



**WORKFORCE**  
**DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**  
OF SEATTLE - KING COUNTY

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) #23-01**

### **Centering Young Black Men - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Programs**

<b>Request for Proposal (RFP) Released</b>	<b>January 10, 2024</b>
<b>Virtual Bidder's Conference</b>	<b>January 24, 2024</b>
<b>Last Day to Submit Questions</b>	<b>February 7, 2024</b>
<b>Proposals Due</b>	<b>February 14, 2024, by 11:59 pm</b>
<b>Anticipated Award Notification</b>	<b>March 15, 2024</b>
<b>Contract(s) Start</b>	<b>July 1, 2024</b>

Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County is an equal opportunity employer.  
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.  
Washington Telecommunications Relay Service 7-1-1.

**Request for Proposals (RFP) #23-01**  
**Centering Young Black Men - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity**  
**Act (WIOA) Youth Programs**

**Table of Contents**

**PART 1: BACKGROUND & CONTEXT INFORMATION**

**A: INTRODUCTION**

1. WDC Regional Plan Alignment

**B: PROCUREMENT INFORMATION**

1. Where to Find Updates and Information Regarding this RFP
2. Bidder Questions
3. Procurement Timeline
4. Virtual Bidder's Conference
5. Eligible Applicants
6. Funding Availability and Requirements
7. Allowable Use of Funds
8. Type of Contract Results from this RFP

**C: BACKGROUND**

1. Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC)
2. Roles and Responsibilities of WDC
3. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Overview

**D: PROGRAM DESIGN**

1. Needs Statement
2. WIOA Youth Eligibility and Enrollment
3. Centering Young Black Men
4. WIOA Program Requirements
5. CORE Program Activities
6. Equity Focus and BIPOC Community Collaboration

**E: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

1. Performance Outcomes
2. Administrative Requirements

## **PART 2: PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

### **F: PROPOSAL FORMAT**

1. Proposal Requirements
2. Withdrawals
3. Proposal Narrative and Scoring Guidelines
  - I. Organization Description
  - II. Demonstrated Effectiveness
  - III. Implementation Plan
  - IV. Planned Outcomes
  - V. Budget and Cost Proposal

### **G: EVALUATION PROCESS**

1. Compliance Review
2. Rating Committee
3. Selection
4. Board Action and Contract Award
5. Appeals Process and Access to Evaluation Information
6. Negotiations and Contract

### **H. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposal Checklist
2. Proposal Cover Sheet
3. Statement of Compliance Form
4. Planned Outcomes Form
5. Budget and Cost Proposal Form

### **I: DISCLAIMERS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS**

## **PART 1: BACKGROUND & CONTEXT INFORMATION**

### **A: INTRODUCTION**

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) requests proposals for the provision of education, employment, training and youth development services for in-school youth ages 14 – 21 and out-of-school youth ages 16-24 residing in King County. Services will be funded in accordance with resources coming from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). 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 workforce they need to compete in the global economy. Working within the youth age range, the WDC seeks proposals from community organizations that will center young black men aged 18-24 to increase visibility to training, employment, and/or support services while navigating career goals and pathways.

The WDC seeks to fund innovative and effective programs and/or partnerships that demonstrate close collaboration with youth and community stakeholders in order to:

- recruit young black men age 18-24 in King County, emphasizing under-resourced areas.
- conduct comprehensive, up-front assessments resulting in customized service/career plans;
- facilitate participant linkages to critical work supports and barrier removal resources, both internally among community and business partners (including legal, adult education, behavioral health, and transportation partners) and externally.
- deliver quality work readiness training, soft skills training, referral to training, and placement/job retention approaches.
- as appropriate, dependent upon candidates' determined level of readiness, broker participants' respective access to training and/or coaching leading to placement in an initial work opportunity or referral to an occupational skills training program. (The proposed training approach must include a soft skills component.)
- support youth in obtaining their vital documents necessary to enroll in occupational skills training and obtain meaningful employment.
- address alternative learning access to align with post-pandemic modalities.
- implement innovative youth employment programs with an emphasis on the following: behavioral health, race and social justice, entrepreneurship, youth leadership advisory, etc.

## 1. WDC Regional Plan Alignment

This RFP represents a key strategy and investment aligned with the [WDC's Regional Strategic Plan](#). The Regional Strategic Plan aspires to achieve two north stars: equitable economic recovery and job quality.

The first anchors on a recovery effort that prioritizes the inclusion of workers who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and other economically marginalized communities, and the dismantling of structural and systemic racism across our institutions, so that all workers, regardless of race or ethnicity have equitable access to high-quality jobs and share in the region's economic prosperity.

The second anchor, job quality, raises the expectation and commitment of all partners in the workforce system to: 1) improve the quality of existing jobs where BIPOC workers, immigrants and refugees are over-represented; 2) support BIPOC workers, immigrants, and refugees in not simply gaining employment in any job but instead placement in a quality job with livable wages and benefits, opportunities for advancement and assurances of a safe and healthy workplace.

These two north stars are undergirded by the following tenets:

- Recovery as an opportunity to rebuild better
- Centering equity
- Re-envisioning workforce development and
- Broadening measures of success, including redefining job quality

## B: PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

Potential bidders are encouraged to read all sections of this RFP in order to develop a full understanding of the opportunities presented as well as the requirements for a successful bid. Bidders are also encouraged to use the question and answer system and bidder's conference described below.

