Request for Proposals

For the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Youth and Young Adult Career Services

Proposals Due:
January 17, 2023

Partner4Work
650 Smithfield Street, Suite 2600
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

RFP Release Date:
November 21, 2022

Partner4Work (TRWIB, Inc.) is an equal opportunity employer.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION

This section provides general and background information needed to understand the context and collective goals related to this RFP. This section also describes important details regarding the services and stakeholders related to this RFP, as well as characteristics of any agreements that may result from this RFP.

About Partner4Work

TRWIB, Inc. (dba "Partner4Work") is the workforce development organization that connects funding, expertise, and opportunities to develop a thriving workforce in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. With a budget of more than $22 million in public and private workforce funds, Partner4Work invests in a comprehensive portfolio of programs and initiatives for adults and youth to ensure that current and future needs of employers, job seekers, and underemployed workers are met. Partner4Work leads the public workforce system by:

Helping businesses find and prepare the talent they need to thrive
As a non-profit organization, Partner4Work offers a wide variety of no-cost services to help regional employers attract the talent they need to thrive. From customized labor market data to assistance with finding diverse talent, Partner4Work is the resource to deliver customized employment solutions for any business.

Breaking down barriers to career opportunities
Partner4Work helps provide adult and young adult job seekers with the opportunities to find meaningful employment. Through our providers, we provide access to career training and exploration programs; employment assistance; job search help; and a robust summer jobs program. Partner4Work opens the door to career opportunities.

Providing community organizations with resources to make an impact
Partner4Work proudly partners with more than 80 organizations in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County to provide opportunities for job seekers and businesses alike. We partner with community-based organizations, economic development agencies, training providers, businesses and educators to collectively bridge the gap between people looking for work and employers in need of talent.

To find out more about Partner4Work: www.partner4work.org

Anticipated Awards & Funding Sources

At this time, Partner4Work has issued three major RFPs concurrently. Potential bidders are highly encouraged to review and understand each RFP and determine which to respond to based on interests and qualifications. The opportunities are:

1. PA CareerLink® One-Stop Operator Services: This RFP seeks to identify a qualified provider of WIOA One-Stop Operator Services in support of PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. One contract will be awarded.

2. <u>PA CareerLink® Career Center Services:</u> This RFP seeks to identify a qualified provider of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Services, delivered primarily from the PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. One contract will be awarded.
3. <u>Youth and Young Adult Career Services:</u> This RFP seeks to support programs intended to serve youth and young adults and provide either career exploration and experience with local employers and/or offer pathways to employment or postsecondary education enrollment and retention for young adults. Contracts awarded under this RFP will support a specific number of youth or young adults that contribute to a total reach of approximately 1,000 young people. An estimated 18 contracts will be awarded. Past contracts have ranged from $25,000 to $1,000,000.

Partner4Work anticipates making the following sources and amounts of funding available for the period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 to support any agreements resulting from the above-described RFPs.

	Estimated Number of Contracts	PA CareerLink® Operating Budget*	WIOA Adult/DW Funds	WIOA Youth Funds	TANF Youth Funds
PA CareerLink® One-Stop Operator	1	$600,000			
PA CareerLink® One-Stop Career Center Services	1		$2,500,000	$300,000	
Youth and Young Adult Career Services	18		TBD	$3,200,000	$2,000,000

*The PA CareerLink® operating budget is funded with multiple funding sources according to the contributions of PA CareerLink® partner agencies, via the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA).

Total funds committed through contracts resulting from the above RFPs will not exceed the following:
- WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Funding Maximum: $3,100,000
- WIOA Youth Funding Maximum: $3,500,000
- TANF Youth Funding Maximum: $2,000,000

Awarded contracts may include one or more of the funding sources described above. The ranges given for contract funding sources and amounts are provided for informational purposes only. Bidders should propose a contract value that most accurately reflects costs necessary to effectively implement their proposed program and meet the requirements of this RFP. The actual amounts and sources of funding supporting agreements resulting from this RFP will be based on the proposed budget, successful contract negotiations, availability of funds, and standards for use of public funds (all costs must be reasonable and necessary to carry out the planned functions, allowable, and allocable to the proper grant/cost categories). Partner4Work is unable to define with certainty the WIOA allocation (administrative and programmatic funds) that will be made available for any agreement resulting from this RFP. The federal government allocates WIOA funds annually each spring. Final funding awards will be based upon WIOA funding allocations, Partner4Work priorities, and other factors, at the discretion of Partner4Work. Partner4Work reserves the right to change the funding structure in future funding periods.

Purpose of this RFP

Partner4Work has issued this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify community based providers who will provide eligible youth or young adults ages 14-24 with innovative opportunities for experiential work-based learning that fall into one of two program models:

1. **Career Exploration and Experience:** Youth engage with local employers to experience a variety of careers and workplaces through opportunities such as internships, cooperative education, job shadowing, summer or transitional jobs, paid or unpaid work experience, pre apprenticeships (registered or with intent to register), or others.

2. **Pathways to Employment or Postsecondary Education**: Youth engage with local employers to gain work experience, participate in training and earn industry recognized credentials that will result in employment or enrollment in postsecondary education.

Outlined in this RFP are the available funds to support each of the program models and their associated eligibility criteria, the requirements for providers and program implementation and instructions for how to apply. With an understanding of the diverse interests of youth and the growing occupations in the region, we seek to use this RFP to identify providers interested in collaboration and connecting their programs and opportunities to curate strong career pathways from high school through adulthood for young people with systemic barriers to employment who have been traditionally marginalized within the workforce.

Labor Market Dynamics in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

Significant opportunities exist for young adults to fill spaces in the labor market. The Allegheny County population is aging. There has been a significant increase in the number of Allegheny residents who are 62 years old and older between 2017 and 2021.[1] Consequently, there have been and are expected to be increasing numbers of retirements, causing a shift in the workforce that will leave many open positions to be filled by new jobseekers.

Currently, 19 percent (131,155) of Allegheny County's workforce is employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry and 27 percent of that group is employed in health care support occupations. In the next five years, projections indicate that there will be a demand for 64,136 employees in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry, 13,989 construction workers and 14,956 employees in manufacturing. In Finance and Technology, there is a demand for 1,034 bank tellers, and 604 computer support professionals.[2] These positions within the industries of healthcare, technology, finance, manufacturing and construction are important to a thriving local economy and available to be filled by young people entering the workforce.

In 2022, 91 percent of Allegheny County high school students graduated on time. But 70 percent of graduates will need a career path that does not depend on having a bachelor's degree.[3] These projected

---

[1] United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Comparison Profiles: https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=0500000US42003&d=ACS%201-Year%20Estimates%20Comparison%20Profiles&tid=ACSCP1Y2021.CP05. Downloaded 10.17.22.

[2] JobsEQ, Industry Projections, 2022Q1.
[3] PA Department of Education, 2022.

positions can provide career pathway opportunities for high school graduates who do not choose to seek a bachelor's degree, but receive the appropriate training services, a career pathway and a livable wage.

Workforce Development in the Context of K-12 Education

Over the next four years, nearly 50,000 high school students will graduate from a school in Allegheny County and will be looking to continue on a career trajectory. Traditionally, high school students are shepherded through decisions of going to college, gaining employment or enlisting in the military and are often posed with an either-or choice of college or careers; current labor dynamics call for more options. Between the strong labor market and the rising cost of college, more teenagers are choosing shorter, more affordable, career-connected pathways, and in a recent poll of high school students, 42% said their preferred postsecondary pathway would be 3 years or less[4]. Young people want educational pathways that are shorter and more directly tied to careers than a traditional 4-year university.

The challenge to preparing for a career in the context of K-12 schools is that career planning is highly specific to the learner. The PA Department of Education has Career and Work Standards that young people must master over the course of their school careers, and PA has developed a Future Ready Index for schools in the commonwealth to demonstrate ways in which students are prepared for college and careers, and there are even ways for seniors to meet statewide graduation requirements through alternative pathways related to evidence of career readiness. The priority for career planning within K-12 schools is well established, but young people can only plan for what they have seen or can imagine. Career readiness is not solely an academic endeavor and requires youth to be exposed to a variety of options in order to make informed choices.

Investing in Work-Based Learning for Youth and Young Adults

Partner4Work seeks to invest in providers that, as a collective, provide experiences for youth to build their knowledge and understanding of industries and career opportunities in such a way that enables youth to have a broad set of early experiences that narrow with specificity the closer young adults get to making an informed choice about their adult career trajectory.

Given the projected opportunities for young people to fill roles in high demand industries that do not require 4-year degrees, and the numbers of graduates the county expects to graduate in the next 5 years, there is a theoretical match of supply and demand between jobseekers and jobs. However, the match relies on young people knowing their options and making informed choices all through their educational trajectory to lead them to the employers where the jobs are open. The ways in which Partner4Work plans to invest in young people is to invest in their knowledge of career opportunities through learning experiences—and more specifically, work-based learning.

Work-based learning experiences build over three phases: career exploration, career experience, and preparation and pathways to employment and retention. If connected, they can form career pathways into specific industries that can begin as early as middle school.

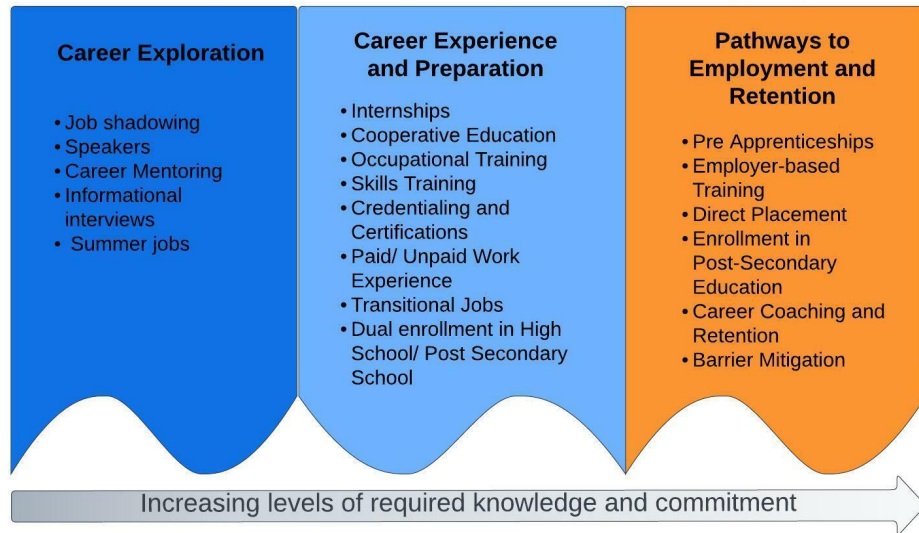At the exploration stage, these are low-commitment interactions and experiences that youth participate in that provide young people with opportunities to build first-hand knowledge of a workplace. This includes things like job shadowing, career mentoring, informational interviews, speakers, or even short

---

[4] https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/16/post-pandemic-four-years-of-college-steadily-loses-its-appeal.html

term summer jobs. The next level of commitment would be to participate in career preparation that could be a way to try out work within an industry or obtain industry-specific training or credentials. This includes activities like internships, cooperative education, occupational training, credentialing, paid/unpaid work experience, and dual enrollment. The level of commitment that requires most informed decision making is a pathway to employment. This includes a registered

Career Pathway Built Through Work-Based Learning Experiences

Career Exploration

• Job shadowing
• Speakers
• Career Mentoring
• Informational interviews
• Summer jobs

Career Experience and Preparation

• Internships
• Cooperative Education
• Occupational Training
• Skills Training
• Credentialing and Certifications
• Paid/ Unpaid Work Experience
• Transitional Jobs
• Dual enrollment in High School/ Post Secondary School

Pathways to Employment and Retention

• Pre Apprenticeships
• Employer-based Training
• Direct Placement
• Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education
• Career Coaching and Retention
• Barrier Mitigation

Increasing levels of required knowledge and commitment

pre-apprenticeship, employer based training, or post-secondary education. Because eligible young adults have at least one systemic barrier to employment, they may also be in need of additional support to retain employment or enrollment. That could include career coaching, barrier mitigation or other retention strategies.

