

Bristol Workforce Investment Board  
FY 18 Youth In-School/Out-of-School RFP  
Bidders Conference  
May 2, 2017 – 2:30 pm  
Fall River Career Center

In Attendance: Jay Correia (Fall River Public Schools), Kit Tunney (Associates for Human Service), Sean Connell (YouthBuild Fall River), Nicole Rioux (YouthBuild Fall River), Derek Farias (Durfee High School), Maria Ferreira-Beddard (SER Jobs for Progress), Dale Hayden (Bristol Community College), Joan Ricci (The Literacy Center), Heidi Collins (Southeast Center for Independent Living), Jessie Stone (Southeast Center for Independent Living), Bernadette Driscoll (Bristol Community College), Beth Viveiros (YouthConnection), Theresa Romanovitch (People Incorporated), Jane DiBiasio (People Incorporated), Victor Tavares (SER Job for Progress)

Staff: Thomas Perreira, Joana Mateus, Maria Frazier

Mr. Perreira thanked everyone for attending and noted that copies of the RFP are available at this meeting or upon request and can be downloaded on the WIB's website [www.bristolwib.org](http://www.bristolwib.org). The RFPs are for Fiscal Year 2018. The minutes of the bidder's conference and any questions and the answers asked at this meeting or after will be posted on the WIB's website. Also, all questions must be directed to Joana Mateus at [jmateus@bristoljobs.org](mailto:jmateus@bristoljobs.org).

There are two components to the RFP, In-School and Out-of-School.

**Out-of School (OOS)**

**I.** There are 14 program elements under WIOA (listed on pg. 3). Although not all 14 have to be proposed, at a minimum, the proposed program must provide the following two elements: 1) tutoring, study skills, training and instruction; 2) paid and unpaid work experiences. It was noted that proposing additional elements is treated favorably in the reviewers' ratings.

**II.** Key terms are listed on page 4 of the RFP. These terms are used throughout the RFP.

**III.** The WIOA local partners are the WIB, City of Fall River and the Career Centers of Bristol County. These entities work together with service providers to build a

comprehensive, integrated youth delivery system. It was noted that youth eligibility and assessment are done at the Career Centers.

**IV.** Primary program services must be provided in one or more of the communities within the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA). A complete list of cities and town within the LWDA is included in Section II., Key Terms. Proposers may serve youth in one, two or all three communities. If a proposer wants to provide services for more than one community, they may submit separate proposals for each community or one proposal for multiple communities. Services provided to youth from a community must take place within that community.

The WIB does not define a minimum or maximum number of youth to be served in this RFP. Proposer must enter the exact number of youth to serve. Cost effectiveness will be an important consideration in the award decision.

Proposers must include any methods that will be utilized to recruit WIOA eligible youth.

All programs must directly provide academic services to assist in skill gains for basic skills deficient youth who have a high school diploma or HiSET preparation for those without a high school diploma.

WIOA requires a Local Workforce Development Area to devote at least 20 percent of its Title I Youth funds for paid and unpaid work experiences. While we are not requiring proposers to devote a specific percentage of its budget to the paid and unpaid work experience element, it is a mandatory element that must be included in proposals.

Collaboration among service providers and employers is strongly recommended. Proposers must demonstrate commitment by developing a partnership with at least one organization. A letter of support or memorandum of understanding (MOU) from the partnering organization(s) must be included with the proposal.

Two WIOA youth elements are mandatory: 1) tutoring, study skills training, and instruction; and 2) paid and unpaid work experience. The remaining eleven elements are optional. Although only two elements are mandatory, the provision of additional elements will be viewed favorably when evaluating the proposals. One youth element, follow-up services, is not being procured through this solicitation.

Occupational skills training shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupation in the local area involved. Please see Attachment D for a list of these industry clusters. Proposers wishing to provide training in a category other than those listed in Attachment D, please include labor market and other data that supports your selection.

Proposers must cite any relevant experience operating programs on behalf of the Bristol WIB, operating similar programs serving youth, and/or any other relevant qualifications. If program staff has been identified, resumes must be attached to the Specification Form. If staff has not been identified, job descriptions for the proposed program staff must be attached.

