



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
YOUTH SERVICES**

FY 2016 – FY 2017

Issued By:

**The City of Boston
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor**

**Office of Jobs and Community Services
Trinh Nguyen, Director**

**The Boston Private Industry Council
Gary Gottlieb, Board Chair
Neil Sullivan, Executive Director**

**RFP Issue Date: March 6, 2015
RFP Closing Date: April 17, 2015**

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JCS is a division of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RFP Timeline	3
I. Overview	4
The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act	4
Priorities for WIOA-Youth Funding	5
Funding Availability and Period of Performance	5
II. Eligibility Criteria	6
Eligible Applicants	6
Participant Eligibility	6
Priority Target Populations	8
III. WIOA Requirements	9
IV. Services Requested	11
Required Program Components	14
WIOA Performance Standards	16
Data Tracking and Reporting	16
Program Reporting and Monitoring	17
Financial Monitoring/Reporting	17
V. Proposal Guidelines	19
VI. Terms of Procurement	26
Application Deadline	26
Letter of Intent	26
Bidders' Conference	26
Submission of Inquiries	26
Proposal Specifications	27
Evaluation of Proposals	27
VII. Proposal Checklist	28

RFP TIMELINE

Request for Proposals Issued Website: http://www.bostonjcs.org	March 6, 2015
Bidders' Conference City Hall, BRA Board Room, 9 th Floor	March 13 , 2015, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
<u>Required</u> Letter of Intent Due E-mail: cindy.chow@boston.gov	March 18, 2015 by 5:00 PM
Submittal of Questions	April 10, 2015 by 5:00 PM
Response to RFP Due Mail to or hand delivery at: 43 Hawkins Street Floor 3B, Boston, MA 02114	April 17, 2015 by 4:00 PM
Contract Start Date	July 1, 2015

Section I. OVERVIEW

The Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services (JCS) is the City of Boston's workforce development agency. Under the leadership of Mayor Martin J. Walsh, JCS administers funding from various sources for the purpose of supporting a broad range of services leading to greater economic security. These services include education and training, career development, job training, adult basic education, and youth employment services. One such funding source is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

JCS is Boston's administrative entity for WIOA Youth funds, which are overseen by the Youth Council of the Boston Workforce Investment Board through the Boston Private Industry Council.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) solicits competitive proposals for services to eligible youths under WIOA. As a division of the Boston Redevelopment Authority/Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (BRA/EDIC), JCS will handle all questions concerning this RFP, review all submissions, and prepare funding recommendations.

THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT¹

In July 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was enacted, replacing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Act "is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy."²

While WIOA maintains the goal of assisting individuals to find and retain jobs through provisions of employment training, education, and support services, there are some key changes under the WIOA Title I Youth Services. These include: increasing the percentage of funds to be spent on out-of-school youth from 30% to 75%, extending the out-of-school age limit from 21 to 24 years, and streamlining the process for documenting eligibility. In addition, under the new Act, 20% of funds must be spent on work experiences.

In view of these key changes, JCS will focus its FY 2016 priorities on programs employing career pathways and work-based learning as leading approaches for workforce activities. In addition, JCS intends to align with the new Act by prioritizing services to out-of-school youth between the ages of 16-24 years.

Some of these changes under the new Act will go into effect on July 1, 2015. However, at the issuance of this RFP, the U.S. Department of Labor has not issued formal regulatory guidance. Programs funded under this RFP will need to be prepared to make some adjustments for the FY 2016 and 2017 funding cycles.

¹ For more information on WIOA please visit: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

² Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

PRIORITIES FOR WIOA YOUTH FUNDING

The priorities for funding in this RFP were developed through a planning process conducted over the past several months. A draft statement of policy priorities was issued for comment in January, followed by a public hearing on January 16, 2015. A broad range of individuals and community organizations participated in the hearing, providing valuable commentary which helped to further focus priorities for this funding. Comments received there were taken into consideration in finalizing the policy principles, which can be found on the JCS website at www.bostonjcs.org.

For FY 2016, JCS will prioritize programs and services that establish a framework to move participating youth along the career pathways continuum, defined as high school diplomas or HiSET attainment, matriculation into post-secondary education/training, and placement into jobs with demonstrated career paths. JCS has developed a visual of this “pathway,” which can be found in Appendix C.

Preference will be given to programs employing a career pathway model, with a structured sequence of activities that focuses on providing participating youth long-term career development services that lead to unsubsidized employment in growing industries with the potential for wage progression. Programs that provide seamless connection and transition between different components of a career pathway model that increase employability for participating youth will be prioritized. Applicants must demonstrate how each participant will advance from one level to the next in the career pathways continuum. In addition, under this RFP, partnerships and collaborations are strongly encouraged to allow provision of a full set of workforce strategies, education, and training, and intensive case management services for participating youth.

Applicants successfully integrating the required program components that include employment, training, and education programs have a greater chance of being funded.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

At the issuance of this RFP, JCS has not been informed by the U.S. Department of Labor of the allocation of WIOA Title I Youth funds for Fiscal Year 2016. The total allocation for the current contracts (FY 2015) is approximately \$1.2 million.

JCS does not predetermine the amount of funds to be dedicated toward each program model. The type and quality of proposals submitted will determine the funds awarded. Open and competitive procurement typically occurs on a two-year cycle. Contracts resulting from this RFP are anticipated to commence July 1, 2015 and end on June 30, 2016. Contracts are awarded for a one-year period, and a re-funding process determines the second year of funding. Re-funding for FY 2017 will be contingent upon satisfactory program performance, approval of a re-funding application, and the availability of federal funding.

