



**Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Program Year 2026 (PY2026) Request for Proposals**

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title I Youth Formula Program
Year-Round Workforce Development Services and Elements**

IMPORTANT DATES AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Release Date: Thursday, April 2, 2026

Bidders Conference, not mandatory: (Zoom): Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 1:00 PM

<https://rochesterorks.zoom.us/j/88464362103>

Proposal Due Date: Thursday, May 7, 2026, by 12:00 PM (Noon)

Workforce Development Board Approval: June 16, 2026

Formal Award Notification: June 17, 2026

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted electronically as a **single PDF document** by the stated deadline.

Submit proposals to:

Isabel Ramirez

Youth Services Administrative Assistant

RochesterWorks

Phone: 585-258-3500 ext. 3508

Email: iramirez@rochesterworks.org

Late submissions will not be accepted.

1. BACKGROUND

RochesterWorks, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, serves as the fiscal agent, career center operator, and administrative entity for the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board (WDB), which oversees millions of dollars in workforce development resources, including WIOA funds. RochesterWorks is located at 100 College Ave, Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607.

As Monroe County's largest employment and training system, RochesterWorks was established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to coordinate federally funded employment and training programs and is now governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA connects job seekers to employment, education, training, and supportive services while helping employers build and retain a skilled workforce.

Services are delivered through three (3) Career Centers and a network of community-based organizations. These Career Centers provide “one-stop” access to job search tools, workshops, career counseling, and training opportunities. RochesterWorks also supports businesses through recruitment services, job postings, and workforce development resources.

2. PURPOSE

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds a formula-based youth workforce development program serving eligible **youth ages 17–24** who face barriers to employment. These funds support service strategies that prepare youth for post-secondary education and employment through integrated academic and occupational learning, delivered in partnership with America’s Job Centers (RochesterWorks) and under the direction of the Workforce Development Board.

RochesterWorks, Inc. is soliciting proposals from qualified governmental entities, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to serve **100% Out-of-School Youth (OSY)** populations. Through this process, RochesterWorks will select agencies to support the recruitment and placement of Youth Workforce Development Service Navigators for the contract period of **July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029**.

This initiative prioritizes employment outcomes, employer engagement, and career pathway alignment.

Programs must align with current U.S. Department of Labor guidance, including Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) and Training and Employment Notice (TEN) such as **program design** (TEGL 21-16, TEGL 09-22), **equity** (TEGL 21-22), **performance** (TEGL 10-16), **data validation** (TEGL 23-19), **outreach** (TEGL 03-23), **innovation** (TEGL 05-25), **artificial intelligence** (TEGL 03-25 and TEN 7-25), and **training** (TEGL 08-19)

Definitions

- **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):** One employee working full-time
- **Out-of-School Youth (OSY):** Individuals ages 16–24 who are not attending school and meet WIOA eligibility criteria
- **Navigator:** A full-time position responsible for delivering workforce development services; each Navigator represents one FTE

Capacity Requirements

Preference will be given to agencies that can host **2 to 4 Navigators**. Agencies proposing only one Navigator must provide a detailed contingency plan outlining how services will be maintained during staff transitions, including the typical six-week recruitment and onboarding period.

3. NAVIGATOR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Navigator Support Model

Navigators play a central role in supporting youth as they work toward their educational and employment goals through a structured case management approach. While participants are responsible for taking ownership of their outcomes, Navigators are expected to guide, motivate, and support youth through relationship-building, effective communication, and consistent engagement. Navigators cannot force change but are expected to influence positive outcomes through trust, accountability, and ongoing support.

Core Responsibilities

Navigators are responsible for delivering comprehensive workforce development services, including:

- Conducting **targeted outreach and recruitment** of Out-of-School Youth (OSY), with an emphasis on reaching individuals facing barriers to employment, including those disconnected from education and the workforce
- Implementing **intentional outreach strategies** to effectively engage underserved and priority populations, using community-based, partner-driven, and data-informed approaches
- Conducting assessment, eligibility determination, and enrollment of targeted youth
- Assisting youth in identifying career pathway(s) and pursuing appropriate education, training, and employment opportunities
- Developing and maintaining an **Individual Service Strategy (ISS)** based on fully completing an objective assessment with ten required components.
- Ensuring participants have access to all **14 WIOA Youth Elements**, based on individual need and interest (see Attachment A-9), including advocacy for supportive services (e.g., clothing, transportation, personal hygiene products)
- Maintaining consistent engagement and relationship-building with participants
- Obtaining and maintaining access to the NYSDOL **One-Stop Operating System (OSOS)** and ensuring accurate and timely data entry
- Completing all required OSOS data entry within **5 business days** of contact with youth
- Utilizing the NYSDOL **SENSE Model** (Situation, Evaluation, Next Steps, Sufficient Information, Employment-Related Information Only) when documenting progress notes in OSOS
- Maintaining accurate, up-to-date case files, including SENSE-aligned progress notes and all required supporting documentation
- Ensuring all reported data is **accurate, complete, and supported by source documentation**, and that participant files are maintained in an **audit-ready format at all times** (TEGL 23-19)

