

YOUTH SERVICES RFP QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A traditional bidder's conference will not be conducted with this RFP. Instead, those with questions (after you completely review the RFP) may submit your questions via e-mail to lbethea@swapte.org no later than April 7, 2023. All questions received, by this day will be reviewed and responses posted on the SWAPTE website (swapte.org). No further questions will be acknowledged beyond the above date, and no one else is authorized to respond to any verbal or written questions.

1. Am I reading the RFP correctly to say we will not be allowed to offer stipends as part of our program?

A: Yes, Incentives and Supportive Service payments will be all that is allowed.

2. Goodwill Gulf Coast has a Google grant that allows us to offer certification/credential training courses free to our participants. It is aptly called Google Coursera. I will send more detailed information regarding these training to you in a separate email. As students who are enrolled in Goodwill's Adult Education Program, YES participants have access to these courses as well. Would you please address how participation in these courses should be handled, and what the performance measure, if any, will be -- Are they considered a placement, similar to PSE and is it considered a credential when they finish? Or not? You could send more information about the trainings. I'll forward

A: Credentials should lead to employment most of these credentials could not assist a young person into employment unless followed with a four year degree, as in, Data Analytics and UX Design. However, IT Support program is a valuable credentials for youth participants (only youth participants for the record) that are interested in a career in technology. It is recognized by ACE so it may contribute toward future learning credits. The coursework is around 60 hours for each program, which is reasonable. This type of certificate would allow a youth to obtain employment on a Help Desk or as an entry level tech.

3. *Is it okay to award a stipend for completing the enrollment process if it is written into our grant?

A: The RFP states that no stipends will be issued this year.

4. Last year, we started enrolling in August. When will we be begin enrolling this year?

A. Enrollment will begin after contracts are issued and appointments are scheduled.

5. What is the best way to contact/communicate with a staff member at SWAPTE?

A: Email is the best policy.

6. If we enroll an individual who is already a high school graduate, will a placement ONLY be needed to get credit or does this individual need a 2nd credential for us to get credit? (It should be noted that if a high school graduate enrolls into our program, we do have in-house trainings that lead to credentialing therefore ITA is not the only option).

A: All youth are required to earn a credential and retain employment 2nd and 4th Quarter after exit. If the youth has already graduated at the time of enrollment, they will need to earn a WIOA recognized credential and be employed 2nd and 4th quarter after exit for the program to receive positive performance for that individual.

7. Is the Career Center planning to continue providing resumes when the youth comes for the enrollment determination process?

A: The Career Center is required to have an account set up on each client to include a resume if work history exists. Providers are able to update this resume at any time.

8. On page 6, B.15. it states to check the SWAPTE website regularly for responses to submitted questions; what date do you anticipate answers to be posted?

A: The deadline for submitting questions was Friday, April 7, 2023. All questions and answers will be submitted at one time and everyone will be notified.

9. On page 7, C.2. the RFP notes that funding is contingent availability of WIOA funds. Does SWAPTE have a planned number of providers to award or projected funding levels for PY23-24?

A: All funding is based on availability of WIOA funds. No planned number of awards.

10. On page 7, C.4. please provide the state or local definition of "substantial cultural barriers"?

A: Perceives him or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.

11. On page 8, C.6. regarding benchmarks, please provide a current list of WIOA Youth training providers in the region by county, the number of planned participants served, the type of program (ISY or OSY), the potential carryforward participant numbers, and the current budget value for each contract.

A: SWAPTE Youth Provider information and the total amount of the budgets are posted on the website. SWAPTE has always required that youth are not carried forward from year to year unless special permission given.

12. On page 12, C.7.c. it states all SWAPTE contractors are expected to meet or exceed performance standards, will there be quarterly reports published to reflect each contractor's performance towards achieving the performance measures?

A: Providers will be reviewed monthly and quarterly. Our performance reports are produced from the Dept of Commerce and will be published when they are received.

13. Please provide the WIOA youth regional performance measure achievements for the past two years.

A:

YOUTH	Cohort	GOAL	Goal	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4
Placement in Education or Employment Q2	7/1/2020-6/30/2021	45.3%	67.8%	58.7%	59.5%	55.2%
Placement in Education or Employment Q4	1/1/2020-12/31/2020	56.7%	67.5%	58.0%	70.3%	59.7%
Youth Median Earnings Q2	7/1/2020-6/30/2021	\$3,219	\$2,795	\$2,947	\$2,875	\$2,809.00
Credential Attainment w/in Yr. after Exit	1/1/2020-12/31/2020	59.2%	45.0%	60.5%	60.0%	37.2%
Measurable Skill Gains	7/1/2021-6/30/2022	51.7%	47.0%	42.5%	49.8%	52.6%

14. Are UBER/Lyft and ride-share gift cards an allowable expense, given youth participants' limited access to personal vehicles or public transportation?

