



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



SUMMER WORK EXPERIENCE FOR
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY YOUNG ADULTS

An Initiative of the Prince George's County
Workforce Development Board

**Employ Prince George's Operations Division on behalf of the
Prince George's County Workforce Development Board**

SUMMER YOUTH CONNECTONS SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PY24: SUMMER YOUTH CONNECTIONS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

RFP No.: WDBRFP-012

Important Dates

RFP Release Date: JANUARY 31, 2024
Information Session: FEBRUARY 8, 2024 | 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM EST
[Microsoft Teams Information Session Link](#)
Proposal Due Date: MARCH 4, 2024 | 4:00 PM EST

Proposals must be submitted via our online grant application portal which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). **PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER 4:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD TIME (EST) ON MONDAY, MARCH 4TH, 2024 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The Board is not responsible for any errors of omission. Mailed, faxed, or emailed proposal(s) **will not** be accepted.

The Prince George's County Workforce Development Board (WDB) does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against any Bidders or Proposer(s) because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
INTRODUCTION AND INTENT	4
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS	4
ISSUING ENTITY	4
YOUTH COMMITTEE OF THE WDB.....	5
AMERICAN JOB CENTER COMMUNITY NETWORK (AJCCN)	5
QUESTIONS	6
EX PARTE COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT OF INTEREST	6
VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION.....	6
SCHEDULE FOR RFP SUBMISSION, REVIEW & AWARDS	6
ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT	7
TERM OF CONTRACT.....	7
MINIMUM CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS:	8
SUMMER YOUTH CONNECTIONS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.....	8
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.....	8
HIRE QUALITY CAREER CONSULTANTS.....	10
OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT.....	10
JOB READINESS TRAINING	11
WORKSITE MATCHING	11
RECRUITMENT AND MONITORING OF WORK SITES.....	11
ADMINISTERING PAYROLL	12
PERFORMANCE METRICS AND OUTCOMES.....	12
DATA, RECORDING KEEPING, VALIDATION AND REPORTING	13
FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY	13
INTERNAL SUB-RECIPIENT MONITORING	14
COST REQUIREMENTS	14
IN-KIND AND CASH MATCH RESOURCES	15

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS..... 15
PROPOSAL NARRATIVE AND SCORING GUIDELINES 15
STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS 15
EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD 16
BEST AND FINAL OFFERS / ONE HOUR PROPOSER(S) INTERVIEW 16
APPLICANT COMPETENCY 17
BIDDERS CONDITIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS 17

INTRODUCTION AND INTENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The [Prince George's County Workforce Development Board](#) (WDB) is seeking to contract with Youth Service Provider(s) that have experience in implementing subsidized summer youth employment programs, internships, work-based learning programs, or pre-apprenticeship programs for youth, ages 16 - 24. Since the Covid-19 pandemic led to a sharp economic downturn in March of 2020, young people ages 16 - 24 have experienced higher rates of unemployment. In 2021, the annual youth unemployment rate in the Washington, DC Metro Area was 10.6%. These disconnected youth and young adults are twice as likely to live in poverty, three times as likely to not have a high school diploma, or its equivalent, and three times as likely to have a disability. Youth who are disconnected and disengaged from education, training and the world of work, risk skill atrophy and increased involvement in the justice system. Youth unemployment is often characterized as a community issue, a crime issue, an education issue, a public health issue, and a social service issue, but it is also an economic issue. As record numbers of employees begin to retire, the large number of youth and young adults that lack work experience and skills will increasingly become a bottom-line issue for businesses and industry leaders in Prince George's County. The WDB's Summer Youth Connections Summer Youth Employment Program RFP seeks to provide youth employment to young people by exposing them to various public and private sector industries, short-term job placement opportunities, and training to help young people increase their self-efficacy, gain work experience, and skills needed to succeed in today's workforce. Ultimately, the WDB seeks to expose youth and young adults to livable wage occupations, high demand occupations, and the opportunity to identify career pathways in in-demand industries.

The contract term for this RFP will commence on **May 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024**. Businesses, Not-for-Profit Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, Colleges, Universities, Private Career Schools, Consortia's, Organized Labor, and Labor Training Entities are encouraged to respond to this RFP. Recognizing that many community-based service providers may not have the capacity to administer cost-reimbursement grants, the WDB encourages consortia proposals that collectively have the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative capacity to successfully operate the proposed program.

