:

- Explain the process used to assess potential participants and the steps and tools involved.
- Explain how the process is informed by your knowledge of the target population.
- How do you plan to integrate your intake process into partnership with one or more WIOA Y providers?

B. Services

- What are the services your organization provides?
- Why do you think these services will support the program retention of WIOA Y providers?

Examples of Services:

- a housing navigator that supports referrals and connections to services across multiple providers;
- “transitional” funding to cover childcare for youth who are in training or on a wait list for vouchers until those funds become available;
- a health care provider such as a community health center that can accept referrals for youth and ensure that they are connected with insurance as well as ongoing mental health care.

C. Case management and supportive services:

- Outline the organization's strategy for providing a coordinated response to participants' needs including addressing barriers to education attainment or employment (if within applicants scope of work).
- Outline your case management strategy, including how individual service plans are developed and updated for each participant.
- Describe referral partnerships for issues falling outside the organization's scope of expertise, including mental health referrals and other social services as needed.
- Describe any additional retention strategies to promote comprehensive support of participant needs and continued engagement.

4. Staffing

A. Describe the staffing plan for the proposed supportive service program.

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B. Identify by name the staff members responsible for this program, briefly describing their experience and qualifications, as well as their roles and responsibilities.

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C. Describe how the experience of the staff, volunteers, and/or leadership inform delivery of support services for the target population.

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D. How does your organization solicit feedback from participants or otherwise incorporate the voice of the individuals served by your program into the design and delivery of services?

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5. Budget

A. Provide a detailed Budget Summary using the OWD template available for download here and at [LINK](#) (Appendix B).

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B. Include costs for all functions (assessment, case management, client tracking, oversight and administration, fiscal management and oversight, reporting).

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