

**FISCAL YEAR 2017
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SERVICES GRANT
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD**

RFP#: RFPYS2017

ISSUING OFFICE: BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPT. OF ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
400 WASHINGTON AVENUE, SUITE 100
TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204
<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/jobtraining/youthservices.html>

DATE OF ISSUE: JANUARY 29, 2016

**PRE-PROPOSAL
CONFERENCE:** WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016
1 P.M. – 3 P.M.
Historic Courthouse
400 Washington Avenue – Room 118
TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204

**WRITTEN
QUESTIONS DUE
NO LATER THAN:** WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2016

**PROPOSAL DUE
DATE AND TIME:** THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2016, 2:00 P.M.

**CONTACT FOR
WRITTEN
QUESTIONS:** SUSAN GEHRING-LIKER
youthservices@baltimorecountymd.gov

I. **BACKGROUND**

As the designated administrator for Baltimore County's federally-funded workforce development programs, the Department of Economic and Workforce Development (DEWD) is soliciting proposals from high performing youth services organizations to provide services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to eligible out-of-school youths living in Baltimore County who are from the age of 17 up to and including 24.

DEWD's youth services program assists County youth in acquiring the necessary skills and work experience they will need to transition successfully to adulthood, careers, and further education. Signed into law in 2014, WIOA introduces significant changes to the existing youth program's features and performance standards. The new law outlines a broader youth vision that supports an integrated service delivery system and gives a framework within which local areas can leverage other Federal, State, local, and philanthropic resources. Key provisions of WIOA prioritize services to out-of-school youth (the focus of this RFP), expand program elements and eligibility criteria and increase emphasis on work-based learning.

Information on WIOA should be carefully reviewed by offerors. The WIOA law can be accessed at <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>. Refer to: *Title 1 – Workforce Development Activities / Subtitle B – Workforce Investment Activities and Providers / Chapter 2 – Youth Workforce Investment Activities / Sections 126 through 129*. Also, refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA NO. 23-14 (http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_23-14.pdf).

II. **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

DEWD is responsible for providing an integrated system and sound youth development practices that enable Baltimore County youth to obtain the skills they will need to succeed in the workplace. Accomplishing this outcome will require a diverse partnership of public and private providers of education, workforce, and supportive services.

An integrated WIOA youth workforce development system should link services to local labor market needs, community youth programs, and services that effectively connect academic and occupational learning and provide for the holistic development of youth. The intensity and methods of delivering services should be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of youth participants as they develop and progress through a continuum of customized services.

To create a strong, sustainable local youth program, DEWD is seeking service providers who can meet or exceed WIOA requirements and who can also demonstrate that they:

- Have a strategic approach aligned with the goals of WIOA and DEWD;
- Have a well-developed organizational infrastructure and experienced staff skilled in youth services and program administration;
- Can recruit and serve out-of-school youth in facilities that are geographically distributed throughout the County on public transportation routes;
- Can maintain ADA-compliant facilities while servicing WIOA-funded youth;
- Can incorporate partnerships and collaborations offering a seamless continuum of programs and services to ensure that there are no gaps; (*Partnerships are urged to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to community-based organizations, employers, institutions of higher education, and adult basic education providers*)
- Have effective intake and assessment processes and an efficient, well-defined customer flow methodology that ensures every young person receives a customized array of services that meet his or her individual needs;

- Can maintain a robust partner network that gives youth access to a wide range of services;
- Have a demonstrated track record of providing the proposed services successfully to the target population;
- Have an effective plan to assume a proportional share of the caseload of our current providers, estimated to be approximately 250-300 active and exited participants as of June 30, 2016.

Specific elements of the Scope of Services are detailed in the Sections A through H:

A. Recruitment and eligibility determination for target population

Baltimore County's WIOA youth program serves two categories of disconnected youth¹:

- HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS – Youth in need of reengagement into secondary education - or its recognized equivalent - to obtain a high school diploma and to continue to build their competencies and skills beyond the secondary level.
- HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES – Youth and young adults who have obtained a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent, but who are disconnected from both school and work.

1. Recruitment

Service providers will be expected to have a written strategy to recruit and engage out-of-school youths (OSY) to consistently meet the enrollment targets agreed upon in the contract. Finding, connecting with and recruiting OSY presents significant challenges, which must be overcome with a creative, proactive strategy for broad outreach efforts. Youth must be identified and screened for WIOA eligibility in areas of the county where there are concentrations of the target population. Access to public transportation must be available to facilitate program participation. Youth with disabilities must have an equal opportunity to receive services.

