

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

## YOUNG ADULT SERVICES

RFP #WIOA-YOUNG ADULT – 2-1-2021

**RELEASE DATE** February 1, 2021

**NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO  
BID DUE DATE** February 19, 2021, 5:00 pm PST

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE** March 3, 2021, 5:00 pm PST

**ANTICIPATED SUBAWARD  
PERIOD** June 1-15, 2021 through June 30, 2022  
*\* Potential annual extension through June 30, 2025*

### **WorkForce Central**

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**WIOA YOUNG ADULT SERVICES**  
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**WIOA YOUNG ADULT SERVICES**  
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**SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

**A. Introduction**

The Pierce County Workforce Development Council, in partnership with Pierce County and City of Tacoma Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), is responsible for overseeing Pierce County’s workforce development system. WorkForce Central is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP), on behalf of the Pierce County Workforce Development Council and CLEOs, to identify and select one or more qualified subrecipients for Department of Labor federal funds to provide Young Adult Services in Pierce County under the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) (Public Law No: 113-128).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program formula funds are provided to local workforce areas to deliver a comprehensive array of services to youth and young adults. Services assist out-of-school and in-school youth and young adults who have one or more barriers to employment to prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. The subrecipient(s) selected through this RFP will coordinate with WorkForce Central and its partners to provide and promote top quality, integrated, non-duplicative young adult services that align with the Washington State Workforce Plan, “Talent and Prosperity for All,” and the Pierce County Workforce Development Council’s [Strategic Plan](#), [Operations Plan](#), and [Local Integrated Workforce Plan](#).

WorkForce Central and the Pierce County Workforce Development Council have three overarching goals for this Young Adult Services RFP:

- 1) Build collaboration and coordination between young adult service providers of all types in Pierce County and integrate more community-based service providers into the WorkSource Pierce System.
- 2) Significantly improve outreach, services, and positive employment and education outcomes for young adults who are furthest from opportunities and who experience systemic barriers to employment.
- 3) Increase utilization of innovative, high impact, and best practice strategies and programs, such as technology-based services, mentorship, wraparound services, entrepreneurial training, and pre-apprenticeships.

Effective, well-planned partnership is one of the best ways to achieve all three goals. We welcome proposals from consortiums of organizations, especially consortiums that include local, small, and minority- or women-owned organizations who are experts in serving specific high priority populations and delivering high impact, innovative workforce development services.

WorkForce Central may select multiple subrecipients for a subaward. Organizations of all sizes and types are encouraged to submit proposals that will help advance the RFP goals while meeting requirements outlined in this RFP, including proposals with pioneering program models and varied funding amounts.

Target Population: All young adults between the ages of 16–24 years who meet WIOA eligibility criteria as provided in WIOA Section 3(18) and 129(a)(1)(B) and (C) and WorkForce Central’s [WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth Eligibility and Documentation Policy Handbook](#) are eligible for Young Adult Services as defined in the WIOA, Section 134 and (2) (A) (1). Subawards through this RFP will fund services to both Out-of-School (OSY) and In-School (ISY) young adults. Highest priority young adult populations are listed in section III.B. of this RFP.

Geographic Area: Pierce County, Washington

Proposed Subaward Amount: Young Adult Services will be funded as a WIOA Title I subaward. For planning purposes, bidders should estimate WIOA funding of **up to approximately \$1,200,000** for this RFP, depending on available funding and the number of subawards. WorkForce Central reserves the right to increase or decrease the total estimated subaward amount; it is provided solely as guidance to bidders in preparing their proposal budget. Bidders are not required to request the full amount of estimated funding available.

Type of Subaward: Cost reimbursement subaward

Anticipated Subaward Start Date: Between June 1 – 15, 2021

Initial Subaward End Date: June 30, 2022

Option to Extend: WorkForce Central reserves the right to extend subawards for another three years on an annual basis through June 30, 2025, based on future funding availability, any additional regulations or rule-making from the federal Department of Labor, community need, subrecipients’ performance, and other factors.

## **B. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Overview**

On July 22, 2014 President Obama signed into law the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA is designed to improve and streamline access to federally funded employment, education, training, and support services. Every year the key programs that form the pillars of WIOA help tens of millions of job seekers and workers to connect to good jobs and acquire the skills and credentials needed to obtain them. The enactment of WIOA has provided an opportunity for reforms to ensure the WorkSource One-Stop Delivery System is job-driven, responding to the needs of employers and preparing workers for jobs that are available now and in the future.

WIOA has six main purposes:

1. Increase access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.
2. Support the alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system.
3. Improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts.

4. Promote improvement in the structure and delivery of services.
5. Increase the prosperity of workers and employers.
6. Provide workforce development activities that increase employment, retention, and earnings of participants and that increase post-secondary credential attainment and as a result, improves the quality of the workforce, reduces welfare dependency, increases economic self-sufficiency, meets skills requirement of employers, and enhances productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

### **C. Subrecipient Designation**

The awardee of this award will be a subrecipient. A subrecipient is a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out all or part of a Federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency (2 CFR §200.93 Subrecipient).

A subrecipient must comply with all applicable uniform administrative requirements, cost principles and audit requirements. In this situation, the pass-through agency of the funds has a responsibility to monitor the subrecipient to ensure the grant funds are being used for authorized purposes and as required by the grant agreement and applicable regulations. For more information, please see: 2 CFR Part 200; 2 CFR Part 2900; TEGL 15-16; and ESD Policy 5250 Subrecipient/Contractor Pass-Through Entity Determination Requirements. For information on uniform guidance 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, visit:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200/content-detail.html>

OR

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/search/pagedetails.action?granuleId=CFR-2016-title2-vol1-part2900&packageId=CFR-2016-title2-vol1>

For more information on WIOA, please visit: <http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA>.

### **D. Washington State Strategic Workforce Plan “Talent and Prosperity for All”**

Soon after the passage of WIOA, Governor Jay Inslee directed the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) to work with the system’s stakeholders to shape Washington State’s Workforce Plan, “Talent and Prosperity for All” (State Plan), toward three goals to maximize the workforce system’s impact:

- Help more people find and keep jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency, with a focus on disadvantaged populations.
- Close skill gaps for employers with a focus on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, including through apprenticeships.
- Work together as a single, seamless team.

In designing the State Plan, the Workforce Board embraced WIOA as a chance to improve service delivery and remove barriers for all individuals with barriers to employment, not just those populations covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information about Washington State’s “Talent and Prosperity for All: The Strategic Plan for Unlocking Washington’s Workforce Potential”, go to: [Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board](#).

## **E. WIOA's Local Governing Body: Pierce County Workforce Development Council, WorkForce Central Executive Board, and WorkForce Central**

An inter-local agreement between the City of Tacoma and Pierce County provides the foundation for workforce development initiatives across Pierce County. Elected officials from the City of Tacoma and Pierce County, as well as a representative of business, form our governing body, the Executive Board, which works closely with and appoints members to the Pierce County Workforce Development Council. Together, their mission is to ensure coordination of the WorkSource Pierce workforce system.

