

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
WIA YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES
PROJECTS**

RFP#: R-89-15-0621

**Issued By:
The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**

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WIA Youth Employment Services Projects RFP
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Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

WIA Youth Employment Services Projects REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): RFP#: R-89-15-0621

SECTION I. GENERAL PURPOSE & GRANTEE INFORMATION

1.1 Purpose

In accordance with Governor Strickland's and Lieutenant Governor Fisher's Budget regarding services identified as Youth Employment Programs, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) releases this Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purpose of obtaining proposals for innovative local or regional youth employment and training programs from Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). The WIBs must show how the proposed project(s) will provide employment and educational services to disadvantaged youth (defined in Section 3.2). A WIB may, at its discretion, act merely as the fiscal agent for the proposed project or as a collaborating partner to provide direct services at the local and/or regional area. At a minimum, the role of the WIB is to serve as the fiscal agent and subrecipient of the grant from ODJFS. Detailed roles of the WIB and partners must be provided in the proposal submitted. Partnerships with community agencies or businesses, including but not limited to private entities, employers, educational institutions, for-profit entities, and private not-for-profit entities, are mandatory. As a result of this competitive process, ODJFS intends to select a minimum of twelve proposals to award funding for youth project implementation.

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP must address at least one of the following two categories:

1. Provide **youth who are disengaged from the educational system** (as defined in Section 3.2) with employment and training opportunities, OR
2. Provide **youthful offenders** (as defined in Section 3.2) with employment and training opportunities

In addition to at least one of the two mandatory categories above, the proposals submitted may choose to address a third category which is as follows:

3. Provide employment and training opportunities to **other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth** (as defined in Section 3.2)

All applicants must clearly state in their proposal which of the two required categories their proposed project will address. Any proposals opting to include the third category of **other at-risk or hard to serve youth** will need to demonstrate in their budget that at least 75% of the budget will be used for direct services for one of the mandatory categories and that no more than 25% of the budget will be used for direct services for the third, non-mandatory category. (Note 1: Variances in approved program budgets of more than 10% for direct services to youth may be approved based upon written request to ODJFS Contract Manager. Note 2: see **Section 6.1, C. for budget review and proposal award criteria.**)

Organizations submitting proposals in response to this RFP must demonstrate significant experience in providing youth employment programs (*e.g.* subsidized and unsubsidized employment such as paid and unpaid internships work experience, business mentorships, post secondary employment placement, entrepreneurship programs, apprenticeships, or other employment-related programs in order to validate the applying organization's qualifications and success in implementing similar programs.

The main purpose of this RFP is to solicit unique and innovative youth programs that will result in successful participation in an educational/training program, which will ultimately lead to a self-sufficient wage and occupation. Projects must also address youth barriers to employment and educational advancement as part of their programming. Proposed projects must be fully planned and defined in proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must address critical components such as program design, administrative structure, outreach/recruitment strategies, participant eligibility determination, local or regional appropriateness, community support and partnerships, performance measures and program evaluation methodology, program sustainability, project budget with matching funds (at least 20% is required), and reporting and record-management. Proposals must clearly explain how the planned project would achieve at least three of the project objectives established in this RFP and must be in accordance with program parameters set by ODJFS for use of this funding (refer to section 1.5). Award selections will be based on multiple criteria including proposal quality, project budget, and geographic factors mandated in the current state biennial budget for the use of this funding.

1.2 Issuing Office

The RFP is released by ODJFS will result in "notices of awards" issued through allocation letters by the ODJFS, Office of Fiscal Services. The Workforce Investment Boards serving as fiscal agents for other applicants (private entities, community based organizations, etc.) will be the subrecipient of these funds awarded by the State of Ohio. ODJFS, Office of Workforce Development (OWD) works in partnership with the State of Ohio Governor's Office and a variety of stakeholders in order to provide youth employment programs. OWD is also functionally aligned and structured by programs and services for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and other federal funds issued by the U.S. Department of Labor. OWD's primary responsibility for youth services is to implement youth programs and strategies that align with the objectives of the Turnaround Ohio Initiative.

If interested applicants have a need to communicate regarding this RFP, they must contact **ODJFS** using one of the mechanisms provided for in **Sections 1.7, Internet Question and Answer Period/RFP Clarification Opportunity, or 1.9, Communication Prohibitions**, of this RFP. Grantees are cautioned that communication attempts which do not comply with these instructions will not be answered, and that ODJFS will not consider any proposals submitted to any address other than the one provided in Section 5.1 of this RFP. Grantee proposals must be submitted to ODJFS in strict accordance with proposal submission instructions provided in **Section 5.1, Proposal Submission Information**.

1.3 Award Distribution

WIA is a federally funded program which includes services to adult, youth, and dislocated workers. A portion of WIA dollars are set aside for the Governor's Discretionary Fund. For the current biennium (July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009) Ohio's budget allows for up to \$6,000,000 from this discretionary funding for competitive awards for the youth programs that are the subject of this RFP. ODJFS intends to select at least twelve proposals that meet the requirements of the RFP. Of these, eight of the projects awarded must be in major urban centers and at least two of the remaining four projects must be awarded in rural locations.

Ohio's urban areas are Cleveland (Cuyahoga), Columbus (Franklin), Cincinnati (Hamilton), Toledo (Lucas), Youngstown (Mahoning), Dayton (Montgomery), Canton (Stark), and Akron (Summit). Rural areas are defined as counties or areas with less than a total population of 250,000. Other areas are defined as a combination of urban and rural. For the purposes of review and selection of awards, all proposals submitted will be need to fit into the classification of urban, rural, or other. Each WIB's proposal must clearly indicate if it is being submitted for consideration as an urban, rural, or other program classification. ODJFS plans to select a minimum of twelve projects for award (eight urban awards, two rural awards, and two other) that meet the requirements specified in this RFP. Any WIB may submit more than one proposal for services within its area, so long as they serve as the fiscal agent for the proposed projects.

ODJFS expects to award a minimum of twelve awards in amounts ranging from \$100,000 up to \$400,000 per year for each award from the effective date through June 30, 2009. Proposal requests exceeding \$250,000 must show regionalization. **Regionalization** is defined as organizational partnerships that span over two or more Workforce Investment Areas and/or counties. A WIB may submit more than one application in response to this RFP (*i.e.* a metro may partner with a rural county or you may have three or four rural counties that would partner together that may or may not be in the same Workforce Investment Area). Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with multiple partners, agencies, and/or employers for this project.

Applicants may submit two separate proposals for the categories of **youth disengaged from the education system** or **youthful offenders** and may within either of these categories include services to **other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth** (for no more than 25% of the project's budget). If applicants are submitting a proposal that will serve other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth, the budget provided in Section 5.2 C should detail how the grantee will devote at least 75% of the grant to serving **youth disengaged from the educational system** or **youthful offenders** (**IMPORTANT NOTE: see Section 6.1, C. for budget review and proposal award criteria**). The grantee may consider using cost-per-participant information to show the distribution of the award to the various youth populations served.

1.4 Grant Award Structure

As a result of the funds designated by Governor Ted Strickland and Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher, The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Workforce Development will enter into agreements only with Workforce Investment Boards, who will be serving as the fiscal agent for a selected community based organization, private not-for-profit agency or for-profit entity. ODJFS plans to award a minimum of twelve separate grants to fund selected projects that provide innovative youth employment and training programs. Workforce Investment Boards will maintain all responsibility for audits and audit resolutions.

