

Economic Growth Region 3

Request for Proposals

For

**Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Title I Youth Programs and Services**

Services to be delivered

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

RFP Issue Date: March 8, 2016

Proposal Due Date: April 12, 2016

Serving the following Indiana counties:

Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben,
Wabash, Wells and Whitley

Northeast Indiana Works

200 E. Main Street, Suite 910

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260-459-1400

Section I: Background and General RFP Information

A. Overview of RFP

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I formula funds are allocated to local Workforce Development Boards for youth services to support the delivery of employment and training services to youth between the ages of 14-24 who meet federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act eligibility criteria. Northeast Indiana Works is the grant recipient of these funds in northeast Indiana. Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), Northeast Indiana Works is seeking proposals from organizations that could use WIOA youth funds to provide skill development and employment preparation services to eligible youth.

In keeping with the intent of WIOA, Northeast Indiana Works is committed to assisting disadvantaged youth to be successful in school, access job training and higher education opportunities, and gain the knowledge and skills required to enter high-wage career pathways. More specifically, Northeast Indiana Works is seeking partnerships with organizations that can demonstrate measurable, positive impact on the youth they serve. Youth-serving organizations are invited to respond to this RFP as an important step toward building a network of integrated youth services, one that helps youth succeed in school, at work, and as members and leaders of their communities.

Because this will be a true partnership between Northeast Indiana Works and selected youth-serving organizations, Northeast Indiana Works is seeking interested organizations that demonstrate the four critical characteristics listed below.

- Competent and cooperative management with a vision for developing and supporting true youth development activities;
- A commitment and ability to ensure that youth oriented staff are available to serve low income youth over the next 3 years;
- A high level of innovation and creativity in designing project and experiential based learning activities in which young individuals can participate; and,
- A willingness to work with community partners and educational organizations in the planning and implementation of these innovative approaches to youth development.

Bidders must:

- Have experience operating a youth program and are familiar with the WIOA, its regulations, as well as other federal and state laws regarding job training, job placement assistance and supportive services to youth.
- Have no record of unsatisfactory performance under a current or past contract with Northeast Indiana Works or its predecessor for similar services. Bidders who are or have been seriously deficient in current or recent contract performance, in the absence of circumstances beyond the Bidder's control, shall be presumed to be unable to meet this requirement.
- Have the ability to fulfill contract requirements, including the indemnification and insurance requirements.

- Have the ability to maintain adequate files and records and meet reporting requirements, as prescribed by Northeast Indiana Works.
- Have the administrative and fiscal capability to provide and manage the proposed services on a cost-reimbursement basis, to ensure an adequate audit trail, to maintain audit ready files, and to monitor its own organizational files (internal audit function).

Northeast Indiana Works intends to:

- Fund a cost reimbursement contract that results in measureable outcomes for youth;
- Allocate 75% of available funding for services to out-of-school youth;
- Expend a minimum of 20% of the available funding on work experiences; and
- Provide services to youth in all eleven counties in northeast Indiana.

B. Purpose of RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the delivery of youth services under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act in the following counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley. Interested organizations may propose programs and services for youth in all eleven counties or propose to target specific counties as appropriate. However, Northeast Indiana Works will actively work to ensure that WIOA youth services are available to eligible youth in all eleven counties. As such, interested organizations are encouraged to make proposed youth programs and services available across northeast Indiana.

WIOA rules require that programs must be designed to serve both in-school and out-of-school youth. In this solicitation, however, Northeast Indiana Works is only accepting proposals that serve youth between the **ages of 16 and 24**.

The overall goal of the WIOA youth program is to connect eligible youth to skill development and other educational activities and then to the local labor market. To accomplish this, youth development strategies must be developed to help interested youth enroll in and successfully complete critical skill development activities AND successfully transition to employment in the local labor market. Youth who are deficient in basic skills must also participate in activities designed to improve their reading, writing, math, analytical, computer and communication skills.

From a broad perspective, the WIOA youth program design must consist of four components:

1. **Assessment:** All youth customers must complete a personalized and objective assessment of their skill levels and service needs;
2. **Plan Development:** Based on the results of these assessments, all youth customers must participate in the development and ongoing maintenance of an individual service strategy or a plan that outlines an effective service strategy;
3. **Service Delivery:** Based on the developed plan, all youth customers must receive the specific youth development and workforce services as described in their plan; and,

4. **Follow Up:** Once all services have been delivered and outcomes achieved, all youth must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum period of 12 months following their completion of program activities.