Proposals must clearly define the goals and objectives of the program and how this will be measured. Attachment B defines the current performance standards. Ms. Mateus noted that some of the requirements have changed under WIOA. Mr. Perreira

further emphasized that the performance measure definitions are different from last year's RFP and indicated proposers should carefully review the definitions to ensure they are meeting the current RFP requirements.

**V.** To be considered for funding, proposed services must meet minimum program threshold requirements listed on pg. 10 of the RFP.

**VI.** Who may apply to operate a program is listed on pg. 10 of the RFP. Proposals that represent joint efforts on the part of public, private, and educational organization will be given priority consideration for funding. Facilities providing services must be accessible to persons with disabilities and operate in full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Any subcontracting arrangements must be articulated in detail in the proposal and be included in the budget. The WIB reserves the right to split awards, if they deem necessary.

**VII.** It is estimated that there will be approximately \$250,000 - \$270,000 awarded for services to out-of-school youth throughout the region over the entirety of Fiscal Year 2018. This is an estimate only, and final budget information may cause variation from these estimates. Cost per proposal cannot exceed \$90,000 per community. The maximum for one community is \$90,000; two communities \$180,000 and three communities \$270,000. An organization may also choose to submit multiple proposals for one or more communities. The Bristol WIB reserves the option to split awards. For example, if a proposer submits a response that includes service in two communities, the WIB may elect to award the proposer funding for program in only one of the communities. Bidders are also required to provide documentation of cash and/or in-kind matching resources to leverage the WIOA funds. All WIOA reimbursed costs at the contract level will be defined as program dollars.

**VIII.** To be considered for funding, proposers must adhere to the submission requirements.

Faxed or emailed proposals will **not** be accepted.

**RFP #17-17** must be written on the envelopes you submit.

Proposal and budget must be in separate envelopes and clearly marked. Proposals must be received at the address listed on pg. 12 of the RFP.

Proposal submission deadline is listed on pg. 12 of the RFP.

Make sure to follow all the instructions. Failure to do so could lead to disqualification of your proposal.

A tentative schedule of youth services procurement activities (actual schedule may vary) is listed on pg.13 of the RFP.

Minutes of the bidder's conference will be posted on the WIB's website [www.bristolwib.org](http://www.bristolwib.org).

**IX.** Selected proposers will enter into a cost reimbursement contract. Program period will cover 7/1/2017 through 6/30/2018. No expenditures may extend beyond 6/30/2018. While continued WIOA changes may preclude the consideration of contracting beyond one year, the Bristol WIB is reserving the option of funding proposals for up to two (2)

years of activities based on availability of funding. However, proposals must be written for a 1 year service delivery period or 12 months.

**X.** Appeal and bid protest procedures are notes in section X. of the RFP.

**XI.** All questions regarding the RFP must be addressed to Joana Mateus. Contact information is listed on pg. 14 of the RFP.

It was noted that the evaluation form on page 19 is only for reference purposes and does not need to be filled out by the proposer. It is used by the proposal review committee. However, it does provide the criteria on which proposals will be rated.

In filling out the budget, please note there are multiple tabs in the excel budget. Include all pages of the budget, not just the cover/summary page, with your proposal. Proposers must be specific when writing the budget narrative in describing their proposed costs.

Mr. Perreira noted that if you are going to utilize an indirect rate it must be an approved rate. Proposers cannot simply include an administrative or indirect percentage to their budget without an approved indirect rate.

For profit entities may propose a profit fee or percentage but must include a rationale in the budget narrative.

Mr. Perreira noted that there is no page limit for responses or attachments.

**Q.** If serving Fall River, Taunton or Attleboro, can location be only in one of those cities and provide transportation?

**A.** If providing service in just one community, you can propose to serve youth who reside in other communities. The RFP does not preclude you from providing transportation for youth. However, this design does not meet the criteria to claim you are serving more than one community in the Local Workforce Development Area. In order to claim service in a community, there must be a physical location within that community where WIOA youth are receiving program services. So if your proposed program has a location in one community where your program services will be provided, you can only claim one community served in your proposal regardless of where youth participants reside. This is an important factor as it determines the maximum funding you can seek in your proposal. A proposer can submit one proposal to serve more than one community or one proposal for each community they want to serve.

