



Capital Region
Workforce Development Board

CAPITAL REGION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**YOUTH PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR YOUTH UNDER
THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT**

PROGRAM YEAR 2021 - 2022

PLEASE NOTE: The Requirements under this Solicitation are based on federal legislation, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), that was signed into law on July 22, 2014. All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the WIOA legislation for additional information.

Questions regarding the RFP should be directed by email to:

ALBANY: Raphael Tucker, Deputy Commissioner of Youth and Workforce Services
Capital Region Workforce Development Board – 175 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12206
rtucker@albanyny.gov

RENSSELAER: Tracy Ellis, Senior Workforce Coordinator
Rensselaer County Dept. of Employment & Training – 1600 Seventh Ave., Troy, NY 12180
tellis@capreg.org

SCHENECTADY: Bailey Gardiner, LMSW, Senior Workforce Investment Youth Coordinator
Schenectady County Connects – 797 Broadway, Schenectady, NY 12305
bailey.gardiner@dfa.state.ny.us

Proposals due no later than 4:00 PM, FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 2021

to

**Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received as a solitary PDF document
emailed to CapitalRegionWDB@capreg.org**

Subject line to read: Youth RFP Response (organization name)

Your proposal is not considered received until you receive a confirmation email.

**Proposals which comply with all RFP requirements and are received by the above email on/or before the deadline
will be reviewed and considered for funding.**

Planning Timeline

<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Date</u>
Release of RFP	July 12, 2021
Proposals Due	August 13, 2021
Award Notification	September 17, 2021
Program Begins	October 1, 2021

Publication: This Request for Proposals has been made available to prospective applicants through publication in The Times Union, Schenectady Gazette, Troy Record, and online at www.capreg.org on or about July 12, 2021, and through mailings to all contractors or applicants who have requested that they be included on the mailing list for solicitations of proposals.

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PART ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Request

The Capital Region Workforce Development Board (WDB), is requesting proposals from qualified sources to provide year-round services to **WIOA eligible Out-of-School and In-School youth** that are available to receive such services provided in Albany, Rensselaer, and Schenectady Counties in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

B. Purpose

The Capital Region WDB, through its fiscal agent (Rensselaer County), is soliciting proposals from organizations interested in establishing partnerships to provide comprehensive educational, development, and employment preparation services via a skills-based design to WIOA eligible youth aged fourteen (14) through twenty-four (24). The Capital Region WDB is looking to fund programs that address the academic, occupational, social, economic, and personal needs of the regions' disadvantaged youth that result in measurable outcomes and meet the established federal and state performance measures.

Services under this RFP are, as federal law mandates, primarily for Out-of-School Youth, as 75% of local area funds will be spent on Out-of-School Youth services. Services will also focus on work experiences as 20% of funds will be spent on work experiences for all youth enrolled in the WIOA program. Eligibility Requirements can also be found in Appendix A.

1. Eligibility Requirements for WIOA Youth
 - a. Authorized to work in the U.S.
 - b. Albany, Rensselaer, or Schenectady County resident
 - c. Comply with the military Selective Service Act, if applicable
2. Out-of-School Youth Eligibility
 - a. 16-24 years old at eligibility determination and
 - b. **Not attending** or **enrolled** in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at eligibility determination and
 - c. At least one of the following apply:
 - i. School Dropout; or
 - ii. Youth who (a) received HS Diploma/equivalent and (b) is low-income and (c) is Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills or is an English language learner; or
 - iii. Required to attend school but has not attended for at least the most recent complete school year's calendar quarter; or
 - iv. Homeless or runaway; or
 - v. In foster care or aged out of foster care; or
 - vi. Pregnant/Parenting; or
 - vii. Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; or
 - viii. Has a disability; or
 - ix. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment (**must also meet low income requirements**)
limited to 5% of WDB areas' out-of-school youth customers
3. In-School Youth Eligibility
 - a. 14 to 21 years old at eligibility determination, and
 - b. Attending or enrolled in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at eligibility determination, and

- c. **Low-income** (see Appendix A), and
- d. At least one of the following apply
 - i. Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills; or
 - ii. Homeless, Runaway; or
 - iii. In foster care or aged out of foster care; or
 - iv. Pregnant/Parenting; or
 - v. Offender; or
 - vi. Has a disability; or
 - vii. An English language learner who is deficient in Basic Literacy Skills.

*State Law: For the purposes of Title 1 of WIOA, the Department does not consider providers of Adult Education under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs, and Job Corps programs to be "schools." Therefore WIOA youth programs may consider a youth to be out-of-school for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility if they are attending Adult Education provided under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild or Job Corps.

C. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include private, public, for-profit, and not-for-profit service providers. An organization, agency, or company submitting a proposal must do so as an individual organization, and must be prepared to either deliver the planned WIOA services directly or to enter into an agreement with appropriate providers.

Entities that are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency are not eligible to respond to this RFP or to receive a contract.

Respondents must disclose and rectify any and all outstanding monitoring and/or audit concerns from any of the respondent's other contracts prior to accomplish the scope of work and the goals and objectives stated in this RFP. Respondents are expected to have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise in management and administration, the professional staff, and the administrative and fiscal management systems to accomplish the scope of work and the goals and objectives stated in this RFP, and must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. Respondents are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the specific funding sources involved and applying them in developing the RFP response.