Section II: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This is an open and competitive procurement process. Eligible applicants must hold 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code, be in the process of receiving such status, or have an identified fiscal sponsor holding 501(c)(3). In addition, JCS is interested in organizations with the following competencies:

- JCS gives priority to organizations with a track record of providing services to low-income youth in Boston while maintaining high standards of program management and accountability. Preference will be given to community-based organizations that are physically located in Boston.
- JCS gives priority to proposals that incorporate partnerships and collaborations under this RFP. Partnerships focusing on a seamless integration of programs and services are strongly encouraged to ensure that there are no gaps in the continuum of programs and services. Partnerships are urged to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but are not limited to employers, institutions of higher education, one-stop career centers, adult basic education providers, and community-based organizations. Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal. Applicants may be members of more than one partnership under this RFP.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

All participants served with WIOA Youth funds under this procurement must meet all of the following eligibility characteristics:

- 1) Out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 – 24 years old or in-school youth between the ages of 14-21 years old (*for definition please see Table 1.1*).
- 2) Resident of Boston and;
- 3) Low-income (see Appendix B for threshold) and;
- 4) U.S. Right to Work Documentation and;
- 5) Selective Service registration for males 18 and older and;
- 6) Having one or more barriers (*for definition please see Table 1.1*)

Out-of-School Youth Definition ³	In-School Youth Definition ⁴
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Not attending any school; b) Not younger than age 16 or older than age 24; and c) <u>One or more</u> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A school drop-out. b) A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter. c) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low income individual and is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. basic skills deficient; or ii. an English language learner. d) An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system. e) A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, in foster care of has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement. f) An individual who is pregnant or parenting. g) A youth who is an individual with a disability. h) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Attending school; b) Not younger than age 14 or (unless an individual with a disability who is attending school under state law) older than age 21; c) A low-income individual; and d) <u>One or more</u> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Basic skills deficient. b) An English language learner. c) An offender. d) A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, in foster care of has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of home placement. e) Pregnant or parenting. f) A youth who is an individual with a disability. g) An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

Table 1.1: Out-of-school and in-school youth eligibility guideline.

³ Taken directly from Section 129 (a)(1):Youth participant eligibility. Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

⁴ Taken directly from Section 129 (a)(1):Youth participant eligibility. Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

In addition, under the WIOA, “low-income” also includes “a youth living in in a high-poverty area.” At the issuance of this RFP, JCS has not received a definition of what constitutes as a “high-poverty area” from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Massachusetts Department of Career Services.

Furthermore, at the issuance of this RFP, JCS has not been informed by the U.S. Department of Labor on all of the guidelines for documenting participant’s eligibility; however, all eligibility criteria must be documented and submitted to JCS for review and approval prior to enrolling participants.

PRIORITY TARGET POPULATIONS

Within the above eligibility requirements under WIOA, the PIC and JCS have determined the following priority target populations under this RFP. As stated earlier, the new WIOA prioritizes serving more out-of-school youth by requiring that 75% of funds go to that population.

- Out-of-school youth between the ages of 16-24 years old;
- In-school youth between the ages of 14-21 years old;
- Low-income youth who are basic-skills deficient or English Language Learners;
- Court-involved, homeless, runaway, in foster care, or aged out of the foster care system; pregnant or parenting; youth with disability; young men of color; documented immigrant youth; youth residing in Boston Housing Authority (BHA) facilities.

Section III: WIOA REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to all youth service providers funded under WIOA. JCS seeks proposals articulating collaborations with other agencies in order to generate access to an appropriate range of services for participating youth. Proposals are expected to demonstrate capacity to fulfill all service requirements, but may do so through partnerships.

Out-of-School Youth

In response to the new WIOA, JCS is requiring that, at minimum, 75% of funds serve out-of-school youth. For the definition of out-of-school youth, please refer back to Section II.

Work-Based Learning

In response to the new Act whereby 20% of the funds must be spent on work experiences, JCS is requiring that programs incorporate work-based learning strategies, such as summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities. These work-based learning strategies must serve as a next steps in career development, whether the desired outcome is employment, or enrollment in advanced training or post-secondary education.

Academic Skills Remediation

All funded programs regardless of program type must incorporate academic skills remediation for youth who are basic skills deficient, defined as those assessed below the 9th grade level in either reading or math. In order to achieve success with the Common Measures, the Federal performance system, and to move all students to proficiency in literacy and numeracy, funded programs must conduct pre and post tests with an approved assessment tool and demonstrate capacity to improve the basic academic skills of students assessed below the 9th grade level. JCS recommends CASAS e-tests online (www.casas.org).

Mandatory Program Elements

Funded programs must be able to provide, either in-house, through collaboration with other organizations (which may or may not be a WIOA-funded provider), or through referral, access to the 14 elements of youth services required under WIOA. Applicants must demonstrate how all 14 required program elements will be made available to participating youth as needed.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a

- recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) 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 as a component academic and occupational education, which may include summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; on-the-job training opportunities;
 4. Occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized post-secondary credentials and in-demand occupations;
 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 community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
 7. Supportive services;
 8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
 9. Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion;
 10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling and other counseling referrals;
 11. Financial literacy education;
 12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
 13. Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services;
 14. Post-secondary preparation and transition activities.

Required Sequence of Services

Programs funded through this RFP are required to provide the following six required sequence of services in order to ensure that all participants receive comprehensive and individualized services consistent with the WIOA requirements. Additional information on each of these services is included in Appendix F.

- Outreach and Recruitment
- Intake and Eligibility Determination
- Assessment and Referral
- Case Management/Individual Service Strategy
- Access to a Range of Services
- Follow-Up Services

Section IV: SERVICES REQUESTED

JCS seeks proposals for programs best demonstrating the capacity to provide access to career-oriented employment through the provision of services based on a career pathway model. All funded services should be offered in the context of a comprehensive service strategy designed to address individual employment and education needs.