Investing in Communities

Meeting the diverse needs of the community within Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh requires a two-fold approach. First, Partner4Work is expanding the audiences able to receive services through PA CareerLink® at the Comprehensive Centers. Secondly, we seek to establish a physical presence and connection with providers in key communities to ensure that the career services are provided where people need them the most.

The PA CareerLink® Comprehensive Centers are designed to provide a wide variety of workforce services under one roof. Currently, there are two centers in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County - PA CareerLink® Downtown Pittsburgh and PA CareerLink® Allegheny East. Together, these centers receive more than 10,000 visits per year and provide access to a broad array of career-related services and information in one place, serving a diverse range of customers with diverse needs and creating a vital link in connecting job seekers and employers. Youth, as defined by WIOA, are ages 16-24, and they have historically gained access to career services primarily through community-based providers. New in this procurement cycle, is an investment in youth being served at the comprehensive centers where they will have more access to the widest range of opportunities as described in the PA CareerLink® Career Services RFP.

Even though the centers are intended to provide broad access to workforce development services for youth and adults, it is still understood that some individuals and groups face barriers to participation related to transportation, life circumstances, past experiences, and other factors. To ensure that the resources of PA CareerLink® reach the areas where they are needed the most, Partner4Work has prioritized the highest need communities identified by DHS, to be areas to partner closely with trusted community-based providers.

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services has developed a Community Needs Index to identify areas in the municipalities in the county and city neighborhoods that face greater socioeconomic barriers than others. The index ranks areas by need level by looking at: the percentage of families who live below the poverty line; the percentage of unemployed males; resident education attainment levels; the percentage of single mothers; and the number of 911 dispatches for gun shots fired. Below is a map of Allegheny County with the municipalities and city neighborhoods color coded according to their level of need.

Allegheny County Communities by Level of Need
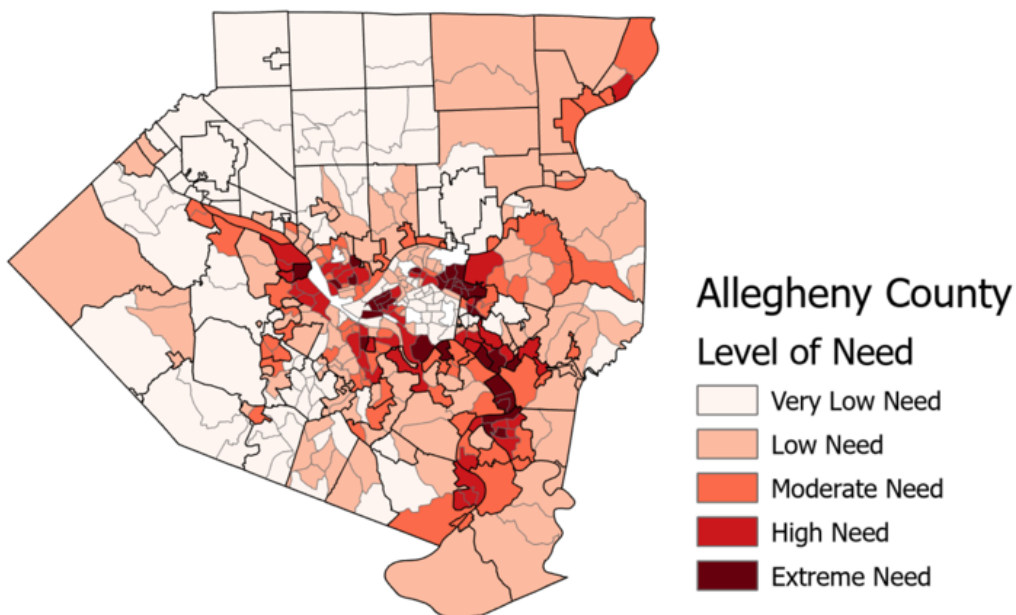
The areas of highest need outside the City of Pittsburgh include Duquesne; McKeesport; Homestead; West Homestead; Braddock; North Braddock; Wilkinsburg; McKees Rocks. Within the City, the neighborhoods of highest need were Mount Oliver; Hazelwood; Hill District, Homewood, Larimer, East Hills and parts of the North Side.

The Community Needs Index does not include analysis of access to public transportation. According to the 2019 Equity Index of Mobility Need conducted by the Port Authority of Allegheny County and the Allegheny County Planning Department, the following areas have the highest need for public

transportation but limited access to frequent bus transit services: Arlington Heights; St. Clair; Mount Oliver; Spring Hill-City View; Chartiers City; East Pittsburgh Borough; Pitcairn; Turtle Creek; North Versailles; and Stowe Township.

To meet the diverse needs of jobseekers and businesses while still having a reach into communities, it is expected that community-based providers maintain working relationships with comprehensive centers in order to ensure that all participants have access to the services at the One Stop centers independent of their connection point. In the long term, it is Partner4Work's priority to establish an entire network of community providers who partner with the Comprehensive Centers through a shared approach to Business Services, coordination of referrals, training registration and service delivery that may also include the availability of additional funds to support adults through WIOA Adult and/or Dislocated Worker funds.

Applicants should propose outreach and engagement strategies including but not limited to a physical presence to deliver program services in one or more of the high need areas mentioned above. This may include applicant facilities already located in one or more of these areas or partnership with neighborhood-based organizations. Realizing the vision of a more true One-Stop at the center of an entire network of workforce development partners will take time to build and dedicated providers who are aligned with this vision. Proposals that reflect the experience and willingness of agencies to partner in such a way will be prioritized.

Program Dates

Successful applicants will begin delivering the full range of services as described below on July 1, 2023. Agreements resulting from this RFP may include four 12-month contract periods, as shown in the table below, with the second, third and fourth contract periods renewable at the discretion of Partner4Work, based on performance of the successful applicant and funds available. The agreement is not renewable after the fourth 12-month period.

Program Dates and Contract Periods		
Contract period 1 (base)	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Base contract award
Contract period 2 (option)	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	Renewable by Partner4Work
Contract period 3 (option)	July 1, 2025– June 30, 2026	Renewable by Partner4Work
Contract period 4 (option)	July 1, 2026– June 30, 2027	Renewable by Partner4Work

Who Can Apply

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, community-based organizations and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state and local law. Applicants must be an incorporated organization and have been in business for at least three years. Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the federal government, not debarred, and have proof of insurance and a Unique Entity Identifier Number (previously known as "DUNS number.") Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared

ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or Partner4Work are ineligible to apply.

The successful bidder will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality occupational training services to the target populations described in this RFP, including placing participants in quality jobs. Programs should be grounded in the communities they serve, with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successfully operating occupational training programs.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium, but the lead applicant/fiscal agent must be clearly identified. In this scenario, Partner4Work would contract with one lead organization. All entities whether directly contracted or subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent will be held to the requirements of federal, state, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent.

Applicant Competency – All applicants must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative capabilities and capacity, professional staff, financial resources and stability, and administrative and fiscal systems to carry-out the work described in this RFP. Applicants must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. Partner4Work requires assurance that the selected applicant's performance of the terms and conditions of any agreement resulting from this RFP be undertaken in accordance with the highest level of integrity and business ethics. Applicants must be able to implement a system of self-monitoring, including the review of key data related to performance, quality assurance, financial integrity and accuracy. Applicants are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the funding sources identified in this RFP. If Partner4Work determines, at its sole discretion, that the selected applicant(s) is not responsible, that it does not possess the administrative, fiscal, and/or technical resources and capabilities necessary to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of an agreement, it shall terminate the agreement immediately.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

Through this RFP, Partner4Work expects to award multiple cost reimbursement contracts to provide workforce development services to youth and young adults in Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh.[5] While there is no total dollar value limit on proposals submitted in response to this RFP, Partner4Work expects to fund multiple proposals, the total sum of which will not exceed $5.2 million for the period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The actual amount of total and individual awards will be based on the proposed budgets, availability of funds, and standards for the use of public funds (all costs must be reasonable and necessary, allowable, and allocable to the proper grant/cost categories). Respondents may submit proposals serving youth from Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, or both.

---

[5] For the purposes of this RFP and subsequent contracts, youth living in the City of Pittsburgh must be served using City of Pittsburgh funds. Youth living in Allegheny County outside of the City of Pittsburgh must be served using Allegheny County funding.

About the Funding Sources

Funds available through this solicitation are formula funds allocated by the Department of Labor and Industry that are provided through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Youth Development Fund (TANF YDF). TANF funds originate from the PA Department of Human Services and are administered by the PA Department of Labor and Industry. Both are allocated to workforce development boards as stewards of public dollars who oversee and are accountable for the delivery of career services. Public funds must be made available through open procurement processes such as this RFP. All funds are participant-based, in that they may only be used to support services and programming for eligible participants. Lastly, the contracted funds are available on a reimbursement basis and would be accessed through invoicing Partner4Work for allowable expenses per the terms of subrecipient contracts. Descriptions of each funding source are below.

WIOA

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the primary federal law governing the funding and provision of workforce development services to job seekers, employers and other stakeholders in the United States, administered by the US Department of Labor (USDOL). WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and supportive services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Please visit the USDOL website for a more thorough overview of WIOA. All qualified parties interested in applying in response to this RFP must be familiar with the goals and requirements of WIOA and all its implementing guidelines; successful applicants awarded WIOA funding must follow and comply with all rules and regulations therein.

WIOA provides the framework for a national workforce preparation system that is flexible, responsive, employer-driven, customer-focused, and locally managed. The Act integrates workforce development programs to better respond to the employment needs of workforce system customers—employers and job seekers. The WIOA system is built around seven key principles:

- *Streamlining Services:* Integrating multiple employment and training programs at the "street level" through the one-stop delivery system to simplify and expand services for job seekers and employers.

- *Empowering Individuals:* Customers will be empowered to obtain the services and skills they need to enhance their employability.

- *Universal Access:* Through the one-stop system, every customer will have access to a set of core employment-related services.

- *Increased Accountability:* Providers of service will be held accountable for meeting employment-related performance measures.

- *Local Oversight:* Local boards (such as Partner4Work) with involvement from the private sector are responsible for program planning and oversight of the local system.

- *Local Flexibility:* WIOA provides local flexibility to improve and encourage innovative and comprehensive workforce investment systems. Local partners play a key role in policy development that is customized to meet the needs of the community.

- ***Improved Youth Programs:*** WIOA seeks to expand youth programs by encouraging a close connection to the local labor market and communities with strong linkages between academic and occupational learning.

WIOA places a strong emphasis on **Career Pathways**, defined in WIOA Section 3 (7) as "a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:
- aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options;
- includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- organizes education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster."

Along with its focus on career pathways, WIOA requires programs to be accountable, demonstrate success, and focus on continuous improvement. Funds made available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will primarily support Pathways to Employment and Retention program models. Significant consideration should be given in the budget to allow for adequate case management and data entry. At least 25% of funds must be spent on work experience. Staff time spent supporting work experience is an allowable work experience cost. See [Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 23-14](#) for additional guidance on work experience expenditures. All qualified parties interested in applying in response to this RFP should review the [WIOA Youth Program Guidance;](#) as successful applicants awarded WIOA funding must follow and comply with all rules and regulations therein.

