### SOUTHWESTERN

**Workforce Development Consortium**



**PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20**

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**

**YEAR ROUND YOUTH SERVICES**

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**RFP Release Date: 1/17/2019**

**Proposal Deadline: 2/28/2019**

**4:00 PM**

*Equal Opportunity Employer/Program*

*Auxiliary Aids and Services Available upon Request to Persons with Disabilities*

*Language assistance services are available free of charge to individuals with*

*Limited English Proficiency*

**Southwestern Workforce Development Consortium**

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Services**

**Request for Proposals**

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**SOUTHWESTERN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

***Funding:*** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Funds

***Service Area****:* Southwestern LA -Cherokee, Clay, Graham counties, and/or Jackson and/or Macon and/or Swain Counties

***Services:***  Year-Round Services/Activities for In-School and Out-of-School Youth

***Request For Proposal #:*** **19-Y01**

***Submittal Deadline:*** **Monday,** **2/28/2019 by 4:00 pm**

***Award Notification Date: 6/6/2019***

**Part 1- General Information**

1. **Purpose of This Solicitation**

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit competitive proposals from qualified organizations for funding of comprehensive youth services and activities under the Workforce Innovative and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Southwestern Local Area Procurement Policy requires that WIOA Youth funds be awarded under a competitive Request for Proposals at least every three years. Funding awards and contracts under this solicitation are expected to begin July 1, 2019.

Proposals are to be submitted to serve a combination of in-school and out-of-school youth. The Southwestern Workforce Development Board is seeking proposals based on youth development principles and best practices that support, motivate, and prepare youth for continuing educational achievements, successful transition into adulthood, and long-term success in employment. The proposed services design and implementation strategies must be age appropriate, provide a customized mix of services to address individual needs and goals, and lead to attainment of the performance measures for in-school and out-of-school youth.

The Southwestern Workforce Development Board is seeking an innovative and original program design for this proposal that indicates a clear approach to delivering a broad range of comprehensively designed, fully integrated and coordinated services. The contract will be awarded to the service provider who can showcase a creative and groundbreaking approach to serving youth in the (Cherokee, Clay, Graham) and (Jackson, Macon, Swain) Counties. This contract will not be “business as usual”, but will be a platform for a fresh approach to youth programs. Service providers must present distinct program fundamentals that are unique to their delivery of services, as well as a cost-effective service delivery plan demonstrating the resourcefulness of community partners.

Proposals must include the Five Components of Service (Education, Career Pathways, Career Experience, Leadership Development, and Mentoring) set forth by the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board, as well as the fourteen program elements essential to WIOA that will fall into these Five Components. Proposals are to be submitted to demonstrate the full extent of what each provider can individually offer the youth of the (Cherokee, Clay, Graham) and (Jackson, Macon, Swain) Counties.

1. **Eligible Youth**
2. WIOA- Funded Services may be provided to In-School and Out-of-School youth. See Appendix I -Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Definitions. **However, 75% of the funds available for local areas shall be used to provide Youth WIOA activities for out-of-school youth. The SWDB emphasis is geared toward out of school youth.**
3. WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements:
4. Be a US citizen or eligible non-citizen; **and**,
5. Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon or Swain County resident; **and**,
6. Comply with the military Selective Service Act; if applicable

**Out-of-School Youth**

1. Not attending any school (as defined by State law)
2. Be 16-24 years of age
3. And be identified as being one or more of the following:
   1. A school dropout
   2. A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter
   3. A recipient of a secondary school diploma who is a low-income individual and is-
      1. Basic skills deficient; or
      2. An English language learner
   4. An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system
   5. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, an individual in foster care or that has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under the Social Security Act, or an out-of-home placement
   6. An individual who is pregnant or parenting
   7. A youth who is an individual with a documented disability
   8. A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

**In-School Youth**

1. Attending school (as defined by State Law)
2. Between the ages of 14 and 21
3. A low-income individual
4. And be identified as one or more of the following:
   1. Basic skills deficient
   2. An English language learner
   3. An offender
   4. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, an individual in foster care or that has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement.
   5. Pregnant and parenting
   6. A youth who is an individual with a documented disability
   7. An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

Note that the term “low-income”, used with respect to an individual, also includes youth living in a high-poverty area.

1. **Program Design & Elements**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Youth funds allocated to service providers for eligible youth shall be used to carry out programs that:

* Provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant.
* Provide service strategies for each participant.
* Provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or a recognized post-secondary credential.
* Provide preparation for post-secondary educational and training opportunities.
* Provide strong linkages between academic instruction and occupational education that lead to the attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials.
* Provide preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate cases.
* Provide effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into post-secondary education, and career readiness for participants, the program must provide fourteen (14) elements. Definitions of these program elements are available through federal regulations. (See Appendix II for additional information on the 14 Elements). The 14 elements that must be present in all WIOA youth programs are:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education which may include:
   1. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year
   2. Pre-apprenticeship programs
   3. Internships and job shadowing
   4. On-the-Job training opportunities
4. Occupational skills training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities
7. Supportive services
8. Adult mentoring for a period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of no less than 12 months
9. Follow up services for no less than 12 months after the completion of participation
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling
11. Financial literacy education
12. Entrepreneurial skills training
13. Services that provides labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training
15. **Service Level and Expenditure Requirements for Out-of-School Youth**

For any program year, not less than 75% of the funds available for local areas shall be used to provide Youth Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act activities for out-of-school youth. Under this solicitation, proposals that are designed to serve both in-school and out-of-school youth must plan to serve at least 75% out-of-school youth, and may serve up to 25% in-school youth. Likewise, proposed budgets to serve both in-school and out-of-school youth, must reflect at least 75% expenditures for out-of-school youth, and no more than 25% expenditures for in-school youth. The 75% requirement should be viewed as a minimum expenditure and enrollment level for out-of-school youth.

