

NOTE: The due date has been extended to October 30th

Please see Addendum 1 for new information related to this RFP

WIOA Title I Youth Services RFP Bidders' Conference Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: September 18, 2026, 9:01 a.m. EDT

Meeting: Bidders' Conference for the WIOA Title I Youth Services RFP

Purpose: To provide prospective bidders an opportunity to ask questions regarding the WIOA Title I Youth Services RFP and to clarify expectations related to funding, program structure, reporting, and outcomes.

Participants

- Judy McKinney Cherry, CSS Workforce Board / Workforce Operations and Oversight Committee
- Bruce Boughton, CSS Workforce Board / Workforce Operations and Oversight Committee
- James "Jamie" Johnson, CSS Workforce Board / Workforce Operations and Oversight Committee
- Rae Ann Widmer-Mason, CSS Workforce New York
- Anita Lewis, EOP
- Michael Murphy, Capabilities Inc.
- Wendy Harrison / Wendy @ FLX Gateway
- Victoria Ehlen, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning

Opening Remarks

Judy McKinney Cherry opened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. and explained that the RFP was issued as a best-practice procurement process. She noted that the youth services contract had not gone through an RFP process since 2017. The board's primary interest is to ensure strong outcomes for youth across the three-county service area and to identify the best opportunity to support youth financial stability and long-term success. The RFP is intended to result in a multi-year contract, with the first period beginning mid-program year.

Key Discussion Items and Clarifications

1. Funding and Budget Expectations

Bruce Boughton stated that the anticipated budget for the remaining portion of the current program year, January 1 through June 30, is approximately \$170,000. This amount is expected to cover staffing, fringe, and youth work experience. Future annual funding is anticipated to be approximately \$300,000, subject to final state allocations. Supportive services are not included in the \$170,000 estimate and may need to be addressed through other internal or external funding sources.

Respondents should prepare budgets recognizing a partial first year followed by two anticipated full years of funding. If a bidder proposes in-kind contributions or other leveraged resources, those should be clearly identified in the budget as in-kind rather than cash contributions.

2. Supportive Services

Questions were raised regarding the supportive services line in the RFP budget template. Judy explained that the template was developed using examples and best practices from other workforce boards and states. Although supportive services are not currently included in the estimated program-year funding amount, the budget line remains useful because experienced providers may identify service needs and associated costs.

3. Staffing Coverage and County Service Hours

It was asked whether the 40-hour service expectation applied entirely to Chemung County or was intended to be divided among the three counties. Judy explained that the hour structure reflected the way services have historically operated, but the board is open to alternative approaches. Bidders may propose a different allocation of hours if they can demonstrate that the model will meet community needs and provide full coverage across the service area.

4. Work Experience Expenditure Requirement

The 30% work experience expenditure requirement was discussed. Judy emphasized that 30% is a minimum requirement and should be met for the current year and future years. The board's focus is not only enrollment but successful completion and transition into the workforce. The committee emphasized the importance of expending available funds in ways that lead to meaningful youth outcomes.

5. Program Innovation and Best Practices

The board encouraged bidders to propose fresh, innovative approaches to youth engagement and service delivery. Judy noted that the goal is to move beyond simply enrolling participants and instead focus on keeping youth engaged through completion and into meaningful employment or income-generating opportunities. It was added that the RFP was intentionally left relatively open to allow bidders to recommend new approaches after many years of similar service delivery.

6. Enrollment Target

The enrollment target of 45 participants was clarified as 45 unique youth enrolled in the system at any given time. The target is a rolling number rather than a duplicated count. The board anticipates that providers should aim to reach the target as soon as feasible during the six-month initial period, rather than waiting until the end of the period.

7. Data, Need, and County Demand

Questions were raised whether data exists showing the need for services by county and whether service needs have changed over time. It was explained that available board data has primarily focused on program effectiveness rather than demand modeling. Bidders are encouraged to review broader data sources such as census data, dropout rates, income thresholds, and the age cohort of youth ages 16 to 24.

8. Fourteen Program Elements and OSOS Reporting

It was asked whether the 14 required program elements are separately identified in the OSOS system.

9. Outcome Measurement and Participant Success

A question was raised regarding specific performance measures. The State currently requires the following youth measurements.

- Employment, Education, or Training Placement
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Median Earning Outcome

The committee did suggest that success measurements beyond those required by the State will be viewed favorably

An additional question was raised regarding the need of participants to complete all 14 program elements to be counted as successful. It was confirmed that services should be aligned to the needs and milestones of each youth and that each program element does not need to be met individually.

Judy emphasized that reporting should capture where participants are in the process, including enrollment, milestones, service needs, and progress toward successful outcomes. The board is interested in using this information to identify service gaps and pursue resources to address unmet needs.

10. Written Question Follow Up

Follow up questions were submitted electronically asking what the turnaround time for payments from this RFP is and how rapidly the selected bidder will be able to receive reimbursements. In addition, it was asked if a bidder can request an advance?"

It was confirmed that bidders cannot request an advance and that reimbursements with back-up documentation are due to the Fiscal Director by the 10th of the month, reimbursement is within 2 weeks.

1. What is the total amount of funding available for this RFP? \$300,000 for full year. \$170,000 for half year
2. Is there a special format required for the narrative? NO
3. Will double-spaced, 2-point font, Arial Narrow work? YES
4. How many FTE staff are currently on this contract? 3 FTE
5. What are the job titles of staff working on this project? 1 Program Lead and 2 Emerging Workforce Navigators
4. What are the required outcome/performance measures? We will work with the service provider to finalize these. Our goal, in full performance, is to have 7 work experiences started each month.
5. Will there be an opportunity to add partners and build new partnerships upon award? Yes
6. Is there a recording or transcript of the Virtual Bidders Conference available? Yes.
Recording

Adjournment

The formal bidder question-and-answer portion concluded after all participating bidders confirmed they had no additional questions. The committee confirmed that the meeting minutes will be published on the CSS Website and the meeting was adjourned.