

Request for Proposals

Outcomes-Oriented Contracting for Opportunity Youth Services

New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), in partnership with the New Orleans Workforce Development Board and the Office of Workforce Development at the City of New Orleans, is requesting proposals from organizations dedicated to encouraging the growth of career pathway opportunities for young people ages 18-24. All quotes and proposals should be submitted to: Attn: Monique Robinson 1250 Poydras Street, Suite 2150, New Orleans, LA 70112. One (1) electronic copy in PDF format to mrobinson@nolaba.org and at least two (2) hard copies must be submitted to the above address. Both versions are due by 5 p.m. **Monday, April 15, 2019.**

The New Orleans Business Alliance reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals and/or any portions of proposals.

All documents submitted are subject to the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.). Any emails sent or received by Organization employees are potentially subject to these laws. Unless otherwise exempted from the Public Records Act, senders and receivers of Organization email or other records should presume that all information sent is a matter of public record, and is therefore subject to public inspection upon request. To comply with the Public Records Act, the Organization keeps all hard documents and electronic correspondence in accordance with its Document Retention Policy.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the New Orleans Business Alliance at 504-934-4568 or mrobinson@nolaba.org.

Submittals that are incomplete, unclear, or fail to comply with the requirements as outlined in the instructions, may be rejected.

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INTRODUCTION

The New Orleans Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan, approved in December 2016, includes a number of priorities and service elements for the workforce development system including the following:

- More extensive leveraging of resources from a range of program partners and funding streams;
- Development of a city-wide brand and common identity for the workforce system;
- Co-location and comprehensive services delivered through a coordinated system so that individuals can be assessed, trained, and placed all within the same delivery methods;
- Deeper partnerships with adult education and other education and training providers;
- Expansion and formalizing of under-developed areas of partnership to conduct outreach and engagement of special populations to meet their needs;
- Further developing "hub and spoke" system for business engagement and partnerships;
- Convening of business service professionals and job developers across partners to prevent duplication, increase coordination, and improve alignment.

As part of the strategic plan, the NOWDB formalized a partnership with the New Orleans Business Alliance to support the expansion of workforce services and employer engagement in New Orleans through private investments and innovative partnership development. In partnership with the Office of Workforce Development at the City of New Orleans, the purpose of this project is to support the system level transformation of youth focused workforce development in New Orleans.

In partnership with the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), Third Sector Capital Partners (Third Sector) conducted a rapid assessment of the opportunity for outcomes-oriented contracting to improve outcomes for opportunity youth in Orleans Parish. Through a workshop with representatives from NOLABA, New Orleans Office of Workforce Development (OWD), New Orleans EMPLOY Collaborative (EMPLOY), and nearly a dozen service provider organizations, Third Sector developed recommendations to inform an outcomes-oriented request-for-proposal (RFP) for services supplementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program elements. These services will support Opportunity Youth (OY) in securing sustainable employment at a living wage, achieving financial stability, and avoiding involvement with the criminal justice system. Our recommendations focus on the metrics, data sharing, incentives structures and continuous improvement processes that NOLABA can include in an RFP for a coaching and mentorship program supporting these longer-term outcomes.

GRANT OVERVIEW

NOLABA is seeking to fund 2-3 providers to provide coaching services for up to 112 opportunity youth in 2019-2020, with the potential for a renewal grant for services supporting up to 112 additional youth in 2020-2021. These grants are made possible through support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation (Hilton Foundation), 1) to support workforce systems efforts focused on opportunity youth 2) to test a Pay-for-Success and/or outcome-based contracting model with local workforce training partners. Hilton Foundation support can be used for:

- **Barrier Removal:** These sub-grants will assist with partner alignment with the requirements of co-enrollment with the public workforce system, additionally it will allow for the development of common intake processes across providers that connect to the system

- **Wrap-around Services:** Sub-grants targeted toward establishing a continuum of supportive services for youth programs who have issues with retention because of limitations on supportive services
- **Post-Completion Support:** Sub-grants target establishing post completion supports to connect youth who complete programmatic milestones such as, but not limited to foundational skills, internships, and/or attained entry level credentials to transitional employment in hospitality

This RFP aims to select providers to deliver coaching services aligned with the objectives of Hilton Foundation, NOLABA, and the broader New Orleans community.