### 1. Where to Find Updates and Information Regarding this RFP

All information regarding this RFP, including updates or changes to the RFP, a weekly updated question and answer digest, upcoming events and deadlines will be available at the WDC website for [Funding Opportunities](#). Interested parties can download this RFP and any related materials from the website. ***Bidders are responsible to check the website frequently to stay informed throughout the procurement process.***

### 2. Bidder Questions

Beginning with the release of this RFP and continuing through February 7th, 2024, 11:59 pm (PST), bidders may submit questions to: [proposals@seekingwdc.org](mailto:proposals@seekingwdc.org). Please include "RFP 23-01" in the subject of the email. Questions submitted by 12:00 pm (PDT) each Friday during this period will be answered the following week.

All questions submitted at the Bidder's Conference will be answered in writing and posted on the RFP webpage. Any questions not submitted through the above process **will not** be answered, including over the phone, in person, or in direct emails to WDC staff.

### 3. Procurement Timeline

<b>Request for Proposal (RFP) Released</b>	<b>January 10, 2024</b>
<b>Virtual Bidder's Conference</b>	<b>January 24, 2024</b>
<b>Last Day to Submit Questions</b>	<b>February 7, 2024</b>
<b>Proposals Due</b>	<b>February 14, 2024 by 11:59 pm</b>
<b>Anticipated Award Notification</b>	<b>March 15th, 2024</b>
<b>Contract(s) Start</b>	<b>July 1, 2024</b>

### 4. Virtual Bidder's Conference

All organizations intending to bid either as a sole applicant or as the lead of a consortium proposal are encouraged to attend the Virtual Bidder's Conference scheduled on January 24, 2024. The conference will provide an overview of the RFP and bidding process from 1:00 to 3:00 pm Information for the Virtual Bidder's Conference will be found on the WDC website for [Funding Opportunities](#). The Virtual Bidder's Conference will be held on Teams, will be recorded and shared, and will include a large question and answer period. If attendance is high and/or there are many scheduling conflicts, more sessions may be added during the open proposal period.

### 5. Eligible Applicants

Government, business, non-profit, and faith-based organizations and educational institutions able to provide services in King County are eligible to apply under this RFP. All applicants must identify a lead agency and the fiscal agent. The WDC is especially interested in receiving proposal from BIPOC community-based programs with integrated social services, strong emphasis on youth development and whose board of directors and leadership and staff are reflective the communities prioritized for services in this RFP.

The WDC does not require bidders to have a comprehensive understanding of WIOA requirements. The WDC will provide technical assistance and training regarding WIOA requirements to organizations chosen through this solicitation. Organizations selected through this RFP are expected to work with the WDC to quickly develop a working understanding of the policies, procedures and requirements of these funding sources.

The WDC recognizes that smaller community-based organizations with distinct expertise in working with individuals who are farthest from opportunity may not have the capacity to manage WIOA funding. In these instances, the WDC suggests potential bidders to consider joining or forming a consortium to partner with organizations in the community that can provide administrative and/or fiscal capacity.

For this funding opportunity, the WDC will consider the following types of applications:

- A. Sole organization applicant, where the applicant serves as the lead and fiscal agent and does not subcontract; or
  - a. Sole organization applicants must apply for a minimum of \$450,000.
  - b. Sole organization applicants can apply for a maximum of \$900,000.
  - c. Sole organization applicants that state specific programming for pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship, formal mentorship, entrepreneurship, and/or financial literacy will be considered for bonus points in the RFP scoring.
  
- B. A partnership or consortium consisting of two or more organizations applying together in one proposal to conduct the activities identified in this RFP, in which each agency leverages the others' strengths. The partnership or consortium must identify a lead organization and fiscal agent. The lead organization and fiscal agent do not have to be from the same organization.

Through this RFP, the WDC encourages consortium applications. This requires consortium applicants to have formal partnerships and/or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with partner organizations.

- a. Consortium applicants must apply for a minimum of \$450,000.
- b. Consortium applicants can apply for the "up-to" amount outlined below.
- c. Consortium applicants that state specific partnerships that promote pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship, formal mentorship, entrepreneurship, and/or financial literacy will be considered for bonus points in the RFP scoring.

Before developing a response to this RFP, please review the ***Disclaimers and General Provisions*** section of this document for additional procurement conditions and qualifiers.

**6. Funding Availability and Requirements**

This RFP is funded with the resources indicated below. Bidders should use these funding estimates as guidance to prepare their budgets and cost proposals.

**Estimated Funds Available**

WIOA In-School Youth Program	Up to \$180,000
WIOA Out-of-School Youth Program	Up to \$720,000
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>Up to \$900,000</b>

Bidders may submit one proposal package. Bidders will be applying for both WIOA In- School Youth and Out-of-School Youth Funds. Bidders submitting a consortia proposal may partner with different organizations for the proposal they submit – the lead agency must be identified clearly in each application. The proposal package must address all the requirements described in this RFP and will be separately scored and evaluated.

