



**Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board  
PY'17 Request for Proposals**

**Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Title I Year-Round Workforce Development  
Services for Youth**

**Contract Period: July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018**

*\* At its discretion the WDB may amend contracts based on performance and funding availability, and/or renew contracts for up to 3 consecutive contract periods (July 1, 2017 through June 30,2018) based on performance and funding availability.*

***Essential Information w/Dates***

<b>Release Date</b>	<b>Thursday, March 16, 2017</b>
<b>Mandatory Information Session (<u>All applicants must attend</u>)</b>	<b>Thursday, March 30, 2017 2pm American Red Cross Greater Rochester Chapter 50 Prince Street Rochester, New York 14607</b>
<b>Technical Assistance</b>	<b>At Information Session Only</b>
<b>Deadline for Submission</b>	<b>Thursday, April 20, 2017 – 12:00 PM (Noon)</b>
<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, May 16, 2017</b>
<b>WIB Approval</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 20, 2017</b>
<b>Formal Award Notification</b>	<b>Wednesday, June 21, 2017</b>

**RochesterWorks, Inc.**  
[www.rochesterworks.org](http://www.rochesterworks.org)

Antwan Williams,  
Director of Youth System Services  
RochesterWorks, Inc.  
255 N. Goodman Street  
Rochester, New York 14607  
(585) 258-3540  
(585) 232-6033 fax  
[Awilliams@rochesterworks.org](mailto:Awilliams@rochesterworks.org)

*“If you can’t be a pencil to write someone’s opportunity,  
then try to be a nice eraser to remove their barriers.”*

– Author Unknown

## **1. BACKGROUND**

RochesterWorks! is Monroe County's largest employment and training system. The RochesterWorks! system was created as a result of the Workforce Investment Act, which took effect in 2000 and connects multiple federally funded employment and training programs in Monroe County. Today, the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and supportive services and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

RochesterWorks, Inc., (RWI) a not-for-profit corporation, serves as fiscal agent, career center operator and research and development staff for the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board (WDB), which oversees millions of dollars in workforce development resources including WIOA funds. RochesterWorks, Inc. is located at 255 North Goodman Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

Employment and training services to thousands of job seekers and businesses are delivered through three (3) Career Center operations with additional services supported through competitively procured contracts with local youth serving organizations. The Career Centers are "one-stop" access points for services available through the system. Job Seekers can utilize the resource rooms with access to computers, copiers, faxes, telephones, and job search materials. They can attend workshops, receive one-to-one job search assistance, career counseling, and access training funds to improve skills. Businesses find qualified employees, post jobs, access training funds to upgrade their workforce skills, and use the Career Centers to conduct recruitment events, get tax credit information, access outplacement services for laid-off employees and get connected to other economic development resources and initiatives. Additional information on programs and services can be found at [www.rochesterworks.org](http://www.rochesterworks.org).

## **2. PURPOSE**

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act enacted a formula-funded youth program serving eligible youth, ages 16-24, who face barriers to employment. Funds for youth services are allocated to state and local areas based on a formula distribution. Service strategies, developed by workforce providers, prepare youth for post-secondary education and/or employment through strong linkages between academic and occupational learning. Local communities provide youth activities and services in partnership with the America's Job Centers (RochesterWorks!) and under the direction of local Workforce Development Boards.

RochesterWorks, Inc. is soliciting proposals from a variety of governmental units, public or private not-for-profit or for-profit corporations, local educational agencies, faith-based and community-based agencies. As a result of this process, RochesterWorks, Inc. will select to employ a Youth Workforce Development Service Navigator (Navigator) for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. A navigator may be a single person/position, parts of FTE spread over different individuals depending upon service delivery design and leverage of resources. Preference will be given to Agencies with the capacity to house two or more navigators. Agencies without the capacity to house more than one navigator should provide a detailed plan of how youth will be served through Navigator transition. The objective of this program is to:

- Provide assistance in achieving academic and employment success through effective and comprehensive activities that improve educational and skill competencies, and connections to employers
- Remove barriers to active participation in education, training, and employment
- Ensure on-going mentoring opportunities with adults

- Provide opportunities for training, career exploration, work experience, employment and financial literacy
- Provide incentives for recognition and achievement
- Provide activities related to leadership development, decision-making, citizenship and community service

Navigators are to be responsible for the process, while participants should be made responsible for their outcomes. Navigators cannot force change on youth, but can use the case management process to influence change. Youth are ultimately responsible for making the change happen.