Preference will be given to applicants that have had experience serving state and federally funded youth in programs in the Capital Region. Due to the need to obtain annual performance outcomes, applicants will be required to utilize the shared case management and reporting system of the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) known as the One Stop Operating System (OSOS). For more information, NYSDOL has provided an instructional video entitled "OSOS Basics: Navigating the System" which provides a brief overview of the system, structure, system screens and requirements. This video is available at the NYSDOL website at <http://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/osos/video/osos-system-navigation.shtm>. Applicants will be required to explain their confidentiality training and maintenance procedures.

Preference will be given to programs that:

- Honor the USDOL Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses
- Stress academic and occupational achievement while attempting to address and resolve issues that are particularly relevant to youth such as substance abuse, lack of adult guidance/mentoring, low self-esteem, pregnancy prevention, leadership development, community involvement, homelessness, and life/career planning

- Establish and maintain proven strong partnerships with providers that serve youth with an emphasis on those programs that serve youth with disabilities
- Leverage other funding resources to provide WIOA youth program services
- Target eligible, Out-of-School Youth as described in section 129(a)(1)(B)
- Emphasize work experience
- Target youth with disabilities transitioning from school to work

D. Availability of Funds

As this RFP covers multiple Program Years, the actual amount of funding to serve youth through this RFP is contingent on Program Year 2021-2022 allocation from the New York State Department of Labor.

Funding for this RFP is contingent on availability of WIOA Title I Youth Funds to the Capital Region WDB. As this RFP crosses WIOA program years, funding levels may be adjusted based on allocations received by the Capital Region WDB. All successful awardee contracts will be considered executory to the extent that WIOA funding is made available to the Capital Region WDB. In the event that such anticipated funding shall not be forthcoming, contracts may be terminated or reduced upon prior written notice to the awardee.

The Board will determine funding amounts and number of awards based on the score and rank of proposals, the applicant's demonstrated ability to administer funds, and on the availability of funds. Funding amounts may increase or decrease during the contract period and/or during subsequent years based on the funds available and on contractor performance. The Capital Region Workforce Development Board is issuing a total of approximately \$560,000 across Albany, Rensselaer, and Schenectady counties. Total approximated funding for programs per County:

City of Albany/Albany County: \$125,000

Rensselaer County: \$290,000

Schenectady County: \$145,000

Funds under this RFP cannot be used to pay for services that are currently funded through other sources. Rather, they are intended to fund additional services, so that the range of service options available to target youth to successfully transition into adulthood is expanded and made more comprehensive.

Allocated funds will be provided for Program Year 2021 and 2022 beginning October 1, 2021 and ending September 30, 2022, with the option to renew the contract for two additional one-year periods based on satisfactory performance and the best interests of the WDB. Contract renewals may be subject to negotiation/modification. The WDB reserves the right to recapture funds if the contractor does not meet the following cumulative guidelines: 25% of the contract for each program must be spent by the end of three months, 50% by then end of six months, 75% by the end of nine months, and 100% by the end of twelve months.

PART TWO: PROGRAM INFORMATION

E. Program Element Requirements

Funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth under Section 128(b) shall be used for programs that provide all of the following:

- Provide an objective assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each participant, which assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interest, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and development needs of such participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants
- Develop service strategies for each participant that shall identify career pathways that include education and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the assessment conducted
- Provide
 - Activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential
 - Preparation of post-secondary education and training opportunities
 - Strong linkages between academic and occupational education
 - Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities
 - Effective connections to employers or intermediaries with strong links to the job market and local, regional employers

The following is a list of fourteen (14) required services local programs must provide or make available to youth per Section 129(c)(2) of the WIOA. If a provider does not directly provide the services listed, it must make referrals to appropriate providers of such services. Please include a list of identified partners who will be providing these elements. Not every youth must receive all of the 14 elements but all 14 elements must be available directly or by referral.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidenced based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized post-secondary credential
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience which may include the following types of work experiences:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs
 - c. Internships and job shadowing
 - d. On-the-job training opportunities
 - i. Please Note: WIOA places increased emphasis on work learning and work experience opportunities for eligible youth. This type of service element should be integral to youth program design. WIOA section 129(c)(4) prioritizes work experiences with the requirement that local areas must spend 20% of non-administrative youth local funds on work experience

4. Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area if the Local Board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria in WIOA Section 123
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupation cluster
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision-making, teamwork, other activities
7. Supportive services such as childcare, clothing, transportation, etc.
8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation
9. Follow-up services for a minimum 12-month period after the completion of the program
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth
11. Financial literacy education, such as assisting participants in creating household budgets, initiate savings plans, manage credit and debt, and navigate the financial aid process for post-secondary education
12. Entrepreneurial skills training, such as developing business ideas, creating a business plan, identify successful entrepreneurs to speak to youth, etc.
13. Labor market and employment information services about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services
14. Transition activities that assist youth to prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

F. Program Components

It is expected that the following components will be integrated into program design:

1. Recruitment- Applicants are responsible for the recruitment of youth participants. The WDB may assist applicants in recruitment. The intent is to use WIOA funds to serve youth who would benefit from year-round service and otherwise have no access to comprehensive services.
2. Eligibility Determination and Verification/WIOA Registration- Prior to enrollment in a WIOA activity youth must be certified as eligible under WIOA guidelines. Service Providers are required to obtain acceptable records/documents to verify each required eligibility item and forward them to respective City/County staff to determine eligibility. Files will be reviewed

periodically by respective City/County staff and during monitoring. Only youth who have been certified as WIOA-eligible by completion of required forms and whose documentation to verify eligibility has been obtained and approved by respective City/County staff may be enrolled, and begin to receive, WIOA services.