The goal of this RFP aligns with the city-wide economic opportunity agenda that aims to tackle income inequality for Bostonians. JCS is aware that there are not enough funds to support all efforts to provide a continuum of services based on a career pathways model – so under this RFP, JCS will be looking for organizations to work together to establish a structure to provide a full set of education and employment programs; to that extent, JCS encourages applicants to partner and clearly define each partner’s strengths, roles, and responsibilities under this RFP.

JCS defines a career pathway continuum as an effort that provides a clear sequence of activities and a connection between high school credentials, post-secondary education or training enrollment, and employment programs that lead to careers with living wages. A career pathway allows participants to progress from one level to the next to build skills that lead to improved career prospects. Career pathways prepare and place individuals into jobs in high-demand and high-wage industries with increased earning opportunities by providing industry-recognized credentials, certificates, and degrees.

Under this RFP, JCS seeks innovative models or approaches which respond to the needs of target populations and employers in today’s changing economy. Applicants must demonstrate how they intend to transition youth into post-secondary education/training and/or employment. Applicants must demonstrate clear transition strategies for youth that help them on a path toward economic security. Described below are allowable program types under the career pathways continuum:

- **Alternative Education:** Alternative education programs include HiSET or diploma granting programs. Program designs must demonstrate comprehensive service strategies to meet the wide array of needs posed by participating youth. Responsive program designs will articulate specific supportive services for targeted populations, such as access to court advocacy, housing, mental health services, health care, food, and clothing. These services may be provided by the program’s case management staff, or through collaboration with other agencies which may be connected with particular youth. Effective program designs should produce academic outcomes which demonstrate learning gain such as grade level advancement and attainment of a diploma or HiSET.

In addition, applicants under this program model should provide a strong school-to-career/college framework. Providing an early introduction and exposure to post-secondary education and careers, allowing youth to establish career goals and interests, and to experience improved educational and employment outcomes, such as dual enrollment

strategies are encouraged. A post-secondary bridge strategy, such as remedial/developmental class preparation, which allows youth to take college level courses upon entry into community colleges, is also encouraged.

For participating youth, especially out-of-school youth, diplomas or HiSET attainment is a top priority, but service strategies must reach beyond the HiSET or diploma completion to support youth entry into post-secondary education/training, or into employment that will lead to economic security. Collaboration with employers and/or higher education institution is encouraged to emphasize career planning and access to post-secondary options for youth. Applicants must demonstrate clear transitional strategies into post-secondary education/training and/or employment for participating youth, which are described below.

- ***Post-Secondary Education/Training.*** Post-secondary education/training programs can include two year and four year community colleges and universities, occupational skills training, and apprenticeship programs. These programs provide individuals with credentials, certificates, and degrees necessary to obtain a career. Applicants must demonstrate a strong connection between the provision of post-secondary education/training and available jobs with a living wage.

Post-secondary education: For post-secondary education, applicants must outline strategies that help youth to pursue, enroll, persist, and complete post-secondary education programs. JCS understands that post-secondary education can take more than two years for target populations to complete. JCS is interested in seeing proposals that not only provide opportunities for individuals to enroll in post-secondary education, but also provide supportive services that help them persist and complete the program.

Occupational skills training: Occupational skills training programs must target jobs in industries that align with labor market workforce needs with projected growth and demand in Boston. Occupational skills programs result in the mastery of technical skills required for employment and the attainment of employer-recognized certification that is portable. Entry-level jobs are characterized by low to moderate starting wages, but also provide emerging career ladders with wage progression. Applicants may utilize contextual learning strategy designed to develop basic and occupational skills simultaneously, thereby facilitating job placement and retention. Programs must work with local employers or training providers to train a strong pipeline of skilled workers.

Apprenticeship program: Apprenticeships allow participants to “earn while they learn,” giving them an opportunity both for advancing wages and opportunities to learn a higher level of skills in their chosen craft or profession. JCS supports apprenticeships that are registered with the Commonwealth and those that have access to matriculation agreement with post-secondary institutions to allow apprentices to gain credits towards certification and/or degree completion.

Post-secondary bridge programs: JCS expects youth participants under the post-secondary education/training pillar to have completed at least a secondary credential, either a high school diploma or HiSET. However, many high school graduates still require basic academic skills remediation. Applicants should demonstrate how services are tailored so people with disparate academic levels can successfully transition from training into employment or post-secondary education within the planned program duration.

In addition, for certain populations, such as out-of-school youth or English Language Learners, bridge programs can also be included as part of the career pathways continuum to accelerate credentials and skills building, but generic, stand-alone bridge programs unconnected to employment and/or post-secondary education/training will not be considered responsive to this RFP.

One example of effective post-secondary bridge programs is the use of contextualized and integrated curriculum and instruction designed to accelerate credentials and skill building. Skills are developed in an applied context, such as running concurrent classroom/academic training and utilizing hands-on experience through work-based learning (e.g. internship). Contextualized learning provides maximum opportunity for students to learn new skills relevant to their career interests.

Employment: Employment programs can include pre-apprenticeship, career exploration, job readiness/soft skills development, and work-based learning that provide maximum opportunities for youth to learn theoretical and practical skills relevant to their career interests. These programs provide an understanding of career options within a given industry, developing industry-relevant work-based readiness skills and employment competencies, and working to connect youth with next steps resulting in post-secondary education, training, and/or employment. Employment programs should be grounded in a comprehensive assessment of each participant's employment history, experience, as well as career interests, skills, and abilities. Assessments should be used to create a career goal that generates quality job matching, wage progression, and career ladder opportunities.

Pre-apprenticeship program: Pre-apprenticeship programs prepare participating youth to enroll in apprenticeship programs.