Contracts awarded through this RFP are anticipated to commence July 1, 2024, and continue through June 30, 2025 (hereafter, "the program period"), contingent upon available funding. Contract renewal options will be available for up to four years. The WDC will be interested in funding innovative pilots in youth employment. Within and between program periods, consortium members may be added, changed, etc. as applicable.

## **7. Allowable Uses of Funds**

WIOA funds may be used to cover the costs of staff wages and benefits, administrative operating expenses, and direct participant costs. Use of federal funds must be in compliance with WIOA regulations, state and [WDC policies](#). All services funded as a result of this RFP will be provided by staff who will serve eligible WIOA youth as part of the WorkSource Seattle-King County system.

## **8. Type of Contract Results from this RFP**

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP will be paid through cost reimbursement unless otherwise specified. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in legislation, regulations or policies required by the funding sources. The WDC reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed as a result of this RFP, including but not limited to funding levels, the scope of services, performance standards, and period of performance, as it deems necessary.



## **C: BACKGROUND**

### **1. Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC)**

**Mission:** We catalyze system change in the Puget Sound region to increase the prosperity and economic growth of workers, employers, and communities and to ensure racial equity.

**Vision:** All people in this region, regardless of race or ethnicity, share in its economic prosperity.

The WDC aspires to lead transformative change that I evolve our region's workforce development efforts into an innovative industry, community, and income-driven system with racial equity at its core. As a nonprofit, grant-making organization, the WDC collaborates with a diverse set of partners to elevate job quality, economic growth, and prosperity for adults and youth throughout the Seattle-King County region.

This RFP reflects a commitment by the WDC to achieve a more racially equitable workforce development system that leverages resources in a manner that is responsive to the needs of youth and young adults farthest from opportunity. This includes:

- Identifying specific marginalized communities currently underserved by the workforce system and explicitly targeting funding for culturally competent and linguistically appropriate services to reach those communities;
- Pooling and coordinating resources to close system gaps, eliminate redundancies and increase efficiencies;
- Expanding access to training programs and navigation services along career pathways;
- Creating a unified regional, coordinated, and efficient system for engaging industry.
- Leveraging public and private funding streams to ensure holistic, flexible services.
- Emphasis on job quality including competitive pay, comparable benefits, safe working conditions, agency and respect within the organization,

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities of WDC**

Roles and responsibilities of WDC include:

- Overseeing and evaluating the management and operations of all programs funded by WDC;
- Allocating funds and paying invoices as agreed upon in the contract;
- Monitoring Provider performance, quality of service and cost effectiveness
- Developing and providing technical assistance to Providers;
- Informing and assisting Providers in the implementation of federal, and state, and local policies, procedures and rules that may impact the operations of the program(s), needed to implement them;
- Ensuring compliance with all rules, regulations and procedures issued by all funding

sources.

- Ensuring Integrated Service Delivery and WorkSource System integration through technical assistance and relationship building.

The roles and responsibilities may be refined and changed as:

- Relevant federal and state law requirements are enacted and implemented covering the workforce development system;
- Regulations and procedures are developed or changed by the United States Department of Labor;
- WDC's governing boards adopt local direction and procedures.

### **3. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Overview**

On July 22, 2014, President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law. WIOA is a federal program funded through the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education. WIOA is administered in the Seattle-King County region by the WDC (Title I), the Employment Security Department (Title III, Trade Act and WorkFirst), the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Services for the Blind (Title IV), and colleges and non-profit organizations (Title II). The WDC is responsible for setting the vision for and overseeing the coordination of services provided with these resources in the Seattle-King County region.

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 workforce they need to compete in the global economy. WIOA requires that services be delivered to any individual who needs help getting or keeping employment, to specific populations that face barriers to employment and to businesses needing help to find and retain an appropriately skilled workforce. In the Seattle-King County region, these services are provided through the WorkSource System, which is part of the national American Job Center Network. The WDC, in addition to its oversight and workforce system coordination functions described above, administers WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker and Title I Youth Program funding to provide services in the region's WorkSource system. As part of the WorkSource System, the awarded grantees from this RFP will be expected to partner with WorkSource and learn more about becoming a WorkSource Connection Site in the course of their contract.

## **D: PROGRAM DESIGN**

### **1. Needs Statement**

In King County, there are at least 19,400 young people disconnected from school and/or work. This is about 8.5% of the young people in King County, and it is likely a severe undercount due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in an economic recession. Of all disconnected youth, young black men are disproportionately outside of formal work or education. This RFP seeks to support young black men before they disconnect from formal education and once they have disconnected from education or work.

In King County, young black men who aren't in school or have any educational attainment tend to have higher unemployment rates and low labor force participation rates. When we examine data, we can see troubling trends emerge. Young black men, specifically ages 18-21, tend to be most at risk of low educational attainment and unemployment. We found that 60% are not in school or are unemployed, over 50% have not obtained a secondary credential, and are geographically situated in the southern parts of King County. Furthermore, Young black men face unique challenges when navigating the ladder of opportunity in the workforce. The RFP seeks to humanize metrics by ensuring young black men have access and representation to clear pathways to educational and career possibilities through WIOA program resources. It is imperative bidders who carry out this work are those who are uniquely suited to address and explicitly support BIPOC youth while centering the least represented, young black men.

