



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT
YEAR-ROUND YOUTH SERVICES**

**Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.
410 Girard Street
Havre de Grace, MD 21078**

ISSUE DATE: JANUARY 11, 2019

BIDDER'S CONFERENCE: JANUARY 18, 2019, 1:00 P.M.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: MARCH 22, 2019, 1:00 P.M.

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Request For Proposal (RFP)
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Year-Round Youth Services

I. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

A. RFP Overview

The Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. (SWN), in partnership with the Susquehanna Youth Committee, is requesting proposals from qualified sources to provide year-round services to eligible youth in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), the Susquehanna Region Workforce Investment Plan, the goals and objectives of the Susquehanna Youth Committee.

B. Purpose

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals from organizations interested in providing comprehensive educational and employment preparation services for eligible youth age eighteen (18) through twenty-four (24). Proposals are being solicited for out-of-school youth in Cecil and Harford Counties. Organizations are permitted to partner with other organizations to ensure comprehensive service delivery.

C. Target Populations

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act defines "out-of-school youth" as those applicants who meet one or more of the following criteria (as defined in WIOA Title I, Section 129, (a)(1)(B):

- A school dropout
- A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low income individual and is basic skills deficient.
- A youth who is an individual with a verified physical or mental disability which presents a substantial barrier to employment and whose own income meets the poverty guidelines, even if the family income exceeds the guidelines
- Homeless, runaway, or foster child
- Pregnant or parenting
- An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
- Is an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

D. Out-Of-School Youth Programs: Overview of Services for out-of-school youth, ages 18-24.

1. Description of Programs Requested

The intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for out-of-school youth is to provide long-term, comprehensive services by reaching out to young people who are not attached to an educational (school) entity. The funds available through this RFP are intended to build upon existing programs/models in our region and create new services to assist those youth who have dropped out of school, or who have graduated but are in need of special assistance to become successful.

The program design should contain strong work, career development, and education components based on WIOA required program elements and program design requirements.

2. Outcomes

Outcomes for out-of-school youth include multiple skill attainment: placement in employment or education, retention in employment and/or education, earnings gains, attainment of a credential, in-program skill gains and indicators of effectiveness with employers.

3. Project Cost per Outcome

Intensive Contract Year

The cost per individual for services delivered through this RFP should not exceed \$5000. Program models with innovative design features that contribute substantially to the Youth Performance Measures will be considered for enhanced cost per funds.

Follow-Up Year

The cost per for follow-up services should not exceed \$500.00.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. Required Program Parameters (see Attachment B for definitions)

1. Youth Program Design

- Individual needs assessment (Objective Assessment)
- Individual service strategies (ISS)
- Preparation for post-secondary/employment; linkages between academic and occupational learning; connections to intermediaries
- Linkages with the Workforce Centers
- Menu of program elements

2. Youth Program Elements

Program element requirements include offering eligible youth at a minimum:

- Tutoring, Skills Training, etc.: Basic Skills
- Alternative school services: ABE/GED

- Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences
- Occupational Skills Training
- Concurrent Education & Workforce Preparation Activities
- Leadership Development Opportunities
- Supportive Services
- Mentoring
- Follow-Up Services to all youth participants for a minimum of twelve (12) months
- Counseling
- Financial Literacy Education
- Entrepreneurial Training
- Labor Market Information
- Preparation for Post-Secondary Education & Training

3. Performance Standards and Outcomes

All participant information must be entered into Maryland State Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation database prior to program participation.

Youth Measures

Measure	Standard
Placement in employment or education 2 nd Quarter after exit	67%
Placement in employment or education 4 th Quarter after exit	61%
Attainment of a credential	65%
In-program skills gain – measureable gains Literacy and Numeracy	57%

B. Program Administration

1. Services provided by the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.

- Eligibility determination
- Work Experience services
- Labor Market Information
- Technical assistance with program design and operation

2. Vendor Responsibilities

Contracts awarded will be based on cost reimbursement with allowable costs limited to those reasonable and necessary for the effective and efficient performance of the contracted services. Partial payment may be withheld for failure to meet contractor specified performance goals. **With the written approval of the Susquehanna Workforce Board, a vendor may subcontract activities by following proper legal procurement procedures.**

Vendor responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Outreach/Recruitment
- Intake
- Assessment
- Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
- Case Management
- Program Services
- Placement
- Follow-up

C. Reporting Requirements and Service Documentation

Quarterly Program Progress Reports and Youth Status Reports are required by all youth service providers receiving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds. Services provided to youth must be documented on the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and the Youth Status Report.