1. **Work-Based Learning Expenditure Requirements**

WIOA will place a large emphasis on Youth work-based learning activities. Youth contractors will be required to put forth their best effort to engage Youth in work-based learning opportunities. At least **20%** of local Youth funds must be used for work activities such as:

* Summer Jobs
* Pre-apprenticeships
* Internships

1. **Matching Funds Requirement (Optional)**

In addition to a WIOA budget, all proposals may include a match budget from the proposing organization in the form of cash or in-kind services. Extra points will be rewarded during the evaluation process to the service provider for providing this information.

# Available WIOA Youth Funding by County

Tri-County (Cherokee, Clay and Graham Counties) Up To $ 105,000

Jackson, Macon, Swain County Up To $ 105,000

The above amounts are based on initial estimates of the Southwestern Area WIOA Youth Allocation for Program Year 2018.Respondent’s proposed budgets must be within the amounts indicated and must be reasonable based on proposed service level and service delivery plans. Subsequent revisions and negotiations of final contract budgets may be required due to actual allocation received and funding award decisions.

**Part 2 - Scope of Work**

Respondents’ proposals should reflect “an age continuum of services” and age appropriate activities based on the expectation that youth may be enrolled in WIOA services for the time period determined by the Individual Service Strategy. The maximum duration in WIOA services is 48 months. Proposals must include plans for addressing the differing needs of in-school and out-of-school youth. The intensity and methods of delivering WIOA services should be flexible to respond to the individual needs of youth as they age and develop. A variety of workforce development activities should be available to help youth identify personal and vocational interests and begin to clarify long-term employment goals. Negotiating the transition from school to the workforce requires more than the acquisition of skills specific to an occupation. It is also necessary for youth to master the developmental tasks associated with cognitive, emotional and social maturity that are critical to long-term employment success.

Toserve in-school youth, the proposals should demonstrate linkages with the public

schools, alternative schools and various training providers to extend and enhance learning

opportunities as part of a year- round strategy to improve academic achievement and build

connections between work and learning. Proposals must also include planned services and activities designed to meet the needs of out-of-school youth, ages 16-24**.** Respondents are expected to build and strengthen partnerships with community organizations to effectively recruit, engage, and sustain out-of-school youth in WIOA activities. All out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient in reading or math must have a Measurable Skill Gains goal set for them, and tutoring or other remedial services must be provided to enable the youth to achieve the Measurable Skill Gains goal in one year or less. Based on an individualized assessment of needs, out-of-school youth should participate in services to re-connect them to learning and education, including work-based learning opportunities, as well as opportunities to acquire work experience and receive skill training in preparation for entering unsubsidized employment.

**Part 3 - Requirements For All Youth Served Under WIOA**

Proposals should address how the following requirements will be met as part of an overall WIOA youth services design.

1. Eligibility Determination and Verification/WIOA Registration

Prior to enrollment into a WIOA activity, youth must be certified as eligible under WIOA guidelines. Service Providers are responsible for determining, verifying WIOA eligibility for each youth applicant by obtaining acceptable records/ documents to verify each required eligibility item. These verification documents must be maintained in a paperless system. Cases will be reviewed periodically by Southwestern Local Area staff and during Southwestern Area monitoring activities. Only youth who have been certified as WIOA-eligible by completion of required forms and whose documentation to verify eligibility has been obtained by staff may be enrolled, and begin to receive, WIOA services.

1. Comprehensive Assessment  
     
   WIOA requires that Youth Service Providers/Contractors administer or obtain a thorough and in-depth assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each youth at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities. Assessment should be carefully planned and administered to collect specific, relevant information leading to an appropriate mix and sequence of services and interventions. Youth Service Providers will use only assessment tools and strategies that are valid for youth. Initial/entry assessment will include: basic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. This information should be acquired through various means, including, but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency). The Southwestern Local Area requires use of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for basic skills testing, and assessment tools for assessing career interests and aptitudes.

Assessment instruments, especially on-line tools, used to measure learning styles, life skills, etc. must be adequately researched by WIOA staff prior to use to determine that they are objective, conform to widely accepted standards for validity and reliability, and are age-appropriate for the youth. WIOA staff must have adequate training on the administration, scoring, and proper use of test results. Information collected from the assessment process serves as the basis for individualized service planning in order to achieve the educational and employment outcomes desired for each youth. Assessment should be an ongoing process throughout participation in WIOA in order to track each youth’s progress and to measure and record personal growth, skill goal attainment, and achievement of planned objectives for each youth. Progress testing should occur at regular intervals to determine the likelihood of basic skills and Measurable Skill Gains goal attainment within the time parameters allowable (one year or less), and to determine the need to try other strategies or approaches when learning gains are not occurring as expected.