From a more detailed perspective, the WIOA legislation as described in Section 129 (c) (2) of the federal WIOA mandates that fourteen specific program elements must be included in the WIOA youth program design (the program elements can be available through direct service provision or through a partnership with another organization):

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include—
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout school year;
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
 - d. On-the-job training opportunities.
4. Occupational skill training;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Interested organizations should also note that Northeast Indiana Works views strong community partnerships as instrumental to the success and sustainability youth programs for at-risk in-school and out-of-school youth. Proposals should therefore demonstrate comprehensive collaboration - including

shared financing as appropriate – among local school districts, community colleges, and community-based organizations.

C. Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) Program

In addition to the WIOA required elements, Northeast Indiana Works is committed to supporting the Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) program. The JAG youth program is a school-to-work transition program focused on helping at-risk youth graduate from high school and either find employment or pursue postsecondary training following graduation. At each participating high school, the JAG program provides a trained "Career Specialist" who provides individual and group instruction to 40-45 students at risk of not graduating. The JAG curriculum focuses on supporting students in their regular studies and offers instruction on 37 core employability competencies that prepare students for the workplace. Contingent on availability of funds, Northeast Indiana Works plans to fund and support existing JAG programs at 14 high schools in northeast Indiana in the coming year. All available in-school youth funds will be used to support this program.

D. Work Based Learning

As noted in section I.B. of this RFP, one required service that must be available to eligible youth are work experiences such as internships, summer jobs, pre-apprenticeship training and on-the-job training. Northeast Indiana Works is a strong supporter of paid work experiences and, as such, will require selected youth providers to have the human resource capacity and structure to support such activities. This means that bidding organizations must have the capacity to perform the following functions in support of paid work experiences for youth:

- Must have the capability to place youth on a payroll system;
- Must have the ability to manage all payroll-related tax requirements and liabilities;
- Must have appropriate liability coverage to cover youth on work experience assignments;
- Must have required worker’s compensation coverage; and
- Must have a quality assurance and program monitoring system to ensure that youth are paid for actual hours worked.

E. Alignment of WIOA Youth Program with High-Growth Industries

Northeast Indiana Works is committed to supporting efforts by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership to align workforce development and economic development activities in the region. Over the years, there have been significant efforts to identify target industries that will be the focus of these joint workforce/economic development activities. These regional efforts have identified a number of high-growth industries that are to be targeted: (1) Manufacturing, (2) Defense, (3) Transportation & Logistics, (4) Medical Devices, (5) Food Processing, (6) Financial Services, and (7) Health Delivery Services. Given this, Northeast Indiana Works is seeking proposals from organizations that can design youth development programs supporting youth entry into career pathways for these targeted industries.

F. Transition of Current (Carry-In) WIOA Youth Customers

A smooth continuation of services to existing youth customers without an undue interruption of services, is a priority for Northeast Indiana Works. Youth customers currently receiving services from an existing provider will continue to receive services from that provider if the provider is awarded a new contract through this RFP. Youth customers currently receiving services from an existing provider that does not receive a contract under this RFP will be smoothly transitioned to another provider. Northeast Indiana Works may require new contractors to accept “carry-in” WIOA youth participants and to continue providing appropriate WIOA services to these young individuals.

G. Performance Goals & Measures

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act measures the success of WIOA youth program services based on a specific set of required performance measures. WIOA youth performance outcomes (percentage and specific performance requirement details are pending guidance from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD)) include:

- Percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit.
- Percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during fourth quarter after exit.
- Median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit.
- Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, secondary school diploma or equivalent during participation or within 1 year after program exit.
- Percentage of participants who are in education that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment during a program year, achieving measurable gains.
- Indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

Please note that these performance measures are negotiated on an annual basis and are therefore subject to change based on these negotiations with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Department of Labor (DOL). Successful bidders will be responsible for meeting the DWD negotiated performance measures.

H. Eligible Bidders

Organizations eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP include not-for-profit organizations, education institutions, government entities, for-profit businesses and other organizations that are not suspended, debarred or otherwise prohibited from entering into a legal contract for WIOA youth funding. Proposals from community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, small businesses and minority-owned businesses are encouraged.

All bidders must accept liability for all aspects of any WIOA program conducted under contract with Northeast Indiana Works. Bidders will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted.

