

# **ATTACHMENT E**

## **TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

Workforce Investment Act of 1998 Title I

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**For**

**Youth Services**

**STATEMENT OF WORK**

**And**

**PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**MANDATORY BIDDERS CONFERENCE**

**Thursday, March 22, 2001 from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM  
Bangor CareerCenter, Conference Room C  
45 Oak Street, Bangor, ME 04401**

**Proposal Due Date:  
On or Before  
April 17, 2001 at 4:00 PM**

**TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

**Request for Proposals  
Youth Services**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>SECTION</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE #</u></b>
<b>I. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT YOUTH SERVICES SYSTEM</b>	<b>3</b>
Program Purpose	4
Instructions for Responding to the RFP	5
A. Process	5
B. Timeline	6
C. Proposal Requirements	6
Program Design Features	6
Program Elements	7
Partnerships	7
Outcomes	8
D. Other Requirements	8
E. Evaluation Criteria	9
1. Identified Need	9
2. Services for Eligible Youth	9
3. Performance Outcomes	10
4. Commitment to Partners	10
5. Budget and Cost	10
6. Operational Capability	10
F. Proposal Review Process	11
<b>III. Grant Application Instructions</b>	<b>11</b>
A. Organization Description	11
B. Statement of Work	11
<b>Attachments</b>	
A: Definitions of Terms	A
B-1: Line Item Budget Form (By County)	B-1
B-2: Program Planning Summary (By County)	B-2
C: Required Youth Performance Outcomes	C

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### A. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The Tri-County Youth Council on behalf of the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for agencies to provide WIA youth services to economically disadvantaged youth, 14 - 21 years of age, in the Tri-County area consisting of Hancock, Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties. The period of performance of the proposal will be for the period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002.

**Total Youth funding for the Tri-County area will be \$617,270 for the program year.** Funding by County is as follows: Hancock - \$149,796, Penobscot - \$373,003 and Piscataquis - \$94,471. Respondents should use the above figures for planning purposes, with the understanding that actual available funds may differ and result in changes to program volume at the time of any contract award. In addition, planned program funding must be by each county as stated in the County figures above. Funding is for one year with continuation dependent upon satisfactory performance and other factors as determined by the Youth Council. **Additionally, the Tri-County Youth Council has determined that no less than 70% of the funds will be expended on the Out-of-School Youth Population.**

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 provides funds for employment and training programs operated in Maine through four Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).

WIA provides the framework for an improved workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet the needs of the nation's businesses, job seekers, and career changers. WIBs are charged with developing and overseeing a system of community partnerships to provide services for businesses, adults and youth.

Due to the unique needs of young people, each WIB is also required to convene a Youth Council. The Youth Council consists of community members with diverse expertise and resources relating to youth who will build a comprehensive infrastructure and program design to provide quality youth services through Maine's CareerCenters.

The mission of the Youth Council is to facilitate a coordinated youth development employment system that meets and anticipates the needs of future workers and employers.

The vision is to assist youth to become life-long learners who have the skills and opportunities to support long-term success in the job market.

Definitions of Terms related to the Workforce Investment Act can be found as Attachment A.

### II. THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT YOUTH SERVICES SYSTEM

The overall goal for the provision of funds under this RFP is to assist youth ages 14 through 21 in achieving major educational attainment, skill development and/or employment. Services are to be year-round and focus on eligible youth. An eligible youth is an individual who:

- Is not less than age 14 and not more than age 21,
- Is a low-income individual, and
- Is an individual who is one or more of the following:
  - ✓ Deficient in basic literacy skills,
  - ✓ A school dropout,
  - ✓ Homeless, a runaway, or a foster child,
  - ✓ Pregnant or parenting,
  - ✓ An offender, or
  - ✓ An individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.
  