1. Individual Service Strategy (ISS)   
     
   Each youth enrolled into WIOA will have a written, individualized plan of services and activities (an appropriate mix of the fourteen required program elements), including appropriate learning objectives and goals, based on the entry assessment information. The Southwestern Local Area will provide a standardized electronic form for completing each youth’s Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS is intended to provide in-depth information about a youth, both history and present circumstances, in order to create a plan of action agreed upon by the young person and staff working together. Youths’ service plans should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the youth as they move through WIOA. Each youth’s service plan will outline the appropriate mix and sequence of services, indicate the rationale for decision-making, and include appropriate achievement objectives and expected timeframes. The ISS will be developed in partnership with each youth, will be client-centered and flexible in accommodating changes in plans as youth’s needs and situations change. Each youth’s ISS will identify an educational goal, Measurable Skill Gains goals (as needed), selected learning objectives, and provide preparation for unsubsidized employment. The ISS will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and continued learning and development.
2. Comprehensive Case Management  
     
   The WIOA Service Provider will provide comprehensive case management services to youth as part of the year-round strategy to support and assist youth to attain meaningful outcomes. Staff is expected to work closely with youth to provide support and guidance, address needs and barriers, solve problems, serve as role models, and assist in the attainment of the objectives and goals agreed upon in the ISS. The ISS will be reviewed and updated by staff every six (6) months to arrange for needed services, identify and address concerns as they arise, and document progress made during participation. Regular personal contact between a Case Manager and the young person is essential. Based on the case management relationship, the youth should be aware that he/she has support and accountability in working to achieve his/her personal goals. Primary case management functions are services coordination, advising and counseling, advocacy, follow-up and accurate and timely record keeping.

All WIOA staff is expected to be informed of, and adhere to, professional standards of client confidentiality. Staff with access to, or control over WIOA youth records or other confidential information is expected to safeguard such information. No staff member, volunteer, or other person associated with the WIOA Service Provider shall release or disclose information concerning the youth without securing a signed release of information authorization prior to releasing the records. This includes information sharing that is verbal, written or electronic. Exchange of information is generally to be used for eligibility verification, coordination of services and activities, tracking progress and participation, securing additional services, and for follow-up purposes.

1. WIOA Data Validation and Record Keeping

The US Department of Labor has issued a data validation policy that establishes record keeping requirements to ensure the accuracy and integrity of information collected and reported on WIOA activities and program outcomes. The federal policy mandates that states “demonstrate the validity of reported data,” and conduct data validation annually. North Carolina has set a statewide policy for data validation, and the Southwestern Local Area has developed guidelines and instructions for participant records/files that include file content and structure, data validation labeling requirements, and file maintenance. Southwestern Local Area staff will provide staff training and ongoing technical assistance for data validation.

1. Information and Referrals for WIOA-Eligible Youth  
     
   Eligible youth will be provided information on services and opportunities that are available from WIOA Service Providers, through the NCWorks Career Center System, and other appropriate education and training opportunities in the community. WIOA Service Providers will refer eligible youth to other educational, employment, training, community agencies, and/or human service organizations that have the capacity to serve them. This requirement applies to youth who may benefit from services other than, or in addition to, WIOA-funded activities. Records of these referrals and the outcome of the referral should be recorded in case/activity progress notes.
2. Referrals and Record Keeping for Youth Not Meeting WIOA Eligibility   
     
   Youth who are not eligible for WIOA or those who can be better served by another agency or program should be referred to appropriate agencies and/or organizations in the community. WIOA staff is responsible for maintaining applicant records, WIOA Intake forms, eligibility documentation copies, etc. of eligible youth who do not become enrolled (for whatever reason) and of youth who are determined to be ineligible for WIOA services.
3. WIOA Performance

Below are the Southwestern Workforce Development Board’s required performance standards for PY 19. **Note: All Performance Standards must be met at 100%** (For example, if 2 standards are met at 100% of goal and one is 90% of goal, then standards are deemed not met).

**PY 2019 Local Area Negotiated Performance Measures for WIOA Youth Programs**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Expected Level** | **Youth** |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit | 60% |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit | 58% |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | $2850.00 |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 51% |
| Measurable Skills Gain | TBD |



1. North Carolina Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Management Information System (MIS)

Youth Service Providers are required to use the MISsystem to track all clients from initial contact through intake/application, eligibility certification, WIOA registration, and enrollment into selected activities, case management/case notes, activity status updates, outcomes reporting, exit, and post-exit follow-up.

User access to the MIS system is allowed only upon completion of system training that is conducted by the Southwestern Local Area “MIS Super User.” User names and passwords will be assigned to users after the training is satisfactorily completed.

11. Location

Youth Service Providers must take into consideration the location of the site providing services to youth. The site must be accessible to the youth population that the Southwestern Local Area serves, as well as a safe location for the youth. The location should be set in a community environment that has outreach to other community partners, accessible transportation and must suit the needs of the youth. Each site should provide youth with additional amenities that will aid in their successful achievement of goals.

**Part 4 - Fiscal and Administrative Requirements for WIOA Contractors**

1. State and local government organizations that receive WIOA Youth funds must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments (29 CFR Part 97), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-87 and A-133, and the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996. Institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements codified at 29 CFR Part 95 and OMB Circulars A-110, A-122 and A-133 as appropriate.
2. All contracts between the Southwestern Workforce Development Consortium and units of State or local government will be conducted on a cost reimbursement basis only. A cost reimbursement contract is one that establishes an estimate of total costs for the purpose of obligating funds and a ceiling that the contractor may not exceed (except at contractor’s risk) unless the awarding party agrees to amend the contract to provide additional funds.  A line item budget shall be based on all legitimate costs to be incurred by the contractor in carrying out the services.  The contractor is reimbursed for actual expenses according to the approved line item budget.

**Invoicing and Contractor Close-out**

The Local Area (LA) will reimburse the proposed service provider for total allowable costs incurred as agreed upon between the LA and the proposed service provider. The proposed service provider will submit monthly invoices for reimbursement of allowable costs. This invoice must be submitted to the LA not later than the 10th of any given month.