Programs that fit within the Pathways to Employment or Post-secondary Education Model will most likely be funded with WIOA Youth funds. However, Partner4Work reserves the right to determine the funding source associated with any proposed programs.

TANF

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Youth Development Program (TANF YDP), funded by The PA Department of Human Services (PA DHS) and administered by the PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), is intended to augment and expand youth workforce development funds and activities supported by WIOA. TANF programs provide quality workforce services for youth and young adults, focusing on employment and education experiences and the development of essential workplace skills. All qualified parties interested in applying in response to this RFP should review the [TANF YDP Manual;](#) as successful applicants awarded TANF funding must follow and comply with all rules and regulations therein.

The primary goal of Pennsylvania's TANF Program is to provide support to families as they make the transition from dependence on welfare to self-sufficiency. TANF youth programs should help youth prepare to enter jobs, build work skills, and create self-efficacy skills.

Programs that fit within the Career Exploration and Experience Model will most likely be funded with TANF Youth Development funds. However, Partner4Work reserves the right to determine the funding source associated with any proposed programs.

Available Funds

As the workforce investment board overseeing investments in two different workforce areas, The City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, funds are budgeted separately for the County and City and require separate contract budgets.

Approximate funding availability:

	WIOA	TANF	Total
Allegheny County	Up to $1.5M	Up to $1M	Up to $2.5M
City of Pittsburgh	Up to $1.7M	Up to $1M	Up to $2.7M
Total	Up to $3.2M	Up to $2M	Up to $5.2M

Available WIOA funding: up to $3.2M in WIOA Youth funding is available through this solicitation. Of this, up to approximately $1.7M is reserved for services for youth and young adults living in the City of Pittsburgh and up to $1.5M is reserved for youth or young adults living in Allegheny County exclusive of the City. WIOA programs, given their complexity, required focus on young adults with barriers to employment, and required placement in post-secondary education or employment outcomes, are generally expected to have a higher cost per participant than TANF programs.

Available TANF funding: up to $2M in TANF Youth funding is available through this solicitation. Of this, up to approximately $1M is reserved for services to youth living in Allegheny County and up to $1M is reserved for services to youth living in the City of Pittsburgh.

Respondents must clearly indicate how many youth or young adults from each geographic area (City and/or County) and funding stream (TANF and/or WIOA) you intend to serve. The final awards will depend upon proposal quality, geographic area to be served, target population, program model, and other considered criteria. Based on the population and funding stream selected, respondents are required to respond to different sections of this RFP. Bidders may propose programs that start youth under TANF programming for career exploration and preparation and transition those who are interested in pursuing employment to WIOA services for occupational skills training and placement.

Partner4Work reserves the right to fund successful proposals out of either TANF or WIOA funding and to shift the funding source for projects in subsequent option years. The federal government allocates WIOA Youth Program funds and TANF funding annually each spring. Therefore, Partner4Work is unable to define with certainty the WIOA or TANF allocations (administrative and programmatic funds) that will be made available for agreements resulting from this RFP and will know total contract amounts with greater certainty when allocations are announced.

Partner4Work reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed because of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the contract period, as it deems necessary and in the best interests of Partner4Work. The most credible proposals for programs most aligned with the requirements of this RFP and most advantageous to Partner4Work in terms of quality and cost will be recommended for funding.

Program Cost Reimbursement

The programs procured through this RFP will be funded through cost reimbursements. Successful bidders must have the ability to pay monthly program costs up front. Partner4Work will require an invoice, proof of expenses, and required documentation to process a reimbursement. Partner4Work will only reimburse the provider for actual expenses incurred during the effective dates of the contract. The reimbursement timeline will be finalized during the contract negotiation. Allowable costs will be determined by all applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance.

PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Partner4Work seeks to contract with organizations that not only have expertise and capacity to be responsible stewards of public workforce funds, but also models the job quality practices we hope to advance among employers. Below are descriptions of the abilities and practices required from all successful Partner4Work contractors.

Administration and Staffing

The administrative load of implementing a workforce development program funded by Partner4Work is significant. Compliance with the policies and regulations from the US Department of Labor, the PA Department of Labor and Industry and Partner4Work must be addressed within the design of programs and the administrative structure. It is required that successful bidders and subsequent contractors will have the administrative capacity to work closely with Partner4Work staff to maintain program compliance throughout the program year through technical assistance training, regular check-ins, open communication and timely reporting. Data entry and overall case management requirements are also significant and consideration for such must be planned for in staffing models and case load capacity.

The fiscal administration of the program requires the ability to potentially track spending across multiple funding streams according to both participant-based funding eligibility and an established cost-allocation model. Partner4Work requires documentation of all expenses to be submitted with invoices that may include, but not be limited to receipts, general ledgers, timesheets for staff and/or participants and payroll ledgers in order to document allowable costs for reimbursement. More specifics on the administrative requirements are in Appendix E. Proposals must demonstrate the administrative capacity for maintaining both fiscal and program compliance in order to be considered for this solicitation.

Employer Practices

Partner4Work recognizes that good jobs are essential to a healthy economy, successful businesses, strong communities and thriving families. This extends to our business partners as well as organizations within the workforce development field. Organizations with strong workplace practices are better equipped to attract and retain the diverse talent necessary to accomplish program goals. As such, Partner4Work encourages that all staff members employed through any agreements resulting from this RFP earn a livable wage per MIT living wage calculator, with a minimum salary of $34,673 per year or $16.67 per hour at the time of this RFP. Additionally, bidders should demonstrate a commitment to implementing job practices that increase economic stability, economic mobility, and equity, respect and voice for all individuals employed by the organization. Such job practices include those identified within the U.S. Department of Commerce Job Quality Toolkit that are organized around eight drivers; 1) Recruitment & Hiring, 2) Benefits, 3) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility, 4) Empowerment & Representation, 5) Job Security & Working Conditions, 6) Organizational Culture, 7) Pay, and 8) Skills &

Career Advancement. Additional consideration will be given to organizations that can clearly articulate current and on-going strategies to establish an inclusive work culture and increase job quality for all employees with a particular focus on frontline positions.

By responding to this RFP, bidders are also agreeing to the potential of collaborating with Partner4Work on job quality initiatives that aim to increase the availability of good jobs within our local economy.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The first four sections entitled people based practices, targeted impact, partnerships and program accessibility describe central requirements of all programs, independent of program model. There are requirements, however, that will vary depending on whether the program fits into the Pathway to Employment and Retention Model or Career Exploration. Those can be found starting on page 17.

People-Centered Practices

Successful applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Programs should be grounded in the communities they serve, with staff focused on providing culturally responsive services and a history of successful programming for young adults disconnected from employment and education or at risk of dropping out of high school. Partner4Work will invest in programs that employ evidenced-based and/or promising practices that incorporate trauma informed approaches within service delivery models.

Targeted Impact

Youth or Young Adult Population

It is expected that program participants will be between the ages of 14-24, meet the eligibility criteria specific to the funding stream, and fall into at least one of five populations:

- *Current high school or college students with barriers to employment[6]* who need assistance with career planning, and preparing for post-secondary education or employment;

- *Young people who have dropped out of high school* who need their high school diploma or GED along with career guidance and transition support;

- *Young adults with a high school diploma or its equivalent* who need occupational skills training and/or academic remediation to connect with the workforce or education;

- *Young adults with a number of college credits who are younger than 25 years old* and in need of assistance maintaining their enrollment in education or finding employment;

- *Young adults with barriers to employment[7] who may be currently unemployed or underemployed* who are in need of guidance towards career-level employment

---

[6] See Appendix B: Terms and Definitions for more clarity on the meaning of "barriers to employment", "basic skills deficient", and more terms
[7] See Appendix B: Terms and Definitions for more clarity on the meaning of "barriers to employment", "basic skills deficient", and more terms

High Need Communities

The Department of Human Services has identified specific communities where large numbers of young people experience barriers to employment, described earlier in this RFP. Providers with established roots and partnerships within the communities highlighted will be given preference. Priority will be given to bidders that demonstrate past success in serving individuals who experience the following potential barriers to employment:

- home insecurity, the foster care system or justice system
- physical or invisible disabilities
- english language learner (ELL)
- pregnant or parenting
- one or more parents are incarcerated
- live in a high-need community with infrequent bus service, as identified in the 2019 Equity Index of Mobility Need conducted by the Port Authority of Allegheny County

Priority Industries

Industries with potential for a large number of entry level jobs within the Pittsburgh region and a strong case for increasing gender and racial diversity within its workforce are healthcare, technology, construction, finance and manufacturing. Within those industries, the employees in occupations that require a high school diploma, such as healthcare support employees, computer support technicians, tellers, construction laborers and manufacturing workers, are over 80% white. Additionally, employees in those positions with higher experienced-level salaries, such as computer support technicians ($73,800), construction laborers ($58,800), and manufacturing workers ($61,700) are over 80% male. Yet, positions with lower average, experienced-level salaries such as healthcare support workers ($36,900) and tellers ($35,700) are largely female (over 80%). Consequently, programs dedicated to ensuring representation in jobs with higher salaries based on race or gender within the workforce will be given additional consideration.

Partnerships

The central purpose of work-based learning is to expose young people to the world of work and to local employers. Programs should provide opportunities to experience local workplaces on a short term basis to build their resumes and social capital, enable young people to make informed decisions about their careers and assist them in making progress towards their goals. The support provided to young people are the 14 WIOA elements, as well as other interventions needed specific to the populations served. The types of training and support provided should be specific to the needs of the young person and be relevant to their trajectory. It is not reasonable to expect that a single organization can directly provide all facets of a workforce development program, therefore it is required for bidders to propose providing service offerings and meeting program goals through a variety of partners.

Partnerships that must be included and verified with a letter of commitment are:

- Referral partners to assist with recruitment and reaching target populations and communities
- Employer partners who are committed to providing work-based learning experiences for young people, and for program graduates ready for employment, employer partners that are committed to offering hiring consideration or employment at self-sustaining wages

Partnerships that may also be included depending on internal capacity and program design are:

- Human service providers or in-house partners that can assist with addressing barriers to employment or meeting human service needs simultaneously while their career development needs are being met
- Training partners that offer education and training, or occupational skills training that result in industry-recognized credentials
- Administrative partners or vendors that add to the organization's capacity for fiscal management or human resource management through subcontracts or shared service agreements
- Eligibility determination partner who would be responsible for case management, data entry and determining eligibility for potential youth
- Existing programs committed to creating space for youth or young adults with barriers to participate. In this partnership, the services proposed in this RFP would be focused on populations with barriers who are underrepresented and in need of supportive services in order to fully participate in an existing program.

By responding to this RFP, bidders are also agreeing to the potential of new partnerships. It is the intention of Partner4Work to procure a portfolio of diverse providers who will also partner with one another to refer clients and share services as appropriate and contribute to an overall learning community. One such partner is PA CareerLink® and its One Stop Center partners, and it is required that programs serving young people establish functional relationships with PA CareerLink® staff to establish referral pathways for youth or young adults that originate at either a community provider or the One Stop Center.

At least three (3) letters of commitment from partners are required attachments to proposals. One letter must come from a referral partner and the other from an employer. The third letter should come from any partner who contributes significantly to the design or administration of the program. All letters should outline the specific commitments that the partner has made and the opportunities that will be available to youth as a result.

Program Accessibility

Partner4Work is committed to ensuring programs are equipped and prepared to operate safely. In delivering the services required herein, successful bidders must follow all federal, state, and local regulations regarding health and safety, including but not limited to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Allegheny County Health Department. Successful bidders must establish and maintain a plan to address all operational and programmatic considerations related to COVID-19 or other outbreaks and emergencies, including providing adequate protective equipment and other preventative measures, having a plan for swift action for containment or mitigation, social distancing and limitations on large gatherings, specific protections for vulnerable populations, and any other considerations defined federal, state, and local regulations and Partner4Work.