3. Objective Assessment- WIOA requires that Youth Service Providers/Contractors administer or obtain a thorough and in-depth assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each youth at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities. Assessment should be carefully planned, adequately researched, and administered to collect specific, relevant information leading to an appropriate mix and sequence of services and interventions. Youth Service Providers will use only assessment tools and strategies that are valid for youth. Initial/entry assessment will include: basic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and development needs. This information should be acquired through various means, including but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency).
4. Individual Service Strategy- Each youth enrolled into the WIOA program will have a written, individualized plan of services and activities (an appropriate mix of the fourteen required program elements), including appropriate learning objectives and goals, based on the entry assessment information. The WDB will provide a standardized form for completing each youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS is intended to provide in-depth information about a youth, both history and present circumstances, in order to create a plan of action agreed upon but the young person and staff working together. Youths' service plans should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the youth as they move through WIOA. Each youth's service plan will outline the appropriate mix and sequence of services, indicate the rationale for decision-making, and include appropriate achievement objectives and expected timeframes. The ISS will be developed in partnership with each youth; will be client-centered and flexible in accommodating changes in plans as youth's needs and situations change. Each youth's ISS will identify educational and employment goals, selected learning objectives, and provide preparation for unsubsidized employment. The ISS will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and continued learning and development.
5. Career Zone- CareerZone (www.careerzone.ny.gov) is a no-cost, internet-based career exploration and planning system developed by the New York State Department of Labor. It offers direct access to detailed career and education information for more than 800 occupations. The CareerZone Facilitator's Guide provides step-by-step directions for using all CareerZone components and provides tips to help integrate CareerZone into your program. The Guide is available at: https://labor.ny.gov/youth/careerzone_facilitators_guide.pdf.

Participants are required to complete five Career Zone modules including:

- a. Interest Profiler
- b. Work Importance Profiler
- c. Abilities
- d. Saved Occupation

e. Budgeting

6. Information and Referrals- Eligible youth will be provided information on services and opportunities that are available from WIOA Service Providers (RFP applicants who are awarded funding) and other appropriate educational and training opportunities in the community. WIOA Service Providers will refer eligible youth to other educational, employment, training, community agencies, and/or human service organizations that have the capacity to serve them. This requirement applies to youth who may benefit from services other than, or in addition to, WIOA-funded activities. Records of these referrals and the outcomes of the referral should be recorded in case notes and OSOS comments.
7. Case Management- Effective case management is essential to providing a customized menu of programs and services for each youth. The Service Provider will provide comprehensive case management services to youth as part of the year round strategy to support and assist youth to attain meaningful outcomes. Staff is expected to work closely with youth to provide support and guidance, address needs and barriers, solve problems, serve as role models, and assist in the attainment of the objectives and goals agreed upon in the ISS. The ISS will be reviewed and updated by staff quarterly to arrange for needed services, identify and address concerns as they arise, and document progress made during participation. Regular personal contact between a Case Manager and the young person is essential. Based on the case management relationship, the youth should be aware that he/she has support and accountability in working to achieve his/her personal goals. Primary case management functions are services coordination advising and counseling, advocacy, follow-up and accurate and timely record keeping.
8. Academic Remediation Services- In order to assist participating youth in both academic and occupational success, services must have a strong emphasis on achieving measurable skill gains toward such credential or employment. All programs must provide academic remediation services, where appropriate, to assist in skills gains and have the capability to utilize instruments that identify skill gain. This may be done in-house or through partnerships with educational service providers.
9. Employer Connections- Connections to employers are essential in the creation of a system of providers that can effectively assist youth to become highly skilled and employable. These connections should lead to Work Experience placements as well as unsubsidized employment. Bidders are also encouraged to leverage employer support in terms of leveraged funds for training or wages, staff or operational needs related to training.
10. WIOA Data Validation and Record Keeping- The U.S. Department of Labor has issued a data validation policy that establishes record keeping requirements to ensure the accuracy and integrity of information collected and reported on WIOA activities and program outcomes. The federal policy mandates that states “demonstrate the validity of reported data,” and conduct data validation annually. New York State has set statewide policy for data validation, and each county has developed guidelines and instructions for participant records/files that include file content and structure, data validation labeling requirements, and file maintenance. Local workforce staff will provide staff training and ongoing technical assistance for data validation.
11. Performance- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act outlines performance objectives for enrolled youth.

- a. Each proposal must include a description of how the program will achieve the expected outcomes as identified in Section J.
 - b. Proposed performance outcomes will be subject to negotiations pending the determination of specific numerical goals, or any other performance-related requirements/information/revisions, imposed by the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and/or United States Department of Labor (USDOL).
 - c. All successful subcontractors will be held accountable for performance measure rates which include future performance outcomes as they become available through the USDOL and the NYSDOL. Continued funding will be contingent upon meeting performance measure rates.
12. New York Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Management Information System (MIS)- One Stop Operating System (OSOS)- Youth Service Providers are required to use the OSOS MIS system to track all WDB certified eligible clients from initial contact through intake/application, eligibility certification, WIOA registration, enrollment into selected activities, case management/case note, activity status updates, outcomes reporting, exit, and post-exit follow-up. OSOS training materials will be provided.
- a. All successful applicants will be required to complete and submit an OSOS Partner Network Integration Questionnaire, OSOS interagency Agreement, and OSOS Individual Access and Confidentiality Agreement in order to access the system.
 - b. User access to this MIS system is allowed only upon completion of system training. User names and passwords will be assigned to users after the training is satisfactorily completed.
13. Location- Youth Service Providers must take into consideration the location of the site providing services to youth. The site must be accessible to the youth population that the area serves, as well as a safe location for the youth. The location should be set in a community environment that has outreach to other community partners, accessible transportation and must suit the needs of the youth.