The Governor-certified Pierce County Workforce Development Council is a business-led council comprised of community leaders with expertise in the public, private and philanthropic sectors. With a wealth of expertise, the Pierce County Workforce Development Council works side-by-side with the Chief Local Elected Officials to address workforce deficiencies, upskill workers, to develop potential employees, and ensure the workforce system offers the highest quality service to its customers. WorkForce Central, established as Tacoma-Pierce County Employment & Training Consortium in 1982, fulfills the vision of the Chief Local Elected Officials and the Pierce County Workforce Development Council.

In partnership with the Executive Board, the Pierce County Workforce Development Council and WorkForce Central have established the [Local Integrated Workforce Plan](#) that strategically supports the State's "Talent and Prosperity for All" plan and the full implementation of WIOA, including the integrated service delivery system. The local service delivery area encompasses incorporated and unincorporated Pierce County.

## **F. Pierce County Workforce Development Council Vision, Mission, Objectives and Values**

Vision: Economic prosperity for our customers and the region.

Mission: Provide easy access to and enhance delivery of workforce development services for individuals and businesses.

### Objectives

- 1) Increase business engagement with the workforce system.
- 2) Create an integrated system that is aligned to the goals.
- 3) Expand and improve the talent pipeline of disconnected young adults and adults to quality jobs.
- 4) Support individuals to gain employment through a system of wrap around services that is responsive to their diverse experience and needs.

Core Values: We believe in the following shared principles, beliefs, and priorities:

- Empowerment - We support our customers in gaining the skills and confidence to make choices right for them and their families.
- Innovation - We embrace on-going innovation, creativity, and change for achieving continuous improvement and growth.
- Results - We deliver our very best in all we do, holding ourselves accountable for results.
- Respect - We treat our team members, customers, and partners with mutual respect and sensitivity, recognizing the importance of diversity. We respect all individuals and value their contributions.
- Stewardship - We are stewards of the public trust and take seriously our responsibility for fiscal management.

- Social Justice - We will actively work to undo the historic harm done to communities of color throughout Pierce County by targeting our financial and strategic resources to those communities. We will purposefully identify, discuss, and challenge issues of race and the impact(s) they have on our organization, each partner organization, its respective systems, and the people we serve, with an aim toward active contributions to racial and gender equity along the way. We will continually challenge ourselves to understand and correct the inequities we discover within the workforce development system, gain a better understanding of ourselves during this intentional process, and work to ensure that power is shared among all stakeholders in our community.

## SECTION II: SOLICITATION INFORMATION

### A. Solicitation Timetable

<b>Request for Proposal (RFP) Release</b>	<b>February 1, 2021</b>
<b>Virtual Bidders' Conference</b>	<b>February 10, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, PST</b>
<b>Deadline for Written Questions</b> Email questions with RFP number in title to: <a href="mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org">procurement@workforce-central.org</a>  Questions and answers will be posted to: <a href="#">WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP</a>	<b>February 18, 2021, 5:00 pm PST</b>
<b>Notification of Intent to Bid Due</b>	<b>February 19, 2021, 5:00 pm PST</b>
<b>Proposal Package Due</b> Email proposal package with RFP number in title to: <a href="mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org">procurement@workforce-central.org</a>	<b>March 3, 2021, 5:00 pm PST</b>
<b>Technical Review</b>	<b>March 4 – 10, 2021</b>
<b>Evaluation of Proposals &amp; Virtual Oral Interviews (if held)</b>	<b>March 11 – April 5, 2021</b>
<b>Announcement of Subaward(s)</b>	<b>On or near April 8, 2021</b>
<b>Subaward Negotiations and Development</b>	<b>April 9 – June 15, 2021</b>
<b>Anticipated Subaward Start Date</b>	<b>Between June 1 - 15, 2021</b>



## **B. Eligible Bidders**

Eligible bidders include any of the following entities who are able to provide WIOA Young Adult Services in Pierce County:

- Consortium of organizations, with one designated as the lead agency and primary subrecipient
- Non-profit organizations
- Education institutions
- Public and government agencies
- Private for-profit businesses
- Business associations
- Faith-based organizations

WorkForce Central is interested in receiving proposals from organizations of all sizes, especially those that effectively serve young adults who are furthest from opportunity and who experience systemic barriers to employment. We also welcome proposals from community-based organizations with integrated social services who might not usually apply for this type of funding opportunity, and from organizations whose board of directors, leadership and staff reflect the communities prioritized for services in this RFP.

WorkForce Central recognizes that smaller community-based organizations with distinct expertise in working with individuals who are furthest from opportunity may not have capacity or experience to manage WIOA funding and processes. They also might not be able to provide all required young adult services on their own. In these instances, WorkForce Central encourages potential bidders to consider joining or forming a consortium to partner with organizations in the community that can provide administrative and/or fiscal capacity and/or collaborate to ensure all required services are available to WIOA eligible young adults. Consortium proposals must identify the lead agency that will be the primary subrecipient and the fiscal agent (these may be the same organization).

WorkForce Central does not require bidders to have a comprehensive understanding of WIOA requirements and processes. WorkForce Central will provide technical assistance and training regarding WIOA requirements to subrecipients chosen through this solicitation. Selected subrecipients are expected to work with WorkForce Central to quickly develop a working understanding of WIOA and Pierce County WorkForce Development Council policies, procedures and requirements.

## **C. WorkForce Central Procurement**

WorkForce Central conducts all procurements in a manner providing full and open competition as required under 2 CFR 200, other federal and state laws and regulations, and WorkForce Central's Procurement Policy. This RFP identifies all relevant requirements, evaluation factors, technical review process, scoring point range, and selection process. Technical Review will be completed for all proposals received by **March 3, 2021, 5:00 pm PST** and for which Notifications of Intent to Bid were received by **February 19, 2021, 5:00 pm PST**.

WorkForce Central reserves the right to revise any part of the RFP at any time before the submission deadline date if necessary. These revisions will become addendums to the RFP and will be posted on the WorkForce

Central website, Young Adult Services RFP page: [WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP](#). Bidders are responsible for checking the website frequently to remain informed about the procurement process. Each bidder must amend its RFP package, as necessary. Failure to acknowledge any addendum will result in disqualification of the proposal.

#### **D. Notification of Intent to Bid**

Entities planning to submit a proposal in response to this RFP are required to **submit a Notification of Intent to Bid via email by February 19, 2021, 5:00 pm PST**. Email the organization's name, contact person name, contact information, and statement of intention to submit a proposal to [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org). Please include the RFP number in the email subject line. If the Notification of Intent to Bid is not received or is received after the due date, proposals will be disqualified.