ISSUING ENTITY

The [WDB](#) is a dynamic group of private and public sector partners that provides leadership, direction, and policy oversight for the Prince George's County Public Workforce System , branded and modeled as the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network. Our mission is to be a board that drives the innovation, integration, continuity, productivity, and efficiency of a workforce system that produces a robust, qualified, and skilled workforce that meets the needs of the business community.

The membership of the WDB is represented by:

Business Sector
Economic & Community Development
Labor Organizations
Vocational Rehabilitation

Department of Social Services
Adult Education/Literacy
Workforce Development Organizations
Higher Education

Community Based Organizations
Chambers of Commerce

State Employment Services
Elected Officials

The WDB provides guidance and oversight of the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network and ensures that businesses have the skilled workers and the resources needed to remain competitive and prosper in a global market. Job seekers can acquire the training and knowledge necessary to achieve livable wage employment along a career pathway, work toward financial stability and building wealth. Youth have access to opportunities in education, career exploration, and work experience with which to build careers in an in-demand industry, and along a career pathway.

The WDB's workforce strategies are designed to reduce skills gaps across targeted in-demand industries with an emphasis in the following in-demand industries:

- Healthcare & Social Assistance
- Food & Beverage Manufacturing
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction and Real Estate
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- Education
- Transportation and Logistics
- Government Services
- Information Technology
- Business Services
- Recreation, Tourism & Hospitality
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Retail Trade

The focus is on advancement along an in-demand career pathway, an approach that encourages job seekers to pursue incremental, progressive skills that will lead to better jobs as they advance along their chosen career pathway.

YOUTH COMMITTEE OF THE WDB

The WDB has appointed its Youth Committee (YC) to provide information and assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services for youth. All proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation team, which may be comprised of YC Members, WDB Staff, American Job Center/One-Stop Delivery System Committee Members, Disability and Severe Barrier Committee Members, and additional evaluators with subject matter expertise. The evaluation team will review eligible proposals and make recommendations to the WDB for final selection(s).

AMERICAN JOB CENTER COMMUNITY NETWORK (AJCCN)

The WDB requires that all workforce development program related contractors become a member of the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, branded, and modeled as the Prince George's County American Job Center Community Network (AJCCN). Membership requires an executed Membership Agreement, that lays forth all obligations of both parties under that document. Because of the fiscal relationship between Employ Prince George's and said contractors, the AJCCN membership will be at the Tier I level, and the Contractor(s) will be required to attend all monthly and quarterly AJCCN meetings. The Membership Agreement is required to be executed at the same time as the Sub-Recipient Agreement. If a contractor refuses to sign the Membership Agreement and join the AJCCN, Employ Prince George's will not execute a Sub-Recipient Agreement with the contractor.

QUESTIONS

All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing via email to Employ Prince George's Contracts & Operations Department at rfpsubmissions@co.pg.md.us no later than **Monday, February 12th** as no questions will be taken during the Virtual Information Session. Answers to written questions will be posted to <https://pgcajc.com/rfps/> and sent via email on or around **Friday, February 16th**. Interested bidders are strictly prohibited from directly contacting members of the Workforce Development Board and EPG staff regarding this RFP.

EX PARTE COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Each Bidder shall ensure that no improper, unethical, or illegal relationships or conflicts of interest whether actual or apparent exist between or among the Bidder, the WDB, and any other parties to this RFP. The Bidder is responsible for disclosing at the point of proposal submission or as soon as the situation arises of any such relationships. This includes interests that they may have with any individual or entity doing business with or proposing to do business with the Workforce Development Board or Employ Prince George's (EPG). An employee or official may not be employed by or have a financial interest in any entity subject to their authority or of the Prince George's County agency, board, or commission of which they are affiliated; or entity that is negotiating or has a contract with that agency, board, or commission; or hold other position that may impair their judgment or impartiality.

