

NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010



**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
PY 2009-2010 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA) TITLE I
YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMS**

Issue Date	October 8, 2009
Bidder's Conference <i>Please submit early questions to be addressed at the Bidder's conference via email to the contact person listed below (Subject line: Youth RFP)</i>	Date: Thursday, October 15, 2009 Place: Niagara County Planning, Development & Tourism / Center for Economic Development (formerly Niagara County Industrial Development Agency) Vantage Centre – Suite One 6311 Inducon Corporate Drive Sanborn, NY 14132-9099 Time: 01:00 pm to 03:00 pm
Deadline for submission:	Friday, October 30, 2009 3:00 PM
Award notification date	November 20, 2009
Contract year	January 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 (subject to continued WIA funding)
Contact person	David.See@niagaracounty.com
Website	http://niagarawib.com/RFPs.asp

PREPARED BY:

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
TROTT ONE-STOP CENTER
1001 ELEVENTH STREET
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14301**

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

SPECIAL INFORMATION

The Niagara County WIB reserves the right to modify this RFP or the scope of the program design to any extent necessary to ensure compliance with state and or federal guidelines or subsequent changes. This may occur anytime during implementation of the 2009 or 2010 WIA programs. Therefore, all successful applicants must demonstrate the capability to modify their program design to comply with regulatory changes. In addition, funding decreases (if experienced) may limit or change the amount, scope, or length of contracts.

It is anticipated that, among others, the following areas may be affected if a reauthorization bill is signed:

- 1) Percentage of allocation for in-school and out-of-school youth funds
- 2) Definition of out-of-school youth
- 3) Changes to the performance measures and definitions

All successful applicants must not only demonstrate the capability to modify their program design, but must agree to do so in order to comply with the new state/federal guidelines or regulations, if any, and to be funded through this RFP. This RFP has been designed to comply with the goals and outcomes of current legislation as well as proposed program guidelines.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Part 1: Background and General Information	4
Performance Measures Discussion	12
Part 2: General Information, Compliance and Regulations	16
Part 3: Proposal Specifications	20
Part 4: Evaluation of Proposals, Evaluation Criteria	23
Part 5: Application Package (Items to include in your proposal)	25
Public Notice of RFP	28
Proposal Cover Page	29
Executive Summary / Project Summary	30
Contractor's Qualifications/Assurances Template	31
Ten Elements – Operator's Summary	32
Attachment A1 – A2: Budget Information Pages	33
Attachment B1: Enrollment Schedule – New	35
Attachment B2: Enrollment Schedule – Carry-in	36
Attachment C: Reviewer's Proposal Review Checklist and Comments	37
Attachment D: Review Summary	41
Attachment E: Key Definitions	42
Attachment F: Performance Measures and Goals	46

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

**Part 1:
BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

A. Introduction to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Niagara County Workforce Investment Board

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) has been appointed by the Niagara County Legislature and certified by the Governor of New York State. The local WIB is composed of a majority of representatives of business in the local area, as well as representatives from local educational agencies, labor organizations, community based organizations, economic development agencies, and representatives of mandated One-Stop partners.

The Mission of the Niagara County Workforce Development System is to provide a universally accessible workforce development system that serves our jobseeking customers and our business customers effectively and efficiently. Our vision is to present a seamless service with rapid response to all of the community, and help to improve the economic well-being of individuals and the local economy.

Niagara County Youth Council

The Niagara County Youth Council is a subgroup of the WIB and has been appointed by the Workforce Investment Board with the approval of the Niagara County Legislature. The Youth Council is composed of community residents and leaders who have an interest or expertise in youth issues. The duties of the Youth Council are to develop a local youth plan, recommend local service providers, conduct oversight, and coordinate youth activities that promote academic and employment success for young people in Niagara County.

The Niagara County Youth Council has approved the following mission statement and guiding principles:

To develop a system that provides the right interventions at the right time ensuring Niagara County youth acquire the necessary skills for success in education and employment, and businesses gain a skilled workforce.

Purpose of WIA Youth Funds

On August 7, 1998, President Clinton signed into law the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). The Act replaced the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) with a new workforce system. The implementation of WIA requires, among other things, a systematic approach to youth services that offers a broad range of coordinated services.

Sec. 129 (a)(1) to provide, to eligible youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment services, effective and comprehensive activities, which shall include a variety of options for improving educational and skill competencies and provide effective connections to employers;

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Sec. 129 (a)(2) to ensure on-going mentoring opportunities for eligible youth with adults committed to providing such opportunities;

Sec. 129(a)(3) to provide opportunities for training eligible youth;

Sec. 129 (a)(4) to provide continued supportive services for eligible youth;

Sec. 129(a (5) to provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth; and

Sec. 129(a)(6) to provide opportunities for eligible youth in activities related to leadership development, decision-making, citizenship, and community service.

It is the Niagara County WIB's intent to acquire these services through this RFP in a way that will fulfill the above purposes while assuring that performance goals will also be achieved.

The Niagara County WIB will give priority to *(in no specific order)*:

- programs that stress academic and occupational achievement while attempting to address and resolve issues that are particularly relevant to youth, such as substance abuse, lack of adult guidance/mentoring, low self esteem, pregnancy prevention, leadership development, community involvement, and life/career planning.
- programs that target older, out of school youth.
- programs that can exceed performance measures (statutory and common measures).
- programs that establish strong partnerships with other youth service providers to maximize services at minimum cost.
- programs that leverage other funding resources to provide WIA youth program services.

The WIB does not dictate specific program design or types of providers in order to allow for flexible program design and innovation based on provider experience. The WIB expects that the array of programs recommended for funding represent the Niagara County population in geography and demographics. Successful programs will provide service to the populations that can benefit from, and succeed in WIA funded programs (based on performance measures).

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

WIA Eligibility – Required under WIA legislation

Eligibility for services funded under this RFP is limited to low-income youth 14-21 years old, residing in Niagara 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
- Offender (is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process)
- Pregnant or parenting
- Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment

Individuals, age 18 and older, may also receive adult WIA One Stop services. Eligible youth 18-21 may be co-enrolled in both youth and adult funded programs.

Note: High school graduates, ages 18-21, who have adequate basic skills should be referred to the One Stop System and should not be served with WIA youth funds.

A minimum of 50% of Niagara County's WIA youth funds should be spent on out of school youth. Proposed legislation would likely mandate a minimum percentage of 50%.

Coordination of Resources/Collaboration

Because WIA youth funds are limited, and have restrictive eligibility criteria, applicants are encouraged to secure additional funds or collaborate with additional agencies. This will maximize the number of youth who can be served through the youth system, and maximize the quality of services provided to youth.

It is recommended (and may be required in future years) that applicants apply as a collaborative which includes partners from:

- a local education agency
- a business/industry partner
- a community-based organization, social service agency, public housing agency or other related program or consortium

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Definitions:

Target Population

For the purpose of this RFP, a **youth** is described as an individual who:

Is a Resident of the Niagara County Workforce Investment Area or receiving full-time residential services in the Niagara County Workforce Investment Area and is:

- A United States Citizen or eligible to work in the United States; **and**
- A male (if applicable) who meets the requirements of Section 3 of the Military Selective Services Act; **and**
- Not less than age 14 and not more than age 21; **and**
- A *low-income* individual as defined below; **and**
 - *Cash welfare recipient*
 - *Income below poverty guideline or 70% lower living standard*
 - *Food Stamp recipient*
 - *Homeless*
 - *Foster Child*
 - *Disabled (an individual is considered a 'Family of one' and income includes applicant only)*
- An individual who is **one or more** of the following:
 1. Deficient in basic literacy skills, defined as:
 - *Computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below grade level 8.9; or*
 - *Is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family or in society.*
 2. A school dropout;
 3. Homeless, or runaway, or a foster child;
 4. Pregnant or a parent;
 5. An offender;
 6. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. (*Locally defined sixth barrier*)*

***Local definition of the sixth barrier:**

- a) Uses English as a second language
- b) Has a past or present substance abuse problem
- c) Is part of a family who receives public assistance (Temporary Assistance, Food Stamps Medicaid, HEAP, SSI or child welfare services)
- d) Living in a single parent home
- e) Not living with a parent (lives with other family members or friends)
- f) One or more years behind age appropriate grade level (one or more grade levels below the level appropriate for youth's age)

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

- g) Has poor work history (ages 18+) (*Has not maintained unsubsidized employment with the same employer for 6 Months or more*)
- h) Has no unsubsidized work history (ages 14-17)
- i) Is attending a school which receives funding from Title I of the *Improving America's Schools Act*
- j) Has a disability
- k) Parents or guardians are unemployed, underemployed, or not in the labor force
- l) Is living in public housing or receives rent subsidy
- m) Is living in a household with 3 or more children
- n) Has a parent who is a seasonal or migrant farm worker

In School Youth and Out of School Youth

In School Youth Eligible youth that are enrolled in an educational program such as middle or high school. Youth that are enrolled in GED classes provided by an educational institution are considered in school youth. In-school youth generally need to remain active participants until they graduate, in order to obtain positive outcomes.