Addressing these challenges will take a concerted effort from educators, businesses, communities, and policymakers to build structural sustainability through targeted universalism. In many instances, emphasizing a universal approach to addressing barriers has adversely affected the BIPOC community. The approach the WDC adopts with this RFP centers on those with the most significant adverse effects, young black men, while creating achievable positive outcomes for all underrepresented youth and young adults.

Service providers will select one or more of the innovative core tracks below:

1. Preparing youth for the workforce through post-secondary education.
2. Re-engagement and advocating for youth to and through Open Doors programs.
3. Revealing opportunities to youth through non-traditional work experiences and apprenticeship opportunities that lead to high-wage quality jobs.

This RFP pursues post-pandemic recovery practices that capitalize on the re-envisioned workforce development approach to co-design programs and networks with youth-for-youth.

### **2. WIOA Youth Eligibility and Enrollment**

WIOA is limited to specific eligibility requirements as defined in the WIOA legislation and state policy. To be considered eligible for In-School or Out-of-School programming, youth must fall into one of these categories:

#### **In-School Eligibility Requirement:**

- Age 14 to 21 and attending school; and
- Low-income individual

**Additional Conditions (must meet at least one):**

- Individual with a disability
- Basic skills deficient
- English language learner
- Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
- Homeless, runaway, or foster child
- Pregnant or parenting
- An individual who requires additional support to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

**Out-of-School Eligibility Requirement:**

An out of school youth is an individual who is:

- Not attending any school (as defined under state law)
- Not younger than 16 or older than the age of 24 at the time of enrollment
  - And one or more of the following:

**Additional Conditions (must meet at least one):**

- School dropout
- Within the age of compulsory school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter
- Recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is low-income and either basic skills deficient or an English language learner
- Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
- A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance, or in an out-of-home placement
- Pregnant or parenting
- An individual with a disability
- Low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

### **3. Centering Young Black Men**

Through this RFP, the WDC seeks to call on young black men's voices while better understanding and approaching youth particularly those demographics subject to the juvenile system, experiencing homelessness, foster care, or aging out of foster care, the LGBTQ community, and youth residing in high-poverty communities. The awardee would promote and provide mentoring opportunities for young black men and foster peer-to-peer engagement for youth who experience social and emotional challenges while entering the workforce. This targeted approach complements the workforce development system goal of serving those who are farthest from resources and opportunity.

### **4. WIOA Program Requirements**

Programs funded through this RFP may also emphasize the individualized services below based on expertise and participant interest. WIOA outlines a vision for supporting youth and young adults through an integrated service delivery system. This vision includes high-quality services for in-school and out-of-school youth, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training, and culminating with a good job along a career pathway or enrollment in post-secondary education.

Bidders will have to describe the model and approach proposed to provide the WIOA Required Services, and articulate a clear service strategy and program design that includes the following core services:

1. **Outreach, Recruitment and Orientation.** Outreach and recruitment include, but is not limited to, identifying potentially eligible youth, working with parents and guardians to secure necessary documentation, and working closely with other governmental and community organizations and school systems to identify and recruit ISY and OSY. As part of orientation, all youth must receive information on full array of services available and how to access.
2. **Intake, Eligibility Determination and Registration.** Providers will be responsible for determining WIOA eligibility of all youth applicants recruited into the program, determining the youth's suitability for program services, and collecting and verifying all necessary eligibility source documents. WIOA requires all youth to meet certain eligibility criteria and be determined eligible prior to enrollment and receipt of WIOA funded services.
3. **Objective Assessment and Referral.** Providers must conduct an objective assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each participant, which will include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, strengths, supportive service needs, mental health services, and development needs. The goal is to accurately evaluate each youth in order to develop an appropriate service strategy to meet their individual needs. Eligible youth who do not enroll in WIOA programs should be provided information regarding other applicable and appropriate services available through other local programs that have capacity to serve them. In addition, eligible youth should be given referrals for further assessment if determined appropriate.
4. **Individual Service Strategy (ISS).** Provider staff must use the results of the youth participant's objective assessment to develop the ISS for the youth participant. The ISS is an age appropriate, individualized, documented plan of short and long-term goals that include career pathways, education and employment goals, involvement in WIOA youth program elements, support services, and incentives. For all youth, the ISS will identify the timeframe in which each youth will be expected to complete all activities related to each of the goal(s) specified in the ISS and should be updated with the youth during the course of service. The ISS will clearly connect the services to be provided to each youth

identifying the outcomes to be achieved between WIOA enrollment and exit. The ISS directly links to one or more indicators of performance outcomes.

5. **Case Management.** Case Management is the infrastructure for delivering effective services that will facilitate the positive growth and development of youth and the achievement of performance goals. The process extends from recruitment through follow-up. The case manager motivates participants and coordinates services and information to prepare youth for post-secondary education opportunities, academic and occupational training or employment and training opportunities as appropriate. Providers are encouraged to incorporate trauma informed approaches, implicit bias training, social justice and racially equitable practices into their case management models.
6. **Access to a Range of Services.** It is required that the 14 WIOA youth program elements be made available to enrolled youth as needed or requested. If a Provider does not directly provide one of the program elements, it must demonstrate the ability to make seamless referrals to appropriate providers of such services. The Provider will have primary responsibility for ensuring that each participant receives and documents the full continuum of services. Services accessed by a WIOA youth participant will depend upon the needs and goals identified by the participant and case manager as documented in the participant's ISS and identified WIOA Program Track. See 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements below for additional information.
7. **Follow-up Services.** Providers are required to provide at least 12 months of follow-up services to participants who have completed program services as well as participants who may have dropped out of the program but need additional services. Providers are encouraged to consider the needs and barriers of the program's target population(s) in determining the appropriate levels and types of follow-up services.

