

**AGENCY SPECIFIC CONTENT FOR THE NOTICE OF  
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY # 75-451**

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**WIOA Statewide  
Youth Career Pathways Initiative**



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
**OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**  
Bruce Rauner, Governor



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**WIOA STATEWIDE YOUTH CAREER PATHWAYS**

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) sets forth the requirements for the 2018 WIOA Statewide Youth Career Pathways Initiative. The goal of this program is to develop a framework which supports regions to work collectively to connect Illinois' youth with careers in growth industries. Below are items that applicants should familiarize themselves with to understand the requirements set forth in this application.

- [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014](https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/)  
<https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>
- [State of Illinois Unified Workforce Plan](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan)  
<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan>
- [WIOA Regional/Local Plans by Economic Development Region](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx)  
[https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans\\_MOUs\\_Dashboard.aspx](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx)
- [State of Illinois WIOA ePolicy Portal](https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home)  
<https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Home>
- [Grant Recovery and Accountability Act](https://www.illinois.gov/sites/gata/Pages/default.aspx)  
<https://www.illinois.gov/sites/gata/Pages/default.aspx>

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Department of Commerce), as the state agency responsible for the administration of statewide workforce development activities outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, is the entity issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), in conjunction with Core WIOA partners - Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Department of Employment Security, and Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is for the development of Regional Youth Career Pathway Programs, developed in partnerships/consortia across communities with the support of both public and private partners.

**DEFINITIONS:**

The following definitions are those commonly used in administering the federal funding workforce grants including the Youth Career Pathways Initiative.

*Career Pathway (Appendix A defines the framework): (as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that*

- Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act"; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an "apprenticeship", except in section 171);
- Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

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- Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

*Eligible Training Provider:* An organization, such as a public or private college and university, or community-based organization whose application has been approved by the local workforce board and approved for the state list of training services using an Individual Training Account.

*Individual Training Account:* A funding mechanism through which eligible individuals can access quality training to help obtain employment in high demand occupations.

*Opportunity Youth:* Young people between the ages of 16-24 who are not in school and not working, in recognition of their need for opportunities to connect to meaningful education, training, and employment opportunities.

*Participant:* A reportable individual who has received staff-assisted services after satisfying all applicable programmatic requirements for the provision of services, such as eligibility determination. The following individuals are not participants: (i) Individuals who have not completed at least 12 contact hours in the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program; (ii) Individuals who only use the self-service system; and (iii) Individuals who only receive information services or activities.

*Sector Partnership:* Partnerships of companies, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, with education, workforce development, economic development, community organizations and other stakeholders that collectively focus on a set of priorities that matter to the competitiveness of their industry. These partnerships are:

- Industry-led, driven by a committed group of employer champions
- Community-supported by a diverse range of public program partners
- Convened or facilitated by a credible third-party (or intermediary)
- An organizing vehicle for multiple program partners to respond to industry priorities together
- Local or regional (not top-down or statewide)
- Action-oriented, focused on improving industry sector competitiveness, and not limited to just workforce issues.

*Training Services:* Means services provided to eligible individuals if it is determined, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual:

- is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
- needs training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and

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- has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

*Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act:* An act to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to strengthen the United States workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs in the United States, and to promote individual and national economic growth, and for other purposes.

**ILLINOIS' UNIFIED STATE PLAN**

Under WIOA, the State of Illinois is required to submit a plan that outlines the vision, principles and goals for the integration of workforce, education and economic development programs through. The plan describes the partnership of core partners, including Title I and III, through the Department of Labor, and Title II and IV through the Department of Education. Projects funded under the Statewide Youth Career Pathways should align and support the vision, goals and strategies that are outlined in Illinois' Unified State Plan.

*Vision Statement:* Promote business-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.

*Guiding Principles:* Illinois will work toward achieving the vision using these principles as guideposts for policy development and program service delivery. Each partner will use its resources to support the following principles:

- Business demand driven orientation through a sector strategy framework
- Strong partnerships with business at all levels
- Career pathways to jobs of today and tomorrow
- Integrated service delivery
- Access and opportunity for all populations
- Cross-agency collaboration and alignment for developing and/or promoting career pathways and industry recognized stackable credentials
- Clear metrics for progress and success
- Focus on continuous improvement and innovation

*State Goals:* The partners will collectively use the following goals to support Illinois' vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of the state's employers and their workforce.

- Foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.

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- Expand information for employers and job seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

*State Strategies and Highlighted Activities:* Illinois will explore a variety of strategies for the implementation of principles and goals with a focus on improving community prosperity through more competitive businesses and workers. These strategies and highlighted activities include:

- Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels
  - Providing data and tools to support regional planning to align education, workforce and economic development strategies.
  - Developing a state and regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the public.
- Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives
  - Conducting outreach to regional and local economic development organizations to improve regional collaboration in economic development planning.
  - Aligning and integrating business and job seeker services among the programs along with state and regional economic development partners.
- Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement
  - Exploring ways to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve outcomes like other populations (see “Targeted Populations” in Chapter 1 of the Illinois Unified State Plan).
  - Creating new pathways for success by preparing low-skill adults to take advantage of sector based bridge programs.
- Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management
  - Establishing case management teams to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across programs.
  - Promoting continuous improvement in career services and case management through the identification of best practice models and incentivizing demonstration projects.
- Expand Access to Labor Market Information
  - Improving access to labor market information for employers and job seekers that will allow them to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends, and identify education and training programs.
  - Supporting awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.
- Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure
  - Working with core partners and the State Chief Information Officer to develop a framework of how to integrate state intake, case management and reporting systems.
  - Expanding and improving the state education and workforce longitudinal data system to support the six strategies.

**Program Purpose:** The purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is to solicit proposals from eligible organizations capable of developing a framework which supports regions that will work collectively to connect Illinois’ youth with careers in growth industries. All proposals must support the

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vision, principles, goals and strategies articulated within Illinois' Unified State Plan as well as the priorities outlined in the Regional and Local Workforce Plans.

This funding opportunity will award grants for projects that not only address priorities identified in the Illinois' Unified State Plan but that will incorporate the practices that align with the statewide adopted definition for a career pathway framework. Proposals must serve opportunity youth who face barriers to continued education and employment. Additionally, successful pilot projects will integrate workforce, education, and economic development services; break down barriers to accessing job-driven training resulting in employment opportunities. These projects will inform a framework for the development of sustainable career pathways for young people throughout the state. Additionally, they will assist in the effective and efficient implementation of WIOA regulations within Illinois' economic development regions.

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board envisions ten success elements for serving opportunity youth. These elements demonstrate the principles, strategies, and criteria in the Illinois' Unified State Plan and how various funding sources may be blended for full regional ownership and sustainability:

1. Partnerships with education, employers, and workforce boards to plan and leverage resources.
2. Business engagement in developing and managing career pathway programs.
3. Credentials, certifications, and/or postsecondary access that result from career pathway programs.
4. High demand industries and higher skill occupations that meet youth earnings and career goals.
5. Work-based learning opportunities to experience the workplace first-hand.
6. Individual career/employment plans for each youth participant.
7. Individual supports available to meet the unique needs of each youth program participant.
8. Contextualized learning and work-based skills that prepare youth for employment.
9. Measuring results and continuous improvement methodology to maintain and enhance program quality.
10. Sustainability plans that connect the program to broader long-term talent strategies.

Consider the following key questions to drive program improvement, coordination, and alignment when completing a proposal.

