

Request for Proposals

Industry-Recognized Training Pipeline: Seeking Cohort-Based Occupational Training Proposals

Proposal Due:
October 12, 2020, 9:00 AM EDT

Partner4Work
650 Smithfield Street, Suite 2600
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

RFP Release Date:
September 11, 2020

Partner4Work (TRWIB, Inc.) is an equal opportunity employer.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities

Agreement resulting from this RFP may be funded through:

- the WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grant Program, via Partner4Work as the grant recipient, provided by the US Department of Labor (USDOL). Federal Award Id. No. (FAIN): DW-32582-18-60-A-42. CFDA #: 17.277 – WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grants / WIA National Emergency Grants (NEGs). Project Title: Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grants. Total grant value: \$7,845,563 .
- WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker grants provided by USDOL. CFDA # 17.258 (WIOA Adult), 17.278 (WIOA Dislocated Worker), 17.259 (WIOA Youth).
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Youth Development Funding provided by the US Department of Health & Human Services (USHHS) via the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. CFDA #: 93.558.

Any organization awarded a contractual agreement resulting from this RFP must comply with all applicable regulations and the terms and conditions of the grant provided by USHHS or USDOL. Please note that the total grant value is dispersed to a variety of workforce development partners.

Who We Are

TRWIB, Inc. (dba “Partner4Work”) is the workforce development organization that connects funding, expertise, and opportunities to develop a thriving workforce in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. With a budget of more than \$25 million in public and private workforce funds, Partner4Work (hereafter P4W”) delivers a comprehensive portfolio of programs and initiatives for adults and youth to ensure that current and future needs of employers, job seekers, and underemployed workers are met.

Purpose of this RFP

Partner4Work has issued this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify training programs that will provide a specific pathway for Allegheny County job seekers ages 18+ to gain industry recognized credentials and gain employment. While funding is available for all Allegheny County job seekers age 18+, the majority of funding under this solicitation is available for young adults ages 18-24 living in the City of Pittsburgh. Respondents must indicate which target group(s) they intend to serve - 1. young adults age 18 to 24; 2. adults age 18 and older; and/or 3. dislocated workers.

This RFP is intended to establish and strengthen collaborative partnerships between training programs, workforce development providers and employers. Training programs need not be the provider of workforce development services, but they must have committed partners who will refer potential participants for training and provide additional services. Examples of additional services include but are not limited to: career counseling, job search assistance, supportive services, access to workshops (resume preparation, interview skills, etc). Successful respondents to this RFP will be required to partner with the PA CareerLink system for referrals, eligibility determination, and more.

It is essential that the programs proposed include committed employers willing to provide opportunities for full time employment to participants upon completion of training. Respondents to this RFP must provide training that leads to employment in one of the following industry sectors and/ or that is aligned with an occupation on the High Priority Occupation list in Allegheny County:

1. Construction
2. Financial Services
3. Transportation/Logistics
4. Manufacturing
5. Healthcare
6. Information Technology/STEM
7. Public Sector
8. Transportation
9. Retail & Hospitality

The initial funding awarded through this RFP will be awarded for a period of eight months, from November 1, 2020-June 30, 2021. At its discretion and given the availability of funds, Partner4Work may choose to exercise up to three additional option years of funding for successful programs.

Respondents to this RFP will be responsible for delivering cohort-based training in [High Priority Occupations](#) and/or the sectors above that is linked to employer partners. Each proposed program must include at least one employer partner in the application. Employer partners to the program must guarantee hire, preferential interviewing, or support of the program for programs to be funded through this solicitation.

Respondents to this RFP must utilize the PA CareerLink system and Partner4Work funded young adult providers for referrals to training programs. Partner4Work will separately solicit the eligibility determination, case management, and documentation functions of programming; successful respondents of this procurement will work closely with the provider(s) selected by the parallel solicitation to ensure that all administrative and reporting requirements of funding are met and programming is client centered.