#### **E. Proposal Minimum Requirements and Submission Instructions**

To be considered for review, proposals must follow the instructions in this RFP, provide all information required in the proposal package, and include all required attachments (including signed and dated by your organization's representative, as indicated). The bidder(s) selected through this solicitation will be required to agree to the General Terms and Conditions in WorkForce Central's contract and must also comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and with local policies established by the Pierce County Workforce Development Council.

Please submit proposals by email to [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org) and include the RFP number in the title of the email. The proposal must be emailed as one PDF document that includes all attachments. All proposals must be received **before March 3, 2021, 5:00 pm PST**. Proposals not submitted by this date and time will be automatically disqualified, without exceptions. Faxed or hard copy proposal packages will not be accepted.

#### **F. Bidders' Conference and Written Questions**

Potential bidders and others who may be interested in the Young Adult Services RFP are invited to a virtual Bidders' Conference on **February 10, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, PST**. This is an opportunity to ask questions about the RFP and proposal requirements, with WorkForce Central staff present to share information and answer questions. Those who want to attend the Bidders' Conference must request an Outlook meeting invitation with the Zoom meeting link. Please email [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org), with the RFP number in the email subject line, to request an invitation.

WorkForce Central also welcomes questions about the RFP submitted by email. Please submit questions in writing by emailing [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org), with the RFP number in the email subject line. The deadline for written questions is **February 18, 2021, 5:00 pm PST**.

All questions and answers from the Bidders' Conference and those received by email will be posted on the WorkForce Central website, Young Adult Services RFP page: [WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP](#).

## SECTION III: YOUNG ADULT SERVICES DESCRIPTION

### A. WIOA Young Adult Services

WIOA outlines a vision for an integrated, comprehensive service delivery system that provides high quality services for in-school and out-of-school youth and young adults – including 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. The 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements, shown below, encompass this vision. Bidders can click on the links in each item to learn more about these activities.

1. [Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Dropout Prevention](#) activities that lead to completion of a high school diploma or recognized equivalent
2. [Alternative Secondary School and Dropout Recovery Services](#) assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education or who have dropped out of school
3. [Paid and Unpaid Work Experience](#) is a structured learning experience in a workplace and provides opportunities for career exploration and skill development. This may include the following types of work experiences:
  - Summer employment and other employment opportunities throughout the school year
  - Pre-apprenticeship programs
  - Internships and job shadowing
  - On-the-job training opportunities
4. [Occupational Skills Training](#) is an organized program of study that provides specific skills and leads to proficiency in an occupational field
5. [Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation](#) is an integrated education and training model combining workforce preparation, basic academic skills, and occupational skills
6. [Leadership Development Opportunities](#) encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors
7. [Supportive Services](#) enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities
8. [Adult Mentoring](#) is a formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement
9. [Follow-up Services](#) are provided following program exit to help ensure youth succeed in employment or education
10. [Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling](#) provides individualized counseling to participants, including drug/alcohol and mental health counseling
11. [Financial Literacy Education](#) provides youth with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve long-term financial stability
12. [Entrepreneurial Skills Training](#) provides the basics of starting and operating a small business and develops entrepreneurial skills
13. [Services that Provide Labor Market Information](#) offer employment and labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations
14. [Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities](#) help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

## **B. Young Adult Services Program Design**

WIOA Young Adult Services providers must make the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements available to participants as direct services they provide or through system partnerships and coordination. Bidders must articulate their program design that includes the following framework services; these services facilitate young adults' successful access and participation in the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements.

Outreach, Recruitment and Orientation: Outreach and recruitment include, but are not limited to, identifying potentially eligible young adults, working with parents and guardians to inform about program services and secure necessary documentation, and working closely with other governmental and community organizations and school systems to identify and recruit out-of-school and in-school young adults. As part of orientation, all young adults must receive information on the full array of available services and how to access them.

Intake, Eligibility Determination and Registration: Subrecipients will be responsible for determining WIOA eligibility of all young adult applicants recruited into the program, determining the young adult's suitability for program services, and collecting and verifying all necessary eligibility source documents. WIOA requires all young adults to meet eligibility criteria and be determined eligible prior to enrollment and receipt of WIOA-funded services.

Objective Assessment and Referral: Subrecipients 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 young adult in order to develop an appropriate service strategy to meet their individual needs. Eligible young adults 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.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS): Subrecipient staff must use the results of the young adult's objective assessment to develop the ISS for the 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, supportive services, and incentives. For all young adults, the ISS will identify the timeframe in which each young adult will be expected to complete all activities related to each of the goal(s) specified in the ISS and should be updated with the young adult during the course of service. The ISS will clearly connect the services to be provided to each young adult, identifying the outcomes to be achieved between WIOA enrollment and exit. The ISS directly links to one or more WIOA performance outcomes.

Case Management: Case management is the structure for delivering effective services that facilitate positive development of young adults and the achievement of their goals. Case management extends from recruitment/enrollment through follow-up services. The case manager supports and motivates participants and coordinates services and information to prepare young adults for post-secondary education opportunities, academic and occupational training, or employment and training opportunities, as appropriate. Subrecipients are encouraged to incorporate trauma informed approaches, behavioral health training, implicit bias training, and racially equitable practices into their case management models.

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 subrecipient does not directly provide one of the program elements, it must demonstrate the ability to make seamless referrals to appropriate providers of such services. Services accessed by a WIOA young adult participant will depend upon the needs and goals identified by the participant and case manager as documented in the participant's ISS. The subrecipient will have primary responsibility for ensuring that each participant has access to the full continuum of services, and for documentation of these services.

Follow-up Services: Subrecipients are required to provide at least 12 months of follow-up services to participants who have completed program services as well as to participants who may have dropped out of the program but need additional services. Bidders are encouraged to consider the needs and barriers of the high priority young adult populations identified for this RFP in planning the appropriate levels and types of follow-up services.

### **C. Overarching RFP Goals**

WorkForce Central and the Pierce County Workforce Development Council have three overarching goals for this Young Adult Services RFP:

1. Build collaboration and coordination between young adult service providers of all types in Pierce County and integrate more community-based service providers into the WorkSource Pierce System.

Strong partnerships and collaboration are critical in delivering the full range of effective services that will have the greatest collective and individual impact. WorkForce Central aims to support increased alignment and collaboration between youth-serving organizations in Pierce County in order to increase access, reduce duplication, close service gaps, and foster innovation.

Bidders should describe current or planned career pathway partnerships with educational institutions and/or employers to develop and deliver specific activities and strategies to connect education, training, and employment activities for participating youth. In addition, bidders are encouraged to form strong partnerships within multiple young adult and youth serving systems to facilitate equitable access to all 14 WIOA Program Elements. This may include formal MOUs or informal partnerships with systems/organizations such as:

- Local area justice and law enforcement officials
- Local public housing authorities
- Local education agencies (e.g., post-secondary and K-12 school districts)
- Local human service agencies
- WIOA title II adult education providers
- Local disability-serving agencies and providers and health and mental health providers
- Job corps representatives
- Representatives of other area youth initiatives, such as YouthBuild, and including those that serve homeless young adults and other public and private youth initiatives
- Adult employment and education programs, to facilitate transition of services for participants whose age will soon disqualify them for young adult services.