G. Program Monitoring

Program monitoring will be ongoing throughout the program year. Monitoring will ensure compliance with WIOA guidelines and regulations as well as provide an opportunity for troubleshooting and program outcomes review. Monitoring will consist of enrollment levels, worksite monitoring, fiscal monitoring, and performance outcomes. Monitoring will be conducted quarterly by respective City/County staff, in one or more of the following ways:

- OSOS- Performance and enrollment information will be collected through the One Stop Operating System, and then reviewed by respective City/County staff. Contractors will be required to attend OSOS training as provided.
- On-site visits- Respective City/County staff will visit program locations to evaluate program progress as well as offer technical assistance.
- Desk audits- Respective City/County staff will cross-check OSOS data with hard copies of eligibility, academic, and occupational accomplishments documentation. They will also review ISS and the progression of services received by the individuals to ensure they are appropriate and being documented correctly.
- Quarterly program monitoring- Contractors will be required to meet with City/County staff to submit identifying performance outcomes, enrollment levels, and services provided.

The WDB reserves the right to terminate a contract with 30 days' notice if an applicant continually falls short of enrollment goals, performance goals, or fails to meet NYSDOL/WDB compliance requirements. In this circumstance, the WDB reserves the right to reallocate remaining funding to existing, successfully performing subcontractors for the continued provision of services to youth impacted by the contract termination.

Interim Outcome Measures

Because most data on performance outcomes will not be available during the program year, respective City/County staff will use the following shorter term or interim outcome measures and process measures in order to ensure progress toward the WIOA outcome measures. The interim outcome measures that will be monitored by the respective City/County staff are:

1. Enrollment of youth
2. Wage progression
3. Retention of youth in a program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential
4. Youth attainment of High School Equivalency or unsubsidized employment
5. Academic and occupational skill attainments

H. Partnerships and Collaborations

Building a strong network of partners is a mandatory program requirement. An example of a youth program network would include employers, post-secondary education, high school equivalency programs, veterans' service organizations, organizations that serve youth with disabilities, Career Centers, probation, and local youth bureaus.

Please provide a list of anticipated partners for your program, a description of the services the partner will deliver, and how the service will lead to a performance outcome(s).

Please Note: The Capital Region Workforce Development Board supports collaboration among agencies in provision of services. This does not mean that all proposals must provide, directly or through subcontracts, all 14 elements of WIOA youth programming, but they must show that there is a plan in place for referral to other programs when appropriate.

I. Limitation on this Request for Proposal

This Request for Proposal does not commit the Workforce Development Board to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure any services or supplies.

The Workforce Development Board reserves the right to:

1. Accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request
2. Modify the terms of this Request for Proposal
3. Negotiate with all qualified applicants
4. Cancel in part or in its entirety this Request for Proposal if it is in their best interest to do so
5. Extend any contract awarded through this RFP process beyond the program year ending September 30, 2022.

Applicants may be required to participate in negotiations and submit additional information or revisions to their proposals.

The WDB reserves the right to modify the scope of services, terms and conditions and funding level of any proposal approved as part of this solicitation in order to comply with any regulatory changes in WIOA.

J. Performance Outcomes

Youth program providers will be responsible for meeting the following youth performance measures, as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act:

- Placement in Employment or Education (2nd quarter after exit)- The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the 2nd quarter after exit from the program
- Placement in Employment or Education (4th quarter after exit)- The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the 4th quarter after exit from the program
- Median Earnings- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit from the program
- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program
- Skills Gained- The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers- Employer surveys will be conducted to determine effectiveness.

Each proposal must include a description of how the program will achieve the expected outcomes as identified above.

Proposed performance outcomes will be subject to negotiations pending the determination of specific numerical goals, or any other performance-related requirements/information/revisions, imposed by the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and/or United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

All successful subcontractors will be held accountable for performance measure rates which includes future performance outcomes as they become available through the USDOL and the NYSDOL. Continued funding may be contingent upon meeting performance measure rates.

K. Data Entry, Measures, and Management

Data Entry

OSOS and Technical Advisories:

- All data entry and record keeping is done by the contractors and reviewed (via OSOS and site visits) by respective City/County staff and the NYSDOL program monitor. The Contractor must adhere to the guidelines established in Technical Advisory (TA) #11-12.2 regarding the timeliness of data entry into the OSOS system. The Contractor will be held accountable for data entry and failure to adhere to the policy may have an adverse effect on future funding. Proposals must address this topic or they will not be considered for funding.

- All services must be documented in OSOS within 5 days of start of service as per TA #11-12.2, with any exceptions documented in OSOS Comments
- All services should be limited to 60 days with any exceptions documented in OSOS comments..
 - Please Note: TA #11-12.2 requires that the DOB tab be completed for youth with a Department of Motor Vehicles ID, if the youth has one.

Reports

- Fiscal Reporting- Billing vouchers are prepared by the contractors and sent to the respective City/County fiscal staff for processing. Vouchers and expenditure reports are submitted to the City/County on the 15th of each month. Failures to reports are submitted to the WDB on the 15th of each month. Failure to meet the reporting deadline will result in a delay in payment. The respective City/County fiscal staff will also monitor each contractor's expenditures on an annual basis. Contractors will be responsible for all disallowed costs. Disallowed costs must be paid with non-WIOA funds.
- Program Performance Monitoring- Program Performance Monitoring is done on a quarterly basis by City/County staff
 - Please Note: Feedback on all monitoring will be given to contractors by email or in-person at individual meetings. In addition, the respective City/County staff will provide feedback and share best practices with contractors on a regular basis.