**Navigator Duties:**

- Outreach, recruitment, assessment, eligibility determination and enrollment of targeted youth
- Develop an Individual Service Strategy specific to each youth that is based on an objective assessment and identifies an employment goal, an educational goal, and any appropriate services supporting the achievement of identified goals
- Keep youth engaged by regularly spending time and building rapport with them
- Make available the 14 Integrated WIOA Youth Elements to each youth requiring them (see A-9), including advocacy for supportive services as needed (i.e. clothing, transportation, personal hygiene products)
- Prepare youth for post-secondary education, training and/or employment opportunities by providing and/or connecting each to basic and occupational skills development and work readiness
- Assist youth to identify appropriate post-secondary educational, training and employment opportunities that will help them to reach their goals
- Problem solve and follow up with youth and/or service; provider to determine effectiveness of results
- Maintain accurate progress notes and supporting documentation for each youth
- Ensure successful attainment of WIOA performance goals, outcomes and measures (see A-5)

The navigator approach incorporates components of The Youth Works Model – A Workforce Development Model developed by the Monroe County/Rochester Youth Committee (see A-4). The model has outcomes in line with WIOA youth funding - credential attainment, workplace and post-secondary readiness, skills gains, median earnings, and retention in employment. These outcomes are accomplished through an approach where the Navigator works in partnership with educators, community and faith-based organizations, employers, career centers, and government to connect youth to needed services. The Navigator acts as the conduit to youth.

Under this solicitation as many as fourteen (14) Navigators are sought to focus WIOA supported services to disconnected youth. For the purpose of this solicitation older disconnected youth are those youth aged 16-24 and not readily employable due to barriers. Typically, these are out of school youth. Navigators sought include:

- This solicitation is seeking up to fourteen (14) Navigators to work autonomously in the community responsible for a specific geographic area such as a city quadrant or county; east-west/town(s), and/or a specific target population (see A-6)

**The basic service delivery design, as envisioned by RochesterWorks:**

- Navigators will focus efforts on the 16-24 year old disconnected, out of school youth population

- Navigators will operate in the community on behalf of an identified target group and/or a defined geographic area (city quadrant or county east-west/town(s) and be allied with the RochesterWorks! Career Centers.
- Navigators will support youth to minimize or eliminate obstacles to post-secondary success
- Navigators will build rapport with, and an understanding of, the array of existing programs and services that serve youth.
- Navigators will connect youth to existing programs and services and support the success of all, maximizing access and minimizing duplication
- Navigators in cooperation with RochesterWorks will provide youth with quality work preparation support leading to post-secondary success (employment and/or advanced training or education)
- Navigators will ensure successful attainment of all WIOA performance goals, outcomes and measures (see A-5)

The Navigator role is envisioned to enhance access to and success in existing programs and services for the target population. The navigator is expected to establish formal relationships with targeted youth system partners and community-based service providers. It is anticipated that this will include appropriate and/or periodic co-location opportunities at suitable youth frequented locations throughout the community in an effort to reach a maximum number of interested and eligible youth, offering improved access to workforce development services. It is expected Navigator activities and services be made available at times that are most appropriate to the youth, beyond the conventional hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday – Friday. Youth must be allowed the flexibility to attend schooling, training, or work.

The RochesterWorks! Career Center (RWCC) will partner with the Navigator to offer job preparation services which will support the efforts of the Navigator including but not limited to:

- Interest and skills assessments
- Workshops regarding resume preparation, interview skills, job search strategy, and job retention
- Resume reviews and mock interviews
- Subsidies for occupational skills development including individual training accounts, on-the-job training and structured work experience/internship
- Youth focused job and career fair events

Navigators will monitor the progress of each youth toward their successful completion of individual goals as well as WIOA performance indicators, WIOA performance goals and other agreed upon outcomes. Navigators will be required to utilize the web-based New York State DOL database system known as the One Stop Operating System (OSOS) to document services using the sense model for relevant case notes for WIOA enrolled youth. OSOS access is limited based on the security permissions relating to WIOA user's job responsibilities. OSOS Access has to be applied for through RochesterWorks and granted for each user with specific assigned security permissions. The different levels of security permissions determine what screens a user can view, change, etc. If needed, on a limited reservation basis, Navigators can request use of cubicle space at a RochesterWorks! Career Center to gain access to office equipment such as computers, printers, faxes, copiers, and telephones (see A-7).

### **3. FUNDING**

At release of this RFP a formal funding amount has not been received from New York State to RochesterWorks, Inc. It is anticipated RWI will obligate \$749,000 in funds to support this solicitation. The maximum award available for each full-time equivalent Navigator is \$53,500. This amount is inclusive of all expenses (see A-2). It is expected on average, contracts will be written to serve 25 youth

(including carry-in) annually per full-time equivalent Navigator. RWI will negotiate a final contracted number with approved service providers based on population to be served and activities to be provided.

