

# COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

## YOUTH REENTRY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Request for Proposal

PROPOSALS DUE BY **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019** AT 4 P.M. EASTERN TIME

**TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR**

[WWW.PA.GOV](http://WWW.PA.GOV)

**W. GERARD OLEKSIK, SECRETARY**

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**SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO:**

**ONE ELECTRONIC COPY *MUST* BE EMAILED TO THE ADDRESS INDICATED BELOW:**

**RESOURCE ACCOUNT:** [RA-LI-BWDA-YOUTH@pa.gov](mailto:RA-LI-BWDA-YOUTH@pa.gov)

**SUBJECT:** RFP APPLICATION – **YOUTH REENTRY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

## **SECTION 1 – PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Request for Proposal, or RFP, is to competitively award funding to local workforce development boards, or LWDBs, to support youth reentry programs that will blend academic and occupation training, provide specific linkages to area employers in high-priority/in-demand occupations, provide needed supportive services and mentorship, and offer clear connections to education and training. Additionally, these programs will feature close working relationships between LWDBs, the PA CareerLink® system, county and/or state justice systems, community or faith-based organizations, the federal bonding program, career and technical education centers, Job Corps, and institutions of higher education.

## **SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND**

The Youth Reentry Demonstration Project funding is offered under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA, Statewide Activities. The funding is authorized under Section 134 of WIOA and administered according to 20 CFR part 682.

WIOA's focus on prioritizing services to out-of-school youth, or OSY, positions both the workforce system and the juvenile justice system to have a shared customer focus. WIOA paves the way for these two systems to enhance the employability of OSY, while simultaneously reducing the risk of re-offending. While the juvenile justice system has made great strides to support its youth customers by aligning with workforce development innovations, there is a minimal strategic collaboration, resource sharing, or common implementation activities, across the juvenile justice and workforce systems, at the state and local levels.

In response to this, the PA Department of Labor & Industry, or L&I, is awarding funding to support expanded youth reentry programs for young people, 18-24 years old. The goal of this initiative is to engage youth, who were incarcerated or were subjected to the justice system, in a career pathway leading to postsecondary education, advanced training, and/or meaningful employment.

## **SECTION 3 - PROJECT SUMMARY**

L&I's vision for this expanded youth reentry programs includes several essential components that are critical to its success. In an effort to reach youth who are considered reentry, each demonstration site must align with their regional workforce area. Each demonstration site is required to develop and incorporate a clear strategy for secondary dropout reengagement (GED, HSD, or employment), and recruiting previously incarcerated young adults, those preparing for imminent release, and/or previously engaged with the justice system. L&I anticipates a robust referral partnership by partnering with county and/or state justice systems, including the Pennsylvania Academic and Career/Technical Training Alliance, or PACTT, affiliates, judges, corrections staff, parole boards, and county commissioners. This could also include the use of various PA CareerLink® locations, career and technical education centers, local high schools and/or intermediate units, and Business/Education Partnerships, etc.

The intent of this initiative is to align individuals' skill sets and training gaps to pursue the relevant education and training pathways that may increase opportunities. This should be done in full partnership with employers, as they are among the effort's beneficiaries. LWDBs should use available occupational information to discern what skills and knowledge are required to advance through a career path, which will lead to the incorporation of recognized assessments that identify academic skills and gaps, and those that gauge occupational interests. A strong training component will help participants build skills leading to a credential in a high-priority or in-demand occupation. Training under this funding must be aligned to an in-demand occupation or PA's High-Priority Occupation, or HPO, which targets industries identified as having the greatest opportunity for individuals to be fully trained and prepared for career-focused employment.

Demonstration sites will be required to develop and incorporate an emphasis on adult mentorship through a formal relationship between each participant and an adult mentor, focused on structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement. This includes the creation and maintenance of pathways for the reciprocal exchange of information amongst project partners, led by a designated project manager, who will ensure on-going partner collaboration in assisting youth participants with successfully reaching their established goals, including addressing any obstacles/challenges in their path.

This project must ensure access to social determinants of health and transitional supportive services via local referral partners, to ensure that reentry issues of housing, transportation, sobriety, hunger, literacy/numeracy, financial literacy, health, and other factors do not derail participants from the path to success. Additionally, provide access to 'clinics' aimed at supporting participants with obtaining the documentation necessary to benefit from all available opportunities (e.g., birth certificate, driver's license, Social Security card, etc.), as well as financial aid services. Supportive services may also include assistance with child care, linkages to community services, uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools (such as protective eye gear, etc.), books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes, payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications, and assistance with needs-related payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970) as well as other services permissible under local areas supportive service policies.

