



**VENTURA COUNTY  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
&  
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

Present a

**Request for Proposals  
(RFP # WY10)  
for**

**COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH SERVICES  
&  
SPECIAL PROJECTS FOR YOUTH**

**RELEASE DATE:** March 22, 2010

**DUE DATE:** April 21, 2010 - 4:00 p.m.

**BIDDERS CONFERENCE:** April 6, 2010  
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Human Services Agency  
855 Partridge Drive  
Ventura, CA 93003

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**SECTION I – PROGRAM INFORMATION**

**A. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) of Ventura County is seeking qualified organizations to operate Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I Youth programs (CFDA # 17.259) in Ventura County. Programs will serve WIA-eligible in- and out-of-school youth ages 16-21.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides workforce services and activities to increase the employment, education and occupational skill attainment of participants, thereby improving the quality of the workforce, reducing welfare dependency and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of our community. WIA provides the framework for a workforce preparation and employment system designed to be customer-focused in meeting the needs of businesses for skilled workers and assisting individuals in easily accessing the information and services needed to manage their careers.

**B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must include program designs that meet the needs of our community’s young people, the performance outcomes of the Workforce Investment Act and the priorities of the WIB. All proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their ability to demonstrate the following:

- Provision of service to youth at risk because of: (1) economic disadvantage (receipt of public assistance); (2) educational disadvantage; (3) status in or out of foster care; (4) disability; or (5) involvement with the criminal justice system
- Emphasis on developing basic skills (reading, writing, math) and learning about and/or preparing for careers
- Creation and maintenance of partnerships with business and education that include alternative training options
- Leveraging of the resources of a collaborative workforce development system
- Provision of early exposure to career pathways, including non-college options, with a focus on work ethic
- Facilitation of youth empowerment and job readiness: self-efficacy, motivation, altruism, personal accountability, investment in the future, vision, confidence.

Contractors will be responsible for providing comprehensive services and activities to participants as required under WIA regulations. These activities include outreach/recruitment, case management, training, supportive services, employment and/or placement in higher education and one-year follow-up reports. All programs must include employer linkages for subsidized and unsubsidized training and placement. All program participants must meet WIA eligibility requirements, (low-income and at least one additional barrier).

Two separate funding opportunities are available through this procurement:

|     | <b>TITLE</b>                 | <b>ESTIMATED FUNDS AVAILABLE</b> |
|-----|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I.  | COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH SERVICES | \$1,000,000                      |
| II. | SPECIAL PROJECTS FOR YOUTH   | \$ 250,000                       |

Actual funding available under this RFP will be determined by the allocation to Ventura County from the State. Interested parties may submit responses to either or both opportunities, for all or a portion of the funds identified. Both types of programs are described further below. The allocation of funds and services is to be distributed as follows:

Eighty per cent of total funds made available for procurement (expected to be about \$1,250,000) will be apportioned among four geographic regions and based on the ratio of the relative poverty population of youth in each region. The remaining 20% will be available for special projects to provide an opportunity to augment services to a particular geographic area (region or sub-region) or for special services to one or more of the five at-risk groups of youth noted above. In addition, the following elements apply to all program applications:

- A minimum of 50% of expenditures must be for out-of-school youth as defined by WIA. But there are no prescribed enrollment limits for either in- or out-of-school youth.
- Proposed programs must provide a minimum of 10% in-kind or cash match. Bidders who can demonstrate a match greater than 10% will receive up to 5 bonus points. See below, Section I, Part VIII, and Section II, Part D.
- Bidders whose programs include an emphasis, not necessarily exclusive, on the attainment of skills needed in careers in allied health and technology-related jobs will receive up to 5 bonus points in the evaluation process described below in Section II, Part D. Allied health includes a wide variety of healthcare-related jobs that assist the work of physicians and nurses.

C. FUNDING SOURCE/SERVICE AREAS

Funding for these programs is made available from WIA “core” youth funds. The County reserves the right to adjust award amounts on the basis of its final allocation and on the basis of the responses to this RFP.

Services are to be provided in proportion to the percentages of youth at risk in the regions of the County described below. Using CalWORKs data for the potentially eligible population, we have divided the County into four regions and indicated the appropriate funding percentages for each. Funds will be obligated in accordance with these ratios.

We intend to fund no more than one Comprehensive Services program in each region. Special Projects may serve an area within one of these regions, e.g., a specific city or a target group of youth across a region or regions. Applicants are encouraged to consider serving more than one region. Listed below are the regions and the associated estimated funding for each. City designations within the regions are goals for expenditures and include service to the unincorporated areas, or “spheres of influence,” within each region. For example, Region 1 would also include service to the El Rio area of Oxnard.