### **Background Required 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements**

- Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Dropout Prevention activities that lead to completion of a high school diploma or recognized equivalent
- Alternative Secondary School and Dropout Recovery Services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education or who have dropped out of school
- Paid and Unpaid Work Experience is a structured learning experience in a workplace and provides opportunities for career exploration and skill development
- Occupational Skills Training is an organized program of study that provides specific skills and leads to proficiency in an occupational field
- Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation is an integrated education and training model combining workforce preparation, basic academic skills, and occupational skills

- Leadership Development Opportunities encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors
- Supportive Services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities
- Adult Mentoring is a formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement
- Follow-up Services are provided following program exit to help ensure youth succeed in employment or education
- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling provides individualized counseling to participants, including drug/alcohol and mental health counseling
- Financial Literacy Education provides youth with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve long-term financial stability
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business and develops entrepreneurial skills
- Services that Provide Labor Market Information offer employment and labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations
- 8. Post-secondary Preparation and Transition Activities help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

## 5. CORE Program Activities

The primary focus of WIOA youth programs is education, training, and employment. As such, providers will be required to provide a minimum of one type of core service to each participant. Providers must demonstrate the ability to provide all three core components:

**Educational Services.** Services must include instructional approaches that offer a continuum of skill, grade level, and developmentally appropriate educational options that connect to career pathways, including:

- Tutoring
- Study skills training
- Evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- Post-secondary preparation, enrollment, and credential/degree attainment
- Alternative secondary school services
- Job shadowing and career exploration in field of study
- Other activities that prepare an individual to be successful in any secondary or post-secondary educational options.

**Training Services.** Services must include instructional approaches that offer occupational skills and

education concurrently with training options that connect to career pathways, including:

- Classroom based occupational skills training
- Job shadowing and career exploration
- Eligible Provider Training List (ETPL)
- Youth Services Education Provider List (YSEPL)
- Apprenticeship training

**Employment Services.** Services must include approaches that offer work-based learning opportunities that connect to career pathways, including:

- Work experience
- Job shadowing and career exploration
- Internships
- Pre-Apprenticeships
- On-the-Job training

## **6. Equity Focus and BIPOC Community Collaboration**

Centering equity means explicitly advancing race-conscious policies by applying an equity lens to every dimension of planning and implementation, not isolating it as a separate set of strategies or adding it as an afterthought. The WDC is especially interested in proposals that increase the number of King County youth served who meet WIOA eligibility and are farthest from opportunity to ensure these young adults are not left out of the system.

In alignment with WDC's regional equity and social justice goals, the WDC seeks to integrate more Black-led community-based service providers into the network of services that are available through the WorkSource Seattle-King County System. The WDC encourages those who serve underserved populations in the Seattle-King County region to apply. The WDC is especially interested in proposals submitted by organizations with track records of positive impacts for:

- young black men age 18-24 who have been historically underserved by the workforce development system,
- leadership, and staffing are reflective of the populations they serve and that are embedded in the community.
- demonstrate research-based, high-impact service strategies.
- formal partnerships to provide the following programming: entrepreneurial training, financial literacy, mentorship, and registered pre-apprenticeship and/or apprenticeship.

Recognizing that many community-based service providers may not have the capacity to administer federal WIOA funds, the WDC encourages proposals developed by teams of partner programs (consortia proposals) that leverage the cultural competence, service delivery expertise, and connections of community-based organizations with the program, administrative or fiscal capacity and expertise of other organizations. The WDC will provide technical assistance and answer questions throughout the open application period, including support for



formalizing partnerships.

## **E: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

Successful bidders will maintain well-organized, up-to-date participant files for enrolled customers. It will be a requirement of all successful bidders that all files will be completely digital. The WDC will monitor all contractors at least annually to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal policies pertaining to customer files and record retention. Monitoring includes quarterly reviews between WDC project management and Provider administrators. Successful bidders will track customer enrollments, demographic information, services provided, and performance for WIOA Title I funds using the statewide Management Information System (MIS), known as Efforts to Outcomes (ETO). Files must be maintained to the standards set by ESD and monitoring teams, which includes real-time data entry (defined as services and data entered within 14 calendar days from time of service/collection). Successful bidders will be required to attend ETO training provided by the WDC and sign data-sharing and non-disclosure agreements to safeguard customers' personal information.

Detailed demographic information on the populations served by successful bidders will allow the WDC to monitor equitable distribution of services and identify promising practices to successfully serve populations farthest from opportunity.

While the WDC encourages direct data entry by staff members providing services, it may approve centralized data entry if the lead bidder submits a data entry plan that meets WDC requirements for ensuring that data is entered into the MIS in a timely fashion (14 calendar days from time of service/data collection), securely maintained, and not subject to interpretation by the staff entering the data. Data entry staff funded under this RFP must have digital literacy skills and use computer systems that meet MIS requirements.