- Preparing youth for post-secondary education, training, and employment by providing and/or connecting them to basic and occupational skills development, work readiness training, and paid or unpaid work experiences
- Establishing and maintaining ongoing employer relationships to support work-based learning opportunities, career exposure, and employment pathways for participants
- Supporting job placement and retention outcomes by connecting participants to employment opportunities aligned with their goals and tracking employment progress
- Monitoring participant progress toward successful completion of WIOA performance goals, including educational attainment, employment outcomes, and other agreed-upon measures (see Attachment A-5)
- Providing ongoing follow-up services for up to **12 months after exit**

Outreach and recruitment activities must be **intentional, documented, and aligned with program goals**. Navigators are expected to demonstrate how outreach efforts lead to participant engagement and enrollment. All outreach-related activities and associated costs must be **necessary, reasonable, and directly tied to program objectives**, and must be supported by appropriate documentation. (TEGL 03-23)

Navigators are also responsible for ensuring compliance with WIOA performance expectations and funding requirements, including maintaining required **Out-of-School Youth (OSY) expenditure** and **work experience expenditure levels**, and supporting achievement of WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance, including **employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit, median earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains**.

4. NAVIGATOR APPROACH AND SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The Navigator model is grounded in the YouthWorks Model, aligning services with key workforce outcomes including credential attainment, readiness, skill development, earnings, and retention.

Navigators serve as the central point of coordination among educators, community organizations, employers, Career Centers, and governmental partners. Through these partnerships, youth are connected to the services and support necessary for success.

Providers are encouraged to incorporate innovative and flexible service delivery strategies, including the use of technology, **artificial intelligence (AI)**, digital tools, and emerging approaches, to improve engagement, expand access, and enhance outcomes for youth. This may include supporting participants in building digital literacy and **foundational AI awareness**, as well as familiarity with tools increasingly used in education and the workplace, and exposure to digital tools and emerging technologies relevant to career pathways. (TEGL 05-25)

Service Delivery Design

Navigators operate primarily within the community to expand access to workforce services for Out-of-School Youth (OSY). This includes establishing partnerships, co-locating at youth-

centered sites, and conducting targeted outreach. The Navigator role is community-based and field-oriented, requiring consistent presence where youth live, learn, and engage.

Service delivery should reflect **flexibility and adaptability**, utilizing a range of approaches—including in-person, virtual, and hybrid engagement methods—to meet the evolving needs of youth and respond to changing workforce demands. Navigators should also support participants in developing **foundational digital skills needed to navigate online systems, training platforms, and modern workplace tools**. (TEGL 05-25)

Navigators are expected to maintain flexible schedules, including availability beyond traditional business hours, to effectively meet the needs of youth who may be balancing school, training, or employment commitments.

Career Center Support

RochesterWorks Career Centers will support Navigators by providing workforce preparation services such as:

- Assessments and career exploration
- Job readiness workshops
- Resume development and interview preparation
- Training opportunities and work experience
- Job fairs and hiring events
- Virtual Reality Career Exploration

Navigators may also access Career Center space and equipment on a limited, reservation basis.

5. FUNDING AND CONTRACT STRUCTURE

At the time of this RFP's release, funding has not yet been finalized; however, RochesterWorks anticipates committing approximately **\$750,000** to support this initiative.

Each Navigator position is funded up to **\$75,000 per FTE**, inclusive of all costs. Each Navigator is expected to serve at least **25 active youth annually** and provide **12 months of follow-up services**. (See A-2)

Final contract amounts will be determined based on program design, target population, and proposed activities.

Cost Efficiency

Applicants are expected to demonstrate cost-effective service delivery and leverage additional resources through partnerships. Proposals that include quantifiable, value-added contributions will receive additional consideration.

