WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COUNCIL
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WIC Policy No.	Subject	Date
2013.013, Change 1	**SELECTION OF WIA YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS**	**3/7/2014**

ISSUING ENTITY:
Workforce Investment Council

SCOPE:
Workforce Investment Council, DC WIA Administrative Entity, One-Stop Operators, Mandatory Partner Programs, and Youth Service Providers

REFERENCES:
Title I of the WIA of 1998 (Public Law 105-220, 29 U.S. C. et.seq; Final Rule at Title I, Chapter 4, "Youth Activities," Sections 126 through 129 and in the Federal Register Volume 65, Number 156, dated August 11, 2000, Part 661, "Statewide and Local Governance of the Workforce Investment System Under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act," Part 664, "Youth Activities Under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act, " any amendments to the aforementioned references, Section 506(c); Pub. L. 105-220; 20 U.S.C. 9276(c)

EFFECTIVE DATE:
March 7, 2014

OBJECTIVE:
To establish the District's process for selecting eligible providers of year-round WIA youth activities.

BACKGROUND:

Under section 129 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the District is required to provide services for eligible youth. WIA Section 123 provides that the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) – as the state and local workforce investment board for the District - is responsible for identifying youth service providers by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendations of the youth council and on the criteria contained in the State plan. The WIC is also responsible for providing oversight with respect to such providers.

The Department of Employment Services (DOES) has been designated as the WIA Administrative Entity for the District, and is responsible for issuing WIA Youth grant funds to youth service providers selected by the WIC. DOES is also responsible for carrying out enrollment, monitoring and performance reporting activities as prescribed by the WIC.

This policy establishes the process that will be used to select eligible providers of youth activities, and describes the roles and responsibilities of the WIC and the WIA Administrative Entity in carrying out this process.

A. PROGRAM DESIGN

1. In General. The WIC shall be responsible for developing a youth program design for the District, in cooperation with DOES. The program design will ensure that youth service providers shall be selected through a competitive grants process as described in section B of this policy, and that providers selected under this competitive process comply with the requirements set forth in WIC Policy No. 2013.014, "WIA Youth Program Design." Subject to the exceptions in section A.2 and A.3, all youth activities and services must be provided by youth service providers selected through the competitive process described in this policy.

2. Program Design Framework. 20 C.F.R. 664.405 requires that the design framework of the District's WIA youth program must:

a) Provide an objective assessment of each youth participant, that meets the requirements of WIA section 129(c)(1)(A), and includes a review of the academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs, of each youth;

b) Develop an individual service strategy for each youth participant that meets the requirements of WIA section 129(c)(1)(B), including identifying an age-appropriate career goal and consideration of the assessment results for each youth; and

c) Provide preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, provide linkages between academic and occupational learning, provide preparation for employment, and provide effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers.

The WIA Administrative Entity may conduct objective assessments described in a), to the extent that such assessments are necessary to determine participant eligibility for WIA Youth programs and to make appropriate referrals to youth service providers. All other elements of the program design framework shall be provided by youth service providers selected through the process described in section B of this policy.

3. Summer Employment Activities. Consistent with 20 C.F.R. 664.610, the WIA Administrative Entity shall administer the summer employment activities described in sec. 129(c)(2)(C) of WIA for those participants who are enrolled in WIA youth programs. DOES shall ensure that the summer employment activities are aligned with the academic and occupational strategies of youth service providers selected through the competitive process described in section B of this policy.

4. Community Engagement. Consistent with the requirements of WIA section 129(c)(3)(C), the WIC shall seek recommendations from the Youth Employment Change Network with respect to the District's youth program design. The WIC may, at its discretion, provide other opportunities for parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth programs to provide recommendations on the District's youth program design.

5. Out-of-School Youth Minimum. The WIC shall ensure that not less than not less than thirty (30) percent of funds allotted to support year-round youth programs shall be used to support year-round programs for out-of-school youth.

6. Duration of Grants and Option Years. The competitive process described in section B. may allow for providers of youth services to receive grants awards for no more than one (1) calendar year. However, the process may allow the WIC to renew existing grants for up to three (3) additional years on the basis of successful performance.

B. REQUESTS FOR APPLICATIONS

1. In General – The WIC, in consultation with DOES (in its capacity as the WIA Administrative Entity), shall select eligible providers of youth activities through a competitive grants process.[1] WIC staff and DOES shall be jointly responsible for developing Requests for Applications (RFAs), consistent with DOES' general grant procedures and District law.