This Request for Proposals is not in itself an offer of work nor does it commit Northeast Indiana Works to fund any proposals submitted. Northeast Indiana Works is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of proposals. Northeast Indiana Works reserves the right to make an award to any bidder or to make no awards, if that is deemed to serve the best interests of northeast Indiana.

I. Contract Length and Details

Based on last year's allocation, Northeast Indiana Works estimates that it will have up to \$840,000 for Out-of-School WIOA youth and up to \$1,272,000 for In-School youth resources that it can award to organizations proposing effective youth development and workforce preparation strategies. Bidding organizations should know that Northeast Indiana Works intends to be as inclusive as possible in this solicitation. The goal is to receive a wide variety of high quality, innovative proposals that meet the youth developmental needs of the emerging workforce in northeast Indiana. The resulting contract with the successful bidder(s) will be for a two-year period which can begin any time after contract negotiations are completed. Based on performance and availability of funds, Northeast Indiana Works may elect to renew the contract for one (1) successive option year through June 30, 2019.

J. RFP Provisions and Expectations

Northeast Indiana Works assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. Northeast Indiana Works also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements that Northeast Indiana Works makes to carry out the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. Any organization submitting a bid is also providing an assurance that they will comply with the above nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements.

The successful bidder also assures that if awarded a contract it will comply with all regional, state and federal program and financial monitoring requirements. This means the bidder will make available all required information (both program and financial) as is required to satisfy local, state, and federal monitoring expectations. In addition, bidders are required to maintain all WIOA records for at least four years.

Bidding organizations should note that specifications in this RFP may change based on issuance of Indiana State, DWD, or Federal policy or guidance. Northeast Indiana Works will work with successful bidders to implement any changes required by the State or the Federal Department of Labor. By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees to work cooperatively with Northeast Indiana Works to comply with any required subsequent changes.

K. Proposal Submission and Time Line

To ensure a fair and open process for all interested bidders, the following time table will be used with this RFP:

<u>Proposed timeline</u>	
RFP Issued	03.08.2016
Questions & Answers Deadline	04.05.2016
Proposals Due	04.12.2016
Board Executive Committee Review	05.06.2016
Board Approval	06.03.2016
Contract Negotiations Begin	06.06.2016
Contractor Begins Delivering Services	07.01.2016

Northeast Indiana Works may require selected bidders to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during negotiations.

Section II: Proposal Requirements

- A. Proposals should be received by email no later than 5:00 pm, April 12, 2016. Proposals received after that time and date may be rejected. An electronic copy of the proposal should be sent to Karen Green, Senior Director of Procurement & Grants Management, at KGreen@NEINWorks.org.
- B. Proposals must be limited to 20 pages, not including other sections of your proposal such as required attachments, audit/financial reports, and other attachments such as resumes and organizational charts. All pages must be numbered and all required attachments must be completed as requested. Proposals that fail to follow all instructions and do not include all applicable information and forms may not be considered.
- C. **Attachment A** (Budget Form) must be completed and a 1-2 page budget narrative(s) must be included to support the line item budget(s) being proposed.
- D. **Attachment B** (Production Schedule) must be completed to highlight planned enrollments, service levels and performance outcomes.
- E. **Attachment C** (Non-Collusion Affidavit) must be signed and submitted.
- F. **Attachment D** (Assurances and Certifications) must be signed and submitted.
- G. Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted by email no later than April 05, 2016 to the following email address: KGreen@NEINWorks.org. Questions submitted by any other means are not permitted and will not be addressed. Questions and all answers will be posted publicly and anonymously on the Northeast website (www.neinworks.org).

H. This checklist can be used to ensure that you have included all items required to respond to this RFP. Failure to include all required information could result in rejection of your proposal.

- Cover Letter with signature(s)
- Proposal Statement of Work
- Attachment A (Budget Plan)
- Budget Narrative (1-2 pages)
- Attachment B (Production Schedule)
- Organizational Chart
- Attachment C (Non-Collusion Affidavit)
- Attachment D (Assurances and Certifications)
- Copy of most recent audit report

I. Bidders have the right to appeal any action or decision related to this RFP. Appeals will be reviewed and investigated by Northeast Indiana Works. Bidders wishing to make a formal appeal must provide, in writing, their specific rationale for the appeal. All written appeals must be submitted to Kathleen Randolph, President and CEO of Northeast Indiana Works, via email to KRandolph@NEINWorks.org.