The WDB reserves the right to determine the pertinence of such relationships, when discovered or disclosed, whether intended or not, and to decide whether the Bidder's disqualifications and/or cancellation shall be at no fault or liability whatsoever to the WDB. The WDB's determination regarding any question of conflict of interest will be final. All WDB members, EPG Board members, officers, and staff are precluded from entertaining questions concerning the completion of the proposal or the procurement process outside the confines of the Pre-Proposal Bidders' Conference. Potential Bidders are asked to respect these conditions by not making personal requests for assistance, except at the conference.

VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION

All organizations intending to bid either as a sole applicant or as the lead of a consortium proposal are encouraged to attend the Virtual Information Session scheduled for **February 8, 2024, from 1:00 pm EST until 1:45 pm EST via [Microsoft Teams](#)**. EPG has selected this forum to present detailed non-competitive information regarding the RFP. The session will provide an overview of the RFP and bidding process and will be recorded for reference. Information for the Virtual Information Session will be provided on the WDB's RFP webpage <https://pgcajc.com/rfps/>

SCHEDULE FOR RFP SUBMISSION, REVIEW & AWARDS

With exception of proposal submission deadline, EPG reserves the right to make changes to the timeline below.

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Published	January 31, 2024

Virtual Information Session	February 8, 2024 1:00 PM to 1:45 PM Microsoft Teams Information Session Link
Deadline to Submit Proposal	March 4, 2024 4:00 PM EST
Selection of Successful Bidder on or around	April 22, 2024
Contract to Begin	May 1, 2024

ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, private career schools, community-based organizations, and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state, and local law, and must have been in business for at least three years. Applicants must be an incorporated organization. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the state and federal government. Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City, or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or the WDB are ineligible to apply.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium but the WDB will award only one contract in a consortium application to the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All entities, whether directly contracted or subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent, will be held to the requirements of Federal, state, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent. All selected applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high- quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Providers will be expected to ground their organization within the communities they serve with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successful workforce development programming.

TERM OF CONTRACT

EPG is the administrative and fiscal agent of the WDB, responsible for the management of the WDB's funds received from various sources including the U.S. Department of Labor, Maryland Department of Labor, Prince George's County Government, and other grant funding. Funding for the project described in this RFP is anticipated to originate from the Maryland Department of Labor's Summer Youth Connections Grant.

The WDB anticipates that total funding of **up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00 USD) for Summer Youth Connections Employment Program** will be available for contract/s awarded through this RFP. Funding for this RFP is expressly contingent upon final budget approval. Respondents selected as a result of this solicitation must participate in contract negotiations with EPG/WDB and may be required to submit programmatic, financial, or other revisions which may have resulted from such negotiation. The award of any contract or agreement shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion of contract negotiation. Please note that the WDB is not obligated to award the full amount requested by an applicant; based on the competitiveness of applications received, the WDB may elect to partially fund a proposal.

The WDB anticipates awarding funding to one (1) or more entities that demonstrate an ability to

effectively deliver and manage services as described within this RFP. The WDB reserves the right to accept other than lowest cost proposals and to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof. Agreements are anticipated to have terms effective **May 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024**. The WDB reserves the right to negotiate up to four (4) separate annual extensions to the contract(s) funded through this RFP. The minimum criteria for extension will be satisfactory performance for the review period; the WDB reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to specify the review period.

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP will be paid through cost reimbursement unless otherwise specified. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations or policies required by the funding sources. The WDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed because of this RFP, including but not limited to funding levels, the scope of services, performance standards, and period of performance, as it deems necessary.

MINIMUM CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS:

Contractors must:

- Demonstrate a record of prior successful experience implementing subsidized youth employment programs, internships or pre-apprenticeship programs for youth, ages 16 -24.
- Demonstrate experience providing workforce development services in urban and suburban communities.
- Recruit and serve youth, ages 16 - 24, in facilities that are geographically distributed throughout the County or on public transportation routes.
- Demonstrate capacity to stand up and operationalize a Summer Youth Employment Program quickly.
- Fulfill contract requirements, including the indemnification and insurance requirements.
- Have the administrative and fiscal capability to: (i) provide and manage the proposed services on a cost-reimbursement basis, (ii) ensure an adequate audit trail, (iii) maintain audit ready files on-site, and (iv) meet all reporting requirements as prescribed by the WDB and the funding source.
- Meet other proposal requirements as listed in this RFP and attachments.