**Q.** Can a physical location in another community be a partner if you don't have a location yourself?

**A.** As long as a proposer has a physical location where the proposed program will be delivered in the community then service in that community may be claimed in the RFP. This would hold true whether it was the proposer's space, a partner's space or rented space.

**Q.** Massachusetts is looking to bring back the GED instead of using the HiSet. Does the WIB prefer the HiSet, GED, or both?

- A. HiSET is what is in place at present. In addition, the RFP includes language explaining the requirements around HiSET preparation. Proposers are instructed to write their proposal based on the existing language in the RFP.
- Q. If proposer has experience in running payroll in paid work experience, can they do the payroll themselves?
- A. If you are proposing to seek funds for youth subsidized wages, include the cost in the budget under the “other” category. While youth payroll is typically run through the WIBs fiscal agent, the RFP does not require you to indicate through which entity you would prefer youth wages be paid and there is no rating preference for this. If your proposal is awarded, this issue will be dealt with at contract negotiation.
- Q. Are youth wages based on minimum wage?
- A. Yes. Subsidized wages can not be below minimum wage. However, if doing unsubsidized wage and employer is paying youth wages, they can pay more than minimum if they choose. Mr. Perreira noted that minimum wage is set to increase in January 2018 and noted proposers should take this into account when constructing their budgets.
- Q. If the program is located in Taunton and proposer wants youth from Fall River, can proposer build in transportation?
- A. The RFP does not preclude a proposer from building in transportation, but proposer should justify in proposal why this is an appropriate and effective design element.
- Q. Is there a certain percentage required for match?
- A. There is no specific percentage requirement for match. However, demonstrating leveraged in-kind resources that increase the effectiveness of program services are considered favorably in the rating process.
- Q. Are there restrictions on the types of funds that can be used as match under this proposal?
- Yes, there are match restrictions. Determination of allowable costs and match are made in accordance with the Cost Principles, now found in the Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), codified at 2 CFR Part 200 and at 2 CFR Part 2900. If a specific cost or proposed match is in question, the proposer can ask if it is allowable by contacting Ms. Mateus.
- Q. Can you use another contract to support the paid internship and then use the funds from this RFP to support other elements?
- A. Proposers may utilize other resources to supplement services to youth enrolled in the Bristol WIB’s WIO funded youth programming. Provision of a youth element

can be achieved with funding from a non-WIOA source. If there resources meet the match requirements as referenced in the prior question, they may be included as match within the proposal.

- Q.** Has the WIB ever funded a program for a second year?
- A.** Yes, but not recently. Mr. Perreira noted that in order to fund a program for a second year, several factors are looked at: 1) funding availability and stability; 2) Performance of the subcontractors. 3) Performance of the youth system as a whole; 4) Changes in legislation, regulations and/or policy that may preclude continuing programming under existing condition. The WIB will decide if conditions merit a second year of funding.
- Q.** Is equipment has been purchased previously, does it stay with the current operator?
- A.** If you have purchased equipment under a prior contract with the WIB, you can continue to utilize that equipment to serve WIOA Youth if you are awarded a contract through this RFP. If you are not successful in receiving an award under this RFP, any prior equipment purchased would revert to the WIB.
- Q.** If the indirect rate goes up after the RFP process would it be resolved during contract negotiation?
- A.** Mr. Perreira noted that, if you are looking to propose an indirect rate, it must be what your approved rate is at present. Technically, the indirect rate established in the contract would be binding for the duration of the contract operational period. If the indirect rate does go up during the contract operational period, the proposer may make a formal request for a line item adjustment and the WIB will decide whether to adhere to the agreed upon contract or allow an adjustment.
- Q.** If a youth is going through an online high school degree program and has completed a majority of it then drops outs, can they finish the online course and get their high school diploma instead of the HiSet?
- A.** If it is a recognized way to get a high school diploma in Massachusetts, the RFP does not preclude including this in your design. However, the proposer must ensure that it is meeting the requirements as set forth in the RFP regardless of any specific design elements it may include.

It was noted that on page 8 of the Specification Form, #9 is followed by #s 12 and 13. Mr. Perreira noted that it is a numbering error and it should be #s 10 and 11. The form will be corrected and updated on the website. A proposer may use the existing Proposal Specification Form or the updated, corrected form as the questions will be the same on both.

