

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Alternative Education Initiative FY 2023

ISSUE DATE	January 31, 2022
BIDDER'S CONFERENCE	February 18, 2022 12:00 pm. Click here to register for the conference.
LETTER OF INTENT DUE Strongly encouraged but not mandatory	February 25, 2022 BY: 5:00 PM EST
PROPOSALS DUE	March 25, 2022 BY: 5:00 PM EST

43 HAWKINS STREET | BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS | **JANUARY 2022**

OFFICE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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Mayor's Office of
**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



CITY OF BOSTON
Michelle Wu, Mayor

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Section I. Overview

The Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is the City of Boston's workforce development agency. Under the leadership of Mayor Michelle Wu, OWD administers funding from various sources for the purpose of supporting a broad range of services leading to greater economic security. These services include education and training, career development, job training, adult basic education, and youth employment services. One such funding source is the Alternative Education Initiative (AEI).

On behalf of the City of Boston's Department of Youth Engagement and Employment (YEE), OWD solicits competitive proposals for services to eligible youths under the AEI. As a division of the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), OWD will handle all questions concerning this RFP, review all submissions, and prepare funding recommendations.

PRIORITIES FOR AEI FUNDING

The goal of Boston's AEI initiative is to ensure that youth who are not effectively served in mainstream education systems are connected to alternative education programs to provide them with the skills and credentials necessary to access career-oriented employment. For Fiscal Year 2023, OWD seeks alternative education programs that can bridge youth who complete their educational credential directly into sector-specific career pathways training or post-secondary education, allowing a seamless transition and continuity of services.

The priorities for funding in this RFP were developed through a planning process conducted over the two years. OWD approved a set of policy principles to guide the selection of programs through the RFP process. Subsequently, a draft statement of policy principles was issued for public comment on the OWD website on November 30, 2021, with the opportunity to comment until January 7, 2022. Public feedback was incorporated into the final policy principles, and the full version of the policy principles has been posted to the OWD website: owd.boston.gov.

In brief, the principles are:

1. The use of proven intervention methods to re-engage and retain marginalized youth in meaningful learning and positive developmental activities
2. The use of effective approaches and strategies to support the transition to post-secondary education and training
3. Strong referral partnerships to provide a complete set of supportive and educational services for the students and their families
4. Comprehensive assessment tools and strategies to track students' functional, developmental, and academic progress and diagnose individual learning needs
5. The integration of intensive case management and support services to help students overcome complex barriers and achieve academic success

For a complete description of each policy principle, please download the document from the website. Applicants are encouraged to review the policy principles before starting the application.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

As of the date of issuance of this RFP, OWD has not been informed by the City of Boston of the allocation of AEI funds for the Fiscal Year 2023. The total allocation for the current contracts (FY 2022) was \$506,250.

OWD does not predetermine the amount of funds to be dedicated toward each program model. The type and quality of proposals submitted will determine the funds awarded. Open and competitive procurement typically occurs on a three-year cycle. Contracts resulting from this RFP are anticipated to commence July 1, 2022, and end on June 30, 2023. Contracts are awarded for a one-year period, and a re-funding process determines the second and third years of funding. Re-funding for FY 2024 will be contingent upon satisfactory program performance, approval of a re-funding application, and the availability of city funding.

Section II. Eligibility Criteria

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This is an open and competitive procurement process. Eligible applicants must hold a 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code, be in the process of receiving such status, or have an identified fiscal sponsor having 501(c)(3) status. In addition, OWD is interested in organizations with the following program abilities and track record of providing such services:

- Organizations that provide comprehensive alternative education services to Boston's youth while maintaining high program management and accountability standards.
- Proposals that incorporate partnerships and collaborations that focus on seamless integration of programs and services to ensure no gaps in the continuum of programs and services. Partnerships are urged to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to employers, institutions of higher education, MassHire Career Centers, adult basic education providers, and community-based organizations. Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal. Applicants may be members of more than one partnership under this RFP.
- Recipients of the Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE) funding or BPS affiliated programs are strongly preferred.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

Program participants served with AEI funds under this procurement must be Boston residents between the ages of 16-24 years old who are high school dropouts or at risk of dropping out from traditional high schools.

PRIORITY TARGET POPULATIONS

Within the above broad eligibility requirements for AEI, OWD has determined the following priority target populations for AEI services in Boston.

- Out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 and 24, defined as high school dropouts without a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET.
- In-school youth between the ages of 16-24 who are at risk of dropping out from traditional high schools, including those who are two or more years behind in obtaining credits required for high school graduation.
- Youth who are court-involved; homeless (including those experiencing housing instability or residence inconsistency outside of the federal McKinney-Vento definition), runaway, in foster care, or aged out of the foster care system.
- Youth with disabilities; youth who are pregnant or parenting.
- Young men of color; youth residing in Boston Housing Authority (BHA) facilities or utilizing a housing voucher.
- Immigrant youth; low-income youth who are basic-skills deficient or English Language Learners.