*The final contract close-out report is to be furnished to the LA within thirty (30) days after the ending date of the contract.*

1. **Internal Financial Management**  
     
   All WIOA service providers/contractors are required to conduct internal financial management reviews. The purpose is to provide adequate internal controls and ensure compliance with the following areas related to WIOA funds and services:

- Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and its regulations;

- Provisions of the WIOA Contract;

- Applicable State and Workforce Development Board Policies;

- Accepted financial management and accounting practices; and

Compliance with OMB Circulars A-133 (revised), A-110, A-87 and others as

appropriate.

Internal financial management procedures shall be sufficient to prevent fraud and abuse. All reports of, information creating suspicion of, or instances of criminal misconduct, fraud or willful and gross misconduct, in connection with any WIOA-funded activity shall be reported immediately to the Southwestern Local Area, to the North Carolina Division of Workforce Development and to the U.S. Department of Labor. Internal financial management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained which support all expenditures of WIOA funds and confirm adherence to policies regarding allowable costs and allocations of cost to proper cost categories. The WIOA Contractor shall document all internal financial compliance reviews.

1. **Internal Program Management**WIOA service providers/contractors are required to establish internal program management procedures to assure compliance with contract requirements, delivery of high-quality services to eligible youth, and achievement of planned outcomes. Internal program management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained to support the eligibility of all WIOA participants and confirm adherence to specific requirements and time limitations.
2. **Submission of Most Recent Audit**As a recipient of WIOA funds, service providers must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed. The audits must be conducted in accordance with auditing standards set forth under the Single Audit Act Amendment of 1996 and revised OMB (Office of Management and Budget) Circular A-133 at 29 CFR 95.26 for institutions of higher education, hospitals and other non-profit organizations and at 29 CFR 97.26 for units of state and local government. This requirement will be met by providing the Southwestern Local Area a copy of the annual audit according to OMB Circular A-133. For-profit, WIOA contractors must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed under Generally Accepted Accounting Standards by an independent auditor. A copy of the audit will be forwarded to the Southwestern Local Area. The audit should be submitted within 30 days after the completion of the audit, but not later than six months after the end of the audit period.
3. **Cooperation with WIOA Contract Monitoring and Audit Procedures**In Accordance with WIOA and the WIOA regulations (20 CFR, Part 652, et al), contracted service providers must cooperate with any monitoring, inspection, audit, or investigation of activities related to WIOA contracts. These activities may be conducted by the North Carolina Division of Workforce Development, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Southwestern Workforce Development Board, or their designated representatives. This cooperation includes access to, examination of, and/or photocopying of books, records, files, documents, property or equipment related to all aspects of WIOA funded activities under this contractual agreement.
4. **Records Retention**The following records and documents must be maintained for WIOA-funded participants and employees. They must be available for monitoring and review by the Southwestern Local Area and must be retained, subject to audit, for three years following the final audit of the contract. If any aspect of the program is under investigation or in the process of audit resolution and/or debt collection, the service provider is required to retain records after the three (3) year period and until the final audit resolution of all disallowed and/or questioned costs are paid or accepted as allowable.
5. General ledger or equivalent;
6. Cash receipts and cash disbursements journals/reports or equivalent;
7. Bank statements, reconciliations, deposit slips and canceled checks for each bank account through which WIOA funds were received or disbursed;
8. All contracts with the Southwestern Local Area including all amendments;
9. All financial reports and documentation supporting requests for reimbursement;
10. Payroll records including Individual Earnings Record, Employee Withholding Authorization (W-4), FICA reporting forms, Federal and State withholding, Unemployment taxes, Employee Personnel Files, Time Records and Employee Time/Salary Allocation plans;
11. Invoices and/or supporting data for non-payroll disbursements; and
12. Participants’ records including participant data forms, verification/documentation items, assessments tests and results, the Individualized Service Strategy and documentation of outcomes.
13. **Insurance Requirements**Proof of insurance is not a requirement for the submission of a proposal, however, successful respondents will be required to obtain all insurances specified/required for operation of all contracted WIOA programs/services and provide the proper Certificates of Insurance prior to commencing work under a contract resulting from this RFP.

**Bonding Insurance Requirements**

Agencies must meet bonding requirements as required through the Office of Management and Budget Circulars. Public agencies are required by the North Carolina General Statute to be bonded. Non-governmental agencies shall procure a blanket fidelity bond, position bond, or name schedule fidelity bond for **all** persons authorized to receive or disburse WIOA funds. The bond limit shall be for the total contracted amount or $50,000.00, whichever is less.

**Medical/Accident Insurance**

The proposed service provider shall provide adequate on-site medical and accident insurance for all enrollees not covered by the North Carolina Workers’ Compensation law. This coverage shall not include income maintenance. Contributions to a self-insurance plan, to the extent that they are comparable in cost and extent of coverage had insurance been purchased, are allowable upon prior approval by the State (NC Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions), throughout the Local Area. Requests for such approval are to be submitted in writing to the Local Area.

1. **Program Income Requirements**The U.S. Department of Labor requires that all income generated under any WIOA contract be reported and used to further program objectives.
2. **Property Management Requirements**The Service Provider agrees to comply with CFR 20 Part 627.465, Property Management Standards, and all applicable Southwestern Local Area property policies.The service provider agrees to maintain careful accountability of all non-expendable property (property with a life expectancy of one year of more and a unit cost of $500.00 or more) and to maintain an inventory of all properties Issued by the Local Area or subsequently acquired with WIOA funds. Acquisition of property in excess of this amount must be approved for purchase by the Southwestern Workforce Development Board. The Southwestern Workforce Development Board will maintain a fixed-asset listing to be verified for physical location and serviceability at your agency at least annually.