GOALS

The goals for this initiative are improved job stability, decreased involvement with the criminal justice system and increased savings for opportunity youth aged 18-24 in Orleans Parish through supportive coaching and mentoring services.

NOLABA upholds providers as partners in achieving our mission of uniting a diverse community of stakeholders who can catalyze job growth, create wealth and build an equitable and sustainable economic future for New Orleans. In an effort to continually learn together in pursuit of this goal, NOLABA has integrated an outcomes-orientation into this RFP, contracting process and ultimately the service delivery relationship. With this increased focus on outcomes, NOLABA seeks more frequent communication and data sharing with providers and participants so that all stakeholders involved may discuss program progress, results, and ideas for removing system barriers, improving services, and ultimately achieving better long-term outcomes for opportunity youth.

SERVICES NEEDED

As defined by the leading “Mobility Mentoring” organization EMPATH, coaching is a participant-directed process designed to, over time, improve participant decision making, persistence, and resilience. Through repeated practice, this process becomes internalized and enables the participants to mentor themselves.¹

NOLABA is seeking providers to deliver coaching support to eligible opportunity youth for a period of **twelve months**, with the aim of improving specific short- and long-term outcomes detailed in the Performance Measurement section below. For the purposes of this RFP, coaching services will include a combination of two or more of the following supportive activities, occurring a minimum of 3 times a month, as determined by the needs of the individual participant through initial intake and evaluation:

- Peer support
- Career guidance
- Problem solving for barrier removal
- Goal setting and planning
- Ongoing technical and/or soft-skills development
- Mental health referrals following administration of a shared mental health assessment deemed appropriate prior to commencement of the program.

¹ Source: <https://www.empathways.org/approach/mobility-mentoring/in-practice>

Additional required activities:

- As part of their intake process, providers are required to refer youth for registration with the public workforce system through Wagner-Peyser (unless they are already enrolled)
 - The preferred pathway for referral is case consultation with case workers at the New Orleans Job 1 YouthWorks Career Center; the Job 1 YouthWorks Career Center may also refer youth for coaching services as needed
 - If youth meet WIOA eligibility, youth must be co-enrolled in WIOA (again, unless youth are already enrolled)
- Upon completing training, certification and/or other services, youth must be provided placement services as well as coaching services
- Engaging with participants' employers a minimum of two times during service delivery to assess soft and hard skills fit, support client success and address any issues that may arise
- Tracking performance metrics such as client employment status, wages, financial stability and engagement with the coaching program in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) data management system (see Performance Metrics below)

Coaching may also include the following:

- Identifying additional resources or opportunities to enable client success
- Other innovative practices or services as determined by the provider and included in the approved program budget to support improved short- and long-term outcomes for clients

Coaching services are generally delivered via weekly or bi-weekly one-on-one conversations between coaches and clients. Respondents are encouraged to specify the intended frequency of these conversations, which will be tracked as an output metric tied to a performance incentive.

INDUSTRY FOCUS

Grants under this initiative target seek to increase retention in career pathways including, but not limited to hospitality, construction, digital media, and healthcare. Graduates who complete program milestones can be connected to employers in NOLABA's portfolio to reduce business engagement pressure on youth serving organizations who may not have the capacity to engage employers. This allows for a single engagement point for employers. Grantees can access this level of employer engagement prior to program completion by incorporating connection with the NOLABA portfolio in participants' career pathway plans in preparation for program completion.

YOUTH PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

The organization providing coaching services will manage identification of prospective clients, confirmation of their eligibility, and entrance into the program. Clients eligible for coaching services must meet the following criteria:

- 18-24 years of age
- Unemployed or underemployed
- Eligible for WIOA and/or Wagner-Peyser in Orleans Parish

This RFP aims to serve up to 112 opportunity youth per year across all participating providers. Providers will manage recruitment of prospective clients, confirm their eligibility, and enrollment into their programs. NOLABA will work with providers to arrange for referrals and collaboration with JOB1. The Office of Workforce Development at the City of New Orleans estimates that between 100 and 120

opportunity youth receive WIOA services on an annual basis in Orleans parish – this total is based on historical data and could vary due to broader economic conditions in the region.