1. ***Are there partnerships?*** Specifically, partners (who minimally include secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, public and private employers and workforce development boards) will support and commit to leveraging resources to educate, train, support, and/or identify employment for youth.
2. ***Is there business engagement/investment?*** Employers should have a leadership role in developing and managing career pathway programs that integrate work-based learning opportunities through the experience. Businesses are best suited to ensure current content for programs and careers that are high demand/higher skill at the local, regional, and/or state level.
3. ***Do career pathway programs lead to the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential?*** A credential must be one or more of the following: an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State or Federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree with opportunities to obtain advanced standing throughout the pipeline (such as early college credit).
4. ***Do the programs address high demand industries that result in high skill occupations?*** Career pathway programs should address high-demand industries and occupations that meet state,

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regional, and local youth earnings goals as well as provide career advancement opportunities to higher skill and higher earnings jobs.

5. ***Do the programs include work-based learning experiences and capstone projects?*** Career pathway programs should include opportunities to experience the workplace through related paid or unpaid internships, apprenticeships, student organization activities, and capstone projects.
6. ***Are individual career/employment plans used in conjunction with these programs?*** Based on career information access, individual career/employment plans developed by participants should enter pathway programs that outline the individual goals and path of coursework/experiences needed to attain those goals.
7. ***Have individual supports been identified?*** There should be a comprehensive set of support services available that to meet the individual needs of each pathway program participant.
8. ***Is pathway program instruction contextualized and does it address workplace skills?*** Instruction should relate to real-world, real-life situations and experiences. Additionally, instruction should result in an increase in digital literacy skills, specifically the ability to find, utilize, evaluate, share, and create content using information technologies and the Internet. Application of learning with integrated content of related foundational and academic skills should be a primary focus?
9. ***Is there a way to measure results and is there a plan for continuous improvement?*** Pathway programs must measure results on indicators and benchmarks and use them to improve performance through evidence-based practices that remain responsive to the needs of the pathway participant and the business community.
10. ***Is there a plan for sustainability?*** A sustainable mechanism for keeping the project running is vital. This plan should address a broader and long-term public and private human resources strategic commitment.

Funded projects will include:

1. *Clearly defined regional, cross-sector partnerships, including businesses supported by an MOU that demonstrates roles and responsibilities for each partner (this includes a clear relationship with a LWIA)*
2. *Services focused on WIOA- eligible youth (see Appendix C) and clearly describe who and how eligibility will be determined along with providing the required follow-up services for one year after exit*
3. *Clearly state your credentials (credentials must be recognized by a postsecondary entity, or industry)*
4. *Plans for utilization of Illinois workNet in project implementation*
5. *Integration of ICAPS/IET and Bridge programs in Career Pathway Development (where applicable)*
6. *Plans for sustainability of the project (must be specific in how project will continue once WIOA funding ends)*

**Theory of Action:** The theory of action for addressing the needs of opportunity youth centers on development of career pathway systems, with both elements that pertain to the development of the learner and the system that supports that learner. Career pathway programs focus on a) participant-focused instruction and training; b) appropriate and meaningful assessment; c) supportive services and navigation; and d) direct connections to employment. The Standing Youth Committee of the IWIB, responsible for the development of this NOFO, recognizes the need to connect young people to meaningful education, training, and employment. WIOA emphasizes deeper investment in a system which supports employer-demand driven sector-based programs that address the diverse needs of young people. Sector-based initiatives at the regional level are approaches to workforce and economic

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development that improve access to good jobs and/or increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry’s workforce. For a complete explanation of the elements of career pathways, learner and system-focused frameworks, sector-based strategies and consortium models, see Appendix B. A successful application will utilize these frameworks to structure their proposed project.

**Table 1: Opportunity Youth Segmentation.** Opportunity youth can be segmented based upon their degree of preparation and ability to take up opportunities.

Higher	<b>C: Facing obstacles outside education</b> <i>High school or better education</i> <b>Unable to transition</b>	<b>A: Mismatched with the employment system</b> <i>High School or better education</i> <b>Able to transition</b>
Degree of Preparation	<b>D: Facing multiple hurdles</b> <i>Less than high school education</i> <b>Unable to transition</b>	<b>B: Mismatched with the education system</b> <i>Less than high school education</i> <b>Able to transition</b>
Lower		
	Lower	Higher

**Ability to Take Up Opportunities**

Source: White House Council on Community Solutions. June 2012. *Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth*. [http://www.serve.gov/sites/default/files/ctools/12\\_0604whccs\\_finalreport.pdf](http://www.serve.gov/sites/default/files/ctools/12_0604whccs_finalreport.pdf)

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**Table 2: Needs and Supports Required for Opportunity Youth**

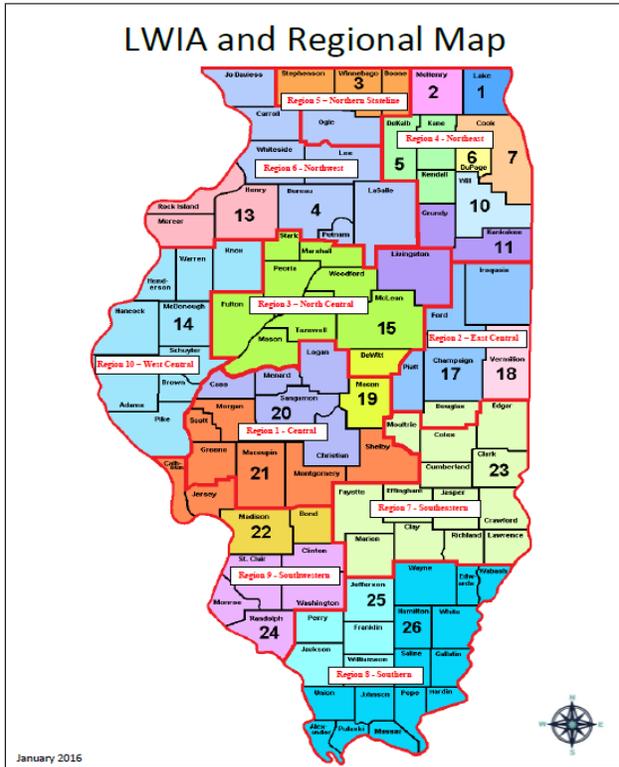
*Types of employment opportunities open to youth increase along this spectrum*

	<b>Group D Facing Multiple Hurdles</b>	<b>Group C Facing Obstacles Outside Education</b>	<b>Group B Mismatched with Education System</b>	<b>Group A Mismatched with Employment System</b>
<b>Critical Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated services across education, social supports, and employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wraparound supports</li> <li>Alternative pathways to learning &amp; employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pathways to GED/high school completion</li> <li>Alternative training and credentialing programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment pathways &amp; more advanced credentialing opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Types of Support Required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity for education within a stable set of interventions (identified in group C)</li> <li>Move youth a “step up the ladder” on path to full employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food access</li> <li>Housing and transport</li> <li>Health/mental health services</li> <li>Life skills mentoring</li> <li>Daycare</li> <li>Financial/legal literacy</li> <li>Alternative pathways to GED, diploma, or community college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High school graduation support</li> <li>GED support</li> <li>On-the-job training and work learning programs</li> <li>Alternative credentialing programs</li> <li>Afterschool summer programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community college collaborations</li> <li>Certification/credentialing programs</li> <li>Internship or apprenticeship opportunities</li> <li>Starter jobs</li> </ul>

**PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**Allowable Activities:** Projects that are funded under this NOFO must be allowable under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Those providing direct services to individuals must meet the eligibility guidelines outlined in the WIOA regulations and summarized in Appendix C. Note that the Department of Commerce is committed to providing preference to all United States veterans, their spouses, and family members who are eligible regarding all services needed for education and employment acquisition.