In order to ensure free and open competition, WIBs must forward to ODJFS all proposals received. All interested WIBs must apply directly to ODJFS in response to this RFP. If the WIB intends to act only as a fiscal agent, it must provide a letter of acceptance of fiscal agent responsibility. The letter does not require a WIB endorsement of the proposed project, however endorsement may be offered. The selected WIBs will be responsible for developing contracts with all involved community partners. Each such contract need not be in place before the submission deadline for responses to this RFP, however, if selected for award, the WIB will be required to complete vendor contracts within 45 days of the ODJFS award announcements, and provide ODJFS with copies of the agreements, signed by all parties. Those contracts between the WIBs and their sub-recipient partners must define all terms and conditions, and the roles and responsibilities of the parties. Selection by ODJFS of an application for funding will

constitute prior approval of a non-competitive procurement (See Fiscal Administrative Procedure Letter (FAPL) No. 2, Appendix 2. of this RFP).

The WIBs serving as fiscal agents for other entities are eligible for reimbursement of their administrative costs related to fiscal reporting, audits, etc., up to 3% of the award. The direct service provider/applicant is entitled to the remaining 7% (of 10% allowed for administration) for their internal administrative expenses.

All selected WIBs will have the primary responsibility for program reporting directly to OWD. Selected WIBs will be required to submit reports to OWD on at least a quarterly basis showing performance outcomes, objectives met, issues encountered and general overall progress of the project. All reporting requirements will be outlined by OWD prior to the start of the grant award period. In addition to collecting and reporting data, the selected projects will be expected to assist OWD in identifying best practices to replicate similar programs across the State of Ohio.

The primary audit responsibility will remain with the fiscal agent for all fiscal related functions, including financial reporting, budget tracking, and fiscal audits. The selected projects will also be monitored and evaluated by ODJFS. Program monitoring activities will include, but may not be limited to, site visits, program operations, participant eligibility, customer satisfaction, and quality of services provided (refer the U.S. DOL handbook for more information on monitoring procedures).

1.5 Objectives of the Project

ODJFS’ overarching goal for this program is to increase the educational and/or vocational preparedness and success of the targeted youth populations (**YOUTH DISENGAGED FROM THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS, and AT-RISK OR HARD-TO-SERVE YOUTH**). In order to achieve this goal, ODJFS will consider proposals that describe how (if funded) the applicant organization would address and meet at least three of the objectives listed below for at least one of the required targeted youth populations as defined in section 1.1. It is the intent of this project for youth to become better prepared for the 21st century workforce by addressing at a minimum three of the following list of objectives:

1. Enter into an educational program that will lead to self-sufficiency.
2. Become employed in an occupation that provides a career path leading to self sufficiency.
3. Be trained and develop specific skill that result in employment.
4. Have business mentors in the actual workforce.
5. Have opportunities to access entrepreneurship and apprenticeship programs.
6. Have access to post secondary educational programs.
7. Have opportunities for subsidized and unsubsidized employment.
8. Have access to community and faith based organizations’ services and programs.
9. Have access to a life coach (or support system).

1.6 Anticipated Procurement Timetable

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
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10/11/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODJFS Releases RFP to Potential Grantees on ODJFS Web Site ▪ Q&A Period Opens ▪ RFP becomes active ▪ Grantees may submit inquiries for RFP clarification
11/05/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grantee Q&A Period Closes at 10 a.m. (for inquiries for RFP Clarification) ▪ No further inquiries for RFP clarification will be accepted
11/16/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODJFS provides Final Grantee Question & Answer Document (estimated)
12/07/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deadline for Grantees to Submit Proposals to ODJFS (3 p.m.) ▪ This is also the proposal opening date that begins the ODJFS process for submitted proposals review.
01/07/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODJFS Issues Contract Award Notification Letter (<i>estimated</i>) ▪ Grantees that submitted proposals in response to this RFP will be sent letters stating whether their proposal was accepted for award of the contract.
02/15/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation* (<i>estimated</i>—following notification of all contractual and funding approvals) ▪ ODJFS contracts are not valid and effective until the state Office of Budget Management approves the purchase order.
06/30/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Completion* - All work must be completed and approved by ODJFS Contract Manager.
07/01/09 through 06/30/2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible Grant Renewal Term - at ODJFS discretion.

ODJFS reserves the right to revise this schedule in the best interest of the State of Ohio and/or to comply with the State of Ohio procurement procedures and regulations and after providing reasonable notice.

* According to requirements of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 126.07, ODJFS contracts are not valid and enforceable until the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) certifies the availability of appropriate funding, as indicated by the approval of the Purchase Order (P.O.). The selected grantee may neither perform work nor submit an invoice for payment for work performed for this project for any time period prior to the P.O. approval date. The ODJFS Contract Manager will notify the selected grantee when the requirements of ORC Section 126.07 have been met. A renewal option will be in effect, contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued availability of funding, and all required approvals, from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011. Since state law prohibits ODJFS from making financial commitments beyond the fiscal biennium (e.g., 7/01/07 through 6/30/09), the contract with the selected vendor will be subject to renewal for the final two-year period of the project. All renewals are at the discretion of ODJFS.

1.7 Internet Question & Answer Period; RFP Clarification Opportunity

Potential grantees may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFP via the Internet during the Q&A Period as outlined in Section 1.6, Anticipated Procurement Timetable. To ask a question, potential grantees must use the following Internet process:

- * Access the ODJFS Web Page at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/>
- * Select “About Us” on the front page;
- * Select “Doing Business with ODJFS;”

- * **Select “Requests for Proposals, Letterhead Solicitations, and Other Invitations;”**
- * **RFP Number [R-89-15-0621](#);**
- * **Select “Ask a Question about this RFP” function; and**
- * **Follow the instructions to send an e-mail question.**

Questions about this RFP must reference the relevant part of this RFP, the heading for the provision under question, and the page number of the RFP where the provision can be found. The potential grantee must also include the name of a representative of the potential grantee, the company name and business phone number. ODJFS may, at its option, disregard any questions which do not appropriately reference an RFP provision or location, or which do not include identification for the originator of the question. ODJFS will not respond to any questions submitted after **10:00 a.m.** on the date the Q&A period closes.

ODJFS responses to all questions asked via the Internet will be posted on the Internet website dedicated to this RFP, for reference by all potential grantees. Potential grantees will not receive personalized or individual e-mail responses. Clarifying questions asked and ODJFS responses to them comprise the “ODJFS Q&A Document” for this RFP. If possible, ODJFS will post an interim Q&A Document, without identifying the grantees asking questions, as well as the final version (in which all grantees that posed questions will be identified). ODJFS strongly encourages grantees to ask questions as early as possible in the Q&A period so that interim answers can be posted with sufficient time for the possibility of grantees’ follow-up questions.

Grantee proposals in response to this RFP are to take into account any information communicated by ODJFS in the Final Q&A Document for the RFP. **It is the responsibility of all potential grantees to check this site on a regular basis for responses to questions, as well as for any amendments or other pertinent information regarding this RFP.**

Accessibility to the ODJFS Q&A Document will be clearly identified on the website dedicated to this RFP, once that document is made available.