The fiscal reporting requirements consist of monthly invoices with appropriate supporting documentation, and a close-out report at the end of the contract.

III. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND RATING SYSTEM

All proposals will be reviewed by an independent Proposal Review Committee. The committee is responsible for the following:

- Rate each proposal against previously established rating criteria. See Evaluation Criteria.
- Forward proposal selections to the Youth Committee for consideration

The Youth Committee will recommend to the Workforce Board proposals for funding.

Evaluation Criteria

Statement of Work – 35 points

This category will evaluate how well the proposed program has been designed, the extent to which all required services will be addressed, how the services will be provided to youth, and the projected outcomes.

Program Design Strategies: 10 points

Program Element Strategies: 10 points

Performance Outcome Strategies: 15 points

Demonstrated Capacity – 35 points

The proposer's experience and past performance in providing services similar to those being proposed including the ability to attain, track and record performance as required by the WIOA Performance Indicators. It will also include financial management experience with federal grants and working in collaboration to facilitate contracted outcomes, service delivery, staff qualifications, and contract management experience.

Past Performance: 15 points

Management Capacity: 10 points

Staff Qualifications: 10 points

Budget and Budget Narrative – 30 points

The proposed cost of the program will be evaluated for fair and reasonable costs. The following factors will determine fair and reasonable costs:

Per unit cost (costs within the cost per range): 10 points

Program length and intensity, staff-to-youth ratio, support services, competitiveness of staff salaries, matching funds, and an administrative 5% cap: 10 points

Financial stability of proposing organization/agency: 10 points

IV. APPEALS PROCEDURE

Any respondents dissatisfied with the Youth Committee’s recommendation and who seek to appeal the matter to the SWN Executive Committee must file a written appeal with the SWN Executive Director at the following address:

Mr. Bruce England
Executive Director
Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.
410 Girard Street
Havre de Grace, MD 21078

All appeals must be filed within ten (10) calendar days of receiving notice of the Youth Committee's decision. The Executive Committee, at its discretion, will decide whether to grant the appellants an open hearing. The decision of the Executive Committee will be final.

V. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. General Conditions

1. The Susquehanna Workforce Network will not pay for any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals in response to the RFP.
2. All proposals, in their entirety, will become the property of SWN upon submission. Proposals will be exempt from disclosure until the evaluation and selection process has been completed. If a proposal contains any information that the offeror considers proprietary and does not want disclosed to the public or used for any purpose other than evaluation of the offer, all such information must be indicated with the following statement:

"The information contained on pages _____, _____, and _____ shall not be duplicated, used in whole or part for any purpose other than to evaluate the proposal, provided that if a contract is awarded to this office as a result of or in connection with the submission of such information, the SWN has the right to duplicate, use or disclose this information to the extent provided in the contract. This restriction does not limit the agency's right to use information contained therein if obtained from another source."

3. This RFP does not constitute a commitment of funding, nor is it a contract.
4. SWN reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of all contracts with successful proposers. Items that may be negotiated include, but are not limited to, type and scope of services and activities, prices, production schedules, target groups, geographical goals, and service levels. Proposers will be required to submit all revisions to their proposal that may result from negotiations prior to any agreement to contract.

5. Agencies selected to contract for training programs may be required to submit programmatic, financial or other revisions of their proposal which may have resulted from negotiations prior to an agreement to contract.
6. Responding agencies should be aware that SWN activities are subject to any modifications as required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and their implementing regulations; the Maryland State Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) policies, procedures and directives; the SWN Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Plan; and compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, including the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR part 34.
7. In submitting a proposal, the proposer certifies as to its legally constituted organization and that in connection with this proposal:
 - a. The prices in the proposal have been arrived at independently without consultation, communication or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other offeror or with any competition; and
 - b. Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in the proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the proposer, and will not knowingly be disclosed by the proposer, prior to award, directly or indirectly, to any other proposer or to any competition; and,
 - c. No attempt has been made by the proposer to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.
8. Person(s) signing the proposal certify that person(s) in the offeror's organization who is legally responsible within that organization for the decision as to the price being offered in the proposal, have not participated, and will not participate in any action contrary to A.7 a, b or c.

B. Availability of Funds

Funding for contracts awarded as a result of this process shall be contingent on continued federal authorization for program activities and is subject to amendment or termination due to lack of funds or authorization. Proposals selected under this RFP may be considered for funding beginning July 1, 2019. Contractors in good standing may be eligible for continued funding.