J. Unless specifically requested by Northeast Indiana Works, changes and/or amendments to the originally submitted proposal may not be considered. In addition, Northeast Indiana Works reserves the right to: (1) amend or withdraw this RFP at any time, (2) reject any and all proposals, and (3) re-issue this RFP if necessary.

Section III: Proposal Statement of Work

Interested organizations should adhere to the following outline in responding to this RFP. This will make proposals more reviewable and allow reviewers to make more informed decisions.

A. Experience of Bidding Organization and Staff (26% of overall rating)

1. Provide an overall description including your organization's mission, vision, governance structure, and legal status. Identify key management staff by name with a description of their role in the proposed project as well as a summary of their credentials/qualifications. Identify the single point of contact for your organization. Describe the experience your single point of contact has at directing and managing WIA or WIOA youth projects. (5%)
2. Proposals must include information to demonstrate that the organization and its key staff have a record of success in operating WIA or WIOA youth development and workforce preparation programs. Describe your organizational and key staff experience in providing WIA or WIOA services to youth. Outline any specific workforce services along with performance outcomes that your organization and/or key staff have provided to low income youth that are either at-risk

of not graduating high school or are out-of-school but looking for further opportunities or guidance. (12%)

3. While staffing/hiring decisions will be the responsibility of your organization, identify the qualifications of any current staff that will be involved in delivering the proposed WIOA youth services. Include brief position descriptions with position titles. If the staff is to be hired at a later date, include the qualifications required for new staff. Also, please describe the process through which qualified staff will be identified and selected. Include an organizational chart that specifies staffing levels and locations where all staff will be located. (5%)
4. Describe your organization's experience in working with customer tracking and/or Management Information Systems (MIS) systems. Specifically, detail any experience your organization and key staff possess in the real time reporting of customer activities in an MIS database. (4%)

B. Proposed Plan of Work (47% of overall rating)

1. Describe the targeted populations you intend to serve and why. Please specify if you plan to offer WIOA services to ISY, OSY or both. Also, identify the specific number of youth (for each of the targeted groups your organization is proposing to serve) who will receive WIOA youth services.
2. Specify which counties youth will be served in. Additional points will be awarded the more counties where youth services are to be provided. (2%)
3. Describe all WIOA youth services that will be provided by your organization. Please note that your organization may propose any of the following (all options must have available the fourteen required youth services as identified in section I.B. of this RFP): (1) to operate the JAG program at all JAG-approved high schools in Northeast Indiana (detailed information about the JAG program can be found in Attachment E to this RFP), (2) to operate an innovative out-of-school youth workforce program for disadvantaged youth, or (3) to operate both the JAG program and an out-of-school program for disadvantaged youth. Regardless of what is being proposed, Northeast Indiana Works is especially interested in the specific skill development services that your organization will make available to WIOA youth participants. Using funds made available through this RFP, please provide detailed descriptions and information on all youth services and learning/development activities that you are proposing to be provided (specify which services your organization will provide and which services will be provided by another organization you have or will have an agreement with.)(15%)
4. Include a brief description of any partners that will be involved in the operation of your proposed WIOA youth program. Describe the specific role that these partners will play in delivering the proposed workforce services to youth. For partners that will play a significant role in your proposed youth program, you are encouraged to include letters from these partners which reference the specific commitments being made, including services to be delivered to youth customers, financial or in-kind contributions if any, and any other commitment(s) being made. (3%)

5. Northeast Indiana Works is looking for highly innovative and nontraditional recruitment strategies that aggressively and effectively outreach to at-risk youth. Describe the specific strategies that your organization will utilize to make youth aware of available WIOA youth services and to recruit them for participation in youth development and workforce preparation activities. (5%)
6. Describe the eligibility, assessment, individual service strategy development, and case management services that will be provided to youth. Describe the intake process your organization will use to ensure that only WIOA eligible youth are enrolled in program activities. Also, describe how youth will be assessed and prepared for youth development and workforce preparation activities. Lastly, describe any innovative or unique approaches to youth service planning or case management that your organization will utilize. (5%)
7. Provide details on how your proposed WIOA youth services align with the skill requirements of the high growth industries targeted by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership as identified in section I.E. of this RFP. (6%)
8. Describe how your organization will manage WIOA youth services and activities to meet or exceed each of the required performance measures as identified in section I.G. of this RFP. Provide specific information on the strategies your organization will use to ensure that youth are continuously engaged in WIOA youth services until they have successfully transitioned to employment or more advanced training. In addition, please provide an assurance that services will also be designed to meet any additional quality standards that may be established by Northeast Indiana Works. (11%)

C. Financial Management and Budget (27% of overall rating)

The bidder should complete a budget plan as provided in Attachment A. Do not deviate from the budget plan provided. Consistency will allow reviewers to compare proposed budgets.