Work-based learning: Work-based learning provides structured opportunities for youth to learn and engage in career opportunities that incorporate education and employment activities. This can take the form of unpaid and paid experiences, summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

Career exploration: Career exploration programs provide youth with structured opportunities to explore a range of career options in a particular industry, thereby developing work-readiness and industry-relevant competencies. Programs must target career fields in high-growth and high-demand industries in Boston. Career exploration

programs should demonstrate the capacity to facilitate the transition to employment, training, and post-secondary education, depending on the goals of individual participants. Applicants must have a clearly identified partnerships with employers or training providers within the industry who are willing to help develop opportunities for job shadowing, guest speakers, mentors, and internships. Career exploration should begin with a comprehensive introduction to a particular industry of interest. The premise is that when individuals are exposed to a range of options within a given industry, they will be able to engage in informed career planning according to their interests and aptitudes.

Job readiness and soft skills: Employment programs include development of job readiness and soft skills. Technical skills can be taught on the job, but only if the employee is receptive and works well with others. Under this RFP, job readiness and soft skills development are encouraged to complement the technical skills component. Soft skills components may include but are not limited to interpersonal skills such as teamwork, communication, and punctuality to better equip youth with non-cognitive skills needed to succeed in jobs. Job readiness components may include resume preparation, job search, and interviewing skills.

In addition, employment programs must demonstrate a strong connection to the next steps in career development for participating youth. For example, a pre-apprenticeship program must demonstrate connection to an apprenticeship program; career exploration must demonstrate the capacity to facilitate the transition to employment or post-secondary education/training, depending on the goals of individual participants.

Preference will be given to programs that provide seamless connection and transition between different components of a career pathway model: alternative education, post-secondary education/training, and employment programs. Applicants must demonstrate how each component is connected to one another that increases employability for participating youth.

Each program element must be connected but be non-duplicative. Applicants must demonstrate how each participant will advance from one level to the next. Services requested in this section are not in a chronological order or in order of importance. In addition, applicants are not required to incorporate every component listed in this section (i.e. occupational training programs will not need to show alternative education component if the clients will already need to have high school diplomas or HiSET in order to enroll in a program).

REQUIRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Successful applicants will articulate a service strategy and program design that is consistent with the following required program components:

- ***Career pathways continuum structure.*** Applicants must describe in their proposal a clear career pathways continuum (and include a diagram as an attachment), indicating what services will be provided and by whom for program participants, including education, training, employment, and provision of intensive case management services. Career

pathways must identify specific steps of activities that lead to placement into jobs or post-secondary education/training. Career pathways must provide clear advancement opportunities and transitions for participating youth. Applicants must demonstrate partnerships with educational institutions or employers to develop specific activities and strategies to connect education, training, and employment activities for participating youth. For post-secondary education/training and employment programs, the description must include specific job(s) that program participants are expected to obtain upon successful completion of a pathway. For alternative education programs, the description must include how a career pathways continuum is providing a strong school to career/college framework.

- ***Outreach and Recruitment, Intake and Eligibility Determination, Assessment and Referral, Case Management/Individual Service Strategy, Access to a Range of Services, and Follow-Up Services.*** Please see Appendix F.
- ***Employer partners.*** Applicants must demonstrate a strong employer or training provider partnerships. Program participants will benefit from a first-hand understanding of the requirements and expectations of employers in a given industry. Partnerships between employers and providers should be built on the premise that the proposed program will benefit employers by developing the job readiness and industry-specific employment skills of potential employees, and by providing a more informed and motivated applicant pool.

Applicants must demonstrate partnership designs that offer employers the opportunity for direct interaction with individual participants and direct coordination with program staff. Youth may be placed in summer jobs or internships with local businesses and employers, while other employers may participate as job-shadow hosts and mentors for youth. Applicants are encouraged to include innovative and sustainable employer partnerships in their program design. These partnerships must lead to post-secondary education/training and/or job placements for participating youth. Applicants should attach a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with at least one employer partner/training providers. Proposals without strong employer/training provider involvement will not be competitive.

- ***Partnership plan.*** A strong partnership is critical for this RFP to deliver the effective services that will have the greatest possible collective impact. Applicants must establish a plan that clearly identifies which organization is providing which service for program participants, including alternative education, post-secondary education, training, employment, and provision of intensive case management programs, and/or job placement and retention services. Partnerships can include but are not limited to employers, higher education institutions, and other community-based organizations with expertise in serving the target population.
- ***Connect youth to work experiences.*** Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to provide work-based learning programs, such as unpaid and paid work experiences, summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job

training that serve as the next steps in career development, whether the desired outcome is employment or enrollment in advanced training or higher education.

WIOA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS⁵

The intent of this RFP is to place Boston youth on a career pathway continuum.

The WIOA measures the success of the WIOA Youth services based on a specific set of required federal performance measures.

For certain populations or certain occupations, temporary jobs, part-time jobs or subsidized jobs may be a strategic first step – these interim/intermediate outcomes will be considered successful short-term or mid-term outcomes. Placement into bridge programs may also be a strategic first step towards employment. Applicants proposing such strategies, however, must make a compelling argument in their favor and demonstrate a continuum of career pathways to jobs. Placement into post-secondary education/training, with a strong likelihood of it leading to jobs, will be considered a successful outcome.

Placement in Employment, Education, or Training

- Number and percentage of participants who are placed into employment.
- Number and percentage of participants who are placed in post-secondary education, including community colleges and universities.
- Number and percentage of participants who are placed into post-secondary training.

Attainment of a Degree or Certificate

- Number and percentage of participants who obtain high school diplomas or HiSET.
- Number and percentage of participants who obtain post-secondary degrees, credentials and industry-recognized certificates.