Successful bidders will also employ virtual methods of participant contact and engagement, and be available during non-traditional working days and hours via phone call, text, or email. For young people in need of accommodations because of a physical or invisible disability or because of a language barrier,

bidders should ensure to account for the needs of clients through strategic partnerships or deliver them within the program design and budget.

Requirements by Program Type

The developmental needs of youth ages 14-24 change constantly throughout adolescence well into adulthood. The services required to address their needs and mitigate barriers will also vary. Programs designed around career exploration and experience require different interventions compared to those intended to assist a young person in obtaining employment or enrolling in post-secondary education as a step on their career journey. Below describes the requirements specific to each program type described in this RFP. The requirements have been established based on funding stream requirements as well as Partner4Work priorities. Proposals will only be evaluated against the criteria for which their program is best aligned. See Appendix E: Does My Program Align to evaluate the alignment of proposed programs with the associated program models, funding sources and administrative requirements

It is possible to have a program that incorporates both program models as a curated process for young people that begins with career exploration as a way to identify interested individuals for available employment opportunities. Such a model should be clearly articulated through an intentional design and goals specific to each phase of the program.

Model 1: Career Exploration and Experience

Career Exploration and Experience programs are not required to result in employment, rather, they must offer youth direct exposure and experiential learning opportunities with local employers. Programs designed to offer career exploration and experience will most likely be funded through TANF Youth funds. Therefore, these programs must meet all of the criteria specific to TANF funding as well as those prioritized by Partner4Work. Proposals should address the following program requirements:

Terms of Participation

Programs that fall into this category should focus on a specific age group within the 14-24 age range to offer developmentally appropriate work-based learning opportunities. In particular, young people must meet the eligibility criteria for TANF youth in order to be enrolled in the program and services may only be delivered to those youth who are formally enrolled. Youth could participate as part of their formal school experience, or as part of their involvement in a community-based program or activity. Enrollment may begin on July 1 and full enrollment must be reached by December 31 at the latest. Youth are enrolled for one (1) program year, and may only extend their enrollment pending an approved program model or explicit permission from Partner4Work; as well as eligibility redetermination.

Eligibility Determination

Every young adult participant must be verified as eligible before receiving services. TANF Youth eligibility criteria is outlined broadly below with the specific details in the Partner4Work Youth Eligibility policy . In order to be determined eligible, the participant must submit verification documents per Partner4Work Youth Eligibility policy, and TANF YDP Manual. All verification documents must be kept in case files and are subject to an audit at the discretion of Partner4Work, the PA Department of Labor and Industry, or the US Department of Labor. To be verified as a qualified participant for the TANF YDP an individual must:
- Be between the ages of 12 (or has completed the 5th grade) and 24 years at the time of enrollment.

- Have proof of Social Security Number.
- Be a U.S. citizen or a TANF-eligible non-citizen.
- Be a PA resident.
- Have personal monthly gross earned income that does not exceed 235% of the FPIG.

Workforce boards are asked to prioritize youth with barriers to employment, however, those barriers would only be used to determine eligibility if the young person's income exceeded 235% of the FPIG.

For definitions of key terms, please see Appendix B: Terms and Definitions. Please note that respondents are not required to serve an entire population and may specialize in serving specific demographic groups within all of those who are eligible.

Data Entry and Case Management

At this time, L&I is working to develop a digital system of record for TANF programs within the state's current CWDS system. Eligibility determination is required to be carried out using a digital tool developed by L&I that is supported by the collection of required verification documents. Case managers may work with a caseload of youth individually or as a cohort and will be responsible for data entry and maintaining case files. Additional requirements and processes may be determined by L&I and would subsequently be required to be carried out by subcontractors as applicable.

Program Activities

Requirements for TANF funds are broadly defined as workforce development activities. Partner4Work has chosen to hone in on work-based learning as a key workforce development activity that must occur across all youth and young adult programs. Similar to WIOA Youth, programs funded by TANF YDP dollars must also support the provision of the 14 WIOA Service Elements. It is not expected that all providers would deliver all 14 elements, but all elements should be available to youth through a combination of referral partnerships. Additional guidance on activities and allowable expenditures is provided in the TANF YDP Manual.

Types of Work-Based Learning Opportunities

The types of work-based learning opportunities that could fall into the category of career exploration and experience include job shadowing, career mentoring, informational interviews, internships, externships, cooperative education, registered pre apprenticeships, paid or unpaid work experience. The format and structure of these experiences should align with either the definitions published through the Department of Labor and Industry or the Department of Education, or with evidence-based best practices.

The educational component of these opportunities should consist of learning the information or skills necessary to be successful in the experience or developing a deeper understanding of the industry. Credit-bearing activities for school-aged students may be incorporated, but should not be the main program goal at the expense of experiential learning in a work-based setting. These include activities such as diploma retrieval and credit recovery for youth who have dropped out of high school, activities resulting in evidence of mastery the PA Career Education and Work Standards for K-12 students, dual enrollment in college coursework within high school, cooperative education or internships that meet school credit requirements in the context of Career and Technical Education. Within post secondary education, the experience may also meet requirements for field experience, internships or cooperative

education for technical schools, colleges and universities. However, for all educational components, the learning must be contextual, and all experiences must include a direct interaction with an employer.

Performance Measures

TANF funds are broadly intended to be used to expand the availability of the 14 WIOA elements and provide workforce development activities for eligible young people. There are no specific performance measures required by the funding stream, however, all TANF-funded programs will be required by Partner4Work to have measurable outcomes specific to their program design that will include as a baseline that all youth participate in a work-based learning opportunity and at least 85% complete the experience.

Ultimately, the value in career exploration is that young people learn about their strengths and competencies, build the skills necessary to be successful in a future workplace, and they're exposed to a variety of possibilities for career pathways. This is best done experientially in the context of an actual workplace. Below are the baseline required performance measures for a career exploration and experience program. Respondents are expected to set at least two additional performance measures that speak to the goals of the program and demonstrate progress made by young people. Additional goals should be specific, measurable, attainable within a program year, reasonable and timely. Partner4Work reserves the right to add or modify performance measures in each year's contract negotiation.

Percent of young people who develop a career plan known as an individual service strategy	100%
Percent of young people who participate in a work-based learning experience	100%
Percent of young people who successfully complete a work-based learning experience	85%
Percent of experiences that align with one of the following industries: healthcare, technology, financial services, construction or manufacturing	Propose
At least 2 other measures of success	Propose

Model 2: Pathways to Employment and Retention

Programs designed to offer pathways to employment will most likely be funded through Title I of WIOA. The WIOA Youth Program allocates specific funds to local workforce boards to deliver comprehensive workforce development services to young people ages 14-24. The funds are intended to support both in-school and out-of-school youth who face systemic barriers to employment. Therefore, these programs must meet all of the criteria described under WIOA Youth as well as those prioritized by Partner4Work. Proposals should address the following requirements:

Terms of Participation

In order to easily meet and exceed performance measures, programs that fall into this category should prioritize young people who will be ready to commit to employment or enrollment in post-secondary education as a pathway to employment by the time they exit the program. In particular, young people must meet the eligibility criteria for WIOA Youth in order to be enrolled in the program. Enrollment may

happen at any point during the first three quarters of the program year and participation may extend into the next year if necessary and approved by Partner4Work. The relationship with young people established through this program should include the time of service and training as well as a full twelve (12) months afterwards for follow up services and retention support. In the event that Partner4Work chose to support a Pathways to Employment and Retention program with TANF funds, there would be no funds to support follow up services after a participant has completed the program.

Eligibility Determination

Every young adult participant must be verified as eligible before receiving services. WIOA Youth eligibility criteria is outlined broadly below with the specific details in the [Partner4Work Youth Eligibility policy](#) . In order to be determined eligible, the participant must submit verification documents per [Partner4Work Youth Eligibility policy](#), and [WIOA](#). All verification documents must be kept in case files and are subject to an audit at the discretion of Partner4Work, the PA Department of Labor and Industry, or the US Department of Labor. Eligibility criteria broadly includes:

- Be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the U.S.; and
- Meet selective service registration requirements (males over 18 only).
- School status of in-school youth (ages 14-21) or out-of-school youth (ages 16-24)
- Resident of Allegheny County or the City of Pittsburgh
- In-school youth must be low income and have at least 1 barrier to employment that may include:
  - Basic skills deficiency
  - English language skills
  - Justice system experience
  - Homelessness
  - Foster care system involvement
  - Being pregnant or parenting
  - Having a disability, or
  - Needing additional assistance
- Out-of-school youth must be not currently enrolled in school and meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - Dropped out of school
  - Holds a diploma or GED and is low income AND either has basic skills deficiencies or is an english language learner
  - Justice system experience
  - Experienced homelessness
  - Foster care system involvement
  - Being pregnant or parenting
  - Having a disability, or
  - Needing additional assistance

In the event that Partner4Work chose to support a Pathway to Employment and Retention program with TANF funds, eligibility criteria would match those described on page 19 and in the TANF YDP Manual.

For up to date eligibility criteria, please refer to the most recent Partner4Work Youth Eligibility Policy. For definitions of key terms, please see Appendix B: Terms and Definitions. Please note that respondents are not required to serve an entire population and may specialize in serving specific demographic groups within all of those who are eligible. For example, the target audience of a program may be 16-18 year

olds who have justice system experience. While both in school and out of school youth are eligible, Partner4Work is required by law to spend at least 75% of its allocation on programs serving out of school youth.

Data Entry and Case Management

Once a participant has been verified eligible, they must be entered into the official system of record for WIOA youth programs in Pennsylvania. The system of record for participant-level workforce development data in PA is the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). Successful WIOA bidders agree to have all case managers or other staff trained in data entry and management in CWDS. Successful bidders must recognize that CWDS is the system of record for WIOA services in the Commonwealth and agree that all WIOA program data will be entered therein.

Case management is a process of building relationships with participants, understanding clients to the extent that managers can help guide young people and recommend services and training pathways that meet their needs. WIOA youth programs require that case management within a provider organization also includes extensive data collection and management within guidelines set within WIOA and defined by Partner4Work staff. All case notes, assessment results, service plans and participant accomplishments must be recorded in CWDS with regular entries and updates occurring every 30 days at the latest.

Assessment- Based Career Planning

By design, WIOA youth services are intended to be highly responsive to the needs of young people and require the use of objective assessments within the enrollment process to understand the participants' academic level, skill levels, and service needs. Career assessments should also be administered to uncover participants' strengths, areas of interest and other qualities that could be useful in driving career planning. Comprehensive assessment results and conversations with participants should inform a service plan for a young person that will empower them to achieve their career goals. The service plan for youth is known as an Individualized Service Strategy (ISS) and is built into the digital system of record for WIOA youth programs. The ISS should outline the goals, roles, responsibilities, services and action steps that will be taken towards achieving placement in post secondary education or employment. All services provided to participants should be linked to their career goals and must be documented within the ISS.

WIOA 14 Service Elements

The service elements that must be available to youth in WIOA Youth Programs are listed below. Providers should be able to make all 14 services available to youth participants through direct service or referral partnerships. It is not an expectation that every provider has expertise in delivering all 14 elements, however, the elements that should be provided as a baseline in all programs are in bold below.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to the completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
2. Alternative secondary school services, as appropriate;
3. **Paid and unpaid work experience⊙ that links academic and occupational education,** which may include summer employment opportunities, employment opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on the job training;

4. Occupational skills training*, as appropriate, particularly training that leads to industry recognized credentials aligned with in-demand industry sectors;
5. Education* offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social 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 not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;**
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. **Career awareness, counseling, and exploration;**
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

✪ It expected that at least 25% of WIOA youth funds are spent on the time and costs necessary to provide paid or unpaid work experience to youth.