IMPORTANT: Requests from potential grantees for copies of previous RFPs, past grantee proposals, score sheets or contracts for this or similar past projects, are Public Records Requests (PRRs), and are not clarification questions regarding the present RFP. PRRs submitted in accordance with directions provided in Section 1.9, Communication Prohibitions, will be honored. The posted time frames for ODJFS responses to Internet questions for RFP clarification do not apply to PRRs.

Grantees are to base their RFP responses, and the details and costs of their proposed projects, on the requirements and performance expectations established in this RFP for the future contract, NOT on details of any current or past related contract. Requirements under a current project may or may not be required by ODJFS under any future contract, and so may not be useful information for grantees that choose to respond to the RFP. If grantees ask questions about existing or past contracts using the Internet Q&A process, ODJFS will use its discretion in deciding whether to provide answers. Interested grantees should also refer to RFP Section 1.10, Time Frames and Funding Source, for related information.

There is an established time period for the Grantee Q&A process (see Section 1.6, Anticipated Procurement Timetable, above). ODJFS will only answer those questions submitted within the stated time frame for submission of grantee questions, and which pertain to issues of RFP clarity, and which are not requests for public information. ODJFS is under no obligation to acknowledge questions submitted through the Q&A process if those questions are not in accordance with these instructions.

* Should grantees experience technical difficulties accessing either the ODJFS website where the RFP and its related documents are published, they may contact the ODJFS Office of Contracts and Acquisitions, RFP/RLB Unit, at (614) 728-5693 for guidance.

1.8 Grantees' Library

A wide variety of information on ODJFS and its programs is available to the public via the ODJFS website at <http://jfs.ohio.gov>. Additionally, some websites containing information related to this topic that grantees may find useful is as follows:

<http://www.obm.gov>

<http://www.ohioworkforce411.org>

<http://www.ohioworkforce.org/youth>

<http://www.dys.ohio.gov>

<http://www.doleta.gov/ryf/WhiteHouseReport/VMO.cfm>

<http://www.ecitycleveland.com>

<http://learningworkconnection.org>

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

<http://www.promisingpractices.net>

http://www.ohioworkforce.org/jobseekers/apprentice_toc.stm

<http://www.ohio.gov>

<http://www.ohioworkforceinformer.org>

http://www.doleta.gov/atels_bat

<http://www.lmi.state.oh.us>

1.9 Communication Prohibitions

From the issuance date of this RFP until awards are formally announced, there may be no communications concerning the RFP between any grantee that expects to submit a proposal and any employee of ODJFS in the issuing office, or any other ODJFS employee, or any other individual regardless of their employment status, who is in any way involved in the development of the RFP or the selection of the contractor.

The only exceptions to this prohibition are as follows:

1. Communications conducted pursuant to Section 1.7, Internet Q&A Period;

2. As necessary in any pre-existing or on-going business relationship between ODJFS and any grantee that could submit a proposal in response to this RFP;
3. As part of any grantee interview process or proposal clarification process initiated by ODJFS, which ODJFS deems necessary in order to make a final selection;
4. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, ODJFS will post those revisions, amendments, etc., to the website dedicated to this RFP;* and
5. Any Public Records Request (PRR) made through the ODJFS Office of Legal Services.

*** Important Note:** Amendments to the RFP or to any documents related to it will be accessible to interested grantees through the original web page established for the RFP. All interested grantees must refer to that web page regularly for amendments or other announcements. ODJFS may not specifically notify any grantee of changes or announcements related to this RFP except through the website posting. It is the affirmative responsibility of interested grantees to be aware of and to fully respond to all updated information posted on this web page.

ODJFS is not responsible for the accuracy of any information regarding this RFP that was obtained or gathered through a source other than the Q&A process described in this RFP. Any attempts at prohibited communications by grantees may result in the disqualification of those grantees' proposals.

1.10 Time Frames & Award Amounts

ODJFS expects to award a minimum of twelve awards in amounts ranging from \$100,000 up to \$400,000 per year for each award. The grant period for the awards is expected to run from approximately mid-February-March 2008 and will conclude on June 30, 2009 with the possibility of a two-year renewal for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011 (SFYs 2010 and 2011), based upon the budget of Governor Ted Strickland and Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher for the Youth Employment Program. However, as state law prohibits ODJFS from making financial commitments beyond the fiscal biennium (*e.g.*, 7/01/07 through 6/30/09), any renewal agreements with the selected WIBs will be contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory performance by the vendor, and is at the discretion of ODJFS.

All applicants will be required to demonstrate a match of no less than 20% of their proposed project budgets. The matching funds may not be federal funds. Matching funds may be private, state, or local dollars, and in-kind match, defined as office space, equipment, staff time, transportation, etc., will be considered. An example of a cash match could be from a legal funding source such as private business, state or local entities. Employer subsidized wages would also be considered as a form of cash match.

ODJFS reserves the right to modify any resulting award according to federal or state requirements in the event that funding is not authorized during the contract period. Potential grantees are to be aware that ODJFS may, at its sole discretion, negotiate with all technically qualifying projects for revised project budgets if, in the sole opinion of ODJFS, such proposed budgets are excessive or if budget requests of successful applicants are in excess of available funding. Section 6.1 C. of this RFP establishes further information on ODJFS procedures to be implemented if this occurs.

SECTION II. GRANTEE EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Grantees' proposals must address all the following minimum qualifications as well as organizational and staff experience and capabilities:

2.1 Mandatory Grantee Qualifications

In order to be considered for the contract expected to result from this RFP, ODJFS requires that interested grantees **must** meet, at minimum, all the following qualification requirements:

- ODJFS will only consider proposals submitted by WIBs. The WIBs are required to submit all proposals.
- Each proposal must have a cover letter from the WIB, identifying, at minimum, its role in the proposed project, the lead agency for the project, and identifying the geographic category for which the proposal is submitted (urban, rural, or other).
- Each proposal must have an identified lead agency (does not have to be a WIB) who will be responsible for coordinating the project activities among any partners.
- Each proposal must identify a project manager who has a minimum of five years appropriate experience working with youth aged 16-21. Acceptable experience may include such history as working with employers, subsidized and unsubsidized employment, youth mentorships, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, high schools, GED programs, and post-secondary education institutions.
- Each proposal must include letters of cooperation and support for all partners listed in the proposal.
- Each proposal must include a description of the roles of all partners involved in the project.
- **Each entity within the partnership** must submit within the proposal a copy of a W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification or other document providing the partner's EIN as evidence of its legal ability to operate. The W-9 Form is provided as Attachment A to this RFP.

Grantees that do not meet the above qualifications may be disqualified from further consideration for contract award.

2.2 Organizational Experience and Capabilities

In order to be considered for selection expected to result from this RFP, ODJFS requires that the entity(s) providing direct services to the youth must demonstrate the following:

- Be able to legally operate in the State of Ohio
- Have a minimum of one year of experience in working with youth in employment, training, education and/or social service programs

A detailed description must be provided for the program project along with the role of each partner listed in the project. Additionally, the proposal should include the background and experience each of the partners has with the target youth identified in this RFP.

