REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT PILOT PROGRAM
TO SERVE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AT BIDDER’S CONFERENCE HELD ON 2/11/13

1. **Q:** Could the Workforce Partnership potentially fund more than two contracts if bidders request smaller funding amounts?
   **A:** Yes that is a possibility and will depend on the total funding level of recommended contract awards.

2. **Q:** For eligibility purposes, if a youth has received a “letter of recognition from a high school” how would that be classified as these are not a diploma, and are generally given to students on a special education track?
   **A:** Letters of recognition are not recognized as a high school diploma equivalency by the Department of Labor (DOL). Furthermore, the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) Q&As addresses the matter as follows:

   **Q:** “Do Individual Education Plan (IEP) diplomas and other alternative secondary school exit documents awarded to youth with disabilities count as a degree in the Attainment of a Degree or certificate common Measure?

   **A:** No. An IEP diploma is not recognized as an equivalent to a high school diploma or GED for federal reporting purposes or by state governments. While an IEP diploma reflects a subjective measure of personal achievement, it is not an indicator of a successful completion of high school study and has limited labor market value. As a result, attainment of an IEP diploma will not count as a positive outcome for this measure”.

3. **Q:** If a bidder is a current contractor with the Workforce Partnership who submitted an RFQ during the last Year Long Youth procurement, does a revised RFQ need to be resubmitted?
   **A:** Yes, RFQs expire a year after they are submitted. As stated in the RFP, Section 1.14, page 11, detailed instructions and necessary forms are available for download from the Workforce Partnership’s website at [http://workforce.org/funding-qualifications](http://workforce.org/funding-qualifications). If your organization is not sure of current Statement of Qualifications status, please email Jared Palmer, Manager of Administrative Services at [jaredpalmer@workforce.org](mailto:jaredpalmer@workforce.org) with your inquiry.

4. **Q:** Regarding participant payments, are there any constraints regarding retention bonuses or achievement bonuses for youth achieving certain milestones?
   **A:** Section 3.6 of the RFP, Other Program Requirements, Participant Payments/Employer of Record
describes options for payments to youth. “Combinations of hourly wage, stipend or incentive payments may be proposed. The use of wages, stipends or incentive payments have proven to be an effective strategy to engage and encourage the completion of defined goals as part of program participation. Distinction of these terms are as follows:

- Wages are defined as monetary payments to enrolled participants for completed work.
- Stipends are defined as a fixed regular small payment made to enrolled youth to encourage the successful completion in a pre-determined WIA related activity.
- Incentives may be either cash or non-cash payments given to youth for participating and achieving an established WIA goal/activity as a result of program participation.

Bidders must describe in their program designs the type of participant payments implemented and how these strategies or components will be incorporated in order to effectively assist youth to attain their goal(s).

For further information on the policies governing stipends, wages, or incentives refer to the Workforce Partnership’s Operations Manual Chapter IV – Part II Program Activities, Section 4.18 Youth Incentive Policy.

5. **Q:** In regards to the Past Performance Questionnaires, if a bidder has been notified by DOL that they will not complete the required Past Performance Questionnaires form for a Youth Build grant, could the bidder provide numbers and outcomes from their last quarterly report instead of the required Past Performance Questionnaire?

**A:** Section 6.3 of the RFP, requires bidder to submit at least three complete references from organizations with whom they have had projects of similar size and scope. Therefore, if bidder is unable to meet this requirement due to the situation described above, bidder could provide a copy of the last report submitted to DOL. However, bidder should be aware that the report may not provide sufficient information on the quality of services provided or effectiveness of your program.

6. **Q:** On page 27 of the RFP, the 4th question under Section I – Program Overview, asks the bidders to describe the location of where services will be provided. Is this where bidders would talk about accessibility and universal access of site?

**A:** Yes. Information on the WIA accessibility and universal access requirements can be found in Employment Development Department (EDD) Directive WSD-10, which can be accessed at: WSD10-1 - Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures.

7. **Q:** If services are being delivered by multiple agencies and the Literacy and Numeracy assessments are being conducted by one of the partner agencies, do the results of those assessments still need to be reported?

**A:** Yes, any youth assessed below the 9th grade level in math or reading must receive educational services to address their basic skills (literacy/numeracy) deficiencies and these must be recorded by the lead agency. While a variety of assessment tests can be used to determine skill levels and work readiness there is a set of approved testing instruments for literacy and numeracy skills. For further details please refer to section 3.6 Other Program Requirements of the RFP. Additionally, the Workforce Partnership will provide technical assistance and training on these processes to successful bidders and their staff prior to contract execution.
8. **Q:** Can current WIA contract funds be leveraged and considered as In-kind/Cash match?  
   **A:** No, the intent is that bidders demonstrate their capacity to leverage other public and private, etc. resources to support and diversify youth workforce services.