Funding Conditions

Funding is contingent upon annual WIOA allocations and overall program budgets. Continued funding is also contingent upon demonstrated performance outcomes and compliance with WIOA requirements. Adjustments may occur based on funding availability, and increases are not guaranteed.

Contracting

Contracts will be **reimbursement-based**, and timely invoicing is a critical requirement. Providers are expected to **submit invoices on a monthly basis** to ensure proper cash flow and financial management. Failure to invoice regularly may result in payment delays and could impact contract standing.

Providers must also meet all reporting and performance requirements as outlined in this RFP.

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) reserves the right to amend, renew, or rebid contracts based on performance, funding availability, and service needs.

6. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Proposals will be accepted from governmental units, public or private not-for-profit or for-profit organizations, local educational agencies, and incorporated faith-based and community-based organizations.

Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate:

- A strong understanding of the targeted geographic area and/or population
- An effective blend of partnerships
- Cost efficiency and strategic use of resources
- A comprehensive understanding of the systems youth must navigate
- A commitment to providing open and equitable access for all interested and eligible youth

- Demonstrated strategies to ensure equitable access, participation, and outcomes for populations facing barriers to employment (TEGL 21-22)

Applicants are expected to incorporate key partners into the design and delivery of proposed services.

Partnership Expectations

Strong private-sector engagement is encouraged under WIOA. Applicants should demonstrate how private-sector employers will be leveraged to:

- Provide employment opportunities for youth
- Contribute financial or in-kind resources
- Support workforce development efforts through mentorship, training, or other engagement

Proposals that include meaningful and quantifiable partnerships will receive additional consideration.

Data and System Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to accurately and efficiently enter and manage participant data in the **New York State One-Stop Operating System (OSOS)**. This includes meeting the **5-day data entry requirement**, as outlined in NYSDOL Workforce Development guidance.

Applicants must also coordinate with community partners, including RochesterWorks Career Centers, to support the referral, recruitment, and enrollment of eligible youth.

Service Delivery Requirements

Applicants must have the capacity to deliver core workforce development services, including:

- Objective assessment (Address 10 components.)
- Development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
- Ensure access to all 14 WIOA Youth Elements, either directly or through partnerships
- Ongoing case management
- Training services must align with approved providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) where applicable (TEGL 08-19)
- Follow-up services that support successful outcomes

Successful applicants will provide a comprehensive mix of services, including counseling, referrals, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, and case management, to WIOA-eligible youth ages 16–24.

7. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

7.1 Deadline

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received as a **single PDF document** no later than **12:00 PM (Noon) on Thursday, May 7, 2026**

Proposals should be submitted via email as a single attachment to:

Isabel Ramirez

Youth Services Administrative Assistant

RochesterWorks

Phone: 585-258-3500 ext. 3508

Email: Iramirez@rochesterworks.org

Proposals received on or before the deadline that comply with all RFP requirements will be reviewed and considered for funding.

7.2 Evaluation Criteria

RochesterWorks, Inc. (RWI) staff will review all proposals to ensure compliance with RFP requirements. Proposals meeting the minimum requirements will be evaluated by a Review Team consisting of RWI staff, Workforce Development Board (WDB) and/or Youth Committee members, or their designees.

Proposals will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

Quality of Service Design – 30%

- **Innovative, client-centered service strategy** that is responsive to youth needs and incorporates flexible, community-based approaches
- **Comprehensive service design** aligned with WIOA requirements, including clear structure and field-oriented delivery
- **Use of innovative practices**, including technology, digital literacy, and exposure to emerging tools and career pathways (TEGL 05-25)
- **Intentional outreach and engagement strategies** that effectively reach underserved and priority populations (TEGL 03-23)
- **Strong partnership model**, including collaboration with community-based organizations and private-sector employers

- **Employer engagement strategy** that supports work-based learning, job placement, and employment outcomes
- **Alignment with and advancement of the YouthWorks Model**

Demonstrated Capability – 30%

- **Organizational experience and past performance**, including the ability to effectively manage programs and address prior monitoring findings (if applicable)
- **Staff capacity and expertise**, including qualified personnel, supervision structure, and ability to deliver high-quality services
- **Experience serving the proposed target population and/or geographic area**, with demonstrated understanding of participant needs
- **Ability to promote equitable access and outcomes** for populations facing barriers to employment (TEGL 21-22)
- **Realistic and achievable plan** to meet WIOA performance outcomes, including enrollment, engagement, placement, and retention

Cost Efficiency – 10%

- **Clear, complete, and well-justified budget** aligned with proposed services
- **Reasonableness of costs** in relation to program design and expected outcomes
- **Leveraged resources and partnerships**, including documented in-kind contributions
- **Alignment of investment with impact**, including cost per participant and overall value

Additional Considerations – 30%

- **Value of added resources**, including funding, partnerships, and enhanced services that strengthen program impact – 10%
- **Prior experience with RochesterWorks**, including collaboration, communication, and performance history – 10%
- **Overall understanding and alignment with RFP goals**, including performance expectations, data integrity, and accountability requirements (TEGL 10-16 & 23-19) – 10%

If necessary, the Review Team may request clarification, revisions, or presentations from applicants to further evaluate proposals.