Cost competitiveness and efficiency is sought in this solicitation. Every applicant is expected to leverage additional non-WIOA support and/or work together with key community partners including educators, community and faith-based organizations, employers, career centers, and government in support of the navigator position and the services/activities generated as a result. Added consideration will be given to proposals that clearly demonstrate true quantifiable and value-added support.

Funding is dependent upon RWI annual youth award under WIOA. Any increases to Navigator awards for subsequent program years are contingent on funding levels and other program budget constraints and are not guaranteed and cannot exceed \$749,000.

Successful providers will enter into a reimbursement-based contract with RWI for the provision of these services. Organizations will be expected to invoice RWI on a monthly and/or fixed basis.

At its discretion the WDB may amend contracts based on performance and funding availability, and/or renew contracts for up to 3 consecutive contract periods (July 1 through June 30) based on performance and funding availability. Additional competitive solicitations may be made to identify future Navigators and/or to procure exclusive service provisions, such as where gaps in vital services are identified.

#### **4. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY**

Proposals will be considered from governmental units, public or private not-for-profit or for-profit corporations, local educational agencies, and incorporated faith-based and community-based agencies. Preference in this application will be given to applicants that demonstrate a thorough understanding of the targeted geographic area and/or population, substantiate an effective blend of partnerships, cost efficiency, show a comprehensive understanding of the systems in which the youth must negotiate, and establish genuine universal access for interested and eligible youth. Applicants must include their partners in the design of the proposed services included in this application.

Strong private-sector involvement is recommended under WIOA funding. Private-sector employers should be leveraged to support the system by hiring young people, making financial donations for job creation in the public sector or donating time and resources to further such efforts. Such leveraged partnerships will receive added consideration in this solicitation.

Applicants must have the capability to proficiently enter eligibility, tracking, and other required data into the One Stop Operating System, and to maintain and update such data to meet the 5-day requirement per NYSDOL Workforce Development TA 11-12.2. Applicants will be required to coordinate for participant recruitment and acceptance of suitable youth who may be referred from various community partners including the RochesterWorks! Career Center.

Applicants must have the ability to provide framework services that include objective assessment, individual services strategy (ISS), general case management, and follow-up services that lead toward successful outcomes for WIOA youth participants.

Successful applicants will provide an appropriate mix of activities, counseling, referral, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, and case management services to WIOA eligible youth ages 16-24. (For additional information on WIOA go to the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration website - <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa>).

## 5. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

### 5.1 Deadline

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received as a solitary PDF document no later than **12:00 p.m. (Noon) on Thursday, April 20, 2017**. Proposals can be submitted as a single document attachment to email or copied as a single document onto a CD/DVD clearly labeled with name of proposing organization and addressed to:

Cassilda Campbell  
Youth System Assistant

RochesterWorks, Inc.  
255 N. Goodman Street  
Rochester, New York 14607  
**ccampbell@rochesterworks.org**

**Proposals received to the above address/email on/or before the deadline and that comply with all RFP requirements will be reviewed and considered for funding.**

### 5.2 Evaluation Criteria

RWI staff will review all proposals to ensure compliance with the requirements of the RFP. Proposals meeting requirements will be evaluated by a Review Team comprised of RWI staff, WDB and/or Youth Committee members or their designees. Evaluation is based on but not limited to:

- **Quality of Service Design 25%**
  - Innovative, client-centered service strategy
  - Comprehensive, high-quality service components
  - Structured, thorough delivery design
  - Involvement of relevant community partners including private sector employers
  - Advances the Youth Works Model
- **Demonstrated Capability 25%**
  - If previous contractor, past performance and monitoring issues
  - Record of achievement in program management and operations
  - High level of professional and technical skill/knowledge including experienced staff w/adequate support
  - History of success in serving target area/population
  - Sensible plan to reach program outcomes
- **Cost Efficiency 10%**
  - Clarity and completeness of budget detail
  - Reasonableness of costs
  - Leveraged resources and in-kind contributions that are clearly quantifiable and confirmed
  - Level of investment in relation to proposed outcomes
- **Miscellaneous 40%**
  - Value of added Resources (funds, contributions, activity/services, etc.) **15%**
  - Prior experience with RochesterWorks/City of Rochester funding **10%**
  - Overall Understanding of RFP objectives **15%**

If necessary, in an effort to clarify specific points regarding what is proposed the Review Team may seek brief revisions and/or request applicants make a presentation to members of the WDB/Youth Committee and RWI management.

Based on the results of the review process, the Review Team will make a recommendation to the Youth Committee on proposals to recommend for funding to the WDB. The Youth Committee makes its recommendation to the Monroe County/Workforce Investment Board (WDB). The WDB makes the final approval of funding.