Target groups in this category that will increase performance outcomes are:

- Graduating Seniors – including those enrolled in Technical and Career Education
- Youth completing alternative school programs
- Foster children

Out of School Youth An individual who:

- Is an eligible youth who is a school dropout; or
- Is an eligible youth who has either graduated from high school or who holds a GED, but is basic skill deficient, unemployed or underemployed.
- Is enrolled in a post-secondary (adult job training or college) program and is basic skill deficient.

*From **TEGL 17-05**, Attachment B: (excerpted from http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL17-05_AttachB.pdf)*

Out-of-School Youth – An eligible youth who is a school dropout, or who has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but, is basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed (WIA section 101(33)). For reporting purposes, this term includes all youth except: (i) those who are attending any school and have not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or (ii) those who are attending post-secondary school and are not basic skills deficient.

Disabled Youth

Sec. 101(17)(A) In general.--The term "individual with a disability" means an individual with any disability (as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102)).

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Target populations in this category that will likely lead to increased performance outcomes are:

- *Youth progressing from juvenile justice systems*
- *GED graduates or GED students who have completed their program and are waiting to be tested*
- *Young TANF mothers*
- *Court-ordered non-custodial parents*
- *ESL students and immigrant groups*
- *Returning Guardsmen*
- *Recent high school graduates without focus*
- *College students (basic skill deficient) with financial issues*

Note: The term "school dropout" is defined as an individual who is no longer attending any school and who has not received a secondary school diploma or GED.

Up to 5% of youth served may be those above income guidelines, if they are one or more of the following:

- School drop-outs
- Basic skills deficient, 1 or more grade levels below the level appropriate to the youth's age
- Pregnant or parenting
- Individuals with disabilities
- Homeless or runaway youth
- Offenders
- Have a past or present substance abuse problem (*Those with the locally defined barrier to employment*)

Note: Each program enrollment is based on documentation for income eligibility, residence, age, selective service registration status, citizenship or eligibility to work, and barriers to work. Examples of acceptable documentation include copies of tax returns; pay stubs; or SSI, SSD, and/or DSS documents.

Required Program Elements

WIA legislation lists 10 program elements that must be provided by WIA youth programs. Each participant need not receive all ten elements, however each program funded under WIA must make the following services available to youth participants. Programs have the discretion to determine what specific services will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. Bidders are responsible for ensuring that all ten (10) elements are accessible to all enrolled youth, as needed, either directly in-house or through subcontractors, or leveraged agreements.

Which of these 10 elements will be accessed by WIA youth participants will depend upon the needs and outcome goals documented in the Individual Service Strategy (a written plan of long- and short-term goals addressing educational, occupational or vocational, and personal support service

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

needs). If any of these 10 elements are provided outside the bidder's organization, bidders must have clear processes in place for determining how youth are referred to these services, how services and related youth progress are tracked, and how leveraged resources are identified and managed.

10 Required WIA Program Elements

1. **Tutoring**, study skills training, and instruction leading to post secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies.
2. **Alternative secondary school services.**
3. **Summer employment opportunities**, for in-school youth must be directly related to academic and occupational learning.
4. **Paid and unpaid work experiences**, including internships and job shadowing.
5. **Occupational skills training**, development of primary occupational skills to perform tasks and technical functions required by specific occupational fields. Instruction in job specific and basic skills in a specific job or industry should be related to local labor market demand. Bidders must make every effort to utilize other funding sources to pay for occupational skills training (e.g. Pell grants and other aid available through community and technical schools/colleges, and WIA adult resources for older youth).
6. **Leadership development opportunities**, which may include such activities as the development of positive social behavior and soft skills, decision-making, teamwork, workplace skills as well as other related activities.
7. **Adult mentoring** that may occur both during and after program participation.
8. **Comprehensive guidance and counseling**, including drug and alcohol abuse and/or dependency counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth.
9. **Supportive services** that may include linkages to community services and/or assistance with transportation, child care, housing, scholarships, appropriate work attire and work-related tools, cell phone minutes, retention in school or work, and other incentives designed to promote positive performance outcomes and encourage follow-up.
10. **Follow-up services** (*must be for at least 12 months after program participation*)
The types of services provided must be based on the needs of the individual. Bidders are encouraged to develop partnerships with other youth programs and to leverage additional funding to support follow up services. Examples of follow up services may include: leadership development, supportive services, regular contact with the youth's employer, which would include addressing post-employment issues, work-related peer support groups, and adult mentoring.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Program Components

It is expected that the following components will be integrated into the program design.

1. **Recruitment-** Contractors are responsible for the recruitment of applicants. Niagara County Employment & Training will assist contractors in recruitment. The intent is to use WIA funds to serve youth who would benefit from year-round service, and otherwise have no access to comprehensive services.
2. **Case Management-** Effective case management is essential to providing a customized menu of programs and services for each youth. Service continuity, referral and integration are either initiated or implemented in the case management process. Case management must be addressed in the proposal, describing who will have the responsibility for this, and how it is expected to occur.
3. **Intake/Eligibility Determination-** Under WIA legislation, all youth must meet eligibility guidelines as previously identified in this RFP. Certification of eligibility for all WIA funded programs must be completed prior to enrollment. Individual certification includes specific documentation such as birth certificates, social security cards, paycheck stubs, and/or school records. Niagara County Employment & Training will certify eligibility for all program participants. Participants must be certified eligible for the program before enrollment or services begin.
4. **Orientation-**All participants must receive information on the full services available through the youth program system.
5. **Assessment-** Each participant must be provided with an objective assessment as described previously in this RFP.
6. **Individual Service Strategy-**A written plan of long- and short-term goals addressing educational, occupational or vocational, and personal support service needs. The ISS must be age-appropriate, developed with each participant, and **linked to targeted performance outcomes for each youth**. The ISS must be regularly reviewed and updated as changes occur in employment goals, barriers, and program services or support services needs.
7. **Referrals-** Programs are encouraged to link and share information with other youth-serving organizations. If there are youth requesting services who cannot be certified as eligible under WIA funding, the contractor will be expected to make and document efforts to help the youth secure other appropriate services.
8. **Collaboration-** Contractors will be expected to engage in partnerships to provide resources and services to youth. The provider will be expected to work closely with the Niagara County One-Stop Service Providers, the entities receiving WIA funds to service adults. Specifically, programs will be required to provide a seamless transition to the One-Stop system, where appropriate.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

9. **Academic Remediation Services** - In order to assist participating youth in both academic and occupational success, services must have a strong emphasis on academic skill gains. All programs must provide academic remediation services to assist in skills gains, and have the capability to utilize instruments that identify skills gains.

10. **Employer Connections**- Connections to employers are essential in the creation of a system of providers that can effectively assist youth to become highly skilled and employable. These connections should lead to placements in employment as well as meaningful exposure to the world of work with resulting measurable skill increases. Bidders are also encouraged to leverage employer support in terms of leveraged funds for training or wages, staff, or operational needs related to training including space, etc.