Section III. Services Requested

OWD seeks proposals for programs best demonstrating the capacity to provide access to a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET-granting alternative education programs in the context of a career pathway model. Programs will connect Boston’s youth to alternative education programs, where they can take advantage of small, personalized, flexible, student-centered learning environments, providing a foundation for participating youth to increase their future employability and earning potential. Preference will be given to programs that offer innovative, career sector-based curricula. For example, an educational program that integrates English language development.

This RFP aligns with the city-wide economic opportunity agenda developed to address income inequality for Bostonians. OWD is aware that there are not enough funds to support all efforts to provide a continuum of services based on a career pathways model, as such, under this RFP, OWD encourages organizations to work together to establish a structure to provide a continuum of education and training programs beyond a high school diploma, GED or HiSET. To that extent, OWD encourages applicants to partner and clearly define each partner’s strengths, roles, and responsibilities under this RFP.

Applicants must demonstrate how their curriculum, materials, and pedagogy align with recognized educational standards and support appropriate assessment practices. Preference will be given to programs that use evidence-based methodologies and incorporate common elements of effective alternative education programs identified by the Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE).

Effective program designs must produce academic outcomes which demonstrate learning gains such as grade level advancement and attainment of a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET. Applicants must employ highly individualized and accelerated curricula that allow participants to graduate and obtain high school diplomas or GED/HiSET. Program participants under this grant must successfully demonstrate mastery of content, allowing teachers and staff to provide intensive support and guidance to improve student learning.

Preference will be given to programs and services that establish a framework to move participants from attainment of high school diplomas or GED/HiSETs to matriculation in post-secondary education/training. Program designs should demonstrate how they intend to transition youth into post-secondary education or training upon successful completion of a high school, GED or HiSET program. Applicants must demonstrate clear transition strategies for youth that set them on a path toward economic security. These strategies include partnerships with workforce development training programs or post-secondary institutions where youth can enroll upon completing their educational credential.

Towards that aim, applicants under this program model must provide a robust school-to-career/college framework. Programs offering an early introduction and exposure to post-secondary education and careers, allowing youth to explore career options and interests, and to experience improved educational outcomes, such as dual enrollment strategies, are encouraged. A post-secondary bridge strategy, such as remedial/developmental class preparation, which allows youth to take college-level courses upon entry into community colleges and the use of structured work-based learning, such as career exploration, unpaid and paid experiences, summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training are also encouraged. Programs should coordinate with relevant partners to deliver an integrated set of activities designed to promote students' successful transition from the AEI program into an industry-recognized training program or college enrollment.

In addition to providing a solid college and career framework where participating youth can gain specific job readiness skills, OWD encourages applicants under this RFP to incorporate restorative justice principles in discipline policies to build safe classroom communities and contribute to socio-emotional learning for participants.

High school diploma or GED/HiSET attainment are the top priorities for participating youth. Still, service strategies must also reach beyond these credential completions to support youth entry into post-secondary education/training, leading to economic security. Collaboration with training and higher education institutions is encouraged to emphasize career planning and access to post-secondary options for youth. Effective program designs will emphasize retention in the program until receiving a high school credential, and applicants must demonstrate clear bridging strategies into post-secondary education/training for participating youth.

This RFP seeks program designs that incorporate comprehensive service strategies to meet the wide array of needs posed by participating youth. Responsive program designs should articulate specific supportive services for targeted populations, such as access to court advocacy, housing, mental health services, health care, food, and clothing. These services may be provided by the program's case management staff or through partnerships with other agencies. Programs should maintain a network of referrals in health, nutrition, teen parenting, childcare, transportation, substance abuse treatment, mental health, and instruction in English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Participation in resource and referral networks, including YTTF, BYSN, and the Re-engagement Center, allow programs to combine their specialized outreach, education, and employment/career services into coherent pathways from disconnection to high school education is highly encouraged.

REQUIRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Successful applicants will articulate a service strategy and program design that is consistent with the following required program components:

- **Career pathways continuum structure.** Applicants must describe in their proposal a clear career pathways continuum (and include a diagram as an attachment), indicating what transitional strategies and services will be provided and by whom for program participants. Career pathways must identify specific activities that lead to placement into workforce development training or post-secondary education/training upon successfully completing high school diplomas or GED/HiSET programs. Applicants must demonstrate partnerships with educational institutions and/or employers to describe specific activities and strategies to connect education, training, and employment activities for participating youth.
- **AEI Required Sequence of Services: Outreach and Recruitment, Intake and Eligibility Determination, Assessment and Referral, Case Management/Individual Service Strategy, and Follow-Up.** Please see AEI Required Sequences of Services on page 7.
- **Post-secondary education/training and employer partnerships.** Applicants should have strong partnerships with post-secondary education and training programs. The partnership design must also offer employers the opportunity for direct interaction with individual participants and direct coordination with program staff. For example, youth may be placed in summer jobs or internships with employers.
- **Service partnership plan.** Strong partnerships are critical for the delivery of effective services. Programs must have strong connections to ancillary service providers, especially mental health, housing, disability services, and social service providers. Applicants should establish a partnership plan that identifies which organization provides which service for program participants.
- **Youth with disabilities.** Applicants must briefly describe their program's current capacity to teach youth with disabilities, including hidden or non-apparent disabilities. Applicants should identify staff qualifications to serve this population as well as the current practice for identifying and addressing invisible disabilities. Applicants should explain what, if any, kind of instructional or assistive technology is used in programming. Finally, applicants should address if there is identified capacity to serve students with disabilities or plans going forward to do so.

Additionally, the following components are strongly preferred:

- Financial incentives, including stipends, monetary rewards, wages, and other conditional cash transfers for a range of purposes from programs that allow participants to 'earn' while they 'learn' to small incentive payments that reward achievement of program milestones. Innovative earn and learn programs that target traditionally underserved youth populations are strongly encouraged
- Work experience that provides structured opportunities for youth to learn and engage in career opportunities that incorporate education and employment activities. This can take the form of unpaid and paid experiences, summer and year-round employment, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

- Digital skills: Programs must provide structured and integrated opportunities to acquire digital literacy skills. Programs that ensure participants' access to technology and the internet are encouraged. Digitally supported learning strategies—the intentional use of technology and interactive media to support learning and program activities are strongly encouraged.

AEI REQUIRED SEQUENCE OF SERVICES

Programs funded through this RFP are required to provide the following sequence of five required services to ensure that all participants receive comprehensive and individualized services.

Step 1: Outreach and Recruitment

Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal an understanding of their target population. Applicants must be capable of executing a comprehensive recruitment strategy for the target population, showing how the proposed strategy will lead to the anticipated level of enrollment.

Step 2: Intake and Eligibility Determination

Proposals are required to include a detailed description of methods used for determining a suitable match between the youth and the program, as well as the youth's eligibility to participate. If the program does not match the individual's needs or the youth does not meet eligibility requirements, programs should make appropriate referrals and participate in the "hand-off" when possible.

If the program and the participant are an appropriate service match, eligibility documentation must be collected. A participant can only be enrolled under AEI grant funding after determining eligibility.

Step 3: Assessment and Referral

Programs must have a comprehensive, well-articulated assessment system to help determine student needs and progress. Access to formal psycho-educational assessments to identify learning disabilities should be readily available. In addition, programs must have structured processes and protocols to intervene if an assessment indicates a need for additional or specialized support. After a participant is determined to be eligible for services under AEI, a comprehensive assessment of reading and math skills, career interests, occupational skills, work readiness skills, and supportive service needs must be undertaken. One tool that can be modified for this purpose is *Appendix D, the Individual Service Strategy Form (ISS)*, but any form that your program utilizes may be used.

OWD provides financial support for programs to utilize CASAS e-tests online for academic skills assessment of AEI-funded students. Programs may choose to use other tools such as TABE or MAPT, subject to OWD approval.

Assessment may take the form of standardized testing, interview(s) with program staff, writing samples, or other methods. Proposals should include a description of tools used and an assessment process that establishes the following data:

- Basic occupational skills and work readiness skills (OWD recommends the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan (<https://www.bostonpic.org/assets/resources/MassWBLP.pdf>) and Massachusetts Careers Information Systems (portal.masscis.intocareers.org))
- Prior work experience
- Career interests, aptitudes, and motivation level

- Supportive service needs; and
- Any identified barriers to employment/education.

Assessment techniques should be:

- Objective, and not program-specific, or limited to the organization providing assessment, instead they should enable the organization to assist the participant in exploring all available service options
- Comprehensive in gauging all the needs of a participant to enable the student to succeed in the program; and
- Ongoing so that the participant’s needs are evaluated throughout the program.

Participants not enrolled in the assessing organization’s services should be referred to other services. The rationale for referral to other services should be documented. For referral processes, this RFP solicits programs committed to participate in a referral network, including Boston Youth Services Network (*bysn.org*) and the Boston Public Schools Re-Engagement Center, which allows programs to combine their specialized outreach, education, and employment/career services into coherent pathways from disconnection to high school education and beyond.