Literacy and Numeracy Gains

- Number and percentage of participants who increase one or more grade levels.

DATA TRACKING AND REPORTING

The Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES) is a web-based, state-managed database system that supports statewide employment programs. The successful applicants will be required to use MOSES to record and track all participant activities, including services rendered and outcomes achieved. Reports generated from MOSES will be used to assess program performance. Funded providers are required to designate two users and attend a three-day MOSES training and be certified by DCS in order to access the database. Providers are also required to attend a case management training. In addition, the contractor may be asked to provide additional data not accessible through MOSES to evaluate performance outcomes.

⁵ The U.S. Department of Labor has notified JCS that the new WIOA performance measures will go into effect in FY 2017.
WIOA Youth RFP FY 2016 – FY 2017

Contracting agencies must be capable of accessing the Internet. We suggest strongly that the computer accessing MOSES be capable of displaying data 800x600. Communication speed must be equal to or better than a DSL communication link. JCS will provide you with the necessary software to affect the hookup through JCS to the state system. Each funded organization is also expected to provide its own anti-virus protection.

PROGRAM MONITORING/REPORTING

JCS program management personnel will conduct periodic site visits to monitor the following criteria:

- Compliance with regulations, policies, and contracts;
- Operations in accordance with the proposal and the contract;
- Achievement of objectives in accordance with the proposal and the contract;
- Integrity of administrative and data systems;
- Quality of service evaluation through observation and informal interviews; and
- Need for technical assistance or corrective action.

These monitoring activities may take the form of administrative record reviews, interviews of staff and/or participants, and general observations of the facilities and operations. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to perform administrative responsibilities including: maintaining records of participant eligibility, attendance and progress; tracking participation; and submitting program reports and invoices in a timely manner.

FINANCIAL MONITORING/REPORTING

Site visits will also be used to monitor financial compliance with WIOA Youth and other applicable regulations.

If your agency expended \$750,000 or more in federal financial assistance, from any and all funding sources during the most recent audit period, you are required to have an audit prepared in accordance with the most recent guidance from the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This guide, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance or "UG"), replaces OMB Circular A-133. The complete text of this audit guidance can be found at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F in the Code of Federal Regulations. A complete copy of the UG-compliant audit report must be submitted, along with a copy of any management letter (if one exists). Agencies subject to the Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report (UFR) filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may use the UFR format.

If you expended less than \$750,000 in federal funds, and are exempt from the UG audit requirements, a statement attesting to that fact must accompany your audited financial statements.

If you expended less than \$750,000 in federal funds, but are subject to the UFR filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then you should submit a complete copy of your agency's UFR.

Applicants are encouraged to share this information with appropriate fiscal staff to ensure that the audit report submission is correct and complete. Proposals that do not contain a complete audit report submission will be considered incomplete.

V. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please complete and include the Proposal Cover Sheet provided in Appendix D. This does not count towards the 20 page limit. Items #1 to #8 below do count toward the 20-page limit.

1. One-Page Proposal Summary (5 points)

Briefly describe your proposed program, including specific target population, number of participants to be served, program site(s), type of program and duration of services, expected WIOA outcomes, amount of funds requested, cost per participant, and other key features of your program. Identify any partners with whom you will collaborate to offer key components of the program design.

2. Agency Background and Organizational Capacity (10 points)

Briefly describe your agency's overall history and its previous experience in providing the specific services proposed. Indicate on an attached organizational chart where the proposed services fit. Describe your experience and expertise in any or all of the critical components of career pathways: alternative education, post-secondary education/training, and/or employment. Include information about your partnership, briefly describing each partner's roles and responsibilities under this RFP – indicate your partnership's positive impact on your service to target populations in the past, if applicable.

Provide a description of your organization's track record in the service you are proposing. Include size of service population and any performance outcomes, including alternative education, post-secondary education/training credential achievement, and/or job placement and retention.

3. Statement of Need and Target Population (10 points)

Please describe the characteristics and needs of the specific populations you intend to serve, assuming the reader is unfamiliar with the population. Describe the target population's barriers in accessing employment and education services. How will the proposed program address those barriers? If more than one group is targeted, provide information for each group. How does this population differ from the general population? What direct experience have you had with members of this population and how did you accommodate their needs? Which aspects of your program (e.g. curriculum, program environment, facilities...etc) are designed specifically to address the challenges faced by this population? Include data supporting your agency's ability to achieve successful outcomes with the target group.

4. Program Design (25 points)

Describe in detail your proposed design for offering each of the following components. Explain how these functions, as designed, are appropriate for your target population and its needs.

Every applicant is required to pick one primary model from numbers (i), (ii), or (iii). Every applicant must respond to questions outlined in (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) which address the essential components of a career pathway model.

i. Alternative education

- Describe your alternative education program and how your program is helping target populations obtain a HiSET or diploma. Does the program have a minimum grade level? What is the typical range of grade levels in your classroom(s)? What proportion of students typically have had IEPs?
- How does your program meet the needs of the range of students in your classroom(s)?
- How has the curriculum been developed and updated to align with MA Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core standards? For diploma granting programs, what particular methods are taken to prepare youth to pass the MCAS?
- How does the program design reflect a school to career/college approach? What role have employers and/or representatives of higher education play in the development of your curriculum? How are your service strategies reaching beyond the HiSET or diploma completion to support youth entry into post-secondary education/training or into employment? What specific strategies is your program using in order to successfully transition youth into post-secondary education/training and/or employment?