Desired Impact

P4W is creating more opportunities for system linkages between programs that serve youth, adults and dislocated workers. This RFP aims to accomplish the following:

- Establish cohort based training opportunities serving young people ages 18-24, adults, and/or dislocated workers. For more information on the definitions of eligible individuals, see the [Partner4Work eligibility policy](#). Generally speaking, to be eligible for Partner4Work funded programming, job seekers must be legally eligible to work in the United States, live in Pittsburgh or Allegheny County, be interested in and ready to work, and meet income guidelines. Partner4Work also prioritizes serving Dislocated Workers in this procurement. Dislocated Workers are individuals who have recently lost their job through no fault of their own;
- Build referral systems within current program providers, including the PA CareerLink system and providers of young adult programs, for participants interested in earning industry recognized credentials;
- Provide pipelines to specific full time employment opportunities in priority industries for young people ages 18-24 who are ready to progress beyond youth programming as well as adults and dislocated workers looking for training that leads to employment.

Participant Eligibility and Suitability

Agreements resulting from this RFP will be funded through multiple funding streams, as described below, each having specific eligibility criteria that apply to participant enrollment. To streamline the process for respondents to this RFP, Partner4Work will designate a third party to make eligibility determinations and conduct enrollment for each individual participating in training agreements resulting from this RFP. This designated agency will also establish training suitability, a requirement of the funding available. Suitability assessment includes determining that an individual has the skills and qualifications needed to successfully participate in the desired training program, among other considerations. Selected respondents to this RFP will refer candidates they have selected as being ready for training to the eligibility and suitability assessment partner. Training providers selected through this RFP must work closely with the eligibility and suitability assessment partner to support the process used for determining participant eligibility and training suitability. While the eligibility and suitability assessment partner will make every effort to support the enrollment choices of training providers selected through this RFP, the eligibility and suitability assessment partner will retain final authority on such determinations.

Anticipated Award

Partner4Work anticipates funding at least 5 cohort based trainings through this solicitation, with an upper limit of \$250,000 per contract. With the exception of proposals that seek to serve entirely City of Pittsburgh young adults, Partner4Work expects to blend funding at its discretion for all other agreements resulting from this RFP. Proposals that demonstrate reasonable and necessary costs to establish partnerships, train and support job seekers will be considered. Highly scored proposals will

contain clear evidence of employer buy-in to programming and immediate or clear path to jobs paying family sustaining wages.

Funding Stream	Projected Amount of Funding Available through June 30, 2021
TANF Youth	Up to \$500,000
National Dislocated Worker Grant	Up to \$100,000
WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker	Up to \$200,000
Community Service Block Grant (Allegheny County only, exclusive of the City of Pittsburgh)	Up to \$70,000
Total	Up to \$870,000

Who can apply?

Non-profits, for-profits, community-based organizations, educational institutions, trade associations, labor-management partnerships, or unions, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship organizations, and government institutions are welcome to apply. To be successful in this proposal, respondent must either be an accredited educational institution or have a close partnership with an employer or group of employers.

Partner4Work requests that respondents of this RFP provide past program performance data for courses/programs to be considered for funding. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Number of individuals served
- Training completion rate
- Number of individuals that completed that earned a credential
- Number of individuals that completed and are in unsubsidized employment
- Average wages earned in subsequent employment

If respondent is proposing a new program without past performance data, respondent must clearly indicate how performance outcomes will be met.

Fiscal agents: Organizations with an existing federal tax ID may serve as a fiscal and/or administrative agent for an unincorporated entity. If so, the proposal must clearly state the arrangement and include a letter signed by an authorized board member of the agent organization acknowledging the arrangement.

Payment

Organizations that receive awards resulting from this RFP must submit invoices to P4W that are certified true and correct by the authorized signer. All costs must be reasonable, allocable and allowable, according to all applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance regulations. Agreements will be established on a fixed, per participant cost structure. Payment will be made 50% on enrollment into a training program and 50% when documentation of a credential earned is provided to Partner4Work.

How to Apply

Interested and qualified applicants must submit proposals by Monday, October 12, 2020 at 9:00 am EDT to rfp@partner4work.org. Emails must have the subject line “Pipeline Project [Organization name].” Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered. Proposals must be submitted in 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch page margins, and 1.15 spacing in a pdf format. Your proposal may not be considered if page limitations and formatting requirements are not met. Your proposal must contain all the content below in the same general order illustrated. Strong proposals will demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements described throughout this RFP and establish the capacity, expertise and program design needed to meet the required standards and goals.