To facilitate efficiency and cooperation between organizations, program staff are asked to share the assessment information upon referring a participant to other organizations or programs utilizing a release of information process to protect personal information.

Step 4: Case Management and Career Planning

Programs must provide case management that is strengths-based, trauma-informed, culturally competent, and evidence-based. In addition, case management should be intensive and deliberately planned based on comprehensive assessments and well-designed service plans. Programs should demonstrate the ability to work with participants to prepare and transition to the next steps after completing a high school diploma or GED/HiSET program, including workforce development training and/or post-secondary education. Applicants should clearly demonstrate how case management is integrated into their service model. Effective case management models assist participants in overcoming multiple barriers to success; case managers should monitor participant attendance and performance and address barriers to success with them as they arise. In addition, programs should incorporate trauma-informed approaches into their intensive case management models. Generally speaking, intensive case management models should have an excellent staff to participant ratio.

Step 5: Follow Up

OWD requires that programs describe the types of follow-up services provided to participants who have either completed or dropped out of the program. Programs are encouraged to consider the needs of individual youth in determining the appropriate level and type of follow-up services. At a minimum, follow-up should entail monthly progress in relationship to career or education goals and, where necessary, a recommendation for obtaining additional services. OWD strongly recommends 12 months of follow-up be provided and documented. Some examples of follow-up services may include ongoing counseling and case management services, peer group activities, mentoring programs, or ongoing tutoring to develop academic skills.

OUTCOME MEASURES

The following outcome measures will be used to evaluate participant success under the AEI funds.

Attainment of a High School Diploma, GED or HiSET

- Number and percentage of participants who obtain high school diploma, GED, or HiSET.

Enrollment in Post-Secondary Training

- Number and percentage of participants who enroll in post-secondary training upon completion of alternative education program.
- Number and percentage of participants who obtain post-secondary credentials or industry-recognized certificates.

Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education

- Number and percentage of participants who enroll in post-secondary education, including community colleges and universities.

Negative Termination or Drop-out

- Number and percentage of participants who drop out, leave the program without completing, or those dismissed from the program.

DATA TRACKING AND REPORTING

OWD will use Box spreadsheets, a web-based file-sharing application that allows OWD to access live participant data. Successful applicants will be required to use these online spreadsheets to record and track all participant activities, including services rendered and outcomes achieved. Reports generated will be used to assess program performance. In addition, the organization may be asked to provide additional data not accessible through data spreadsheets to evaluate performance outcomes. Organizations must be capable of accessing the Internet and using the Box system.

PROGRAM MONITORING/REPORTING

OWD program management personnel will conduct periodic site visits to monitor the following criteria:

- Compliance with regulations, policies, and contracts
- Operations in accordance with the proposal and the contract
- Achievement of objectives in accordance with the proposal and the contract
- Integrity of administrative and data systems
- Quality of service evaluation through observation and informal interviews; and
- Need for technical assistance or corrective action.

These monitoring activities may take the form of administrative record reviews, interviews of staff and/or participants, and general observations of the facilities and operations. Organizations must demonstrate the capacity to perform administrative responsibilities, including maintaining records of participant eligibility, attendance, and progress, tracking participation, and submitting program reports and invoices in a timely manner. Organizations chosen for AEI funding may be required to attend training or technical assistance meetings.

FINANCIAL MONITORING/REPORTING

Site visits will also be used to monitor financial compliance with AEI and other applicable regulations.

If your agency expended \$750,000 or more in federal financial assistance, from any sources during the most recent audit period, you are required to have an audit prepared in accordance with the most recent guidance from the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance or “UG”). The complete text of this audit guidance can be found at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F in the Code of Federal Regulations. A complete copy of the UG-compliant audit report must be submitted, along with a copy of any management letter (if one exists). Agencies subject to the Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor’s Report (UFR) filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may use the UFR format.

If you expended less than \$750,000 in federal funds, and are exempt from the UG audit requirements, a statement attesting to that fact must accompany your audited financial statements.

If you expended less than \$750,000 in federal funds but are subject to the UFR filing requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then you should submit a complete copy of your agency’s UFR.

Applicants are encouraged to share this information with appropriate fiscal staff to ensure that the audit report submission is available for review by OWD during fiscal site visits. Proposals that do not contain a complete audit report submission will be considered incomplete.

Section IV: Proposal Guidelines

Please complete and include the Proposal Cover Sheet provided in Appendix B. This does not count towards the 20-page limit. Items #1 to #8 below do count toward the 20-page limit.

