WIOA Youth Program: Career in Focus
Written Questions and Answers

Q1) The WDB anticipates awarding approximately $300,000 in WIOA Youth funding through this RFP for a twelve (12) month contract to operate. What is the limit for each organization? Can we each apply for up to $300,000?

A1) The time limit for the awarded sub-recipient is twelve months, beginning July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 with the option of renewing the funding for up to two years based on funding availability. The total funding for the first year of WIOA Youth services is $300,000 for the selected sub-recipient(s). An organization may apply for up to $300,000 depending on their program design and budget.

Q1.1) Will there only be three awardees for the grant? Will there be a selection process to divide the total amount amongst those three awardees?

A1.1) Based on the review of the proposal, scope of work and program design will determine how the $300,000 will be split up. It also depends on the amount the successful respondent(s) requests to complete the work based on the proposal.

The WDB is not going into the selection process with a specific number of awardees in mind. We want to be able to provide the option to the community based on the successful respondent(s) capabilities to complete the work. The total amount available for any contract(s) combination is $300,000.

Q2) Regarding the disconnected youth study reference in the application (Youth RFP, page 1). Most of the data in the study is from 2016 – much has changed since the pandemic. Can you point us to any more current/accurate data?

A2) The last time a disconnected youth study was conducted for Solano County was 2016. The WDB understands the labor market has changed due to the pandemic and that any barriers pre-existing to the pandemic were exacerbated during COVID-19. Specific data for the proposed population or geographic concentration respondents are interested in serving should be included in the submitted statement of need.

Resources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Measure of America provide information on how the pandemic is affecting the economy and populations. Measure of America has a series called Disconnected Youth 2020 and is a good resource of how they compile data from the last few years to cover the core of the COVID-19 period.

Q3) The RFP says that career exploration and guidance, interpersonal skills, job search skills and digital literacy are priorities (Youth RFP, page 2). Does program design need to also include all 14 WIOA program elements? Or can we cover some of them by connecting young people to other organizations?

A3) No, a respondent's program design does not need to cover all 14 elements. The required program elements to be included are Follow-Up Services (per WIOA requirements) and Paid or Unpaid Work Experiences (per the RFP on page 9). It is up to the sub-recipient based on their individual service plan for a participant and the proposed program design to determine which one of the 14 elements will be applied by the sub-recipient versus which elements can be referred to other organizations as needed. The requirement is that the sub-recipient document which program element will be applied in the overall service plan.

Q4) The performance requirements have this indicator: $3,490 median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit (Youth RFP, page 10). Is that monthly/quarterly/annual income?

A4) The indicator is quarterly based on when each participant exits and reported wages for that term.

Q4.1) Participants only have to make $3,490 every three months?

A4.1) Yes. This is the negotiated baseline from the state. The WDB strives to meet higher earnings than the state baseline.

Q4.2) Have previous Youth providers [sub-recipients] been able to satisfy these measures?

A4.2) Nationwide the WIOA employment metrics have not been what they were pre-pandemic due to COVID-19. If someone does not enter training, then the credential attainment and measurable skills gain is not applicable.

Q5) The last sentence on page 10 of the Youth RFP, IV. Performance Requirements, reads the Successful Respondents will be expected to serve OSY enrollees already on the program at the time this contract is awarded. Would the new sub-recipient(s) be responsible for serving the previous OSY clients?

A5) No the new sub-recipient(s) will not be responsible for serving OSY from the previous sub-recipient, but the option is available. There will be a revision to the RFP that will read as follows: The Successful Respondents *may* be expected to serve OSY enrollees already on the program at the time this contract is awarded.

Q6) Is there a minimum number of youth to be served by the program?

A6) No, there is no minimum. The proposed budget line item and cost per participant, targeted population and level of services needed, and individual service plan should drive the number of youth to be served. It is understood that Out-of-School Youth may need longer term assistance. The first contract year is the enrollment goal, with subsequent contract years maintaining a number served instead of enrollment. For example, if an entity proposed to enroll 50 participants in the first year, the following years' performance would become 50 served, it includes carry-over numbers from the first year.