2.3 Staff Experience and Capabilities

The grantee must demonstrate significant expertise by assigning staff to key leadership roles for this project. Positions will require profiles, resumes, or curriculum vitae. The proposal must include at a minimum:

1. Project Manager who has a minimum of five years appropriate experience working with youth aged 16-21. Acceptable experience may include such history as working with employers, subsidized and unsubsidized employment, youth mentorships, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, high schools, GED programs, and/or post-secondary education institutions.
2. Case manager who provides direct services to youth must have at least three years experience working with the target population identified in the submitted proposal.
3. Other Key Staff who are essential to the program success project. Proposals failing to demonstrate the appropriate education and experience for each key staff member shall be disqualified from consideration.

Detailed job descriptions should be provided with the grant application for any positions that have not yet been filled.

SECTION III. SCOPE OF WORK & SPECIFICATIONS OF DELIVERABLES

As the basis of the proposed work, all proposed projects submitted to ODJFS must fully and clearly define the youth categories (identified in Section 1.1) to be served and the program objectives (in Section 1.5) to be achieved. Each proposal must have a complete project narrative and budget to show how the grantee will engage community and business support. The narrative must detail how program items in Section 3.1 (Scope of Work) will be delivered.

3.1 Scope of Work

A. Innovative Youth Employment/Education Programs

The proposal must demonstrate ability to implement successful employment programs that have career growth opportunities for youth from entry level positions to lead worker or management level positions. Programs might include an education component, such as Entrepreneurship, Apprenticeship, Post-secondary education or other programs that result in a certificate or degree that can be obtained by the end of the award period of June 30, 2009. If the grantee anticipates that the completion of any certificates and/or degrees will go beyond the initial award period ending June 30, 2009, the grantee must show financial support for completion. **All proposed programs must include an employment component.** For example, a GED program must have an employment component attached. In addition, to the employment component once the GED is completed, the grantee would be responsible for identifying an additional education and/or training program that will lead to career growth and self sufficiency.

B. High Growth High-Demand Occupations

The proposal must take into consideration high growth and high demand occupations when exploring career paths. **High growth, high demand occupations will vary based on region/county.** Each

proposal must locally define high growth, high demand occupations specific to their geographic area of service.

C. Business Involvement

The proposal **must include business letters of commitment for employment opportunities, including registered apprenticeships, internships and/or mentorship opportunities.** Employers must define employment opportunities (including a position description) after a reasonable training period has been defined. Youth wages may be subsidized for all employment of 32 hours or more per week. An example of business and career growth would be the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning's (CAEL) training model of a nursing career lattice in Registered Apprenticeship. It allows for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to choose pathways to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), that include clinical training for an Associates Degree in Nursing (ADN). Through the career lattice, employees in nurse assistant training or even in non-nursing jobs are allowed a certain period to obtain CNA certification. In addition, the flexibility of this model allows people interested in nursing to enter the lattice at a lower, middle, or upper rung. The lattice would also increase the number of Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), and Registered Nurses (RNs) in the work force. An additional advantage may be reduced turnover. Employees tend to stay with the organization longer when given the opportunity to advance in their careers while maintaining their income.

D. Local Advisory Council

Proposals must describe how the program would meet its responsibilities for organizing an advisory council and holding quarterly Youth Employment Meetings. The advisory council must be comprised of an odd number of members to include a majority of business members and at least two youth program participants (minimum total of five individuals). The purpose of the committee is to discuss employment and educational opportunities and challenges for the youth in the program. The grantee would be responsible for convening the committee. The purpose of the council is to work with the grantee on any challenges around youth employment and supportive services.

E. Training Commitment

Proposals must demonstrate locally defined training. Training can be short term leading to a degree or certificate leading to self-sufficiency (*e.g.* In ABC county, the average income is \$13,000 per year. Therefore, training as a pharmacy technician earning \$13,000 per year would meet self-sufficiency.) Training stipends may be issued at the rate of one half the minimum wage for students enrolled in a training or educational component of at least twelve hours per week. For post-secondary education twelve hours is defined as twelve credit hours as defined by the institution of higher education based on a semester or quarter. For GED, vocational and trade types of education, twelve hours is defined as twelve clock hours per week. Specific training modules must be identified for the purposes of this RFP.

F. Reporting

Proposals must describe how the program would meet its responsibilities for entering data into a system as defined by ODJFS. Reporting elements are identified in Appendix 1. to this RFP.

G. Administrative

The grantee shall demonstrate total project administrative costs not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount. If the WIB is serving only as the fiscal agent they shall be entitled to not more than 3% of the administrative dollars with the remaining 7% provided to the sub-grantees.

The definition of administrative costs includes general administrative functions, such as:

- a. financial activities (accounting, budgeting, financial and cash management);
- b. procurement and purchasing functions;
- c. property management functions;
- d. personnel management functions;
- e. payroll functions;
- f. coordinating the resolution of findings arising from audits, reviews, investigations and incident reports;
- g. audit functions;
- h. developing systems and procedures related to these general administrative functions.

These administrative costs can be both personnel and non-personnel, both direct and indirect.

H. Program Eligibility

Proposals must describe recruiting and outreach methods to be engaged for youth ages 16-21 that are currently living at or under 200% of the poverty level and for determining and documenting individual participant eligibility. No more than 20% of the total grant amount can be utilized for youth ages 16-17. If the grantee intends to provide services to youth ages 16-17, the grantee must show in the budget proposal (Section 5.2 (c)), that 80% of the total budget is dedicated to services to youth ages 18-21. The grantee should provide outreach to provide a program that has cultural diversity among the participants. It is the responsibility of the grantee to maintain all documentation regarding program eligibility.

3.2 Participant Eligibility

The grantee shall be responsible for determining the number of youth to be served. Fair consideration will be given to those applicants who offer multiple components including, but not limited to the objectives listed in Section 1.5. It is also understood a smaller number of participants may be served if education stipends and other youth incentives are offered to participants. The purpose of these grants is to provide strategies and programs that meet the needs of disadvantaged youth.

For the purpose of this RFP, **disadvantaged youth** (as mentioned in Section 1.1) is defined as one of the following populations:

- a) **Youth disengaged from the education system** are defined as youth who have been truant for more than 90 days (either in their middle or high school careers/not necessarily consecutive), youth age 18 who have obtained ten credit hours or less, youth ages 16 or 17 with five credit hours or less or youth age 16 and older who have officially withdrawn from the education system.
- b) **Youthful offenders** are defined as youth (male or female) who are within 90 days of release from State or community-based facilities and/or anyone with a criminal record who is residing in an area identified in the grant.

Other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth include, *but may not be limited to*, youth meeting the OWD definition for “Knowledge and Education for Youth Success” (KEYS), such as, youth aging out of foster care, children of incarcerated parents, youth with disabilities, Native American Youth, migrant youth and homeless/runaway youth. (Reference material Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 28-05 and TEGL 3-04).

NOTE: The grantee shall not enroll any youth in a program that is deemed unsuitable based on their previous history (*e.g.* youthful offenders may not suitable for certain healthcare occupations).

Family is defined as two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more of the following categories:

- A. A husband, wife, and dependent children.
- B. A parent(s) or guardian(s) and dependent children.
- C. A husband and wife.

NOTE: An individual with a disability and a major barrier to employment will be considered an individual for determining family size (previously known as family-of-one).

Dependent Children are defined as those children living in a single residence with parent(s) or guardian(s), and who are included in one of the following categories:

- 1. children aged 18 and under,
- 2. children aged 18 to 21 who are not attending school and who are not supporting themselves,*
- 3. children aged 18 to 23 who are attending full-time secondary or post-secondary school and are not supporting themselves,*
- 4. children aged 18 to 23 who are attending part-time secondary or post-secondary school and are not supporting themselves,*
- 5. biological or adoptive children aged 18 or over who are unable to work due to a medically-documented, permanent, physical or mental disability.