A successful recruitment program will incorporate ongoing outreach to and through community, governmental and faith-based organizations with strong connections to OSY. Potential program participants can also be engaged through Baltimore County Public Schools. The support of parents and guardians should be enlisted to secure necessary documentation. Service providers may also wish to organize partnerships with the Department of Social Services, Department of Juvenile Services, Community Colleges and other entities, and consider non-traditional methods such as those identified in a U.S. DOL demonstration grant:

- Use young adults who have enrolled in the program to help recruit and refer relatives or friends
- Getting referrals from partners such as parole and probation officers, police community resource officers, local pastors, and housing authorities
- Press releases (or newspaper articles featuring success stories) because parents and grandparents respond
- Mass emails to partner agencies asking if employees have family members who can benefit from the program
- Advertising in weekly classified ad papers (e.g. Pennysaver) targeted by zipcode

2. Eligibility Determination

Service providers will be responsible for conducting eligibility screening to assess whether youth meet the WIOA participant criteria outlined on the following page. DEWD staff will review and confirm eligibility determinations made by providers.

¹ The term "disconnected youth" refers to youth ages 17-24 who are not in school or working.

WIOA Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Eligibility Requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not attending any school (as defined under State law); and 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not younger than 17 or older than age 24 at time of enrollment. Because age eligibility is based on age at enrollment, participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 24 once they are enrolled in the program; and 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more of the following: 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A school dropout²; ○ 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. School year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters; ○ A recipient of a secondary school diploma or³ its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner; ○ An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A homeless individual (as defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2(6))), a homeless child or youth (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2))), a runaway, in foster care or 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. ○ An individual who is pregnant or parenting; ○ An individual with a disability; ○ A low-income⁴ individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

² OSY who are school dropouts or who have not attended for at least one calendar quarter of the most recent school year, **do not** have to prove low-income status. Dropout status is determined at the time of enrollment for eligibility as an OSY. Once enrolled as an OSY, that status, for the purpose of the 75 percent OSY enrollment requirement, will be maintained, even if the youth later returns to school

³ OSY who have earned a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent, and/or those who require additional assistance to enter/complete an education program or to secure/hold employment, **must demonstrate** that they are low-income individuals.

⁴ A low-income individual is one who meets at least one of the following criteria: receives(or has received in the past 6 months) or is a member of a family that receives assistance via Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy families(TANF) or the supplemental income program of the Social Security Act; is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of: the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level ; qualifies as a homeless individual, as defined in the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 or the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; is an individual with a disability who meets the income requirements of the program, but is a member of a family whose income does not meet income requirements; further, for the purpose of determining youth participant eligibility “low-income” also includes youth living in a “high-poverty area”. Note: High-poverty area is a Census tract, set on contiguous Census tracks that has a poverty rate of at least 30 percent as set every five years using American Community Survey 5-year data plan.

B. Intake and assessment

Comprehensive intake and assessment that produces an in-depth understanding of each participant's unique needs will be essential to their ultimate success. Research shows that as many as 60% of the 1.6 million young adults categorized as "disconnected youth" may have a developmental challenge or disability. These challenges, as well as a host of other potential barriers, must be identified and addressed early in the process. Therefore, youth service providers will be required to complete, with youth, WIOA-mandated objective assessments as well as a complementary in-depth interview.

At a minimum, objective assessments must include:

- Basic skills (CASAS or TABE)
- Occupational skills
- Prior work experience
- Interests
- Aptitudes, including non-traditional jobs
- Support service needs
- Developmental needs

WIOA requires that the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) or the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) be used for assessing basic skills. The proposing organization will also be responsible for the administration and evaluation of appropriate pre-tests and post-tests in order to measure actual performance outcomes for participants, as appropriate to the activity.

The WIOA Youth Program is not an entitlement program. There may be youth who, although they meet basic eligibility criteria, may have individual goals and needs that are not truly suitable for this program. A youth who is not suitable for the program must receive a warm handoff⁵ by the vendor to a more suitable service provider.

C. Planning and delivering effective, customized services

To strengthen education, employment outcomes and retention for a youth participant, youth service providers must demonstrate an effective service delivery framework for meeting each individual's needs. Service providers must have defined strategies to guide and support youths as they work to achieve their postsecondary and career goals while promoting long-term retention.