A. **Required Components**. The WIC and DOES will ensure that any RFA for youth services includes the following components:

1. A description of providers of youth services that are eligible applicants under the RFA;
2. A description of the youth participants eligible to be served under the RFA;
3. A requirement that the eligible provider provide a program that provides the services and activities described in section A.1 of this policy;
4. A requirement that if an eligible youth does not meet the entrance requirements of the particular program or cannot be served, the provider shall refer such youth to DOES for further assessment, as necessary, and to other appropriate programs to meet the basic skills and training needs of the applicant;
5. A description of performance and reporting requirements under the RFA;
6. A description of award amounts available and payment structures under the RFA, including the condition under which the WIC may renew a grant award;
7. A description of the application process to be used by providers seeking funds under the RFA;
8. A description of the review process to be used to select providers under the RFA;
9. A description of any materials or information that a provider must submit in order to demonstrate compliance with federal or District law; and
10. Any other information or materials that the WIC determines is necessary to carry out its responsibilities in accordance with this policy.

B. **Stakeholder Engagement.** The WIC shall ensure that the WIC's Youth Council has the opportunity to review and provide comments on any youth RFA prior to publication. The WIC may, at its discretion, provide other opportunities for parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth programs to review and provide comments on the RFA.

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[1] Under WIA, youth services may be competitively procured by either grants or contracts. According to the District's Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook, grants are generally appropriate where "the principal purpose of the relationship is the transfer of money, property, services, or anything of value to the subgrantee to accomplish a public purpose of support and stimulation authorized by statute, rather than an acquisition of goods or services for the direct benefit of the District government." Because the benefits of the WIA Youth program are intended to flow to youth participants rather than to the District government, the WIC believes the use of a grants process is appropriate.

C. **Board Approval.** Prior to the publication of any RFA developed under this policy, the WIC Executive Committee shall review the RFA design and make a recommendation to the full WIC Board to approve the RFA design. The full WIC Board must vote to approve the RFA design before it may be submitted for publication.

D. **Notice of Funding Availability.** DOES shall be responsible for developing a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), and submitting the NOFA to the Office of the Secretary for publication in the District of Columbia Register at least fourteen (14) days prior to the publication of any RFA. The NOFA must include a description of the purpose for which funds are being made available, criteria for eligible applicants, and the time and location at which the RFA may be obtained and submitted. The NOFA must also include information on how applicants may submit questions regarding the RFFA.

   DOES may, with approval by the WIC, submit a NOFA less than fourteen days prior to the posting of an RFA if DOES determines there is good cause to do so. However, in no case may a NOFA be posted less than seven (7) days prior to the posting of an RFA.

E. **Publication of RFA.** DOES shall be responsible for submitting the RFA approved by the WIC to the Office of the Secretary for publication in the District of Columbia Register.

F. **Review Process.** The WIC and DOES shall be jointly responsible for conducting a review process for applications received under any RFA. The review process shall be consistent with the requirements of DC law and DOES grant procedures. DOES shall be responsible for appointing review panel members, subject to agreement by the WIC. Not less than 30 percent of review panel members must be members of the WIC or the Youth Employment Change Network. Review panel members must sign a conflict of interest form and confidentiality form provided by DOES prior to engaging in review activities and must comply with the code of conduct outlined in WIC Policy 2013.011 WIA Youth Council (C).

   The review process shall include:

   1. A preliminary review of applications to determine applicant eligibility and responsiveness. The preliminary review shall be conducted by DOES. Applications that are determined to be ineligible or nonresponsive shall not be reviewed, and DOES shall provide written notification to the applicant describing the reasons that the application was not eligible for review.
   2. An application review in which members of the review panel read applications and score applications according to the requirements described in the RFA. Each application must be read by not less than three (3) members of the review panel. DOES shall be responsible for managing the application review, consistent with DOES grant procedures.
   3. A consensus review during which all reviewers are convened to discuss applications and provide final recommendations on applications to be funded. The consensus review shall be conducted by WIC staff, in cooperation with DOES. The consensus review shall result in a final set of recommendations from the review panel that shall be signed by all members of the review panel.

G. **WIC Executive Committee Approval.** Upon completion of the review process, the recommendations of the review panel shall be submitted to the WIC Executive Committee for approval. The WIC Executive Committee will approve applications in a manner that ensures geographic and programmatic diversity. The Executive Committee may award less than the amount requested in an application, and may modify the allocation of funds among applicants in the best interests of the District. WIC staff shall provide written notice to DOES that identifies the applications that have been approved, and the amounts of the awards for each application.

H. **Notice of Awards.** Upon receipt of the written notice described in section B.8, DOES shall provide notice to all applicants describing whether their application was approved or not approved.

I. **Development of Grant Agreements.** DOES shall be responsible for negotiating grant agreements with each approved applicant, consistent with the terms of the RFA and the application submitted by the applicant. Grant agreements must be signed by the Director of DOES, the Executive Director of the WIC, and a duly designated representative of the applicant. Unless a grant agreement specifies a start date, the grant agreement shall be effective as soon as the grant agreement has been signed by all required parties.

RESCISSIONS:
None.

CONTACT ENTITY:
Inquiries regarding this rule should be directed to the Executive Director for the Workforce Investment Council.

APPROVAL:

Michael N. Harreld
Chair, Workforce Investment Council
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