Data Management and Continuous Improvement

Monthly examination of program outcomes, exits, and expenditures will prompt recommendations and new strategies for program improvement.

The respective City/County staff will work with each contractor to standardize and implement a performance outcome approach to data management:

- If contractor fails to provide the required Program Performance Reports and/or fails to comply with the written corrective action plans, the WDB has the right to not reimburse the contractor for the timeframe involved.
- If the contractor fails to meet the Performance Measures, the WDB reserves the right to deny future funding to that provider.
- If the contractor meets all the outcomes as referenced above, it will be a determining factor in the extension of the contract.

L. Program Staffing

Please provide a description of proposed staffing pattern of any staff charged in whole or in part to this proposed project. Job descriptions, staff resumes, and an organizational chart must be included.

Program staff will be required to attend the annual NYATEP Youth Academy/Youth Learning Lab and local staff development conferences. In addition, program managers and front line staff will be expected to attend other training deemed necessary. Budgets must include funds for conference and travel and must have a plan to overcome any agency freezes or policies restricting unnecessary conference or travel. This documentation must be included in the proposal. The approximate registration cost per attendee is \$400.

PART THREE: SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

M. Submission Deadline

Proposals due no later than 4:00 PM, FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 2021. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received as a solitary PDF document emailed to CapitalRegionWDB@capreg.org with the subject line to read: Youth RFP Response (organization name). A proposal received after the closing date will not be considered. The applicant assumes all responsibility for submission of proposal and meeting of required deadlines.

Questions regarding the submission of proposals or after proposals have been submitted may be emailed to the respective City/County staff noted on page 2. In order to be considered, proposals must be submitted following the guidelines set out in this RFP.

N. Format and Contents

All applications must be typewritten, double spaced on 8 ½" x 11" paper in a 12 point font; the narrative (Project Narrative and Program Specifics) should be no more than five (5) pages. The Cover Page (Appendix D), Summary of Request, Executive Summary and Budget pages need not be counted as part of the 5 pages. If the space provided in an application form is insufficient, attach additional pages.

Table of Contents

Include all sections and attachments with page numbers.

Executive Summary

All proposals must include a one page double-spaced Executive Summary with a concise composite description of the proposed project. This summary will be reviewed by the Capital Region Workforce Development Board that approves funding decisions. This summary should include:

- A clear and concise summary of the Statement of Work
- Results and benefits expected both in terms of the participants involved and the community as a whole
- Proposed cost of the program

Applicants should make every effort to be as complete and accurate in this summary as they can. The full statement of work and budget upon which this summary is based should therefore be completed first.

Project Narrative

This section should provide a clear and comprehensive description of the proposed program. It should include the following elements:

1. Organization Description- Describe your business or organization, including its mission, vision, current customer base, staffing and service expertise.
 - a. System Experience and Collaboration - Describe your organization's experience in working as a partner within a system that delivers educational, youth development, and/or employment and training services to youth. Describe how your organization integrates services and shares customers with other providers.

2. Target Group and Recruitment- Indicate whether any specific groups of youth will be targeted, i.e. a specific age group or those with a particular barrier to employment. Also indicate any geographic areas targeted by the program. Please indicate what percentage of in-school youth and what percentage of out-of-school youth you plan to serve. Please outline the plan for recruiting your programs targeted groups.
3. Proposed Activities and Services- The proposal must describe the comprehensive program you plan to provide, including delivering the 14 elements found in Section E of this RFP. Please break activities out by in/out of school.
 - a. Some other objectives to keep in mind:
 - i. The program must put 20% of WIOA youth funds towards paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment opportunities, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities. Please Note: Staff time devoted to developing work experience or placing youth in a work experience is countable towards the 20% work experience requirement.
 - ii. Addressing work skill deficiencies in eligible youth. Work skills are defined as communication skills both written and verbal, critical thinking skills, appropriate behavior in the workplace.
 - iii. Plans for youth retention in program services and/or employment until their goals are achieved
 - iv. Case management methods and staff to youth ratios to provide consistent support, follow through for service plans, referrals and tracking for participants
 - v. A payment plan for supportive services and youth paychecks if included in the services provided
 - vi. Comprehensive assessments of participants and a set of goals based on assessments, and the development of an Individual Service Strategy for each student
4. Schedule of Activities and Services- Specify the sequence and duration of each activity/service provided by the program. Specify the hours/days and projected average number of hours of participation for each proposed activity/service. A chart may be sufficient for indicating these.
5. Location- Specify where the trainings will be offered and ensure that these locations are accessible for youth with disabilities.
6. Staffing- Include staff titles and outline the staffing pattern for the proposed program.
 - a. Please include the following:
 - i. Resumes and/or qualifications for staff (not counted toward page count)
 - ii. Employee or volunteer status of staff
 - iii. Staff to youth ratio for each activity/service
7. Collaboration with Other Agencies- Describe all partner agencies and the relationship with them in regards to this proposal
 - a. Describe participant flow between agencies
 - b. Include a list of collaborating and specify roles and responsibilities for each program element to be delivered
 - c. Describe the method of communication between agencies regarding youth information
 - d. Describe the method of service delivery that optimizes ease of use for participants (co-location, transportation assistance, etc.)

- e. Describe how a program exit strategy for participants will be developed
 - f. Provide any partner budgets in addition to the overall program budget (see Section O)
8. Equipment- List the equipment that will be used in providing services, showing the participant to equipment ratio.
 9. Curricula and Other Instructional Materials- Describe or provide curriculum, training materials, or any other materials to be used in each instructional component of the program.