1. One-Page Proposal Summary (5 points)

- a) Briefly describe your proposed program, including specific target population, number of participants to be served, program site(s), type of program and duration of services, expected AEI outcomes, amount of funds requested, cost per participant, and other key features of your program.
- b) Identify any partners with which you will collaborate to offer key components of the program design.

2. Agency Background and Organizational Capacity (10 points)

- a) Describe your agency’s overall mission and history and its previous experience in providing the specific services proposed
- b) Provide a brief narrative summary and (if available) attach an Organizational Chart to describe your organization’s structure in terms of chain of command, departments, and services, and where proposed services will fit within your organization.
- c) Explain why your organization is well-positioned to successfully design and implement alternative education programs in the context of a career pathway model.
- d) Provide a description of your organization’s track record in the service you are proposing. Include the size of the service population and any performance outcomes, including attainment of high school diplomas, GED or HiSET credentials, and placement into post-secondary education/training programs and/or job placement and retention. (Include any

references to past experiences implementing AEI-funded services, along with any similar non-AEI funded programs).

- e) Describe the process you used to ensure performance measures were met. What were the most important factors in meeting or exceeding past performance expectations?

3. Statement of Need and Target Population (10 points)

- a) Please describe the characteristics and needs of the specific populations you intend to serve, assuming the reader is unfamiliar with the population.
- b) Describe the barriers the target population faces in completing high school diplomas, GED, or HiSET credentials.
- c) How will the proposed program address those barriers? If more than one group is targeted, provide information for each group.
- d) Describe potential challenges that may arise in engaging and enrolling this population.
- e) What direct experience have you had with members of this population, and how did you accommodate their needs?
- f) Include data supporting your agency's ability to achieve successful outcomes with the target group.
- g) Is the program or any of the program components open to the general public, i.e., non-AEI participants?
 - o If so,
 - What is the cost per non-AEI participant? If the cost-per is different from AEI per capita costs, please explain why.
 - How many non-AEI participants are expected to be enrolled between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023?
 - o If no, explain.

4. Program Design (25 points)

- a) Describe the experience youth will have in your program. Be specific in describing how many staff people the youth will see and when and how the youth will be referred for other services.
- b) Describe in detail your proposed design, including an explanation of the proposed program schedule describing the duration, intensity, location, and mode of delivery (virtual/hybrid/onsite) of each component, plus teacher- and counselor-to-student ratios.
- c) Explain how these functions, as designed, are appropriate for your target population and address the barriers this population faces in accessing and persisting in educational programs. Include in your explanation a discussion of how best practices for serving this population informed the design.
- d) Describe how the proposed program design and schedule are of sufficient intensity (hours per week) and duration (number of weeks) to promote substantial learning gains of participants.
- e) Describe your alternative education program and how your program is helping target populations obtain a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET completion. Does the program have a minimum grade level? What is the typical range of grade levels in your classroom(s)? What proportion of students typically have had IEPs?
- f) How has the curriculum been developed and updated to align with MA Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core standards?

- g) How do participants demonstrate mastery of content? For diploma-granting programs, what methods are taken to prepare youth to pass the MCAS?
- h) Discuss attendance, termination, and code of conduct policies and how these are communicated to staff and participants.
- i) Discuss how your program incorporates restorative justice principles in discipline policies to build safe classroom communities and contribute to socio-emotional learning for participants.
- j) Describe the methods to improve participation retention and motivation, demonstrating effectiveness where possible.
- k) Describe how you will ensure, measure, and continuously improve the experience of the youth in your program.
- l) Indicate how each program component will be delivered (on-site, remotely, hybrid).
- m) What is the balance between synchronous and asynchronous instruction?
- n) Is the proposed service a new program, or is it an existing program?

Career Pathways Continuum Structure:

- a) How are your services tailored so youth can successfully transition from your program into post-secondary education/training?
- b) Describe any post-secondary bridge programs to meet the needs of the target population and how they are providing opportunities for youth to build credentials and skills.
- c) Detail the specific activities that will help prepare for and transition to a post-secondary education/training, including identifying post-secondary options, developing a career plan, and completing applications and financial assistance forms.
- d) Describe how program staff will support youth transition into post-secondary education/training. What resources will be utilized in this effort?
- e) How will staff facilitate career planning for participants with CORI or other barriers?

Partnerships

- a) Please provide a chart that defines each partner's roles and responsibilities.
- b) Describe your experience and/or how you plan to partner with post-secondary education and training partners. Provide a summary of the organizations with which you currently partner or intend to partner for such services, the scope of these services, and any formal agreements planned or in place to deliver services.
- c) Do you connect youth with the following supportive services? If so, how:
 - o Assistance with transportation; childcare and dependent care; housing; referrals to medical and mental health services; assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools; and the provision of additional services that will support youth with disabilities.
- d) Describe how the program is (or will) partner with other agencies to provide these and other specialized support services.
- e) Describe how the program is (or will) coordinate with other agencies to provide these and other specialized support services.