### **1. Performance Outcomes**

Successful bidders requesting WIOA funding will be required to meet WIOA performance measures at the level negotiated by the WDC with the state. Performance levels are adjusted each year based on past system performance and may be adjusted in the future based on populations served in the region. The measures below are the targets the state and federal government set for our region. The WDC will negotiate additional targets with each Provider. These are often more granular, leading indicators of success that are tracked on a quarterly basis. Examples include enrollments, work experience completions, and career readiness indicators among others.

WIOA COMMON MEASURES – OSY AND ISY	PY23 TARGETS
Youth Placement – participants who are in education, training, or employment in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit	59.0%
Youth Retention – participants who are in education, training, or employment in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter after exit	60.0%
Youth Median Earnings – median earnings of participants employed in 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit	\$3,946
Credential Attainment – participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma, or equivalent with one year after exit	40.6%
Measurable Skills Gain – participants who, during a program year, are in education that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable gains	29.4%
Employer Engagement – effective in serving employers	TBD

## 2. Administrative Requirements

Data must be entered electronically into ETO and minimum system requirements must be met. The WDC estimates that the average cost per computer, appropriately configured, will not exceed \$1,500, not including the personnel costs associated with timely customer data entry. Bidders may either incorporate the estimated cost of MIS implementation into their budgets (computer hardware and personnel) or link with organizations that currently have the capacity to provide the functions discussed above.

Successful bidders will also be required to:

- Provide quarterly program narrative and quantitative reports describing how the organization or consortium is meeting agreed upon service delivery priorities and addressing any compliance issues that have been identified in previous quarters. Quarterly reports will include demographic detail of new enrollments aligned with priority populations. All exits by quarter will provided to the WDC in order to cross check with demographic information. This will allow for analysis of demographic-level outcome data.

- Provide quarterly fiscal reports that include accrued expenditure report, leveraged/match funds report, and program income.
- Meet the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements outlined in 2 CFR Chapter I and II, Part 200 et el.
- Comply with WDC Policies: F300 Allowable Costs and Prior Approval and A406 Property Management and inventory.
- Meet quarterly with WDC program and fiscal staff to review program deliverables, reporting, and expenditures. The WDC will provide technical assistance and collective best practice sharing across provider organizations on topics of policy, WIOA implementation/compliance and agencies identified challenges.

## PART 2: PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

### F: PROPOSAL FORMAT

#### 1. Proposal Requirements

Proposals are hereby solicited and will be received via email no later than 11:59 pm on the due date noted above. The services procured through this RFP shall be provided in accordance with the following and the attached instructions, requirements, and specifications. Applicants are responsible for regularly checking the WDC website for any updates, clarifications, or amendments to this RFP.

#### 2. Withdrawals

A submitted application may be withdrawn prior to the application due date. A written request to withdraw the application must be submitted to the WDC. If a bidder does not withdraw a proposal by the due date, the proposal becomes the property of the WDC and may be subject to public disclosure per the Freedom of Information Act.

#### 3. Proposal Narrative and Scoring Guidelines

All bidders must provide a narrative proposal. Bidders must respond to all sections below, follow the submission instructions, and use the forms. Any additional attachments will not be accepted or considered in scoring.

For single bidder proposals, the bidding organization is the lead organization and the fiscal agent. For consortium proposals, the lead organization and fiscal agent must be identified from among the consortium members. The lead organization and fiscal agent may be the same organization but are not required to be.

Bidders must provide the following information.

##### I. Organization Description (15 points)

- **Organization History.** Provide an overview of the lead organization, including primary location of the organization, type of organization (for-profit, nonprofit, etc.), size, years in operation, history of organization, mission and vision, areas of focus and/or services, and any other relevant information that helps provide an overview of the organization. Include an organizational chart.
- **Consortium History.** If applying as a consortium, include how long the consortium has been operating together and provide a brief history of each organization other than the lead.
- **Staffing Plan.** Describe the staffing plan and management structure clarifying which staff will participate in the delivery of services funded with this RFP.
- **Qualifications and Expertise.** Describe the approach for recruitment, training, staff development and support for all staff involved in the program. Include how the

approach to staffing considers the diverse needs of youth served.

- **Culturally Appropriate Services.** Describe the organization's knowledge and experience working with youth facing challenges and expertise in providing culturally appropriate and relevant services for the populations prioritized in the proposal.
- **Equity.** Describe the diversity of the board of directors, organizational leadership, and staff of the lead organization/consortium members and how this diversity assures culturally relevant services and community connections for the customers to be served.

## II. **Demonstrated Effectiveness (10 points)**

- **Performance.** Provide evidence of the organization's ability to successfully perform the services described in this RFP, including descriptions of past projects completed with a similar scope of work.
- **Youth Engagement.** Provide evidence of the organization's track record in recruiting, providing services and achieving positive employment related outcomes for eligible customers, especially customers farthest from opportunity who have been prioritized for services in this proposal.
- **Data Management.** Provide evidence of the lead organization's success in using data entry systems to capture service delivery data, case notes, and documents necessary for the provision of workforce development services. Describe a plan for ensuring data security and participant privacy.
- **Continuous Improvement.** Provide evidence of the organization's success using quantitative and qualitative performance data to drive service design and delivery to expand access to services or improve results for customers farthest from opportunity.