Any purchases with a unit cost value of $5,000 or more to be purchased with WIOA funds must be approved by the Local Area and the State, prior to purchase. The Local Area must make the request. The State will monitor the inventory of all items purchased or leased with a value of $5,000 or more.

The proposed service provider agrees not to dispose of or transfer any property purchased with WIOA funds which has a value of $500 or more and/or a life expectancy of one year or more until written authorization is received from the Local Area. Any disposal of WIOA property must be in accordance with applicable Federal, State and local disposal procedures. Any revenues derived from the sale of property purchased with WIOA funds must revert to a WIOA activity.

The proposed service provider will be responsible for maintaining an accurate inventory of all WOIA property in their possession.

In the event property purchased with WIOA funds is stolen or destroyed by criminal act, the proposed service provider will notify appropriate law enforcement officials immediately. The Local Area Chief Administrator must be notified within three (3) working days of discovering the loss or damage. A copy of the police report will be maintained as documentation of loss, and a copy forwarded to the Local Area.

The proposed service provider agrees to pay for or replace any property purchased with WIOA funds which is lost or destroyed through the negligence of the proposed service provider, its staff or representatives.

1. **Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination**The respondent assures, with respect to operation of the WIOA- funded services or activity and all agreements or arrangements to carry out the WIOA funded project or activity, that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 188, and its implementing regulations. From WIOA Section 188, “No individual shall be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program or activity because of race, color, religion sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.” The United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

The respondent assures that it will comply fully with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR Part 34. The United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. Applicable laws include but are not limited to the following:

* Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et.seq.)
* Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
* Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et.seq.)
* Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et.seq.)
* Non-traditional Employment for Women Act of 1991
* Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

All participants and staff will be informed of EEO policies and guidelines and the name of the EEO Officer during enrollment.

All grievances and complaints submitted by WIOA participants involving allegations of discrimination, violations of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or criminal fraud, abuse or misconduct must be processed in accordance with the LA Grievance/Complaint Procedures.

1. **Wage and Labor and Health and Safety Standards**Youth employed in work-related activities under WIOA must be compensated in accordance with applicable law, but not less than the higher of the rate specified in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 or the applicable State minimum wage law.  
     
   Health and safety standards under Federal and State law otherwise applicable to working conditions of employees are equally applicable to working conditions of WIOA youth participants engaged in work experience activities under WIOA. Workers’ compensation insurance coverage must be secured for youth participants in work experience.
2. **Authority to Re-Capture and Re-Distribute Funds**

Southwestern Workforce Development Board has the authority to re-capture and re-distribute youth funds based on the following criteria not being met.

* Staffing levels
* Enrollments
* Caseloads
* Spending levels

**Part 5 - Instructions and Guidelines for Submission of Proposals**

To be considered, proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received at the offices of the:

Southwestern Workforce Development Board

Southwestern Commission

125 Bonnie Lane

Sylva, NC 28779

on or before 4:00 p.m., Thursday, February 28, 2019. Late proposals, regardless of delivery means, will not be considered. Response should be submitted in a sealed envelope, clearly marked on the outside, with the project name and RFP number.

1. **A Pre-proposal Information Session is scheduled for Thursday, January 31, 2019 from 11:00 AM to Noon at 125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva, North Carolina.**

Attendance at the Information Session on Thursday, January 31, 2019 is strongly recommended prior to preparing a proposal in response to this RFP. Reading through the entire RFP before attending the Information Se**ss**ion is also recommended. Southwestern Workforce Development Board members, Southwestern Local Area Youth Council members, staff and authorized representatives of the Southwestern Workforce Development Consortium are precluded from answering questions concerning a proposal or the procurement process outside the confines of the Information Session or the process indicated in the RFP for submitting questions via Southwestern Local Area e-mail or fax. Potential respondents are asked to respect these conditions by not making direct or personal requests for assistance. Violations may result in the disqualification of a respondent.

1. Questions concerning the RFP must be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax to:

**David Garrett  
Workforce Development Director  
E-mail: david@regiona.org  
Fax: (828) 586-1968**

**Note: Any comments provided in response to inquiries will be sent in writing via email to all bidders. No phone inquiries will be accepted.**

1. **Eligible Service Provider**

Any governmental, educational or not-for-profit organization (including faith and community–based) or agency engaged in a public service may apply. Private for-profit organizations engaged in providing employment and training and educational opportunities for eligible youth may apply. Please note Any not-for-profit entity MUST have been incorporated for at least two years (as evidenced by a letter from the appropriate governing body certifying incorporation) AND be designated as a 501 c-3 tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Also, any for-profit entity must have been incorporated at least two (2) years prior to the submission of any 2018 Youth program proposal(s) in order to be eligible for consideration. Any organization, agency, or company submitting a proposal must do so as an individual organization and must be prepared to either deliver the planned WIOA services directly or to enter into an agreement with an appropriate provider(s) of the services.

Entities that are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency are not eligible to respond to this RFP or to receive a contract.

Outstanding Monitoring, Audit or Legal Concerns– Respondents must disclose and rectify any and all outstanding monitoring and/or audit concerns from any of the respondent’s other contracts prior to receiving a contract resulting from this RFP. Additionally, respondents must disclose any legal judgments, claims, arbitration proceedings, lawsuits or other legal proceedings pending or outstanding (unresolved) against the organizations, its owners, officers, or principals.