Performance Measures

The United States Department of Labor has released a series of common measures to be implemented by all DOL funded programs. These common measures will be tracked and reported:

ETA Common Youth Measures

1. Placement in Employment or Education
2. Attainment of a Degree or Certificate (note: see definition of certificate; it is not the same as credential)
3. Literacy and Numeracy Gains*

NOTE: Pre- and Post- Testing to measure Literacy and Numeracy through the TABE test will be required of all participants.

Attachment F gives a detailed explanation of how all of these measures are calculated.

Common Measures will be reported. Program design will be assessed to ensure the ability to successfully meet Common Measures, and this assessment will be used as a major factor in judging the funding of proposals. Contractors will be responsible for attainment of the measures. System Indicators have also been set as measures by the State of New York, and will be considered in judging funding of proposals.

*The literacy and numeracy gains indicator measures the increase in the skills of participants through a common assessment tool administered at program entry and regular intervals thereafter. This measure pertains to participants who are basic skill deficient based on pre-test results, and who are out-of-school. In-school youth are excluded from this measure.

Mandatory Pre- and Post- Testing to Measure Literacy and Numeracy Gains

A pre-test must occur within 60 days following the date of first youth program service for all youth participants. It is allowable to use pre-tests that are administered up to six months prior to the date of

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

first WIA youth service, if such pre-test scores are available. If prior pre-tests are not available, administration of the pre-test must occur within 60 days following the date of first youth program service.

A post-test is required for all youth that are basic skill deficient. The post-test must be administered at least once by the end of one year following the individual's enrollment date.

To measure the increase in skills of individuals, programs must use an assessment procedure comprised of a standardized test or a performance assessment with standardized scoring protocols. The local area will use the TABE. The TABE was chosen to meet the following requirements: (1) The same assessment tool is administered to the participant for pre-testing and post-testing; (2) The assessment tool and its scores must crosswalk directly to the educational functioning levels so that educational gains can be reported in terms of increase in one or more ABE or ESL levels; and (3) Test must be administered in a standardized manner throughout the jurisdiction (i.e. used consistently and reliably across programs and produces observable results.)

Tests must be administered to individuals with disabilities (as defined in 29 CFR 37.4) with reasonable accommodations, as appropriate.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) measures the success of services based on a set of required performance measures which successful proposals must use as a foundation for program design. Bidders will be held accountable for the performance outcomes of participants enrolled in their programs.

Proposals must include a plan for the twelve-month follow-up process. This could be accomplished through collaborative partnerships.

Each program objective and activity must be linked to the relevant performance measure(s). The WIB will be working with successful bidders on detailed implementation of these measures.

The WIB expects bidders to develop a clear strategy for investing program dollars in their clients in a way that generates positive performance outcomes corresponding to the performance measures. Contractors need to understand and identify all the performance measures that are triggered by the youth they plan to enroll, and to design appropriate program activities that can be expected to lead to attainment of positive outcomes for those measures.

System Indicators

New York State has adopted a **System Indicator Goal** for Out of School Youth participation numbers. **The System Indicator Goal to Increase Out of School Participation is equally important to reach as are the Common Measures.**

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

See page 47 for local goals for PY 2009

Customer Satisfaction Indicators

Satisfaction evaluation surveys are encouraged after conclusion of WIA Youth program participation for both participants and employers.

When to Count Outcomes

All of the core measures for youth are based on the point when a youth exits, but are assessed at varying time periods based on the particular measure. While individuals are not counted in performance measures until they exit, outcomes can occur at any time during program participation.

Setting Appropriate Goal(s)

Although Goal Attainment Rate is no longer a performance measure, operators are encouraged to set and monitor goal levels. Within the skill attainment, three types of skills are being assessed: basic skills, work readiness skills, and/or occupational skills. All youth who are determined basic skills deficient must have a basic skills goal to which they will be held accountable. In addition to that basic skills goal, the participant may also have a work readiness goal and/or occupational skills goal. If the participant is not basic skills deficient and therefore does not have a basic skills goal, the individual must have a work readiness and/or occupational skills goal if they are an in-school youth. If the participant is an out of school youth (not in need of basic skills), it is a local option whether or not a work readiness skills goal and/or occupational skills goal is necessary. This work readiness skills goal could be tied to their summer youth experience in order to make it feasible to attain such a goal. If the participant is basic skills deficient, they must have a basic skills goal and it would be more appropriate to continue serving such a participant beyond their summer experience.

Timing of Skill Attainment Measure

At least one goal must be set upon initial enrollment and assessment of the participant as a part of the OSOS data management system. The first goal must be attained within one year of the enrollment. Subsequent goals have one year from the anniversary of the date the goal was set. Attainment of a goal is counted as it is achieved (i.e. goal attainment counted in the quarter in which the goal was achieved.) Failure to attain a goal is counted on the one-year anniversary date of when the goal was set, if not achieved by such a date (i.e. failure is counted in the quarter of the anniversary date). New goals may be set as initial goals are achieved; however, each participant is allowed as many goals as deemed attainable but only three goals per year will be credited toward performance goals.

Participants may have any combination of the three types of skill goals.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Interim Outcome Measures

Because most data on performance outcomes will not be available during the program year, the Niagara WIB will use shorter term or interim outcome measures and process measures in order to ensure progress toward the WIA outcome measures. The interim outcome measures that will be monitored by the Niagara WIB staff are:

1. First quarter program enrollment of youth into services and activities that lead to performance outcomes.
2. Wage progression.
3. Retention of youth in a program leading to a credential.
4. Youth return to and/or retention in school.
5. Academic and occupational skill attainments.
6. System for pre- and post- testing for basic skill deficient youth.

Data Management and Continuous Improvement

Monthly examination of program outcomes, exits and expenditures will prompt recommendations and new strategies for program improvement. The LWIB staff (or its appropriate designee) will work with each contractor to standardize and implement a performance outcome approach to data management.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Part 2: General Information, Compliance and Regulations

A. Future Changes

Niagara County Workforce Investment Board reserves the right to make changes to these policies based on clarifications in the regulations, State Legislation, or other guidance provided the State or Federal Government regarding the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act or its successor.

B. Bidder's Conference

Attendance at the Bidder's Conference is not required but is recommended for successful proposal completion. **Please bring your copy of the RFP. Copies of the RFP will not be available at the conference.**

Date: Thursday, October 15, 2009

Place: Niagara County Planning, Development & Tourism / Center for Economic
Development (*formerly Niagara County Industrial Development Agency*)

Vantage Centre – Suite One
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive
Sanborn, NY 14132-9099

Time: 01:00 pm to 03:00 pm

C. Deadline for Submission of Proposals

Proposals must adhere to the instructions outlined in this RFP package.

Applications must be on standard 8.5" x 11" paper, one sided. *Do not use hard covers, binders, or staples on the original (allowable on the copies); removable binder clips are acceptable on original.* Do not include extraneous materials. Proposals will be limited to a maximum of 12 pages; *this does not include cover sheet, 2 page summary, budgets, and enrollment/outcomes chart.*

In order to be considered for funding, nine copies (the original proposal with original signature, together with eight (8) complete copies), must be hand or courier delivered (do not fax proposal), by no later than 3:00 p.m. EST, on the deadline date in the cover of this document, to the following address:

**Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Trott One-Stop Center, 2nd Floor
1001 11th Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301**

In addition, the Two Page Summary should be emailed to the Niagara WIB by sending to David.see@niagaracounty.com. Timely submission of proposals is the sole responsibility of the proposing agency. Applications received after the deadline date and time will not be reviewed. There is no limit on the number of proposals; however, budgetary constraints and client characteristics to be served will limit the number of proposals funded.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

D. Eligible Applicants

Any private-for-profit business entity, private non-profit corporation or public entity with the ability to provide skills-based workforce development services to youth age 14 – 21 is eligible to apply. These eligibility requirements apply to the organization which will serve as a lead agency in a collaborative effort and to any joint applicant.