- In addition, 5% of youth participants served by youth programs in a local area may be individuals who do not meet the income criterion for eligible youth, provided that they are within one or more of the following categories:
  - ✓ School dropout,
  - ✓ Basic skills deficient, as defined in WIA section 101(4),
  - ✓ Are one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age,
  - ✓ Pregnant or parenting,
  - ✓ Posses one or more disabilities, including learning disabilities,
  - ✓ Homeless or runaway,
  - ✓ Offender, or
  - ✓ Face serious barriers to employment as identified by the Local Board.

**Program Purpose**

The purpose of these funds is to provide workforce investment activities for eligible youth. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to establish integration between a broad range of service providers. All programs and services must be client-driven. Programs must be geared to the needs of the youth and the economy of the local workforce investment area.

Purposes listed in the Act:

- To provide to youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success, effective and comprehensive activities which shall include a variety of options for improving education and skill competencies and provide effective connections to employers;
- To ensure on-going mentoring opportunities with adults committed to providing such opportunities;
- To provide continued supportive services;
- To provide incentives for recognition and achievement; and
- To provide opportunities in activities related to leadership development, decision-making, citizenship and community service.

## **Instructions for Responding to the RFP**

The Request for Proposals process is a competitive process, which adheres to government procurement rules. Respondents should provide assurances that each county will receive its proportionate share of the funding as stated in the Background and General Information section of this document. All funding is for the operation of programs. A line item budget form can be found as Attachment B and should be used to indicate spending plans. A Program Planning Summary can be found as Attachment B-2.

Follow the instructions on page 11 of this document and carefully review the evaluation criteria beginning on page 9. Proposals must be received by 4:00 PM on April 17, 2001. Faxes or emailed versions will not be accepted. Address to:

Tri-County Workforce Investment Board  
Eastern Maine Development Corporation  
P.O. Box 2579  
Bangor, ME 04402-2579

Please be sure to mark all envelopes with the following identifier: "YOUTH SERVICES RFP."

A Mandatory Bidder's Conference is scheduled for Thursday March 22, 2001 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM at the Bangor CareerCenter, Conference Room C, 45 Oak Street, Bangor, ME.

### **A. Process**

Proposals submitted on time and meeting the criteria will be reviewed and evaluated by a subcommittee of the Youth Council.

Potential service providers may be contacted to make a presentation to the subcommittee or if additional information is required. The subcommittee will make a recommendation for award to the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board. The final award will be made by May 15, 2001. Staff will develop the contract once the award is finalized, for a program start date of July 01, 2001.

#### Complaints/grievances:

Anyone having a complaint about any portion of this RFP process may contact the Executive Director, Barry Martin who will present the complaint to the Youth Council and Tri-County Board Chair. Decisions will be made within 10 working days. Written appeals on decisions and requests for a formal hearing may be made to Andrew Drouin, Director of Administrative Services, Maine Department of Labor (MDOL), Bureau of Employment Services, (BES) Station # 55, Augusta, ME 04333. Decisions of the BES are final.

Expected date for program implementation is July 1, 2001. The program end date is June 30, 2002. Funding is for one year with continued funding contingent upon satisfactory performance.

## B. Timeline

RFP published	March 12
Bidder's Conference	March 22
Proposals due	April 17
Award announced	May 15
Contract written by	June 1
Program begins	July 1

## C. Proposal Requirements

- At least 3 agencies must collaborate on a response in order to be considered a consortia.
- The CareerCenters in the Tri-County region must be a primary partner in any response. Please describe how youth will gain access to Information Center resources and other resources provided by other partners.
- Services will commence on 7-1-01 and end as of 6-30-02 except for follow-up.
- Services are to be provided on an as-needed basis.

### Program Design Features

The design framework of the youth program must:

- Provide the services of eligibility determination, selection, objective assessment (see item 1), plan development (see item 2) and follow-up for 12 months following exit.
  1. An objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each participant, including a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for non-traditional jobs), support services needs, and developmental needs.
  2. Develop written individual service strategies that identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and services needed.
- Award academic credit for educational services whenever possible;
- Provide opportunities for community service whenever possible;
- Provide preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities;
- Provide strong linkages between academic and occupational learning;
- Provide preparation for unsubsidized employment;
- Provide effective connections to the job market and employers;
- **Spend no less than 70% of funds on services to out-of-school youth (a Tri-County Youth Council Requirement); and**

- Utilize the One Stop Operating System (OSOS) to track and report customer information including but not limited to enrollment status, individual service strategies and follow-up activities.