Review Timeline (all dates are subject to change):

Release of RFP:	September 11, 2020	
Proposal due date:	October 12, 2020	by 9:00 AM EDT
Questions regarding this RFP due:	September 30, 2020	by 5:00 PM EDT
Selection of providers:	October 23, 2020	
Start of contracts	November 1, 2020	

Proposal Contents

- **Cover Sheet** – Use form provided; see P4W webpage for this RFP
- **Executive Summary**—Include each of the following: (maximum 2 pages)
 - Overview of the organization’s qualifications and alignment with the services sought by this RFP.
 - Description of the training organization’s accreditation or PA licensures.
 - Employer partner(s) involved in the program.
 - Specific number of job seekers divided by geography (City of Pittsburgh or Allegheny County) and eligibility (young adult 18-24, adult 25+, and/or dislocated worker) proposed to be served.¹
 - Concise description of the proposed pipeline and retention model.
 - The total amount of funding requested.
- **Partnership Description** – Describe each of the following for your program: (maximum 2 pages)
 - Indication of lead organization
 - Description of training organization(s), including but not limited to year established, legal status, executive leadership, annual budget and number of full-time staff that will be dedicated to services within the proposed model, applicable accreditation or PA licensures, experience training job seekers and young people ages 18-24, overview of training program and curriculum, credentials of trainers, credentials earned by program completers, timeline and materials required for completion, employers that recognize the credentials and the potential employment outlook for training graduates.
 - Description of employer(s), including but not limited to one or more specific employers with an interest in hiring trained participants; the specific jobs (job titles and numbers of

¹ Partner4Work oversees two Workforce Development Areas - City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County - and therefore must track program activities accordingly. For purposes of this RFP, respondents must indicate the number of anticipated participants living within the City of Pittsburgh and the number living within Allegheny County outside the City of Pittsburgh.

each) that are projected to be available within the next year; the starting wage and benefits, and the leadership commitment to creating a strong training pipeline. In scoring of the RFP proposals, higher marks will be awarded to those that can demonstrate the employer(s) interest in participating in a multi-employer approach.

- Description of referral system(s), including the communication channels; process for making and receiving referrals between your organization and partners; one or more specific committed sources for program participant referrals
- **Program Description** – Describe each of the following for your proposed program: (maximum 5 pages) Applicants should directly respond to each of the sections below; however, strong responses will clearly demonstrate how the applicant will effectively meet all the standards, expectations and desired outcomes found in this RFP. Priority will be given to programs that describe a seamless partnership that forms the pathway a job seeker will take from recruitment, to training and to employment.
 - Program model. Major components of your proposed program, according to the requirements described in this RFP. Be sure to address your plans for recruitment, employment, supportive services, jobs placements, career services, job development and placement, job retention and how you will meet other important standards included in this RFP. Clearly identify employer partners in the program.
 - Placement in employment is a critical component of a successful workforce program and will be evaluated accordingly. P4W encourages the inclusion of MOUs with employers in proposals to demonstrate agreement to provide preferential interviews, hire, provide placement in apprenticeships, and/or provide union membership and related employment to graduates of training programs. In lieu of MOUs, P4W will accept letters of support from employers that provide this information and demonstrate this agreement. MOUs and letters of support do not count toward the 5 page limit of this section.
 - List specific job titles and number of open jobs the training will prepare job seekers for by employer partner and industry.
 - Job quality and job retention are important results of a successful program. By job quality Partner4Work means wages that exceed Partner4Work's self-sufficiency policy, equity for and inclusion of all employees, affordable health insurance, an expectation of stable employment over the long-term, and opportunities for advancement. By job retention Partner4Work means employment in a job during the second quarter after being hired or other exit and during the fourth quarter after being hired or other exit. Describe your plans for achieving employment of participants that provides job quality and job retention.
 - Content of the training program, specific population served, total trainees trained, number and timing of cohorts, and credentials earned;
 - Attach a flow chart, which does not count toward the page limit, depicting program entry, eligibility/suitability assessment by Partner4Work Eligibility Partner, participation, progress and exit that clearly connects the services and activities of your proposal with desired outcomes.