1. Bidders must maintain a financial management system that is auditable and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. Detailed financial records must also be available for audit and monitoring purposes when required. To demonstrate your organizational ability to comply with these financial standards, provide a brief description of your financial management system, including appropriate internal controls. If you are proposing to offer paid work experiences to youth, briefly describe your payroll process for supporting these activities. Also, provide an electronic copy of your most recent audit report. (5%)
2. Has your organization had any questioned costs, disallowed costs or compliance monitoring findings? If so, describe these costs or findings and detail how the issues have been resolved. (3%)

3. If WIOA costs you incurred in the operation of the proposed youth program were subsequently disallowed as a result of an audit or monitoring (meaning you spent funds inappropriately), does your organization have the capability to repay these funds? If yes, from what source? (3%)
4. A 1-2 page budget narrative must be attached that describes the allocation of funds amongst programs and the philosophy of the bidder with respect to minimizing overhead costs while maximizing direct youth costs. The budget narrative(s) should be used to clarify and annotate the budget. (16%)

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Attachment A

Budget Plan

A budget plan must be completed for each category of youth you are proposing to serve (In-School youth and Out-of-School youth). If proposing to serve both categories of youth, a total of two budget plans will be required. Include in your budget plan all proposed management fees, including all costs associated with staff that are not providing direct customer services.

Instructions for completing a Budget Plan are located in the first tab of the Budget Plan file. The Budget Plan Template can be downloaded from the Northeast Indiana Works website at www.neinworks.org.

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WIOA Youth Production Schedule

Enter Organization Name

Planned Youth Enrollments & Exits by Quarter

	1st Quarter July – Sept 2016	2nd Quarter Oct – Dec 2016	3rd Quarter Jan – March 2017	4th Quarter Apr – June 2017	Total for Year
Planned WIOA youth Enrollments (# of youth to begin receiving services)					
Planned WIOA youth Exits (# of youth to stop receiving services)					

Performance Goals for Proposed Youth Program

Performance Measures/Outcomes	Required Goal as a %	Organizational Goal as a %
Placement in Education or Employment (2 nd quarter after exit)	64%	
Placement in Education or Employment (4 th quarter after exit)	64%	
Median earning (2 nd quarter after exit)	New – To be determined	
Attainment of Degree/Certificate (during program or within 1 year of exit)	58%	
In Program Skills Gain	New – To be determined	

These performance measures/outcomes have been described in section I.G. of this RFP and are subject to change based on DWD and DOL negotiations.

Attachment C

Non-Collusion Affidavit

State of Indiana

County of _____

The respondent is hereby giving oath that it has not, in any way, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or with any officer or employee of the Northeast Indiana Works Board whereby it has paid or will pay to such other respondent or officer or employee any sum of money or anything of real value whatever; and has not, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or respondents which tends to or does lessen or destroy free competition in the letting of the agreement sought for by the attached response; that no inducement of any form or character other than that which appears on the face of the response will be suggested, offered, paid, or delivered to any person whomsoever to influence the acceptance of the said response or awarding of the agreement, nor has this respondent any agreement or understanding of any kind whatsoever, with any person whomsoever, to pay, deliver to, or share with any other person in any way or manner any of the proceeds of the agreement sought by this response.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Print Name

Date

Assurances and Certifications

The respondent assures and certifies to each of the following items:

1. The bidding organization agrees to comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations governing the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, Northeast Indiana Works, and any other applicable laws and regulations.
2. The bidding organization has not been debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federally funded programs.
3. The bidding organization possesses legal authority to offer the attached proposal.
4. A drug free workplace will be maintained in accordance with State of Indiana requirements.
5. By submitting a proposal the bidder certifies to his/her knowledge and belief that there is no conflict of interest (real or apparent) inherent in the bid or in delivering the plan of work if Northeast Indiana Works awards a contract. A conflict of interest would arise if any individual involved in the preparation of this RFP, proposal review and rating or award decisions has a financial or other interest in or represents the bidding organization and would be likely to gain financially or personally from the award of a contract. The same would hold true for any member of the individual's family, partner, or an organization employing or about to employ any of the above as a direct result of the successful award of a contract under the RFP. Northeast Indiana Works reserves the right to disqualify a bid should a conflict of interest be discovered during the solicitation process.
6. The bidding organization assures that if awarded a contract by Northeast Indiana Works, it will comply with Regional, State and Federal program and financial monitoring requirements. This means the bidder will make available required information (both program and financial) as is required to satisfy local, state, and federal monitoring expectations.
7. The bidding organization assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. The bidding organization also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements that Northeast Indiana Works makes to carry out the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. This WIOA Title I funded program is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services will be made available upon request for individuals with disabilities. By submitting a bid all bidders are providing an assurance that they will comply with the above nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Print Name

Date

An Introduction to the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG Program)

The Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program is a school-to-career program with a total of 970 programs implemented in high schools, alternative schools, community colleges, and middle schools across the country. JAG's mission is to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities or enrollment in a postsecondary institution that leads to a rewarding career.

JAG serves young people with barriers to success. The more barriers to success that a young person might have, the more he or she is considered "at-risk" of graduating from high school or having a successful transition from school to an entry-level job that leads to a career. After more than two decades of operation, JAG has proven to be one of the most cost-effective and successful state-level strategies for tackling high drop-out rates, low academic performance, youth unemployment, and other critical issues related to at-risk youth.

The mission statement of the national model is to establish state organizations committed to implementing the JAG Model to serve in-school and out-of-school young people. JAG programs deliver a unique set of services to targeted youth in high school, including 12 months of post-graduation follow-up services that will result in the graduate pursuing a postsecondary education and/or entering the workforce in a quality job leading to a career. Targeted youth are those most at risk of leaving high school before graduating, unable to complete requirements for a high school diploma, or unable to experience a smooth transition from school to a career (with or without postsecondary education). While JAG is not for everyone; it is for students that possess significant barriers to academic (high school diploma or Indiana High School Equivalency Diploma (HSE)) and career success (securing an entry-level job leading to a career).

JAG Specialists recruit and interview students interested in the program. However, before a final decision is made to finalize the Program Roster, the in-school Advisory Committee meets and reviews candidates for the program. The JAG Specialist depends upon the Advisory Committee to provide feedback on each candidate and assist in the selection of participants with barriers to academic and career success. Generally speaking, career specialists know that young people with the greatest number of barriers (who want to be in the JAG program) will gain the most benefits from participation in the program.

The Electronic National Data Management System (ENDMS) provides JAG Specialists with a tool to capture critical information about participants upon entry into the program. Specialists are able to print a hard copy of a document called the "Student Profile." This document identifies barriers to academic and career success based upon the master list below.

ACADEMIC BARRIERS

- A.1. One or more modal grades behind peers
- A.2. Low academic performance (a grade point of C or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of the class)
- A.3. Basic skills deficient (reading and math in particular)
- A.4. Failed state proficiency exam
- A.5. A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials

- A.6. Has been suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school
- A.7. Has repeated a grade in high school
- A.8. Has dropped out of school previously
- A.9. Limited English proficiency

PERSONAL BARRIERS

- P.1. Special Education-certified (verified by school district or agency)
- P.2. Lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals
- P.3. Emotional disorder that impairs education or career goals
- P.4. Has a disability (documented disabilities only)
- P.5. Health problems that impair education or career goals

ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS

- E.1. Family environment is not conducive to education or career goals
- E.2. Is pregnant (when admitted to the program)
- E.3. Has dependent child(ren) in the home
- E.4. Has documented alcohol and/or substance abuse
- E.5. Convicted of a criminal offense other than a traffic violation
- E.6. Has a record of violent behavior
- E.7. Homeless
- E.8. Runaway

INCOME AND WORK-RELATED BARRIERS

- W.1. Is an economically disadvantaged student as defined by public assistance, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, or free lunch
- W.2. Is a member of a race/ethnic group with a low family income
- W.3. Having inadequate or no work experience
- W.4. Lacks marketable occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

JAG MODEL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OUTCOMES

JAG Specialists are held accountable for the following process and performance outcomes:

- 90 percent HSE and/or high school graduation rate
The word “graduates” appears in the name of the organization and represents the importance of graduation (or HSE completion) to the JAG National Network. The goal is to achieve a 90% completion rate by the close of the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. The Graduation Rate is computed by subtracting the non-graduates from the number of participants on the Program Roster and dividing the graduates by the total number of participants. For example:

Total number of participants:	600
Non-graduates:	50
Graduates:	550
Graduation Rate:	90.17% (550 divided by 600)

- 80 percent experiencing a positive outcome, including: employment, postsecondary education enrollment, or military
The goal is for 80% of the participants to achieve a positive outcome by the close of the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. The positive outcomes valued in the JAG Model include: employment (full-time or part-time); postsecondary enrollment; or full-time military. The Positive Outcome Rate is computed by dividing the number of Positive Outcomes by the number of graduates (550). For example:

Total number of graduates:	550
Total number of positive outcomes:	500
Positive Outcome Rate:	90.9% (500 divided by 550)

- 60 percent employed in a job in the public or private sectors
The goal is for 60% of the participants to be employed in a full-time (35 hours or more) or a part-time job (greater than 10 hours but less than 35 hours). The word “jobs” is prominent in the name of the organization - “Jobs for America’s Graduates.” The Employment Rate is computed by dividing the number of employed participants (full-time, part-time, and full-time military) by the number of graduates. For example:

Total number of graduates:	550
Total number of employed graduates:	350
Employment Rate:	60.1% (350 divided by 550)

- 60 percent employed in a full-time job
The goal is for 60% of the graduates to be in a full-time job including: full-time employment (35 or more hours per week; two part-time jobs totaling 35 or more hours equates to a full-time job). The Full-time Jobs Rate is computed by dividing the number of full-time employed graduates (full-time civilian and full-time military) by the total number of employed graduates (full-time civilian, part-time civilian and full-time military). For example:

Total number of employed graduates:	350
Total number of full-time employed graduates:	210
Total Full-time Jobs Rate:	60.0% (210 divided by 350)

- 80 percent in a full-time placement, including: full-time job; full-time postsecondary enrollment; or, a combination of work and school
The goal is for 80% of the graduates to be engaged in full-time activities (full-time civilian employment; full-time military; full-time postsecondary enrollment; or part-time jobs with part-time postsecondary enrollment) by the close of the follow-up phase. The Full-time Placement Rate is computed by dividing the total number of full-time enrolled and employed graduates by the number of graduates. For example:

Total number of graduates:	550
Total number of full-time enrolled and employed graduates:	520
Full-time Placement Rate:	94.5% (520 divided by 550)

- 5 percent or less of graduates in the unable to contact rate category

The goal is a less than 10% “unable to contact” rate during the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. An escalating “unable to contact” rate is of considerable concern because performance outcomes can’t be claimed if the Specialist is unable to make contact with graduates.

Total number of graduates:	550
Unable to contact:	25
Unable to Contact Rate:	4.5% (25 divided by 550)

- 30 percent pursuit of a postsecondary education
Specialists are committed to encouraging graduates to pursue a postsecondary education if it is appropriate and feasible given the graduate’s situation. The Further Education Rate is tracked to emphasize the importance that the JAG Model places on a postsecondary education especially when combined with part-time employment.

Total number of graduates:	550
Postsecondary enrollment:	110
Further Education Rate:	20% (110 divided by 550)

- For all sites, 20% of JAG classroom activities per school year must include guest speakers and/or field trips with area businesses.
- All JAG participants register with and submit a resume in IndianaCareerConnect.com.
- For all sites, 10% of JAG classroom time must be spent on community service per month.
- 85% of seniors will have a pin and complete the online FAFSA by March 1st, annually.
- 85% of seniors will have completed two post-secondary applications by May annually.
- 85% of seniors will have taken the ACT, SAT or other post-secondary/certification assessment by May annually.
- 100% of JAG sites will participate in a college fair by May annually.
- 100% of JAG sites will have visited a college campus by May annually.
- 100 percent of participants are being tracked accurately and in a timely manner using the Electronic National Data Management System (e-NDMS) and DWD’s management information system.

JAG MODEL SERVICES

- ✓ Classroom Instruction. A trained “JAG Specialist” provides individual and group instruction to 40-45 students carefully selected for the program by a school Advisory Committee comprised of faculty, administrators, and counselors.
- ✓ Employability Skills Training. The JAG Curriculum is designed to equip students with no less than 37 competencies that will prepare them to secure a quality job and/or pursue a postsecondary education upon graduation from high school. Students in multi-year programs may attain as many as 85 competencies in four years.
- ✓ Adult Mentoring. The JAG Specialist provides individual attention to reduce the number of barriers preventing students from receiving a high school diploma, securing employment, or pursuing a postsecondary education and/or training that leads to a career.