Competency – Respondents are expected to have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise in management and administration, the professional staff, and the administrative and fiscal management systems to accomplish the scope of work and the goals and objectives stated in this RFP and must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. Respondents are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the specific funding sources involved and applying them in developing the RFP response.

1. **Amendments -** If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the Request for Proposals, all amendments will be provided in writing to all respondents.  
   VERBAL COMMENTS OR DISCUSSION RELATIVE TO THIS SOLICITATION CANNOT ADD, DELETE OR MODIFY ANY WRITTEN PROVISION. ANY ALTERATION MUST BE IN THE FORM OF A WRITTEN AMENDMENT TO ALL RESPONDENTS.
2. **Submission of Proposals**To accomplish a fair and uniform review, respondents are to submit one (1) original (*clearly marked*) with original signatures and one (2) additional copies of the proposal under seal. All proposals must be signed and dated by a representative authorized to commit to proposal provisions. Unsigned proposals will be rejected/deemed nonresponsive.The original and each copy are to be submitted in a three-ring binder with tab dividers by section. Use at least a 1” binder, but no larger than 2” in size. Font size should be Times New Roman, no less than 12 point with 1” margins. All pages are to be numbered sequentially. Respondents are to type or write“WIOA Youth 2019-20 RFP #19 Y01” on the outside of the sealed proposal package**.** Faxed proposals will not be accepted.Proposals will be received by the Southwestern Local Area until 4:00 PM, Thursday, February 28, 2019.
3. **Right of Non-Commitment or Rejection**

This solicitation does not commit the Southwestern Workforce Development Board to award a grant, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services. The Board reserves the right to select proposals it deems most responsive and appropriate and is not bound to accept any proposal based on price alone. The Board also reserves the right to request additional information, documentation, or oral discussion in support of written proposals. The Southwestern Workforce Development Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, or to cancel in part or in its entirety, this RFP if it is in the best interest of the Southwestern Local Area to do so.

1. **Appeal Process**

Appeals by proposing organizations denied funding are limited to procedural appeals only; such appeals shall be based solely on allegations of irregularities in the solicitation and awards procedure and not on the relative merit of the offers submitted. If a proposer believes to have been harmed by the violation or misapplication of procedure or regulation of this program, the proposer has the right to file a grievance. This grievance should be filed according to the written procedures established by the Southwestern Workforce Development Board and may be obtained by contacting the Southwestern Workforce Development Director at 125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva, NC 28779, phone: 828-586-1962 ext. 210

1. **Confidential Information**

No documents relating to this procurement will be presented or made otherwise available to any other person, agency or organization until after the funding awards. Commercial or financial information obtained in response to this RFP that is privileged and confidential and is clearly worded as such will not be disclosed at any time so long as all requirements of North Carolina General Statutes 132-1.2 have been met. Respondents must visibly mark as “Confidential” each part of their funding application that is considered proprietary information, otherwise it will be considered public information.

1. **Contract Negotiation and Administration** The Southwestern Workforce Development Consortium will administer contracts awarded through this RFP. The Southwestern Local Area may require successful respondents to participate in cost negotiations, technical revision, or other revisions to their proposal prior to final contract award. Successful contract negotiation is viewed as a step in the overall selection process. In addition, contract amounts may be adjusted by the Workforce Development Board based on the Southwestern Local Area’s final WIOA allocations and/or subsequent contract negotiations.
2. **Administrative and Fiscal Capabilities**As part of the proposal review process under this solicitation, the Southwestern Local Area staff will conduct a pre-award review of the respondent organization’s administrative and fiscal capabilities. Any concerns or discrepancies will be brought to the attention of the Southwestern Workforce Development Board prior to final contract approval. Respondents who have outstanding audit or monitoring exceptions may not receive a contract unless the Board is satisfied with the current or proposed resolution of the findings, and the corrected measures are immediately forthcoming.
3. **Time Frame**

The initialcontract term will be for the period beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30,

2020. All budgets submitted for activities under this Request for Proposal are to be for costs

incurred between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Activities are to begin on or after July 1,

2019 and end on or before June 30, 2020. If awardees are granted an extension, they may

be considered for extensions up to 2 additional years.

1. **Approval of Subcontracts or Assignability**

The Contractor shall not assign all or any portion of its interests in this contract, nor shall any of the work or services to be performed under this contract by the Contractor be subcontracted, without the prior written approval of the Commission.

**Part 6 – Proposal Format and Specifications**Proposals submitted for WIOA Youth services are to include all of the items listed below assembled in the order indicated with tab dividers to separate and label each section. Any information requested must be addressed. Failure to respond to specific requirements and/or information will result in a proposal being deemed non-responsive.

Proposal will include the following sections:

1. Proposal Identification/Certification Cover Page – Complete information, sign certification, and return as the top sheet of the proposal – Attachment A
2. Executive Summary– See Content on Page 22
3. Summary of WIOA Youth Services – Complete Attachment B
4. Statement of Work - See Instructions on Page 22
5. Proposed WIOA Staffing – Provide Position Descriptions Attachment C
6. Organization Qualifications and Performance Data - See Instruction Page 25
7. Proposed Budget and Costs Breakout - Pages 1-4 to be completed for each of 2 budgets to be submitted and returned. Prepare a WIOA budget. If applicable, prepare a separate Match budget. Each budget will be for the period beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020. – Attachment D
8. Attachments E and F – Complete both questionnaires, sign and return.
9. Additional Required Documents/Information - Submit the information and documents listed below:
10. Federal ID Number
11. Copy of most recent IRS form 990 (not-for-profits only)
12. List of Current Board Members (if applicable)
13. Audited Financial Statement\*
14. Operational organizational chart with all key staff and lines of authority

*\* If the responding organization is not required to have an annual audit and has not had an annual audit, copies of the most recent financial statements including balance sheets, income statements, summary of reports for payables and receivables, and statements of cash flow must be submitted.*

**I. PROPOSAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Instructions**: Provide a concise summary (not to exceed 1 page) highlighting each of the areas from the Statement of Work and other sections of the proposal. Highlight how the proposal will fulfill the specifications and emphasis for an innovative and creative youth program requested by the Southwestern Workforce Development Board. Showcase the originality in the executive summary.

