



LEARNINGWORKS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Career Preparation Specialist
For the
Youth Building Alternatives Program**

For the two (2) year period:
July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020

Inquiries regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Heather Davis
Executive Director
LearningWorks
181 Brackett Street, Portland, Maine 04102
Tel: 207-775-0105 ext. 111
e-mail: hdavis@learningworks.me

SCHEDULE:
Issued: April 20, 2018
Deadline for Questions: April 27, 2018
Deadline for Submitting Proposals: May 18, 2018, 4:30 P.M. EST

Direct proposals to Heather Davis via email or mail to:

Heather Davis, Executive Director
LearningWorks
181 Brackett Street
Portland, Maine 04102
e-mail: hdavis@learningworks.me

Purpose

LearningWorks (the “Organization”) is requesting proposals from organizations and individuals with extensive experience in providing work readiness, youth leadership, and soft skills education for workforce development programs serving youth ages 16 ½ to 24 who have dropped out of high school. We invite the submission of a proposal to us by no later than **4:30 p.m. on Friday, May 18, 2018**, for consideration. A description of our organization, the services needed, and other pertinent information follows.

Background of LearningWorks

LearningWorks reimagines learning through innovative programs that help children, families, and adults realize their potential and build thriving communities. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is governed by a 12-member volunteer board of directors. Administrative offices and all records are located at 181 Brackett Street, Portland, Maine 04012. Secondary offices are in Biddeford and Sanford, Maine, along with a number of program host schools serving Biddeford, Waterboro, Portland, Saco, South Portland, and Windham, Maine.

Founded in 1967, LearningWorks started as a grassroots neighborhood advocacy group that, over time, evolved to focus on providing free education programs to give community members of all ages the tools they need to realize their potential. LearningWorks currently offers five major programs, including an afterschool program for over 900 students at 11 sites throughout southern Maine; a community service and restorative justice program for corrections-involved youth; an AmeriCorps program that provides up to 100 members annually to support struggling schools with one-on-one, small group, and classroom support; a YouthBuild program for students who need an alternative pathway to complete their education and enter the workforce; and, an English language and literacy instruction program for adult new Mainers.

Services to be Performed

Founded in 1994, Youth Building Alternatives (YBA) is a comprehensive youth and community development program that uniquely addresses the status of unemployed young adults ages 16 ½ to 24 who have dropped out of school and have no apparent path to a productive future. YBA is nationally accredited YouthBuild USA program that is comprised of 3 basic components: 1) educational and job training services; 2) leadership training, counseling, and other support activities; and 3) on-site training through actual housing rehabilitation or construction work. The primary and secondary funders for this program are the U.S. Department of Labor and the Maine Department of Corrections, respectively.

To adequately support and implement these program components, and reach its annual goal of successfully serving at least 30 eligible young adults from Portland, Maine and surrounding communities per year, LearningWorks seeks proposals for a Career Services Specialist that will be an integrated member of the LearningWorks YBA team. Your proposal for Career Preparation Specialist is expected to cover the following services:

1. **Student Mentorship:** The Career Preparation Specialist will implement a work-based mentoring program for students enrolled in LearningWorks’ Youth Building Alternatives program that will provide appropriate curriculum and ensure students achieve life skills and career-based competencies through classroom instruction; instruction through a variety of methods including lecture, hands-on activities, and team teaching; program and teaching methods tailored to the needs of each specific student; and implementation of an intervention strategy for each student.

2. Career Interest Exploration: The Career Preparation Specialist will administer a testing program that will include, at minimum, pre-/post-tests and career interest surveys. The individual in this role will also establish and implement a career development plan for all enrolled students.
3. Student and Program Stewardship: The Career Preparation Specialist will ensure positive perceptions of students enrolled in the Youth Building Alternatives program at LearningWorks and within the community by developing and maintaining positive, effective working relationships with LearningWorks personnel, including administrators, programmatic staff, and other students, parents and community members who participate or volunteer in LearningWorks programs.
4. Program Advocacy: The Career Preparation Specialist will advocate for the Youth Building Alternatives program and develop a pool of effective community support resources by working with employers and other community members to develop job opportunities for students served in this program.
5. Youth Leadership Development: The Career Preparation Specialist will build students' appreciation for teamwork, sense of belonging, and commitment to community service, by creating training opportunities through hands-on activities, guest speakers, and workshops, and by assisting the program with identifying and implementing civic and social opportunities.
6. Student Guidance: The Career Preparation Specialist will provide Youth Building Alternatives students with guidance, counseling, and support within appropriate limits, will refer students to additional support services on an as-needed basis, and will undertake responsibility for learning and complying with LearningWorks program policies such as mandated reporting, student discipline, and program attendance.
7. Vocational Training: The Career Preparation Specialist will oversee the implementation of one of the following "Construction Plus" Career Pathways: culinary arts, hospitality, or healthcare services. Participates in both JMG and LearningWorks staff, regional, and state-wide meetings, and staff development activities.
8. Employment Assistance and Follow-Up: The Career Preparation Specialist will work with Youth Building Alternatives personnel to assist students in finding and maintaining quality employment and/or post-secondary educational programs upon completion of the program, and will work closely with students and employers/mentors for up to 12 months following students' active enrollment in the program to ensure a satisfactory employment outcome. The Specialist will also develop a plan for contacts with non-graduates to ensure effective transition to employment or additional education.
9. Compliance: The Career Preparation Specialist will ensure compliance with all federal, state, and program-level documentation and data reporting requirements relevant to their role in a timely fashion, including documentation of contacts and activities involving students, employers, and mentors. The Specialist will develop and maintain a well-organized record keeping system relevant to their role and responsibilities.
10. Meetings: The Career Preparation Specialist will be required to attend all organization and program staff meetings, outings, and professional development trainings that are required for employees of the Youth Building Alternatives team.