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**Support of Regional and Local Plans:** As indicated above, applicants must identify the workforce / economic development region and administer the programs within the context and align with the State, Regional, and Local workforce development plans. Applicants must work with the State, Regional and Local partners to implement the project in coordination with WIOA and must have a signed MOU. This map identifies the workforce and economic development regions in Illinois. Additional information regarding the regional and local workforce plans is posted on Illinois workNet portal at:

[https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans\\_MOUs\\_Dashboard.aspx](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx)

**WIOA Participant Eligibility & Case Management:** Applicants other than Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs) and their active WIOA operators and providers must work with their designated LWIA(s) to create a viable approach for complying with WIOA client eligibility (Appendix C), reporting, and performance requirements. Such applicants must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed and signed by the applicant and an LWIA or other qualified organization that details roles and responsibilities related to recruitment, eligibility determination, enrollment, performance requirements, and strategies. Applicants must identify staff that are qualified to certify and document eligibility in the *Illinois Workforce Development System* for WIOA youth. Additionally, applicants must be aware that Illinois workNet is the required program of record for awarded grants.

**Business Engagement:** Projects must provide evidence of businesses committed to addressing the employment needs of youth. At a minimum, the proposal should include an MOU with at least one business. As WIOA emphasizes deeper investment in a system which supports employer-demand driven sector-based programs that address the youth’s diverse needs, the expectation for the grant and as part of sustainability the successful applicant must increase the number of businesses that are committed to employing youth served. A business engagement plan (Appendix D) that identifies current business and community partner relationships and demonstrates how additional businesses will be engaged is required for the application.

**WIOA Performance:** Projects that provide services directly to participants are subject to the WIOA performance measures of the LWIA in which they are partnering. Negotiated performance measures unique to each local area are applicable to all participants served under this NOFO are listed in Appendix E. In instances where the Grantee is not an LWIA, WIOA performance measures and targets for the grant will be determined at the State level. The following are the performance measures for youth under WIOA:

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*Youth*

- *Employment/Education Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit* - The percentage of WIOA registered participants in unsubsidized employment, secondary education, postsecondary education, and occupational skills training in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit from the program.
- *Employment/Education Rate 4th Quarter after Exit* - The percentage of WIOA registered participants in unsubsidized employment, secondary education, postsecondary education, and occupational skills training in the 4th quarter after exit from the program.
- *Credential Attainment – Only includes those who received training or education (excluding OJT or Customized Training)* - The percentage of WIOA registered participants who obtain a postsecondary credential or a high school diploma or GED during participation in a program or within 1 year after exit from the program. If participant obtains secondary school diploma or equivalent, they must also be employed or in an education/training program leading to a postsecondary credential within 1 year after exit to count as having met the performance indicator
- *Measurable Skill Gains* – includes those in education or training in each program year (not exit based) that achieve any of the following – educational functioning level increase, secondary school diploma attainment, transcript/report card showing 12 credits attained, satisfactory progress report toward established milestone, and successful passage of a required exam. (Only 1 gain per program year (i.e., in numerator and denominator 1 time) unless a participant has multiple periods of participation in each program year.

**Target Populations:** Commerce will accept and consider proposals that support the priorities outlined in the regional workforce development plans. This may include projects that serve youth, adults, dislocated workers, and/or incumbent workers that are eligible under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Additional consideration will be provided to projects that serve the targeted populations included in the Illinois' Unified State Plan including:

- Low-income individuals
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Returning Citizens (ex-offenders);
- Homeless individuals;
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
- Individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers;
- Single parents (including single pregnant women);
- Long-term unemployed individuals.

**Targeted Industries and Occupations:** Commerce will accept projects that support the targeted industries included in the state and/or regional workforce plans as appropriate. Applicants must demonstrate how the project will align with either state, regional and local workforce plans and other resources as part of an analysis of the labor market information.

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**Participant Training Programs:** All participant training programs must be provided by an Eligible Training Provider program that will lead to an employment related placement. All participant training programs must be certified and include a target occupation(s) from the current Demand Occupation Training List for the Local Area found in the ePolicy Portal under the attachments in Chapter 7 Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility (<https://apps.il-work-net.com/WIOAPolicy/Policy/Index/58>) on Illinois workNet. Participant serving proposals must identify the industry-recognized credentials that will result from the training. Applicants are also encouraged to expand career pathway opportunities through accelerated training and work-based learning.

**Program Outcomes:** Specific project outcomes, goals, and deliverables must be included in the proposal. Agreed upon deliverables and outcomes will be tracked utilizing project management tools in Illinois workNet.

**B. FUNDING INFORMATION**

**Funding Source:** This program will utilize federal funds from the U.S. Department of Labor under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

**Award Amount:** It is anticipated that the Department of Commerce will award \$3-5 million in Youth Career Pathways grants, with the potential for additional funding contributed by other WIOA Core partners. However, the Department of Commerce may elect to award amounts over this amount based on strength of application or strength of performance during the grant period.

Funding decisions are made as funding is available and the Department of Commerce is not obligated to provide the maximum grant amount requested. Allowable costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable based on the activity or activities contained in the scope of work. Examples of allowable costs include personal services costs, leasing, meetings, outreach. Funding for the activities outlined in this are subject to State and federal legislative appropriation.

**Pre-award and Application Costs:** Pre-award costs for services in anticipation of an award are allowable where necessary for the efficient and timely performance of the program, and are subject to 2 CFR 200.458. To be accepted, proof of services must meet the guidelines and requirements outlined within this NOFO. Only applicants who receive an award because of the NOFO and merit-based review process will be eligible for pre-award costs. Grantees are advised to contact the Department of Commerce for technical assistance with questions or concerns prior to incurring costs. Costs associated with the development of a proposal are not allowed.

**Cost Sharing or Matching:** Matching funds are not required; however, braiding of funds is encouraged, and projects leveraging multiple funding sources will be given priority consideration. Successful applicants will be required to report leveraged resources from partners over the life of the project, including WIOA formula funds and other federal, state, local, and private resources. There is no minimum requirement, but applications will be reviewed in part based upon their ability to leverage additional funding sources, which should be clearly described in the application.

**Administration Costs:** It is expected that administrative costs, both direct and indirect, will represent a small portion of the program budget and shall not exceed 10%. Program budgets and narratives will detail how all proposed expenditures are directly necessary for program implementation and will distinguish between direct/indirect administrative and direct/indirect program costs.

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**Indirect Costs:** To charge indirect costs to the grant, the applicant organization must elect one of the following options annually and complete the necessary requirements in the State of Illinois Indirect Cost Rate System:

- *Federally Negotiated Rate.* Organizations that receive direct federal funding may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally approved NICRA.
- *State Negotiated Rate.* The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have Federally Negotiated Rate. The indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted to the State of IL within 90 days of the grant effective date.
- *De Minimis Rate.* An organization that has never received a Federally Negotiated Rate or a State of Illinois Negotiated Rate may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the de minimis rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually to accept the de minimis rate.