**II. STATEMENT OF WORK**

**Instructions:** Proposals shall include a Statement of Work narrative detailing all aspects of the proposed project design. The Statement of Work will include areas identified in the RFP Scope of Work (Part 2, page 5), Items A through K below, and other information deemed relevant by the respondent. The purpose of the Statement of Work is to provide an in-depth description of the design of services, to demonstrate how requirements will be met, and to describe the process for achieving the WIOA Youth Common Measures. Respondents must include the following, at minimum, in the Statement of Work Narrative:

**A.** Listed below are the Five Components that are required through the Southwestern Workforce Development Board to be incorporated into the WIOA Youth Program. Proposals must describe how each Component will effectively be carried out from beginning to completion. Be specific with the explanation of each Component. Briefly describe how and by whom each of the 14 elements will be provided to support the 5 components listed below:

**1.** **Education**

Describe the education aspect of the program. Highlight the opportunities that are readily available to youth, how provider will help youth achieve educational goals, and what resources, tools, and/or partnerships will be used. Describe how youth will be assessed in literacy and numeracy and how they will meet performance measures in these areas if they are basic skills deficient.

**2. Career Pathways**

Describe the career pathways aspect of the program. Highlight the diverse types of training and career readiness that will be offered to youth. Describe the necessary steps from education into the workforce and how the program will address these needs. List the specific integrated services, partnerships and other unique features of the program.

**3. Career Experience**

Describe the career experience aspect of the program. Highlight the career opportunities made available to each youth and how they reinforce academic and occupational education. List community businesses that may have a role in the program. Be specific about employability, timeframes, industry clusters, and the on-going support offered through these experiences.

**4. Leadership Development**

Describe the leadership development aspect of the program. Highlight the opportunities for youth to participate in community service, peer-centered activities, classroom development, and soft skills training. Describe how youth will learn responsibility, positive social skills, and civic behavior.

**5. Mentoring**

Describe the mentoring aspect of the program. Each provider should have a designated mentoring program as a strong component for the youth. List the specific roles of a mentor, planned activities throughout the program, and how the program can be expanded and marketed to future mentors. Describe the process of recruiting local mentors to the program.

1. The first ninety (90) days following contract award (beginning July 1, 2019) are very important to successfully implementing a WIOA youth services project. Provide a schedule for addressing start-up priorities including, but not limited to, staffing, staff training, and purchasing. Explain how the transition of current WIOA youth from previous contractors will smoothly shift to the new youth contractor, including meetings, changes in delivery of services, and timeframe.
2. Submit a list of all staff (names/titles) that will be involved with the proposed project, whether local or off-site, full or part-time and funded in whole or in part by WIOA funds under this RFP. List key management staff and specific job descriptions for all key management and operational positions. Job descriptions must detail job duties and specific qualifications required (minimum education, experience, skills) for each position.
3. Describe strategies to be used for outreach and recruitment of out-of-school and/or in-school youth. Describe the eligibility verification process and how provider will conduct orientation for participants. Describe the referral procedure to other community partners for services for both eligible and ineligible youth. Identify specific partnerships and collaborations involved. Indicate the numbers of youth to be served, July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020. Indicate the number of enrollments per quarter.
4. Describe the participants to be served in the program by number, key demographic/target group characteristics.
5. Highlight how provider will deliver comprehensive case management and guidance. Describe your methodology for developing the Individual Service Strategy (ISS), providing objective assessments and ensuring that service plans are unique and that they address the specific needs of the individual. Define the policies and procedures for accurate record keeping. Describe comprehensive youth assessments including types of instruments to be used and how assessment results will be used to determine appropriate services and identify needs. Explain the distribution of caseloads between staff, including the minimum and maximum number of youth. State on-going procedures for periodic review and/or measurement of participant progress.
6. Describe plans for connecting/exposing WIOA youth to services offered through the local NCWorks Career Center in the Tri-County (Cherokee, Clay, Graham) area and/or the NCWorks Career Centers in (Jackson, Macon and Swain) counties. Indicate how you will work to partner with NCWorks Career Centers in your county to support, and to contribute to, expanding youth services through the Southwestern Local Area One-Stop System.
7. Describe retention strategies, incentives, and performance expectations for youth that will be implemented to increase the likelihood that youth will actively participate in necessary activities. Describe how the personal goals of youth and WIOA Common Measures for Youth will be achieved. Explain the strategies to keep youth actively engaged and participating during enrollment and through follow-up activities.
8. Follow-up services are required monthly for at least one year after exit for youth who exit WIOA services, including those who do not attain performance outcomes at the time of exit. Describe the follow-up process, including items such as frequency of contacts, methods of contact, supportive services to be provided during follow up, etc.
9. At least **20%** of local youth formula funds must be used for paid and unpaid work experiences, as described under the Youth Program Elements. Describe your plans to insure that at least 20% of youth funds will be used for paid and unpaid work experience.
10. Describe strategies to be used to obtain feedback from youth, parents, community partners, employers, and schools to further improve the effectiveness of the WIOA services being offered.
11. Describe the facilities and location to be used during training/contract periods.
12. Provide an itemized listing of the equipment (e.g., computers, etc.) to be used in the program in accordance with the requirements of the training.
13. Identify any third parties to whom any part of the contract will be subcontracted and the responsibilities of the subcontractor.
14. Highlight any unique key features and attributes that have not already been discussed.