Time Frame

A written response to this RFP is due to LearningWorks by no later than **4:30 p.m.** on **Friday, May 18, 2018**. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that proposals are received by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

Proposals can be submitted **electronically** to hdavis@learningworks.me by the closing submission date noted above. Email subject line for proposals must be entitled 'Career Preparation Specialist Services RFP.' Proposals may also be submitted **by mail** to: LearningWorks, Attn: Heather Davis, 181 Brackett Street, Portland, ME 04102, RE: Career Preparation Specialist Services RFP. All mailed proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope and include three hard copies of the submission. Failure to do so may result in premature disclosure of your proposal.

It is expected that a decision about selection of the successful serving organization will be made within 2 weeks of the closing date for the receipt of proposals, by **May 21, 2018**. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful serving organization, all Offerors submitting proposals in response to this Request for Proposal will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful serving organization.

Services that are the subject of this RFP are to begin on **July 1, 2018** and are anticipated to conclude on **June 30, 2020**.

Contract Options

At the discretion of LearningWorks, this service contract can be extended for one (1) additional one-year period. The cost for the option period will be agreed on by LearningWorks and the Offeror. It is anticipated that the cost for the optional year will be based on the same approximate cost as the contract for the initial year.

Proposal Format

For clarity, the proposal should 1½-spaced with 1" margins on white 8 ½" x 11" paper using a font no smaller than 12-point Times New Roman or similar. All pages should be numbered consecutively beginning with number 1 on the first page of the narrative through to the end, including all forms and attachments. The proposal narrative should be limited to a maximum total of five (5) pages. Offerors may not include brochures or other promotional material with their proposals. Pages provided beyond the aforementioned maximum amount will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated.

Proposal Contents

In order to simplify the evaluation process and obtain maximum comparability, the Organization requires that all responses to this RFP be organized in the following manner:

A. Description of the Organization & Qualifications

Describe the history and mission of the Bidder's organization, especially regarding skills pertinent to the specific work required by the RFP and any special or unique characteristics of the organization which would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. Include similar information for any subcontractors, as well as anticipated subcontractors' name, address, phone number, contact person. Include a list of past accomplishments, if applicable, that state what outcomes and outputs were achieved and include supporting data. Provide explanation for any goals and objectives not met. If not applicable, include a statement indicating all goals and objectives were met with supporting data.

B. Project Personnel

Identify and describe the tasks project personnel will assume. Include résumés of project personnel. Provide an organizational chart. Describe other personnel who will be involved in the project but who will not be paid from the project budget.

C. Description of Experience with Similar Projects

Provide a description of three projects that occurred within the past five years which reflect experience and expertise needed in performing the functions described in the “Services to be performed” portion of this RFP. Include supporting data.

D. Services to be Provided

Discuss the Services to be Performed referenced above in this RFP and what the Offeror will provide. Give particular attention to describing the methods and resources you will use and how you will accomplish the tasks involved. If subcontractors are involved, clearly identify the work each will perform. Indicate whether the program is a Model Program or best practice.

E. Work Plan

Provide a realistic work plan for the implementation of the Career Preparation Specialist role through the first contract period, using an attached timeline chart if necessary, to identify the program development and implementation task, the month it will be carried out and the person or position responsible for each task. If applicable, make note of all tasks to be delegated to subcontractors.

F. Project Evaluation/Performance Measures

Explain the outcomes you plan to achieve for Youth Building Alternatives students, and describe the process measures including data collection, tools used to evaluate the work of the Career Preparation Specialist. Describe data collection, tools used to evaluate the program, and timeframe for collecting data. Short (during or at the end the program.) and long term (6 to 12 months after program completion.) outcomes are required.

G. Cost Proposal

The Offeror must submit a cost proposal that covers the entire period of the contract. Please use the expected contract start date of July 1, 2018 and an end date of June 31, 2020 in preparing this section. The cost proposal shall include the costs necessary for the Offeror to fully comply with the contract terms and conditions and RFP requirements. Provide a detailed, accurate project budget. No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for this RFP or to the negotiation of the contract with LearningWorks may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date that are specifically related to the implementation or operation of contracted services may be included.

Proposal Evaluation

LearningWorks will evaluate proposals on a qualitative basis. This includes our review of the Offeror’s proposal and related materials for evidence of prior experience, value-added services beyond the scope of work, qualifications of staff to be assigned to the project, cost effectiveness, and the Offeror’s completeness and timeliness in its response to us.

Please submit your response to this request for proposal by no later than May 18, 2018. We would also appreciate a response if you decline to submit a proposal. No proposals received after this date at 4:30 p.m. will be considered. All proposal submissions will be responded to once a decision has been made. For any additional inquiries, please contact Heather Davis at 207-775-0105 ext. 111 or hdavis@learningworks.me.