Following the review process, recommendations will be made to the Youth Committee, which will in turn make funding recommendations to the Workforce Development Board (WDB). Final funding decisions rest with the WDB.

7.3 Minimum Requirements

Proposals must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Submitted as a **single, optimized PDF document**
- Organized in the required order
- Narrative not to exceed **eight (8) pages**
- Formatted to **8.5 x 11 paper**, using **12-point Times New Roman font**, with **1-inch margins**
- Single-spaced text is permitted
- All narrative pages must be **numbered** and include the **applicant's name in the footer**
- Clearly describe service delivery elements with specificity
- Focus on definitive approaches rather than possibilities
- Include only information directly relevant to the proposed services and target population
- Quantify minimum standards, service hours, and key components
- Provide detailed support for any proposed collaborations
- Be concise and avoid unnecessary or extraneous information

7.4 Format and Content

Organizations interested in providing the requested services must submit a proposal narrative not to exceed eight (8) pages. The narrative must include the following information, presented exactly as labeled (**in bold**) and in the order outlined below.

Required attachments do not count toward the narrative page limit and must include the Proposal Summary Form, resumes, job descriptions, organizational chart, budget forms, and certifications.

Proposal Content Requirements

1. **Proposal Summary Form** (Attachment A-1)
2. **Organization and Experience**
Describe your organization's experience in providing youth services relevant to this solicitation. Include characteristics of the target population(s) you propose to serve and explain why your organization is well-positioned to meet their needs. Describe existing partnerships and how they will benefit participating youth.
3. **Strategy and Work Plan**
Provide a detailed description of your service delivery strategy. Explain how services will align with the **14 WIOA Youth Elements** (Attachment A-9) and lead to required performance outcomes (Attachment A-5). Include service locations, hours, and days of operation.
Note: Selected providers must coordinate with RochesterWorks to formalize partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for system-wide service delivery.

4. Additional or Unique Services

Describe any additional services that enhance or complement the proposed program. Include details on matching funds or in-kind contributions.

5. Challenges and Opportunities

Identify potential challenges and opportunities that may impact performance outcomes. Current contractors must address any previously identified deficiencies.

6. Quality Control and Management

Describe oversight structures and processes to ensure effective staff supervision, service quality, performance outcomes, and communication with the funder.

7. Staffing Plan

Provide names and resumes of proposed Navigator staff. If staff have not yet been identified, include job descriptions with minimum qualifications.

Agencies proposing a single Navigator must include a contingency plan for maintaining services during staff transitions.

Include an organizational chart illustrating staff roles related to this project.

8. Budget (Attachment A-2)

Complete all required budget forms and provide a detailed narrative justifying program costs, including any in-kind contributions.

9. Certifications (Attachment A-3)

- Service Components
- Fiscal Compliance
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Checklist

10. Attachments

Include resumes, job descriptions, organizational chart, and any additional supporting documentation.

7.5 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for this RFP will be provided through a **Bidders Conference on April 9, 2026 at 1pm**. Questions may be submitted in advance by **12:00 PM on April 8, 2026**, via email to:

Isabel Ramirez

Youth Services Administrative Assistant

Email: iramirez@rochesterworks.org

Proposal Due Date: Thursday, May 7, 2026, by 12:00 PM (Noon)

Responses to all questions will be shared during the conference and/or posted on the RochesterWorks website:

www.rochesterworks.org

ATTACHMENTS

- A-1 Proposal Summary Form
- A-2 Budget Instructions and Forms
- A-3 Certifications
- A-4 Youth Works Model
- A-5 WDB Performance Goals
- A-6 Target Population and Eligibility
- A-7 Navigator Responsibilities and Service Delivery Guidelines
- A-8 Workforce Terms and Definitions
- A-9 14 Required WIOA Youth Elements
- A-10 Monitoring and Support