Projects should have connections to postsecondary education so that participants can be exposed to the importance of advanced education and, in appropriate circumstances, to enroll in and begin taking college courses. They should have connections to employers and jobs, including paid work experience opportunities, to ensure that participants can be self-sufficient while they are moving towards academic and occupational credentials. Lastly, demonstration sites must have connections to WIOA Youth and/or Adult programs and services to allow for the expansion of opportunities, where applicable.

LWDBs that participate will be required to evaluate how this new utilization of funds addresses service delivery for individuals with barriers. Following the grant period, each grantee will present a replicable program from which other LWDBs can learn and consider for adoption, including lessons learned, so far, and recommendations for success. Specific elements of the replicable program could include: a list of key stakeholders that were essential to the program's success; a description of the recruitment and assessment processes; process for identifying appropriate adult mentors, along with establishing the framework for their on-going support, engagement, and activities with the participants; program curricula; successful approaches to case management and social/transitional supportive services delivery, including engagement of community and faith-based organizations; and a compendium of resources leveraged to support the program.

LWDBs are encouraged to leverage other federal and state funding allocated to the local area, as well as local and philanthropic funds.

#### **SECTION 4 – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AVAILABILITY KEY COMPONENTS**

- A. PROJECT SPONSOR: This RFP is offered by L&I using federal WIOA Statewide Activities funding.
- B. APPLICATION DEADLINE: **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019, AT 4 P.M. EASTERN TIME**
- C. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Approximately \$2,500,000.00 is available. Funding will be awarded based on the availability of funds.
- D. ANTICIPATED AWARD SIZE: L&I anticipates that funding will be competitively awarded at approximately \$500,000.00. This project may be awarded under multiple Notice of Obligations.
- E. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The commonwealth anticipates a performance period beginning November 18, 2019, and ending March 31, 2022.
- F. FUNDING REAUTHORIZATIONS: L&I reserves the right to de-obligate funds for those projects that show minimal expenditure or obligation. These funds will be reallocated to other projects awarded under this RFP.
- G. REPORTING: Applicants awarded funding will be required to submit quarterly narrative reports, or QNRs, quarterly performance reports, or QPRs, monthly financial status reports, or FSRs, and participate with agency staff on calls to identify project progression, share best practices, and receive technical support. Following the grant period, each grantee will present a replicable program, along with a final evaluation of the demonstration project. The QNR and QPR templates and corresponding due dates will be provided to awarded applicants.

A completed closeout package is due to both the comptroller's office and the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration within 60 days after the termination date of the Notice of Obligation, or NOO, or after the NOO has been fully expended (whichever occurs first).

#### **SECTION 5 - ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Eligible applicants will be LWDBs. A LWDB can submit only one application. LWDBs are encouraged to reach out to other boards within the planning region to submit a regional package that will serve all of the LWDBs within the region.

Applicants must be capable of bringing together county and/or state justice systems, including PACTT affiliates, judges, corrections staff, parole boards, county commissioners, business, education, workforce, and provider partners to achieve the overall project goals as defined by the proposal. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate their ability to: coordinate the design of the project, develop, and implement an appropriate budget, collect, and report performance management measures, and coordinate and evaluate the activities of the project.

## **SECTION 6 - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

- A. ADDRESS TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE: Application forms and instructions are available on the L&I Grants page: <http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants>
- B. MANDATORY APPLICATION DOCUMENTS: Applicants must complete all mandatory forms and any applicable optional forms in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below. Files submitted for the application MUST be in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word unless otherwise specified in this notice.