E. Funds Available

It is expected that the amount of funds available under this (18 month) RFP will be approximately \$700,000. (including participant wages). This available funding is an estimate solely for the purpose of offering guidance to bidders, based on PY 2009 allocation and estimated PY 2010 allocation. Actual contract award will be determined based on allocation data available at award and rated quality of programs. No less than 65% of total funds awarded will be planned to serve Out-of-School Youth. (Each proposal does not need to serve 65% out of school youth, however the entire balance must be met through total awards.)

Funding will be for the period based on the date of award, and no earlier than December 1, 2009, and will end on June 30, 2011. Contracts may, however, be extended beyond the end date of the Program Year, if funding and programming allow, upon consent of both parties. In the unlikely case of a severe decrease in funding, contracts may be reduced in length or funding if determined necessary by the WIB.

F. Size of Funding Requests

The Workforce Investment Board will determine funding amounts based on the review process of proposals. Funding amounts may increase or decrease during the contract review process based on the funds available through allocation/closeout and based on contractor performance. A minimum of four programs are expected to be funded.

The Board does not expect to ask for revision of proposals (narrative or budget) before recommendation of award levels; proposals should be realistic and reasonable to accomplish their goals. The Board reserves the right to award amounts based on availability of funding and quality of proposals.

G. Technical Assistance

Requests for technical assistance may be made by calling the Niagara County Workforce Investment Board. A Bidder's Conference has been scheduled. All prospective bidders should plan to attend. **Please bring your copy of the RFP. Copies of the RFP will not be available at the conference.**

H. Proposal Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee that will include members of the WIB and the Youth Council, and who will score each proposal. An average rating and recommendation for each proposal will be determined. Reviewers have discretion as to overall recommendation of approval or disapproval for funding. The Executive Summary and necessary narrative and performance information on each proposal will be submitted to the WIB along with funding recommendations based on the terms of this RFP. (Attachment D is the proposal review form that will be used.) The Review Team will submit their recommendations to the WIB, and the Workforce Investment Board will make the final decision of award. This action will be duly noted in the WIB's minutes.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

I. Contract Term

The funding period will be during Program Year 2009 (beginning no earlier than December 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2010) and continuing into PY 2010 (July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011). The funding period will begin no earlier, however, than the award date. Existing program operators have contracts extended through December 31, 2009. It is expected that a newly awarded program operator or existing operator with a substantially different program will begin operations on or about January 1, 2010. The WIB and Niagara County reserve the right to modify the scope of the program to any extent necessary to ensure compliance with State and/or Federal guidelines, or in accordance with decrease or increase in allocated funding. Contracts may be extended beyond the end date of the Program Year, if funding and programming allow, upon consent of both parties.

J. Data Reporting/Management

The contractor is responsible for recording data (individual by individual) on a day-to-day basis in paper or computer form.

The contractor will maintain proper file documentation to audit programs and services provided under this RFP. The One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) will be used as the data reporting method for all programs funded under this RFP. Contractors will be encouraged to enter participant data directly into OSOS. In order to accomplish this, a contractor must agree to participate in training on data entry in OSOS. Training shall be provided prior to the contractor's responsibility for data entry.

Prior to training being accomplished, the contractor will provide the Niagara County Employment & Training Department (NCET) with information in a form designed by Employment & Training in a way to facilitate data entry input. Information which changes a participant's status shall be provided to Employment & Training within 10 business days of occurrence. NCET staff will be responsible for data entry of all information in (OSOS) until a contractor is trained in data entry.

Management reports shall be generated by the LWIB and by NCET management staff and shared with the contractor and the Youth Council to help manage the program towards its required performance goals. (However, long term performance measurements will fall outside the timeframe provided under this RFP; programs shall be designed to ensure long term success of youth past the end date of this RFP).

K. Monitoring

The contractor will need to establish a timeline and frequency schedule for monitoring. In addition, both the LWIB and the New York State Department of Labor will perform required monitoring of program and financial systems and procedures consistent with its plan submitted to NYS. Monitoring guides approved by the NYSDOL will be used to do this. Performance will be monitored on a quarterly basis so that failing performance levels can be identified early, well before the end of the contract. Monitoring and performance outcomes will be reported to the Youth Council. Periodic meetings shall be scheduled between the contractor and LWIB/NCET Youth staff. Contractors will be expected to make timely changes within their programs to ensure enrollment levels and outcomes are being achieved in a way to measure the success of the program. The Youth Council may make recommendation to the WIB to terminate the contract.

Monitoring will consist of enrollment levels, worksite monitoring, fiscal monitoring, and performance outcomes.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Monitoring Procedures: Performance Outcomes

1. **Monthly Monitoring.** Each month, the contractor will review a monthly progress report with the NCET Coordinator. The Coordinator will review reports and give feedback to the contractors. Number of enrollments and outcomes will be checked against the contractor's proposed schedules. If the contractor is not accomplishing the projected program goals, the Coordinator will meet with the contractor to discuss concerns and develop new strategies.
2. **Quarterly Monitoring.** Each quarter, the Coordinator will review the progress of the contractor. The Interim Outcome Measures, expenditures and 2009 Performance Targets will be assessed. Benchmarks for monthly monitoring are as follows:
 - First Quarter: At least 50% of new program enrollments should occur within the first two quarters. If the contractor does not meet or exceed the benchmark, the Coordinator will provide technical assistance and a written corrective action plan.
 - Second Quarter: A majority of program participants should be enrolled in a program service or activity that leads to a performance outcome.
 - Third Quarter: Contractor progress will be rated against the 2009 Performance Targets.
3. If the contractor fails to provide the required monthly reports and or fails to comply with the written corrective action plans, the WIB has the right to not reimburse the contractor for the timeframe involved.
4. The WIB reserves the right to terminate a contract with 30 days' notice if a contractor continues to fail to reach enrollment and performance goals.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Part 3: Proposal Specifications

A. Target

All programs must target service to WIA eligible youths aged 14 to 21. Eligible persons with disabilities shall be given full opportunity to participate in training programs. All participants must meet WIA eligibility criteria prior to enrollment in any program. WIA youth programs can serve persons 14 to 21 years of age (at time of enrollment). The WIB has not targeted service to specific groups, and expects that the array of programs recommended for funding represent the population in geography and demographics. Successful programs will provide service to the populations that can benefit from, and succeed in WIA funded programs (based on performance measures).

B. Format of your submitted proposal

The proposal must be typed in accordance with the requested information. This format may serve as the basis for a finalized contract. All proposals must use a copy of the **Cover Page** (included) or a duplicate copy with the exact signatory statement as it appears on that page. The **Executive / Program Summary** must be included, along with the **Budget** (New Enrollment, and if applicable [prior funded programs], and Carry-in) **Enrollment/Outcome Schedule charts**, and **Contractor Qualification Assurances**, as well as all other materials required to comply with the terms of this RFP.

Nine copies of the proposal (one with original signature and eight copies, 8.5" x 11" single sided) must be submitted. Proposals, excluding cover sheet, 2 page summary, budgets, and enrollment/outcomes chart, should be limited to no more than 12 pages.

Please provide an electronic copy of your proposal's Executive/Program Summary to david.see@niagaracounty.com.

Please number the pages in your proposal.

One copy of additional documentation (such as curriculum and letters of support) may be submitted as a separate attachment; however such additional documentation will not be distributed directly to reviewers and will only be used in the case of clarifying a proposal, if needed. Such attached data should be summarized and included in the narrative of the proposal.

Please be clear, specific, and concise in your proposal.

C. Budget

All costs must be real, allowable, and necessary (according to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998) to the operation of the program. A line item budget must be submitted; if you have any questions with the classification of costs, our office will help you, before or after proposal submittal. Budgets should be close to actual with little unexpended funding.

No non-line item, contracted costs will be allowed.

Provide a budget narrative to clarify the costs in your proposal.