Program Specifics

This section should include the following details about the program:

1. Program Timetable- Provide a timetable for implementation and operation of the proposed program.
2. Enrollment Criteria- Describe any criteria youth would need to meet in order to enter the proposed program beyond eligibility for WIOA (see Section B). These may include age levels, residency requirements, barriers to employment, educational attainment, reading/math skill levels, physical requirements, or others.
3. Individual Service Strategy- Describe how the ISS will be used to continuously evaluate and document each youth's progress and attainment of competencies in each component of the program. Include a description of the corrective action steps to be followed if a participant is not making satisfactory progress.
4. Career Zone- Detail accessibility the youth in your program will have to computers. Describe how Career Zone will be incorporated into your program including how the five required modules detailed in Section F will be completed.
5. Transition Efforts- Describe how your program will aid in the participant transition from the program to other engagement.
 - a. Describe how the program will establish and maintain relationships with employers. Describe how youth will be matched for openings and how the program staff will follow up with employers and employed youth.
 - b. Provide a list of employers your organization has placed youth with in the past.
 - c. Describe how the program will coordinate with colleges, vocational training providers, apprenticeship programs, and military recruiters to transition participating youth into advanced training, education or military service.
6. Program Outcomes- Please complete chart in Appendix B regarding how many total youth you anticipate serving in each of the following categories:
 - a. Total number youth enrolled
 - b. Total number youth to complete the program
 - c. In education or training activities during the second quarter after exit
 - d. In unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after exit
 - i. Please include expected median earnings in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit
 - e. In education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit

- f. In unsubsidized employment in the fourth quarter after exit
- g. Will attain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation or within one year after exit
- h. In an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who achieve measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment during one program year

O. Budget

The WDB will be determining funding amounts and number of awards based on the score and rank of proposals, the applicants demonstrated ability to administer funds, and on the availability of funds. Funding amounts may increase or decrease during the contract period and/or during subsequent years based on the funds available and on contractor performance. The anticipated funding level should be considered solely as an estimate for the purpose of offering guidance to the applicant. Final contracts will be based on actual funding availability when determined.

Funding for this RFP is contingent on availability of WIOA Title I Youth Funds to the Capital Region WDB. As this RFP crosses WIOA program years, funding levels may be adjusted based on allocations received by the Capital Region WDB. All successful awardee contracts will be considered executory to the extent that WIOA funding is made available to the Capital Region WDB. In the event that such anticipated funding shall not be forthcoming, contracts may be terminated or reduced upon prior written notice to the awardee.

All contracts will be on a cost reimbursement basis and will be negotiated based on a line item budget to be submitted as part of the proposal. Funded program providers will receive reimbursement for expenditures associated with the program based on a final negotiated contract budget.

Provide a complete budget, utilizing the Budget Forms found in Appendix C. Include a copy of the applicant agency's most recent financial audit will be required prior to execution of a contract. Indicate whether this is attached or will be provided upon notification of grant award.

Budget Narrative

A detailed budget narrative must be included as part of the Proposal Budget. Unclear or ambiguous budget line items may be the basis for disqualification of any proposal. For each line-item budgeted in the Cost Budget Proposal, provide a narrative description of the costs in sufficient detail to thoroughly describe what is being charged to the budget, at what rates and for what activities. Attach additional pages as necessary. All budget amounts should be rounded up to the nearest dollar.

If the WDB decides to provide a proportion of the funding request for fewer participants than proposed, state the impact, if any, this will have on implementing your proposed program.

All proposals are subject to negotiation following their award.

Applicants should be ready to explain all budgets submitted for the purpose of justifying the reasonableness of the charge. Reasonableness of cost will be considered when rating proposals and will be determined based on the following factors:

1. Relevance of costs requested in the budget as to their necessity, allowability, allocability, and cost in relation to similar services in Capital Region
2. The extent to which applicant has been able to leverage WIOA funds by coordinating with other funding sources
3. The difficulty in providing services to particular target groups. Applicants should substantiate any such claims as relates to costs proposed
4. The anticipated wage to be earned by the participant
5. The length of program and training
6. Effective use of support services
7. The amount of administration requested

The release of this RFP reflects a shift toward implementing out-of-school youth programming that applies the research regarding the importance of providing a continuum of developmentally appropriate youth workforce investment programs, as well as a desire to begin filling gaps identified in a scan of previously-supported year-round models. Please note the following expenditures:

- At least 75% in out-of-school youth
- 20% funding for work experience

P. Supplemental Information

Reporting Requirements

Applicants will be required to prepare and submit accurate and timely reports on hourly attendance, trainee status, and expenditures to the respective City/County staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prior to a contract award, respective City/County staff may conduct a pre-award survey. The survey is to insure that all WIOA and WDB standards and conditions can be met by the training provider. The survey may include review of the training site, equipment, record keeping systems, staff credentials, etc.

Once a contract has been awarded, periodic monitoring and evaluation of program operations and performance will be conducted by designated representatives of the WDB. Monitoring and evaluation may also be conducted by representatives of USDOL or NYSDOL.

As a part of normal program evaluation, training services and the program's internal systems of communication, monitoring and control will be examined. Applicants are expected to maintain documentation of these processes such as: minutes of meetings, participant attendance sheets, staff/participant contact sheets, inter-unit communications regarding participant's progress, program policies, etc.

Fiscal Requirements

Applicants will be required to provide recent audited financial statement and other acceptable records attesting to fiscal status of the organization as well as disclosure of any impending litigation or other issues which may impact on ability to meet the terms of the agreement.