SUMMER YOUTH CONNECTIONS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Summer Youth Connections Employment Program (SYCEP) is to provide youth with summer employment opportunities, combined or integrated with pre-apprenticeship programming, or the delivery of a hybrid model to Prince George's County youth, ages 16 - 24. Summer Youth Employment

Programs should expose youth to various public and private sector industries, with a focus on those deemed “in-demand” by the WDB, through short-term subsidized work experience opportunities. SYCEP is a strength-based employment program and youth will be matched to employment opportunities based on their interests and skills.

- **Youth Ages:** 16 – 24
- **Referral Sources:** Recruit youth attending high schools, youth disconnected from high school, and youth who graduated from high school or post-secondary education but are currently unemployed and not attending any school.
- **Minimum Number of Youth Served Per Contract:** Bidders may propose the number of participants they will serve. The WDB recommends a minimum of 1:25 (career consultant to participant) ratio.
- **Program Schedule:** twenty (20) hours per week of combined instruction and on-site work placement for six (6) weeks equaling one hundred twenty (120) hours per youth in total over the span of the project.
- **Allowable Budget Categories:** youth wages and fringe, staff and/or instructor wages and fringe, transportation, materials, uniforms, supplies, incentives, and administration.
 - **Youth Wages:** \$15.00 - \$17.00 an hour
 - **Career Consultant Wages:** Service Providers are encouraged to pay market competitive wages to all staff; the expected wage for Career Consultants is not less than twenty-seven dollars (\$27.00) per hour for the duration of the contract.
 - **Transportation:** reasonable transportation costs to, from, and around the work site for participating youth as well as staff conducting monitoring and oversight.
 - **Materials and supplies:** directly related to instructional and programmatic needs.
 - **Uniforms and workplace equipment:** when required by the employer for successful participation on the job.
 - **Incentives:** reasonable and prudent incentives may be used to motivate participants when attainable by all participants without bias.
 - **Administration:** reasonable administrative support costs.
- **Key functions of the program provider:**
 - Hire quality career consultants and instructors;
 - Recruit and support youth participants;
 - Assess and determine program eligibility;

- Deliver job readiness and soft skills curriculum to prepare youth for on-site work experience prior to site placement;
- Match youth with employment placement or pre-apprenticeship program based on youth's demonstrated interest and skills;
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with employers to ensure successful job placements or pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Provide sufficient oversight and monitoring of work sites to ensure a quality experience for each participant; and
- Administer payroll for youth wages.

HIRE QUALITY CAREER CONSULTANTS

Under this program model, the selected Service Provider must identify staff who have experience working with youth, ages 16 - 24, or possess other commensurate experience in workforce development or education. Career Consultants are responsible for building strong relationships with youth participants in the program and will monitor youth participants' progress in Job Readiness Training and on the worksite. The Career Consultant will also serve as a liaison between the participant and the host worksite and will conduct regular evaluations of the participants progress throughout the 6-week work experience. Finally, Career Consultants will be responsible for tracking participant data in the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE), MD Labor's data management system. Appropriate training and technical assistance will be provided.

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

The selected Service Provider(s) shall conduct outreach and recruitment efforts throughout Prince George's County to generate quality enrollments for SYCEP. Outreach shall be conducted in conjunction with Prince George's County Public Schools, the American Job Center Community Network partners and other service providers, programs, and educational institutions who serve youth, ages 16 - 24. Service Provider(s) will be required to establish a social media presence, and written strategy, targeting eligible youth in Prince George's County. Demographic data must be tracked for all recruits that attend orientation in the service providers internal data tracking tools. Data must be readily available to the WDB staff upon request.

To be eligible for the Summer Youth Connections Employment Program, the individual must:

1. Be between the ages of 16 - 24 at the time of enrollment;
2. Reside in Prince George's County;
3. Face an employment barrier, including but not limited to one or more of the following characteristics:
 - a. From a low-income family;
 - b. Have a disability;
 - c. Be basic skills deficient (defined as an English language, reading, writing, or math skill level at or below eighth grade as demonstrated on a standardized test);
 - d. A school dropout;
 - e. Homeless;

- f. In (or aged out of) foster care;
- g. Pregnant or parenting;
- h. Ex-offender or justice-involved;
- i. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and maintain employment; defined as:
 - i. Lack of employability skills including social skills;
 - ii. Inability to retain employment: lost two or more jobs in the 12 months preceding enrollment;
 - iii. Lack of work experience: has never worked or has not worked for the same employer for longer than three consecutive months in the 12 months preceding enrollment.