### 5.3 Minimum Requirements

- A single optimized PDF document
- Arranged in proper order
- Not to exceed eight (8) pages of narrative
- Formatted to 8.5 x 11 paper size using 12 point font, 1 inch margins and Times New Roman Font
- Text lines may be single spaced
- All pages of narrative section must be numbered and contain the applicant name as the footer
- Be specific when describing the elements of service delivery
- Refer to features that are definitive, not those that are only possibilities
- Include only information directly related to the services delivered and target population
- Quantify minimum standards, hours of service, and other crucial components of service delivery
- Any proposed collaboration must be supported by detail
- Be concise and avoid extraneous references and unnecessary detail

### 5.4 Format and Content

Organizations with interest in providing the requested services should submit a proposal narrative of not more than eight (8) pages that includes the following information exactly as labeled (**in bold**) and as ordered below. Required attachments will not count against the narrative page total. Such attachments include Proposal Summary Form, Resumes, Job Descriptions, Organizational Chart, Budget Forms, and Certifications.

1. Complete **Proposal Summary Form** (A-1, page 2)
2. Describe your **Organization and Experience** in providing services to youth as it relates to this solicitation. Include the unique characteristics of the population(s) you propose to serve and why you are well suited to meet their needs. Include any established relationships with other youth serving agencies and/or systems partners within the geographic area and/or population(s) you propose to serve and how they will benefit the youth proposed to serve.
3. Describe in detail your **Strategy and Work Plan** for providing the services requested in this RFP. Include how services will be aligned with the WIOA required 14 Elements (see A-9), and how services will lead to the required WIOA performance goals, outcomes and measures (see A-5). Include specific location(s), hours, and days that services are to be available.
4. Describe any **Additional or Unique Services** you will provide to enhance and/or complement the services you would provide under this RFP. Include any actual matching funds and in-kind contributions.
5. Describe **Challenges and Opportunities**, if any, that might impact your achieving successful performance outcomes as described in this RFP. *Current contractors reapplying must address known deficiencies.*
6. Describe the **Quality Control Measures and Management Procedures** that will ensure successful oversight of staff, quality service delivery, satisfactory performance, and consistent communication with the funder.
7. Provide the name and resume of **Staff Proposed as Navigator(s)**. If specific staff is not yet identified attach a job description including minimum required qualifications. Agencies without the capacity to house more than one navigator should provide a detailed plan of how youth will

be served through Navigator transition. Include an Organizational chart that briefly illustrates the staff and jobs dedicated to this project.

8. **Budget** (A-2) - complete the attached forms. Provide sufficient detail to justify all costs of program activities in the budget narrative. Include any in-kind funding or services and how it will support this effort.
9. **Certifications** (A-3)
  - a. Service Components
  - b. Fiscal Compliance
  - c. Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist
10. **Attachments** - Resumes, Job Descriptions, Organizational Chart, and other.

### **5.5 Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance specific to this RFP **may be sought in the form of open questions at the March 30<sup>th</sup> Information Session only**. Questions may be forwarded in writing, by **12 noon March 28<sup>th</sup>**, via email to Cassilda Campbell, Youth System Assistant in advance of the session – [Ccampbell@rochesterworks.org](mailto:Ccampbell@rochesterworks.org). Responses to all questions will be shared at the information session and/or posted on the RochesterWorks! website following the session – [www.rochesterworks.org](http://www.rochesterworks.org).

## **6. LIMITATION**

The Workforce Development Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request; to negotiate all qualified sources; or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if found not in the best interest of the WDB and/or Youth Committee. This RFP does not commit the WDB to award a contract, to pay costs incurred for preparation of proposals, to pay for legal liability in refusing to award a contract, or to procure or contract for services. Youth Navigators funded under WIOA must adhere to EEO laws and standards. The source of funding shall be those WIOA funds appropriated to Monroe County. Funding for any project will be dependent upon availability of WIOA funds.

Demonstration of past performance and cooperation of the organization awarded in past contract years will be taken into consideration in review of proposals. Poor past or current contract performance with RWI or other funding source may affect recommendations for awards. RWI reserves the right to stipulate special terms regarding the area of concern that will become part of the final contract.

All decisions of the WDB are final.

## **7. ATTACHMENTS**

- A-1 Proposal Summary Form
- A-2 Budget Instructions and Forms
- A-3 Certifications
- A-4 Youth Works Model
- A-5 WDB Performance Goals
- A-6 Target Population and Eligibility
- A-7 Navigator Responsibilities and Service Delivery Guidelines
- A-8 Workforce Terms and Definitions
- A-9 14 Required WIOA Youth Elements
- A-10 Monitoring and Support