### Program Elements

These service elements must be available to all eligible youth, and will be offered based on the results of the youth's assessment and individual service strategy. A description of each of the following ten menu items may be found, listed alphabetically, in Attachment A.

- Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to completion of secondary school including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school services;
- Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences;
- Occupational skills training;
- Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors;
- Support services;
- Adult mentoring for 12 months;
- Follow-up services for 12 months after the completion of participation; and
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral.

### Partnerships:

Partnering and collaboration will deliver the most effective services and have the greatest community impact. Proposals not involving at least three partners will not be considered. Consortia applicants should attach a preliminary Memorandum of Understanding(s) (MOUs) with the proposal submission. Before contract execution, a finalized MOU should be submitted. An MOU, will contain the following information at a minimum:

- A description of what customer services will be provided by each partner,
- How the costs of services and operating costs of the partnerships will be funded,
- Method of referral between partners,
- Duration of the Memorandum and procedures for amending it, and
- Other provisions as agreed upon by the parties to the MOU.  
(See State of Maine Workforce Investment Act Plan for information on MOUs).

## Outcomes:

Program emphasis will differ slightly for two groups of youth, younger youth ages 14 through 18, and older youth ages 19 through 21. Program activities should result in achievement of the following goals: (See Attachment D for Required Youth Performance Outcomes.)

- For younger youth -
  - ✓ Attainment of basic skills, and as appropriate, work readiness or occupational skills;
  - ✓ Attainment of secondary school diplomas and their equivalents;
  - ✓ Placement and retention in postsecondary education or advanced training or placement and retention in military service, employment or apprenticeship; and
  - ✓ Customer satisfaction.
  
- For older youth –
  - ✓ Entry into unsubsidized employment,
  - ✓ Retention in unsubsidized employment 6 months after entry into employment,
  - ✓ Earnings change 6 months after entry into employment,
  - ✓ Attainment of a recognized credential relating to achievement of educational skills that may include attainment of a secondary school diploma or equivalent, or occupational skills, and
  - ✓ Customer satisfaction.

## **D. Other Requirements**

- a. Proposals must be consistent with the Workforce Investment Act and applicable State and Federal regulations.
- b. 100% of the funds made available to providers are program dollars and must be spent on allowable program costs. None of these funds may be used to pay for services that are otherwise available at no cost through another source.
- c. Providers must make services available in entire Tri-County Region. **Where will Youth Staff be located in the Tri-County area (specific physical location).**
- d. Providers are expected to enter into partnership with other providers to deliver services.
- e. If any of the funds are to be subcontracted, it must be identified in the proposal. All sub-contracts must meet State and Federal procurement policies and procedures.
- f. The Youth Council retains the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to negotiate with selected providers and require revisions to applications as agreed to during negotiations.
- g. Programs selected for funding must comply with reporting requirements as required by the State. These may include a tracking of youth referrals between and among partners and providers which will be articulated in the contract.

- h. Programs selected for funding are required to submit regular reports, including, but not limited to: service provider invoices; final invoices; other reports required by the Board and the Department of Labor (DOL).
- i. Proposals selected for funding are required to comply with State financial management procedures.
- j. Programs selected for funding are required to comply with contract monitoring and oversight requirements.
- k. Programs selected for funding may (based on meeting the federal, state and local performance standards and all other requirements stipulated in the contract) be granted continued funding for Program Year 2001. Continued funding is contingent on performance, continuation of current legislation, Council discretion and availability of funds.
- l. Providers selected to deliver services may need to fulfill service commitments to those persons who are currently enrolled and may not have finished their service plan as of June 30, 2001.