2. Significantly improve outreach, services, and positive employment and education outcomes for young adults who are furthest from opportunities and who experience systemic barriers to employment.

Proposals must demonstrate how outreach and services will be provided to demographic groups that are traditionally underfunded and overrepresented among low-income young adults who are disconnected from school and employment, and how these will lead to positive employment and education outcomes. The following young adult populations are high priority for services through this RFP; individuals who belong to more than one group are highest priority.

Black & African American	Hispanic & Latino	Indigenous
Other minority races/ethnicities	Asian American	Pacific Islander
Experiencing homelessness	Immigrants	English language learners
Pregnant and parenting youth	Foster care or history	LGBTQIA+ community
Mental health & substance use disorders	Disabilities	Low income
Justice system involvement	Gang involvement	Living in remote areas
At risk of disengaging from school	Disengaged from school	Basic Skills Deficient (BSD)
No high school diploma or GED		

Bidders should describe outreach, service strategies and partnerships that will engage all or many high priority populations, and/or strategies and partnerships tailored to specific populations.

3. Increase utilization of innovative, high impact, and best practice strategies and programs, such as technology-based services, mentorship, wraparound services, entrepreneurial training, and pre-apprenticeships.

As access to educational and employment opportunities become increasingly reliant on technology, innovative strategies for connecting young adults to virtual opportunities is essential. Mentorship is a powerful support system where young adults receive guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competencies and character necessary for successful transition into adulthood and self-sufficient careers. Providing wraparound services is vital to young adults’ success by utilizing natural and community resources to address the various unique needs and strengths of our next generation. Entrepreneurial training and pre-apprenticeship opportunities offer young adults customized learning that can lead to successful, self-sufficient, and self-reliant careers.

Bidders should describe service strategies and partnerships that increase access to technology and mentorship, how wrap-around services will be provided, and how young adults will have access to entrepreneurial and pre-apprenticeship training. Bidders should also demonstrate how they will work to meet young adults where they are at, not expecting them to come to us. We are interested in proposals that demonstrate innovative ways to meet with young people in their communities and in ways they are more likely to engage.

## **D. WIOA Eligibility for Young Adults**

Young adults must meet specific WIOA eligibility requirements as defined in WIOA legislation and state policy. To be considered eligible for Out-of-School or In-School program services, young adults must meet the following requirements.

### Out-of-School Eligibility Requirement:

- Not attending any school (as defined under state law);
- Not younger than 16 years or older than 24 years at the time of enrollment; and
- One or more of the following conditions:
  - 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 runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a youth 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

### In-School Eligibility Requirement:

- Attending school;
- Not younger than 16 years and not older than 21 years (This is WorkForce Central eligibility; WIOA also allows youth age 14-15 years.);
- Low-income individual; and
- One or more of the following conditions:
  - Individual with a disability
  - Basic skills deficient
  - English language learner
  - Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
  - Homeless, runaway, or foster placement
  - Pregnant or parenting
  - An individual who requires additional support to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

## **E. Performance Outcomes**

The subrecipient(s) selected from this RFP will be required to meet and track WIOA Common Performance Measures at the current levels negotiated with the state for our area. Performance measure levels are adjusted annually based on past system performance and populations served. The WIOA Common Performance Measures and levels from last program year are shown below.

WIOA COMMON PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PY20 TARGETS
<b>Young Adult Placement</b> – Percent of participants who are in education, training, or employment during the 2nd quarter after exit	56.8%
<b>Young Adult Retention</b> – Percent of participants who are in education, training, or employment during the 4th quarter after exit	58.9%
<b>Young Adult Median Earnings</b> – Median earnings of participants employed during the 2nd quarter after exit	\$2,375
<b>Credential Attainment</b> – Percent of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in OJT and customized training) who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program	66.3%
<b>Measurable Skills Gain</b> – Percent of young adults who, during a program year, are in education that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable gains (defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment)	50%

There are many ways to help young adults achieve these outcomes, via the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements and/or other strategies and supports uniquely suited to an individual’s needs. Subrecipient(s) selected from this RFP will be expected to tailor their approach and strategies for each young adult depending on individual strengths, preferences and needs. For this reason, WorkForce Central is not requiring bidders to commit to numeric, strategy-specific performance measures in their proposal.

Bidders’ proposals will need to state the number of young adults they expect to serve. Bidders are encouraged to also estimate the numbers and/or percentages of young adults from specific high priority populations they anticipate serving, if possible. Bidders may choose to propose performance measures relevant to their planned strategies and to the young adult populations they will serve. WorkForce Central may negotiate additional performance measures and targets with bidders awarded a contract through this RFP.

**F. Services Location**

WIOA Young Adult Services must be accessible to all qualifying young adults in Pierce County, including those with geographic, transportation, or technology barriers. WorkForce Central encourages proposals that specify outreach and engagement strategies for young adults with these barriers.

Bidders should expect to maintain a visible and reliable presence at the WorkSource Pierce One-Stop Center, located at 2121 South State Street, Tacoma, WA 98402. Rent and space use costs for co-



location of staff will be negotiated during contract development. Subrecipient(s) selected from this RFP must have technological capacity for executing responsibilities and providing services virtually if WorkSource Pierce One-Stop Center closures are required due to the COVID-19 pandemic or other reasons. Services may also be provided virtually, at WorkSource Pierce's partner affiliate sites and connection sites, and at any other location that meets young adults who are furthest from opportunity.

### **G. 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 and state regulations, and [WorkForce Central Policies](#).

Paid Work Experience: The Pierce County Workforce Development Council requires at least 20% of all awarded WIOA youth formula funds be devoted to paid work experiences. Subrecipient(s) selected from this RFP must demonstrate a capacity to provide, or collaborate in providing, work-based learning programs such as paid work experiences, summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job-training that serve as the next steps in career development. This should include working closely with WorkForce Central's Business Services Team to develop strategies and relationships to engage employers, and with WorkSource Pierce system partners that serve industry.

In-School-Youth Services: A maximum of 25% of all WIOA funding for Young Adult Services is allowed for In-School Youth services.