A comprehensive orientation will be provided to all youth and their parent or legal guardian (if applicable), regardless of entry point. Orientation should include sharing information and services available through the workforce system, including partner services and any other pertinent resources to ensure successful completion of the youth's summer work experience.

JOB READINESS TRAINING

All Service Provider(s) are required to facilitate job readiness training to youth participants prior to their start date at their assigned work site. Job Readiness Training must be designed to help youth develop 21st century skills, including soft-skills development and financial literacy. Examples of these skills include:

- Developing skills such as communication, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills, and self-management;
- Learning work norms and culture;
- Understanding career pathways and decision points, including the linkages among educational attainment, relevant experience, demonstrable skills, and career advancement;
- Building professional networks;
- Assessing skills to discover and reflect on interests and strengths;
- Using summer employment experiences or specialized training experiences to build a resume; and
- Financial literacy.

WORKSITE MATCHING

Service Provider(s) will match youth to employment placement or specialized training programs based on the youths' interests and skill assessments. The Service Provider should identify the assessment tools that will be used to identify the interests, aptitudes, and skill level of each participant. Youth should be matched to a worksite based on their identified interests and not on worksite availability alone.

RECRUITMENT AND MONITORING OF WORK SITES

Service Provider(s) will recruit work sites and/or specialized training programs in various industries who are committed and have experiences working with youth at their sites. Work Experience host sites should be equipped to foster youth's experiences in exploring career interests, assist in developing employability skills and offer professional support, communication, and monitoring to ensure youth are gaining valuable skill development opportunities. The Career Consultant or other designated staff person must conduct

ongoing oversight and monitoring of each worksite for each participating youth. They must ensure not only a safe environment for the participant but one in which communication, coaching, and learning become key factors for a successful and quality experience.

ADMINISTERING PAYROLL

A worksite agreement is required for each participant at each worksite outlining the responsibilities of the Service Provider, the Employer, and the Participant. The Agreement may not exceed 120 hours and wages must be paid at competitive market value between \$15.00 and \$17.00 per hour. If a participant drops out or chooses not to complete the entire summer work experience, the service provider may enroll additional youth to fulfill the remaining hours from the previous participant.

Youth wages can be paid by the service provider, their fiscal agent, or a third-party payroll processor. Service providers or their designated fiscal agent or third-party processor must have the capacity to operate a payroll and timekeeping system that ensures youth are paid on time and according to an established schedule. **All service providers will operate on a reimbursement basis.** Service providers must have adequate and available resources to meet program and payroll costs.

Key activities of Payroll Administration:

- Collect participant timesheets and record in payroll system. Respondent will be required to maintain a timekeeping system including collection of hours worked to be reported into the payroll system for reporting purposes regardless of payroll system chosen.
- Pay participants on a bi-weekly basis. Regardless of payroll system chosen, Respondents are required to ensure all protocols of payroll system are adhered to and followed to ensure bi-weekly wages are paid to youth.
- Offer Direct Deposit and educate participants on the benefits of utilizing Direct Deposit.
- Maintain time and payroll documents in a secure place.
- Comply with all applicable regulations, laws, and tax requirements as the employer of record for participants.

PERFORMANCE METRICS AND OUTCOMES

The Summer Youth Connections Employment Program (SYCEP) strives to provide youth employment to young people between the ages of 16 - 24 by exposing them to various public and private sector industries, job readiness training and employment placement opportunities. To track progress toward achieving the outcome goals of this program and assess success, WDB staff will monitor a set of impact measures that may include, but are not limited to:

- 100% of youth will identify a career pathway based on their skills, aptitudes, and interests
- 90% of youth will complete Job Readiness Training
- 40% of youth will secure long-term employment after the summer

To monitor and recognize intermediate progress toward the above performance indicators, the service provider(s) must track output metrics that may include, but are not limited to:

- 70% of youth will complete the entire six-week program
- 100% youth will be paid on time
- 75% of youth report a positive relationship with an instructor or coordinator in their program
- 80% of youth will sign up for Direct Deposit

In addition to the performance indicators and output metrics listed above, the WDB encourages service provider(s) to propose additional indicators and metrics, including those that demonstrate early success and are indicative of youth's progress of attaining educational or career pathways due to their participation in SYCEP.