**I.** The purpose of this RFP is to fund effective proposals to serve WIOA eligible in-school youth. There are 14 required youth program elements that our local area must make available. Not all of the 14 elements must be present in any single program. Program elements are listed on pg. 3 of the RFP.

**II.** Key terms are listed on page 4 of the RFP. These terms are used throughout the RFP.

**III.** The WIOA local partners are the WIB, City of Fall River and the Career Centers of Bristol County. These entities work together with service providers to build a comprehensive, integrated youth delivery system. Youth eligibility and assessment is completed by the Career Center, not by the service provider.

**IV.** The WIB has established general policies around which organizations should develop their programs. These policy considerations are listed on pg 5 and 6 of RFP.

Youth aged 17 and over who are high school seniors are given priority placement in youth programming. This does not automatically exclude the placement of 14 – 16 year olds into programs, however. This does not exclude the placement of 14 through 16 year olds into programs. It was noted that the youth targets have a significant impact on credential attainment which is emphasized in WIOA. With limited in-school resources, the WIB puts a strong emphasis on targeted programming that maximizes youths' ability to obtain the high school diploma. If serving sophomores or juniors, this outcome will not be achieved within the contract operational period. Mr. Perreira noted that the WIB is required to devote a minimum of 75% of its youth funding to out-of-school youth. It is not required to devote any funds to in-school youth. While the WIB has decided to devote some resources to in-school youth, it must place an emphasis on maximizing performance outcomes.

**V.** WIOA funded programs under this RFP shall offer school year service strategies that provide a continuum of services.

WIOA funded wages to youth are typically paid through the City of Fall River, and not through selected vendors. However, wages are to be included in the proposed budget to give a complete picture of overall program cost. Wages count against the program cap as defined in Section VIII.

Subsidized work experience during the summer is limited to 20 hours per week for no more than 6 to 8 weeks at minimum wage.

Stand-alone summer work experience is not a program objective of the WIB.

In most cases, the attainment of a high school diploma will be a planned goal for youth.

**VI.** Programs funded must operate in at least one of the BWIB communities defined in Section II, Key Terms.

All youth must meet WIOA income guidelines and other characteristics listed in Attachment A. Preference is given to enrolling youth who are 17 and over.

While Career Centers will be source of initial enrollments, proposers must include methods that will be utilized to recruit WIOA eligible youth.

Proposed services shall include the required Youth Elements as defined in Section I of the RFP. At a minimum, the proposed program must provide the following element: paid and unpaid work experience. However, provision of additional elements will be viewed favorably when evaluating the proposals. It was noted that due to the limited funding available for in-school programming, the WIB wanted to provide the greatest flexibility in program design and youth element mix. It should be noted, however, that the greater the number of elements provided will be viewed favorably as noted in the rating criteria.

If a proposer decides to utilize a partner or partners, a letter of support or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the partnering organization must be included with the proposal. Although a partner(s) is not mandatory, if it is utilized it will be viewed favorably in proposal evaluation.

Proposers must provide any relevant experience operating programs and/or any other relevant qualifications.

Youth programs will be responsible for performance measures. Attachment B in the RFP defines the statewide performance standards by which the WIB is measured. Proposals shall include which performance measures will be acquired by youth. Mr. Perreira emphasized that we are moving from WIOA transition to WIOA implementation which has resulted in changes to the performance requirements.

VII. Who may apply to operate a program is listed on pg. 12 of the RFP. Proposals that represent joint efforts on the part of public, private, and educational organization will be given priority consideration for funding.

Facilities providing services must be accessible to persons with disabilities and operate in full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All subcontracting arrangements must be identified in detail in the proposal and be included as a separate line item in the budget.

**VIII.** It is estimated that there will be approximately \$100,000 - \$120,000 awarded through this RFP for services to in-school youth over the entirety of Fiscal Year 2018. This is an estimate, and final budget information may cause variation from these estimates. The WIB has elected to place a cap on the cost per proposal. Individual in-school proposals cannot exceed \$40,000. Organizations may elect to submit more than one proposal (no more than \$40,000 each). Scoring preference is given for programs that demonstrate high levels of cost effectiveness in the provision of comprehensive youth services.

**IX.** To be considered for funding, proposers must adhere to the submission requirements.

Faxed or emailed proposals will **not** be accepted.