### **H. Additional Expectations**

WorkSource Pierce One-Stop System: In addition to co-location at the WorkSource Pierce One-Stop Center, the subrecipient(s) awarded a contract through this RFP is expected to be an active partner in the WorkSource Pierce One-Stop System. Specific expectations will be negotiated during contract development, but will likely include:

- Adhere to WorkSource Pierce One-Stop Center policies and procedures and participate in daily operations.
- Regularly attend WorkSource Pierce partnership meetings and workgroup meetings.
- Participate in WorkSource Pierce Continuous Quality Improvement efforts.
- Sign the required Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Sharing Agreement and participate in associated cost sharing.
- Successfully contribute to overall WorkSource Pierce performance measures using a common data collection system for tracking and reporting.
- Share best practices, innovative service delivery strategies, and resources with WorkSource Pierce partners.
- Consistently use WorkSource Pierce's Common Referral System to make and accept community referrals.

Participant Files, Data Entry and Tracking: The subrecipient(s) awarded a contract through this RFP is expected to maintain well organized, up-to-date electronic participant files for enrolled participants. They will be required to track participant enrollments, demographic information, services provided,

and performance outcomes for WIOA Title I funds using the statewide Management Information System (MIS), known as Efforts to Outcomes (ETO). Files must be maintained to the standard set by the Washington Employment Security Department and Monitoring teams, which includes real time data entry (defined as services and data entered within (seven) 7 calendar days from time of service/collection). Subrecipients will be required to attend ETO training provided by WorkForce Central and sign data sharing and non-disclosure agreements to safeguard customer personal information.

## I. Policies

For information about WIOA Youth and Young Adult Services, please visit the [Workforce Professionals Center](#). Links to specific Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) are provided below.

### [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 21-16](#)

Third Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth Formula Program Guidance

### [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 08-15](#)

Second Title 1 WIOA Youth Program Transition Guidance

### [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 23-14](#)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Transition

Bidders are also encouraged to review WorkForce Central's [WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Eligibility & Documentation Handbook](#).

## SECTION IV: PROPOSAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

### A. Required Notification of Intent to Bid submitted no later than February 19, 2021, 5:00 pm PST

### B. Proposal Content Requirements & Organization

To facilitate the proposal review process and maximize comparability between proposals, submitted proposal packages must include all items below (unless noted otherwise), in the order shown.

1. Proposal Cover Sheet (signed) - Link: [Proposal Cover Sheet](#)
2. Table of Contents with page numbers
3. Proposal Narrative
4. Equity/Diversity/Anti-Racism policies and procedures (if applicable)
5. Budget Worksheet - Link: [Budget Worksheet](#)
6. Organizational Chart
7. Job Description Forms - Link: [Job Description Form](#)
8. Reference Forms (up to 3) - Link: [Reference Form](#)
9. Applicant Info & Pre-Award Assessment - Link: [Applicant Information and Pre-Award Assessment](#)
10. Audit Report (or most recent financial statements if no Audit Report is available)
11. Conflict of Interest Attestation (signed) - Link: [Conflict of Interest Attestation](#)
12. WorkForce Central Assurances and Certification (signed) - Link: [WorkForce Central Assurances and Certifications](#)

The RFP and all RFP forms are posted at [WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP](#). (Please see Section V.I., pages 20-21, for information about non-scored forms and attachments.)

### C. Proposal Format Requirements

Font: 11-12 point, Times New Roman or Arial

Pages: Numbered, 1-inch margins

Paper: 8 ½ x 11 inch

Maximum Page Limit of the Proposal Narrative: 15 pages (does not include attachments)

## SECTION V: PROPOSAL NARRATIVE, BUDGET & ATTACHMENTS

Bidders are advised to review the vision, mission, objectives and values of the Pierce County Workforce Development Council, WIOA regulatory requirements, and all parts of this RFP to provide context for the following Proposal Narrative questions. Please include questions before your responses.

### A: Partnerships, Collaboration & Coordination (18 points total)

We believe local connections and experience will facilitate rapid launch of high quality, well-coordinated Young Adult Services, delivered in collaboration with WorkSource Pierce partners and other community organizations, to individuals who are furthest from resources and opportunities.

1. Please describe your current and recent collaboration and partnerships with the following groups, specifying organization names, collaboration/partnership dates, and information about your shared work and accomplishments. When possible, please focus on experience in Pierce County. *(8 points)*
  - a. Organizations and groups that work with youth and young adults
  - b. Organizations that provide pre-employment/career preparation, employment services, and/or training and education
  - c. Organizations and groups that focus on working with Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander people and people from other underrepresented groups, races, ethnicities and cultures
  - d. WorkSource Pierce One-Stop System partnership
2. Please describe your plans to partner, collaborate, and coordinate services with Pierce County organizations, including names, partnership details, and any formal agreements. If you will partner with regional, national or virtual organizations to provide Young Adult Services in Pierce County, please also describe these plans. We especially want to know about planned partnerships and collaboration with organizations that assist young adults who are furthest from opportunity and who face systemic barriers to employment. *(10 points)*

### B: Proposed Services (22 points total)

Young Adult Services from selected subrecipient(s) must provide equitable, proactive and customer-centered outreach and workforce development services to young adults who are furthest from

program resources and opportunities, as well as demonstrate commitment to best practices and successful outcomes.

1. Please share your history of providing outreach, career preparation, employment, and training services to young adults, especially to those who are furthest from resources and opportunities and who face systemic barriers to employment. Include specific types of services provided, dates, locations, and partnerships. *(4 points)*
2. What outreach strategies will you use to recruit, enroll, and engage young adults from the high priority groups listed below, including collaboration and partnerships? Please describe your: *(7 points)*
  - a. Overall outreach plan and how it will be effective for many or most of the high priority young adult groups.
  - b. Specific outreach and engagement strategies planned for any of the groups listed.

Black & African American	Hispanic & Latino	Indigenous
Other minority races/ethnicities	Asian American	Pacific Islander
Experiencing homelessness	Immigrants	English language learners
Pregnant and parenting youth	Foster care or history	LGBTQIA+ community
Mental health & substance use disorders	Disabilities	Low income
Justice system involvement	Gang involvement	Living in remote areas
At risk of disengaging from school	Disengaged from school	Basic Skills Deficient (BSD)
No high school diploma or GED		

3. Please outline your service delivery plan for some or all of the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements (page 8), using the framework services described in Section III.B. (pages 9-10). Include which program elements you will provide, which will be provided by partners (if applicable), and which will be coordinated with local organizations. Please expand on any specific strategies or approaches planned for the high priority young adult populations listed in question B2 that will address their unique challenges (for example, wraparound services, trauma-informed care, co-location). *(7 points)*
4. Describe how your proposed services are based on evidence of success, and how you will meet performance outcomes while maintaining quality services customized to each young adult’s needs. Please include the following in your response: *(4 points)*
  - a. Past service outcomes and other accomplishments that validate your approach.
  - b. Workforce development best practices and proven resources for young adults you will utilize.
  - c. How you will incorporate past experience with performance tracking and reaching outcomes, including challenges overcome.

**C: Innovation & Technology** (12 points total)

Our Young Adult Services subrecipient provider must develop and continuously improve flexible, innovative services that meet the evolving needs of young adults in Pierce County.