Payments

Payments to programs funded will be made in accordance with the terms of the contract. Invoices shall be prepared and submitted by the successful applicant for the program with the necessary back-up documentation attached.

Record Keeping

All applicants are expected to maintain complete records to justify payment according to the terms of the contract.

Employee Benefits

Statutory benefits as provided by law (FICA, Workers Compensation, NYS Disability, etc.) must be provided to all employees including those in work experience activities.

Liability Insurance

The applicant shall maintain liability insurance with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 combined single limit.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policies

All applicants must provide a copy of their Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies with their proposal. All policies must comply with current federal and state laws.

Drug-Free Workplace

All applicants must provide a copy of their policy/signed statement regarding a drug-free workplace environment as required under the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

Sex Abuse Prevention

All applicants are required to submit written policies regarding criminal background checks, reporting alleged abuse, staff training and professional conduct of employees working with youth.

Veteran's Priority of Service Provisions

Federal grants for qualified job training programs funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor are subject to the provisions of the "Jobs for Veterans Act" (JVA), Public Law 107-288 (38 USC 4215). The JVA provides priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services. Please note that to obtain priority service, a person must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Training and Employment Notices No. 17-13 (December 18, 2013), No. 10-09 (November 10, 2009), and No. 15-10 (November 10, 2010) provide general guidance on the scope of the veterans' priority statute and its effect on current employment and training programs. Where applicable, the grant applicant agrees to comply with the Veterans' Priority of Service provisions.

Q. Application Evaluation

The selection of a proposal for negotiation and consideration of contract award is to be made after a careful evaluation of the proposals received by the Workforce Development Board. The Workforce Development Board will evaluate each proposal for acceptability, with emphasis on the various factors as outlined in the Ratings section, assigning to that factor a numerical weight. Proposals will be evaluated in the following categories:

Program Design - 20 points

This category will evaluate how well the proposed program has been designed, the extent to which all required services will be available, how services will be provided to each of the youth, ease and feasibility of implementation, innovativeness, and its likelihood to lead to the desired outcomes for youth. Evaluation will be based on the plan to implement all fourteen required elements and plan for youth to meet the performance outcomes.

Budget - 15 points

This category will evaluate the cost of the proposed program to determine if it is fair and reasonable. It may include such factors as length and intensity of program design, staff-to-youth ratio, support services, competitiveness of staff salaries, cost for each of the groups of young people identified herein, leveraging of funding from other resources, and administrative costs. Budgets will be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, appropriateness, and reasonableness of cost. Proposed costs may be compared against other applicants and to independent cost estimates prepared by the Capital Region WDB.

Demonstrated Ability - 10 points

This category will evaluate the applicant's experience in providing services similar to those being proposed, including the ability to attain, track and report performance as required by the WIOA Performance Indicators. It will include experience in collaboration, targeting of services, outcomes and expertise in youth development and/or employment and training services to youth.

Match Funds - 10 points

The extent to which other sources of funding are being leveraged to offset expenses and enhance program deliverables will be considered here.

Linkages/Collaborations - 10 points

The applicant documents linkages between the applicant and other service providers, employers, colleges and/ vocational education providers in the community to offer comprehensive services to youth.

Work Experience - 10 points

Clarity and specificity of how the 20% work experience requirement will be met/exceeded considered here.

Recruitment - 5 points

The ability of the applicant to recruit and identify WIOA eligible youth will be considered here.

Individual Service Strategy - 5 points

A review of the plan to develop and implement the ISS; how will be used to continuously evaluate and document each youth's progress and attainment of competencies in each component of the program.

Use of Career Zone - 5 points

Accessibility of computers and plan to have youth complete the required modules of Career Zone will be considered here.

Ability to Serve Out of School Youth - 5 points

The ability of the organization to serve WIOA eligible out of school will be considered here.

Preference will be given to programs that demonstrate any of the following - 5 points

- Honor the USDOL Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses
- Stress academic and occupational achievement while attempting to address and resolve issues that are particularly relevant to youth such as substance abuse, lack of adult guidance/mentoring, low self-esteem, pregnancy prevention, leadership development, community involvement, homelessness, and life/career planning
- Establish and maintain proven strong partnerships with providers that serve youth with an emphasis on those programs that serve youth with disabilities
- Leverage other funding resources to provide WIOA youth program services
- Target eligible, Out-of-School Youth as described in section 129(a)(1)(B)
- Emphasize work experience
- Target youth with disabilities transitioning from school to work

Applications will not be considered for funding where the criteria above are not addressed. Other reasons for disapproval may include, but are not limited to:

- Proposal is incomplete or is not considered responsive to this RFP
- Program is not cost effective
- Program is not responsive to needs of population to be served
- Applicant lacks demonstrated administrative and/or fiscal capacity to operate the proposed program
- Applicant is seeking to start up a new training institution or business
- Proposed program duplicates existing services