VI. GENERAL SUBMISSION AND FORMAT INSTRUCTIONS

Five (5) copies of the proposal must be submitted for consideration, one (1) original and four (4) copies. The original must be signed by the individual authorized to submit the proposal and enter into contract negotiations for the organization.

Proposals submitted which do not conform to the RFP format and/or do not provide adequate responses to all sections of this RFP will be considered non-responsive and will be disqualified from the review and selection process.

Proposals must be submitted to:

Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.
Attention: Linda D. Siegel
410 Girard Street
Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078

Proposal Due Date: March 22, 2019, 1:00 p.m.

Responding organizations should ensure that proposals are prepared in compliance with the following requirements:

1. Please follow the proposal guidelines using the headings for each section.
2. Emphasis should be placed on clarity of content.
3. The writing should be brief, concise, clear, organized and logical. Keep the review criteria in mind when writing the proposal. Reviewers will use only the information contained in the submitted proposal and the Request for Proposal to assess the proposal. Do not assume the reviewers are familiar with the proposer's organization.
4. The Proposal Narrative must be limited to 10 pages, typed, double-spaced, one side only, non-bound, with pages numbered.
5. Additional pages in Attachment A must be included to complete the proposal.
6. Endorsement letters are not recommended.

Required Capacity Building Activities:

All entities awarded contracts under this Request for Proposals will be required to attend training on Workforce Board approved tools, tracking systems, and documentation methods including but not limited to:

- Skills attainment/benchmarking system
- Individual Service Strategy/portfolio
- Coordination with Work Experience Coordinator
- Maryland Workforce Exchange - Management Information System
- Fiscal Reporting Requirements
- Follow-Up Expectations
- Other Contractor capacity building activities

Bidder's Conference:

A bidder's conference is scheduled for Friday, January 18, 2019, 1:00 p.m., at the Administrative Offices of the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc., 410 Girard Street, Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078.

SUSQUEHANNA WORKFORCE NETWORK, INC.
Summary of Request
Year-Round Youth Services

Name of Applicant Organization:

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Contact Person: _____

Tax ID: _____ S.S. # (if not incorporated): _____

License/Accreditation Entity: _____ Effective Date (if applicable): _____

Type of Organization: (check one) For Profit Non-Profit

Incorporated in the State of _____

Governmental Entity Educational Institution

Number of years operating in the Susquehanna Region WIA area: _____ Elsewhere _____

Names and Affiliations of Proposal Collaborators:

Name & Type of Program: _____

Primary County (ies) of Service: _____

Location Where Training Will Take Place: _____

Program Operating Hours: _____ Total Hours of Training: _____

Project Period From: _____ To: _____

Summarized Activities:

Number to be Served & Proposed Outcomes:

WIA Amount Requested for this Project: \$ _____

Total Matching Funds for this Project: \$ _____

If funded, what percentage would the contract funds represent of your organization's/company's total budget? _____ (The SWN cannot support the funding of more than 35% of an organization's total budget.)

Does your organization have an audited accounting system? Yes No

Has your organization ever had to repay funds due to a question/disallowed cost? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your organization have the capacity to repay a disallowed audit cost? Yes No

Executive Director/Signatory Authority Title Date

Signature

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All proposals must include a two page, double-spaced, Executive Summary with a concise composite description of the proposed project for the WIOA Youth project. Label these pages as **Executive Summary**. This summary will be reviewed by the Susquehanna Region Youth Committee and the Susquehanna Region Workforce Board that approve funding decisions. This summary should include:

- A clear and concise summary of the Statement of Work
- Proposed strategies to be utilized in meeting performance measures
- Proposed cost of the program

Applicants should make every effort to be as complete and accurate in this summary. The full Statement of Work and Budget upon which this Summary is based should therefore be completed first.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

The narrative will describe how the applicant proposes to meet the specifications outlined in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Please complete your proposal according to the following format. It is the responsibility of the proposing agency to address any and all requirements contained in this RFP. The Narrative should be limited to ten pages.