1. How have you managed challenges related to serving young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic? What new strategies, resources, and lessons learned will you bring forward into the post-pandemic environment? *(5 points)*
2. Please describe technology and innovative solutions you will use or provide, to: *(7 points)*
  - a. Facilitate remote/virtual services
  - b. Enable ongoing, effective communication with young adults in ways that meet their needs and preferences
  - c. Securely send and receive required documentation
  - d. Provide or facilitate remote/virtual training
  - e. Ensure equitable outreach and services to young adults with limited access to reliable technology

**D: Young Adult Voice (8 points total)**

We believe young adults understand what they need and what works best for them and should have direct input into service design and delivery.

1. We expect our Young Adult Services subrecipient provider to have a feasible and effective plan for continuous incorporation of young adult voice. Please describe: *(8 points)*
  - a. Current and past success in engaging community members and service recipients in developing and improving services
  - b. Your plan to meaningfully involve young adults, including past, present and potential customers, in ongoing design, flexing, and improvement of proposed Young Adult Services
  - c. If and how you will solicit input from other community groups with insights into young adults' needs

**E: Equity, Diversity & Anti-Racism (12 points total)**

We are seeking a Young Adult Services subrecipient provider whose belief in the value of diversity and commitment to equity and anti-racism are reflected in their policies, practices and composition.

1. Please describe organizational policies and practices designed to foster equitable opportunities for employment and advancement at your organization, and equitable access to the program services you provide. Please include any relevant policies and written procedures with your proposal and note these attachments in your narrative response (attachments will not count towards the Proposal Narrative maximum page count). *(5 points)*
2. Have your employees participated in intercultural competence, implicit bias, and/or anti-racism training? If yes, please describe the types and duration of training received and how many current staff participated. If your organization has not provided this type of training, please describe any plans to do so. *(3 points)*
3. To the best of your ability, please share information about the diversity of your organizational groups, listed below, using numbers and/or percentages. In addition to race/ethnicity/culture, diversity may include age, gender, disabilities, and other attributes or lived experience relevant to serving young adults. *(4 points)*

- a. Board and/or leadership team
- b. Employees
- c. Volunteers (if applicable)

**F: Staff Qualifications, Training & Retention (10 points total)**

Our ideal Young Adult Services subrecipient provider employs staff who are well-qualified and trained to assist young adults who are furthest from opportunity, and retains these employees through positive organizational culture, professional development, family wages and benefits, and other proactive retention strategies.

1. What are your organization's minimum experience, education and training requirements for program staff and management staff? *(3 points)*
2. Describe training your staff has received in each of the following areas, including dates, length of training, and how many current staff participated. Please also share any training plans you might have in these or other areas. *(3 points)*
  - a. Providing Trauma-Informed services
  - b. Behavioral health symptom/crisis recognition and response skills (for example, Mental Health First Aid, Psychological First Aid)
  - c. Case Management Skills
  - d. Conflict Resolution
  - e. De-Escalation
  - f. Providing career counseling/career exploration/career assessment/labor market information
  - g. COVID-19 safety practices and precautions
  - h. Please describe other training your staff has received or will receive in the first six months of the contract to help them provide excellent employment and training services to young adults.
3. What organizational practices and strategies have you implemented to create and sustain positive work culture and retain your employees and volunteers (if you have volunteers)? If employee retention is positively impacted by salary and benefits, please include specific information about this. Please also provide information about the retention rates of both program and leadership staff over the last 3 years, to the best of your ability. *(4 points)*

**G: Budget (12 points total)**

1. Please complete the Budget Worksheet (Link: [Budget Worksheet](#)), including all costs for which you request funding through this RFP. All costs included must be reasonable, allowable, necessary, and allocable among the stated cost categories, and based on cost principles from 2 CFR 200 and CFR 2900. (Budget Worksheet does not count towards Proposal Narrative maximum page count.) *(2 points)*
2. Provide a Budget Narrative that describes and breaks down all expenses in the Budget Worksheet, including sufficient details to enable assessment of cost reasonableness. Please also include the following in your Budget Narrative: *(10 points)*
  - a. Leveraged funds from your organization and from partners (if applicable) with explanation of how funds will support proposed Young Adult Services.

- b. Description of specific in-kind resources and donated time from your organization and from partners (if applicable) with explanation of how these resources will support proposed Young Adult Services.
- c. The number of young adults you propose to serve and your anticipated average cost per young adult served. If possible, please include numeric or percentage estimates of young adults you anticipate serving from specific, high priority populations. Please share how you will balance meeting this projected performance metric with provision of quality, customized service.

**H: Organizational Structure & Staffing Plan (6 points total)**

1. Please provide a brief narrative summary and attach an Organizational Chart to describe your organization's structure in terms of chain of command, departments and services, and where proposed Young Adult Services will fit within your organization. Bidders may add partner organizations to the Organizational Chart to show their role in proposed services. (Organizational Chart does not count towards Proposal Narrative maximum page count.) *(2 points)*
2. Using the Job Description form (Link: [Job Description Form](#)), provide information about each position/job classification that will provide direct services or administrative support for proposed Young Adult Services and information about the current and proposed organizational staff who will fill these positions. Information in the Job Description forms must align with the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. (Job Description forms do not count towards Proposal Narrative maximum page count.) *(2 points)*
3. Please share how many direct services and administrative staff you will need to hire to provide proposed Young Adult Services, your anticipated staff to customer ratio, anticipated length of time until hiring is complete, and how you would begin providing services in the time period before all staff are hired. Please state your commitment to honor and fulfill current participants' Individual Service Strategy plans to maintain service continuity. *(2 points)*

**I: Attachments (not scored)**

Every attachment described previously and those listed below must be included with the Proposal Narrative in the proposal package, in the order shown on page 15, and as part of a single PDF document. The attachments described below will not count towards proposal scoring but will be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee. All attachment forms are available at [WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP](#), and links to each non-scored form are provided below.

Proposal Cover Sheet with certification - The Proposal Cover Sheet must be completely filled out and signed and dated by an authorized representative of the organization. Link: [Proposal Cover Sheet](#)

Table of Contents with page numbers – Proposal packages are required to include a Table of Contents with page numbers that align with and include the required content listed on page 15.

Reference Forms - Bidders must acquire references from organizations they have worked with by sending them the Reference Form for completion, signature, and return to the bidder. The proposal

package must include a minimum of one reference, but bidders are encouraged to include the maximum of three references. Link: [Reference Form](#)

Applicant Information and Pre-Award Assessment - This form requests information about the bidder’s organization, management systems, audit history, accounting system, and contract/grant performance history. Link: [Applicant Information and Pre-Award Assessment](#)

Audit Report or most recent financial statements - The Applicant Information and Pre-Award Assessment requests submission of the bidder’s most recent Audit Report. If the bidder’s organization doesn’t have annual audits performed, the bidder must instead submit the organization’s most recent financial statements.