Q6.1) How many youth is Solano County Office of Education serving in this program year?

A6.1) The current contractor serves 40 enrollments for the program year.

Q7) Will only one agency be awarded or can there be multiple awards?

A7) The WDB may award up to three Respondent(s). Respondent(s) can utilize collaborative partnerships to support participant success and leverage internal or community resources that will result in cost efficiency.

Q8) Did I understand that only 20 percent [of funding] can be used towards staff and administration cost and everything else would go towards serving OSY?

A8) When it comes to administrative costs (i.e., accounting or Human Resources), sub-recipients may use an indirect cost rate that is approved by a federal agency or sub-recipients may take the de minimis rate, or 10 percent administrative costs. Staffing is allowable cost under either administrative or program activities. For example, staffing cost to provide career coaching to youth would be a program cost and could be

considered a work experience cost if it meets the work experience parameters, which are outlined in the Youth RFP on page 8.

Q9) Page 1 of the RFP as it defines Out-of-School Youth – "young adults who are between the ages of 16-24 who are neither working nor are in school" and in Youth RFP on page 7 in Section III. Program Requirements, subsection A. Youth Eligibility, it doesn't say a youth who is working would be ineligible. So if they are out of school, fit one of the criteria under "Youth Eligibility," and they have a part-time job, would they still be eligible?

A9) Yes, a person would be eligible for services if they are unemployed or underemployed. However, it is contingent upon their ability to participate in the program and meet eligibility guidelines. Refer to the General Program Eligibility Determination WIOA Out-of-School Eligibility Worksheet to determine when income is a factor for the applicant. An assessment can be done based on need, availability and what services they can benefit from.

The concept of Out-of-School Youth is someone who is not fully engaged with work or education. Part-time job or if they have had a full-time job in the past that doesn't mean that they are fully engaged with work. Policies that pertain to youth, specifically youth eligibility can be found in the Youth RFP on page 7, as well as https://solanoemployment.org/wioa-policies.

The definition of underemployed as outlined in the 2018-08 Youth Eligibility and Enrollment policy is an individual who is:

- employed less than full-time who desires full time employment,
- working in employment not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational and/or skill achievement,
- employed who meets the definition of a low-income individual under WIOA, or
- employed but whose current job's earnings are less than 80% of their previous job earnings.

Q10) Regarding the job center (America's Job Center of California), is the WDB saying the provider [sub-recipient] cannot be the access point? For example, if we wanted to serve the youth in our program and limit it to those youth, is that acceptable or must we serve other youth coming through the AJCC?

A10) The sub-recipient(s) can serve youth in the program and through the AJCC. It is not required to only use the AJCC to serve youth. Respondent(s) can utilize their own agency resources, such as its facility or any public facility that would allow access. The emphasis would be capturing information and data as to who is being served, why they are being served, their individual service strategy. The concept is that any service provider [sub-recipient] of WIOA is a defined part of the AJCC system.

Q11) Correction to Performance Requirements chart on page 10 of Youth RFP:

A11)

Outcome	Description	Measure
Placement in Employment or Education, Second Quarter After Exit	Measured in second quarter after exit	75%
Placement in Employment or Education, *Fourth* Quarter After Exit	Percentage of participants in education, training, or unsubsidized employment; measured in fourth quarter after exit	71%

Median Earnings	Median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit	$3,490
Credential Attainment	Percentage of participants who are enrolled in a training program and obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or diploma up to 1 year after program exit	60%
Measurable Skills Gain	Percentage of participants who are enrolled in a training program that achieve educational milestones	60%

Q12) Is there a current incumbent(s)? How long have they been with the WDB?

A12) Solano County Office of Education is the incumbent service provider and has been operating since June 2019.

Q13) Did Solano County opt into the new waiver for 50 percent OSY?

A13) The WDB did opt into the in-school youth waiver. The WDB doesn't serve a high volume of youth in Solano County, so the WDB requested a 25% in-school youth waiver. The RFP did not include the in-school youth waiver because it is a year-by-year waiver, so Solano is not guaranteed to have that waiver next year. Based on what the state allows for next program year it would be an option during contract negotiations.

Q14) Is there a match requirement?