The proposal narrative should describe the proposed program in sufficient detail to demonstrate an understanding of the work to be performed, the needs of the participants, and the desired outcomes. The proposal shall consist of the following:

A. STATEMENT OF WORK

1. **Program Need:** Describe the need for the proposed program, and proposed strategies to address the need.
2. **Past Experience:** Describe your organization's past experience in providing the types of services solicited by this RFP. Indicate the number of years your agency has operated such programs. List the actual performance outcomes for programs you have operated, the location, and the year. Please provide names of current or previous funders.
3. **Target Population:** Describe the target population to be served; include age groups, and number of participants.
4. **Program Design and Program Elements:** Describe how the required Program Design and Program Elements will be implemented through your program, and the specific types of activities/strategies proposed for each element. See page 3 of this RFP. Specifically describe how you will coordinate with SWN's Work Experience Specialist in your program model.
5. **Performance Outcomes:** Required performance measures are listed on page 3 of this RFP. Describe the strategies you will use to meet the measures in specific detail.
6. **Program Staffing:** Describe proposed staffing pattern for any staff charged in whole or in part to this proposed project. Job descriptions and proposed staff qualifications and an organizational chart must be included.
7. **Program Duration:** Describe program duration by activities.
8. **Workforce Center Coordination:** Describe how the local Workforce Centers (AJC) will be utilized in your program and how youth will be introduced to the Workforce Centers for continued support during and after completion of the youth program.

B. GENERAL PROGRAM OPERATIONS

1. **Outreach and Recruitment:** Describe outreach and recruitment strategies for the target population.
 - a. Include partnerships with youth serving agencies, organizations, and schools to reach target populations.
 - b. What criteria will be used to select youth enrolled into your program?

- c. How will you provide outreach and accommodate services to youth with disabilities or whose primary language is not English?

2. Orientation and Assessment: Describe orientation/assessment activities.

- a. How and when will the prescribed career assessment be administered?
- b. How will your program develop, evaluate, and coordinate the “Individual Service Strategy” for each participant?

3. Case Management: Describe your program’s case management strategy for providing consistent support, the updating of individual service plans, referrals, barrier removal, monitoring service delivery for each participant and the provision of follow-up services..

BUDGET SUMMARY

Record Budget information below.

Cost Category	WIOA Funds	Matching Funds*	Total
Personnel Costs			
Travel/ Transportation			
Training Materials			
Participant Expenses: (please list items)			
Supplies			
Other (please list items)			
TOTALS			

*Matching funds which are in-kind funds may be subject to a monitoring.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Please complete a budget narrative to support each item of costs listed. Please list the detail upon which the budget request is based.

Example:

Personnel Costs:

Program Coordinator - \$11,055
\$11.00 an hour; 30 hours a week for 15 weeks = \$4,950
\$11.00 an hour; 15 hours a week for 37 weeks = \$6,105

MATCHING FUNDS/IN-KIND/OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

Describe monies or dollar value of services that will be used for these activities from sources other than WIOA.

Program Design Definitions

Individual Needs Assessment (Objective Assessment)

- Assessment of the academic skill levels: basic skills, and occupational skills
- Prior work experience, and employability
- Interests and aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs)
- Supportive service needs and developmental needs

Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

- Identification of an employment goal
- Appropriate achievement objectives based the Individual Needs Assessment

Education and Employment Preparation

- Provide preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities
- Provide linkages between academic and occupational learning
- Provide preparation for employment
- Provide effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers.
- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurial Training

Youth Program Element Definitions

Improving Educational Achievement

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school (GED),

Preparation For and Success in Employment

- Employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing – the purpose is to provide the youth participant with the opportunity for career exploration and skill development
- Occupational skills training
- Labor Market Information for career decision making

Support for Youth

- Supportive services
 - (a.) Linkages to community services
 - (b.) Assistance with transportation
 - (c.) Assistance with childcare and dependent care
 - (d.) Assistance with housing
 - (e.) Referrals to medical services
 - (f.) Assistance with work attire and tools
 - (g.) Adult mentoring
 - (h.) Follow-up services

Follow-up Services: All youth must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum duration of twelve months. Quarterly follow-up reports are required on all

youth. Acceptable follow-up services are:

- 1.) Leadership and supportive services
- 2.) Regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise
- 3.) Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development, and further education
- 4.) Work-related peer support groups
- 5.) Adult mentoring
- 6.) Tracking the progress of youth in employment after training
- 7.) Comprehensive guidance and counseling

Citizen and Leadership Development

- Leadership development activities: community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors such as
 - (a.) Exposure to postsecondary educational opportunities
 - (b.) Community and service learning projects
 - (c.) Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring
 - (d.) Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training
 - (e.) Training in decision-making, including determining priorities
 - (f.) Citizenship training, including life skills training, such as parenting, work behavior training, and budgeting of resources