### **1. APPLICATION FORM**

The application must be completed in full and submitted with the other mandatory documents. The application must reflect the house and senate districts where specific funding activity will occur and not the entire local workforce development area, unless applicable. The application is posted with this RFP. Save this document in a file named **“ApplicationForm.”**

### **2. PROJECT SUMMARY**

The Project Summary must contain a summary of the proposal suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained document that identifies:

- The name of the applicant
- Project title
- Project service area (e.g., counties to be served)
- Objectives of the project
- Description of the project
- The potential impact of the project (i.e., benefits, outcomes)
- Project partners
- Project point of contact with contact information

This document must not include any proprietary or sensitive business information as L&I may make it available to the public. The Project Summary must not exceed one (1) page. Save this document in a file named **“ProjectSummary.”**

### **3. PROJECT NARRATIVE (MUST ADDRESS CRITERIA 1-2)**

The Project Narrative must be formatted to clearly address the Merit Review Criteria in Section 7 (Criterion 1-2). Provide sufficient information so that reviewers will be able to evaluate the application in accordance with these merit criteria. **EVALUATORS WILL REVIEW AND CONSIDER ONLY THOSE APPLICATIONS THAT SEPARATELY ADDRESS EACH OF THE MERIT REVIEW CRITERION.**

The Project Narrative must not exceed ten (10), one-sided pages including cover page, table of contents, the statement of project objectives, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations when printed using standard 8.5” by 11” paper with 1” margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [single spaced]. **EVALUATORS WILL REVIEW ONLY THE NUMBER OF PAGES SPECIFIED IN THE PRECEDING SENTENCE.** Page numbers must be provided in the footer. Do not include any Internet addresses (URLs) that provide information necessary to review the application. Save this document in a file named **“ProjectNarrative.”**

4. LETTERS OF SUPPORT (MUST ADDRESS CRITERION 3)

Two letters of support are required to accompany your proposal. One letter must come from either county or state justice system representative (judges, corrections staff, parole boards, parole staff or county commissioners). We strongly suggest that the second letter come from a PACTT affiliate. Each letter of support must not exceed a single, one-sided page when printed using single-spaced, 12pt. Times New Roman font on letter-sized paper (8.5" x 11") with 1" margins on all sides. Documents should be saved using "**LetterOfSupport**" as the file name.

5. BUDGET FORM (MUST ADDRESS CRITERION 4)

Applicants must submit a detailed budget. The budget will be evaluated in terms of cost reasonableness and the relationship to proposed activities. Budgets must be for the time-period November 18, 2019 – March 31, 2022. The budget will also become the financial basis for any award, including making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. PA reserves the right to unilaterally modify application budgets, prior to, and/or after the award. The Budget Form does not count toward the ten (10) page limit of the Project Narrative. The Budget Form is posted with this RFP. Save this document in a single file named "**BudgetForm.**"

6. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION FORM (MUST ADDRESS CRITERION 4)

Applicants must justify, in detail and by line item, the costs proposed in each cost category and any other information to support the budget. The Budget Justification does not count toward the ten (10) page limit of the Project Narrative. The budget justification form is posted with this request for proposal. Save this document in a single file named "**BudgetJustificationForm.**"

7. PERFORMANCE REPORTS (MUST ADDRESS CRITERION 5)

Applicants must use the QPR form to develop baseline numbers as part of the RFP pre-evaluation. The baseline numbers will be based on the local areas numbers of planned participants and will serve as a future measurement of success and reporting. Each project site will be required to complete the QPR form with the performance data for the appropriate quarter thereafter. The QPR form and the Pre-Evaluation form will be posted with this RFP. Save the QPR form in a single file named "**QuarterlyPerformanceForm.**" Save the Pre-Evaluation form in a single file named "**PreEvaluationForm.**"

C. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES: Applications must be submitted by **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019, AT 4 P.M. EASTERN TIME**

D. OTHER SUBMISSION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- Application packages must be submitted ELECTRONICALLY by the application deadline.
- Electronic application packages must be submitted to RA-LI-BWDA-YOUTH@pa.gov.
- The subject line for your email submission must include "RFP Application – **YOUTH REENTRY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**"

## **SECTION 7 - APPLICATION REVIEW AND CRITERIA**

### **A. INITIAL REVIEW CRITERIA**

Prior to comprehensive merit evaluation, Pennsylvania will perform an initial review to determine the following:

- the applicant is eligible for an award
- the information required by the announcement has been submitted
- all mandatory requirements are satisfied
- the proposed project is responsive to the purpose of the RFP

### **B. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA**

The comprehensive merit evaluation will be conducted by a review team who will score proposals based on the degree to which the proposal addresses the following required criterion:

#### **CRITERION 1: PROJECT APPROACH AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (40 POINTS)**

- Describes how the LWDB will implement the Youth Reentry Demonstration Project (including how it will leverage WIOA resources and funding) (10 points)
- Describes how the LWDB will conduct outreach to target the indicated population under this initiative (5 points)
- Describes how the LWDB will implement a strategy for secondary dropout re-engagement (5 points)
- Describes how the training skill gaps of individuals will be identified (including case management tools and assessments) (5 points)
- Indicates and addresses any changes needed to local policies to implement this initiative (5 points)
- Describes how the LWDB will create and maintain the adult mentorship component of the reentry project (5 points)
- Indicates the targeted number of individuals that will be provided training services under this initiative (5 points)

#### **CRITERION 2: APPLICANT/TEAM CAPABILITIES (25 POINTS)**

- Identifies the partners on this project (including county and/or state justice systems, PACTT affiliates, business/education partnerships) (4 points)
- Identifies the responsibilities of the partners (4 points)
- Identifies the ability of the applicant to coordinate project responsibilities of identified partners (such as case management, fiscal management, and reporting) (4 points)
- Identifies applicant's prior track record related to recent discretionary projects, if applicable (4 points)
- Identifies the ability of the key personnel on the project to foster collaboration and implement programs (identifying personnel by name and qualifications) (4 points)
- Identifies the ability to develop and incorporate adult mentorship through a formal relationship between each participant and an adult mentor, focused on structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, supports, and encouragement (5 points)

#### **CRITERION 3: Letters of Support (10 POINTS)**

- Two letters of support are required to accompany your proposal. One letter must come from either county or state justice system representative (judges, corrections staff, parole boards, parole staff or



county commissioners). We strongly suggest that the second letter come from a PACTT affiliate (10 POINTS)

#### CRITERION 4: BUDGET FORM AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (15 POINTS)

- Includes a complete budget broken out by line item (5 Points)
- Includes a detailed budget justification which contains a detailed breakout of quantity, cost, and narrative to support each line item of the budget reflective of the scope of the project. The number of participants to be served must be provided. If staff salaries will be supported by these funds, provide a description of the duties and responsibilities of each staff person to be funded (10 Points)

#### CRITERION 5: POTENTIAL IMPACT (10 POINTS)

- Completed Youth Reentry Demonstration Project Pre-Evaluation form (5 points)
- Established baseline numbers on their QPR form (5 points)

### **SECTION 8 – COST INFORMATION**

The number of proposals selected for funding will be based upon the number of proposals submitted, the funding available, and how those proposals accomplish and achieve the criteria outlined in Section 7 of this RFP.

#### 1. ALLOWABLE COSTS

Funds available through this RFP must be used to support the training, education and, supportive service costs for Reentry Youth. This includes case management, mentorship, recognized assessments, creation, and maintenance of pathways. Administrative costs are permitted so long as they do not exceed 10% of the total award.

Applicants must build upon existing resources, including the use of existing staff, facilities, and equipment to support the submitted proposal.

#### 2. DISALLOWABLE COSTS

Pre-award costs are incurred at the applicant's risk. The commonwealth is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the applicant does not receive an award or if the award is made for a lesser amount than the applicant expected. Disallowed costs include:

- Building construction
- Procuring lobbying services

## **SECTION 9 - AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

- A. **DISCUSSIONS AND AWARD:** PA may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including but not limited to: (1) the budget is not appropriate or reasonable; (2) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (3) PA needs additional or clarifying information; and/or (4) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by PA within a specific period determined by the commonwealth may preclude award to the applicant.
- B. **RIGHT TO REJECT OR NEGOTIATE:** The commonwealth reserves the right, without qualification, to reject any or all applications received in response to this announcement and to select any application, in whole or in part, as a basis for negotiation and/or award.
- C. **COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS:** The contracting officer is the only individual who can make awards or commit Pennsylvania to the expenditure of public funds. A commitment by other than the contracting officer, either explicit or implied, is invalid.
- D. **NOTICES:** Each applicant shall be notified in writing within 30 days after the award/denial decision is made regarding the submitted application.
- E. **AWARDEE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Awardees will be required to enter into a workforce grant agreement with the L&I unless a current grant agreement is already in place.

## **SECTION 10 - QUESTIONS/AGENCY CONTACTS**

- A. **QUESTIONS:** Questions regarding the content of this RFP must be submitted, in writing to, RA-LI-BWDA-YOUTH@pa.gov.