The ideal Service Provider(s) will be open to flexibility in program delivery and having a cooperative relationship with the WDB and the Program Performance & Data Management Team, who will provide program monitoring, training, and technical support throughout the contract term.

DATA, RECORDING KEEPING, VALIDATION AND REPORTING

The WDB will require a standardized data collection procedure that ensures a comprehensive, detailed, and comparable record for each participant. This will include quantitative participant demographic information and services received, individual and family characteristics, and qualitative data across all programs. Baseline data collection at the outset of the project should be followed by data gathering activities at regular intervals to record the programs and its participants evolving history and data records. The selected Service Provider(s) will have access to existing databases for use in participant record keeping. The WDB requires electronic record-keeping in the state-managed database system, Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE), which is maintained by the Maryland Department of Labor. Service Provider(s) must utilize MWE and/or any designated management information database system required by the WDB for data collection and documentation. Service Provider(s) must ensure documents are legibly imaged to a prescribed file management and document imaging system and must maintain an electronic file that is properly tagged and uploaded using prescribed guidelines. The Service Provider(s) must develop policies and procedures that ensure the proper use of data and demonstrate that controls are sufficient to prevent identity theft, fraud, and abuse of participant information.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Service Provider(s) operations must be conducted in a transparent, responsible, and ethical manner in line with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The WDB expects the following minimum financial system requirements –

- *Budget Controls:* The organization has a method for tracking planned expenditures that allows it to compare actual expenditures or outlays to planned or estimated expenditures.
- *Cash Management:* The organization's cash draws are necessary and reasonable, and the timing and amount of such draws appear to be as close as possible to the actual disbursement of federal funds for the payment of allowable and allocable costs incurred under the contract.
- *Program Income:* The organization is aware of the requirements for earning, spending, and reporting program income.
- *Cost Allocation:* The organization only allocates costs to the contract to the extent that a benefit was received.

- *Allowable Costs:* The organization has a system in place to ensure the program is incurring necessary and reasonable costs and is only charging allowable and allocable costs to the contract.
- *Internal Controls:* Effective control, integrity, and accountability are maintained for sub-recipient cash, personal property, and other federally funded assets.
- *Financial Reporting:* The organization has an accounting system that allows it to maintain accurate and complete disclosure of the financial results of its contract activities and those of its sub-recipients according to the financial reporting requirements of the contract.
- *Documentation Required for Monitoring and/or Invoice Submittal:*
 - o General ledger;
 - o Cash receipts and cash disbursements journals/reports or equivalent;
 - o Bank statements, reconciliation, deposit slips and canceled checks for each bank account through which WIOA funds were received or disbursed;
 - o All contracts and MOUs with AJCCN Partners, including all amendments;
 - o All financial reports and documentation supporting requests for reimbursement;
 - o Payroll records including Individual Earnings Record, Employee Withholding Authorization (W-4), FICA reporting forms, federal and state withholding, Unemployment taxes, Employee Personnel Files, Time Records and Employee Time/Salary Allocation plans;
 - o Invoices and/or supporting data for non-payroll disbursements.

The successful Bidder will need to demonstrate a high degree of fiscal accountability, transparency and integrity in its financing and budgeting.

Moreover, the successful Bidder will need to demonstrate the ability to maintain separate accounting streams for these grant funds and be able to clearly show that funds have been used for their intended and allowable purposes.

INTERNAL SUB-RECIPIENT MONITORING

Service Provider(s) must cooperate with any contract monitoring, inspection, or audit requests from the WDB, the Maryland Department of Labor, and any other internal or external auditors. Providers must also ensure compliance with all sub-recipient monitoring of its own subcontractors.

Service Provider(s) must also demonstrate the capacity to ensure internal program record management procedures that ensure auditable and adequate records are maintained demonstrating the eligibility of all participants as well as confirm adherence to specific requirements and time limitations. Service Provider(s) are required to have an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) single audit, share any audit results or findings with federal, state, and WDB monitors and develop corrective action plans.