Each participant's plan will be outlined in his or her "Individual Service Strategy" (ISS). The ISS is a living document that is revisited regularly to track participant progress in achieving the identified objectives, and ensures that services align with each youth's progress and changing needs. The ISS will include:

- Individualized educational and employment goals;
- Assessment of the need for supportive services and a plan to provide them;
- Results of the comprehensive assessment process (including objective assessments and interviews), which will be documented in a format defined by DEWD; *and*
- A customized program of services that is based on assessment findings and incorporates, as appropriate in each case, **one or more of the 14 WIOA-required program elements summarized in the table below**. These fourteen required program elements support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants. An individual service provider is not required to provide all fourteen elements on its own, but must demonstrate that all will be available to participants through a combination of its own resources and partnerships with other organizations. Service providers must have clear referral processes in place for facilitating warm handoffs to partner organization. The importance of delivering personalized, integrated and well-coordinated services is stressed throughout the WIOA legislation and is particularly relevant here.

⁵ A **warm handoff** is a referral practice wherein the service provider introduces the participant to an appropriate provider in the community in real-time.

WIOA Required Program Elements	Description
<p>1. Tutoring, study, skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery</p>	<p>Strategies that lead to the 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 a recognized postsecondary credential.</p>
<p>2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services</p>	<p>Defined as a public secondary school that addresses needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school, provides nontraditional education, serves as an adjunct to a regular school, or falls outside the categories of regular, special, or vocational education.</p> <p>Instruction and support for secondary credential attainment (includes GED preparation, alternative secondary education instruction, opportunities for credit retrieval, and support for obtaining a high school diploma).</p>
<p>3. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences</p>	<p>Planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; b. Pre-apprenticeship programs; c. Internships and job shadowing; and On-the-job training opportunities. <p><i>Please Note: WIOA places increased emphasis on work-based learning and work experience opportunities for eligible youth. This type of service element should be integral to your youth program design.</i></p>
<p>4. Occupational Skills Training</p>	<p>An organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Occupational skills training is training typically delivered to participants through community college, industry partners, and/or private career schools to provide them with employer-driven, specific vocational skills at entry, intermediate or advanced levels. Occupational skills training leads participants to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions that are required by certain industries. After completing this training, participants may receive industry recognized certificates. Such training must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be outcome-oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy; b. Be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal; and c. Result in the attainment of a recognized post-secondary credential.
<p>5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.</p>	<p>This program element reflects the integrated education and training model and requires integrated education and training to occur concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training. This program element describes how workforce preparations activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internships or job shadowing combined with GED® classes; • Computer training coupled with basic skills training or literacy activities; • Summer work activities coupled with contextual learning on the job; • Job readiness activities (resume writing, interviewing skills, applying for jobs online) combined with GED® classes or tutoring; or, • Occupational skills training (i.e., Certified Nursing Assistant/Geriatric Nursing Assistant training) coupled with intensive medical terminology tutoring; and • Enables individuals to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential.

WIOA Required Program Elements	Description
6. Leadership Development Opportunities	<p>These services include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors. Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to postsecondary educational opportunities; • Community and service learning projects; • Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; • Organizational and teamwork training; • Training in decision-making, including determining priorities; • Life skills training such as parenting, work behavior training, and budgeting or resources; • Civic engagement activities; or, • Activities which put youth in a leadership role.
7. Supportive Services	<p>Supportive services provide financial assistance to participants who would not be able to participant otherwise. As needed, the youth service provider may offer supportive services to eligible participants to assist with transportation, business attire, tools, work or training equipment, child or dependent care, graduation fees, clothing for interviews or job fairs, and more. Before a participant is approved for supportive services, program staff should ensure that other resources have been explored, and no other resource is available to pay for the necessary service.</p>
8. Adult Mentoring	<p>Should be offered to participants as needed and must be provided at a minimum of 12 months, which may occur both during and after program participation. Adult mentoring for youth must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be a formal relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee; b. Include a mentor who is an adult other than the assigned youth case manager; an c. Match the youth with an individual mentor with whom the youth interacts on a face-to-face basis.
9. Follow-Up Services	<p>Must be provided to all participants for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation. Examples of follow-up services include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation assistance; • Childcare or dependent care assistance; • Housing assistance; • Referrals to community resources; • Referrals to medical services; • Assistance with uniforms or other work attire and work-related tools; • Tracking progress on the job; • A work-related peer support group; • Assistance in securing a better paying job, career development, or further education; • Assistance with work-related problems; • Adult mentoring; • Tutoring; or, • Leadership development.