Conflict of Interest Attestation - This form requires attestation that the bidder’s organization will comply with WorkForce Central’s [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and requests disclosure of any current or potential conflicts of interest, real or perceived, in providing WIOA Young Adult Services. The form must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the bidder organization. Link: [Conflict of Interest Attestation](#)

WorkForce Central Assurances and Certification - This form must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the bidder organization. Link: [WorkForce Central Assurances and Certifications](#)

## SECTION VI: PROPOSAL REVIEW , EVALUATION & AWARD PROCESS

### A. Technical Review

WorkForce Central will conduct a Technical Review of proposals to ensure that all technical requirements of the RFP have been met, such as inclusion of all required attachments. Proposals passing Technical Review will be forwarded to the Evaluation Committee for review, evaluation, and scoring.

### B. Evaluation & Selection

The proposal review and evaluation process will be conducted utilizing a fair and objective process that adheres to WorkForce Central’s Procurement Policy and all other applicable state and federal regulations. All proposals will be assessed and scored by an Evaluation Committee, who will recommend one or more proposals for funding to WorkForce Central’s Chief Executive Officer.

Proposals received by the March 3, 2021 due date and passing Technical Review will be scored by the Evaluation Committee using the following rubric.

YOUNG ADULT SERVICES RFP SCORING RUBRIC	
SECTION / QUESTIONS	POSSIBLE POINTS
A: Partnerships, Collaboration & Coordination	18
Question 1	8



Question 2	10
<b>B: Proposed Services</b>	<b>22</b>
Question 1	4
Question 2	7
Question 3	7
Question 4	4
<b>C: Innovation &amp; Technology</b>	<b>12</b>
Question 1	5
Question 2	7
<b>D: Young Adult Voice</b>	<b>8</b>
Question 1	8
<b>E: Equity, Diversity &amp; Anti-Racism</b>	<b>12</b>
Question 1	5
Question 2	3
Question 3	4
<b>F: Staff Qualifications, Training &amp; Retention</b>	<b>10</b>
Question 1	3
Question 2	3
Question 3	4
<b>G: Budget &amp; Budget Narrative</b>	<b>12</b>
Question 1 (Budget Worksheet)	2
Question 2 (Budget Narrative)	10
<b>H: Organizational Structure &amp; Staffing Plan</b>	<b>6</b>
Question 1	2
Question 2	2
Question 3	2
<b>TOTAL PROPOSAL POINTS POSSIBLE:</b>	<b>100</b>

After the Evaluation Committee completes proposal review and scoring, they may decide they are ready to recommend one or more proposals for funding to WorkForce Central’s Chief Executive Officer.

Alternately, the Evaluation Committee may decide to hold virtual oral interviews with bidders who submitted top-scoring proposals prior to making their recommendation. Up to twenty points may be

added to proposal scores for oral interviews. **If held, oral interviews are anticipated to occur on March 30 and 31, 2021. Bidders should hold these dates in their calendars.** WorkForce Central will send oral interview invitations between March 25-29, 2021. Following oral interviews, the Evaluation Committee will recommend one or more proposals for funding to WorkForce Central's Chief Executive Officer.

If all proposals are deemed inadequate as judged by the Evaluation Committee, WorkForce Central will have the option of re-posting the RFP or conducting a sole source procurement.

WorkForce Central may select a proposal based on the initial information received without modification; however, WorkForce Central reserves the right to conduct additional virtual or phone interviews, request further information, conduct a site visit, and/or complete a WorkForce Central management review of the evaluation process prior to making a funding award recommendation to the Executive Board.

If it is determined to be in the best interest of the Pierce County Workforce Development Council, any proposal may be rejected.

### **C. Award Process**

Each bidder submitting a proposal will be notified in writing of WorkForce Central's decision concerning their proposal. Formal notification to award a contract and the actual execution of a contract are subject to the following conditions:

- Approval by the Pierce County Workforce Development Council and the Executive Board
- Receipt of WIOA funds from federal and state administering agencies
- Continued availability of WIOA funds

WorkForce Central may require selected bidders to participate in negotiations and modify their proposals based on the outcome of those negotiations. WorkForce Central may decide not to fund part or all of the proposal, even though it is found to be in the competitive range, if in the opinion of WorkForce Central the services proposed are not needed, the goals of the proposal do not align with goals of WorkForce Central, or the costs are higher than WorkForce Central finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available. If negotiations and review indicate, in the opinion of WorkForce Central, that the bidder may not be able to fulfill contract expectations, WorkForce Central reserves the right to not enter into the contract with the entity, regardless of the ranking and/or approval of the entity's proposal.

WorkForce Central reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards as set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by state or federal agencies. In such instances, WorkForce Central will not be held liable for provisions of the RFP package that become invalid.

Additional funds received by WorkForce Central may be used to expand existing contracts or to fund competitively rated proposals not initially funded under this RFP. These decisions shall be at the discretion of WorkForce Central.

#### **D. Debriefing of Unsuccessful Bidders**

Upon request, a debriefing conference will be scheduled with an unsuccessful bidder. A written request for a debriefing conference must be emailed to [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org) within three (3) business days after the Notification of Unsuccessful Proposal is emailed to the bidder. WorkForce Central will acknowledge receipt of the debriefing request within three (3) business days.

Discussion will be limited to a critique of the requesting bidder's proposal. Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of the other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted by phone, virtually, or in person (COVID-19 health and safety measures will be followed) and will be scheduled for a maximum of one hour.

#### **E. Protest Procedure**

This procedure is available to bidders who submitted a response to this solicitation document and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the bidder is allowed three (3) business days to file a protest via email to [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org).

Bidders protesting this procurement shall follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures shall not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to bidders under this procurement.

All protests must be in writing and signed by the protesting party or an authorized agent. The protest must state the grounds for the protest with specific facts and complete statements of the action(s) being protested. A description of the relief or corrective action being requested should also be included.

Only protests identifying an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

- A matter of bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of the Evaluation Committee.
- Non-compliance with procedures described in the RFP document.

Protests not based on the above will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit if they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a proposal, or 2) agency's assessment of its own and/or other agencies' needs or requirements.

Upon receipt of a protest, a protest review will be held by WorkForce Central. WorkForce Central's Chief Executive Officer or her designee will consider the record and all available facts and issue a decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a protest may affect the interest of another bidder, such bidder will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest.

The final determination of the protest shall:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold the agency's action.

- Find only technical or harmless errors in the agency’s acquisition process and determine the agency to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest.
- Find merit in the protest and provide the agency options which may include:
  - Correct the errors and re-evaluate all proposals.
  - Reissue the solicitation document and begin a new process.
  - Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.