NOTE: Dependent children "living in a single residence with parent(s) or guardian(s)" would include children living away from home while attending a post-secondary educational institution, but where permanent residence is the same as the parent(s) or guardian(s). The issue of guardianship concerning dependent children may be determined by decree of court, or may be determined by a state or federal agency which has established or assumed guardianship.

*Not supporting themselves is defined as having a maximum income of \$3200 for the last twelve months. This corresponds to maximum earnings allowable when claiming dependency status for Federal tax purposes.

Individual: A person not meeting the definition of family is considered to be an individual (often known as family-of-one).

3.3 Specifications of Deliverables

The specific services required under any award will be based upon the specific project details, presented in response to locally defined needs and community resources, as provided in the successful proposals. While the specific deliverables for the funded projects will vary, each will conform to the following basic deliverables descriptions and the guidelines provided for each.

A. Innovative Youth Employment/Education Programs

1. Operation of an innovative program which contains an education component leading to a certificate and/or degree along with employment of no less than 20 hours per week.
2. Any certificates and/or degrees with an expected completion date beyond the contract period of June 30, 2009 must show financial support for completion.
3. All education programs must have an employment component attached unless they are considered an apprenticeship program which includes training and wages.
4. All GED tracks must have an employment component attached. In addition, to the employment component once the GED is completed, the grantee would be responsible for identifying an additional education and/or training track that would lead to career growth and self sufficiency.
5. Entrepreneurship Programs must have some type of certification or accreditation.

B. High Growth High Demand Occupations

1. Projects must take into consideration locally defined high growth, high demand occupations.
2. Projects must take into consideration data, such as Labor Market Information (LMI) or other data to support the locally defined high growth, high demand occupation
3. Projects may take into consideration information from local regional labor market analysts regarding regional occupations.

C. Business Involvement

1. Data and/or letters of commitments from employers for the intended population of this grant. Letters of commitment detailing employment opportunities, internships and/or mentorship for youth will support funded projects.
2. Employers will provide input into determining reasonable training duration for youth employment opportunities based on the job descriptions.
3. Youth wages may be subsidized (paid to youth) for all employment of 32 hours or more per week.
4. Information on career paths with certain employers and how they lead to self-sufficiency will be used in project design.

D. Local Advisory Council

A council of at least five individuals, the majority of whom are business community members, will act as an advisory council.

E. Training Commitment

1. The grantee must demonstrate locally defined training based on the locally defined high growth, high demand occupations.
2. The grantee shall determine what short term training would be suitable for the target population which would lead to a degree or certificate.
3. The grantee shall be responsible for determining locally defined self sufficiency and maintain training records.
4. The grantee will determine training stipends based on the training and/or education components. Training stipends may only be issued for individuals/students in training/education of at least twelve (12) hours per week. For post secondary education twelve (12) hours is defined as twelve (12) credit hours as defined by the institution of higher education based on a semester or quarter. For GED, vocational and trade types of education twelve (12) hours is defined as twelve clock hours per week.
5. Specific training modules must be identified based on the target population and career path.

F. Reporting

The grantee will be responsible for working with a vendor identified by ODJFS for the purposes of training data. Reporting elements are identified in Appendix 1. to this RFP.

G. Administrative

The grantee shall demonstrate administrative cost not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount. See definition of administrative costs in section 3.1, letter G. If the WIB is only serving as the fiscal agent they are entitled to no more than 3% of the administrative dollars with the remaining 7% provided to the partners.

H. Program Eligibility

1. The grantee shall demonstrate recruiting methods for youth 16-21. The grantee shall maintain all files to document eligibility.
2. Youth shall be eligible if their family (family is defined below) income is at 200% or below of the federal poverty level.
3. No more than 20% of grant can be utilized for youth age 16-17.

3.4 Selected Grantee Compensation Structure

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has a Subgrant Agreement in place with each Workforce Investment Area in Ohio. This agreement gives the WIA Areas the authority to legally draw and expend WIA funds. With this RFP, the WIA Area fiscal agents will be acting in the same capacity as spelled out in their existing Subgrant agreements. The funds awarded as result of this RFP will be a uniquely identified funding stream that the Areas can report expenditures to and draw funds against, i.e. Youth Settlement, Rapid Response, BRAC, etc.

The ODJFS Office of Fiscal Services will issue “notice of awards” through allocation letters to each selected project and fiscal agent that specify the purpose of the funding and any deliverables associated with the funding. Funds shall be allocated via an Allocation Letter(s) from ODJFS to the Subrecipient. Costs incurred under this agreement may not exceed the amount allocated by the Allocation Letters.

WIA Areas will be required to report accruals, expenditures and submit cash flow forecasts similar to the existing WIA dollars in order to draw cash to reimburse themselves or other entities that are providing direct services to the target youth population. The WIA Areas will utilize the CORE system to complete all mandatory reporting requirements. In addition, WIA Areas and Subgrantees may be required to provide detailed quarterly budget and expense data to the Office of Workforce Development.

Commencement of expenditures is subject to the issuance of the allocation letters. Funds under this Subgrant are based in whole or in part upon federal funding. Should the external source of the funding be terminated or reduced for reasons beyond the control of ODJFS or the State of Ohio, this Subgrant shall terminate as of the date the funding expires without further obligation of ODJFS or the State of Ohio. Additionally, pursuant to R.C. Section 126.07, availability of funds is contingent on appropriations made by the Ohio General Assembly. If the Ohio General Assembly fails at any time to continue funding ODJFS for the funds described in this Subgrant, the Subgrant is terminated as of the date funding expires without further obligation of ODJFS or the State of Ohio.

SECTION IV. CONDITIONS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Through this section of the RFP, ODJFS notifies grantees seeking award of a contract of certain conditions and requirements which may affect their eligibility or willingness to participate in any procurement (RFP, RLB, etc.) process; or their eligibility for award; and of requirements that would be in effect should they be awarded funding.

4.1 Interview

Grantees submitting proposals may be required to participate in an in-depth interview as part of the evaluation process. The interview, if necessary, may include participants from ODJFS and/or other state or county agency staff or other representatives it may appoint, as appropriate. ODJFS reserves the right to select from responding grantees for interviews and may not interview all grantees submitting proposals. The grantee shall bear all costs of any scheduled interview.

4.2 Start Work Date

The selected grantee must be able to begin work no later than seven (7) working days after the time funds are encumbered and approved by the Office of Budget & Management. The selected grantee will be notified by the ODJFS project manager when work may begin. **Any work begun by the grantee prior to this notification will NOT be reimbursable by ODJFS.**

4.3 Proposal Costs

Costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal are to be borne by the grantee, and ODJFS will not contribute in any way to the costs of the preparation. Any costs associated with interviews will be borne by the grantee and will not be ODJFS’ responsibility (see Section 4.2, above).

4.4 Trade Secrets Prohibition; Public Information Disclaimer

Grantees are prohibited from including any trade secret information as defined in ORC 1333.61 in their proposals in response to any ODJFS RFP, RLB or other procurement efforts. ODJFS shall consider all proposals voluntarily submitted in response to any ODJFS RFP (or etc.) to be free of trade secrets and such proposals shall, in their entirety, be made a part of the public record.