WIOA Required Program Elements	Description
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	Should be offered to youth participants as needed, and could include drug and alcohol abuse counseling or referrals to counseling outside of the WIOA Youth Program.
11. Financial Literacy Education	<p>Activities which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support the ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks, and make informed financial decisions; b. Support participants in learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards; c. Teach participants about the significance of credit reports and credit scores; what their rights are regarding their credit and financial information; how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies; and how to improve or maintain good credit; d. Support a participant’s ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities and to make informed financial decisions; e. Educate participants about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identity theft, and how to resolve cases of identity theft and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data; f. Support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of non-English speakers, including providing the support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials; g. Provide financial education that is age appropriate, timely, and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and savings; h. Implement other approaches to help participants gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high quality, age-appropriate, and relevant strategies and channels, including, where possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools, and instruction.
12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training	<p>Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. Such training must develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Such skills include, but are not limited to, the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Take initiative; ii. Creatively seek out and identify business opportunities; iii. Develop budgets and forecast resource needs; iv. Understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and v. Communicate effectively and market oneself and one’s ideas. b. Approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills include, but are not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Entrepreneurship education that provides an introduction to the values and basics of starting and running a business. Entrepreneurship education programs often guide youth through the development of a business plan and may also include simulations of business start-up and operation. ii. Enterprise development that provides supports and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses. Enterprise development programs go beyond entrepreneurship education by helping youth access small loans or grants that are needed to begin business operation and by providing more individualized attention to the development of viable business ideas. iii. Experiential programs that provide youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business. These programs may involve the development of a youth-run business that young people

WIOA Required Program Elements	Description
	participating in the program work in and manage. Alternatively, they may facilitate placement in apprentice or internship positions with adult entrepreneurs in the community.
13. Labor Market Information	These services should provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training	Post-secondary education and training afford participants long-lasting economic and job opportunities. Therefore, activities that help youth prepare for, and transition to, post-secondary education, and training are key.

D. Complete and accurate case management

Youth case management is the ongoing provision of personalized coaching, counseling, and coordination of services both during the active and post-exit follow-up phases. Effective case management is customer-focused and requires substantive knowledge, understanding, and monitoring of youth with unique challenges and individual barriers. In addition, case management serves an important evaluative function, ensuring that high-quality, well-coordinated services are being provided and are meeting participant needs. It is an essential mechanism for identifying changes in a participant’s condition or circumstances that would warrant an adjustment to the youth’s plan.

Case management activities and essential details about each youth’s progressions and regressions are documented in case notes and on the ISS. Youth service providers are required to prepare accurate electronic case notes for every participant enrolled in WIOA funded programs.

The case notes must be submitted to DEWD for review and approval on a monthly basis. The case note record is a living document that tracks the participant’s activities and progress toward his or her employment and educational goals. The initial case note should give a history of the participant’s current state, barriers, employment status and services planned. Subsequent case notes should reflect a frequency and intensity of participant contact and follow a sequence. Case notes should justify and document any action taken by the youth service provider and/or participant that would describe their performance while receiving services.

E. Implementation of effective retention strategies

Like recruitment, retention of the OSY population can present numerous challenges. Successful participant retention demands organization and planning. Retention activities should engage youth and motivate them to remain in the program until successful completion. **Creativity and innovation in retention strategies are encouraged.** Examples of the range of approaches employed around the country include but are not limited to:

- Offering modest monetary incentives, including achievement awards, which would be budgeted into the program. Other incentives, such as tickets to special events, merchandise, or gift certificates from local merchants, may also be provided;
- Holding recognition ceremonies for milestone achievements to bolster the confidence of participants and encourage them to complete the program. Inviting relatives to social gatherings and asking them to encourage the youth to return can also work;

- Using social media, texts, emails, posts on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to connect;
- Making home visits to let youths know they are welcome back into the program;
- Creating a toolkit for re-engagement of youths who drop out of the program prior to completion;
- Offering referrals to partners for mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, assistance with housing.

F. Establishment and maintenance of effective community partnerships

Service providers must have strong community partnerships in place to be successful in the recruitment process and to provide access to services and resources that increase the scope and impact of the program. Offerors, for example, are encouraged to partner with other community-based organizations and community partners to provide training opportunities, work experiences, transportation, supportive services, and other referral options.