**Award Term:** The grant term/performance period will be determined on a project specific basis, targeted at 12-18 months.

**C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

**Eligible Applicants:** This funding opportunity is limited to public and private organizations that are in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State. Additional consideration will be given to organizations that demonstrate the administrative capacity and a history of successfully implementing innovative projects. Additional consideration will also be given to organizations and projects in local workforce areas and regions throughout the State of Illinois (State) that document how the project will impact workforce, education, and economic development, and that can be replicated throughout the State (if applicable).

Grantees must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

**Demonstrated Effectiveness:** Eligible applicants must demonstrate effectiveness in serving the target population(s), engaging businesses, and ability to meet performance targets. The applicant's capacity to show they can deliver in these areas is a strong factor in coordinating education, workforce and economic development services. Proposals must provide data and supporting related outcomes to demonstrate capacity and effectiveness.

**Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM):** Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. Registration information is available at [governmentcontractregistration.com/sam-registration.asp](http://governmentcontractregistration.com/sam-registration.asp);
- Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and

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- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information during the entire period of an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department of Commerce may not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements.

**Pre-Registration Requirement:** An entity may apply for a grant but will not be eligible for a grant award until the entity has pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, [www.grants.illinois.gov](http://www.grants.illinois.gov). During pre-qualification, Dun and Bradstreet verifications are performed including a check of Debarred and Suspended status and good standing with the Secretary of State. The pre-qualification process also includes a financial and administrative risk assessment utilizing an Internal Controls Questionnaire. If applicable, the entity will be notified that it is ineligible for award because of the Dun and Bradstreet verification. The entity will be informed of corrective action needed to become eligible for a grant award. If an applicant has failed to meet an eligibility criterion at the time of an application deadline, the application will still be reviewed but the State will not make a State Award until all eligibility criteria are met. The online registration will trigger a pre-qualification process that will ensure the entity:

- Has a current DUNS number;
- Has a current SAM CAGE Code (you will need to register at SAM.gov);
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List;
- Is in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State.

Once your entity is pre-qualified, you will receive a link to an Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ). Applicants must complete the ICQ as part of the pre-award process and program staff will then determine whether any or all risk-based conditions shall be incorporated into the Agreement.

**Required Technical Assistance:** Technical Assistance (TA) will be provided throughout the application process, in the form of webinars, regional meetings, and direct support. Applicants will be required to attend a one-day technical assistance session late March or early April and are encouraged to participate in all technical assistance webinars that are offered in conjunction with this grant. A TA schedule will be available and regularly updated. For information regarding the TA, the NOFO, and the Standing Youth Committee, please visit Illinois workNet at [www.illinoisworknet.com/YouthCareerPathwaysNOFO](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/YouthCareerPathwaysNOFO) or contact Tammy Stone at [Tammy.Stone@illinois.gov](mailto:Tammy.Stone@illinois.gov). Successful applicants must agree to receive consultation technical assistance from authorized representatives of the Department. The applicant and collaborating partners may be required to attend site visits. Successful applicants may also be required to attend regular meetings and training as provided by the Department or a subcontractor of the Department and should budget accordingly.

**D. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**Application Information:** Application materials are provided throughout the announcement and at [www.illinoisworknet.com/YouthCareerPathwaysNOFO](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/YouthCareerPathwaysNOFO). This website will contain information regarding the NOFO and materials necessary for submission. Questions and answers will also be posted on the program website. It is the responsibility of each applicant to monitor that website and comply with any instructions or requirements relating to the NOFO.

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**Content and Form of Application Submission:** *Youth Career Pathway Initiative proposals must address the elements expressed in Section I. Program Description.* Each applicant must submit all sections as follows:

**Executive Summary:** Provide a one-page summary that identifies/describes the:

1. Applicant
2. Amount of funding requested
3. Geographic region and community(ies) to be served
4. Members of the regional partnership including education and training agencies, regional employers, business and industry associations, economic development organizations, one-stop partners, organized labor, and others determined appropriate
5. Services to be provided
6. Anticipated goals and outcomes of this project

**Technical Proposal (12-page maximum):** The narrative technical proposal should highlight the goals of the organization with respect to the targeted population, activities to be undertaken, and the expected outcomes of these activities. The technical proposal should include the following information:

1. *Applicant Capacity:*
  - a. Describe the related experience of the applicant and partners responding to the NOFO. If any of the work is to be sub-contracted, provide the name of and describe the relevant experience of the subcontractor(s).
  - b. Provide information about the applicant's size and structure, as well as the length of time in business.
  - c. Include a list of the applicant's staff, including subcontractor personnel, to be assigned to the project. Describe the role each staff person will fulfill as well as the primary person that will interact with the Department. Indicate the number of hours each staff will be assigned to the project. Provide resumes for all project staff. Indicate, at a minimum, their positions and total years in the organization, education, and relevant work experience.
  - d. Provide evidence data demonstrating the applicant's past ability in serving youth.

**Documentation of Need:** Provide a detailed explanation of how this organization meets the priorities specified in the Program Description (Section I).

- a. Describe the target population that will be served by this grant as well as service levels.
- b. Describe the applicant's connection to the population (program participants) targeted in this proposal. How many program participants will be served and how will they be identified/recruited?
- c. Describe any additional contextual details that will strengthen the reviewers understanding of the program need.
- d. Full Inclusion Models: Supporting Illinois' commitment to Employment First principles through development of career pathway programs that fully integrate youth with disabilities into general training classrooms/program models and feature full integration in the general working population for work-based learning and employment opportunities.
- e. Evidence Based Programming: Supporting the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage such youth to re-enter and complete secondary

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education, enroll in postsecondary education and advanced training, progress through a career pathway, and/or enter unsubsidized employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

*Narrative of Action Plan:* The narrative of proposed activities should highlight the goals of the organization towards the population, the activities, and the outcomes these activities will accomplish.

- a. Provide detailed information about the service or training providers(s) selected for this project including but not limited to:
  - i. Where will the service or training take place?
  - ii. Who will provide the service or training?
  - iii. What is the duration of service or training?
  - iv. What course credit(s) and/or credential(s) will be received at completion of training? (Be sure to note any credentials that are nationally recognized and portable).
  - v. If your project includes training services, explain how you will assure that the training provider is accredited and will successfully fulfill their duties.
- b. Describe how the organization will complete and comply with the program requirements described in Section I.
- c. Indicate a plan for the use of 20% of all funds for work-based learning efforts. This must be clearly illustrated in the application and may include work-experience, internships, on-the-job training if the candidate is WIOA-eligible.