ii. Post-secondary education/training

- Describe your education/training programs, which can include occupational skills training, apprenticeship program, post-secondary bridge programs, and/or post-secondary education. Describe how your proposed education/training programs will lead to jobs with livable wages.
- Identify the specific positions for which your training will prepare participants. Identify the specific certificates, credentials or degrees your program will prepare participants obtain upon successful completion of your program. Describe the basic academic skill levels, educational credentials, and technical skills typically required for the positions. Describe your methods for instructions.
- How will staff conduct job development for participants who are interested in pursuing options outside of the industry? For participants with criminal histories? Provide a timeline that describes the process and timing of your job development and placement activities.
- What role have employers and/or representatives of higher education play in the development of your program design?
- Describe any post-secondary bridge programs to meet the needs of the target population and how they are providing opportunities for youth to build credentials and skills. For applicants offering post-secondary education, what strategies will your program employ that help youth to pursue, enroll, persist, and complete post-secondary education?
- How are your services tailored so youth can successfully transition from your program into employment or post-secondary education within the planned program duration?

iii. **Employment**

- Describe your employment programs, which can include pre-apprenticeship, career exploration, and/or utilization of work-based learning strategies. Describe how your program is providing opportunities for youth to learn theoretical skills relevant to their career interests.
- For career explorations and pre-apprenticeship, identify the specific positions for which your training will prepare participants.
- How will programs educate participants about a range of occupations and career pathways in a given industry, and the required experience, education, and training necessary for such occupations?
- Describe the basic academic skill levels, educational credentials, and technical skills typically required for these positions. Discuss your methods for instruction. Discuss your methods for instructions for job readiness and soft skills development. Discuss how you will develop goals and measure individual competencies in each of these areas.
- How will your program facilitate transition into employment and/or post-secondary education/training? Describe how program staff will provide youth with ongoing support in employment search, and/or assistance in transitional services. What resources will be utilized in this effort?
- How will staff facilitate career planning for participants with CORI or other barriers?

a) *Career pathways continuum structure:*

- Describe your career pathways continuum structure, including what services will be provided for program participants, whether it is alternative education, post-secondary education/training, and/or employment. Describe specific strategies that connect different components of a career pathway continuum to increase employability for participating youth. Discuss specific strategies your program will use in order to successfully transition youth from one level to the next. Include a graphic illustration of your career pathways continuum model.
- For post-secondary education/training and/or employment programs, what are the specific job title(s) (with wages) that program participants might obtain upon successful completion of your pathway? Cite appropriate labor market information supporting your choice of targeted occupations. What is the economic significance of sector(s) to the regional economy? What are advancement opportunities for your choice of targeted occupations/sectors?

b) *Program design:* Briefly describe all key components and special features of your program design, including proposed program schedule, duration, intensity, and location of each component and staff to participant ratios. Discuss attendance, termination, and code of conduct policies, and how these are communicated to staff and participants. Describe the methods to improve participation retention and motivation, demonstrating effectiveness where possible.

c) *Employer partner:* Discuss how the program has engaged industry employer(s) and/or training providers in the development and delivery of a program design/curriculum

which prepares youth for careers. Describe the nature of the organization’s employer partnerships, and describe any plans to develop new partnerships or strengthen existing relationships. Attach a Memorandum of Agreement with at least one employer.

d) Partnership plan. Describe in detail the ways in which your partnership will contribute to the success of your program. Clearly define the roles and activities of the partner organizations. Attach a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Letter of Support between your organization and each of the partners outlining the responsibilities and contributions of partner organizations. The MOA/Letter of Support must be signed by the CEO of each organization or a designee who has senior operational authority.

e) Work-based learning. Describe how your program is incorporating work-based learning programs to provide opportunities for youth to gain work experience. Indicate what workplace related materials, supplies, and equipment will be used. Describe the balance between classroom-based activities and work-based learning opportunities.

5. WIOA Required Sequence of Services (15 points)

These common services form a core structure for a participant’s involvement in the WIOA system. For each of the steps outlined, explain how your program design will fulfill the expectations of the WIOA system.

<p>Outreach and Recruitment</p>	<p>Discuss your plan for recruitment, including the specific target group you will recruit, the neighborhoods they live in, the organizations and audiences with which you will communicate, and the tools and methods you will use. How large a pool of recruits will you need to bring into your intake process in order to identify the cohort of enrolled participants you propose to serve? Discuss plans for the recruitment and enrollment of out-of-school youth.</p>
<p>Intake and Eligibility Determination</p>	<p>Describe the intake process, including the collection of basic information from potential clients, informing potential clients of available services in your organization or elsewhere, and determination of client suitability for program services. Describe the process of determining eligibility for WIOA funded services and which staff are responsible for this process.</p>
<p>Assessment and Referral</p>	<p>Describe how your assessment process provides an objective assessment of academic levels, work readiness/interests and occupational skills levels, service needs, and assets/strengths of each participant. Include a description of any tools or methods used to determine the following: levels of basic skills, occupational skills, work readiness skills, prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes, and supportive service needs. How will you ensure that academic assessment is conducted quarterly and that students perform to the best of their ability? Provide a plan to</p>

	incorporate academic instruction tailored to student needs, particularly for those assessed below the 9 th grade level in reading or math. If it is determined that the program does not match the particular needs of the individual, how is that individual referred to more appropriate services?
Case Management/ Individual Service Strategy (ISS)	Describe your program’s capacity to provide case management services designed to support student achievement and address barriers to education and employment participation. Describe how the Individual Service Strategy ⁶ will be used to document services for each participant and to measure progress toward attaining goals. What steps will be taken to ensure that the ISS is an active document that reflects a client’s progress, evolving goals, and service needs? Describe how your program will incorporate trauma-informed approaches into their case management models? Describe how program staff will provide youth with ongoing support in employment search, and/or assistance in applying for advanced training or higher education.
Access to a Range of Services	In order to provide individual youth with access to a broad range of services, or the required 14 elements, WIOA necessitates the formation of a system of services and providers. Please discuss how the program is able to provide, either in-house, through collaboration, or through referral mechanisms, access to each of the 14 WIOA service elements. Please attach any relevant MOAs with partners.
Follow-up Services	Describe how your program proposes to provide at least 12 months of follow-up services to participants completing program services as well as participants who may have dropped out of the program, but need additional services. Programs are encouraged to consider the needs and barriers of the program’s target population in determining the appropriate levels and types of follow-up services. Follow-up services may be included in your budget.