**E. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals that meet all requirements will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

**1) Identified Need (10 points)**

- Is the bidder sufficiently aware of the needs of eligible youth in the area?
- Is the bidder sufficiently aware of the local labor market?
- Has the bidder identified sub-areas within the region where different needs exist and explained why?
- Has the bidder included relevant demographic and/or survey data?

**2) Services for Eligible Youth (30 points)**

- Is it clear how the bidder will identify and assess eligible youth and develop appropriate Service Strategies?
- Is it clear how referrals for individuals who are not enrolled will be facilitated and documented?
- Does the bidder describe how they will provide/coordinate career exploration for youth?
- Does the bidder's program design provide: preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, strong linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for unsubsidized employment and effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market and area employers?
- Does the bidder address how they will provide/coordinate each of the 10 service elements?
- Does the bidder describe how and when youth will receive occupational skills training? Are the occupations youth will be trained in identified?
- Does the bidder target occupations where demand exists and jobs are available in the region? Does the bidder provide supporting documentation of local industry data?

- Does the bidder describe how they will address work readiness (“soft skills”) and retention skills?
- Will the bidder make youth aware of non-traditional employment opportunities?
- Do the planned services meet the needs of eligible youth?

**3) Performance Outcomes (15 points)**

- Are the bidder’s performance outcomes congruent with the local area performance standards?
- Based on the services described, can the bidder achieve the outcomes?
- Has the bidder indicated what approach will be taken to balance services between those “most in need” and the achievement of the performance requirements?
- Does the bidder describe how customer satisfaction will be achieved and measured?

**4) Commitment to Partnership (15 points)**

- Does the bidder have a relationship with and a commitment to the area’s CareerCenter System? Is it clear how the bidder will integrate services with other partners?
- Is it clear that there will be no duplication of services? Is it clear that active partnerships have been established with the agencies listed for shared delivery or exchange of services?
- Is it clear that Workforce Investment Act funds will not be used to pay for services covered by other funding sources?

**5) Budget and Cost (15 points)**

- Did the bidder complete all required budget forms?
- Was the budget submitted in sufficient detail and with appropriate supporting documentation to evaluate reasonableness of the costs?
- Is the cost per participant appropriate? Is the direct client costs versus staffing costs reasonable?
- Does the bidder identify other funds or in-kind resources that will be used to supplement Workforce Investment Act funds?

**6) Operational Capability (15 points)**

- Does the staff proposed appear to be sufficient to support the program design? Did the bidder identify where staff would be located?
- Has the bidder demonstrated previous success in operating employment & training programs?
- Has the bidder demonstrated success in serving economically disadvantaged youth?
- Has the bidder documented adequate program administrative capabilities

## **F. Proposal Review Process**

All proposals will be evaluated by the proposal review committee comprised of a subcommittee of the Youth Council. All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process.

## **III. GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The grant application consists of the following sections:

- Organization Description;
- Statement of Work; Budget; and
- Administrative Assurances.

**The proposal narrative should be typed in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and should not exceed 30 single-spaced pages (attachments are not included as part of the 30 pages). Six hard copies of the proposal and one diskette of the proposal in MS Word format must be received at the office no later than March 30, 2001.** Please note that the grant application is for the period of July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Complete each section as follows:

### **A. Organization Description**

Describe the organization submitting the proposal, including experience in operating youth employment and training programs and experience providing services to economically disadvantaged youth. Describe your staffing patterns, the number of staff and a description of the jobs that will be supported by these funds. DO NOT send annual reports – summarize their results in the text.

### **B. Statement of Work**

A program narrative should be written as described below, and in the format outlined.

#### 1. Need

Describe this region's local labor market. Identify counties where different needs exist and explain why. Describe the needs of eligible youth. Include relevant demographic and/or survey data. The Need Statement should relate to the services you are providing.