APPENDIX A: WIOA Eligibility Chart

Fund	Age & Other	Work Status	Selective Service	Low Income
WIOA In-School Youth	A. 14-21 years old at eligibility determination, <u>and</u> B. Attending or enrolled in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at eligibility determination, <u>and</u> C. <u>Low-income, and</u> D. At least one of the following apply 1. Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills; <u>OR</u> 2. Homeless, Runaway; <u>OR</u> 3. In foster care or aged out of foster care; <u>OR</u> 4. Pregnant/Parenting; <u>OR</u> 5. Offender; <u>OR</u> 6. Has a disability; <u>OR</u> 7. An English language learner who is deficient in Basic Literacy Skills.	Authorized to work in U.S.	If male, registered as required	Family income at or below 100% of poverty line or 70% lower living standard. Income test not required if customer meets one of the following criteria: 1. Customer receives or is a member of a family that receives (currently or in the past six months) one of the following: TANF, SNAP, SSI, or other public assistance; <u>OR</u> 2. Is a Foster Child; <u>OR</u> 3. Is Homeless; <u>OR</u> 4. Receives or is eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch; <u>OR</u> 5. Lives in a high poverty census tract. Note: Customer with a disability must be determined a family of one for income determination purpose if the customer's family does not meet the income test and 1 through 5 above do not apply.
WIOA Out-of-School Youth	A. 16-24 years old at eligibility determination, <u>and</u> B. <u>Not attending or enrolled</u> in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at eligibility determination <u>and</u> C. At least one of the following apply: 1. School Dropout; <u>OR</u> 2. Youth who (a) received HS Diploma/equivalent and (b) is low-income and (c) is Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills or is an English language learner; <u>OR</u> 3. Required to attend school but has not attended for at least the most recent complete school year's calendar quarter'; <u>OR</u> 4. Homeless or Runaway; <u>OR</u> 5. In foster care or aged out of foster care; <u>OR</u> 6. Pregnant/Parenting; <u>OR</u> 7. Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; <u>OR</u> 8. Has a disability; <u>OR</u> 9. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment (must also meet low income requirements)	Authorized to work in U.S.	If male, registered as required	OSY customers can attend and/or be enrolled in a non-credit postsecondary school at eligibility determination. OSY customers 21-24 years old are not subject to in-school educational requirements. Low income required only if using C. 2. or C. 9. from "Age & Other" column A. Family income at or below 100% of poverty line or 70% lower living standard <u>OR</u> B. Meets one of the following criteria 1. Customer receives or is a member of a family that receives (currently or in the past six months) one of the following: TANF, SNAP, SSI, or other public assistance; <u>OR</u> 2. Foster Child; <u>OR</u> 3. Homeless; <u>OR</u> 4. Receives or is eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch; <u>OR</u> 5. Lives in a high poverty census tract. Note: Customer with a disability must be considered family of one for income determination purposes if family income exceeds youth income criteria and 1-5 above do not apply.

WIOA Eligibility Desk Aid

October 2019

APPENDIX B: Program Outcome Chart

Deliverable	Number of Youth Served
a. Number of youth enrolled	
b. Number of youth to complete the program	
c. In education or training activities during the second quarter after exit	
d. In unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after exit	
e. In education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit	
f. In unsubsidized employment in the fourth quarter after exit	
g. Will attain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation or within one year after exit	
h. In an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment during one program year	

APPENDIX C: Budget Forms

A. COST CATEGORY	WIOA FUNDS	IN-KIND/OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL
Personnel Costs			
Contractual Services			
Equipment Rental/Lease			
Conference Expense/Travel			
Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits			
Miscellaneous Participant Expenses			
Supplies			
Other			

B. Totals	WIOA	IN-KIND/OTHER	TOTAL

Subcontractors will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with services provided to youth who are not enrolled. WIOA eligibility is only determined by the local WIOA youth funding agency.

APPENDIX D: Cover Page

Name of Applicant Organization: _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Contact Person _____ Email _____

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

License/Accreditation Entity _____ Effective Date (If Applicable) _____

Type of Organization: (check one) For Profit Non-Profit
 Governmental Entity Educational Institution

Number of years operating in the Capital Region area _____ Elsewhere _____

Name & Type of Program _____

Number of Youth to be Served: In-School _____ Out-of-School _____

A Brief Description of Program:

Primary County(ies) of Service _____

Location Where Training Will Take Place _____

Are proposed training facilities within 1/2 mile of public transportation? YES NO

Program Operating Hours _____ Total Hours of Training _____

Project Period From: _____ to _____

WIOA Amount Requested For This Project _____

Total Other Resources (if dollar amount) For This Project _____

If funded, what percentage would the contract funds represent of your total budget? _____

Has your organization ever had to repay funds due to a questioned/ disallowed cost? YES NO

If yes, please explain _____

Does your organization have the capability to repay a disallowed audit cost? YES NO

Executive Director: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Signature: _____

APPENDIX E: Certification of Specification Compliance

Please attach this form to submitted applications.

We understand that we must give assurances for each item below. If we cannot, then we understand that this proposal will automatically be rejected. The assurances are:

1. We will provide records to show that we are fiscally solvent, if required.
2. We have, or will have, all of the fiscal control and accounting procedures needed to ensure that WIOA funds will be used as required by law and contract.
3. We have additional funding sources and will not be dependent on WIOA funds.
4. We will meet all applicable Federal, State, and local compliance requirements. These include but are not limited to:
 - a. Records accurately reflecting actual performance
 - b. Maintaining record confidentiality, as required
 - c. Reporting financial, participant and performance data, as required
 - d. Complying with Federal and State non-discrimination provision
 - e. Meeting requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
5. We will not:
 - a. Place a youth in a position that will displace a current employee
 - b. Use WIOA funds to assist, promote or deter union organization
 - c. Use WIOA funds to employ or train persons in sectarian activities
 - d. Use funds for youth in the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of a facility to be used for sectarian instruction or religious worship.
 - e. Use WIOA funds for activities that would interfere with or replace regular academic requirements for eligible youth that are not dropouts.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this proposal is accurate and complete, and that I have the legal authority to commit this agency to a contractual agreement. I understand that final funding for any service is based upon funding levels and final approval by the Capital Region Workforce Development Board.

Signature _____
Executive Director/Signatory Authority

Date _____