D. Liability

Agencies must carry adequate liability insurance coverage. Agencies that are bonded should include a statement as such in their proposal.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

E. Selection

Not all proposals will be funded due to budgetary restrictions and programmatic considerations. Selection of service providers will take into account past performance in job training or related activities, fiscal accountability, and ability to meet performance standards and will be judged upon effectiveness in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training, and characteristics of participants.

F. Disclaimer

This RFP does not commit the WIB to award any contract. The WIB reserves the right to:

- a. Accept or reject any or all proposals.
- b. Modify the terms of this RFP in the interest of assuring the most effective program design.
- c. Negotiate with all qualified sources. The WIB may require that the selected applicants participate in negotiations and submit such price, technical, or other revisions to their respective proposals as may result from the aforementioned negotiations.
- d. Re-issue the RFP at a later date.

G. Notification

Each agency will receive notice of the final disposition of their proposal after the final selection approval process by the WIB. Upon award of a contract, each contractor will receive an approval letter detailing eligibility, contracting, and vouchering procedures.

H. Monitoring /Data Management

The WIB is responsible for and will conduct monitoring, including observing training sessions, interviewing staff, interviewing participants, etc. Data collection and recording will be a function of Niagara County Employment & Training staff. Contractors will submit monthly and quarterly reports which document participant levels and status. Program progress and outcomes will be reported to the WIB Director, Youth Council, and the WIB Evaluation Committee.

I. Non-Duplication

Funds provided under WIA shall not be used to duplicate facilities or services available in the area with or without reimbursement from Federal, State, or local sources. No funds may be used for any lobbying activities, sectarian activities, or maintenance of effort. Agencies/individuals receiving funding may not be under suspension or be debarred from receiving federal, state, or county funding.

J. Audit

Each applicant will be required to submit a copy of the applicant's most recent financial audit before a contract is executed.

K. Contractor Qualifications

All businesses/organizations must meet the following administrative and fiscal contractor qualifications in order to contract with the Niagara County Area Workforce Investment Board to provide Workforce Investment Act Title I-B services for youth. **All bidders must certify that**

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

they and their subcontractors/partners meet the following Contractor Qualifications. Such attestation/documentation will be required as part of the application.

- Demonstrable competency in the administration and operation of youth specific programs.
- Such competency may be acquired or be demonstrated by the organization itself, by key administrative and operational staff in that organization or through partnerships with organizations that operate youth- specific programs and must:
 - Demonstrate the ability to address the required program elements.
 - Be legally authorized to conduct business in the State of New York and have established administrative and program resources in the Niagara County area.
 - Be eligible to receive Federal funds.
 - Be able to provide the following policies/procedures which comply with the Workforce Investment Act and are otherwise acceptable to the Niagara WIB:
 1. Personnel policies: Programs working with youth under age 18 must include a provision for criminal background checks for all staff that have contact with the youth. Acknowledgement of labor laws for minors must be included in said policies.
 2. Conflict of interest statement for staff and governing Board of Directors.
 3. Follow grievance procedure for clients/customers.

In addition, the applicant organization must demonstrate that it:

- Does not discriminate against nor deny employment services to any person on the grounds of race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, political affiliation or belief.
- Complies with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Has proven fiscal capacity for fund accounting.
- Has current annual revenues equivalent to or greater than the amount proposed.
- Has access to non-WIA funds sufficient to cover any disallowed costs that may be identified through the audit process.
- Has or is able to obtain up to \$1,000,000 liability, motor vehicle and Worker's Compensation insurance.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

- Agrees that the federal, state and/or local auditors to ensure compliance with funding requirements may review provider facilities and relevant financial and performance records.
- Has the ability to collect outcome data, which measures performance to plan.
- Has Internet capability and e-mail address and fax access for staff working with WIA funds.
- Provides staff training opportunities for designated staff.

Bidders who do not meet these minimum qualifications shall be deemed non-responsive and will not receive further consideration. Any proposal that is rejected as non-responsive will not be evaluated and no score will be assigned.

L. Partnerships and Collaborations

Building a strong network of partners is a mandatory program requirement. An example of a youth program network would include employers, K-12 school systems, post-secondary education, ABE and GED programs, One-Stop Centers, probation, local youth bureaus, and youth service providers.

Please provide a Memorandum of Agreement for each partner, which includes:

- A brief overview of the agency or organization.
- A description of the services the partner will deliver and how the service will lead to a performance outcome(s).
- How the costs of the services will be funded (include all revenue sources).
- Method of referral between partners.

Part 4: Evaluation of Proposals, Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in the following categories, with scoring assisting, but not limiting, recommendation decisions:

A. Program Design - up to 30 points

This category will evaluate how well the proposed program has been designed, the extent to which all required services will be available, how services will be provided to each of the three groups of youth, the extent of collaboration/services integration, extent and nature of youth and parent involvement, plan for development of employer relations, ease and feasibility of implementation, innovativeness, its likelihood to lead to the desired outcomes for youth, and the inclusion of the WIA elements.

B. Demonstrated Ability – up to 20 points

This category will evaluate the applicant's experience in providing services and/ or programs similar to those being proposed, including the ability to attain, track and report performances as

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

required by the WIA Performance Indicators. It will include experience in collaboration, targeting of services, outcomes, service provision, and staff qualifications.

C. Budget – up to 25 points

This category will evaluate the cost of the proposed program to determine if it is fair and reasonable. It may include such factors as length and intensity of program design, staff-to-youth ratio, support services, competitiveness of staff salaries, cost for each of the groups of participants identified herein, and leveraging of funding from other resources. Budgets will be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, appropriateness, and reasonableness of cost. 90 to 100% of contract award is expected to be expended so as to serve the maximum number of youth and have no excess or de-obligated carryin funds.

D. Collaborative Funds/Resources – up to 25 points

Points will be awarded based on the evidence of collaboration and combined resources presented. Who are your collaborators and what are their roles for building in connections for youth to education, employment, youth development and youth support services? Describe how your collaborators will combine existing financial and other resources to maximize effectiveness. How is the private sector (business and industry) involved in this program – planning, beginning, middle, and/or end (placement)? How will program participants transition successfully to employment/further education?

Additional Category: Performance Outcomes and Continuous Improvement– from minus 5 (poor performance) to positive 5 points (exceptional performance) based on previous WIA funded performance for similar programs. New programs (*not previously funded under WIA*) and *average* WIA performance in programs are unaffected.

Points may be awarded based on past demonstrated and present ability of the applicant to achieve the goals and outcomes of programs and those performance standards set by the State for the WIA Programs. Where applicable, outcomes, both positive and negative, will be evaluated in relationship to performance measures and service goals. Continuous improvement strategies and meeting benchmarks will be evaluated. Common Measures will be evaluated. Performance in spending in regard to contracted budgets awarded may also be evaluated.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Part 5: Application Package

The general information, goals, program descriptions, budget information, etc., may become part of the final contract. Please be specific and realistic; unclear writing will not be interpreted in your favor. The information on page 32 can be used to summarize the proposal's 10 program elements.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Please provide the Executive Summary/ Project Summary (page number 30), clearly present the information listed on the form, and use up to the rest of that page and one more page (maximum 2 pages). This page will be provided to each Board member as your agency's proposal summary.