**Region 1**

| City         | Percentage of Funds | Estimated Funding |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Oxnard       | 49                  | \$490,000         |
| Port Hueneme | 4                   | \$40,000          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>53</b>           | <b>\$530,000</b>  |

**Region 2**

| City           | Percentage of Funds | Estimated Funding |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Ojai, Oak View | 2                   | \$20,000          |
| Ventura        | 15                  | \$150,000         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>17</b>           | <b>\$170,000</b>  |

**Region 3**

| City          | Percentage of Funds | Estimated Funding |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Santa Paula   | 9                   | \$90,000          |
| Fillmore/Piru | 5                   | \$50,000          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>14</b>           | <b>\$140,000</b>  |

**Region 4**

| City  | Percentage of Funds | Estimated Funding |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| Camarillo/Somis                                   | 3                   | \$30,000          |
| Moorpark  | 2                   | \$20,000          |
| Thousand Oaks/Newbury Park, Westlake and Oak Park | 4                   | \$40,000          |
| Simi Valley                                       | 7                   | \$70,000          |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>16</b>           | <b>\$160,000</b>  |

D. PERIOD OF SERVICE AND TYPE OF CONTRACT

Contracts are expected to be awarded in June 2010, for operation from July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011.

Contract(s) may be renewed for additional years. Should a new contract be awarded for subsequent years, the County reserves the right to enter into a new agreement with the selected contractor(s) for these services without the need for further competitive procurement, subject to approval by the Ventura County WIB and Board of Supervisors, the availability of sufficient funds and satisfactory performance by the contractor(s).

E. PROGRAM DESIGN/SCOPE OF SERVICES

I. Program Elements and Components

Training programs should include sufficient resources to ensure each participant's success and achievement of mandated performance outcomes. Because of the limitations of WIA resources, contractors will be expected to enlist other community partners to provide services and resources to participants in order to maximize the available resources and provide a comprehensive array of services responsive to the unique needs of the target population.

Contractors must make available, but need not necessarily directly provide, the following ten WIA program elements to each youth. Each youth need not receive every service listed. Proposals should include a description as to how the program will incorporate the following elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies
2. Alternative secondary school services, as appropriate
3. Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning
4. Paid and/or unpaid work experiences including job shadowing and internships as appropriate. (Work experience must be linked to an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and activities that meet DOL Common Measures (for which, see below) and may not be provided on a stand-alone basis.)
5. Occupational skills training
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility and other positive social behaviors in non-school hours
7. Supportive services, including transportation, childcare, etc., that are necessary to enable the youth to participate in activities. The rationale for supportive services must be included in the Individual Service Strategy.
8. Adult mentoring during the period of program delivery and follow-up
9. Follow-up services for up to 12 months after participant exit (Follow-up services may include career planning, referral to supportive services, job search assistance and counseling.)
10. Comprehensive guidance, mentoring and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referrals, as appropriate

Work Preparation and Work-based Opportunities Program designs should offer a continuum of learning opportunities that are varied as well as age- and development-appropriate. These experiences should be used to assist youth to develop soft skills, gain work experience and influence their decisions about career choices

Partnerships with other service providers are essential for program success and continuity. Communication linkages, information sharing, referral procedures and issues

of confidentiality must be addressed. Partnerships may be paid or provided in kind to the WIA contractor. Proposals involving a collaboration or partnership must include signed letters of agreement from each entity. The agreement, whether developed as an umbrella agreement with a variety of agencies, or independently with a particular partner, must contain, at a minimum, the following information and must clearly designate the roles and responsibilities of the agency:

- A description of what services will be provided by each partner and how such services will be documented
- Primary agency responsible for ensuring case management and reporting
- Explanation of how the costs of services and the operating costs of the partnerships will be funded
- Duration of the agreement and procedures for amending it

Contractors will be expected to use an Individual Service Strategy for each participant. Through this process, contractors will ensure that each participant has the opportunity to achieve agreed-on goals and that appropriate documentation on the progress toward those goals is maintained.

Participants should be provided access to needed special services such as drug and alcohol treatment, health services, transitional housing, psychological counseling, and specialized assessment in areas for conditions such as learning disabilities and visual/hearing impairments. Contractor staff are expected to assist participants in determining the appropriate mix of services.

Program designs that include participation in hands-on paid, work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, work experiences, job shadowing and community service are encouraged. Industry partnerships with local employers that expose youth to high-growth, high-demand occupations are also encouraged, as are training opportunities that are linked to local educational or training providers.

## II. Participant Recruitment and Eligibility

Contractors are responsible for the recruitment of sufficient numbers of eligible youth to meet their enrollment obligations. Contractors will be responsible for conducting WIA eligibility determination and submitting related documents to the County for quality control review.