G. Delivery of quality work experiences

Under WIOA, work experience has become a required focus of local youth programs. Although work experience is only one of the 14 required program elements, each participant must participate in a six-week paid or unpaid work experience unless already employed. In addition, **local areas must spend a minimum of 20 percent of non-administrative local area funds on work experience**. Ideally, work experiences should be oriented towards career pathways leading to middle-skill or higher careers.

Service providers will be expected to meet or exceed the 20% work experience expenditure rate. They will also be responsible for handling all aspects of the work experience element, including youth participant wages, payroll processing, staffing costs for development and management of work experiences, and liability insurance.

Employers should be involved in multiple aspects of the program, including having input into both educational and skills training curricula. Employers are also encouraged to provide unpaid (e.g., mentoring, job shadowing, mock interviews, internships) and/or paid (e.g., on-the-job training, summer and year-round jobs and work experiences). The employer’s commitments should be documented in written agreements. In turn, the provider will commit to extensive follow-up services, including regular communication with employers who have hired program participants.

Providers will also be encouraged to establish or develop linkages with postsecondary educational institutions (such as community colleges) and occupational training providers to augment their educational services. For example, a program may partner with the area community college and one or more employers to develop customer-centered industry specific education program with multiple entry and exit points leading to greater employment opportunities. Dialogue between colleges and employers can help ensure that career pathways incorporate skills and certifications that align with the industry needs and provide employment in high-value fields.

H. Meeting or exceeding all performance and reporting requirements

Youth service providers must meet all new WIOA Federal and State program performance indicators outlined in the table below (actual benchmark numbers still to be provided by US DOL and MD DLLR⁶).

⁶ TO PROVIDE HISTORICAL CONTEXT ONLY - The Baltimore County Youth Program metrics under the former law, WIA, were:

WIA Performance Indicator	Expected Outcome Period	Performance Standards
Placement in Employment or Education	Measured 1 st quarter after exit. The # of youth participants who are in employment (including the military) or enrolled in post-secondary education and/or advanced training/occupational skills training in the first quarter after the exit quarter.	73%
Attainment of a Degree or Certification	Measured 3 rd quarter after exit. # of youth participants who attain a diploma, GED, or certificate by the end of the third quarter after the exit quarter.	76%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	# of youth participants who increase one or more educational functioning levels	70%

These requirements are subject to revision when/if new standards or measures are set. These performance requirements are used to assess program effectiveness in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by these programs. Each measure has a specific performance standard associated with it as outlined on the following page.

Providers will also be required to meet specific DEWD program goals (such as enrollment targets) specified in the final DEWD grant agreement. To this end, a performance accountability system has been established which consists of six performance measures.

Approved youth programs will be monitored regularly by DEWD with the oversight of the Baltimore County Workforce Development Board (WDB). All aspects of approved programs will be monitored, and the provider agrees to retain all records pertinent to this agreement, including financial, statistical, property, participant, and supporting documentation for a period of five years beyond this agreement.

In addition to WIOA performance reporting, DEWD requires that service providers provide quarterly reports on performance measures, training outcomes, recruitment activities and results, youth success stories, and a data overview. The specifications of the quarterly report will be shared with successful vendors.

WIOA Performance Indicator	Expected Outcome Period	Performance Standard
Placement in Employment, Education or Training	<p>Measured 2nd quarter after program exit</p> <p>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.</p>	TBD
Placement in Employment, Education or Training	<p>Measured 4th quarter after program exit</p> <p>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.</p>	TBD
Median Earnings	<p>Measured 2nd quarter after program exit</p> <p>Median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit from the program.</p>	TBD
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	<p>Measured during participation in, or within 1 year after, exit from the program.</p> <p>The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in, or within 1 year (365 days), after exiting the program.</p>	TBD
In Program Skills Gain	<p>Measured during participation</p> <p>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 measure skill gains toward such a credential or employment.</p>	TBD
Serving Employers	The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.	TBD

III. **ELIGIBLE YOUTH SERVICES PROVIDERS**

Any public or private for-profit or non-profit organization or educational institution with 501(c)3 status that can demonstrate the capacity and experience to successfully administer youth workforce development programs is eligible to apply. The RFP process is open to both current contractors, as well as qualified organizations that have not previously contracted with DEWD. Organizations must demonstrate a strong understanding of the local workforce system, employer base, and challenges to youths ages 17-24.

To apply for a WIOA OSY Youth Services Grant, an applicant organization must also:

- a. Be registered and in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation.
- b. May be a faith-based organizations, but may not require participation in religious activities as a condition for receiving services.