Youth with disabilities:

- a) Briefly describe your program's current capacity to support youth with disabilities, especially hidden or non-apparent disabilities. What are your staff's qualifications to serve this population?
- b) What is your current practice for identifying and addressing hidden disabilities?
- c) What, if any, kind of instructional or assistive technology do you have?
- d) If you do not have the capacity to serve students with disabilities, what are your plans to do so going forward?

Financial assistance: If your program model provides financial incentives, such as stipends, monetary rewards, wages, additional paid training opportunities, and "Learn and Earn" models of programming: describe the nature of the financial incentives, the justification, the amount, the frequency and duration of payment, and how these payments will address barriers to the successful completion of the program.

Technology:

- a) Describe how your organization will effectively use technology products, tools, and resources in your service delivery.
- b) Describe plans plan to give access to and integrate technology into instruction and program services.
- c) Describe how technology will be used to improve the quality of learning and whether and how youth will be given access to technology.
- d) Describe current or proposed strategies for incorporating digital literacy into instruction and service delivery.
- e) Describe remote or hybrid learning opportunities and any other instructional delivery methods that your program will implement to increase the accessibility and quality of learning for youth.
- f) How will the program ensure substantial learning gains for participants who will access services remotely or in a hybrid format?

Work experience and employment.

- a) Describe how your program will provide opportunities for youth to gain work experience.
- b) Describe how staff will assist participants interested in pursuing work while in the program.

5. AEI Required Sequence of Services (15 points)

These standard services form a core structure for a participant's involvement in the AEI system. For each of the steps outlined, explain how your program design will fulfill the expectations of the AEI system.

Outreach and Recruitment	a) Discuss your plan for outreach and recruitment, including the specific target group you will recruit, the neighborhoods they live in, the organizations and audiences with which you will communicate, and the tools and methods you will use.
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	<p>b) How large a pool of recruits will you need to bring into your intake process to identify the cohort of enrolled participants you propose to serve?</p>
Intake and Eligibility Determination	<p>a) Describe the intake process, including collecting basic information from potential clients, informing potential clients of available services in your organization or elsewhere, and determining client suitability for program services.</p> <p>b) Describe the process of determining eligibility for AEI funded services and which staff are responsible for this process.</p>
Assessment and Referral	<p>a) Describe how your assessment process provides an objective assessment of academic levels, work readiness/interests and occupational skills levels, service needs, and assets/strengths of each participant. Include a description of any tools or methods used to determine the following: levels of basic skills, occupational skills, work readiness skills, prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes, and supportive service needs.</p> <p>b) How will you ensure that academic assessment is conducted regularly and that students perform to the best of their ability? Provide a plan to incorporate academic instruction tailored to student needs, particularly for those assessed below the 9th grade level in reading or math.</p> <p>c) If it is determined that the program does not match the particular needs of the individual, how is that individual referred to more appropriate services?</p>
Case Management/ Career Planning	<p>a) Describe your program's capacity to provide case management services designed to support student achievement and address barriers to a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET completion.</p> <p>b) Describe how the career planning tool utilized by your program will be used to document services for each participant and measure progress toward attaining goals.</p> <p>c) What steps will be taken to ensure that the career planning tool is an active document that reflects a client's progress, evolving goals, and service needs?</p> <p>d) Describe how your program will incorporate trauma-informed approaches into their case management models.</p>
Follow-up Services	<p>a) Describe how you propose to provide follow-up to participants completing the program, as well as those who may have dropped out but need additional services. Programs are encouraged to consider the needs and</p>

	<p>barriers of the program’s target population in determining the appropriate levels and types of follow-up services. These services may be included in your budget and must encompass more than only a contact attempted or made for gathering information needed to report a performance outcome.</p>
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6. Staffing and Facilities (10 points)

- a) Identify staff responsible for each component of the proposed program, including direct services and administrative personnel.
- b) Discuss staff qualifications, skills, and experience working effectively with youth and implementing the proposed services. Identify the staff who will manage the Google Sheets.
- c) Discuss your agency’s overall staffing and management structure and the extent to which this adequately supports program operations and goal attainment.
- d) Describe the physical facilities that will be used, including the location of classes and other services, total square footage of the site, accessibility to persons with disabilities, and all equipment or resources that will be available to youth.
- e) Describe organizational policies and practices designed to support equitable opportunities for employment and advancement at your organization.
- f) Have your employees participated in implicit bias, intercultural competence, and/or anti-racism training? If yes, please describe the types of training received and how many current programs staff participated in. If your organization has not provided this type of training, please describe any plans to do so.
- g) To the best of your ability, share information about the diversity of your staff and leadership using percentages. In addition to race/ethnicity, diversity may include age, gender, disabilities, and other attributes or lived experience relevant to serving young adults.