- Target population. Describe the individuals you plan to serve in your proposed program, including how you will effectively reach and engage them, meet their unique needs, and ensure they can achieve the desired outcome of the program. Please include commitment that your partnership will work closely with Partner4Work and its Eligibility Partner to determine eligibility and suitability of program participants for training.
- Recruitment Strategy. Describe specific strategies for recruiting job seekers, with a priority on young adults to fill training class. Provide process(es) your organization implements to ensure prospective clients are suitable and likely to be successful in the program.
- Program Prerequisites. If applicable, include what prerequisites trainees will need to be successful in the program, including but not limited to High School Diploma or its Equivalent, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, or Particular Course Prerequisites.
- Alignment to High Priority Occupation(s). Provide the specific High Priority Occupation(s) the program supports, including the specific O*Net SOC code and job title provided on Allegheny County's 2020 High Priority Occupation List.² Alternatively, provide the priority industry served by the training program.
- Past Performance. Provide evidence of past performance success, including but not limited to: training completion rate, employment rate, and average wages earned in subsequent employment. If performance data is not available, please provide clarification as to why and how successful performance will be assured.
- Performance Goals/Expected Outcomes. Describe how your proposed program will meet the performance standards required by this RFP. Include the expected outcomes individuals will obtain from completing the program. This includes expected planned employment and/or education related outcomes which can be achieved during the program of study, including but not limited to:
 - Measurable skills gain
 - Industry recognized credential/certificate/certification
 - Occupational certificate/certification
 - Postsecondary diploma
 - Community college certificate
 - Apprenticeship certificate
 - Occupational license

Be sure to address how you will track performance within the program timeline and regularly communicate status to P4W.

- Staffing plan. Provide a staffing plan for program-related, administrative and executive positions that will support your program, including titles, basic roles, responsibilities, and level of effort.
- Location. Describe where you will deliver program services, including characteristics of the space, and how location and space will provide access and support effective service delivery to program participants. Include strategies to ensure participants may also be served in neighborhood-based locations, if possible. If the program will be entirely virtual, include a description of how you will ensure engagement in virtual training and that participants have the necessary equipment to participate. If program will be in

² [2020 HPO List - Allegheny County](#)

- person, outline arrangements for continuing programming if stricter in-person guidelines become required given the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Partnership and referrals. Describe how you will collaborate, coordinate and establish strong relationships with project stakeholders, including the selected eligibility determination partner and other community agencies to benefit participants. Be sure to address how you will promote and facilitate referrals to and from your proposed program.
 - Timeline. Provide a timeline illustrating the major activities, tasks, and services of the proposed program. Include a description of the timeline that outlines the process for program completion and proposed strategy to help ensure program completers are placed to employment. All participants must be exited from the program by June 30, 2021. As such, provide a deadline for enrollment in the timeline that allows for positive program exits for all individuals enrolled.
 - Any other services, programs, or resources you and your partners will offer participants, if applicable, and any funds or resources you plan to leverage in support of your proposed program, if applicable.
- **Budget**—Provide a budget including all program and administrative costs, using the required budget template provided (see P4W webpage for this RFP). All costs must be allowable according to applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance and regulations of the funding source, and allocable to the proposed program. Effective budgets will enable the proposed program to meet the requirements of the contract, while being realistic and reasonable, avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures. Refer to the Uniform Guidance to identify disallowed costs associated with this grant. The cost of proposed programs on a per participant basis should be reasonable, justified in the budget narrative, and comparable to similar workforce programs operating regionally and nationally. *Partner4Work seeks to increase the professionalization of the workforce development field and strives to ensure that the workforce development system reflects the dignity of work. As such, Partner4Work encourages that all staff members employed through any agreements resulting from this RFP receive a minimum salary of \$21,528 per year or \$10.35 per hour. Preference will be given to respondents at which staff members are paid a minimum of \$31,200 per year or \$15.00 per hour.*
 - **Budget Narrative** (maximum 2 pages)—Provide a narrative to accompany the budget that describes the purpose of each cost, explains how all costs were estimated, and justifies the need for all costs in meeting contract requirements. In your narrative, be sure to clearly communicate the calculation for staff, space, equipment, general operations, technology, books, fees, administration, indirect and any other necessary costs. A strong budget narrative will minimize or eliminate the need for clarifications from evaluators reading the proposal. See Appendix B for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative. If your proposal includes leveraged resources of your organization or another organization, use the budget narrative to describe the actual or estimated value of the leveraged resources. If applicable, also attach a letter of support from any organization providing leveraged resources in support of your proposal. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate, please specify. Otherwise, indirect costs are limited to 10% of the total program and administrative costs.
 - **Attachments**