*When youth are enrolled in academic or occupational skills training in WIOA programs, they must be assisted in earning an industry recognized credential. They must also demonstrate a measurable skill gain by the end of the program year.

**Supportive services are defined by Partner4Work's Supportive Service Policy. Given the barriers that youth may experience to obtain and retain a job, supportive services should be thought of as providing what is needed to remove barriers to employment.

***Follow up services are provided after a young person has exited programming because they no longer are in need of services and have enrolled in post secondary education or are employed. The specific types of services that may be provided are included in Partner4Work's Follow Up Service Policy. Consider follow up services as those that a young person may need in order to maintain employment or enrollment in post-secondary education.

Training Services
Employment or enrollment in post-secondary education that results in living wages and economic mobility is the central purpose of WIOA Youth programs. To that end, training services serve a significant purpose depending on the competencies, self-efficacy and career goals of the young person. Strong programs that effectively serve out of school youth with barriers to employment will be able to provide an array of training services to meet their specific needs, either in-house or through partners.

Some examples include:

Academic training:
Youth enrolling in programs with deficiencies in reading or math may require remediation to the extent that they may be able to access training content, complete necessary exams or acquire certifications.

GED or Diploma Retrieval services are an essential means to acquiring a high school diploma or equivalency in order to unlock additional employment or educational opportunities.

Foundational skills:

In a survey of 233,755 job ads from June 2021-June 2022, the top four soft skills required were communication, customer service, cooperative team player, and organization. The top hard skills were related to the use of MS Office products and sales. Building these foundational skills would be transferable to almost any job and could serve a purpose not only in skill building, but also in confidence building. Training that establishes milestones for showing progress and celebrating successes can support the self-efficacy of youth and contribute to their stamina and perseverance through their own growth and learning required to maintain a positive trajectory on their career path.

Occupational Skills Training/ Credentialing:

Young people who have identified a career path of interest and are in need of additional education should be enrolled in occupational skills training. It may be provided in-house or through referral pathways between partners. Training that results in an industry recognized credential should be prioritized; they are those that have been created by employers or endorsed within an industry and are used in hiring or recruitment. Industry recognized credentials that are stackable and in high demand industries provide young people with the largest amount of opportunities for growth.

Types of Work-Based Learning Opportunities

Work-based learning opportunities in the context of Pathways to Employment and Retention programs include direct connections to employment upon completion. This includes pre-apprenticeships that are registered or that are intended to be registered within the program year, employer-based training opportunities, or partnerships that result in consideration for employment following participation. Even programs that may target post-secondary enrollment as a workforce development strategy must also engage employer partners that provide relevant context for the young peoples' educational decisions. Paid or unpaid work experience is a required program component, but it should not be the goal of the program. It must be provided as either a means of establishing employment history or references or exploring a short term job in an industry of interest with the main goal being long term employment or enrollment in post secondary education upon program exit.

The benefit of WIOA Youth funds is that they are intended to assist in mitigating barriers to employment and can provide funds to support participant costs that would enable young people to participate in existing workforce development programs. Partnerships that do not create new programs but instead use WIOA funds to increase the accessibility of existing programs to target communities or industries described earlier in this RFP will be strongly considered.

Performance Measures

The effectiveness of WIOA programs are measured across the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance codified by federal and state law. Provider performance across these indicators will be evaluated according to definitions, calculations and guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor, including but not limited to TEGL 10-16 and TAC (Technical Assistance Circular) 17-01, as well as related WIOA guidance and directives from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. As a Workforce Development Board, Partner4Work is required to negotiate goals for each of these indicators periodically with the PA Department of Labor & Industry. The indicators and negotiated goals apply to the WIOA programs that Partner4Work oversees, as a whole, across the workforce development system in Pittsburgh and

Allegheny County. The WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance are marked in the chart below with an asterisk.

Beyond those measures required by WIOA, Partner4Work has incorporated additional measures to provide evidence of progress towards organizational goals around integration of services. Respondents may also propose any additional measures that speak to the goals of the program. Proposed programs must clearly demonstrate the potential for success in terms of the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance and all other proposed measures. Partner4Work reserves the right to add or modify performance measures in each year's contract negotiation.

Programmatic retention (those who begin and complete a program)	90%
Demonstrate a measurable skill gain by the end of the program year (if enrolled in training)*	85%
Placement in Employment or Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education Upon Exit	85%
Employment or Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education in the 2nd Quarter after Exit*	75%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit*	$3,500
Earn an industry-recognized credential by the 4th quarter after exit (if enrolled in training)*	85%
Employment or Placement in Post-Secondary Education in the 4th Quarter after Exit*	65%
Percent or number of participants referred to PA CareerLink or One Stop Partners	Propose
Percent or number of participants coenrolled in PA CareerLink for access to additional training services	Propose

*WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance

The longest term outcome for Pathways to Employment and Retention Programs is economic and career mobility. Not all young adults are ready for their first career-level job between the ages of 16-24. Career development for individuals exists on a continuum of first obtaining a job(s), then moving into a better job(s) with higher pay or benefits, and then eventually moving to a career-level job(s) to build expertise within an industry. Sometimes employment pathways require post-secondary education or training as a stepping stone, other times it may require incumbent worker training in order to advance to higher paying positions with more opportunity. Young people need different training and employment services at all parts of the career development continuum and the flexibility provided within WIOA Youth enables providers to deliver customized services for a young person whose starting point is unemployment or at any part of that continuum. Partnerships that are able to not only assist youth in gaining employment or enrollment in post secondary education, and can also articulate ways that young people can be advanced along the career development continuum will be strongly considered.

Budget

All costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary according to applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance and WIOA and/or TANF

regulations. Refer to the appropriate regulations per the funding source in conjunction with the uniform guidance to identify disallowed costs associated with this grant. Effective budgets will enable the proposed program to meet the intent and requirements of the contract, while being realistic, reasonable and prudent, avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures. WIOA programs must include at least 25% of expenditures in work experience costs. Staff time spent supporting work experience counts towards this metric. Direct participant costs are a key part of youth services and Partner4Work encourages bidders to maximize the use of direct participant funds in their service delivery model.

HOW TO APPLY

This section provides instructions for preparing and submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, including required proposal content and format, important dates and deadlines, and how to find out more about the RFP. Before preparing and submitting a proposal, interested and qualified applicants are highly encouraged to read all other sections of this RFP and key source documents referenced throughout to gain a full understanding of the services requested and provider characteristics and competencies sought.

Proposal Instructions

Before drafting a proposal, review the flow chart in Appendix F to evaluate the alignment of your program into the basic funding priorities outlined in this RFP. The strongest proposals will be able to clearly describe program design, implementation and outcomes in a way that is credible and inspires confidence in your organization's ability to administer the program.

Interested and qualified applicants must submit proposals by Tuesday, January 17th at 11:59pm to rfp@partner4work.org. Emails should have the subject line "Youth Proposal [Organization name]". Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered. Proposals are limited to seventeen (17) pages, excluding the cover sheet and any attachments. Proposals must be submitted in 11-point, Calibri font, single-spaced with 1-inch page margins. Your proposal may not be considered if page limitations and formatting requirements are not met. Required attachments will not count toward the page limitations established below.

Respondents wishing to apply for multiple RFPs must complete separate proposals for each. Respondents applying for funds to support the two program models described in this solicitation may do so within a single proposal. Applicants may request a specific funding source to support their program model, however, Partner4Work reserves the right to decide the funding source for a specific project in a given year and may change over time.

Your proposal must contain all the content below in the same general order illustrated. Strong proposals will demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements described throughout this RFP and establish the capacity, experience, and program design needed to meet the required standards and goals:

1. **Cover Sheet** – Use template provided. (See Partner4Work's webpage for this RFP)

2. **Executive Summary** (2 pages maximum) that includes the following:

a. An overview of the organization's qualifications, including the number of years it has successfully provided services in southwest Pennsylvania, the type of services provided, and the demographics of customers served;

b. If submitting as a partnership or collaboration, please identify all key partners and the lead entity;

c. A concise description of the proposed program that identifies the community (geography and demographics) to be served, program model, and the proposed number of youth served in each Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh;

d. The amount of funding requested per funding stream for the period beginning on July 1, 2023 and ending on June 30, 2024;

e. The proposed outcomes of programming.

3. **Organization Overview and Capacity** (3 pages maximum) Describe each of the following for your organization:

a. Basic organizational description, including, but not limited to legal status (e.g. nonprofit, for-profit, government), governance structure, executive leadership, mission, key programs and services, annual budget and number of full-time staff. If submitting as part of a partnership, please identify all the partners and proposed subcontractors and explain their role, services to be provided, expertise, and rationale for participation in the program. Attach MOUs for all partners (not included in page limits).

b. Past experience in managing quality workforce development programs, especially those similar in size and scope to those sought in this RFP, including but not limited to contracted number of individuals served, actual individuals served, services and activities delivered, contract values, and performance outcomes. Include contracted outcomes and actual outcomes on every workforce development grant your organization has been awarded within Allegheny County and/or Pennsylvania within the past three years. If your organization does not have workforce development grants within Pennsylvania, please include contracted and actual outcomes on workforce development grants from outside of the Commonwealth.

c. If your organization has performed work within the past 2 years (including currently) similar to the work described in this RFP, that is or has been subject to official corrective action or another type of performance or compliance-related remediation, please describe. Include the specific contracts involved, names of programs and funders, factors leading to corrective action or remediation, and whether and how deficiencies were corrected.

d. Location of your facilities, as well as the resources available in the facilities. Describe the access to public transportation, planned hours of operation, and ADA accessibility features of the site. Describe your organization's history of serving young adults with barriers to employment at the site or sites.

e. Describe what makes your organization uniquely qualified to provide workforce development services to youth in Allegheny County and/or the City of Pittsburgh and how your programming aligns with the mission and vision of Partner4Work.

f. Describe your experience with, and/or commitment to, working with individuals from marginalized and historically underrepresented communities.

4. **Program Narrative**– Describe each of the following for your proposed program

Provider Requirements: (2 pages max)
    a. <u>Administrative capacity:</u> Describe your organization's strategies to meet the administrative demands of operating a program that may result from a contract through this solicitation. In your response, be sure to address how you will accomplish the following:
        i. Maintaining program compliance with the criteria outlined in the funding description of this RFP
        ii. If the proposed program incorporates both career exploration and pathways to employment, describe how you propose to using both TANF and WIOA funds to not duplicate services and to support youth on a trajectory
        iii. Oversee case management practices and data entry
        iv. Carry out data entry requirements
        v. Produce timely and accurate reports and engage regularly with Partner4Work staff
        vi. Fiscal management and invoicing with accuracy and precision inclusive of all receipts for reimbursement.
        vii. Fiscal oversight and ability to comply with the Uniform Guidance. See Appendix C for more information on administrative and fiscal capacity requirements.
    b. <u>Staffing:</u> Describe the proposed staffing plan to support the programmatic, administrative, and executive components of the program. Respondents should specify staffing levels, position titles, the tenure in the role and organization for key staff members. Attach an organizational chart illustrating all positions with substantive involvement in the proposed program and lines of authority and responsibility. Use this section of the narrative to clearly describe the organizational chart, including brief job descriptions for key positions. Also attach staff resumes or minimum qualifications for key positions of your proposed model involving director-level responsibilities. In your response, be sure to address how you will accomplish the following:
        i. Employ a professional staff with knowledge of the regulations of the funding stream, statement of work, and expertise in workforce development and trauma informed care. Please identify any key skill sets, such as language fluency or certification held by key staff.
        ii. Ensure a high level of staff performance and retention, cultural responsiveness and services to young adults.
        iii. Maintain reasonable caseloads for all case managers
        iv. Maintain regular and clear communication between proposed staff and Partner4Work.
    c. <u>Staff Retention and Development:</u> Explain the process for retaining current staff, training current and new staff on WIOA and/or TANF guidelines, Uniform Guidance, and Partner4Work regulations and program requirements. Identify your annual staff turnover rate for the past three years and explain any recent turnover of key positions. How does your organization maintain the level of service to young adult clients if staff leave the organization? How do you measure the success of individual program staff and invest in their continued development?
    d. <u>Job Quality Practices:</u> Describe your organization's top 3-4 current job practices that ensure job quality for your own employees and 1-3 additional job practices that will be implemented over the course of the program period. Explain how your organization establishes an inclusive workplace culture or plans to do so. Provide a breakdown of the demographics of the staff of the organization. Describe the extent to which your demographics compare to the populations you seek to serve and any processes you have in place to measure or increase the diversity of your workforce.