7. Outcomes (10 points)

- a) Provide anticipated outcomes for services described. Applicants must clearly indicate the number of individuals to be served and expected outcomes for the proposed program.
- b) What outcomes will be achieved in year one post-program?
- c) Please complete and include the Outcomes Form provided in Appendix C.
- d) How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your program?
- e) Describe partner commitments to provide data needed to evaluate program effectiveness.

8. Sustainability Plan (5 points)

- a) Summarize your agency’s total budget and total project budget and describe the source and amount of non-AEI funds committed and pending for the specific services proposed in this application.
- b) Assuming your program is funded, describe your sustainability efforts, including how your agency would deal with a possible reduction of funding in the second and third years of this three-year funding cycle and how this would impact your program.

9. Budget (this is not counted in the 20-page limit) (10 points)

Please follow the budget instruction in Appendix E. Please present a budget cover page, a cost detail page, and a budget narrative for the AEI funding you are requesting for FY 2023. Applications that do not include these forms will not be considered.

These forms should show AEI funds only. Use the budget instructions page in this RFP to guide the requirements under each budget category. Please double-check your calculations; all costs must total up exactly. The budget narrative should present descriptive detail on all line-item costs in the budget so that readers will not be left with questions about how you propose to use the funds.

Collaborative proposals should submit one set of budget forms that clearly identify the project costs of each agency. Each applicant may apply as the lead applicant for only one proposal.

Section V. Terms of Procurement

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Responses to this RFP must be received by **5:00 PM on March 25, 2022**.

The application must be completed electronically and uploaded to OWD's internal Box site as a Word document. *The link below will direct you to the site to upload the application:*

[Box Submission Link](#)

Or cut and paste the following link into your browser:

<https://bpda.app.box.com/f/6fe1e9751ead4cefb16f3a9d2cf2f60>

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is successfully uploaded into the Box folder. (If it is successfully uploaded, you should see the message **“Success! Your file has been uploaded”** or **“Thanks! Your file was sent”**).

If you have difficulties uploading your file, please email Sarah Soroui, Workforce and Policy Manager, at sarah.soroui@boston.gov. **The deadline for inquiries or assistance is March 24, by 5:00 PM.**

Proposals not received by 5:00 pm on March 25, 2022, will be disqualified from the competitive process.

LETTER OF INTENT

A letter of intent (LOI) is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Letters of intent allow OWD to plan for the volume of proposals and resources needed. If your organization is submitting an, it should be received by OWD by 5:00 PM on February 25, 2022, via Google Forms. Please click on this [Google Form Link](#) to complete the LOI.

Should you subsequently decide not to submit, please inform us via email: sarah.soroui@boston.gov.

BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

Organizations interested in bidding on the RFP are strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Bidder's Conference, which will be held virtually on **February 18, 2022**, at 12:00 P.M. [Please click here to register for the conference.](#)

Questions and answers provided at the Bidder's Conference will be available to the public on OWD's website at **owd.boston.gov**.

SUBMISSION INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Sarah Soroui, Policy, and Workforce Manager, via email: sarah.soroui@boston.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. The deadline to submit questions is **March 18, 2022, by 5:00 PM.**

Responses to questions received during the procurement process will be posted on the OWD website at **owd.boston.gov**. It is the bidder's responsibility to check the website for updates and postings.

OWD is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants should ensure their proposals comply with the following requirements:

- A response to each section of the RFP is required and should follow the guidelines and sequences as specified in the Proposal Guideline section (Section IV). Each section should be labeled.
- Every section of the Request for Proposals should be completed in full. If funded, the proposal will provide the basis for contract negotiations, and final negotiated terms will be incorporated within the contract as the Statement of Work.
- Proposals should be typewritten, double-spaced, in 12-point Arial font with one-inch margins.
- The proposal narrative may not exceed 20 pages. The page limit does not include the cover sheet, budget forms, or any required attachments.
- Some sections require appended material. All forms should be completed in full.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of the proposal, congruence with the goals of this RFP, past program performance, geographic distribution of services, and service to the target population.

The point values allocated to each section of the proposal narrative are an evaluation tool; they do not dictate which proposals are ultimately recommended for funding. OWD reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive or modify any requirement contained in this RFP, to amend without consultation any proposal, and to affect any agreement deemed to be in the best interest of the city and its residents.

