2016 REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Seeking Training Providers for:

Career Development and Life Skills Training
for
PY 2016
Summer Youth Earn & Learn Employment Program

RELEASE DATE: Friday, June 3, 2016
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 12:00 p.m. (Noon) EST
Friday, June 17, 2016

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Program
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

This document was supported by funds from the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Department of Children and Families.
SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

The WorkPlace, Southwestern Connecticut’s Workforce Development Board, is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that coordinates job training, employment, and educational services in the Southwestern Connecticut region which is composed of twenty (20) municipalities. It develops partnerships with local community leaders, elected officials, business, labor, and education leaders to create a competitive economic environment through workforce development.

The WorkPlace is accepting statements of qualifications from training providers to deliver Career Development and Life Skills Training to youth between the ages of 14 and 24, who are enrolled in Youthworks’ Summer Youth Earn and Learn Employment Program (SYELEP). SYELEP is funded by the State of Connecticut and is designed to introduce young people to the world of work as well as provide them with a foundation of core soft and life skills. It also seeks to provide youth with career pathways information and career planning tools that will help them make informed decisions about their future.

Selected training providers will deliver a program that addresses the following components: (1) career exploration, (2) financial literacy, and (3) project-based learning activities. The period of performance is Monday, July 11, 2016 through Friday, August 19, 2016.

SECTION II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to select qualified training providers to deliver a program that includes career exploration of Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) careers as well as careers in the arts; financial literacy training; and project-based learning activities that focus on topics like culture and diversity, sustaining the environment or improving the community.

Career Exploration: Career exploration allows youth to connect the training, skills and credentials they need for getting into and advancing on a career track. For this training, participants will learn about Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) careers as well as careers in the arts.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, there are more options for STEM jobs than non-STEM jobs. STEM workers are essential for driving innovation and competitiveness by bringing critical thinking and problem solving skills. It is common today to find the addition of the arts to STEM programs, transforming STEM to STEAM. With the addition of the arts to STEM, educators draw on design principles and encourage creative solutions to real-world problems.

1 Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bridgeport, Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Westport, Weston and Wilton.
**Financial Literacy:** Financial literacy training provides youth with the skills and knowledge needed for personal financial management. Training will be based on the “*Your Money, Your Goals*” toolkit issued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

**Project-Based Learning:** Project-based learning (PBL) is a dynamic classroom approach in which participants actively explore various life topics, real-world problems and challenges and acquire a deeper knowledge. Training providers must be prepared to facilitate PBL activities relating to topics such as culture and diversity, sustaining the environment or improving the community.

This request is also to ensure that all interested qualified training providers are identified as potential training providers for Career Development and Life Skills Training. The WorkPlace will create a Career Development and Life Skills “Training Provider List” which will contain course information, pricing, and timelines for all soft skills and life skills training which may be procured under these funds.

The cost to deliver the six (6) week career development training shall not exceed three hundred dollars ($300) per participant.

**SECTION III – SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The training will take place in the four (4) labor markets in the Southwest Service Delivery Area (SDA): Bridgeport, Stamford, Norwalk, and the Valley. The WorkPlace will refer all participants to training classes. Training providers are not responsible for recruiting or selecting course participants. Training providers can choose one or multiple areas to deliver the training.

The training class will contain a minimum of ten (10) and a maximum of twenty-five (25) participants at any given time. The WorkPlace reserves the right to request that training providers accommodate a larger group based on need.

**The period of performance is for six weeks, beginning on Monday, July 11, 2016 through Friday, August 19, 2016.** The training to be provided must be a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) hours in duration. Training providers may combine training for more than one (1) skill area by creating a module for a specific core skill area. The cost to deliver the six (6) week career development training shall not exceed three hundred dollars ($300) per participant.