Then provide specifics to your program by addressing the following suggested questions **as needed** (not all questions need be answered in all cases) to fully present your proposed program :

A. Program Design

1. What are your **program's goals and measurable objectives**? (Be specific). How will you meet **Common Measures**? How have you met WIA performance measures serving this population? Are there any challenges that will need to be overcome to meet any of the measured standards or goals, and how will you address them?
2. What **target group(s)** of youth do you plan to serve? Specifically, what are the demographics of the targeted population? (*for example, not limited to or required to be: high school dropouts in need of a diploma or GED or both; in-school youth in need of summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning; young TANF mothers; youth from the juvenile justice system; etc.*)
3. What geographic **area** will you serve?
4. How **many** youth do you plan to serve?
5. What is the median **length of time** a participant will be in the program?
6. Will all participants be enrolled near the start of the contract year?
7. Will all participants **complete their program by the end of the contract year**? **If not, how will you ensure successful program completion** if continued funding is unavailable?
8. How will you **outreach and recruit** the targeted population? Are there any linkages that have been established with your target referral sources?
9. Describe how you will provide, or make available through collaboration, each of the **ten required WIA youth program elements**. Each program has the discretion to determine what specific services will be needed, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. However, you must have the demonstrated capacity to deliver all required elements or be able to refer participants to other operating programs in the Niagara area that can provide the needed service.
10. Will you establish any key partnerships with other organizations to ensure success?
11. Describe how you will determine the length of time a participant will remain in your program. What is the average length of time expected for your participant population?
12. How will you measure success and compliance with WIA performance indicators?
13. Describe the educational components in your program.
14. Describe how you will provide contextual basic skills training and link academic and occupational training.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

15. Include a copy of curricula to be utilized **if it is essential** to presenting the impact of your program. Copies of such curricula **will not be distributed** to reviewers but will be used in the case of clarification. Please include a summary in your narrative of such attachments. That summary information will then be seen by all reviewers.
16. Include staff roles, qualifications, and job specifications for all staff. What is the staff/student ratio for this program, and why is it set at this level?
17. Describe the facilities you will use including physical description, equipment and handicapped accessibility.
18. Describe how a participant's needs will be assessed on an ongoing basis.
19. List and describe the assessment tools to be used.
20. Describe the work-based (employment) element of your program, including job readiness, job-specific skills, paid and unpaid work-based learning, SCANS skills and summer employment opportunities.
21. Describe how you will provide job development and job placement.
22. Describe your plan for providing continuous improvement of your program.
23. Describe how you will elicit and use customer feedback.
24. Will you engage the private sector in this program? If so, how?
25. Describe your plans to meet the Pre- and Post- Testing requirement for Literacy and Numeracy for all participants. The Pre-test must be administered within 60 days following the date of first youth program service. ETA guidelines provide that participants identified as basic skills deficient (resulting from the pre-test) be post-tested at least once by the end of one year following the individual's participation date. However, timing of testing and assessment earlier (such as at 6 months) might allow for earlier identification of the need for intense remediation and produce better results. Contractors are expected to use the TABE (online or paper and pencil), either administered by the contractor or by another agency.
26. Complete Attachment B1, B2, and B3 showing time periods for participant enrollments and participant and follow-up outcomes.
27. All participants to be enrolled in Work Experience (subsidized employment) through the County Payroll will be required to pass a pre-work physical exam and a drug screening test prior to beginning work experience.

B. Demonstrated Ability

1. Provide a brief organizational summary.
2. Describe the types of clients you generally serve.
3. What is your history of providing youth employment/youth development programs for targeted populations?
4. If previously funded through WIA, provide a brief summary of recent past performance.
5. How have you evaluated the success of your program(s)?
6. How will this program meet performance standards and common measures?

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

C. Budget

1. Provide a cost reimbursement line item budget of Staff Expenses, Participant Wages, Participant Expenses and Other Expenses as indicated in the WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT YOUTH PROGRAM BUDGET (Attachment A).
2. Please provide a **clear, concise budget narrative** to describe the costs charged in this program.
3. Please note that one budget, including New Enrollment, Continuing Participants (if needed), and Follow-ups (if needed) will be used this year.
4. Describe the fiscal controls to be utilized to ensure proper expenditure of funds. 90% to no more than 100% of contract award is expected to be expended so as to serve the maximum number of youth and have no excess or de-obligated carryin funds.
5. Describe how you will leverage/utilize funding from other resources.
6. List the matching funds and in-kind funds to be utilized in execution of the program (there is no required minimum).
7. What is the **cost per participant** (direct funded and total including matching funds)? What is the direct participant cost? What is the **cost per participant exit**?
8. Attachment A indicates the format to be used in budget calculations.
9. Subcontracted costs (generally counseling or additional services) are not allowed.
10. It is preferred, although not necessary, that participant wages are paid through County payroll for auditing purposes and to assure consistent wage rates across all funded programs. **Use the NYS minimum \$ 7.25 per hour as participant wage rate.**

D. Collaboration

1. **How will your program begin to coordinate and fit in** with a youth system described by the Mission and Guiding Principles of the Youth Council?
2. Who are your collaborators and what are their roles for building in connections for youth to education, employment, youth development and youth support services?
3. Describe how your collaborators will combine existing financial and other resources to maximize effectiveness.
4. How will you **involve the private sector** (business and industry) in this program?
5. How will program **participants transition successfully** to employment/further education?

Additional Criteria: Performance and Continuous Improvement

1. Were you **able to reach the goals that were proposed** in previous programs, WIA-funded and through other sources of funding? What were your individual and overall outcomes?
2. Was your staff able to complete WIA mandated reporting requirements in a timely fashion?
3. How will you meet the goals for this proposed program?
4. How will you modify your program design based on experience working with this population and ongoing program monitoring?

Thank you for your time and effort in preparing a program to serve Niagara's youth!

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

This ad appeared in the Niagara Gazette, Lockport Sun & Journal and the Tonawanda News on October 8 and October 9, 2009.

The Niagara County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) will release a Request for Proposals on October 8, 2009, soliciting proposals to provide training in the following areas:

Youth Workforce Development Programs

The WIB is the Administrative Agent for the Workforce Investment Act funding for Niagara County. Training will be targeted to participants meeting eligibility requirements for economically disadvantaged status.

To receive a copy of the proposal package, and information on the Bidder's Conference, interested parties may request a copy by calling:

716 278 8213

or writing:

**Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Programs *Request for Proposal*
Trott One-Stop Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201**

David See, Executive Director
Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/ADA Agency

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

Name of Program _____

Total Number to be Served _____ New Enrollments _____
Carry-In Participants _____

Target Population _____

Total Funding Requested _____

Project Operational Dates _____

Name and Address of Agency

Name, Title, Phone #, and Email Address of Contact Person

Printed Name _____

Title _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Signature, Title, and Date of Agency Director Empowered to Submit This Application

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the cost data contained in this proposal are accurate, complete, and current at the time of this submittal, are real and necessary to the operation of this program, do not permit excess program income or program profit, and training will be offered without any duplication of costs (e.g. instructional grants, PELL grants, etc.)

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / PROJECT SUMMARY

A. Agency/Provider Name			
B. Program / Project Name			
C. Funding Request			
New Enrollments		Carry-ins (Enrolled Prior Year's Program)	
D1. New – Out of School		D3. Carry-In - Out of School	
D2. New – In School		D4. Carry-In - In School	
E1. Number of In-School (D1+D3)		F. Total Participants Served (D1+D2+D3+D4) -or- (E1+E2)	
E2. Number of Out of School (D2+D4)		H. Planned Participants to Complete Program & Exited by 06/30/2011	
G. Cost Per Participant (C/F)		I. Planned Participants NOT to Complete by 06/30/2011	
J. Geographic Area(s) Served			
K. Characteristics of the Population the Program Serves			

Please provide an executive summary that describes the goals and methods of your program (use no more than the rest of this page plus one additional page, 12 point type, spacing 1.5 lines or greater).

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

SUMMARY OF CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED IN PROPOSAL
(from pages 21,22,23)

- Demonstrable competency in the administration and operation of youth specific programs.
- Such competency may be acquired or be demonstrated by the organization itself, by key administrative and operational staff in that organization or through partnerships with organizations that operate youth- specific programs and must:
 - Demonstrate the ability to address the required program elements.
 - Be legally authorized to conduct business in the State of New York and have established administrative and program resources in the Niagara County area.
 - Be eligible to receive Federal funds.
 - Be able to provide the following policies/procedures which comply with the Workforce Investment Act and are otherwise acceptable to the Niagara WIB:
 1. Personnel policies: Programs working with youth under age 18 must include a provision for criminal background checks for all staff that have contact with the youth. Acknowledgement of labor laws for minors must be included in said policies.
 2. Conflict of interest statement for staff and governing Board of Directors.
 3. Follow grievance procedure for clients/customers.