IV. **TERM OF AGREEMENT**

It is anticipated that the term of any grant agreement resulting from this solicitation will be for twelve (12) months, beginning July 1, 2016 and ending on June 30, 2017.

It is further anticipated that there will be two renewal options available for two years each, depending on provider performance and availability of funds. If both renewal options are executed, the end date of the agreement will be June 30, 2021. Baltimore County reserves the right to extend the agreement for additional periods of sixty to ninety days under the same terms and conditions as stipulated in the original agreement.

Baltimore County also reserves the right to terminate the agreement based on the terms of the executed grant agreement and to adjust the grant agreement amount based on the availability of funds or performance.

The formal grant agreement as executed will dictate specific terms and conditions.

V. **PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE**

A pre-proposal conference will be held on February 10, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at:

Historic Courthouse
400 Washington Avenue – Room 118
Towson, Maryland 21204

Attendance at this conference is **strongly** encouraged.

VI. **INSURANCE**

Applicants selected for awards will be required to submit a certificate of insurance when they sign their grant agreement. The insurance certification may be on a form provided by the insurance carrier indicating sufficient coverage for the period of the grant and specifically naming the County on the insurance coverage. DEWD will not pay submitted expense reimbursement requests until this requirement is met.

VII. **OTHER CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

- Baltimore County reserves the right to request information about the applicant and/or the applicant's proposed program in addition to that which is received and attached to any application that is received pursuant to this RFP.

- Baltimore County maintains the right to reject or accept any or all proposals, to fund or not fund, or reduce the amount of funding available for an applicant's program.
- All awards shall be subject to the availability of funds and the County's Grants Review Procedure which ultimately includes approval by the County Council.
- In addition to those contingencies listed above, funding awards shall also be subject to:
 - The written notification to the County of funding availability by the State;
 - The satisfaction of any requirements, rules or policies imposed on the applicant by DOL/DLLR rules, regulations, or policies and/or the County; and
 - The proper execution of a formal written agreement between the County and the applicant.
- Any service provider selected and funded as a result of this RFP shall be governed by Federal, State and Baltimore County laws, rules, regulations and codes. The applicant will note particularly all applicable DOL, DLLR, Baltimore County, and DEWD rules and regulations, including those that govern the WIOA Youth Program. **Please note: the rules, regulations, and policies impacting this funding (and listed below) are still in preliminary form. All applicants and service providers will be expected to meet the final rules, as well as any future updates thereto.**
 - WIOA: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>. Refer to: Title 1 – Workforce Development Activities / Subtitle B – Workforce Investment Activities and Providers / Chapter 2 – Youth Workforce Investment Activities / Sections 126 through 129.
 - Training & Employment Guidance Letter WIOA NO. 23-14
http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_23-14.pdf
 - State DLLR: <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/mpi/mpi8-15.pdf>
 - County Code: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/agencies/law/countycode.html>
- Any organization that receives an award pursuant to this solicitation must agree to provide all required reports in a timely manner in the prescribed formats, to include, but not necessarily be limited to the items outlined in Section II-H. Award recipients will be subject to periodic monitoring by DOL, DLLR, and Baltimore County and shall also agree to acknowledge receipt of U.S. DOL resources through Baltimore County Department of Economic and Workforce Development (DEWD) in any publications related to the awarded program.
- All expenditures under this grant agreement will be paid on a reimbursement basis only, unless otherwise specified in the agreement.

VIII. **ISSUING OFFICE CONTACT**

The point of contact for written questions or inquiries with regard to this Request for Proposals is the issuing office contact presented below:

Susan Gehring-Liker, Manager
Baltimore County Department of Economic and Workforce Development
400 Washington Ave, Suite 100
Towson, Maryland 21204
E-MAIL: youthservices@baltimorecountymd.gov

Written questions will be entertained until the close of business on February 17, 2016. Questions may be submitted in writing to the email address above, prior to and/or after the Pre-Proposal Conference scheduled for February 10, 2016.