**A. Career Exploration**

Training providers must use the “*Career Development Toolkit – Skills Library*” curriculum to deliver the career exploration component of the program. The “Career Development Toolkit” is made available, with permission from Jennifer Leonard, author of the toolkit. The toolkit was developed to support career activities for schools and youth programs in Massachusetts. Therefore, some activities will be modified by substituting Connecticut or national information. See [http://skillslibrary.com/careers/careerdevelopment_skillslibrary.pdf](http://skillslibrary.com/careers/careerdevelopment_skillslibrary.pdf).
During the six (6) week sessions, training providers must deliver instruction on the following topics from the “Career Development Toolkit – Skills Library”.

1. Welcome
2. Career Assessments*
3. Looking at Labor Market Data*
4. The New Economy
5. Education and Career Options*
6. Spotlight on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
7. Spotlight on the Arts*
8. Spotlight on the Building Trades*
9. Spotlight on the Hospitality Industry*
10. Spotlight on Health Care*
11. Entrepreneurship
12. Workplace Skills
13. Lifelong Career Strategies
14. Writing a Resume

*See Attachment B for National or Connecticut data

B. Financial Literacy

Training providers must deliver financial literacy training to participants using “Your Money, Your Goals”, a financial empowerment toolkit for Social Services Program issued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. For more information on “Your Money, Your Goals”, please visit: http://www.consumerfinance.gov/your-money-your-goals/.

C. Project-Based Learning Activities

Participants should spend between 40% and 50% of the time on PBL activities. PBL activities help participants become knowledgeable about a topic, learn how to conduct research and analyze information, and help to develop their leadership skills. Participants are generally more engaged and motivated when they are included selecting the topic and designing the project. The following topics are offered as suggestions:

- **Entrepreneurship**: participants learn about creating, promoting and sustaining a small business. Participants will also develop and deliver a business plan at the end of the program.
- **Leadership and Community Service**: participants identify an important issue or need in their community. Participants will then research and develop strategies to address the community need, and deliver their findings in a final report or documentary.
- **Website Design**: participants propose a design for a youth-friendly website featuring information and resources that assist youth in registering addressing educational, work readiness and life skills needs. The website should include online learning options and the ability to share information with social media networks.

Training providers may choose other topics as long as they are well defined with definitive outcomes. Additional guidance on PBL activities is available at: [http://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning](http://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning).

Well-designed projects ask students to:

1. Tackle real problems and issues that have importance to people beyond the classroom. Projects emanate from issues of real importance to students and adults in the community and answer the age-old student question “Why do we need to know this?”

2. Actively engage in their learning and make important choices during the project. Projects make room for student choice and creativity while still demanding student mastery of essential content, enabling students and teachers to interact as co-learners in the experience, rather than in the traditional student-teacher relationship.

3. Demonstrate in tangible ways that they have learned key concepts and skills. Projects provide opportunities for students to produce observable evidence that they have mastered rigorous curricular standards as they apply their learning and solve the problem at hand. Projects and exhibitions also provide extensive evidence of process work and self-directed learning.


### SECTION IV – SUBMISSION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

**A. Proposal Requirements**

Interested training providers must provide the information listed below to be considered and added to the Career Development and Life Skills “Training Providers List”. All information must be provided and complete to receive consideration:

1. **Complete Attachment A – Vendor Title**

2. **Program Description** *(maximum 2 pages)*
   
   In the program description training providers must include the following information:
   
   a. Location of training
   
   b. Cost per participant
   
   c. Student-teacher ratio
   
   d. Equipment needed for the program
3. **Delivery Requirements**

   a. The WorkPlace believes that the training must be participatory in order to be effective. Participants must have opportunities to discuss, question and internalize the material. PBL activities are important aspects of the training. PBL encourages participants to take ownership of activities and as a result they become more engaged. Participants also gain leadership skills from these activities. Students are often more motivated to learn when they participate in PBL activities.

   b. Training providers must describe how the training program will be delivered and include how they will integrate project-based learning activities.

   c. Training providers must describe how they will assure the following outcomes for their training:

      (i) **Youth Portfolios**

         Each participant must develop a portfolio that includes:

         - Result of Career Interest Survey
         - College and Career Plan
         - Resume and Cover Letter
         - Completed Job Application
         - Informational Interviews with Employers
         - Updated budget based on their anticipated summer earnings

      (ii) **Project**

         Each group will present their project to the class and guests during the final week of training.