In addition, the applicant organization must demonstrate that it:

- Does not discriminate against nor deny employment services to any person on the grounds of race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, political affiliation or belief.
- Complies with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Has proven fiscal capacity for fund accounting.
- Has current annual revenues equivalent to or greater than the amount proposed.
- Has access to non-WIA funds sufficient to cover any disallowed costs that may be identified through the audit process.
- Has or is able to obtain up to \$1,000,000 liability, motor vehicle and Worker's Compensation insurance.
- Agrees that the federal, state and/or local auditors to ensure compliance with funding requirements may review provider facilities and relevant financial and performance records.
- Has the ability to collect outcome data, which measures performance to plan.
- Has Internet capability and e-mail address and fax access for staff working with WIA funds.
- Provides staff training opportunities for designated staff.

**NIAGARA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
YOUTH SERVICES RFP FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2009-2010**

PROGRAM OPERATOR'S SUMMARY OF THE 10 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

COLLABORATION

**Check if program provides
DIRECT PROVISION OF
10 PROGRAM ELEMENTS:**

**if not directly provided,
NAME OF AGENCY
PROVIDING SERVICE**

<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring and study skills leading to secondary school completion	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative school settings	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Summer employment linked to academic and occupational learning	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Paid and unpaid work experiences, i.e., internship, shadowing	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational skill training	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership, development opportunities, i.e., Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS): teamwork, decision-making, positive social behavior	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Supportive services, i.e., childcare, transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult mentoring for at least twelve months	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up services for twelve months	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive guidance and counseling (i.e. drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy)	_____

The 10 program elements do not have to be provided with WIA funds or by WIA funded partners, and the program proposed need not supply all 10. **It is not only acceptable, but also desirable, to connect WIA youth to other community resources/services while monitoring service delivery.**

Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR LINE ITEM BUDGET –

Insert agency name here

Attachment A1

These 2 budget pages should reflect the dollar amounts requested.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT YOUTH PROGRAM BUDGET (Page 1 of 2)

STAFF EXPENSES

TITLE OF POSITION	SALARY OR HOURLY RATE	FTE OR HOURS	WAGES	FICA	UNEMPLOYMT. INSURANCE	WKRS' COMP	RETIREMENT	BENEFITS	TOTAL FRINGES		TOTAL
										TOTAL STAFF SALARY & BENEFITS	

PARTICIPANT WAGES

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	SALARY OR HOURLY RATE	FTE OR HOURS	WAGES	FICA	UNEMPLOYMT. INSURANCE	WKRS' COMP	RETIREMENT	HEALTH BENEFITS	TOTAL FRINGES		TOTAL
										TOTAL PARTICIPANT WAGES	

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR LINE ITEM BUDGET

Insert agency name here

Attachment A2

These 2 budget pages should reflect the dollar amounts requested.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT YOUTH PROGRAM BUDGET (Page 2 of 2)

PARTICIPANT EXPENSES

SUPPLIES & INCENTIVES												
TRANSPORTATION												
CHILDCARE												
FIELD TRIPS												
TOTAL PARTICIPANT EXPENSES												

OTHER EXPENSES

OFFICE SUPPLIES												
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS												
STAFF MILEAGE												
FACILITY RENTAL												
STIPENDS												
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT												
STAFF TRAVEL/CONFERENCE												
CONTRACTED COSTS ARE <u>NOT</u> ALLOWED IN THIS BUDGET												
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES												
GRAND TOTAL												

**Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)**

Attachment B1

NEW PARTICIPANTS (enrolled on or after 1/01/2010)

Quarters (2) Number		Jan thru June 2010	July thru Dec 2010	Jan thru June 2011
ENROLLMENT SCHEDULE (cumulative)				
Enroll into Registration / Assessment				
Enroll into Education / Basic Skills				
Enroll into Work Experience / Skills Training				
OUTCOME SCHEDULE (cumulative)				
Quarters (2) Number		Jan thru June 2010	July thru Dec 2010	Jan thru June 2011
Number of Program Exits <i>into FollowUp</i>				
Number of Job Placements (entered employment)				
Number of 1st Quarter Retentions (employment)				
Number of 3 rd Quarter Retentions (employment)				
Number of GED Completions/ Certificates*				

**see definition of Certificates – credentials are NOT an option for these participants*

TOTAL NEW PARTICIPANTS SERVED _____

CARRY-IN PARTICIPANTS (active participants on January 1, 2010)
[enrolled before 12/31/2009- previously funded programs]

Quarters (2) Number		Jan thru June 2010	July thru Dec 2010	Jan thru June 2011
ENROLLMENT SCHEDULE (cumulative)				
Enrolled Registration / Assessment		<i>(should be all the carry-ins, by definition)</i>	<i>(should be all the carry-ins, by definition)</i>	<i>(should be all the carry-ins, by definition)</i>
Enrolled into Education / Basic Skills				
Enrolled into Work Experience / Skills Training				
OUTCOME SCHEDULE (cumulative)				
Quarters (2) Number		Jan thru June 2010	July thru Dec 2010	Jan thru June 2011
Number of Program Exits <i>into FollowUp</i>				
Number of Job Placements (entered employment)				
Number of 1st Quarter Retentions (employment)				
Number of 3 rd Quarter Retentions (employment)				
Number of GED Completions/ Credentials/Certificates				

TOTAL CARRY-IN PARTICIPANTS SERVED _____

NYS DOL Youth System Indicator

Increase Out-of-School Youth Participation

ETA Common Youth Measures

- 1. Placement in Employment or Education**
- 2. Attainment of a Degree or Certificate**
- 3. Literacy and Numeracy Gains**

OUTCOMES: Does the program address each of the measures targeted to each participant?
Every youth must obtain the performance outcomes. What is the overall likelihood that WIA performance goals will be achieved?
Will it work and meet our goals?
Can this program achieve what the proposal is saying it will?
Is this a program youth and the business community will benefit from?
Is there evidence of performance that can be used to evaluate success? Addresses population(s)?

**Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)**

B. DEMONSTRATED ABILITY 20

Have the certifications and assurances been addressed? Yes No
Evidence of ability to provide services and/or programs similar to those being proposed
History of program services to youth
Has program run in prior years?
Participant/program records maintenance

C. BUDGET 25

Look for reasonable cost categories and how much the program will spend on each youth, based on length of program and degree of involvement (i.e., new enrollments, carry-ins, and follow-ups).
Budget sheets are complete
Budget sheets are correct
Budget narrative is clear and complete and adds to understanding of program
Budget instructions were followed
Budget is reasonable for program
Cost per participant is reasonable
Cost per exit is reasonable
Costs are reasonably distributed to direct participant benefit

D. COLLABORATION 25

Is there sufficient collaboration with other agencies in the program design?

Match not required, but could leverage funds in proposal.

Required program elements are met

Strength of network of services

Builds upon existing programs/services

Private sector involvement and planning

Additional information: PERFORMANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:

Demonstrated ability of the applicant to achieve the goals of proposed and past programs

Past performance in this or other programs; significant address of new definitions and measures

If previously funded, was spending done along proposal budget?

What do the Enrollment/Outcome Schedule Charts show about the program flow and outcomes?

If agency's previous WIA program was funded, how were performance standards met?

Were budget spending goals met (staff, participant enrollments, direct participant spending)?

<i>RATINGS</i>	<i>NUMBER OF POINTS FOR EACH</i>	
Program Design	up to 30 Points	_____
Demonstrated Ability	up to 20 Points	_____
Budget	up to 25 Points	_____
Collaboration	up to 25 Points	_____

AWARDED TO THIS PROPOSAL: _____

Performance & Improvement minus 5 to none to plus 5 _____

TOTAL POINTS: _____

Key Definitions for WIA Youth Performance Measures

Advanced Training - an occupational skills employment/training program, not funded under Title I of the WIA, which does not duplicate training received under Title I. Includes only training outside of the one-stop, WIA and partner, system (i.e., training following exit).