All proposals and any other documents submitted to ODJFS in response to this RFP shall become the property of ODJFS. This RFP and, after formal announcement by ODJFS of the results of this RFP project (e.g., notices provided to responding grantees regarding grantee selection, notice of project cancellation, etc.), any proposals submitted in response to the RFP are deemed to be public records pursuant to R.C. 149.43. For purposes of this section, “proposal” shall mean both the technical and the proposal budgets submitted by the grantee, any attachments, addenda, appendices, or sample products.

Any proposals submitted in response to this or any ODJFS RFP which make claims of trade secret information shall be disqualified from consideration immediately upon determination that such unallowable claim has been made.

4.5 Public Release of Records

Public release of any evaluation or monitoring reports funded under this agreement will be made only by ODJFS. Prior to public release of such reports, ODJFS must have at least a 30-day period for review and comment.

4.6 Confidentiality

All contracts will require that the contractor maintain the confidentiality of information and records which state and federal laws, rules, and regulations require to be kept confidential.

4.7 Ethical & Conflict of Interest Requirements

- A. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract shall promise or give to any ODJFS employee anything of value that is of such character as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the employee with respect to his or her duties;
- B. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract shall solicit any ODJFS employee to violate any of the conduct requirements for employees;
- C. Any contractor acting on behalf of ODJFS shall refrain from activities which could result in violations of ethics and/or conflicts of interest. Any contractor or potential contractor who violates the requirements and prohibitions defined here or of Section 102.04 of the ORC is subject to termination of the contract or refusal by ODJFS to enter into a contract; and
- D. ODJFS employees and contractors who violate Sections 102.03, 102.04 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the ORC may be prosecuted for criminal violations.

4.8 Health Insurance Portability & Accessibility Act (HIPAA) Requirements

As a condition of receiving a contract from ODJFS, the contractor, and any subcontractor(s), will be required to comply with 42 U.S.C. Sections 1320d through 1320d-8, and to implement regulations at 45 C.F.R. Section 164.502 (e) and Sections 164.504 (e) regarding disclosure of protected health information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. Protected Health Information (PHI) is information received by the contractor from or on behalf of ODJFS that meets the definition of PHI as defined by HIPAA and the regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Health & Human Services, specifically 45 CFR 164.501 and any amendments thereto. The selected grantee can reasonably anticipate HIPAA language in the contract that results from this RFP.

In the event of a material breach of contractor obligations under this section, ODJFS may at its option terminate the contract according to provisions within the contract for termination.

4.9 Waiver of Minor Proposal Errors

ODJFS may, at its sole discretion, waive minor errors or omissions in grantees' technical and/or proposal budgets/forms when those errors do not unreasonably obscure the meaning of the content.

4.10 Proposal Clarifications

ODJFS reserves the right to request clarifications from grantees of any information in their technical and/or proposal budgets/forms, and may request such clarification as it deems necessary at any point in the proposal review process.

4.11 Unresolved Findings for Recovery (R.C. 9.24)

ORC Section 9.24 prohibits ODJFS from awarding a contract to any entity against whom the Auditor of State has issued a finding for recovery, if the finding for recovery is "unresolved" at the time of award. By submitting a proposal, the grantee warrants that it is not now, and will not become, subject to an "unresolved" finding for recovery under R.C. 9.24 prior to the award of any contract arising out of this RFP, without notifying ODJFS of such finding. ODJFS will review the Auditor of State's website prior to completion of evaluations of proposals submitted pursuant to this RFP. ODJFS will not evaluate a proposal from any grantee whose name, or the name of any of the subcontractors proposed by the grantee, appears on the website of the Auditor of the State of Ohio as having an "unresolved" finding for recovery.

4.12 Grantee Selection Restriction

Any grantee deemed not responsible, or submitting a proposal deemed not to be responsive to the terms of this RFP, shall not be awarded the resulting contract.

SECTION V. PROPOSAL FORMAT & SUBMISSION

5.1 Proposal Submission Information

ODJFS requires proposal submissions in both paper and electronic format. The proposal must be prepared and submitted in accordance with instructions found in this Section. The proposal submission

must be comprised of **seven paper copies (one signed original and six copies)** and one CD-ROM copy of the entire proposal package. The CD-ROM must be labeled with the grantee's name, the RFP number, and the proposal submission date or proposal due-date, at minimum.

The grantees' total proposal submissions (including all required copies) must be received by ODJFS complete no later than 3:00 p.m. on **Friday, December 7, 2007**. Faxes or e-mailed submissions will not be accepted. **Proposals must be addressed to:**

**Office of Contracts & Acquisitions
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
ATTN: RFP/RLB Unit**

All original proposals must contain all the information and documents specified in Section 5.2, "Format for Organization of the Proposal." All copies (both paper and CD-ROM) of the original proposal must include copies of ALL information, documents, and pages in the original proposal. The CD-ROM will be used by ODJFS for archiving purposes and for fulfillment of Public Records Requests and failure to include them or to properly label them may, at ODJFS discretion, result in the rejection of the grantee from any consideration.

All proposal submissions must be received, complete, at the above address, via mail or hand delivery by the above date and time. Materials received separately from a grantee's proposal submission (*e.g.*, letters of recommendation from past customers of the grantee's services) will not be added to the proposal nor considered in the review and scoring process. Materials received after the date and time as stated above will not be included in any previous submissions, nor will they be considered. ODJFS is not responsible for proposals incorrectly addressed or for proposals delivered to any ODJFS location other than the address specified above. No confirmation of mailed proposals can be provided.

For hand delivery on the due date, grantees are to allow sufficient time for downtown parking considerations, as well as for security checks at both the lobby of the Rhodes State Office Tower (address as stated above) and again on the 31st Floor. All proposals received on the due date by the Office of Contracts & Acquisitions, on the 31st Floor of the Rhodes Tower. **ODJFS is not responsible for any proposals delivered to any address other than the address provided above.**

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the grantee of the conditions contained in this RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between ODJFS and the grantee selected.

5.2 Format for Organization of the Proposal

A. Overall Proposal Organization

A sample Technical Proposal Score Sheet is provided as **Attachment B**. of this RFP. **Grantees are strongly encouraged to use the Score Sheet to check their proposals for quality, compliance, and completeness prior to submission.**

The grantee's Technical Proposal must contain the following components (organized in five (5) primary tabs and divided into sub-tabs) as described below. Any other

information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to a specific RFP section number/letter must be provided as an appendix to the proposal and so marked as an additional tab. ODJFS reserves the right not to review submitted appendices which includes information/materials not required in the RFP. All pages beyond Tab 1 shall be sequentially numbered.

Grantees must organize their Technical Proposals in the following order:

Tab 1 A cover letter from the WIB submitting the proposal and letters of cooperation and support from all partners listed in the proposal.

Tab 2 Grantee Experience & Qualifications

Sub-Tab 2a. Mandatory Grantee Qualifications (Section 2.1,)

Sub-Tab 2b. Organizational Experience & Capabilities (Section 2.2)

Sub-Tab 2c. Staff Experience and Capabilities (Section 2.3)

Tab 3 Scope of Work and Specifications of Deliverables - A narrative presentation, no more than twelve pages in length, describing how each of the Scope of Work items and Deliverables would be managed.