Section VI. Proposal Checklist

Proposals should follow, in order, the outline below and be uploaded **in one PDF.**

1. Proposal Cover Sheet – Appendix B

2. Narrative Submission – This section has a 20-page limit.

- Proposal Summary
- Agency Background and Organizational Capacity
- Statement of Need and Target Population
- Program Design
- AEI Required Sequence of Services
- Staffing and Facilities
- Outcomes
- Sustainability Plan

3. Outcomes Form – Appendix C

Use this worksheet to identify your proposed program’s outcomes. Outcomes should follow the format in the form. Indicate the number of AEI youth you expect to serve and the number you anticipate will achieve each outcome. Add additional outcomes, if necessary.

4. Signed Memorandum of Agreement(s)/Letter(s) of Support

The MOA/Letter of Support must be signed by the CEO of each organization or a designee who has senior operational authority for collaborations requesting funding for one or more agencies.

5. Budget Forms and Budget Narrative – Appendix E

Develop a budget for the amount of AEI funds you are requesting. Refer to the budget instructions page in Appendix E for details on how to complete the following:

- Budget cover page:** This form requires the signature of the person who prepared the budget.
- Budget cost detail page:** Totals should match throughout your budget forms. Formulas have been included to calculate totals automatically.
- Budget narrative**

Appendices

- a. [Letter of Intent to Bid](#)
- b. Proposal Cover Sheet
- c. Outcomes Form
- d. Individualized Service Strategy
- e. Budget Instruction and Forms

Appendix A. [Letter of Intent Google Form](#)

**Appendix B
Proposal Cover Sheet**

Please complete the form below. The cover sheet should not exceed 2 pages.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE			
Name of Applicant Organization			
DUNS Number			
Organization's Address, City, and Zip Code			
Name of Program			
Proposed Neighborhood of Service Delivery			
Executive Director's Name			
Name and title of primary contact for the grant			
E-mail address and phone number of primary contact for the grant			
Total organizational budget		\$	
Total AEI Funds Requested		\$	
PROGRAM SUMMARY			
Describe your program in 2-3 sentences: 			
Total number of AEI participants to be served:		Select which program type(s) your program will provide: <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> HiSET <input type="checkbox"/> GED	
Demographic Information (indicate the % of clients with the following characteristics you plan to serve):			
<u>Gender</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Race</u>	
Female: %	16-17: %	American Indian/Alaskan Native %	Asian
Male: %	18-19: %	Black/African-American %	White
<u>Barriers</u>		Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander %	
Basic skills deficient %	Disabled	Other/Multi-Racial %	
ELL %	Homeless	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>BHA residents</u>
DSS/Foster Care %	Court-involved	Hispanic or Latino %	

Pregnant/parenting %	Ex-offender %	
Neighborhood(s) the majority of participants will come from:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Allston/Brighton <input type="checkbox"/> Back Bay/Beacon Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Charlestown <input type="checkbox"/> Chinatown <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown <input type="checkbox"/> Dorchester	<input type="checkbox"/> East Boston <input type="checkbox"/> Fenway-Kenmore <input type="checkbox"/> Hyde Park <input type="checkbox"/> Jamaica Plain <input type="checkbox"/> Mattapan <input type="checkbox"/> North End	<input type="checkbox"/> Roslindale <input type="checkbox"/> Roxbury/Mission Hill <input type="checkbox"/> South Boston <input type="checkbox"/> South End <input type="checkbox"/> West End <input type="checkbox"/> West Roxbury
PARTNERS <i>(add rows as needed)</i>		
Type/Role of Partner <i>(e.g. Employer)</i>	Organization Name	Contact Name

**Appendix C
Outcomes Form**

Please describe what is expected to be achieved as a result of youth participation in your program in FY 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) using the list of outcomes below.

NAME OF APPLICANT ORGANIZATION:
TOTAL PROJECTED NUMBER OF AEI YOUTH PARTICIPANTS:

Projections	Proposed Number of Youth
Total Received Diploma/Credential	
High School Diploma	
Equivalent Diploma (GED/HiSET)	
Transitions after Program Completion	
No. of Participants who Enter Qualified Apprenticeship	
No. of Participants who Enter Post-Secondary Ed.	
No. of Participants who Enter Occupational Training Program	
No. of Participants who Enter Unsubsidized Employment	
Of those employed after completion, the number who are receiving the living wage or higher ¹	

¹ Boston Living Wage \$15.87/hour at time of RFP release

Appendix D. Individualized Service Strategy
(Download from OWD website)

Appendix E. Budget Instruction and Forms
(Download from OWD website)