If WorkForce Central determines that the protest is without merit, WorkForce Central will enter into a contract with the apparent successful subrecipient. If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the alternatives noted in the preceding paragraph will be taken.

#### **F. Public Disclosure**

All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the RFP shall belong exclusively to the Pierce County Workforce Development Council and WorkForce Central and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

### **SECTION VII: GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **A. Incurred Proposal Costs**

The entire cost for the preparation and delivery of the proposal or any related communication shall be at the expense of the bidder.

#### **B. Withdrawal**

A submitted proposal may be withdrawn by a written request to [procurement@workforce-central.org](mailto:procurement@workforce-central.org). Please include the RFP number in the subject line of the email.

#### **C. Termination Due to Non-Availability of Funds**

When funds are not appropriated or are otherwise unavailable to the Pierce County Workforce Development Council to support continuation of this RFP or any subaward(s) herein, they shall be cancelled as of the effective date set forth in the termination notice.

#### **D. Negotiation/Discussion**

WorkForce Central, the Chief Local Elected Officials, and the Pierce County Workforce Development Council reserve the right to conduct discussions with bidders in order to ensure a full understanding of the proposal. Selection of an organization as a subrecipient does not constitute approval of the subaward proposal as submitted. Before the subaward is awarded, WorkForce Central may enter into negotiations about such items to include, but not be limited to, program components, allowable activities, staffing, funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support services implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, WorkForce Central reserves the right to terminate the negotiations and decline to fund the proposal. Bidders will be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revisions concerning their proposals.

## **E. Misrepresentation**

If, in the course of the RFP process, it is determined that the bidder has made a false statement, misrepresentation, or that inaccurate information has been provided, the bidder may be terminated from the RFP process.

## **F. Disallowed Costs**

The subrecipient(s) selected as a result of this RFP must have sufficient funds available to reimburse any determined disallowed costs that occur during the subaward period.

## **G. Monitoring**

Successful bidders awarded a subaward will be overseen and monitored by WorkForce Central to ensure compliance with the requirements of WIOA, the activities per the Statement of Work, performance reporting requirements, and the terms and conditions of the contract governing the subrecipient(s). Monitoring will include a compliance review of the requirements of WIOA, the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200 and 2 CFR part 2900. The subrecipient(s) will also be required to develop internal monitoring procedures. The subrecipient(s) will be responsible for monitoring any subawards it may make.

## **H. Assurances and Certifications**

Bidders must review and sign the [WorkForce Central Assurances and Certifications](#) form, stating they will comply with all federal, state, and local requirements and all applicable WIOA regulations. This must be included with the proposal package. Bidders are also expected to review the [WIOA Assurances and Certifications](#) form and be prepared to sign the form if selected for a subaward from this RFP. It does not need to be included with the proposal package.

Both Assurances and Certifications forms are available at [WorkForce Central website - Young Adult Services RFP](#).

## **I. Reports**

Routine monthly and quarterly written reports will be required. Specific required reports will be discussed during the contract negotiation process. Subrecipients must have the capability of generating and/or providing required reports. Other reports may be required during the subaward period.

## **J. Conflict of Interest**

Every reasonable course of action will be taken by the selected subrecipient(s) to maintain the integrity of subaward expenditures and to avoid any favoritism or illegal conduct. The subaward(s) from this RFP will be administered in an impartial manner, free from improper personal, financial, or political gain and must follow the requirements of WorkForce Central's [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

## SECTION VIII: DISCLAIMERS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following are disclaimers and general provisions of the Pierce County Workforce Development Council (WDC)/WorkForce Central.

1. This RFP does not commit the Pierce County WDC or WorkForce Central to award a subaward.
2. No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a subaward for services or supplies under WIOA.
3. Formal notification to award a subaward and the actual execution of a subaward are subject to the results of negotiations between selected bidders and WorkForce Central and continued availability of WIOA funds.
4. Any changes to the WIOA regulations and guidance, funding level or board direction may result in a change in the subaward. In such instances, the Pierce County WDC and WorkForce Central will not be held liable for what is in the bidder's proposal or this Request for Proposals package.
5. Proposals submitted for funding consideration must be consistent with, and if funded, operated according to, the federal WIOA legislation, all applicable federal regulations, State of Washington policies and laws, and Pierce County WDC policies and procedures.
6. Bidders selected for funding must also ensure compliance with the following, as applicable:
  - U.S. DOL regulations 29 CFR Parts 93, 37, 2 and 98;
  - Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900.
7. Additional funds received by the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central may be contracted by expanding existing programs or by consideration of proposals not initially funded under this RFP, if such proposals were rated in the competitive range. These decisions shall be at the discretion of the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central.
8. The Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it is found to be in the competitive range if, in the opinion of the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central, the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are higher than the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central to believe that the bidder has undertaken services that it cannot successfully carry out.
9. The Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central may choose not to award a subaward to the bidders with lowest cost or highest rating when considering other factors such as balancing services to customers.
10. Any proposal approved for funding may be contingent on the results of a pre-award site visit conducted by WorkForce Central. This site visit will establish, to the Pierce County WDC's/WorkForce Central's satisfaction, whether the bidder can conduct and carrying out the provisions of the proposed sub-award. If the results of the site visit indicate, in the opinion of the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central, that the bidder may not be able to fulfill subaward expectations, the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central reserves the right not to enter into

subaward with the organization, regardless of Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central approval of the bidder's proposal.

11. The Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central is required to abide by all WIOA legislation and regulations. Therefore, the Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by state or federal agencies.
12. Bidders will be expected to adhere to Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central procedures to collect and verify data and submit required monthly reports as well as invoices to WorkForce Central.
13. Bidders agree to adhere to all processes and tools developed and implemented by the partners who are signatories to the Pierce County Workforce Development Council Memorandum of Understanding. Bidders understand these processes and tools are designed to facilitate integration of the workforce system's service delivery system.
14. All bidders must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual in the Pierce 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, (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity) national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.
15. All bidders must ensure access to individuals with disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
16. Bidders must accept liability for all aspects of any WIOA program conducted under subaward with WorkForce Central. Bidders will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted.
17. Reductions in the funding level of any subaward resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the subaward period should a bidder fail to meet expenditure, customer, and/or outcome goals specified in the subaward or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from federal or state governments.
18. Subrecipients will allow local, state, and federal representatives access to all its records and financial statements, WIOA records, program materials, staff, and customers. In addition, subrecipients are required to maintain all WIOA records for three years, beginning on the last day of the program year.
19. The subaward will not be final until WorkForce Central and the successful bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. WorkForce Central reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No program activity may begin prior to final WorkForce Central Executive Board approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and WorkForce Central.

20. The Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central reserves the right to cancel an award immediately if new state or federal regulations or policy makes it necessary to change the program purpose or content substantially, or to prohibit such a program.
21. The Pierce County WDC/WorkForce Central reserves the right to determine both the number and the funding levels of subawards 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.