This RFP does not specify a fixed number of opportunity youth who must receive services from each provider. Respondents are encouraged to consider the overall number of youth eligible for the program, their own capacity, their budgets, and the outcomes they aim to achieve when submitting applications.

SERVICE PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

This initiative aims to align partner providers with the requirements of co-enrollment with the public workforce system in order to 1) better leverage public and private resources and 2) improve quality of services available to opportunity youth in New Orleans. As part of their intake process, providers are required to register youth with the public workforce system through Wagner-Peyser. If youth meet WIOA eligibility, youth must be co-enrolled in WIOA. Youth receiving WIOA services must be provided coaching services upon program completion.

Providers responding to this RFP should meet the following criteria:

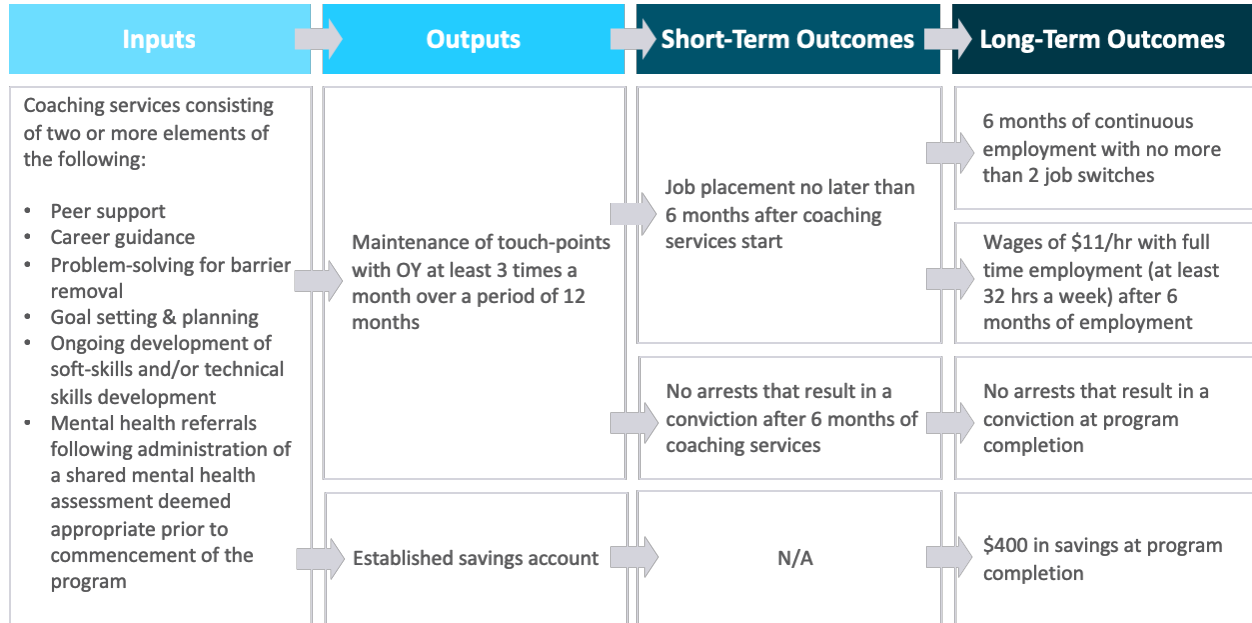
- Capacity and staff expertise to manage a coaching program for opportunity youth ages 18-24
- Ability to provide a minimum of two identified coaching services and relationships with additional providers to allow for the complete suite of coaching services identified in the “Services Needed” section above
- Demonstrated success implementing coaching services to improve employment outcomes for opportunity youth aged 18-24
- Performance management and staff capacity to measure, track and report on program data using the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) data system
- Participation in the EMPLOY Collaborative Data Sharing Pilot; ideally with participation in the Opportunity Youth Data Sharing Council (OYDSC)

While participation in the EMPLOY Collaborative Data Sharing Pilot is a preferred eligibility requirement, we encourage respondents to view participation as an opportunity to access best practices, resources and support for the ongoing use of data and evidence in their programming. EMPLOY provides significant value to providers by convening stakeholders across the New Orleans opportunity youth ecosystem and delivering technical assistance to enable efficient and effective implementation of the ETO data system. In addition, collaboration and coordination between service providers – including joint or multi-stakeholder responses to this RFP – is highly encouraged.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This initiative will evaluate performance against the metrics outlined in Figure 1 below:

FIGURE 1 – PERFORMANCE METRICS



Metric Definitions

- **Touchpoints with Opportunity Youth (OY):** A touchpoint with an OY is defined as a one-on-one conversation between the youth and a coach that meaningfully contributes to the OY's career and/or life goals; one-way communication such as text messages or voicemail does not count as a touchpoint
- **Continuous employment:** For purposes of this RFP, continuous employment is defined as being employed for the duration of at least 6 months during the program and evaluation period; changing jobs or brief lapses in employment are allowable, so long as the period of unemployment lasts no longer than four consecutive weeks
- **Arrests that result in conviction:** An arrest that results in conviction is any felony or misdemeanor conviction that occurs during the evaluation period; arrests without conviction are not counted towards performance measurement
- **Savings:** For purposes of this RFP, savings are defined as total dollars in a savings account with a licensed bank or credit union, as demonstrated by OY participating in the program through a recent bank statement; for tracking purposes, providers should upload copies of bank statements with information aside from name and balance redacted into ETO

Data Collection & Measurement

Data collection and measurement is critical to evaluating short- and long-term outcomes for the program. Figure 2 shows the three main data sources for measuring and tracking performance throughout the program cycle:

FIGURE 2 – DATA SOURCES FOR PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

	ETO	Parish Prison Database	HiRE
Purpose	Primary tracking for employment, wage and savings outcomes	Tracking for conviction outcomes	Verification of aggregate 12-month employment and wage outcomes
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch-points • Employment • Wages • Savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % employment as of December 2020 • Median quarterly wages as of December 2020
Ownership and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWD • NOLABA • EMPLOY • Service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office • OWD • NOLABA • Service Provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWD • WIOA Youth Operator
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data should be available in ETO following routine touch-points with participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible to service providers in real time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data available quarterly • Only needed for post-program employment & median wages

Providers will be responsible for accurately entering data into ETO to enable measurement of short- and long-term outcomes – this responsibility is integrated into the funding and invoicing process for grant support. NOLABA will evaluate short- and long-term outcomes using data from ETO and the Parish Prison Database, with further performance incentives tied to outcome attainment.

Non-Payment Performance Metrics

In addition to the long-term outcome measures in Figure 1, NOLABA will partner with the New Orleans Workforce Development Board and the City's Office of Workforce Development to use HiRE data to verify:

- % of OY employed in December 2020 (with a target of 70% or more)
- Median wages of OY employed in December 2020 (with a target of \$4,225 per quarter)

HiRE data is not suitable for measuring payment outcomes in the context of a 12-month grant for services delivered on a rolling basis because NOLABA would be unable to issue outcomes-based payments until 6-9 months after the initial grant period. However, HiRE data can still provide valuable feedback on program effectiveness and help to verify data reported in ETO. By partnering with the City's Office of Workforce Development to evaluate outcomes beyond the horizon of coaching services, NOLABA will gain further insights into the effectiveness of coaching services for improving long-term employment and wage outcomes for Opportunity Youth in Orleans Parish.

FUNDING

NOLABA allocated **\$375,000** for coaching services described here for PY 2019-2020. Under outcomes-oriented contracts, NOLABA reserves 10% (\$35,000) of total funding for bonus payments, with the remaining \$340,000 for cost reimbursement. Respondents to this RFP should submit budgets for **cost-reimbursement** for services, with the understanding that they will receive bonuses proportional to their share of the grant for short-term outcomes (33% of bonus) and long-term outcomes (67% of bonus). Per-participant cost will be based on the contractor budget, as submitted by the contractor and approved by NOLABA.