6. Staffing and Facilities (10 points)

Identify staff responsible for each component of the proposed program, including direct services and administrative personnel. Discuss staff qualifications, skills, and experience working effectively with youth and implementing the proposed services. Identify the staff who will manage MOSES. Attach job descriptions and resumes for all positions involved in the project, noting whether they are to be funded or provided in-kind. Label the job descriptions

⁶ To see the current ISS form, please refer to Appendix G.
WIOA Youth RFP FY 2016 – FY 2017

with the name of the staff person, or indicate if the position is vacant. Label the resume with the name of the position in the program.

Discuss your agency's overall staffing and management structure, and the extent to which this adequately supports program operations and goal attainment. Describe the facilities that will be used including location of classes and other services, total square footage of site, accessibility to persons with disabilities, and any and all equipment or resources that will be available to youth.

7. Outcomes (10 points)

Provide anticipated outcomes for services described. Applicants must clearly indicate the number of people to be served and expected outcomes for the proposed program. What outcomes will be achieved in year one? Please complete and include the Outcomes Form provided in Appendix E. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your program? Describe partner commitments to provide data needed to evaluate program effectiveness.

8. Sustainability Plan (5 points)

Summarize your agency's total budget and total project budget and describe the source and amount of non-WIOA funds committed and pending for the specific services proposed in this application. Assuming your program is funded, describe your sustainability efforts, including how your agency would deal with a possible reduction of funding in the second year of this two-year funding cycle, and how this would impact your program.

9. Budget (this is not counted in 20-page limit) (10 points)

Please follow the budget instruction in Appendix H. Please present a budget cover page, a cost detail page and a budget narrative (applicants can create their own budget narrative form using the attached instruction) for the WIOA funding you are requesting for FY 2016. Applications that do not include these forms will not be considered. The job titles and staff initials listed on the cost detail page should match the job descriptions and resumes attached as described above.

These forms should show WIOA funds only. Use the budget instructions page in this RFP as a guide for the requirements under each budget category. Please double check your calculations; all costs must tie out exactly; do not round off. The budget narrative should present descriptive detail on all line item costs in the budget, so that readers will not be left with questions about how you propose to use the funds.

Collaborative proposals should submit one set of budget forms that clearly identifies the project costs of each agency. Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal.

If your organization has an indirect cost rate approved by a federal agency, please attach a copy of the latest approved rate to your proposal. However, JCS is not obligated to accept that rate and reserves the right to limit indirect cost rates allowable under funded contracts.

VI. TERMS OF PROCURMENET

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Responses to this RFP must be received by JCS by 4:00 PM on Friday, April 17, 2015. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure their proposal is complete and submitted on time. Proposals can be mailed to or hand-delivered at:

**Jobs and Community Services
Planning and Policy Development, Floor 3B
43 Hawkins Street
Boston, MA 02114**

The office is located near City Hall, behind Channel 7 and the Area A police station. It is within walking distance of the State Street, Haymarket and Bowdoin subway stations. Parking in the vicinity of the office is difficult; allow extra time if you are driving.

Proposals not received by this time will be disqualified from the competitive process. Facsimiles and electronic submissions will not be accepted. JCS will provide confirmation upon receipt.

LETTER OF INTENT

A letter of intent is required. Letters of intent must be received by JCS no later than 5:00 PM on March 18, 2015 via email to Cindy Chow at cindy.chow@boston.gov. Please complete the information using the form *Appendix A: Letter of Intent to Bid*. All applicants will receive email confirmation upon receipt. Should you subsequently decide not to submit, please let us know via email to Cindy Chow.

BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

Organizations interested in bidding on the RFP are strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Bidders' Conference on March 13, 2015. Questions and answers provided at the Bidders' conference will be made available to the public on JCS' website at www.bostonjcs.org.

SUBMISSION OF INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Midori Morikawa, Senior Planner for Youth Services, via email: midori.morikawa@boston.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. The deadline to submit questions is **April 10, 2015, by 5:00PM.**

Responses to questions received during the procurement process will be posted on the JCS website at: <http://www.bostonjcs.org>. It is the bidders' responsibility to check the website for updates and postings.

JCS is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants should ensure their proposals comply with the following requirements:

- A response to each section of the RFP is required and should follow the guidelines and sequences as specified in the Proposal Guideline section (Section V). Each section should be labeled.
- Every section of the Request for Proposals should be completed in full. If funded, the proposal will provide the basis for contract negotiations, and final negotiated terms will be incorporated within the contract as the Statement of Work.
- Proposals should be typewritten, double-spaced, in 12-point font, printed single-sided with one-inch margins.
- The proposal narrative may not exceed 20 pages. The page limit does not include the cover sheet, budget forms, or any required attachments.
- JCS requires one (1) original proposal and five (5) copies. The original should be clearly marked as such, and should contain original signatures by your agency signatory. The original should not be bound, but placed in a sealed envelope and clearly marked as such. Copies must be securely bound (e.g. 3-ring binder, comb binding spine – no binder clips or paper clips please).
- Some sections require appended material. All forms should be completed in full.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of the proposal, congruence with the goals of this RFP, past program performance, geographic distribution of services, and service to the target population.