#### 2. Services for Eligible Youth

Summarize the services which you will provide that will enable you to achieve the outcomes you identify. Please relate your services to your Need Statement and identify for each, as appropriate, the different service strategies you will utilize for youth ages 14-18 and those ages 19-21.

a. Describe your methods for identifying eligible youth, determining and verifying eligibility for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act.

b. Describe in detail your assessment methods for academic levels, skills levels, and service needs of each participant. Include how you will assess basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interest and aptitudes for non-traditional jobs), supportive service needs and developmental needs of each participant. Identify the test(s) and other methods that will be used, how assessment will be administered, and the results documented. How will you coordinate assessment with other education and training programs the youth is involved in? (Initial assessment of youth applicants should occur within the first 60 days of program enrollment.)

c. Describe how you will facilitate and document information and referrals for youth who are not enrolled for services.

d. Describe the methods you will use to develop Individual Service Strategies. Describe what the Service Strategies will include and how they are developed based on the assessments. How often will an enrollee's Service Strategy be reviewed for continued relevance? Please be specific.

e. Describe your Case Management methods and how the goals of the youth's individual plan is communicated to other consortia partners. How will partners be involved in this process?

f. Describe how your program design will provide for each of the following (include what service collaborations and linkages you will develop with other organizations/ agencies serving youth):

- Preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities;
- Strong linkages between academic and occupational learning;
- Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities; and
- Effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market and area employers.

g. Describe how you will provide each of the following services and include what service collaborations and linkages you will develop with other organizations/agencies serving youth:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school services, as appropriate;
- Summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
- Paid and unpaid work experience, including internships and job shadowing, as appropriate;

- Occupational skills training, as appropriate. Describe how and when you will deliver this service. Describe the occupations youth will be trained for. Explain your reasons for selecting these occupations using local labor market information.
- Leadership training and development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours, as appropriate;
- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate; and
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

h. Employers have indicated that work readiness skills (“soft skills”) are a major consideration in hiring and retaining employees. Describe in detail how you will address work readiness skills and retention/post-placement services for youth.

i. Describe how you will make youth aware of non-traditional employment opportunities.

a. Identify any other resources that will be coordinated with Title I of the Workforce Investment Act to serve area youth.

b. If you plan to use incentives or bonuses, please describe. Identify what criteria you will use for incentives/bonuses.

### 3. Coordination

Provide a narrative description of how you plan to integrate services with all consortia partners if not articulated in an attached MOU. Describe as well, how you propose to coordinate funding sources to ensure that Workforce Investment Act funds will not duplicate other sources of funding. Likewise, describe the consortia’s planned collaboration with other community partners.

### 4. Customer Satisfaction

Primary objectives of the CareerCenter System is ensuring that customer satisfaction and readily accessible services are achieved. Please describe how you will ensure that:

- a. Customer satisfaction is achieved:
- How does the structure of your program(s) provide for it?
  - How do you measure?

b. Your customers can easily access any service they need.

What steps will you take to ensure “user friendly” and integrated services for youth? How will you provide services in remote locations? How will youth be exposed to the CareerCenter services offered in the Information Center?

Attachment A: Definitions of Terms

Attachment B-1: Line Item Budget Form

Attachment B-2: Program Planning Summary

Attachment C: Required Youth Performance Outcomes

#### Additional Website Resources

- Information on the Workforce Investment Act and Youth Councils may be found at: <http://www.usworkforce.org>
- The Act can be found at: <http://usworkforce.org/wialaw.htm>
- The Regulations can be found at: <http://usworkforce.org/finalregs.txt>
- State of Maine Workforce Investment Act plan can be found at [www.state.me.us](http://www.state.me.us) (Click on Maine State Government, then State Agencies – Department of Labor – Bureau of Employment Services – Maine Workforce Investment Act Planning Guidelines.
- The Tri-County Local Area Draft Plan can be found at: [www.emdc.org](http://www.emdc.org)
- Definitions of terms in this RFP are in **Attachment A**.