## III. **Implementation Plan (60 points total – broken up below)**

### **Centering Young Black Men (20 Points)**

Please provide information questions below on the design and approach of how you will serve.

#### **Young Black Men**

- Describe your strategy to eliminate barriers and social determinants that young black men face related to education, employment, and training. Use specific examples of successful outcomes.
- How will your program specifically work to address bias and racism in employment practices that contribute to the high disconnect rates for young black men?
- How will your organization connect education and training services with young black men to increase trust, positive interactions, and experiences?

### **WIOA Required Elements (15 Points)**

- **Outreach, Recruitment and Orientation** – describe your plan to reach eligible youth, especially youth that are farthest from opportunity including BIPOC youth, foster youth, juvenile justice involved youth, and/or youth with disabilities. Please also

describe the geographic footprint you intend to serve within King County.

- **Intake, Eligibility Determination and Registration** – describe how you intend to onboard eligible youth, including collection of eligibility documentation such as birth certificates and social security cards, and ensure secure electronic registration.
- **Objective Assessment and Referral** – describe your approach to assessing each youth's needs, assets, and skills. Refer to any tools or frameworks you may intend to use.
- **Individual Service Strategy (ISS)** – describe your approach to goal setting and establishing realistic, yet ambitious, plans tailored to each participant. Refer to any tools or frameworks you intend to use.
- **Case Management** – describe your approach to case management, building trust, and ensuring each participant has an attentive, asset-based case manager working with them.
- **Access to a Range of Services** – describe your plan to ensure that youth have access to all [14 WIOA Service Elements](#).
- **Follow-up Services** – describe your plan to provide the required 12 months of follow-up services, including how case management will differ between active participants and those in follow-up services.

#### **Core Activities (10 Points)**

- Please describe your program model and service delivery – include a description to demonstrate the ability to provide one of the three core components; Post Secondary education, Reengagement-OpenDoors Programs, Work Experiences/Apprenticeship opportunities.

#### **Equity Focus and BIPOC Community Collaboration (15 Points)**

- Please describe your approach in centering racial equity in effective service delivery and ability to partner with BIPOC community and service providers.
  - In your response, please approximate demographic percentages of the young adults you plan to serve.

#### **IV. Planned Outcomes (10 points)**

Bidders must describe the outcomes they will be working toward during the performance period, using the Planned Outcomes form.

- **Relevance.** Explain why the outcomes you have projected are reasonable for the new enrollees you are planning to serve.
- **Data Management.** Explain how the organization/consortium will provide appropriate data entry and management in order to track customers, services, costs and outcomes. If data management functions will be centralized, describe the arrangement and how it addresses WDC requirements.
- **Use of Qualitative Data.** Explain how the organization/consortium will collect and use qualitative data – customer feedback, customer stories, youth voice, etc. – to identify potential service gaps and improve customer outcomes.

## **V. Budget and Cost Proposal (5 points)**

Bidders will use the Budget and Cost Proposal form to submit their cost proposal.

- Describe the fiscal agent's capacity and experience in managing federal, state and other public funds and applying fund accounting and accrual accounting.
- Describe the accounting software and payroll system being used by the fiscal agent and internal controls for accuracy and validity.
- A copy of current liability insurance. If applying as a consortium, provide a copy of insurance liability for all partners.
- Describe how the resources requested through this RFP will be used to support the proposal, and how the funding requested will be integrated with other financial and non-financial resources to achieve the maximum benefit to customers. If applying as a consortium, clearly identify the financial and non-financial resources to be provided by each organization participating in the consortium. Identify all leveraged resources with specificity. Administrative and overhead costs should be minimized because federal workforce funding is limited and may be declining. Efforts to maximize workforce services per dollar are critical. All administrative and operating/overhead/indirect costs will be reviewed by WDC staff and are subject to negotiation and potential reduction as part contract negotiations.
- Provide evidence of lead organization's/fiscal agent's past fiscal performance/compliance derived from the last two year audited financial statement and monitoring reports of the organization. Audits are required for any non-federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year (single or program-specific audit). For bidders whose fiscal agent does not meet this threshold, please provide the fiscal agent's most recent financial statements (Statement of Revenue and Expenses, Balance Sheet) with documentation of approval by the organization's Board of Directors.
- Successful bidders will be required to provide a Federally approved Indirect Cost Rate letter or Cost Allocation Plan if charging indirect costs to the grant funding.

## **G. EVALUATION PROCESS**

All applications will go through an identical evaluation, rating, and notification process:

### **1. Compliance Review**

- Once the proposal deadline has passed, all applications will be vetted for compliance. Applications must follow all the instructions outlined under Proposal Requirements, including all attachments, formatting specifications, and submission times. Only applications within compliance will be considered by the rating committee.
- Applicants out of compliance will be notified.