Figure 3 below illustrates a budget scenario with two providers:

FIGURE 3 – BUDGETING SCENARIO (ILLUSTRATIVE)

Outcomes Payment Inputs	
Model Variables	Example Inputs
Annual available funding	\$ 375,000.00
Funding for Annual Services Cost Coverage	\$ 340,000.00
Total % Bonus Allocation	10%
Funding for Annual Bonus Payments	\$ 35,000.00
Short-Term Outcome Bonus Allocation	33%
Long-Term Outcome Bonus Allocation	67%
Number of contracts awarded	2
Service Provider 1 budget	\$ 125,000.00
Service Provider 2 budget	\$ 215,000.00
Contract budget total	\$ 340,000.00

Once grants are awarded, invoices for payment may be submitted at four benchmarks. At the first benchmark, contractors may submit initial operating costs invoices which may include, but not limited to 25% of the participant cost on a quarterly basis for each individual youth (i.e. three months of coaching services) participating in the program. In order to receive this benchmark payment, the contractor must have (1) met the minimum touchpoint threshold, and (2) completed all required data entry in ETO and (3) verified that participants have created a bank account as outlined in the Performance Measures section above. For the second, third and fourth benchmarks, contractors may invoice for an additional 25% of the per-participant cost provided that they have (1) met the minimum touchpoint threshold, and (2) completed all required data entry in ETO for each participant slot invoiced.

NOLABA will issue bonus payments once outcomes are reported and verified via ETO. Figure 4 below illustrates a sample payment schedule using the provider budgets from Figure 3.

FIGURE 4 – PAYMENT SCHEDULE (ILLUSTRATIVE)

Input & Output Payments				Outcome Payments		Total Eligible Payments
Operating Costs Installment #1	Cost Reimbursement Installment #2	Cost Reimbursement Installment #3	Cost Reimbursement Installment #4	Short-Term Outcome Bonus	Long-Term Outcome Bonus	
\$ 31,250.00	\$ 31,250.00	\$ 31,250.00	\$ 31,250.00	\$ 4,248.75	\$ 8,626.25	\$ 137,875.00
\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 7,307.85	\$ 14,837.15	\$ 237,145.00
						\$ 375,000.00

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible costs may include the following:

- Wages or salaries and mandatory employee related costs for program staff who support service delivery
- Materials and supplies
- Any reasonable direct program or project costs that are needed to effectively and efficiently carry out service delivery such as, but not limited to training and supportive services.
- Additional costs for innovative services as approved by NOLABA.

CONTRACT TERM

The contract period for these services is July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Depending on results from the first contract period, NOLABA may renew contracts for a second period from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

SELECTION PROCESS

NOLABA will employ a 3-step process to evaluate applications and issue grant awards.

First, NOLABA staff will evaluate each proposal for acceptability, with emphasis placed on completeness and responsiveness to the eligibility criteria. The following minimum criteria will be used to determine which proposals will continue on to Step 2:

- All required services for the program for which they are bidding are addressed;
- All requested information and documentation are included in the application package; and
- The proposal is submitted in accordance with the RFP.

Second, proposals meeting the above criteria will then be reviewed and ranked by the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee will be comprised of NOLABA staff, New Orleans Workforce Development Board members, City’s Office of Workforce Development and a representative of the EMPLOY Collaborative. Proposals will be ranked based on evaluation criteria determined by the Evaluation Committee, and these rankings will be used as a guide for discussion and determination of recommendations. Note: NOLABA retains the right to request additional information from any applicant or request oral presentations from applicants.

Finally, the Evaluation Committee recommendations will be presented to the Executive Staff of NOLABA and the NOLABA Board for approval. All contract awards will be considered provisional pending receipt of

any additional documents regarding administrative qualifications and/or any other areas of concern and the successful completion of contract negotiations.

DBE PARTICIPATION

NOLABA is committed to inclusive economic growth in New Orleans. Consequently, we strongly encourage successful respondents to this RFP to prioritize meaningful DBE participation in the procurement of any business services related to this project in alignment with NOLABA's annual goal of 35% DBE contractor utilization.

DEADLINES

March 15, 2019:	RFP Released
April 15, 2019:	Full Application Due
May 10, 2019	Notification of Intent to Award/Grant Agreements Issues
June 14, 2019	Grant Agreements Due to NOLABA
July 1, 2019	Grant Period Begins

The deadline for responses to this RFP is **Monday, April 15, at 5:00pm Central Time**. For a full timeline of the RFP process, see Figure 5:

FIGURE 5 – RFP TIMELINE