Program Requirements (2 pages maximum)

    e.   <u>People-Centered Practices</u>: Describe your approach to case management and service delivery. How is the staff trained to implement trauma-informed care? What do culturally responsive practices look like at your organization? Is your methodology and approach to case management evidence-based, based on promising practices, or homegrown? In what ways does client satisfaction impact your organization?

    f.   <u>Targeted Impact:</u> Describe the youth population you intend to reach. In what communities do you have established relationships? What industries are your employer partners connected to? What is the impact that your program will have on communities and/or industries?

    g.   <u>Partnerships</u>: Describe each of the following for your proposed program. Be sure to attach 3 letters of commitment from partners with the first two being from referral and employer partners :

        i.   <u>Referral partners:</u> Describe your partners who will drive youth to your program

        ii.   <u>Employer partners:</u> Outline all employer partners, the industries they are affiliated with and the commitments that they have made.

        iii.   <u>Additional program partners:</u> Describe any other functional program partners and their contributions to youth and to the success of the program.

        iv.   <u>PA CareerLink Network partnership:</u> Describe the ways you currently partner with PA CareerLink if applicable. Share the ways in which you would envision partnering with PA CareerLink and the other partners procured through this solicitation.

    h.   <u>Program Accessibility</u>

        i.   <u>Virtual Provisions:</u> Describe the extent a youth may participate in services virtually. Include a description of all the points of virtual access for youth. If using an online platform for training or communication, please describe it.

        ii.   <u>Accessibility:</u> Describe the accommodations your organization is equipped to provide for youth should the need arise. These may include accommodations for youth with visible and invisible disabilities, English language learners, parents, shift workers, or any others.

Model-Specific Requirements: Respondents may answer the questions that correspond with the model for which the proposed program best aligns. (3 pages max)

Model 1: Career Exploration and Experience: Describe the following in regards to the services that youth may access through their participation in your program.

    a.   <u>Terms of participation</u>: Describe the lifecycle of the program year with a scope and sequence of activities.

    b.   <u>Eligibility determination:</u> Describe the process of recruitment, selection, eligibility determination and participation. What referral pathways exist for youth who are not verified as eligible to participate in other programs?

    c.   <u>Data entry and case management:</u> Describe your approach to case management as it relates to data entry. List the staff who would be responsible for data entry and case management and their titles. What is the anticipated case load for each? What will be your processes for monitoring case files and documentation to ensure compliance?

d. <u>14 WIOA Elements</u>: List which of the 14 WIOA Elements will your organization provide on site through program staff. Which will be provided on site through partnerships? Which will be provided through referrals to other agencies? Be sure all partners referenced here are listed in the partnership section with more detail.

e. <u>Types of work-based learning opportunities:</u> Describe the specific work-based learning opportunities that will be available to youth. Specify if youth will be paid stipends, wages or incentives or whether they will be earning any type of academic credit. Describe how you will ensure the quality of their experience.

f. <u>Program outcomes:</u> Describe how you will measure success. Be sure the program goals are specific, measurable and attainable within a program year. What are options for next steps on the pathway for youth that complete the program?

g. <u>Organizational portfolio of programs:</u> Describe the relationship between the program described in this proposal and existing programs within your organization's portfolio. How, if all, do the programs compliment one another?

h. <u>Funding stream alignment:</u>Which funding stream do you think would be best to support your program? Describe the reasons why. Share any experience you have with the requested funding stream. In particular, share if staff within your organization have CWDS experience or knowledge.

Model 2: Pathways to Employment and Retention: Describe the following in regards to the services that youth may access through their participation in your program.

a. <u>Terms of participation:</u> Describe the criteria you will use to determine whether a young person is committed to employment or enrollment in postsecondary education following participation. What will be your eligibility determination process? What benchmark accomplishments will signify a participants' readiness to be exited from the program?

b. <u>Eligibility determination:</u> Describe the process of recruitment, selection, eligibility determination and participation. What referral pathways exist for youth who are not verified as eligible to participate in other programs?

c. <u>Data entry and case management:</u> Describe your approach to case management as it relates to data entry. List the staff who would be responsible for data entry and case management and their titles. What is the anticipated case load for each? What will be your processes for monitoring case files and documentation to ensure compliance?

d. <u>Assessment:</u> Describe the ways in which youth skills, interests, and abilities will be assessed in order to connect them with services and opportunities.

e. <u>Career planning:</u> Describe the process by which staff and youth will draft the youth ISS. How and when will the ISS be updated? In what ways will the training and services provided be driven by the youth's goals and documented in the ISS?

f. <u>14 WIOA Elements:</u> List which of the 14 WIOA Elements will your organization provide on site through program staff. Which will be provided on site through partnerships? Which will be provided through referrals to other agencies? Be sure all partners referenced here are listed in the partnership section with more detail.

g. <u>Training:</u> Describe the trainings that will be available to youth and their type (academic, foundational, occupational skill, industry recognized credentialing). Which will be provided onsite by program staff? Which will be provided onsite through partnerships? Which will be provided through referrals?

h. Types of work-based learning opportunities: What opportunities for occupational training and industry recognized credential attainment exist within your program model? How, specifically, are training and credentials tied to employment opportunities? How will you ensure that at least 25% of all funds are spent on the staff time or direct costs that support paid or unpaid work experience as a work-based learning opportunity?

i. Pathways to employment and retention: Describe the employment trajectory for youth who participate in your program. Include the positions they would be qualified to hold and the starting salary of those positions. If relevant, provide the percentage of program graduates that have been historically hired as a result of the program. Describe the extent that graduates were hired by employers within their field of study or interest. If enrollment in postsecondary education is a step on the pathway, describe the opportunities young people will have to engage with employers to make their educational decisions based on career goals. What does the employment outlook look like for those postsecondary graduates? Describe your strategy for offering follow up services to support youth to retain their employment or enrollment for at least 12 months after program exit. Highly rated responses will clearly demonstrate how the proposed program components connect young adults with opportunities in sustainable career pathways.

j. Program outcomes: Describe how you will measure success that include and go beyond those set as performance measures by WIOA. Be sure the program goals are specific, measurable and attainable within a reasonable time frame. For those that are set as WIOA performance measures, describe how you will monitor progress towards achieving those measures.

k. Organizational portfolio of programs: Describe the relationship between the program described in this proposal and existing programs within your organization's portfolio. How, if all, do the programs compliment one another?

l. Funding stream alignment: Share any experience you have with WIOA Youth Program funds, or WIOA funding in general. In particular, share if staff within your organization have CWDS experience or knowledge. Describe your process for ensuring quality programming is delivered that meets all of the criteria required for the use of WIOA Youth program funds.

5. **Budget**– Use the required budget template (see Partner4Work webpage for this RFP)[8] to submit budgets for the period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.[9] Respondents may submit a single budget that reflects costs for County and/or City residents and must explain the projected cost allocation in the budget narrative. If proposing programming under both program models, a separate budget for each model should be submitted. Partner4Work reserves the right to determine the appropriate funding source that will support subsequent contracts depending on the amount of funding available and the ability of the provider to meet funding source requirements.

Please note that Partner4Work will award specific funding amounts to the successful bidder for each program (i.e., Career Exploration or Pathways to Employment) and workforce development area (i.e., Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh), according to funds available, contract discussions, Partner4Work priorities, and other factors. The successful bidder will be asked to provide multiple

---

[8] The template file must be opened and completed using MS Excel only.
[9] Reference *General Information, Anticipated Award & Funding Sources* for information regarding possible contract values and sources of funding to help guide your budget development.

budgets for any contract resulting from this RFP, reflecting the specific funding sources and amounts awarded by Partner4Work, and deliver services in proportion to the funding sources and amounts awarded. Additionally, make sure at least 25% of costs of WIOA Youth funds are allocated to paid or unpaid work experience for youth participants, which may include staff time to develop and manage work experience opportunities or related wages and supportive services.

All costs must be allowable according to applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance and regulations of the funding source, and allocable to the proposed program. Effective budgets will enable the proposed program to meet the requirements of the contract, while being realistic and reasonable, avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures. Refer to the appropriate regulations per the funding sources described in this RFP in conjunction with the Uniform Guidance to identify disallowed costs associated with this grant. See Appendix D for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative.

6. **Budget Narrative** (maximum 2 pages) – Provide a narrative to accompany the budget that describes the purpose of each cost, explains how all costs were estimated, and justifies the need for all costs in meeting contract requirements. In particular, you must indicate the percentage of the total budget that you propose to support with funds from the County and/or City with a description of the basis of your allocation. In your narrative, be sure to clearly communicate the calculation for staff, supportive services, equipment, general operations, technology, administration, indirect and any other costs necessary to perform the services described in this RFP. A strong budget narrative will minimize or eliminate the need for clarifications from evaluators reading the proposal. If your proposal includes in-kind services or donations, including cash contributions, fee-for-service or other revenue generation, or any other leveraged resources, use the budget narrative to describe the actual or estimated value of such contributions. If applicable, also attach a letter of support from any organization providing leveraged resources in support of your proposal. See Appendix D for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative.

7. **Attachments** (not included in the page limit)
   a. <u>Required attachments</u> - These attachments will not count against the page limitations for each proposal section above.
      i. At least 3 letters of commitment from partners. One must come from a referral partner and another from an employer partner. See *Program Narrative, Provider Requirements, Partnerships.*
      ii. Program organizational chart. See *Program Narrative, Provider Requirements, Staffing*.
      iii. Key staff resumes or minimum qualifications. See *Program Narrative, Provider Requirements, Staffing*.
   b. <u>Optional attachments</u> - You may choose to include optional attachments with your proposal; however, all attachments must clearly relate to your proposal. Examples may include letters of support, MOUs, a timeline or schedule of activities, or a table illustrating past performance. Optional attachments containing general information not directly relevant to the proposed program will not be considered. Strong letters of support or MOUs will attest to specific partnerships or relationships with organizations or businesses that you plan to leverage or involve directly in your program, as described in your proposal. Letters of support or MOUs should agree with the description of the support in your proposal and quantify the direct value of services or resources leveraged. Proposal readers may consider optional attachments in

evaluating the proposed program, to the extent they strengthen the content of your proposal, as described herein. Attachments will not count toward the page limitations established herein.