      (iii) **Trainee Evaluation**

         - Eighty percent (80%) of participants must be satisfied with their training experience.
         - YouthWorks will supply a survey to participants.
         - Failure to achieve this measure will result in the removal of the training provider from the Summer Youth Eligible Training Provider List.

4. **Instructor Qualifications**

   Training providers must submit background and experience for all staff involved in the program to establish qualifications to deliver the training.
B. Selection Criteria

Selection will be based upon:

1. **Quality of Submittal**: the quality of the response, as evidenced, for example, by the completeness and responsiveness to the requested information, clarity, readability and thoroughness of the statement.

2. **Program Design**: extent to which the program design meets the needs of The WorkPlace and demonstrates the ability to successfully complete the objectives of this RFQ.

3. **Cost Effectiveness**: the demonstrated ability to complete the entirety of the project scope with the approved budget.

4. **Record of Past Performance**: evidence of prior experience with similar projects.

The WorkPlace reserves the right to request training providers whose qualifications are accepted to create and present a lesson to The WorkPlace staff prior to making a final decision.

C. Terms and Conditions

1. **Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion**: An organization will not be considered if it is currently debarred, suspended, ineligible or voluntarily excluded from applying for government funds may not respond to this Request for Qualifications. Selected training providers will be asked to sign a form certifying they are NOT currently debarred, suspended, ineligible or voluntarily excluded by any federal or state agency.

2. **Legal Status**: In order to be considered by The WorkPlace, responding training providers must be properly organized in accordance with State and Federal law and in business for at least one (1) year.

3. **Being selected to be on the Work Skills and Career Exploration Providers List is not a guarantee of trainees**: The WorkPlace reserves the right to contract with training entities that meet the initial eligibility criteria, are within the parameters of YouthWorks’ programs, and are cost effective. Approved programs will be reviewed on a continual basis and can be removed from the list if eligibility requirements are not maintained.

D. Response Timeline

All submissions must be sent via email to Diana Napier, YouthWorks Manager, at dnapier@workplace.org, with the following subject line:

2016 SYELEP RFQ – Career Development & Life Skills Training

The deadline for all submissions is Friday, June 17, 2016 at 12:00 Noon (EST). Late submissions will NOT be accepted.
It is anticipated that applications will be approved or declined by **June 22, 2016**. Applicants will be notified before that date if information is incomplete and needed for full consideration.

### E. Inquiries

Questions regarding this RFQ may be directed to:

Diana Napier  
Manager, YouthWorks  
The WorkPlace  
238P Fairfield Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
(203) 610-8568  
Email: dnapier@workplace.org
2016 SYELEP Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
for
Career Development and Life Skills Training

VENDOR TITLE PAGE

Organization Name

Connecticut UI Tax Registration No. DUNS No.

Address

Contact Person Title

Work Phone Cell Phone

E-Mail Address Fax Number

Operation Sites

Program Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area to be Served</th>
<th>Participants per Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stamford</td>
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<td>Norwalk</td>
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<td>Valley</td>
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Signature of Authorized Representative Date

Name and Title
Supplemental Information to the Career Toolkit Activities

The following are links to National and Connecticut information to be used in place of activates that are based on Massachusetts data.

Activity 1.1 Information to Guide Career Planning

- Set Career Goals
  http://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/Plan/set-goals.aspx

Activity 2.1 Assessing Your Career Interest

- My Next Move O*NET Interest Profiler

Unit 3: Looking at Labor Market Data

- Fastest Growing Occupations in Connecticut
  http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/hotnot_results.asp

- Connecticut Occupations with the Largest Employment
  http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/hotnot_results.asp

- Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages
  http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/wages/naics2014.asp

Unit 7: Spotlight on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

- Connecticut Stem Jobs
  http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/stems/

Unit 8: CT Career Paths

https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/careerpaths.asp