



Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program 2017 Bidder's Conference Frequently Asked Questions

SYELP Priorities

1. **Question:** Do in-school applicants need 90% attendance in school to be eligible? If so, what is 90% attendance?

Answer: Priority of Service is applied **after** eligibility is determined. Each service provider is required to fill a minimum of 70% of program slots with youth who meet the priority criteria. The priority criteria for in-school youth includes "low-income resident of a priority town who is a rising high school junior, senior or 2017 graduate with a **school attendance rate of 90% or better.**" This means **no more than 18 absences during the 180-day school year.** This is an indication of being "employment ready."

2. **Question:** What kind of documentation of school attendance will be required?

Answer: Paper documentation from the school system is required. The documentation may include school transcript, report card, letter from the school or a printout from the school system but it must come from the school system. We expect that successful bidders will coordinate with the local school district to learn how best to obtain this documentation and to prepare the school officials and guidance counselors for these requests by the students. CWP has already discussed this need for documentation with the Hartford School System.

3. **Question:** For purposes of this program, can you define disability?

Answer: Any disability as defined by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Any youth who has had an IEP is included.

4. **Question:** What documentation will need to be obtained to verify student disability status? Will parents be able to self-attest?

Answer: A letter from the school, parent or participant (if over 18). A signed self-attestation form is acceptable.

5. **Question:** Are there any additional services offered to help accommodate youth with a disability at the worksite?

Answer: If the youth is eligible for BRS services, providers should arrange for BRS to provide accommodations in the workplace. Otherwise, we expect providers to arrange for accommodations and/or look for employers who can provide accommodations.

6. **Question:** Is there flexibility in terms of how long an individual can be out of school to be eligible (e.g., an applicant has been out of school for 2 years and 2 months)?

Answer: As long as an Opportunity Youth is eligible as of July 1, 2017 she may be served. CWP will not require providers to serve youth who left school prior to June 2015.

Program Design

7. **Question:** For providers that serve both in-school and Opportunity Youth, how will the slots be allocated?

Answer: For providers who serve both in-school and Opportunity Youth, CWP will execute two separate contracts, one for in-school youth and one for Opportunity Youth. The region-wide allocation is no more than 90% in-school youth and at least 10% Opportunity Youth. The 10% Opportunity Youth might be concentrated in a few contracts or in a single contract. Providers will not be allowed to move slots between the two groups.

8. **Question:** Within the ISY option, are you looking for a specific percentage of Career Preparation (formerly Tier 2) versus Career Bridging (formerly Tier 3)?

Answer: No. We want to meet youth where they are rather than assigning them based on age.

9. **Question:** Does CWP provide guidance on assessing work-readiness?

Answer: We received input from providers that they want the flexibility regarding assessments and do not want CWP to prescribe a specific tool. CWP is requiring that proposals include a description of the assessment tool(s) that will be used. If they are known, published tools, they only need to be referenced.

Note: It is no longer a requirement that the less ready youth only go to non-profits. Businesses such as grocery stores and department stores are familiar with hiring and supervising entry-level high school students. There is also no requirement for Career Preparation youth to be placed in groups.

10. **Question:** Under “Career Exploration” are we required to have the participants visit the job before they are placed in it?

Answer: Career Exploration is not intended to be exploration of the particular position or worksite placement, but rather developing the participant’s understanding of what career pathways are and how they can be navigated.

11. **Question:** For 2017 graduates participating in the “In-School” program, does placement into a career pathway program count as a positive outcome?

Answer: Yes.

12. **Question:** Can we enroll WIOA youth participants in SYELP?

Answer: No. For youth already enrolled in a WIOA Youth program, the WIOA youth providers must use WIOA resources to cover paid work experience.

13. **Question:** Can speaker presentations be done in groups?

Answer: Yes, but the speaker should be an industry expert or a person speaking about his or her career path. This can be done in groups or one on one. Proposals must include how providers plan

to incorporate career exploration into their worksites. One example, is to host a career expo and invite a group of employers. Participants go from one table to another and learn about different occupations and companies.

14. **Question:** How do we fit in all the required hours of work in during the contract period if participants have to do career exploration?

Answer: Career exploration is counted towards hours of work. In your proposal, you need to describe how you will structure the career exploration so that it fits into the work experience. It is important that when you conduct the upfront assessment that it results in an appropriate worksite placement that furthers the youth's career exploration. Be creative with local employer relationships (e.g., 20 participants are placed at a town site who host a career exploration fair with employers from the targeted sectors.) We do not want classroom style career exploration with instructors delivering content.

15. **Question:** When do we do financial literacy training?

Answer: We expect providers to integrate financial literacy into their programs. CWP will provide guidance on baseline financial learning objectives after providers are selected. We do expect, at minimum, that participants will be assisted with opening a bank account (if they don't have one) and will be offered direct deposit.

16. **Question:** Is financial literacy training rolled into paid hours?

Answer: Yes.