Basic literacy skills deficient - the individual computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the 8th grade level or is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. In addition, States and locals have the option of establishing their own definition, which must include the above language. In cases where States and/or locals establish such a definition, that definition will be used for basic literacy skills determination.

Basic Skills Goal - measurable increase in basic education skills include reading comprehension, math computation, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, reasoning, and the capacity to use these skills.

Certificate – A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupational skills are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers.

Certificates awarded by workforce investment boards are not included in this definition. Work readiness certificates are also not included in this definition. A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of technical or occupational skills by:

- A state educational agency or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state.
- An institution of higher education described in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of that Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education that are eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs.
- A professional, industry, or employer organization (e.g., National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Institute for Metalworking Skills, Inc., Machining Level I credential) or a product manufacturer or developer (e.g., Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer, Sun Certified Java Programmer) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- A registered apprenticeship program.
- A public regulatory agency, upon an individual's fulfillment of educational, work experience, or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use an occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession (e.g., FAA aviation mechanic certification, state certified asbestos inspector).
- A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.
- Job Corps centers that issue certificates.
- Institutions of higher education which is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.

Credential - nationally recognized degree or certificate or state/locally recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to a high school diploma, GED or other recognized equivalents,

Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)

post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, and licensure or industry-recognized certificates. States should include all State Education Agency recognized credentials. In addition, States should work with local Workforce Investment Boards to encourage certificates to recognize successful completion of the training services listed above that are designed to equip individuals to enter or re-enter employment, retain employment, or advance into better employment. (Please Note: this term applies to the current WIA statutory measures only, it does not apply to common measures.)

Date of Exit – Represents the last day on which the individual received a service funded by the program (see definition of exit).

Date of Participation – Represents the first day, following a determination of eligibility, that the individual begins receiving a service funded by the program (see definition of participant).

Educational Functioning Level –

- Programs assess participants at intake or within 60 days of their date of participation to determine their educational functioning level. There are two sets of educational functioning levels – six levels for Adult Basic education (ABE) and six levels for English as a second language (ESL) students. The ABE levels roughly equate to two grade levels.

- Each ABE and ESL level describes a set of skills and competencies that students entering the program at the level demonstrate in the area of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, functional, and workplace skills. These descriptors provide guidelines for placing participants in educational functioning levels, based on performance on standardized tests. After a participant has completed a uniform, standardized assessment procedure, programs use these descriptors to determine the appropriate initial ABE or ESL level in which to place students.

- If a participant is functioning at different levels in reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, functional, and workplace areas, the individual is placed in different ABE and ESL levels across the functioning areas. In the post-test assessment, if the participant demonstrates an increase to the next functioning level in any of the areas – reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, functional, and workplace areas – he/she has made an educational gain and should be included in the numerator.

Educational Gain – At post-test, participant completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels from the starting level measured on entry into the program (pre-test).

Employed at Registration - An employed individual is one who, during the 7 consecutive days prior to registration, did any work at all as a paid employee, in his or her own business, profession or farm, worked 15 hours or more as an unpaid worker in an enterprise operated by a member of the family, or is one who was not working, but has a job or business from which he or she was temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor-management dispute, or personal reasons, whether or not paid by the employer for time-off, and whether or not seeking another job.

Employed in Quarter After Exit Quarter - The individual is considered employed in a quarter after the exit quarter if wage records for the quarter show earnings greater than zero. When supplemental data sources are used, individuals should be counted as employed if, in the calendar quarter of measurement after exit, they did any work at all as paid employees (i.e., received at least some earnings), worked in their own business, profession, or worked on their own farm.

Exit – The term “program exit” means a participant does not receive a service funded by the program or funded by a program partner for 90 consecutive calendar days and is not scheduled for future services.

Exit Date - the last date on which WIA Title I funded or partner services were received by the individual. *(An additional type of service, follow-up services, must be provided to a youth for 12 months after exit. However, the participant is not current nor counted at this point, since she/ he has exited).* Performance Measures are determined based on this exit date.

Exit Quarter - quarter in which the last date of service (except follow-up services) takes place.

High School Diploma Equivalent - a GED or high school equivalency diploma recognized by the State.

Occupational Skills Goal - primary occupational skills encompass the proficiency to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate or advanced levels. Secondary occupational skills entail familiarity with and use of set-up procedures, safety measures, work-related terminology, record keeping and paperwork formats, tools, equipment and materials, and breakdown and clean-up routines.

Participant – A participant is an individual who is determined eligible to participate in the program and receives a service funded by the program in a physical location or remotely through electronic technologies. *Note: Each program enrollment is based on documentation for income eligibility, residence, age, selective service registration status, citizenship or eligibility to work, and barriers to work. Examples of acceptable documentation include copies of tax returns; pay stubs; or SSI, SSD, and/or DSS documents.*

Planned Gap in Service - no participant activity of greater than 90 days due to a delay before the beginning of training or a health/medical condition that prevents an individual from participating in services.

Post-Secondary Education - a program at an accredited degree-granting institution that leads to an academic degree (e.g. AA, AS, BA, BS). Does not include programs offered by degree-granting institutions that do not lead to an academic degree.

Pre-test – A test administered to a participant within 60 days following the date of participation (date of first youth program service). It is allowable to use pre-tests that are administered up to six months prior to the date of first WIA youth service, if such pre-test scores are available. If prior pre-test are not available, administration of the pre-test must occur within 60 days following the date of first youth program service.

Post-test – A test administered to a participant at regular intervals during the program.

Training Services - Include WIA funded and non-WIA funded partner training services. These services include: occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment; on-the-job training; programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs; training programs operated by the private sector; skill upgrading and retraining; entrepreneurial training; job readiness training; adult education and literacy activities in combination with other training; and customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)

Work Readiness Skills Goal - Work readiness skills include world of work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision making, and job search techniques (resumes, interviews, applications, and follow-up letters). They also encompass survival/daily living skills such as using the phone, telling time, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account, and using public transportation. They also include positive work habits, attitudes, and behaviors such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. This category also entails developing motivation and adaptability, obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills, and acquiring an improved self image.

Performance Measures And Goals

CALCULATING NYSDOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

Increase Out-of-School Youth Participation

In PY 2007 the NY State Goal was to increase number of out-of-school participants by 50% over PY 2006 levels. This was a straight calculation with a goal of 100 out-of-school youth. It is estimated that the goal will be an increase over PY2008 levels, although it may not be as high as the 50% increase in previous years.

CALCULATING USDOL COMMON MEASURES

Placement in Employment or Education

Of those who are not in post-secondary education or employment (including the military) at the date of participation:

Number of youth participants who are in employment (including the military) or enrolled in post-secondary education and/or advanced training/occupational skills training in the first quarter after the exit quarter

 Number of youth participants who exit during the quarter

Attainment of a Degree or Certificate

Of those enrolled in education (at the date of participation or at any point during the program):

Number of youth participants who attain a diploma, GED, or certificate by the end of the third quarter after the exit quarter

 Number of youth participants who exit during the quarter

Literacy and Numeracy Gains

Of those out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient:

Number of youth participants who increase one or more educational functioning levels

 Number of youth participants who have completed a year in the program (i.e., one year from the date of first youth program service) plus the number of youth participants who exit before completing a year in the youth program

**Niagara County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Services RFP for Program Year 2009-2010 (1/01/2010 – 6/30/2011)**

WIA PERFORMANCE GOALS

**PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR PY 2009
HAVE NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED – HOWEVER, IT IS LIKELY THAT
GOAL TARGETS WILL INCREASE TO THIS LEVEL**

<u>Program Group/Performance Items</u>	<u>Estimated PY 2009 Performance Goal</u>
Placement in Employment or Education	57%
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	44%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	38%
Increase Out-of-School Youth Participation	

Data available on current programs will be evaluated against Common Measures, based on current regulations, including cost efficiency, testing data, and the inclusion/exclusion of IEP in the measure definitions.