Review and Selection Process

All proposals received by the submission deadline will be initially reviewed by Partner4Work for completeness and compliance with this RFP. Proposals passing the initial review will be scored by qualified evaluators according to the criteria below, with attention to clarity, completeness and quality. High scoring proposals will clearly demonstrate an ability and likelihood to effectively meet all provider and program requirements, deliver the proposed program, and meet the standards and intended outcomes of this RFP. Certain bidders may be requested to participate in presentations or discussions with proposal evaluators and other Partner4Work staff, at the full discretion of Partner4Work. Partner4Work reserves the right to consider information gathered during presentations or discussions with bidders in its evaluation and selection process. Award recommendations of the evaluators will be presented to the Partner4Work Board of Directors for final decision.

Scoring for the required sections of the proposal will be assigned as follows:

Proposal Review Scoring Rubric	
Cover Sheet	Required, but not scored
Executive Summary	Required, but not scored
Organization Overview and Capacity	10 points
Program Narrative	60 points
Budget	20 points
Attachments	10 points
Total points available	**100 points**

Successful applicants will be invited to negotiate a contract for services based on the project described in the proposal and stipulations of the funding source.

Review Timeline (all dates are subject to change):

Release of RFP: November 21, 2022
Due date - questions for bidder's conference: December 2, 2022 at 11:59pm ET
Due date - registration for bidder's conference: December 6, 2022 at 11:59pm ET
Bidder's conference: December 7, 2022 at 1:00pm ET
Due date - all questions regarding this RFP: January 9, 2023 at 11:59pm ET
Due date - proposal submission: January 17, 2023 at 11:59pm ET
Potential bidder presentations or discussions: From late February to mid-March, 2023
Notification to bidders: End of March, 2023
Contract development and transition (if applicable): From April to June, 2023
Contract start date: July 1, 2023
Partner4Work reserves the right to make changes to the above timeline.

Questions or Requests

All questions or requests for additional information regarding this RFP must be made in writing to RFP@partner4work.org by January 9, 2023 at 11:59pm ET. Emails must have the subject line "Questions, Youth Services [Organization name]." Answers will be posted publicly at www.partner4work.org. Interested parties are encouraged to check the website frequently for updates. Partner4Work may not answer questions received after January 9, 2023 at 11:59pm ET.

Bidder's Conference

Partner4Work intends to conduct a bidder's conference on December 7, 2022 at 1:00pm ET. However, Partner4Work reserves the right to reschedule or cancel the bidder's conference and will post notice via the Partner4Work website if it chooses to do so. All interested parties are highly encouraged to attend the bidder's conference, which should be viewed as a vital opportunity to ask questions, understand proposal requirements, and obtain guidance on the scope and nature of the work required by this RFP.

The bidder's conference will be conducted virtually. Attendees must register no later than December 6, 2022 at 11:59pm ET by emailing RFP@partner4work.org and including names of organization and attendees. Emails must have the subject line "Bidder's Conference, Youth Services [Organization name]." Partner4Work will reply to confirm attendance and send instructions regarding how to attend the event.

Questions may be asked during the bidder's conference, but complete answers may not be available until a question/answer document is released or updated following the conference. Interested parties are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the bidder's conference, following the guidance provided in the *Questions* section above, no later than December 2, 2022 at 11:59pm ET.

Disclaimers

- [Executive Order 2021-06, Worker Protection and Investment](#) must be followed throughout this RFP.
- This Request for Proposals (RFP) does not commit Partner4Work to award a contract.
- Partner4Work may select a firm based on its initial proposal received, without discussion of the proposal. Accordingly, each proposal should be submitted on the most favorable terms, from a price and technical standpoint, that the bidder can submit to Partner4Work. Partner4Work may, however, have discussions with those firms it deems in its discretion to fall within a competitive range.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant, request oral presentations from applicants, or conduct site visits from any applicant before a contract award.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to fund portions of a proposal, or to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part. Rejection of a portion of a proposal does not necessarily negate the entire proposal.
- Partner4Work may, at its discretion, adjust the level of funding provided to successful bidders under this RFP and/or consider the funding of proposals not initially funded under this RFP at a later date.
- No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a contract for services or supplies.
- All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to Partner4Work and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, Right to Know Law, or other applicable legislation.
- The contract award will not be final until Partner4Work and the successful bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. Partner4Work reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No activity may begin prior to final Partner4Work approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and Partner4Work.
- The submission of the proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged to any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.
- Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of Partner4Work are considered public records and subject to disclosure. Partner4Work reserves the right to issue additional RFPs if and when it is in Partner4Work's best interest to do so and may elect to negotiate and issue multi-year contracts to successful bidders under this or subsequent RFPs.
- All programs and activities are designated as equal opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact staff to request assistance with access to this RFP.
- Applicants must be capable of agreeing to the requirements set forth in the Partner4Work contract templates, available at https://www.partner4work.org/document/partner4work-contracttemplates/.

Appendix A – Request for Proposals Cover Sheet

See webpage for this RFP for fillable version of this form

Name of RFP for this Proposal: Enter text here
Use title of RFP on Partner4Work website

Lead Applicant: Enter text here

A. Contact Information
Organization Name: Enter text here
Address: Enter text here
City: Enter text here   State: Enter text here Zip Code: Enter text here

Principal Contact Person: Enter text here **Title**: Enter text here.
Phone: Enter text here **Email**: Enter text here
Fiscal Contact Person: Enter text here **Title**: Enter text here
Phone: Enter text here **Email**: Enter text here
Executive Director: Enter text here
Phone: Enter text here **Email**: Enter text here

B. Legal Information: Type of organization (place a check mark (X) in the left column to indicate the type of your organization):

Select	Type of organization
	For-Profit
	Non-Profit
	Government
	Educational Institution

Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN): Click or tap here to enter text.
Please provide your current Unique Entity ID: Click or tap here to enter text.
Please provide your current CAGE Code: Click or tap here to enter text.

C. Requirements / Documents
Proposals submitted without these documents or requirements will be considered incomplete; please see associated links for more information and instructions on how to acquire them. Please note that a single copy of all requirements below must be submitted for EACH Partner, in addition to the lead applicant (if applicable). Place a check mark (X) in the left column of the

table to indicate each of these requirements has been met and your proposal includes supporting documentation.

Check	Requirements / Documents
	Registration in the System for Award Management (SAM)
	Certificate of Liability Insurance; Including Cyber Security Coverage[10]
	Most recent financial audit
	Certificate of Worker's Compensation Insurance
	W9

D. Program Type (check all that apply)

Check	Program Type
	Career Exploration/ Preparation
	Pathways to Employment and Retention

E. Funding Source Requested (check all that apply)

Check	Funding Source Requested
	TANF Youth
	WIOA Youth

F. Certifications and Signatures
Please carefully review the below certifications and assurances. Place a check mark (X) in the left column and complete the signature section to certify the below statements.

---

[10] Comprehensive Commercial General Liability Insurance with limits not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence and Aggregate not less than $2,000,000. Automobile Liability Insurance with limits not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence, combined single limit for bodily injury (including death) and property damage liability covering all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles. Privacy/Cyber Liability Security Insurance with limits of not less than $1,000,000.

Check	Certifications and Assurances
By submitting this proposal and signing below, I certify and represent to Partner4Work the following:	
	The above-named organization is legally authorized to submit this proposal.
	All submitted proposal materials are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
	My organization intends to comply with the terms, conditions, and requirements described in this RFP, if offered a contract.
	My organization understands and agrees to abide by the payment provisions described in this RFP, if offered a contract.[11]
	My organization will use Partner4Work's Contract Management Software, Parley Pro, for contract negotiation and administration, if offered a contract.
	My organization is compliant with the following PA state integrity policy. If not, please submit along with your proposal a written explanation of why such certification cannot be made.

Signature required on next page

---

[11] This program operates on a reimbursement model. Successful bidders must front costs related to the program until requirements for reimbursement are met and funds are available for reimbursement.

Signature of Authorized Representative

By signing below, I certify that I am legally authorized by the organization named herein to submit this proposal and represent the above certifications and assurances on behalf of the organization named herein. I understand that Partner4Work is relying on this representation to effectively conduct the procurement process and develop any agreements that may result from this RFP.

Name of Authorized Representative: Enter text here
Title of Authorized Representative: Enter text here
Phone: Enter text here Email: Enter text here

Signature of Authorized Representative:_____

Date: Enter text here

Appendix B – Terms and Definitions

Basic Skills Deficient: Refers to when an individual's English reading, writing, or computing skills are at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or a youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Barriers to Employment: Conditions that may make securing employment, completing credential/training programs or other job training/post-secondary programs difficult for certain individuals

Case Manager/Career Coach: Program staff member that collaboratively works with participants to create career development plans that lead to credential attainment, post-secondary enrollment, and/or employment.

Commonwealth Workforce Development System: The Commonwealth Workforce Development System, known as CWDS, is the state of Pennsylvania's internet-based record system for workforce development programs – specifically that of the PA CareerLink®. A successful application will utilize CWDS to track and manage a client's progress throughout their time engaging in PA CareerLink® and specifically WIOA Title I services. Other than service providers, both jobseekers and employer interface with the system directly as a user. Primarily, jobseekers use the system to seek employment opportunities and employers use the system to find talent for open positions.[12]

Culturally relevant: An approach in which the cultural strengths of participants are identified and nurtured to promote achievement and a sense of well-being. Culturally relevant services assist youth with understanding material through their own cultural frame.

Credential: A credential is a nationally recognized degree or certificate, or state recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to, a high school diploma, GED, or other recognized equivalents, post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, licensure or industry-recognized certificates, and all state education agency recognized credentials.

Exit: Is the point after which a participant who has received services has completed the services associated with the program.

Follow up: are critical services provided following a youth's exit from the program to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or postsecondary education and training. Follow up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise. Follow up services may also include: supportive services, adult mentoring, financial literacy, labor market information and career counseling, and activities that help youth prepare to transition to post-secondary education. All youth participants must be offered the

---

[12] For more information, please see the Department of Labor and Industry's description: https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/careers/Pages/Commonwealth-Workforce-Development-System-(CWDS).aspx.

opportunity to receive follow-up services for a minimum of 12 months unless the participant declines. Follow up services must include more than an attempt at contact.

High poverty area: An area that has a poverty rate of at least 30% (set every 5 years, using ACS 5-year estimates).

Individual Service Strategy (ISS): This refers to the individual services strategy for each enrolled participant that informs the plan for each participant. The ISS form should be completed with each participant at enrollment and updated throughout the term of the program. The ISS includes: educational status, job history, barriers, educational/employment goals, and the services needed to attain these goals, etc.

Job Retention: The period an individual remains in an unsubsidized job following placement. The period of required retention is determined in accordance with WIOA.

Job Development: The planned and organized effort by agency representatives to encourage employers or business organizations to make jobs available for WIOA customers and other job seekers.

PA CareerLink®: The one-stop system for WIOA and other workforce services in Pennsylvania. PA CareerLink® helps bridge the gap that currently exists between job-seekers and employers. Physical locations for the Pittsburgh area are at: Downtown Pittsburgh: 304 Wood Street Pittsburgh, PA, 15222 and Allegheny East: 2040 Ardmore Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA, 15221. More information here: https://www.careerlinkpittsburgh.com/

Participant: An individual who has satisfied all applicable program requirements for the provision of services, including eligibility determination, an objective assessment, and development of an individual service strategy.

Program Model: Refers to the structure of services provided to job seekers by sub-recipients

Self-efficacy: An individual's belief in his or her innate ability to achieve goals. Individuals who have high self-efficacy will exert sufficient effort that, if well executed, leads to successful outcomes, whereas those with low self-efficacy are likely to cease effort early and fail.

Sub-recipient: The contracted recipient of Partner4Work WIOA or TANF funding.