The point values allocated to each section of the proposal narrative are an evaluation tool; they do not dictate which proposals are ultimately recommended for funding. JCS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive or modify any requirement contained in this RFP, to amend without consult any proposal, and to effect any agreement deemed to be in the best interest of the city and its residents.

VII. PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

Proposals should follow, in order, the outline below. **Sign originals in blue ink.**

Submit:

- **one (1) set of loose originals of checklist items 1-14** in an envelope, and
- **five (5) bound copies of checklist items 1-10 only.**

1. Proposal Cover Sheet – *appendix D*

2. Narrative Submission – This section has a 20-page limit.

- Proposal Summary
- Agency Background and Organizational Capacity
- Statement of Need and Target Population
- Program Design
- WIOA Required Sequence of Services
- Staffing and Facilities
- Outcomes
- Sustainability Plan

3. Outcomes Form – *appendix E*

Use this worksheet to identify your proposed program's outcomes. Outcomes should follow the format in the form. Indicate the number of WIOA Youth you expect to serve and the number you anticipate will achieve each outcome. Add additional outcomes, if necessary.

4. One-Page visual depiction of your career pathways model

5. Signed Memorandum of Agreement(s) / Letter(s) of Support (for collaborations requesting funding for more than one agency or programs working in collaboration with employers or other entities). MoA/Letter of Support must be signed by the CEO of each organization or a designee who has senior operational authority.

6. Applicant Agency's Organizational Chart

7. Budget Forms and Budget Narrative – *appendix H*

Develop a budget for the amount of WIOA funds you are requesting. Refer to the budget instructions page for details on how to complete each worksheet.

Budget cover page: requires [original signature of person who prepared the budget](#)

Budget cost detail page: Totals should match throughout your budget forms. Formulas have been included to calculate totals automatically.

Budget narrative: Detail WIOA program costs following guidelines for each section on the budget instructions page.

8. Federally-approved indirect cost letter, if applicable

- 9. Job Description(s) & Resume(s):** submit for staff funded through WIOA Youth only. Please indicate the person's name on each job description and the job title on each resume. Job titles should match those listed on the Budget Cost Detail Page.
- 10. List of Current Agency's Board of Directors** (showing addresses, affiliations, etc.)
- 11. Certificate of Authority (CM-06) – appendix I**
The CM-06 asks you to list the name of the designated authorized signatory for the WIOA-funded program twice, on the top and bottom sections of the form. However, the CM-06 should NOT be signed by the authorized signatory. Please submit with the [original signature of the agency's clerk/secretary](#).
- 12. Wage Theft Prevention Form (CM-16) – appendix J**
Select box 1 or 2, as applicable, and submit with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).
- 13. Provide the D-U-N-S Number for Applicant Agency**
Request/verify your DUNS number at: mycredit.dnb.com/duns-lookup/
Enter the agency's name, address, or phone number. If there is a DUNS number that matches the information you entered, a list of agency name options pops up. Click on '**send DUNS #**' next to the agency name you want. Enter your name and email to receive the DUNS information directly to your email. Include the DUNS number in the proposal cover sheet.
- 14. Most Recent CPA-Audited Financial Statement, with all related documents**

Proposals will be considered complete with checklist items 1-14. We are including checklist items 15-21 to expedite the contract execution process, should your proposal get funded. However, completion of these additional forms will not be part of the proposal evaluation and there is no penalty for submitting the proposal without them. Please submit along with the set of loose originals of items 1-14 in a clearly-labeled envelope.

- 15. Contractor Certification (CM-09) – appendix K**
Section (A) on this form should state the name of the program at your agency for which you are contracting with EDIC. Please submit the CM-09 with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).
- 16. CORI Forms – appendix L**
- CORI Form A**
The CORI form refers to agency guidelines regarding employees, not program participants. Please submit CORI form 15A with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).
- CORI Form B**
Submitting this form indicates you've read and understand the City of Boston's CORI guidelines.
- CORI Form C**
If vendor checks #3 in CORI Form 15A, vendor must submit a copy of its own CORI guidelines on CORI form 15C.

17. Living Wage Form(s) – appendix M

2015 LW-8

The Living Wage forms indicate the current FY15 rate, \$13.89. This rate is subject to an annual adjustment on July 1, 2015. The start date of contract is 7/1/15 and the end date of contract is 6/30/16. The form should indicate a 1-year length of contract. All agencies are required to submit an LW-8. Please submit the LW-8 with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).

2015 LW-2 (if applicable, see below)

Agencies who employ 25 or more FTE's also need to submit the FY15 LW-2. Form LW-1 has instructions on how to calculate full-time equivalents for your agency. Please submit the LW-2 with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).

2015 LW-1

Submitting this form indicates you've read and understand the city's Living Wage guidelines.

18. Certificate of Debarment/Lobbying – appendix N

Submit with the [original signature of authorized signatory](#).

19. Register in the System for Award Management

Register for the first time or update your annual registration. You may check on the status of your registration at any time by logging into www.sam.gov and clicking on your Entity Record page.

20. WIOA Complaint Process – appendix O

Review this form. This will be part of the contract.

21. WIOA Equal Opportunity Employment – appendix P

Review this form. This will be part of the contract.

Appendices

- A. Letter of Intent to Bid
- B. Income Eligibility Guideline
- C. Career Pathways Continuum
- D. Proposal Cover Sheet
- E. Outcomes Form
- F. WIOA Required Sequence of Services
- G. Individualized Service Strategy
- H. Budget Instruction and Forms
- I. Certificate of Authority (CM-06)
- J. Wage Theft Prevention Form (CM-16)
- K. Contractor Certification Form (CM-09)
- L. CORI Forms
- M. Living Wage Forms
- N. Certificate of Debarment/Lobbying
- O. WIOA Complaint Process
- P. WIOA Equal Opportunity Employment