A: Transportation Supportive Services are allowed as long as the need is documented, and the provider has a published policy in place.

15. Are emergency assistance (utility payments, car repair) support services available if community resource funds are unavailable? If yes, what are the limits?

A: As stated in the RFP under the Policy:

Incentives for Supportive Services must be addressed on the participant's ISS before issued and is on a case-by-case basis and not an entitlement. There will be no limit on supportive services, however there is a maximum limit of \$300.00 per participant for incentives. Supportive services that will be issued needs to be addressed in the budget and explained in the narrative.

Incentives for Supportive Services can only address the following:

Gas

Transportation

Uniforms

Child Care

Testing Fees

License Fees

Food

*Other supportive services must receive prior approval from SWAPTE before purchasing and/or issuing to a participant.

When addressing Supportive Services with participants reaching out to and referrals to community services should be provided.

A maximum of \$100.00 can be earned towards a credential. A copy of the credential(s) must be submitted to Career Center staff along with documentation indicating when the credential was earned and date the incentive was received.

A maximum of \$25.00 can be earned towards a measurable skills gain (MSG). A copy of the MSG(s) must be submitted to Career Center staff along with documentation indicating when the MSG was earned and date the incentive was received.

16. Please provide local policies for occupational skills training, ITA funding limits, youth on-the-job training, and follow-up.

A: Policies are posted on the SWAPTE website

17. Regarding the budget, should we separate WIOA Work Experience salaries and fringe for staff to support the 20% WIOA expenditure requirement?

A: Yes

18. Please specify if proposals are to be printed dual or single-sided.

A: Single sided

19. Is there a separate form to be signed for the Certifications and Assurance, or should we add a statement and signature line to the pages included in the RFP?

A: By signing the response package cover sheet will suffice. If awarded contract there will be other contract forms to be signed.

20. Are proposers allowed to include Attachments or Exhibits such as the Articles of Incorporation (required per the Cover Sheet) and charts/tables to support the narrative?

A: Narrative should not exceed 25 pages so any additional information will need to be included in the 25 pages.

21. Regarding the State of Alabama Disclosure Statement, please clarify if a contractor has provided WIOA services through an RFP award in the State of Alabama (e.g., with a regional workforce office) if this is considered providing goods or services to a State Agency/Department, or applying for and receiving a grant from a State Agency/Department, both or neither? The form instructions do not provide guidance regarding these questions.

A: Yes any funds received through the State of Alabama as a whole should be reported.

22. We just wanted to make sure WBL is still optional since the Career Center has picked that up. We were thinking if this is the case, we would continue to refer our participants to them and not include that in our proposal, but wanted to make sure that is an option.

A: Yes this is still an option with the provider.

23. Does each out-of-school youth program need to address all of the required elements listed on pages 10-11? Because of the nature of our program and the population we serve a few of them are difficult.

A: Any or all of the Fourteen Elements should be addressed with the youth as needed.

24. Technically our program participants are not students at the university. We are a program, housed at the university however our participants do not gain academic credit nor earn a degree. Participants take classes and get grades based on performance in the classes and receive a certificate. So since there is no academic credit involved they are "not attending any school (as defined under state law)", right?

A: PASSAGE USA will be considered an out of school youth program.

25. (Item 1 of required elements) TIs our certificate a recognized postsecondary credential? Our program and our certificate has been approved as a comprehensive transition and postsecondary (CTP) program by the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, the VA has approved our program for Special Restorative Training Only. Is this sufficient?

A: PASSAGE USA is a specialized program and this will be sufficient.

26. (Item 2 of required elements) TSince our participants have already received a diploma (albeit not a traditional diploma) do we need to address the "alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services" other than saying they do not apply to participants in our program?

A: Correct for PASSAGE USA

27. (Item 3 of required elements) T I do not believe that some of our participants are eligible for postsecondary education programs and perhaps training

programs because of the diplomas they have received. Many of the formal postsecondary training programs are also too rigorous. However, the activities we have help prepare for postsecondary employment and perhaps taking the GED or other training opportunities. Is this acceptable?

A: For PASSAGE USA yes acceptable.