*Specific Project Requirements and Considerations:*

- a. Describe the project partners in Attachment E the Business Engagement Plan. Program applicants are highly encouraged to participate in a consortium (described in Appendix B) to address opportunity youth needs. If the applicant chooses not to apply as a member of a consortium, they must explain within the **Technical Proposal** their rationale including a description of their access to the eligible targeted population; ability to provide education, training and supportive services; and established relationships with employers for work-based learning placements and eventual unsubsidized employment.
- b. Applicants should clearly describe any elements of the project they consider to be innovative, the evidence supporting and the specific intended outcomes of the proposed innovation.
- c. Provide any relevant information that demonstrates how your project will break down barriers to accessing career pathways. Projects may focus on:
  - i. Priority Populations: Developing strategies for effectively serving individuals with barriers to employment and for coordinating programs and services among workforce partners.
  - ii. Child support services, and assistance provided by State and local agencies carrying out part D of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC 651 et seq.);
  - iii. Cooperative extension programs carried out by the University of Illinois;
  - iv. Programs carried out for individuals with disabilities, including programs carried out by State agencies relating to intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, activities carried out by Statewide Independent Living Councils established under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 796d), programs funded under part B of chapter 1 of title VII of such

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Act (29 USC 796e et seq.), and activities carried out by centers for independent living, as defined in section 702 of such Act (29 USC 796a). For more information on funding strategies for applications seeking to serve individuals with disabilities, please see the addendum to this NOFO;

- v. Programs that target services to out of school youth in contact with the Juvenile Justice System;
- vi. Programs that target services to out of school youth in the Child Welfare and Foster Care System;
- vii. Youth covered under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA);
- viii. Adult education and literacy activities, including those provided by public libraries;
- ix. Activities in the corrections system that assist ex-offenders in reentering the workforce; and
- x. Digital literacy and financial literacy activities.

**Implementation Plan and Schedule:** Grant applications must include an implementation plan using the format provided in Attachment F. The implementation plan must include the major project activities, timelines for completion of the activities, the staff responsible for performing the activities and the deliverable associated with the project activity.

**Resumes of Program Staff:** Grant applications must include the resumes of key program staff that demonstrate capacity to complete the work outlined in the application.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** For applicants other than LWIAs, an MOU must be developed and signed by the applicant and Local Workforce Area that minimally includes the Local Workforce Area's role and responsibilities related to recruitment, eligibility determination, enrollment, and performance requirements and strategies. Attach Partnership Agreements (as opposed to Letters of Support) with all key partners detailing entity information and contact information, responsibilities, functions, integration, and plans for sustainability of the project.

**Budget Proposal:** Complete the budget form and provide a narrative justification of each cost including information on how each proposed cost in the budget is calculated.

**Submission Dates and Times:** Grant Applications are due May 1, 2018. The Department will not accept applications submitted by mail, overnight mail, diskette, or by fax machine. Submit the proposal via e-mail to [grantapplications@illinoisworknet.com](mailto:grantapplications@illinoisworknet.com). Applications will be considered based on quality and feasibility based on the funding that is available. It is anticipated that funding decisions will be made or about May 31, 2018.

**Intergovernmental Review, if applicable:** This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

**Funding Restrictions:** The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards ("Final Guidance"), located at 2 C.F.R. 200 et seq., supersedes and combines the requirements of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-21, A-87, A-102, A-110, A-122, and A-133. The U.S. Department of Labor has published exceptions to the Final Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 2900. Any reference to the OMB Circulars is subject to the Final Guidance. The Final

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Guidance regulations may be viewed at: [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)

**Application Format and Submission Requirements:** All applicants must meet the following submission requirements:

- Applications must be formatted to an 8 1/2 x 11-inch page size, using 11-point type and at 100% magnification. Tables may be used to present information with a 10-point type.
- The program narrative must be typed single-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. The proposal narrative is a maximum of 12 pages.
- The entire application, including appendices, must be sequentially page numbered (hand written page numbers are acceptable). Items included in the Attachments are NOT included in the page limitations.
- Applicants must submit the proposal via email. Submit the proposal to [grantapplications@illinoisworknet.com](mailto:grantapplications@illinoisworknet.com).

The Department of Commerce is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements.

**E. APPLICANT REVIEW INFORMATION**

The Department of Commerce reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to evaluate applications. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject all applications; to reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement; to award in part or total; and to waive minor defects and non-compliance. Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. The Department of Commerce is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application, or pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant beginning date. All decisions of the Department of Commerce are final.

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet all requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. Applications that fail to meet the criteria described in "Eligible Applicants" as identified in Section C "Eligibility Information" may not be scored and considered for funding. The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications:

**Applicant Capacity (20%)**

- The applicants' capacity to successfully complete the project tasks within the proposed grant period
- The applicants' experience in working with employers on similar projects
- The related experience of the applicant, sub-contractors, and partners
- The applicants' previous performance in administering similar grants and projects
- The qualifications of the applicants' staff to be assigned to the project
- The applicants' demonstrated evidence working with, and ability to recruit from the targeted population
- The applicants' performance in serving the targeted population

**Documentation of Need (20%)**

- The proposed project is aligned with the State vision and principles, and the expected outcomes of the NOFO

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- Demonstrated historic connection to, and understanding of the needs of the population targeted in the application
- The proposed project shows focus on needs within the targeted population that are supported by evidence, and achievable in scope

**Project Quality and Integration (60%)**

- The types of services and the method of delivery that will be implemented, including any partnerships implemented to deliver services
- The number of participants, companies served, the participant recruitment plan, and the services provided to priority populations
- The quality of education/training providers and education/training outcomes (industry recognized skills, certifications, etc.)
- Integration with key partners and strength of the partnership agreements/MOUs
- The innovative approach and potential impact on workforce, education, and economic development in the State
- The business engagement strategies and projected impacts

**Review and Selection Process:** A team of Department of Commerce, IWIB business representatives, WIOA partner agency staff, and will use the criteria listed in this section of the NOFO to review the applications. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined per application based upon compliance with the requirements of this NOFO. Based on the review, applicants may be selected to enter negotiations with the Department for a grant. The purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budgetary and scope-of-work provisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made.

**Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates:** Applicants will be notified upon completion and approval of the funding plan, contingent on the availability of funds.

**F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**State Award Notices:** A successful applicant will be notified in writing by the Department of Commerce.

**Payment Schedule:** The executed grant agreement will specify conditions for payment and payment schedule. Generally, grantees will receive payments on a reimbursement basis and may be prorated dependent upon the grantee meeting performance targets. Each grant will have enrollment and outcome goals specific to the types of projects funded. Penalties for missing performance targets may be applied at the grantor's discretion.

**Administrative and National Policy Requirements:** Refer to C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION, Indirect Costs for details on indirect rate requirements and limitations. A Notice of State Award (NOSA) will be distributed by the awarding agency prior to the issuance of a grant agreement. The NOSA will specify terms and conditions added to the award based on the results of the fiscal and administrative internal control questionnaire and the programmatic risk assessment.

**Project Reporting:** Successful applicants will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements. These reports include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Quarterly Progress Reports including a trial balance;

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2. WIOA registrant information and reports for projects serving WIOA registrants using the Illinois Workforce Development System, Illinois workNet™, or other reporting process as directed by the Department of Commerce;
3. Other reporting deemed necessary by the Department of Commerce and/or USDOL;
4. Formal evaluation of projects will be required as the State deems necessary.

**Monitoring:** Applicants funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department of Commerce. The successful applicant must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department of Commerce monitors to evaluate the progress of the project, and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with the participating businesses and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department of Commerce may modify grants based on performance. Successful applicants may be subject to monitoring by other core partners, in the instance where the additional agency funding is included in the award. Formal evaluation of projects will be required as the State deems necessary.