A14) No, there is no match requirement.

Q15) Do attachments count towards the 15-page narrative limit? For example, if we wanted to add a job description.

A15) The page limit is for the narrative only. No job descriptions need to be included as attachments if they are mentioned in the narrative. Staff cannot guarantee the Review Committee will review any of the attachments that were not requested, but it does not count toward your page limit.

Q16) For the total individuals served, is it three-year projection or per year? Knowing that some individuals might be receiving services into the second year.

A16) The successful respondent(s) would be required to provide the performance indicators for the first year and then those individuals may go into your second year and count towards your second-year numbers.

Q17) In the General Program Eligibility File Verification Worksheet, can you explain the selective service category?

A17) To receive any Federal assistance, all men (18-25) must be registered with the selective service system. Further information can be found in the WDB's WIOA Youth Eligibility and Enrollment Policy.

Q18) For the General Program Eligibility File Verification Worksheet, is there only one document required per category?

A18) For birthdate, age, identity, right-to-work and selective service only one document is required for each category. For the adult/youth (income based) section, depending on an individual's circumstances typically it is one document required, but there are situations where multiple documents may be needed. For example, if an individual is a recipient of public assistance, we'd ask for a printout from their worker. Another example is income. Once the application is dated, we are looking at any income received six months prior. If an individual has multiple sources of income in a six-month period, we'd ask for paystubs from various employers.

Q19) What happens if an individual is working with a youth who has no income? Will it allow them to qualify?

A19) Yes, a youth with no income would qualify. They would use the statement of applicant to verify they have had no income in the past six months.

Q20) Can you talk about the foster care and aged out foster care. Are they automatically eligible even if their income is over?

A20) The sub-recipient would need some type of verification or status that they are currently in the foster care system or aged-out of the system. They typically receive some type of benefits. The allowable documentation sources are outlined in the WIOA Youth Eligibility and Enrollment Policy.

In the Youth Eligibility and Enrollment Policy, there is an Eligibility Checklist for WIOA Youth Programs. Income is not always applicable. For out-of-school youth they cannot be currently attending any school (this includes community college), they must be 16-24 at the time of enrollment, and fit one or more of the barriers to employment. If they are homeless, runaway, or foster youth, social security, or out-of-home placement then that is the qualification and income does not need to be a determination. In that scenario, if they are over income, they would still qualify.

Q20.1) If a person is working and over income are they still eligible for WIOA funded projects if they can prove they were a former foster care youth in the system?

A20.1) It is a unique circumstance for each individual applicant. With out-of-school youth if they have aged out of the system, they don't have to be low income if they can verify that they have aged out of the foster care system. The WDB has a verification sheet that identifies when an applicant would need to be low income and when income is not a factor. This form is called General Program Eligibility Determination WIOA Out-of-School Youth Eligibility Worksheet. This is a worksheet that the WDB uses to determine eligibility, but as a sub-recipient it is not required to use. The sub-recipient would need to have some sort of checklist to identify eligibility. The WDB is happy to provide any of these tools for the selected sub-recipient.

Q21) Does the sub-recipient collect the information and upload it into CalJOBS or just keep it on their site for auditing?

A21) The sub-recipient is required to maintain a record of customers served, documents used to establish eligibility, services provided, and outcomes received. There is no requirement for information to be uploaded into CalJOBS. It is possible to only use electronic systems however, a process would need to be established to do that. The requirement is that the documentation must be kept in the hard copy file or in CalJOBs.

Q22) How long does the eligibility determination process take once all forms are submitted to approve services?

A22) How long a person goes through eligibility determination will be based on the individual program design of the sub-recipient and the individual's ability to complete the documentation requirements. Once the application has been finalized and determined to meet eligibility, the 30-day CalJOBS clock begins and enrollment would need to be completed within that timeframe. It is possible to do all four of the minimum activities (CASAS Assessment, Objective Assessment, Individual Service Strategy and one of the 14 WIOA Required Elements) in one day.

Checking the eligibility for the WDB is part of the technical assistance and how long that is provided can be negotiated. The WDB wants to ensure the eligibility pieces are fully understood by the selected respondent because if eligibility requirements are not met, any funds spent thereafter could be determined as unallowable costs.