Program enrollments are limited to WIA-eligible, low-income youth, ages 16 to 21, in- and out-of-school residents of Ventura County, who have one or more of the following barriers to employment:

- Reading, writing, or computing at or below the eighth grade level
- School dropout
- Homeless, runaway, or foster child
- Pregnant or parenting
- Offender (is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process)
- Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program to secure and hold employment. (This group may include emancipated youth, youth with disabilities, youth with limited English proficiency and youth with family history of chronic unemployment.)

Contractors may provide access to services for 14- and 15-year-old youth and non-WIA eligible youth via referral to partner agencies and other applicable programs. This program is not intended to serve 14-15 year olds.

### III. Out-of-School Youth

An out-of-school youth is one defined as an eligible youth who (1) is a school dropout, or (2) has graduated from high school or holds a GED, but is basic-skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed. Contractors will need to comply with applicable State and local guidance and definitions in documenting and providing services to all youth.

A minimum of 50% of total contract expenditures must be for service to out-of-school youth. Applicants are to submit two budgets: one for in-school youth and one for out-of-school youth. Similarly, accounting records and invoices to report actual expenditures will also be split between these two groups.

Contractors will be expected to enroll new participants for Program Year 2010-2011. If applicable, contractors may also need to assume responsibility for participants transitioning from PY 09-10 (exact numbers to be determined) and exited participants in the 12-month post-exit follow-up phase (exact numbers to be determined). Contractors will assume responsibility for completing all services and documentation for each youth.

### IV. Performance Goals

Contractors are responsible for achieving successful participant and program outcomes for the following Department of Labor (DOL) Common Measures:

1. *Placement in Employment or Education:* Measures the percentage of participants who are in employment, the military, post-secondary education and/or advanced training/occupational skills training in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter after the program exit quarter
2. *Attainment of a Degree or Certificate:* Measures the percentage of participants in education who attained a diploma, GED, or certificate by the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter after the program exit quarter
3. *Literacy/Numeracy Gains:* Measures the percentage of out-of-school, basic skill deficient participants who increase one or more educational functioning levels within one year of the date of youth program participation

The Literacy/Numeracy Gains Measure requires the use of the same standardized test for both pre-assessment and post-assessment. The approved assessment tools are:

- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Instrument (CASAS)
- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)
- Adult Basic Learning Exam (ABLE)
- Adult Measures of Educational Skills (AMES)
- Student Performance Levels for ESL
- Basic English Skills Test for ESL (BEST)
- Work Keys for top three Adult Basic Education (ABE) levels only

Before a client can successfully exit the program, he/she must have attained a certificate or degree, achieved placement in employment or education and, for out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient, have measured gains in Literacy/Numeracy. The Contractor shall coordinate client program exit strategies with the County.

If, at any time, the contractor's performance falls below 80% of the performance goals, the contractor may be subject to corrective action and/or the recapture of funds, in accordance with WIB policy.

The proposal should include well-defined, measurable performance goals and activities tied to WIA Common Measures. Applicants are to describe specific strategies in their responses to this RFP to show how their program design leads to the attainment of the Common Measures performance goals. Contracts will require documented attainment of Common Measure outcomes that will be evaluated by the WIB on a quarterly basis.

For further information on WIA Common Measures, please refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 17-05, Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and Related Performance Issues at [http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL\\_17-05.pdf](http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL_17-05.pdf).

#### V. Incentive Payments Policy

Contractors may provide cash or other appropriate incentives for youth to recognize and award the achievement of a defined goal in compliance with WIA requirements. Justification for the payment must be documented and identified by the Contractor. Such payments will be made in accordance with established County policies and procedures. The County reserves the right to approve the use of any incentive payment plans.

#### VI. Participant Payments/Employer of Record

Service providers must have the capacity to provide direct monetary payments to youth, including hourly wages or stipends. This can be done directly by the funded agency or through partnership with another agency, including a payroll-processing agency. The employer of record must adhere to all child labor laws regarding hours of employment, working conditions, etc. For more information, see the following website: [www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/ChildLaborPamphlet2000.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/ChildLaborPamphlet2000.html).

#### VII. General Contractor Responsibilities

To ensure compliance with the provisions noted above, contractors will be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining ongoing coordination and communication with County representatives and participate in all training and contractor meetings as directed by County.
- Preparing and submitting to the County on a timely basis, invoices for direct and subcontracted partner expenses.
- Reporting on progress indicators as directed by County.
- Providing a quality control process to ensure that all program deliverables are met prior to participant exit and that minimum case management standards are maintained.