**Federal Requirements:** All applicants must comply, or agree to comply, with the following federal and state laws and related regulations (as applicable) to be considered for an award:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113-128)
- Equal Employment Opportunity / Nondiscrimination Provision and will comply with the physical, programmatic and accessibility requirements
- Protection of Personally Identifiable Information
- Jobs for Veteran Act (Public Law 107-288)
- Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 as amended (42 U.S.C 4001)
- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151)
- Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, (41 U.S.C. 702 et seq., and 2 C.F.R. § 182)
- Hotel Motel Fire Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2225a)
- Buy American Act (41 U.S.C 10a)
- Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (18 U.S.C. 874 and 40 U.S.C. 276c)
- Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 276a to a-7)
- Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333)
- Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract or Agreement
- Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), as amended
- Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352)
- Uniform Administrative Requirements found at 2 CFR Part 200 and the US Department of Labor Exceptions found at 2 CFR 2900
- Applicable State of Illinois Laws
- State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policies

**Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information:** Applications are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could reasonably be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the application. The Department of Commerce will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

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**G. State Awarding Agency Contact:**

Please direct any questions regarding this NOFO to:

Tammy Stone  
Tammy.Stone@illinois.gov  
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
500 East Monroe Street  
Springfield, IL 62701

**H. OTHER INFORMATION**

If an applicant fails to meet an eligibility criterion at the time of an application deadline, the application may still be reviewed but the State will not make an award until all eligibility criteria are met.

The Department of Commerce reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to evaluate applications. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject all applications; to reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement; to award in part or total; and to waive minor defects and non-compliance. Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. The Department of Commerce is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application or pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant beginning date. All decisions of the Department of Commerce are final.

**Acronyms Used in This NOFO:**

DCEO Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
DUNS Data Universal Numbering System  
IWIB Illinois Workforce Innovation Board  
LWIA Local Workforce Innovation Area  
MOU Memorandum of Understanding  
MTDC Modified Total Direct Cost  
NICRA Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement  
NOFO Notice of Funding Opportunity  
NOSA Notice of State Award  
SAM System for Award Management  
USDOL United States Department of Labor  
WIOA Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

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**APPENDIX A**

**Illinois Common Career Pathways Definition and Guidance**

*Introduction to WIOA Career Pathways Definition*

A career pathway means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that aligns both vertically and horizontally across Secondary Education, Adult Education, Workforce Training and Development, Career and Technical Education, and Postsecondary Education systems, pathways, and programs. Collaborative partnerships with these entities and business and industry, along with human service agencies, corrections, and other community stakeholders, serve as the foundational structure for high-quality and sustainable career pathways. A career pathway also includes multiple entry and exit points to facilitate individuals to build their skills as they progress along a continuum of education and training and advance in sector-specific employment.

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The following guidance should help policymakers and practitioners implement state, regional, and local career pathways. The guidance is meant to clarify how a successful pathway—often comprised of one or more career pathway programs—should operate. This guidance also addresses the career pathway system, which sets the policies and procedures that shape career pathways and can assist with strong pathway development and sustainability. A- G represents elements of the WIOA Career Pathways definition, with added guidance to clarify and provide additional detail for each element.

**(A) Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;**

Career pathways should:

- Use labor market data, informed by state, regional, and local employers, to design sector-focused programs that meet the needs of the employers in the state, regional, and local economies.
- Regularly and meaningfully engage employers at every stage of pathway development in an interactive, ongoing relationship<sup>1</sup> and encourage employers to assume leadership roles
- Identify the certifications, licenses, and industry-recognized credentials that state, regional, and local employers require and craft programs leading to them.

**(B) Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the National Apprenticeship Act.<sup>2</sup>**

Career pathways should:

- Enable lifelong learning that ensures youth and adult participants can gain entry to and advance, as desired, through successive education and training programs, leading to stackable credentials<sup>3</sup> in each occupational cluster.
- Lead to jobs in increasingly high-skill, high-wage, and/or high-demand industries.

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<sup>1</sup> “Meaningful employer engagement” is the process by which State and/or local stakeholders (e.g. training providers, colleges, workforce boards) convene with local and regional industry employers to discuss the skill and credential needs of their workforce and ways in which education and training programs can best prepare individuals.

<sup>2</sup> The Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

<sup>3</sup> A stackable credential is part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time and move an individual along a career pathway or up a career ladder.

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- Ensure access and appropriate services for the targeted populations included in the State of Illinois Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Unified State Plan.<sup>4</sup>

**(C) Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;**

Career pathways should:

- Ensure participants have access to career exploration, academic advising, support with transitions through the pathway, and comprehensive individualized support services, such as, but not limited to, child care, transportation, and financial aid (where appropriate).
- Involve partnerships among K-12, postsecondary educational institutions, workforce training and development agencies, public and private employers, workforce boards, human services providers, and other partners to ensure participant access to the above services.

**(D) Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities<sup>5</sup> and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;**

Career pathways should:

- Include career-focused instruction that integrates academic and technical content with foundational professional skills<sup>6</sup>, which are skills needed for success in education, and training, career, and life.
- Offer opportunities for work-based learning<sup>7</sup> experiences.
- Offer job placement assistant services that are tailored to participant needs at different points along the pathway.

**(E) Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;**

Career pathways should:

- Offer quality, non-duplicative training, coursework, assignments, and assessments<sup>8</sup> to accelerate progress, maximize credit and credential attainment, and increase student success.
- Encourage concurrent enrollment and early college credit opportunities that support progression through the pathway.

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<sup>4</sup> Priority populations identified in the [State of Illinois Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Unified State Plan](#) are: Long-term unemployed; Low-income adults; Low literacy adults, including those without a high school diploma; Low-skilled adults; Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities; Those receiving public assistance; Out-of-school youth; Veterans; Migrant and seasonal farm workers; Re-entry individuals (ex-offenders); English Language Learners; Older individuals; Homeless individuals; Single parents; Youth in the foster system or who have aged out; Displaced homemakers; Veterans with disabilities; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

<sup>5</sup> “Workforce preparation activities” means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. WIOA HR 803, SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS (17)

<sup>6</sup> “Foundational professional skills” (often also called “soft skills” or “essential skills”) are the skills needed for success in college, career, and life, such as, but not limited to, punctuality, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

<sup>7</sup> Work-based learning provides participants with work-based opportunities to practice and enhance the skills and knowledge gained in their program of study or industry training program, as well as to develop employability. Examples include: Internships, service learning, paid work experience, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and apprenticeships.

<sup>8</sup> Non-duplicative (across education and training partners) assessments of participants’ education, skills, competencies, assets, and support service needs as they move through a career pathway and its programs.

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- Offer participant-focused education and training that incorporates flexible class formats, locations, and times that makes learning accessible and achievable for all populations. Strategies include, but are not limited to, modularized curriculum<sup>9</sup>, contextualized curriculum and instruction<sup>10</sup>, and virtual learning.

**(F) Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential;**

Career pathways should:

- Create partnerships between programs that serve youth and adults of all skill levels to ensure that participants can in time earn a recognized postsecondary credential<sup>11</sup>, as desired.
- Enable participants to gain entry to or advance within a given sector or occupational cluster, facilitate efficient transitions to continuing education, and incorporate stackable and portable industry-recognized credentials.
- Facilitate co-enrollment in programs administered by the core<sup>12</sup> and required<sup>13</sup> partners (as defined by WIOA), in addition to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T).

**(G) Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.**

Career pathways should:

- Involve partnerships with employers to support participant educational and career advancement through on-the-job training, customized training, corporate training, incumbent worker training<sup>14</sup>, and other work-based training strategies.
- Overcome barriers to entry to ensure that participants with diverse backgrounds and experience can enroll and succeed in a pathway.