Supportive Services: Services rendered to participants to assist in overcoming barriers to secure credentials, employment or placement into a post-secondary or training program.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Youth Development Fund (TANF YDF): Funding support from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to local boards and their youth councils/committees to enhance workforce investment funding and extend the availability of high quality workforce development activities to low-income youth.

Trauma-informed Workforce Development: Populations serviced by workforce development programs often have experienced trauma due to poverty, domestic or childhood violence, or the loss of home, safety and security. These experiences significantly impact how the population being served think, feel, behave, and relate to others. It can also impact how they approach new experiences or cope with stressful situations. Trauma-informed workforce development includes structure and a program framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma.

Unsubsidized Employment -Employment in the private sector or public sector for which the employer does not receive a subsidy from public funds to offset all or a part of the wages and costs of employing an individual.

Work Experience: Is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Internships and other work experiences may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate and consistent with other laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act. An internship or other work experience may be arranged within the private for-profit sector, the nonprofit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience setting where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, exists. Transitional Jobs are a type of work experience.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. The law aims 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. Congress passed the Act by a wide bipartisan majority; it is the first legislative reform in 15 years of the public workforce system. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Appendix C – Administrative Requirements

Overview of Administrative Requirements

At a minimum, all subrecipient organizations must meet the Standards for Financial and Program Management found at 2 CFR 200 in the OMB Uniform Guidance, as well as any regulatory requirements related to the funds. Your organization's financial management system must provide for the following:

1. Tracking spending on multiple individual funding streams
Identification, in its accounts, of all Federal awards received and expended and the Federal programs under which they were received. Federal program and Federal award identification must include, as applicable, the CFDA title and number, Federal award identification number and year, name of the Federal Agency, and name of the pass-through entity (i.e., Partner4Work).

2. Fiscal reporting on an accrual basis
Accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each Federal award or program in accordance with the reporting requirements set forth in 2 CFR 200.327 Financial Reporting and 200.328 Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance. If a Federal awarding agency requires reporting on an accrual basis (2 CFR 200.302) from a recipient that maintains its records on other than an accrual basis, the recipient may develop accrual data for its reports on the basis of an analysis of the documentation on hand. Similarly, a pass-through entity must not require a subrecipient to establish and accrual accounting system and must allow the subrecipient to develop accrual data for its reports on the basis of an analysis of the documentation on hand.

3. Maintaining documentation supporting all spending and assets
Records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for federally-funded activities. These records must contain information pertaining to Federal awards, authorizations, obligation, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income and interest and be supported by source documentation.

4. Maintaining internal controls that ensure compliance with all funding regulations
Control over, and accountability for, all funds, property, and other assets. The non-Federal entity must adequately safeguard all assets and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. See § 200.303 Internal Controls.

5. Producing a budget to actual report
Comparison of expenditures with budget amounts for each Federal award.

6. Processing payments on a reimbursement basis
Written procedures to implement the requirements of § 200.305 Payment.

7. Budgeting and spending funds in allowable cost categories (i.e., direct, indirect, program, and admin costs)
Written procedures for determining the allowability of costs in accordance with Subpart E - Cost Principles of this part and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

Record Retention

The selected applicant(s) must retain, secure and ensure the accuracy of all program files and records, whether related to job seekers, businesses or general operations, in compliance with WIOA and/or TANF requirements, related federal and state regulations, and Partner4Work's record retention requirements. Case files are the property of Partner4Work and must contain a variety of documentation including, but not limited to: program eligibility, suitability, and assessment data; Individual Service Strategies (ISSs); regular customer contacts and updates; progress reports, time and attendance sheets (training services); and case notes. Files must be retained for seven years after Partner4Work reports final expenditures to the funding source. The selected applicant(s) must allow Partner4Work and representatives of other regulatory authorities access to all WIOA and/or TANF records, program materials, staff, and participants.

Personally Identifiable Information Compliance

The selected applicant(s) are responsible for maintaining and securing participant case files at all times, as well as ensuring privacy and protection of all personal information collected from participants per applicable laws, regulations and P4W policies. Confidentiality of participant information must be maintained and all case files must be properly stored in a secured space with limited staff access. Each staff member who has contact with participants or participant information must receive training on confidentiality requirements. The selected applicant(s) acknowledges that the use or disclosure of participant information for purposes other than the effective delivery of the services described in this RFP is strictly prohibited. Staff of the selected applicant(s) may have access to this information only on a "need to know" basis. The selected applicant(s) must inform employees that inappropriate use of such information may result in disciplinary action, including discharge, or criminal prosecution if the employee knowingly uses the information for fraudulent purposes.

Links to Relevant Fiscal and Program Policies and Regulations

2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

Pennsylvania Workforce System Policy 3-2015 Financial Management Policy

Pennsylvania Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

US Dept of Labor Employment and Training Administration WIOA Related Advisories

Pennsylvania Dept of Labor and Industry Workforce System Directives

Appendix D – Budget Narrative Instructions

The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the budget template. It should also include a description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.

Use the following guidance for preparing the budget narrative:

Personnel (1): List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed). Give the annual salary of each position, the percentage of each position time devoted to the project, the amount of each position's salary funded by the grant, and the total personnel cost for the period of performance.

Fringe Benefits (2): Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement, etc.

Other Program Costs (3): Detail out other program expenditures, such as materials and supplies, technology, travel, etc. and break them down between 3 categories: program; work experience; training.

Direct Admin Costs (4): Provide type of direct administrative cost being charged directly to grant along with amount.

Indirect Costs (5): If you include indirect costs in the budget, then include one of the following:

a) If you have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), provide an explanation of how the indirect costs are calculated. This explanation should include which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Also, provide a current version of the NICRA.

or

b) If you intend to claim indirect costs using the 10 percent de minimis rate, please confirm that your organization meets the requirements as described in 2 CFR 200.414(f). Clearly state that your organization has never received a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), and your organization is not one described in Appendix VII of 2 CFR 200, paragraph (D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 below for definition) as their cost allocation base. Provide an explanation of which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Note that there are various items not included in the calculation of Modified Total Direct Costs. See below the definitions to assist you in your calculation.

2 CFR 200.68 Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

The definition of MTDC in 2 CFR 200.68 no longer allows for any sub-contracts to be included in the calculation. You will also note that participant support costs are not included in modified total direct cost. Participant support costs are defined below.

2 CFR 200.75 Participant Support Cost (6) means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

See Section IV.B.4. and Section IV.E.1 for more information. Additionally, the following link contains information regarding the negotiation of Indirect Cost Rates at DOL: https://www.dol.gov/oasam/boc/dcd/index.htm.

On the spreadsheet, please follow the below steps for indirect:

- Enter Cost Rate into Cell E3 (This will calculate the amount of allowable indirect in cell E4)

- In cell E5, enter the amount of indirect being charged to this budget.

- In cells E6 and F6, you will enter a percentage to split the indirect between admin and program

- Once you have completed the above steps, cells F5 and G6 should read "OK", if it reads "ERROR" something was incorrect

- Detail out the type of indirect expenses (column A) with total cost (column B)

Other (7): Provide clear and specific detail, including costs, for each item so that we are able to determine whether the costs are necessary, reasonable and allocable. List any item, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere here. Costs for supportive services per Partner4Work's Supportive Service Policy belong in this tab.

Appendix E- Does My Program Align?

Use the flowchart below to determine if your program broadly fits within the parameters of this RFP to evaluate the alignment with the associated program models, funding sources and administrative requirements.
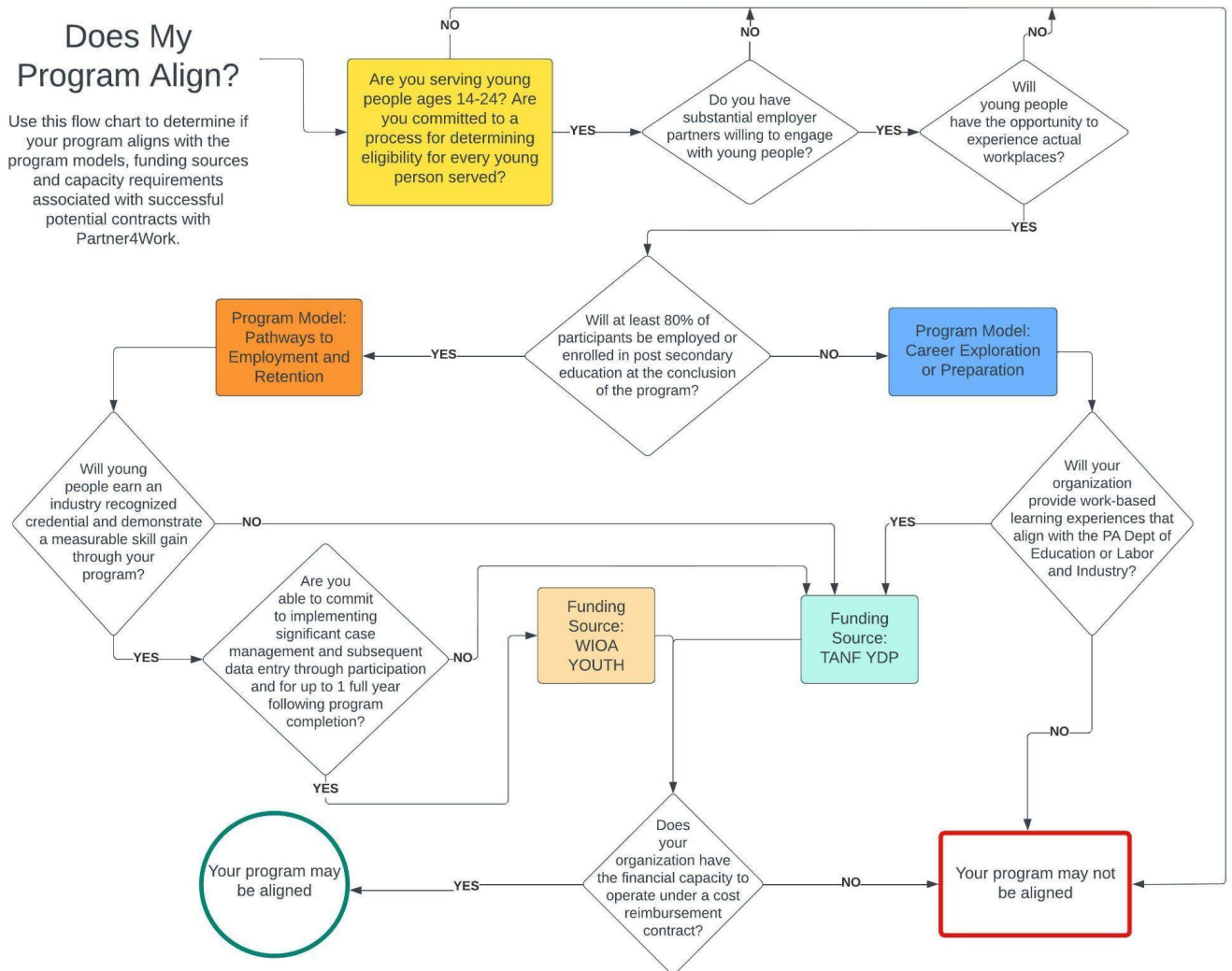
Appendix F- Important Links

Partner4Work Data: https://www.partner4work.org/research

Partner4Work Policies: https://www.partner4work.org/documents/policies/

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry Workforce System Guidance:
https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Youth
Development Program Manual:
https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Documents/TANF%20YDP%20MANUAL.pdf

Pennsylvania Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act:
https://www.dos.pa.gov/BusinessCharities/Charities/Resources/Documents/CharitiesSolicitationAct,%201-2018.pdf

Training and Employment Guidance Letters:
https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/All_WIOA_Related_Advisories.cfm

Uniform Guidance:
https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200.pdf

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/