Sub-Tab 3a. Scope of Work/Deliverable A

Sub-Tab 3b. Scope of Work/Deliverable B

Sub-Tab 3c. Scope of Work/Deliverable C

Sub-Tab 3d. Scope of Work/Deliverable D

Sub-Tab 3e. Scope of Work/Deliverable E

Sub-Tab 3f. Scope of Work/Deliverable F

Sub-Tab 3g. Scope of Work/Deliverable G

Sub-Tab 3h. Scope of Work/Deliverable H

Tab 4 Participant Eligibility

Tab 5 Program Budget - to be presented using the Proposed Project Budget Form, provided as **Attachment C. to this RFP.**

Tab 6 Optional Grantee Attachments or Appendices

All pages in the Technical Proposal must be sequentially numbered, with the exception of Tab 1 contents.

B. Proposal Details

The grantee's proposal must contain the following components, at minimum. It is mandatory that grantee proposals be organized in the following order and that wherever appropriate, sections/portions of the proposal make reference by section number/letter to those RFP requirements to which they correspond.

1. (Tab 1)

WIB's Cover Letter and Partners' Letters

The proposal must include letters from the WIB submitting the proposal and from each partner to the project, as described in **Section 2.1**, of this RFP.

**2. (Tab 2)
Grantee Qualifications**

a. Mandatory Grantee Qualifications (Sub-Tab 2 a.)

The grantee must include information on the mandatory experience of the grantee, as described in **Section 2.1**, of this RFP. This information must include the identification of the lead agency, of a qualified project manager, a description of the roles of all partners in the proposed project, and copies of letters of cooperation and support from each of those partners. Tab 2 should also contain copies of signed W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification or other documents providing the partner's EIN as evidence of its legal ability to operate. (The W-9 Form is provided as Attachment A to this RFP.)

b. Organizational Experience and Capabilities (Sub-Tab 2 b.)

The grantee should include information on the relevant experience of the proposed direct services provider(s) and all prior experience relevant to this RFP, as described in **Section 2.2**, of this RFP. Additionally, each partner's experience with the targeted youth should be described.

c. Staff Experience and Capabilities (Sub-Tab 2 c.)

Under this section the grantee is required to include resumes, education, experience, and any other evidence the qualifications of the Project Manager, a Case Manager, and of any other key personnel for this project, and describe any appropriate supplemental and support staff (including any subcontractors) to be involved, as described in **Section 2.3**, of this RFP.

**3. (Tab 3)
Scope of Work & Specifications of Deliverables**

This section should describe in detail how the grantee proposes to address each of the responsibilities and tasks of the scope of work described in Sections 3.1, Scope of Work and in Section 3.3, Specifications of Deliverables, of this RFP. The responses must address each element separately.

**4. (Tab 4)
Participant Eligibility**

This section should, at minimum, identify the project's targeted youth population(s) and the number expected to be served.

**5. (Tab 5)
Program Budget**

The program budget provided in the proposal will be the prices in effect throughout the contract period, including any renewal contracts, as described in Section 1.10 of this RFP, Time Frames & Funding Source.

Grant requests exceeding \$250,000 must show regionalization. Regionalization is defined as organizational partnerships that span over two or more Workforce Investment Areas and/or counties.

Grantees are to use the format in **Attachment C.**, Program Budget Form, to submit their proposed project budget for SFY 08, 09 (etc.). At the grantee's discretion, additional documentation may also be included with the completed Attachment C., as explanatory information, but when making the grantee selections and when executing the contract, ODJFS will consider only the dollar amounts displayed on the Program Budget Form.

In calculating their total proposed cost, grantees must consider any and all costs resulting from the entire scope of work and all deliverables listed in Sections 3.1 and 3.3 of this RFP, as well as all program costs, primary and incidental, necessary to complete all program activities (whether explicitly identified by ODJFS in this RFP or not).

**6. (Tab 6)
(Optional) Grantee Attachments or Appendices**

C. IMPORTANT – GRANTEE DISQUALIFIERS FOR PROPOSAL ERRORS:

Any trade secret, proprietary, or confidential information (as defined in Section 4.5 of this RFP) found anywhere in a grantee's proposal shall result in immediate disqualification of that grantee's proposal.

SECTION VI. CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION & SELECTION

6.1 Scoring of Proposals

ODJFS will contract with those grantees that best demonstrate the ability to meet requirements as specified in this RFP. Grantees submitting a response will be sorted by the geographic categories of urban, rural, and 'other' and then evaluated within each of those three categories based on the capacity and experience demonstrated in their technical proposal and project budget. All proposals will be reviewed and scored by a Proposal Review Team (PRT), comprised of staff from ODJFS, Office of Workforce Development and their designees. Grantees should not assume that the review team members are familiar with any current or past work activities with ODJFS. Proposals containing assumptions, lack of sufficient detail, poor organization, and lack of proofreading and unnecessary use of self-promotional claims will be evaluated accordingly. PRT members will be required to sign disclosure forms to establish that they have no personal or financial interest in the outcome of the proposal review and contractor selection process.

Selection of the grantee will be based upon the criteria specified in Sections II, III, IV, and V. of this RFP. Any proposals not meeting the requirements contained in those sections of this RFP will not be

scored or may be held pending receipt of required clarifications. The PRT reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this request. The review team may waive minor defects that are not material when no prejudice will result to the rights of any grantee or to the public. In scoring the proposals, ODJFS will score proposals, sorted by the geographic category in which they contend, in three phases:

A. Phase I. Review—Initial Qualifying Criteria:

In order to be fully reviewed and scored, proposals submitted must pass the following Phase I. Review. **Any “no” for the listed Phase I. criteria will eliminate a proposal from further consideration.**

1. Was the proposal received by the deadline as specified in Sections 1.6 and 5.1?
2. Did the grantee submit seven (7) paper copies and one electronic copy of their proposal, labeled: **“PROPOSAL FOR WIA Youth Employment Services Project Grants #: R-89-15-0621 SUBMITTED BY [GRANTEE’S NAME HERE]”**?
3. All other RFP-specific mandatory requirements as described on the Technical Proposal Score Sheet (provided as Attachment B. to this RFP)?

B. Phase II. Review—Criteria for Scoring the Technical Proposal:

The PRT will then score those qualifying technical proposals, not eliminated in Phase I. Review, by assessing how well the grantee meets the requirements as specified in Sections II, III, V, and VI. of this RFP. Using the score sheet for Phase II scoring (see **Attachment B.** of this RFP for specific evaluation criteria), the PRT will read, review, discuss and reach consensus on the final technical score for each qualifying technical proposal.

A maximum of 480 points will be awarded for the Technical Proposal. A technical proposal must achieve a total of at least 330 points (a score which represents that the grantee can successfully perform the resulting contractual duties) out of the possible 480 points to qualify for continued consideration. Any proposal which does not meet the minimum required technical proposal points will be disqualified from any further consideration and its proposed budget will not be considered.

All Phase II technical proposal evaluation criteria will be scored according to the following scale, based on a proposed plan’s ability to meet ODJFS needs. The Technical Proposal Score Sheet (see **Attachment B.**) uses the following point values for rating each requirement.