An effective and efficient career pathway will also commit to equity for all participants and potential participants and continuous improvement. To ensure that is possible, the system will:

- Collect, share, and use evidence to identify and eliminate barriers to participant access and success.
- Include shared qualitative and quantitative evaluation of participant outcomes, with a focus on equity of access and services across participant groups, to inform the improvement of all programs within the pathway as well as the pathway itself.

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<sup>9</sup> “Modularized curriculum” is curriculum that is divided into shorter, ‘self-contained’ segments or chunks of instruction. The common module length can vary depending upon content, format, and schedule of the course.

<sup>10</sup> “Contextualized curriculum and instruction” is the practice of systematically connecting basic skills and academic instruction to industry, or occupational content.

<sup>11</sup> “Recognized post-secondary credential”, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, means a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree. <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/Docs/wioa-regs-labor-final-rule.pdf>  
[WIOA sec. 3\(52\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> Core programs within WIOA are: WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula programs) administered by Department of Labor (DOL); Adult Education and Literacy Act programs administered by the Department of Education (DoED); Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL; and Rehabilitation Act Title I programs administered by DoED.

<sup>13</sup> Required programs within WIOA are: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American Programs, HUD Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild

<sup>14</sup> “Incumbent worker training” is training that is developed with an employer or employer association (group of employers) to retain a skilled workforce or avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment.

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- Disaggregate participant-level data to identify inequities in performance among participant groups and improve the outcomes of different participant groups.
- Include shared qualitative and quantitative evaluation of effectiveness in serving employers (the business community) to inform strategies for improvement.

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**APPENDIX B**

**Vision and Theory of Action**

The vision and theory of action outlined in this section is key to the development of an application for funding in this NOFO. The Standing Youth Committee of the IWIB, responsible for the development of this NOFO, recognizes the need to connect young people to meaningful education, training, and employment. WIOA emphasizes deeper investment in a system which supports employer-demand driven programs that address the diverse needs of young people.

**Career Pathway Systems:** Young people who are disconnected from either the employment and/or education system represent diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and circumstances. As such the issue of disconnection (i.e., why students are disconnected in the first place) requires various approaches to solve. The theory of action for addressing the needs of opportunity youth centers on development of career pathway systems, with both elements that pertain to the development of the learner and the system that supports that learner.

**Learner Focused Framework:** As learner's progress through an education program and into a career, there are three aspects of career pathway development that must be taken into consideration:

1. **Workplace Learning**, through work-based learning opportunities, particularly those skills that enable people to grow in their work;
2. **Foundational Skills**, such as accountability, timeliness, and interpersonal skills, those skills that are essential to developing workplace relationships with others; and
3. The continuation of **Education and Training**, to develop and continuously fine-tune technical and academic skills which support both personal and business development goals.

**System Focused Framework:** Career Pathway system development requires several key elements to ensure long term feasibility and inclusiveness:

1. **Ownership** of local and regional programs by local actors, targeting participants with the supports that suit local needs, addressing the needs and requirements of the business community, working with providers, and blending/braiding public funds where appropriate from federal and state agencies and private sector investments;
2. Building **capacity** of local and regional actors to develop programs that are locally and regional appropriate, with the necessary intermediary supports to ensure the continuation of programs; and
3. Ensuring program **sustainability** through the blending of private and public funds where appropriate and the braiding of those funds where feasible.

**Addressing Youth Needs:** A key in shifting the conversation from disconnection to opportunity is a recognition that young people are ready and eager to be part of the solution, and desire ways in which to reconnect to work and to school, but face multiple obstacles in their attempts to do so. Career Pathway models have proved successful in reintegrating young people into education and employment, but care must be taken to ensure that appropriate supports are provided based on individual need. Opportunity Youth needs can be organized based up on their degree of preparation and ability to take up opportunities. Within each of these quadrants, critical needs and the types of support required are

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identified. This helps providers and community partners ascertain what types of support an opportunity youth learner might need in relation to his/her own career development.

**Community Ownership:** Communities should have a sense of ownership and participation in the design and implementation of career pathway systems. This co-ownership among partners at the local and regional level helps to build capacity among local actors to build regionally responsive programs and to build mechanisms for sustainability. The community ownership is facilitated by a connection to other communities who are doing this work, to learn from best practices and collectively overcome hurdles.

**Consortia Models:** [Building a consortium](#) helps to consolidate partners who are often servicing similar constituencies and/or connecting with the same partners and employers. Joining forces towards a common cause helps to avoid many issues of program overlap and can concentrate a community's focus for greater impact on a problem.

**Youth Ownership:** Young people should be given the opportunity to participate fully depending on their level of need and should be provided with the commensurate support to do so. Youth ownership is facilitated by the development of a forum where opportunity youth who demonstrate capacity for leadership are provided with the opportunity to speak for the opportunity youth community at large and to play a leadership role in that community.

**Sector-Based Strategies and Career Pathways:** Sector-based initiatives at the regional level are approaches to workforce and economic development that improve access to good jobs and/or increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry's workforce. Sector initiatives:

1. Focus intensively on an industry within a regional labor market, and multiple employers in the industry, over a sustained period.
2. Are led by a workforce intermediary with credibility in the industry.
3. Create new pathways for low-wage workers into the industry, leading to good jobs and careers.
4. Achieve systemic changes that are "win-win" for employers, workers, and the community.

Career pathways are an approach to connecting progressive levels of basic skills and postsecondary education, training, and supportive services:

1. In specific sectors or cross-sector occupations.
2. In a way that optimizes the progress and success of individuals, including those with limited education, English, skills, and/or work experience.
3. In helping individuals secure marketable credentials, self-sustaining employment, and further education and employment opportunities.

Career pathway programs focus on a) participant-focused instruction and training; b) appropriate and meaningful assessment; c) supportive services and navigation; and d) direct connections to employment.

Sector and career pathways initiatives are complementary, and all career pathways should incorporate sector strategy principles.

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**APPENDIX C**

**Eligibility Criteria for WIOA Funded Programs**

Fund	Age & Other	Work Status	Selective Service	Low Income
WIOA In-School Youth	<p>A. 14-21 years old <u>and</u>            B. Attending compulsory school <u>and</u>            C. <b>Low-Income</b> <u>and</u>            D. At least one of the following apply</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills; <u>or</u></li> <li>2. Homeless, Runaway; <u>or</u></li> <li>3. In foster care or aged out of foster care; <u>or</u></li> <li>4. Pregnant/Parenting; <u>or</u></li> <li>5. Offender; <u>or</u></li> <li>6. Has a disability; <u>or</u></li> <li>7. An English language learner;</li> </ol>	Authorized to work in U.S.	If male, registered as required	<p>A. Family income at or below 100% of poverty line or 70% lower living standard; <u>or</u>            B. Meets one of the following criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customer receives or is a member of a family that receives (currently or in the past six months) one of the following               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) TANF, or</li> <li>b) SNAP, or</li> <li>c) SSI, or</li> <li>d) Other public assistance; <u>or</u></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Foster Child; <u>or</u></li> <li>3. Homeless; <u>or</u></li> <li>4. Receives or is eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch; <u>or</u></li> <li>5. Lives in a high poverty census tract.</li> </ol> <p>Note: Individual with a disability must be considered family of one for income determination purposes if family income exceeds youth income criteria and 1-5 above do not apply.</p>
WIOA Out-of-School Youth	<p>A. 16-24 years old <u>and</u>            B. Not attending compulsory school <u>and</u>            C. At least one of the following apply</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Dropout; <u>or</u></li> <li>2. Youth who (a) received HS Diploma/equivalent and (b) is <b>low-income</b> and (c) is Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills or is an English language learner; <u>or</u></li> <li>3. Required to attend school but has not attended for at least the most recent complete school year's calendar quarter'; <u>or</u></li> <li>4. Homeless or Runaway; <u>or</u></li> <li>5. In foster care or aged out of foster care; <u>or</u></li> <li>6. Pregnant/Parenting; <u>or</u></li> <li>7. Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; <u>or</u></li> <li>8. Has a disability; <u>or</u></li> <li>9. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment (<b>must also meet low income requirements</b>)</li> </ol>	Authorized to work in U.S.	If male, registered as required	<p>Low income required only if using C. 2. or C. 9. from "Age &amp; Other" column</p> <p>A. Family income at or below 100% of poverty line or 70% lower living standard <u>or</u>            B. Meets one of the following criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customer receives or is a member of a family that receives (currently or in the past six months) one of the following               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) TANF, or</li> <li>b) SNAP, or</li> <li>c) SSI, or</li> <li>d) Other public assistance; <u>or</u></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Foster Child; <u>or</u></li> <li>3. Homeless; <u>or</u></li> <li>4. Receives or is eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch; <u>or</u></li> <li>5. Lives in a high poverty census tract.</li> </ol> <p>Note: Individual with a disability must be considered family of one for income determination purposes if family income exceeds youth income criteria and 1-5 above do not apply.</p>