IX. APPLICATION FORMS AND PROCEDURES

A. Forms and Other Documentation Required

Component	Number of Originals	Number of Copies
Applicant Response Form (downloaded and filled in pdf)	1	8
Required Attachments		
• Baltimore County MD application for Financial Assistance	2	n/a
• Signed linkage/partnership agreements from partners (if not attached, must be received by DEWD by 4/1/16).	1	8
• Letters documenting past performance on similar contracts (if not attached, must be received by DEWD by 4/1/16).	1	8
• Letter of agreement(s) re: work experience with at least 1 employer	1	8
• Organizational chart	n/a	9
• Resumes: CEO/ED, CFO, key program positions	n/a	9
• Most recent IRS 990 filing or income tax return	n/a	1
• Most recent audit	n/a	1
• 2014 & 2015 financial statements	n/a	One each (1)
• Current Board of Directors with contact information	n/a	1
• 501 (c) 3 or other legal status documentation	n/a	1

DEWD will review applications for completeness. DEWD reserves the right to reject any incomplete applications.

Note: If documents are signed by anyone other than the individual(s) so authorized, the organization must submit a resolution evidencing that the Board delegated authority to another individual to enter into a binding legal agreement on behalf of the organization.

B. Procedures

Unless otherwise specified, applications and attachments must be submitted on the forms provided and in the order noted in the previous section.

The application should conform to following specifications:

- Be written in Calibri font, 11 point, single spaced with line between paragraphs.
- All pages of the application must be three hole punched.
- No folders or binders allowed.
- Each original and copy must be on 8½ x 11 paper.
- All proposals must be properly collated. Applications that are not properly collated may not be accepted or reviewed.

Applications are due by 2:00 p.m. .on March 24, 2016 to Susan Gehring-Liker, Department of Economic and Workforce Development, 400 Washington Avenue, Suite 100, Towson MD 21204. Envelopes should be clearly marked with the RFP number and brought to the above address Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on or before March 24, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. **No applications will be accepted after March 24, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.**

X. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Each proposal will be evaluated by a review panel based on the following criteria:

Element	Points	Description
Program Design and Approach to Services	40	Under this criterion proposals will be evaluated for the respondent's program service delivery design and overall approach to providing youth services for out-of-school youth. The evaluation committee will also evaluate the proposer's experience in partnership, collaboration, targeting of services, and outcomes.
Organizational Capacity and Capability	25	Under this criterion proposals will be evaluated to determine if the respondent has the organizational capacity, structure, and capability to effectively manage and operate the WIOA Youth program.
Demonstrated Experience and Performance	25	This category will evaluate experience in providing services similar to those being proposed, including the ability to deliver as proposed, and attain and report performance. The evaluation committee will determine to what extent the organization and assigned staff have the capabilities to provide the services described in the RFP and the contractor's proposal. The contractor's financial ability to undertake the contract will also be evaluated. The evaluation committee will also evaluate staff qualifications and administration.
Budget and Reasonableness of Cost	10	<p>The proposed budget will be evaluated for reasonableness of cost, clarity in identifying and explaining costs, minimization of administrative and operational costs, the overall competitiveness of costs compared to other proposals. The review panel will look favorably upon applications that leverage funds from other sources to increase the scope and impact of the WIOA-funded services.</p> <p>Applicants may be required to clarify their proposals by making individual presentations to the evaluation committee. Evaluation of applications will be based on both the narrative section of the application and the budget, and not just cost. However, applicants should not presume they will be invited to make a presentation and should be certain that the application package submitted is complete and fully responsive.</p>

XI. CALENDAR

1/29/16	RFP available on website
2/10/16	Pre-proposal conference: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., 400 Washington Avenue – Room 118, Towson, MD Limited RFP copies available on site.
2/17/16	Deadline for written questions
3/24/16	Proposals due @ 2:00 p.m.
3/24/16– 4/10/16	Proposals evaluated by review committee. Interviews scheduled as needed.
4/10/16 - 5/30/16	Baltimore County Grants Review Committee process and final decision
6/1/16 – 6/15/16	Grant agreements processed and executed
Mid-June	Grantee orientation
07/01/16	New program year begins

XII. AVAILABLE FUNDS

A. WIOA

Assuming WIOA allocations from U.S. DOL and DLLR are comparable to those for FY2016, DEWD anticipates approximately \$1,050,000 in total funding available for awards under this solicitation. Awards may be made to one or more organizations that demonstrate their ability to provide all of the required program elements to youth across Baltimore County.

B. Possibility of additional funding from the Governor’s Office for Children (GOC)

A new focus by the GOC on serving dislocated youths in Maryland may result in additional funding services through the Baltimore County Local Management Board for Baltimore County youth programs later in FY2017 and subsequent years. If this funding becomes available, service providers selected through this RFP will be notified and invited to submit proposals to effectively utilize additional funds to expand or enhance services to Baltimore County youths.