9. **Q:** Since this is a 13 month contract award, is the expectation for all outcomes to be met at the end of the 13 month period?  
   **A:** Yes, see response below for further details.

10. **Q:** Based on the targeted population being served, is there a possibility of having contracts extended so as to meet performance outcomes?  
    **A:** The Workforce Partnership understands the needs and barriers associated with the targeted population being served under this procurement and as such may not be opposed to a no cost extension beyond the 6/30/14 deadline. Additionally, if additional funding becomes available we would also consider increasing the amount associated with this procurement; however, it is all subject to funding availability.

**Questions Received as of 2/15/13**

11. **Q:** Would a youth who receives a "Letter of Recognition" be considered a high school dropout?  
    **A:** The youth would not be considered a school drop out. However, they would be considered an out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient and therefore would be eligible to be served under this RFP.

12. **Q:** Can the list of attendees at the bidders Conference be posted in the interest of partnering?  
    **A:** A list of all agencies present has been posted to the website as “Attachment 11”. As stated in the RFP, all organizations who submit an intent to apply will be posted on the website along with relevant contact information.

**Questions Received as of 2/21/13**

13. **Q:** The RFP does not mention follow-up/job retention activities. As such, what type of follow-up/job retention activities are expected and for what period of time would such services be provided for youth exiting a program funded under this RFP?  
    **A:** As stated in the RFP Section 3.6 Follow-Up: All youth must be provided with twelve (12) months of documented follow-up services, after the youth is exited from the program, to assist youth in sustaining a successful transition from the program. Follow-up is a WIA requirement, lending critical support to the participant after exit. Although funding may not be available to contractors procured under this RFP, the Workforce Partnership strongly encourages service providers to ensure the best interests of youth served are addressed through other resources. For additional guidance refer to Attachment 9: Glossary of Terms.
14. **Q:** The previous RFP for WIA Youth Programs issued by the Workforce Partnership required that the format for the proposal narrative be printed double sided. Should our proposal narrative be printed single or double sided?

   **A:** Respondent may choose to submit single or double sided pages. If single sided, the total page count of the Program Narrative may not exceed twenty-five (25) pages. If double sided, each side of the paper counts as one page.

15. **Q:** Can WIA YouthBuild grant funds awarded to an organization by the U.S. Department of Labor be leveraged and considered as In-kind/cash match?

   **A:** As noted in question #8 above, WIA funds may not be used as leverage as the intention is that bidders demonstrate their capacity to leverage other public and private resources to support and diversify youth workforce services. However, other sources of Federal funding may be leveraged if the applicant has the permission of the grantor of the Federal funds to be used as match/leverage. Should your agency choose to use another Federal award as match/leverage, a letter of permission from the Federal grantor on official letterhead must be submitted with your proposal.

16. **Q:** Are bidders encouraged to select one sub-region (Metro, East, North, or South County) in which to focus all program activities, or can a successful WIA program be diversified countywide based on need? For example, our organization, operating in the metro region, intends to recruit countywide, partner with a metro or metro-south one-stop, and offer job training activities in 2 different regions – South County and East County.

   **A:** The RFP has been designed as a pilot project, and as such the service area has been intentionally left up to bidder’s discretion. It is the hope of SDWP that bidder’s will use their expertise to determine area/region of program activities based on their knowledge of the needs of youth with disabilities in that area/region.

**Questions Received as of 2/28/13**

17. **Q:** Page 8 of the RFP mentions the Department of Labor (DOL) performance accountability standards known as Common Measures. However, the RFP does not include goals for the Common Measures. Since the RFP is a pilot program to serve youth with disabilities that have multiple barriers to employment and a high unemployment rate, what is the Workforce Partnership’s performance expectation for the Common Measures?

   **A:** The Workforce Partnership’s current state negotiated standards are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Current State Negotiated Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement in Education or Employment</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainment of Degree or Certificate</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy and Numeracy Gains</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Bidders must demonstrate how their programs will help youth meet the long-term mandatory (DOL) performance accountability standards on Form I – Performance Matrix. The evaluation panel will take into consideration all aspects of the proposal, including the projected outcomes youth will achieve during their program participation and/or upon exit from their program, when determining whose proposal best meets the needs of the Workforce Partnership.
18. **Q:** We are a nonprofit organization, but are planning on partnering with a fee-based (not for profit) organization that works with people with disabilities on this project. Is that permissible through this RFP?