17. **Question:** How do we provide resume development and career exploration without a classroom setting?

Answer: A brief post-employment transition period of up to 10 paid hours per participant will be allowed to create or update participant resumes based on the work experience. This period may also include reflection and debriefing on the work experience, career counseling, and financial education. Please see question 14 for more on career exploration.

18. **Question:** Can we still do orientation for work?

Answer: You are required to do an unpaid orientation. The orientation must cover the code of conduct, workplace safety, policies and procedures, and the payroll process.

19. **Question:** Could financial literacy training be conducted during orientation?

Answer: Yes, but tell us how you would do it in your proposal.

20. **Question:** Will the applications be processed the same way as last year?

Answer: CWP will provide an online pre-application for use by selected providers. CWP is working with a contractor to design a system that allows providers to view applicants in real time instead of weekly.

21. **Question:** Can we start on July 10, if we have the upfront funds?

Answer: Selected providers may submit a request to start programming prior to July 17th and CWP will address it on a case by case basis.

22. **Question:** Is there a set amount of weeks that programs must run? A required number of hours per week?

Answer: A total of 150 hours of paid work experience per participant must be provided. The contract end date is September 30, 2017.

23. **Question:** What career development documentation will be required (resumes, etc.)?

Answer: CWP will prescribe the contents of the portfolio in the contracts. We expect that for in-school youth it will consist of the Employee Competency Review and a Resume. For Opportunity Youth the portfolio will also include the Individual Service Strategy and documentation of the participant's outcome (enrollment in a career pathway program or unsubsidized employment).

24. **Question:** If the overall applications received for a region do not meet the priority requirements (70% of students placed meet priority eligibility/30% do not meet priority eligibility) is it preferred to increase the 30% to fill all available spots, or to place fewer students who meet the priority criteria?

Answer: We may de-obligate the contract and reallocate funds to a provider who has recruited the target population. We advise you create an outreach strategy to reach the target populations in partnership with the local municipalities and school systems.

Proposal Specifications

25. **Question:** Is there a limit to the number of slots that we can request in the proposal?

Answer: We are not asking for the number of slots at all. We are asking how much you can spend before being reimbursed, and will calculate the number of slots on that basis.

26. **Question:** Can the employer MOUs and employer agreements be combined into one document to reduce the burden on the employers?

Answer: No.

27. **Question:** Do we submit a budget with the proposal?

Answer: No. A line item budget will be required only once we award contracts.

28. **Question:** Is the proposal limited to fifteen (15) pages if the proposal is to serve both in-school and Opportunity Youth participants?

Answer: Yes, it is limited to 15 pages. However, the proposal can be single spaced.

29. **Question:** Did CWP send 2016 performance data to providers to include in the proposal?

Answer: CWP has not issued provider performance data for 2016. The previous experience section of the proposal should not include CWP funded programs. Please see page 16 of the RFP.

30. **Question:** Can we provide just one hard copy and one e-copy of the cost allocation plan and audit?

Answer: Yes.

31. **Question:** Is there a limit to the number of participants per worksite?

Answer: There is no minimum or maximum number of participant per worksite. However, we expect that you will be thoughtful about a worksite's ability to supervise a certain number of youth when deciding on the number to be placed.

32. **Question:** Do we need an MOU from every worksite or just those that agree to do career exploration activities?

Answer: No, the MOU is **only** required to document and demonstrate contributions from businesses other than worksite hosting and supervision.

33. **Question:** Will municipalities be required to apply to this RFP?

Answer: No

Other

34. **Question:** What is a middle skill job?

Answer: A job that requires more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree. Middle skill jobs can be obtained with a 2-year degree or a certificate.

35. **Question:** Is CWP expecting participants to obtain a middle skill job upon completion of SYELP?

Answer: No, CWP wants programs to introduce youth to what a middle skill job is and how they might obtain one.

36. **Question:** What will the contract end date be?

Answer: The contract ends September 30, 2017. Work experience generally ends by August 30, 2017 and data entry and reporting must be completed by September 30, 2017.

37. **Question:** Can staff who do WIOA Youth programs work on SYELP?

Answer: As long as their salaries and related costs are allocated between WIOA and SYELP. We will be reviewing budgets to ensure that the allocations are appropriate.

38. **Question:** How are you selecting providers for in-school and Opportunity Youth programs?

Answer: We will look at all of the proposals for each type of program and make selections based on the evaluation criteria in the RFP.

39. **Question:** Is there a form to document the weekly visits to the worksites?

Answer: We provide a copy of our own monitoring tools as a model. We examine the documentation when we monitor, but you do not have to submit copies weekly.

40. **Question:** Based on the RFP, are the contracts eligible for renewal beyond one year?

Answer: Renewal for up to two years will be contingent upon performance and funding availability.

41. **Question:** When will the participant application be available? Will it be released to both Hartford and non-Hartford residents at the same time?

Answer: We expect to make the application available in late March or early April to all applicants at the same time.