**ORGANIZATION QUALIFICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE DATA**

**(Maximum 2 Pages)**

**Instructions:** Provide a brief history (type of organization, date established, major line or lines of work and general background) of the proposing entity and how entity’s mission relates to the provision of youth development services. Describe the proposing entity’s knowledge and experience of WIOA Youth programs, youth development programs and services, etc.

Provide the organization’s experience in providing services that are similar to the services required under this RFP. Describe past performance in the start-up, implementation, and completion of similar programs of this magnitude. Include the following: type of services, funding source/dates of funding/amount of funding, length of the project, characteristics of target groups served, and number of youth served per project or year, completion rate and other measurable outcomes. Indicate clearly and specifically how performance outcomes were defined and measured. Indicate reasons for non-attainment of performance outcomes, if applicable. If the project is currently operating, state the measurable outcomes achieved for most recent performance period, e.g. past 2 years.

Provide proposing entity’s current sources of funding and the percent of the total each source represents. Briefly describe the organization’s financial management system, cash management system, financial capacity and knowledge in accordance with GAAP. Indicate the type of accounting system/software used.

Indicate the recent performance of the organization as it relates to administrative requirements, such as contract schedule, deliverables, compliance, and performance, including the respondent’s:

1. Fiscal/Administrative experience of key staff;
2. Experience working with federal and state regulations and/or procedures;
3. Experience in internal controls, monitoring and oversight of systems;
4. Record of conforming to specifications and to standards of high quality;
5. Adherence to contract schedule and expectations; and
6. A record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal accountability.

Describe the organization’s self-monitoring systems that will be utilized to ensure that this project is operated efficiently and effectively while complying with applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, and policies.

**SOUTHWESTERN AREA**

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDER**

**PROPOSED BUDGET AND COSTS BREAKOUT**

1. **Instructions:** Complete the budget forms (Excel document pages 1-4) to identify all WIOA costs and complete a second set of pages 1-4 to identify all matching costs, if any.  
   Signature is required on page 1 of each budget set. Provide a budget narrative as needed to explain any aspects of the proposed costs. **See Attachment D.**

All budgets submitted for activities under this Request for Proposal will be for proposed costs during the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

**Part 7 - Proposal Review and Evaluation**

1. **Proposal Evaluation Process**The intent of the evaluation process is to certify that each proposal received meets the basic requirements and to determine the quality of each proposal.
2. **Evaluation Factors and Proposal Rating Criteria**A primary consideration in selecting an organization(s) to deliver WIOA Youth services shall be the effectiveness of the organization in delivering comparable services based on demonstrated performance, in terms of the likelihood of meeting or exceeding federal youth common measures, cost, and overall quality of services. Consideration shall be given to: a strong record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal management and accountability; the staff qualifications/professional and technical skills to perform the work; the ability of the organization to meet service delivery requirements at a reasonable cost; and demonstrated collaboration and leveraging of resources.

**Initial Review by SWDB Staff to determine if the Proposal meets the following minimum standards**

* The proposal was submitted before the closing time and date.
* The applicant organization/agency is not on a Federal Debarment list.
* All required program elements are present for youth being served.
* The applicant organization/agency is fiscally solvent.
* The individual signing the proposal and assurances has the authority to do so.
* The applicant organization/agency agrees to meet all federal, state and local compliance requirements.

**Staff Review/Evaluation of RFPs**

If the proposal meets the above minimum criteria, the proposal will be evaluated by the SWDB staff. Those proposals passing the initial review will be scored with a possible 200 points. The total possible points for each section are listed in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum Points** |
| 1. Background of Agency | 35 |
| 2. Coordination and Linkages | 20 |
| 3. Budget | 35 |
| 4. Program Training Design and Implementation | 65 |
| 5. Program Outcomes- Performance Standards | 45 |
| **TOTALS** | 200 |

In the event that two or more proposals are awarded equal points prior WOIA monitoring reports will be utilized in further evaluation of the proposals.

The rating sheets will be compiled and averaged by the Local Area Director and the average rating will be submitted to the Southwestern Workforce Development Board. Individual rating sheets will be maintained and available for Workforce Development Board review.

Cost Reasonableness

To insure that costs are reasonable, allowable and necessary, Local Area staff will compare proposals submitted for consideration to previous closeouts of similar projects within the Local Area and cost of similar projects in Western North Carolina. Specific costs targeted in the comparison are staff costs, tuition, participant support, fees, and other training costs. This market analysis comparison will be included in the RFP rating process and contract renewal process. Cost reasonableness determination for all other services/equipment or supplies will be conducted in compliance with IPDC/local government procurement policy.

Additionally, Local Area staff may conduct pre-award reviews if deemed necessary prior to presentation of RFP results to the WDB. The Local Area Director will be responsible for all technical assistance and inquiries regarding proposals.

Workforce Development Board Review

The RFPs will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Southwestern Workforce Development Board. Southwestern Local Area staff shall provide guidance, and/or technical assistance on an as needed basis to the Executive Committee. Following the review of all proposals the Executive Committee will make a representation to the board on which proposals it has selected to perform the WIOA contracted services.