Q22.1) Who determines if an applicant is eligible? The WDB or the sub-recipient?

A22.1) The sub-recipient will be responsible for eligibility determination. In the beginning of the contract, the WDB will verify eligibility. Once the onboarding is completed, it will be the responsibility of the sub-recipient to verify eligibility. The WDB will conduct annual sub-recipient monitoring to verify the compliance of sub-recipient eligibility determination. The WDB's technical assistance for onboarding is part of contract negotiations.

Q23) Does it make applicants more competitive if providing more services from the 14 WIOA Program Elements versus quality intensity?

A23) A competitive proposal will include the WIOA program elements that make a strong program design based on the services proposed and the population served.

Each of the 14 WIOA Program Elements is defined per the federal guidelines in the Youth and Enrollment Policy. There are some elements that will not be able to be provided based on the population served. For example: Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention strategies AND Alternative secondary school services are for in school youth focused program elements.

Q23.1) If a sub-recipient is using all 14 WIOA Program Elements as part of their customized plan and they are documenting it by progress notes, is there a way to track each of the 14 elements separately?

A23.1) The element that a respondent selects must be tracked. Not all program elements require documentation but all require case notes. Each program element has codes in CalJOBS that describe the service provided and the case notes give additional information on the expected outcome, etc.

Q23.2) Are the elements funded by WIOA dollars?

A23.2) Program elements do not need to be provided through WIOA funds, but WIOA funds may be used to provide each element used.

Q23.3) Is that the same as stipends?

A23.3) Work experience can be considered paid or unpaid. There is a supportive service policy that outlines how youth incentives can be used from a regulatory standpoint that could provide more guidance if there are technical assistance questions.

Q24) Is it the responsibility of the sub-recipient to do outreach post-exit? Or is the tracked in CalJOBS?

A24) The required outreach for all youth is designated as Follow-Up Services under WIOA and is defined in the WIOA Youth Service Delivery policy. Yes, there are data entry requirements in CalJOBS.

Q25) Is part of the technical assistance the provider [sub-recipient] working with the WDB to determine what exit date is? For instance, exit dates might be different for different programs.

A25) Exit date is when you have no longer worked with the participant or provided a service for the past 90 days. Yes, the WDB will work with the successful respondent on any technical assistance needs for any phase of the program.

Q25.1) If a provider [sub-recipient] offers a program that is two years, exit dates would be when the participant exits from that program so exit indicators wouldn't start until that point?

A25.1) Correct. The only caveat would be individuals in trainings. Milestone achievements in the form of a measurable skills gain would need to be made. That is the one indicator that is not exit based. Since WIOA indicators are primarily exit based, the RFP outlines that respondents should identify performance outcomes that will lead to WIOA indicators.

Q26) What is the expectation for co-location of the job center [America's Job Center of California]?

A26) Staff would encourage the sub-recipient to have a presence in either/or the comprehensive center (Vallejo) or the affiliate center (Fairfield). The mandate is that any entity that receives federal workforce funding is required to be part of the One Stop job center system. Services can be provided on-site, virtually or through referrals. A One Stop Operator meeting is held virtually each month. Whether or not the services are provided at the job center could be dependent on the targeted population; however, it is important to make sure those services are connected to the larger job center.

Q26.1) Would the sub-recipient be responsible for opening the target population for all youth if that wasn't in alignment with the target population that is included in the proposal?

A26.1) The way the RFP was created, the successful respondent is not required to serve all the out-of-school youth population eligible under WIOA youth. For example, justice involved youth may be one of the targeted populations. A justice involved program that is in within a jail would not be able to take referrals from the community because it is a jail-based program, but it would still be required to be part of the One Stop system and be connected to those larger services.

Q26.2) If it's associated with the One Stop system it must be an open referral process for the target population?

A26.2) If you are serving those targeted populations that would be apart of the RFP process. If there are concerns on how that is connected to the larger One Stop system that can be discussed during contract negotiations. There is nothing in the RFP that requires the sub-recipient to receive referrals from the larger system.