COST REQUIREMENTS

The Bidder may propose costs associated with performing the scope of work identified on the Budget Worksheet. The Bidder must submit a description of the proposed costs and explain the allocation by cost element. The Bidder must have an explanation of how costs will be recorded and tracked, and the name and version of the proposed accounting system.

IN-KIND AND CASH MATCH RESOURCES

To efficiently deliver proposed services, it is important to leverage resources. Bidders are encouraged to include in-kind resources that will be dedicated to this service contract. These in-kind resources must directly support the proposed program activities and must be documented with a Letter (s) of Commitment.

Examples of in-kind resources include:

- Staff time from contractor and/or related subcontractors.
- Facilities expenses where the program services are performed
- Participant expenses such as stipends, wages, incentives, travel, tuition, books, fees, tools or required work clothes, and other supportive services
- Equipment used in providing services
- Program-based outreach and/or media support

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted via our online grant application portal no later than **March 4, 2024** which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Proposals not received by the deadline will be automatically disqualified from competition – no exceptions. Mailed, faxed, or hard copy proposals will not be accepted.

Proposals should be prepared in a professional manner, providing a complete and detailed description of the proposed program. Emphasis should be placed on clarity of content and completeness. Bidders must include all the required attachments listed on Attachment Submittal Form that pertain to the proposal. Failure to include required attachments will disqualify the proposal. No additional attachments are allowed. Bidders may submit the required attachments as part of their electronic submission.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE AND SCORING GUIDELINES

STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Bidder must describe the relevant experiences, resources, and qualifications of the proposed staff to be assigned directly to this project. In addition, describe the experiences of personnel in implementing similar services, and state the Bidder's ability to commit full time key personal for the full contract performance period.

- a. **Key Personnel:** Bidders should identify key personnel; Program Manager, Fiscal Personnel, and Other Key Personnel, as full-time and part-time employed staff, and/or all Subcontractors (*this does not preclude the Bidders responsibility to follow federal procurement requirements*). Provide dates of employment, job titles, and relevance of previous experience of work undertaken by the employee and proposed partners.
 - Program Manager:** The Bidder will identify and assign a Program Manager who will provide management, administrative, and technical interface with EPG personnel in the day-to-day performance of the contract. *For the Program Manager of the project, describe*

relevant experience in managing projects of similar size, scope, and dollar amount.

- Fiscal Personnel:** The Bidder will identify and/or assign fiscal personnel who will provide fiscal responsibility, accountability, reporting, and monitoring that interface with EPG personnel in the day-to-day fiscal transparency of the contract. *Provide qualifications of fiscal staff that will be responsible for fiscal, procurement, internal controls, reporting, and self-monitoring; thereby, demonstrating the ability and acceptance of fiscal liability for grant funds.*
- Career Consultants:** The Bidder will identify one or more Career Consultants who will work directly with the youth participants. *Identify what experience each Career Consultant has in working with youth, ages 16 - 24, and/ or their other commensurate experience in workforce development or education.*
- Other Key Personnel:** The Bidder will identify and provide the qualifications of key personnel by activity (*i.e., employer engagement, employer oversight, recruitment, eligibility determination, assessment, case management, etc.*) **including number of hours of relevant training.** The intention is to identify the connection between the qualifications and experience of key personnel and the value their expertise will bring to the proposed program.

EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

The following is the total weight for this RFP. Bidders **must have a total of 80% or higher** in the scoring methodology to be recommended to the WDB for final consideration.

SCORING METHODOLOGY	
Organizational Background/Demonstrated Experience	20
Staffing Levels and Qualifications	15
Outreach and Assessment Strategies	10
Job Readiness Program	10
Worksite Matching and Oversight	10
Payroll Administration	15
Fiscal Budget/Narrative	20
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100 POINTS

BEST AND FINAL OFFERS / ONE HOUR PROPOSER(S) INTERVIEW

The WDB and EPG reserves the right to conduct one hour interview with Bidders for the purpose of obtaining “best and final offers” as follows:

- Enter into pre-selection negotiations.
- Schedule oral presentations; and
- Request revised Proposals.