### **2. Rating Committee**

- A Rating Committee consisting of WDC Board Members, workforce professionals from outside of Seattle-King County, community members will rate the compliant applications. Each Rating Committee member will use a standard scoring rubric to score applicants.
- 3. Selection**
    - The Rating Committee will put forward recommended awards to the whole WDC Board for final approval.
  - 4. Board Action and Contract Award**
    - The WDC Finance and Administration Committee will convene on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2024 and vote on the Rating Committee recommendations.
    - Once approved, all applicants will be notified of the WDC Board's decisions.
  - 5. Appeals Process and Access to Evaluation Information**
    - An appeal must be made in writing within seven (7) calendar days from the date of the Notice of Award decision is issued to the bidder. See #19 under Disclaimers and General Provisions below for full detail.
  - 6. Negotiations and Contract**
    - Contracts start July 1, 2024 and go through June 30, 2025 for the innovative pilot programs, with contract renewal options for up to four years.

## **H. DISCLAIMERS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. All competitive procurements undertaken by the Workforce Development Council (WDC) will be conducted in compliance with WDC Policy: A402, Procurement Policy.
2. This RFP does not commit the WDC to award a contract.
3. The WDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, and to accept or reject portions of proposals received.
4. No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or negotiating a contract for services.
5. Proposers are advised that most documents in the possession of WDC are considered public records and are subject to disclosure under Federal and State public records laws.
6. All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to the WDC and be subject to disclosure under public records and/or the Freedom of Information Act.
7. Proposals should follow the format and adhere to the minimum requirements in this RFP.
8. Contract awards are contingent upon fund availability and demonstrated capacity of the bidder, as determined by WDC staff.
9. Contract award is subject to all of the following: receipt of funds by the WDC, successful contract negotiation and approval by the WDC.
10. Proposals submitted for funding consideration must be consistent with, and if funded, operated according to WIOA legislation and rules, all applicable Federal regulations, State of Washington policies, King County rules and policies related to WDC policies and procedures.
11. Bidders selected for funding must ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal



## Awards

12. The WDC may require selected bidders to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during contract negotiations.
13. The WDC may award more or less dollars to any budget proposal, unless the bidder qualifies its proposal by specific limitations.
14. Additional funds received by the WDC may be contracted by expanding existing programs or by consideration of proposals not initially funded under this RFP. These decisions shall be at the discretion of the WDC.
15. The WDC may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it has a high overall score if, in the opinion of the WDC, the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are higher than the WDC finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead the WDC to believe that the bidder has undertaken services that it cannot successfully carry out.
16. The WDC may choose not to award a contract to the bidders with lowest cost or highest rating when taking into account other factors such as balancing services to customers.
17. Any proposal approved for funding is contingent on the results of an on-site pre-award assessment that may be conducted by the WDC. This site visit will establish, to the WDC's satisfaction, whether the bidder is capable of conducting and carrying out the provisions of the proposed contract. If the results of the site visit indicate, in the opinion of the WDC, that the bidder may not be able to fulfill contract expectations, the WDC reserves the right not to enter into a contract with the organization, regardless of WDC approval of the bidder's proposal.
18. Bidders will be expected to adhere to required WDC and King County procedures to collect and verify data, and to submit to the WDC accurate monthly or quarterly reports, and monthly invoices.
19. Any entity who submitted a proposal that was evaluated may appeal an award decision. The WDC's appeal procedures are fully described in WDC Policy: A402, Procurement Policy, and summarized as follows: (a) an appeal must be made in writing within seven (7) calendar days from the date of the Notice of Award decision is issued to the bidder; (b) the appeal must state the procedural reason(s) for the appeal and the desired remedy; (c) appeals are only accepted for procedural matters such as alleged bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of the rater(s), or non-compliance with WDC procurement policies. Appeal requests that are not based on procedural matters will not be considered.
20. Any entity who submitted a proposal that was evaluated may submit a request up to thirty (30) calendar days after the Notice of Award an informal debrief to gather feedback for continual improvement of future proposals as described in WDC Policy: A402, Procurement Policy.
21. All bidders must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual in the Seattle-King County local area shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any WIOA funded program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency, or political affiliation, or belief.
22. All bidders must ensure access to individuals with disabilities pursuant to the Americans

with Disabilities Act.

23. Successful bidders must accept liability for all aspects of any WIOA program conducted under contract with the WDC. Once contracted, successful bidders will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or improper program operations.
24. Reductions in the funding level of any contract resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the contract period when a contractor fails to meet expenditure, participant, and/or outcome goals specified in the contract or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from the Federal or State governments.
25. Bidders who have proposals accepted and funded by the WDC will allow local, State, and Federal representatives access to all WIOA records, program materials, staff, and participants. In addition, bidders are required to maintain these records for proposals funded by WDC for six years, beginning on the last day of the program year.
26. The contract award will not be final until the WDC and the bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. The WDC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No program activity may begin prior to final WDC Executive Committee approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and the WDC.
27. The WDC reserves the right to cancel an award immediately if new local, State or Federal regulations or policy makes it necessary to change the program purpose or content substantially, or to prohibit such a program.
28. The WDC reserves the right to determine both the number and the funding levels of contracts finally awarded. Such determination will depend upon overall fund availability and other factors arising during the proposal review process. Bids submitted which are over the maximum amount of funds specified for this RFP will be rejected.
29. The proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.
30. The WDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and to negotiate with any and all offers on modifications to proposals.
31. The WDC reserves the right to accept proposals with minor clerical errors such as misspellings, incorrect page order, or similar nonmaterial errors.