- Required attachments
 - Service flow chart. See *Program Description, Program Model*.
 - If your proposal includes partnerships with employers, include MOUs with the information and agreements identified above in the Program Description section. In lieu of MOUs, P4W will accept letters of support from employers with the information and agreements that are described for MOUs above in the Program Description section.
 - Evidence demonstrating financial capacity (1 of the following:):
 - Most recently submitted IRS Form 9-90, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax
 - Most Recent independent Audit
 - A letter from a Certified Public Accountant attesting to the fact that the entity has a financial system in place for tracking participants in training and is using accepted accounting practices
 - Evidence the provider complies with physical and programmatic accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended and the regulations implementing these statutory provisions
 - Evidence of a policy that requires compliance with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity laws

Questions

All questions or requests for additional information must be made in writing to rfp@partner4work.org by September 30, 2020, no later than 5:00 PM EST. Answers will be posted publicly at www.partner4work.org. Interested parties are encouraged to check the website frequently for updates. Questions received after September 30th will not be answered.

Disclaimers

- This Request for Proposals (RFP) does not commit Partner4Work to award a contract.
- Partner4Work may select a firm based on its initial proposal received, without discussion of the proposal. Accordingly, each proposal should be submitted on the most favorable terms, from a price and technical standpoint, that the bidder can submit to Partner4Work. Partner4Work may, however, have discussions with those firms it deems in its discretion to fall within a competitive range.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant, request oral presentations from applicants, or conduct site visits from any applicant before a contract award.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to fund portions of a proposal, or to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part. Rejection of a portion of a proposal does not necessarily negate the entire proposal.
- Partner4Work may, at its discretion, adjust the level of funding provided to successful bidders under this RFP and/or consider the funding of proposals not initially funded under this RFP at a later date.
- No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a contract for services or supplies.
- All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to Partner4Work and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, Right to Know Law, or other applicable legislation.
- The contract award will not be final until Partner4Work and the successful bidder have executed a

mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. Partner4Work reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No activity may begin prior to final Partner4Work approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and Partner4Work.

- The submission of the proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged to any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.
- Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of Partner4Work are considered public records and subject to disclosure. Partner4Work reserves the right to issue additional RFPs if and when it is in Partner4Work's best interest to do so and, may elect to negotiate and issue multi-year contracts to successful bidders under this or subsequent RFPs.
- All programs and activities are designated as equal opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact staff to request assistance with access to this RFP.
- Partner4Work strongly recommends potential bidders look at the contract templates, available at www.partner4work.org, before considering whether to submit a bid for this program.

APPENDIX A

Request for Quotes Cover Sheet

Lead Applicant: Click or tap here to enter text.

A. Contact Information

Organization Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Address: Click or tap here to enter text.

City: Click or tap here to enter text. State: Click or tap here to enter text. Zip Code: Click or tap here to enter text.

Principal Contact Person: Click or tap here to enter text. Title: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Fiscal Contact Person: Click or tap here to enter text. Title: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Executive Director: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

B. Legal Information

Type of organization: For-profit: Non-Profit: Government: Education Institution

Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN): Click or tap here to enter text.

C. Requirements / Documents (*proposals submitted without these documents will be considered incomplete, please see associated links for more information and instructions as to how to acquire them*) Please note that a single copy of all requirements below must be submitted for EACH Partner, in addition to the lead applicant (if applicable).

Registration in the [System for Award Management](#) (SAM)

Certificate of Liability Insurance

Certificate of Worker's Compensation Insurance

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D. Additional Requirements

Agree to Use Partner4Work's Contract Management Software, Parley Pro, for Contract Negotiation

By submitting your proposal you certify that you are compliant with the following [PA state integrity policy](#). If you are not, please submit along with your proposal a written explanation of why such certification cannot be made