0	6	8	10
Does Not Meet Requirement	Partially Meets	Meets Requirement	Exceeds Requirement

Technical Performance Scoring Definitions:

“Does Not Meet Requirement”- A particular RFP requirement was not addressed in the grantee’s proposal, **Score: 0**

“Partially Meets Requirement”-Grantee proposal demonstrates some attempt at meeting a particular RFP requirement, but that attempt falls below acceptable level, **Score: 6**

“Meets Requirement”-Grantee proposal fulfills a particular RFP requirement in all material respects, potentially with only minor, non-substantial deviation, **Score: 8**

“Exceeds Requirement”-Grantee proposal fulfills a particular RFP requirement in all material respects, and offers some additional level of quality in excess of ODJFS expectations, **Score: 10**

IMPORTANT: Before submitting a proposal to ODJFS in response to this RFP, grantees are strongly encouraged to use the Technical Proposal Score Sheet (**Attachment B.**) and the above technical performance scoring information to review their proposals for completeness, compliance and quality.

All the remaining qualified Technical Proposals will proceed to the next level of review, which is consideration of proposed budget. Any other proposals will be disqualified from further consideration.

C. Phase III.—Criteria for Considering the Proposed Project Budget

The Project Budgets for those proposals earning at least the technical quality (Phase II) score of 330 points will then be reviewed by ODJFS. Each such budget will be reviewed for adequate and appropriate match; any proposal budgets not demonstrating compliance with the specified match requirements will be disqualified.

At this writing, it is not possible to predict the number or quality of proposals that may be submitted in response to this RFP. While ODJFS is under no obligation to award more grants than those specified for each geographic category (see Section 1.3), ODJFS reserves the right to award more grants, if additional proposals are found through the technical scoring process to be of merit and if available funding exceeds the budget requests of those highest scoring projects found to fulfill the geographic category requirements.

If after ODJFS has recommended for funding at the full amount requested those twelve quality projects necessary to meet the geographic criteria established for this program, and additional funding remains available for this program, ODJFS may at its discretion, award additional grants according to the highest scoring remaining proposals until all available funding is committed. ODJFS reserves the right to make any or all awards in amounts less than the amounts requested in proposals, if, in the sole opinion of ODJFS it is in the best interest of the State and of this program’s goals to award a greater number of grants but at lower amounts. ODJFS reserves the right to negotiate over any items in any proposed project budget if any costs are deemed excessive or inappropriate.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As stated in Section 1.3, Award Distribution, proposals are to present project budgets that would devote at least 75% of the grant to youth disengaged from the educational system or youthful offenders and should plan on no more than 25% of the project’s budget for other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth. However, after award

recommendations are made to meet the geographic criteria established for this program, funding remains available and any proposed projects for serving the needs of other at-risk or hard-to-serve youth are found to be especially promising, ODJFS reserves the right to award additional funding (*i.e.*, in excess of the 25% proposal maximum) for that project.

6.2 Review Process Caveats

ODJFS may, at its sole discretion, waive minor errors or omissions in technical proposals and/or project budget forms when those errors do not unreasonably obscure the meaning of the content.

ODJFS reserves the right to request clarifications from grantees to any information in their Technical and/or budget proposals/forms, and may request such clarification as it deems necessary at any point in the proposal review process. Any such requests for proposal clarification when initiated by ODJFS, and verbal or written response to those requests, shall not be considered a violation of the communication prohibitions contained in Section 1.9 of this RFP. Such communications are expressly permitted when initiated by ODJFS, but are at the sole discretion of ODJFS.

Should ODJFS determine a need for interviewing project representatives prior to making a final selection, results to interview questions shall be scored in a manner similar to the process described in Section 6.1, Scoring of Proposals, above. Such scored results may be either added to those grantees' proposal scores, or will replace certain criteria scores, at the discretion of ODJFS. The standards for scoring the interviews and the method used for considering the results of the interviews shall be applied consistently for all grantees participating in the interview process for that RFP.

ODJFS reserves the right to negotiate for adjustments to their proposals should ODJFS determine, for any reason, to adjust the scope of the project for which this RFP is released. Such communications are not violations of any communications prohibition, and are expressly permitted when initiated by ODJFS, but are at the sole discretion of ODJFS.

Any proposal deemed not to be responsive to the terms of this RFP, shall not be awarded the contract.

6.3 Final Grantee Recommendations

The PRT will recommend to the Director of ODJFS those technically qualified grantees offering the proposals most responsive to program needs, objectives, and requirements., as determined by the processes established in this RFP.

SECTION VII. PROTEST PROCEDURE

7.1 Protests

Any potential, or actual, applicant objecting to the award of a contract resulting from the issuance of this RFP may file a protest of the award of the contract, or any other matter relating to the process of soliciting the proposals. Such a protest must comply with the following guidelines:

- A. A protest may be filed by a prospective or actual applicant objecting to the award of a contract resulting from this RFP. The protest shall be in writing and shall contain the following information:
1. The name, address, and telephone number of the protestor;
 2. The name and number of the RFP being protested;
 3. A detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds for the protest, including copies of any relevant documents;
 4. A request for a ruling by ODJFS;
 5. A statement as to the form of relief requested from ODJFS; and
 6. Any other information the protestor believes to be essential to the determination of the factual and legal questions at issue in the written protest.
- B. A timely protest shall be considered by ODJFS, if it is received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services, within the following periods:
1. A protest based on alleged improprieties in the issuance of the RFP or any other event preceding the closing date for receipt of proposals which are apparent or should be apparent prior to the closing date for receipt of proposals shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. the closing date for receipt of proposals, as specified in Section 1.6, Anticipated Procurement Time Table, of this RFP.
 2. If the protest relates to the announced intent to award a contract, the protest shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. of the *eighth (8th) calendar day* after the issuance of the Letter of Intent to Award the contract.
- C. An untimely protest may be considered by ODJFS if ODJFS determines that the protest raises issues significant to the department's procurement system. An untimely protest is one received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services after the time periods set forth in Item B. of this section.
- D. All protests must be filed at the following location:
- Chief Legal Counsel
ODJFS Office of Legal Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-0423
- E. When a timely protest is filed, a contract award shall not proceed until a decision on the protest is issued or the matter is otherwise resolved, unless the Director of ODJFS determines that a delay will severely disadvantage the Department. The grantee(s) who would have been awarded the contract shall be notified of the receipt of the protest.
- F. ODJFS' Office of Legal Services shall issue written decisions on all timely protests and shall notify any grantee who filed an untimely protest as to whether or not the protest will be considered.

7.2 Caveats

ODJFS is under no obligation to issue any allocation letters as a result of this solicitation if, in the opinion of ODJFS and the proposal review team, none of the proposals are responsive to the objectives and needs of the Department. ODJFS reserves the right to not select any grantee should ODJFS decide not to proceed. Changes in this RFP of a material nature will be provided via the agency website. All grantees are responsible for obtaining any such changes without further notice by ODJFS.

SECTION VIII. ATTACHMENTS AND THEIR USES

- A. Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (W-9) Form** *(To be completed & included in proposal packet as specified in Sec. 5.2, B., 1.)*
- B. Technical Proposal Score Sheet** *(For grantee self-evaluation purposes...do not submit)*
- C. Project Budget Form** *(To be completed & included as specified in Sec. 5.2, C.)*

SECTION IX. APPENDICES AND THEIR USES

- 1. Reporting Elements**
- 2. Fiscal Administrative Procedures Letter (FAPL) # 2.**

Thank you for your interest in this project.