- ✓ Guidance and Counseling. JAG Specialists provide informal guidance to students on career and life decisions and, based on the individual needs of students, connect them to professional counseling services to address more serious barriers.
- ✓ Summer Employment Training. JAG programs include placement services for students over the summer months to support yearlong learning.
- ✓ Leadership Development. In-school students participate in the highly motivational student-led JAG Career Association to develop leadership and teaming skills. Out-of-School young adults participate in a youth-led organization called the JAG Professional Association.
- ✓ Job and Postsecondary Education Placement Services. Specialists engage in intensive employer marketing and job development activities to identify quality job placement opportunities for students upon graduation. Likewise, they assist students in the exploration of postsecondary education opportunities and help navigate the financial aid and application processes.
- ✓ Linkages to School- and Community-Based Services. JAG programs serve as a school-based “one-stop center” to ensure that they receive academic and social services from in-school and community-based resources as needed.
- ✓ 12-Month Follow-up Services. JAG provides a full 12 months of post-graduation follow-up services and support on the job and/or in pursuit of a postsecondary education.
- ✓ Accountability System. Systematic Internet-based tracking of program activities, including: students served, services delivered and performance results achieved. Electronic National Data Management System (ENDMS) allows monitoring of the data captured in the national, state, and local database. The required data and information are essential in conducting JAG’s National Accreditation Process including local site reviews and funding sources.
- ✓ Professional Development. Continuous improvement of results through the professional development of state and local staff is an ongoing service provided JAG-State Organizations.

All JAG programs must offer the following activities in each high school in which the JAG program is operating:

1. JAG Specialists (teacher) must participate in the DWD provided JAG training workshops to learn how to deliver the model services and implement all components of the model. This workshop will be in-state and conducted by a nationally certified trainer. When a JAG Specialist terminates service and is replaced, the new specialist must also receive this training.
2. The national organization sponsors a National Training Seminar (NTS) each July. JAG Specialists are not required, but encouraged, to attend to receive updated technical knowledge and professional development, pending available funding.
3. One component of the model is to have a student organization called the “Career Association” for students to learn and practice leadership skills. A few competitive events allow students to compete against other schools. Some of these are required events. Therefore, staff participation in the Regional Career Development Conference and the State Career

Development Conference (CDC) is required. For the State CDC, JAG students who have qualified to compete also participate. Both are one-day events.

4. Classes should be separated by grades whenever possible because the competencies taught to seniors are different than those taught to underclass students.
5. JAG Specialist must have his/her own computer with Internet access. The data entry requirements must be kept current to meet national expectations. Specialists will be required to enter data on a daily or weekly basis. The database will be monitored monthly by the state staff and the national staff and is expected to be current, complete, and accurate.
6. JAG Specialist should be scheduled the equivalent of one hour per day to conduct Job Development, Job Marketing, and Follow-up Activities. A minimum of three hours per week should be scheduled for these activities.
7. JAG Specialist should be contracted for twelve (12) months to have time during summer when schools are not in session to conduct follow-up activities with all students. It is required that graduates receive, at a minimum, one contact per month (including June, July, and August) for 12 consecutive months after leaving high school. Undergraduate students should also receive monthly contacts during summer months to encourage tutorial help, remediation, work experience, return to school, etc.

For Northeast Indiana, there are currently fourteen (14) fully operational JAG Programs at the following high schools:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ East Noble HS (Noble County) | ✓ Wayne HS (Allen County) |
| ✓ Garret HS (DeKalb County) | ✓ New Haven HS (Allen County) |
| ✓ South Side HS (Allen County) | ✓ Heritage HS (Allen County) |
| ✓ North Side HS (Allen County) | ✓ North Manchester HS (Wabash County) |
| ✓ Northrop HS (Allen County) | ✓ Marion HS (Grant County) |
| ✓ Snider HS (Allen County) | ✓ DeKalb HS (Grant County) |
| ✓ Impact Institute (CTE program covering multiple counties within the region) | ✓ Huntington North HS (Huntington County) |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about the Jobs for America's Graduates National Model can be found on their Web site at www.JAG.org.