The Evaluation Committee will limit any discussions to those Bidders whose proposals have the potential for selection.

APPLICANT COMPETENCY

All applicants must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management, administrative capabilities and capacity, professional staff, financial resources, and stability, as well as administrative and fiscal systems to carry- out the work described in this RFP. Applicants must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. The WDB requires assurance that the selected applicant's performance of the terms and conditions of any agreement resulting from this RFP be undertaken in accordance with the highest level of integrity and business ethics. Applicants must be able to implement a system of self-monitoring, including the review of key data related to performance, quality assurance, financial integrity and accuracy, and one-stop center operations. Applicants are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the funding sources identified in this RFP. If the WDB determines, (at its sole discretion), that the selected applicant is not responsible or that it does not possess the administrative, fiscal, and/or technical resources and capabilities necessary to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of an agreement, it shall terminate the agreement immediately.

BIDDERS CONDITIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

By submitting its proposal, each Bidder understands, represents, and acknowledges that:

A Bidder or his/her authorized representative may withdraw or modify his/her proposal by written notice received, at the Issuing Office's address, prior to the exact hour and date specified for proposal receipt.

The Bidder's information and representations in the proposal are material and important, and the Issuing Office may rely upon the contents of the proposal in negotiations, contractual obligations, and awarding the contract(s). The Bidder agrees that the proposal will remain firm for a period of one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after the date specified for receipt of proposals or until a sub-recipient agreement is fully executed.

Each Bidder, by submitting its proposal, authorizes the WDB to release to the State of Maryland information concerning the Bidder's Maryland taxes, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation liabilities, and total compensations for individuals charged to the subrecipient agreement. The Bidder has arrived at the cost(s) and amount(s) in its proposal independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Bidder or potential Bidders. The Bidder shall not disclose any of these items on or before the proposal submission deadline specified in this RFP.

The Bidder has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting a proposal on this sub-recipient agreement, or to submit a proposal higher than this proposal, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive proposal or other form of complementary proposal.

The Bidder has not made, under separate sub-recipient agreement with the WDB, any recommendations to the Issuing Office concerning the need for the goods and services described in its proposal or the

specifications for the goods and services described in the proposal.

The Bidder is not currently under suspension or debarment in the State of Maryland, any other State or the Federal government and, if the Bidder cannot so certify, then it shall submit along with its proposal a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.

The Bidder must clearly identify and describe the services being offered in response to this RFP. Bidders are cautioned that the organization, as well as the thoroughness of the response, is critical to the evaluation process.

The Bidder's Proposal forms must be legible and complete in their entirety, with all required supplemental information presented in an organized, comprehensive, and easy-to-follow manner.

The WDB is not liable for any costs the Bidder incurs in preparation and submission of its proposal, in participating in the RFP process, or in anticipation of award of the sub-recipient agreement.

The WDB reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by the Bidder proves the Bidder is not qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFP and to complete the Project as specified.

The WDB may make investigations (including on-site visits and contacting any or all references) as deemed necessary, to determine that the Bidders competence, number of qualified employees, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform per the RFP.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder, the Bidders, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Bidder has disclosed in its proposal.

To the best knowledge of the person signing the proposal for the Bidder and unless the Bidder has otherwise disclosed in its proposal, the Bidder has no outstanding, delinquent obligations including, but not limited to, any Federal and State tax liabilities not being contested on appeal or other obligation of the Bidder that is owed.

Until the selected Bidder receives a fully executed and approved written sub-recipient agreement from the Issuing Office, there is no legal and valid sub-recipient agreement, in law or in equity. The WDB reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any sub-recipient agreement executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the sub-recipient agreement period, as it deems necessary in the interest of the Board and its programs, pending availability of funds.

The fully executed Agreement will require the selected Bidder to assume responsibility for all goods and services offered in its proposal whether it produces them itself or through subcontract. Additionally, if the Bidder uses any subcontractor, the proposal should be clear on the roles, responsibilities, and outcomes of each. The substitution of one subcontractor for another must be made at the discretion and prior written approval of the Issuing Office. The WDB considers the selected Bidder to be the sole point of contact regarding all contractual matters.

Bidders shall not issue press releases, internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of the Issuing Office, and then only in coordination with the Issuing Office.