**A:** The Workforce Partnership is soliciting proposals from qualified organizations to operate comprehensive workforce services programs for WIA eligible youth with disabilities. Therefore, bidders should develop appropriate partnerships and/or collaborations with organizations who will support their overall proposed program design and success of the program.

However, as stated in section 1.6 of the RFP, identifying partners in the proposal does not preclude bidders from the requirement of conducting an open and competitive procurement process if the partner(s) are entering into a financial subcontract using WIA funds. For additional guidance refer to Attachment 3: Contract General Provisions, Section 29.0 – Procurement and Purchases and the federal CFRs where procurement requirements are referenced, based on the type of organization that is conducting the procurement.

19. **Q:** Where in the narrative of our proposal should we identify the occupational training that will be provided? Should the description of occupational training be included under the Industry and Occupations or under the Work Preparation and Work-Based Opportunities Section?

**A:** Bidders’ narrative response should thoroughly answer all of the questions posed in each of the sections in 7.2 and 7.3. Therefore, it is up to the bidder to determine where information is appropriate.

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**QUESTIONS RECEIVED AS OF 3/5/13**

20. **Q:** The San Diego School District’s Transition Resources for Adult Community Education (TRACE) Program serves students with disabilities ages 18-22 who have not received a high school diploma. The Workforce Partnership’s WIA Youth Pilot Program RFP targets youth with disabilities, ages 18-21. If a student is eligible at 21 and turns 22 during the service period can we continue to provide services? Is there any possibility of including 22-year old students co-enrolled in TRACE living with a disability and working towards a High School Diploma? Are there any exceptions to the 21 year age limit for these types of situations?

**A:** As stated in section 3.6 Other Program Requirements of the RFP, under the WIA legislation for federal funding, all youth must meet WIA eligibility prior to program enrollment. Therefore, if a youth is determined eligible and enrolled into the program at age 21, services outlined in the Youth’s ISS could continue to be provided as they turn 22 during the service period.

The WIA Title I Youth formula funds require local areas to serve youth 14-21 years of age. More specifically, as stated in Section 1.1 RFP Overview, this RFP is seeking programs that provide services to youth with disabilities, 18-21 years of age. Although the Workforce Partnership understands the barriers and needs associated with the targeted population being served under this procurement, we are unable to make any exceptions to the age range being served. Attachment 1 – WIA Youth Program Eligibility Guidelines provides the eligibility guidelines at a glance and as a reminder, Workforce Partnership will provide further technical assistance on the certification process to properly determine eligibility to successful bidder(s).
21. **Q:** I would like to confirm that 100 percent of the youth we serve are eligible for the WIA grant to serve out-of-school youth with disabilities. Approximately 10-20% of the out-of-school youth we serve have a pre-existing IEP which would define them as having a mental/physical disability. However, 100 percent do have below-average academic abilities and test out at below high school reading and math comprehension levels, often at elementary levels. Does this mean they can all be regarded as having disabilities that limit their ability to secure employment, thereby qualifying 100% as eligible?

**A:** The definition of Individuals with Disabilities, as described in Attachment 1 of the RFP, is:

*Individuals with Disabilities – (WIA Title I, Section 101(17); Title 20 CFR Section 664.250; Section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)*

An individual who has a physical (motion vision, hearing) or mental (learning or developmental) impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities and has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment and the individual’s physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.

The population of youth described in your question that have “below-average academic abilities and test out at below high school reading and math comprehension levels, often at elementary levels” fits the definition of basic skills deficient, but does not fit the definition above of an individual with a disability.

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**QUESTIONS RECEIVED AS OF 3/7/13**

22. **Q:** On page 28 of the RFP, proposers are asked to describe their approach to subsidized or supported employment to keep out-of-school youth engaged in the educational program. Could you please define activities that are considered by the Workforce Partnership as supportive employment (i.e. sheltered workshops, paid OJT, job coaches)?

**A:** Section 3.2 of the RFP, provides bidders with further details on the types of key elements bidders must include in their program designs to demonstrate how their programs will keep youth engaged and connecting the classroom experience to real life work activities. Examples of supportive employment activities can include but are not limited to: jobs with intensive coaching, paid work-based experience, or apprenticeship opportunities. For a full listing please refer to the Key Elements for Program design on page 17 and Attachment 4: WIA Program Elements.