**RFP #17-17** must be written on the envelopes you submit.

Proposal and budget must be in separate envelopes and clearly marked. If proposal and budget are in the same envelope, it will be disqualified.

Proposals must be received at the address listed on pg. 14 of the RFP.

Proposal submission deadline is listed on pg. 14 of the RFP.

Make sure to follow all the instructions. Failure to do so could lead to disqualification of your proposal.

A tentative schedule of youth services procurement activities (actual schedule may vary) is listed on pg.15 of the RFP.

Minutes of the bidder's conference will be posted on the WIB's website

[www.bristolwib.org](http://www.bristolwib.org).

**X.** Selected proposers will enter into a cost reimbursement contract. Program period will cover 7/1/2017 through 6/30/2018. No expenditures may extend beyond 6/30/2018. Based on funding availability, the Bristol WIB is reserving the option of funding proposals for up to two (2) years, but proposals must be written for 1 year of service only. It was noted that a proposal can include a program design that results in a service delivery start date that is later than July 1<sup>st</sup> even if the contract date is July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**XI.** All questions regarding the RFP must be addressed to Joana Mateus. Contact information is listed on pg. 16 of the RFP.

It was noted that the evaluation form on page 21 is only for reference purposes and is not filled out by the proposer. It is for reference only and is used by the proposal review committee.

In filling out the budget, please note there are multiple tabs in the excel budget. Include all pages of the budget, not just the cover/summary page, with your proposal.

Proposers must be specific when writing the budget narrative as to how funds will be spent. Mr. Perreira also noted that vendors can not reference any budget or program cost information in the Proposal Specification Form.

Mr. Perreira noted that there is no page limit for responses or attachments. He also noted that the space left between questions should not be construed as a preferred estimate of question length.

**Q.** Is the 20% paid/unpaid work experience on the WIBs end, or does the proposer have to put it into their proposal and budget?

**A.** The proposer needs clearly describe how it will deliver the work experience element but does not have to show a specific allocation of fund. The WIB's fiscal agent will utilized cost allocation methodologies to determine if the region is meeting the 20% requirement.

**Q.** What if the program ultimately shows 18% is being devoted to work experience. Will the WIB seek to recapture the 2%?

**A.** Successful proposers will only be held responsible for the work experience requirements included their contracts, not on a specific percentage.

**Q.** If proposing in more than one community, can you do a combined proposal?

**A.** Proposals can include services to more than one community but would still have to adhere to the \$40,000 cap. Proposer have the option of submitting multiple proposals. Each proposal can include a budget for up to \$40,000.

**Q.** Mr. Perreira was asked to clarify question 1 of Attachment E (the RFP Review Form).

**A.** He noted that to achieve the Highly Advantageous rating, services have to be offered in at least one of the three major cities (Fall River, Taunton and/or Attleboro) and be easily accessible to program participants. A program located within a city but may or may not be in an area that is easily accessible to youth. For example, there might be limited or no public transportation to the proposed program location. In that instance, even though it might be in one of the cities, the criteria for the Highly Advantageous rating would not be satisfied unless the proposer could demonstrate why the location is easily accessible to WIOA eligible youth.

**Q.** Does the IS program have to be in a public schools or can it be at a private school?

**A.** The RFP does not state that programming must be delivered at a public school. However, any youth served must meet WIOA Youth Title I eligibility criteria for in-school youth.

**Q.** **The** RFP proposal numbers listed on the cover sheets for the both the In-School and Out-of-School RFP (17-17) is the same. Is that correct?

**A.** Yes. The in-school and out-of-school RFPs are included in the same solicitation.

**Q.** Where can the definition of low income be accessed?

**A.** In general, Low income for WIOA In-School Youth is defined as Family income at or below 100% of poverty line or 70% lower living standard. However, a much more detailed description of income eligibility is defined in WIOA Sec. 3(36)(A) at the following link: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

**Q.** Can proposer work with a partner for the tutoring and academic element?

**A.** Proposers may use partnering organizations to deliver program services. Clearly define in your proposal which organization is providing each element. If you will sub-contract with a partnering entity, ensure that this is described in your proposal with the relevant sub-contracted amounts included in your budget and budget narrative. If the partnering entity is providing the service in-kind, ensure that a MOU or support letter is included that confirms the organization's agreement to provide the service.