Any contractor receiving these funds must comply with the following policies and procedures:

1. **Monitoring:** The County, in accordance with the requirements that are outlined and/or referenced in this agreement, will monitor the delivery of service provided by the contractor. At any time during normal business hours and as often as the County/State may deem necessary, the contractor will make available to, and permit inspection by County and State representatives, all records, information and documentation, including youth service records, related to the agreement with the County.
2. **GOC LMB Policies and Procedures Manual:** The MD Governor’s Office for Children (GOC) Local Management Board (LMB) Policies and Procedures Manual contains the specific policies for the administration of programs and services that GOC funds. The contractor will be responsible for completing all measures required for full compliance with this manual throughout the length of the agreement. This manual is subject to change throughout the length of the agreement and can be viewed online at the following address: <http://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2014/03/LMB-Manual-July-2015-Final.pdf>
3. **Financial Records:** The contractor shall maintain systematic accounting of the receipt and disbursement of agreement funds using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or Generally Accepted Government Accounting Principles (GAGAP). The contractor must retain all books, records, and other financial documents relevant to this agreement for a minimum of 5 years after the conclusion of the program service period. If a financial audit is initiated prior to the expiration of the 5-year period, and extends beyond the period, all documents must be maintained until the audit is completed.

XIII. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Respondents shall not engage in any activity that would restrict or eliminate competition under this procurement. Violation of this provision may cause a bidder to be disqualified. This does not preclude joint ventures, partnerships, collaborations, or subcontracts.
2. Respondents shall not, under penalty of law, offer or provide any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any Workforce Development Board member, officer, employee, proposal evaluator, an authorized agent of the Workforce Development Board, or elected official for the purpose of having an influencing effect on this procurement.
3. Respondents shall not attempt in any manner to advocate for, lobby, or otherwise attempt to influence any Workforce Development Board member, officer, employee, proposal evaluator, authorized agent of

the Workforce Development Board, or elected official for purposes of having an influencing effect on this procurement

4. No Workforce Development Board member, officer, employee, or authorized agent of DEWD shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Workforce Development Board funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved.
5. The contractor must ensure that the WIOA Youth Services program is adequately staffed at all times during the duration of the contract to provide all services specified in this RFP.
6. The Department of Economic and Workforce Development (DEWD) will provide any training and/or technical assistance needed by the selected contractor in regard to Workforce Development Board policies, documents, procedures, etc. that are specific to DEWD.
7. Profit is an allowable cost with for-profit entities only. Profit payments will be made based upon negotiated performance measures and targets.
8. No more than five (5) percent of funds expended under a contract shall be used for administrative costs, and shall be calculated against the operational budget (excludes costs associated with direct client services – i.e. training and supportive services).
9. The contractor will be required to maintain a case file for each program participant in accordance with standards established by DEWD. Such files will be considered the property of DEWD and must be turned over to DEWD upon request or upon the end of the contract.
10. The contractor may be required to utilize The Maryland Workforce Exchange System (MWE) and any other automated management information system as may be required by DEWD and/or the Workforce Development Board. Contractor shall ensure that the input of data is done in a timely and accurate manner and is in compliance with the requirements established by DEWD and/or the Workforce Development Board.
11. Contractor shall ensure that the confidentiality of all client data is maintained in accordance with state and federal law. Contractor shall also ensure the security of client data in hard copy and/or electronic files in accordance with Workforce Development Board policy.
12. Contractor, including all of its employees, must comply with all Information Technology access and user policies and requirements of the Workforce Development Board and/or DEWD.
13. Contractor must comply with the Workforce Development Board's Marketing Standards and Guidelines, including the use of contractor name, logo, and equal opportunity requirements.
14. Contractor will be expected to fully cooperate with DEWD in the development and implementation of any changes to the WIOA Youth Services delivery program, as deemed necessary and appropriate by DEWD or as required by legislative change.
15. Contractor will be expected to fully cooperate with DEWD in the development and implementation of community partnerships and collaborative related youth services and the maximization of resources. This includes cooperation, coordination, and implementation as may be requested or required by DEWD under Memoranda of Understanding or the agreements entered into by DEWD.

XIV. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/NON-DISCRIMINATION

1. As a condition of the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIOA, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws

2. Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity of 2014 (WIOA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I- financially assisted program or activity;
3. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin;
4. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
5. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and
6. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination of the basis of sex in educational programs.
7. In addition the applicant assurance that it will fully comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, or the Non-Traditional Employment for Women Act of 1991, as amended.