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**APPENDIX D**

Agency name:

Grant Number:

**Current Business and Community Partner Relationships**

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<b>Business or Community Partners</b>	<b>Their interest in the project</b>	<b>Their role with the project</b>	<b>Status of relationship</b>	<b>Desired outcome</b>
<b>Sub-Contractor Partners</b>	<b>Their interest in the project</b>	<b>Level of input into the project</b>	<b>Status of relationship</b>	<b>Desired outcome</b>
<b>Community Group Partners</b>	<b>Their interest in the project</b>	<b>Level of input into the project</b>	<b>Status of relationship</b>	<b>Desired outcome</b>

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**APPENDIX D**

**Plan for Establishing Business Partners and Continuous Engagement of Partners**

<b>Action Steps/Tasks: What will be done?</b>	<b>Timeline: When will it begin and when will it be completed?</b>	<b>Accomplishment/Outcome: What will this task/step accomplish?</b>
<b>PLANNING</b>		
<b>PROJECT LAUNCH</b>		
<b>CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT</b>		

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**APPENDIX E**

**WIOA Performance Measures/Negotiated Goals for PY 2016/2017**

**Adult**

**Dislocated Worker**

**Youth**

	Adult Employment Rate <b>2nd</b> Quarter after Exit	Adult Employment Rate <b>4th</b> Quarter After Exit	Adult Median Earnings	Adult Credential Attainment	DW Employment Rate <b>2nd</b> Quarter After Exit	DW Employment Rate <b>4th</b> Quarter After Exit	DW Median Earnings	DW Credential Attainment	Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate <b>2nd</b> Quarter After Exit	Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate <b>4th</b> Quarter After Exit	Youth Credential Attainment
<b>DCEO</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>78.0%</b>	<b>75.4%</b>	<b>6,978</b>	<b>60.5%</b>	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>61.1%</b>	<b>69.0%</b>
<b>LWIA 1</b>	67.0%	63.0%	3,900	71.0%	69.0%	69.0%	7,500	74.0%	58.0%	66.0%	80.0%
<b>LWIA 2</b>	73.0%	75.0%	4,500	65.0%	77.0%	75.0%	7,500	65.0%	56.0%	65.0%	60.0%
<b>LWIA 3</b>	65.0%	62.0%	3,000	53.0%	67.0%	67.0%	5,000	42.0%	53.0%	50.0%	60.0%
<b>LWIA 4</b>	74.0%	73.0%	5,100	64.0%	78.0%	74.0%	5,500	58.0%	58.0%	55.0%	70.0%
<b>LWIA 5</b>	68.0%	69.0%	4,300	54.0%	75.0%	75.0%	6,500	60.0%	70.0%	70.0%	69.0%
<b>LWIA 6</b>	76.0%	71.0%	5,000	63.0%	74.0%	73.0%	9,000	61.0%	70.0%	67.0%	74.0%
<b>LWIA 7</b>	66.0%	66.0%	4,000	50.0%	71.0%	71.0%	6,300	45.0%	54.0%	56.0%	56.0%
<b>LWIA 10</b>	62.0%	71.0%	3,200	71.0%	72.0%	73.0%	7,000	76.0%	52.0%	57.0%	47.0%
<b>LWIA 11</b>	72.0%	71.0%	4,200	60.0%	76.0%	75.0%	5,600	61.0%	50.0%	40.0%	75.0%
<b>LWAI 13</b>	71.0%	60.0%	4,500	66.0%	65.0%	57.0%	4,800	55.0%	50.0%	44.0%	80.0%
<b>LWIA 14</b>	74.0%	72.0%	4,200	78.0%	68.0%	71.0%	3,500	75.0%	69.0%	70.0%	75.0%
<b>LWIA 15</b>	78.0%	78.0%	5,600	72.0%	76.0%	71.0%	6,000	66.0%	65.0%	65.0%	72.0%
<b>LWIA 17</b>	73.0%	75.0%	3,600	66.0%	78.0%	78.0%	5,600	63.0%	60.0%	67.0%	80.0%
<b>LWIA 18</b>	70.0%	71.0%	3,600	52.0%	74.0%	73.0%	5,000	58.0%	50.0%	53.0%	69.0%
<b>LWIA 19</b>	73.0%	71.0%	4,000	70.0%	76.0%	74.0%	6,800	52.0%	55.0%	60.0%	60.0%
<b>LWIA 20</b>	78.0%	80.0%	5,000	73.0%	73.0%	73.0%	5,700	70.0%	66.0%	62.0%	75.0%
<b>LWIA 21</b>	75.0%	74.0%	4,200	60.0%	70.0%	73.0%	5,500	58.0%	70.0%	63.0%	65.0%
<b>LWIA 22</b>	72.0%	63.0%	4,800	66.0%	74.0%	60.0%	5,000	60.5%	52.0%	50.0%	63.0%
<b>LWIA 23</b>	82.0%	69.0%	4,200	56.0%	83.0%	75.0%	4,800	60.5%	60.0%	57.0%	60.0%
<b>LWIA 24</b>	74.0%	70.0%	3,400	60.0%	76.0%	60.0%	4,000	50.0%	40.0%	46.0%	72.0%
<b>LWIA 25</b>	73.0%	69.0%	4,000	30.0%	78.0%	76.0%	5,400	40.0%	60.0%	52.0%	67.0%
<b>LWIA 26</b>	72.0%	71.0%	4,300	75.0%	74.0%	71.0%	5,400	68.0%	50.0%	60.0%	73.0%

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**APPENDIX F**

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

List the major project activities in the first column. In the second column, indicate the timelines for completion of the activities. Timelines may be specified by the week of the project (e.g., such as month 1, month 2, etc.) or by specific dates. In the third column, indicate the staff by name and title responsible for performing the activities, and indicate the organizational affiliation of each staff person listed. The fourth column must describe the deliverable associated with the project activity. [Expand the table as needed].

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE STAFF</b>	<b>DELIVERABLE</b>