

Real Skills for Youth Solicitation

**Real Skills for Youth
GWB-RSFY-2022-02**

**Governor's Workforce Board RI Rhode
Island Department of
Labor & Training
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Building 73-1
Cranston, RI 02920**

*** * ***

**Applications must be submitted no later
than**

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

4:00 P.M. EST

Notice

A prospective applicant that wished to ensure receipt of any changes or additional materials related to this solicitation must email dlt.realskillsforyouth@dlt.ri.gov immediately and provide the applicant's contact name, organizational affiliation, and email address. Please read the full solicitation carefully, especially if you've previously responded to other GWB solicitations. Requirements for this program may differ.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND | RI Department of Labor and Training

KEY INFORMATION SUMMARY SHEET

Solicitation for Applications: Real Skills for Youth Program

Solicitation Issue Date: Monday, August 23, 2022

Solicitation Issuing Office: RI Department of Labor and Training – RI Governor’s Workforce Board | Real Skills for Youth Program | Director of Youth Career Readiness Programs- Julissa Disu | Youth Program Coordinator- Alaina Roch

Applications are to be submitted: Electronically only. Final applications must be submitted in PDF format and budget narrative and budget in the prescribed format to dlt.realskillsforyouth@dlt.ri.gov

HAND DELIVERY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME

Solicitation Webinar (VIRTUAL): Wednesday, August 31, 2022 | Time: 10:30 a.m. EST.

Interested parties must register in advance by emailing dlt.realskillsforyouth@dlt.ri.gov

All Conference-related materials and recording of webinar will be made available online for those who cannot attend

Submission of Questions: All questions related to this solicitation must be submitted via email to the following email address: dlt.realskillsforyouth@dlt.ri.gov no later than Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. EST.

Q&A Posting: All questions and answers addressed via email or at the solicitation webinar will be posted to the RI Governor’s Workforce Board website at <https://gwb.ri.gov> under the Solicitations Tab (located at the top of the main page) by Friday, September 16, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. EST.

Applications Due: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. EST

Awards Announced: November 2022

The contract period for Real Skills for Youth awardees will be from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023 with an option to renew and apply for additional funds for another two (2) years to repeat successful programs, or to address other youth workforce needs within their respective industry or region.

Additional funds will be awarded based on factors including available funds and awardee performance

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Rhode Island Governor’s Workforce Board (GWB) is issuing a request for applications to identify qualified organizations to form strategic partnerships among youth-serving organizations to develop and implement high-quality career exploration activities, work-based learning experiences, and required work-readiness training for youth in Rhode Island.

A. Background

The GWB was established by Executive Order on September 22, 2005. It is the primary policy-making body on workforce development matters for the State of Rhode Island, with statutory responsibility and authority to plan, coordinate, fund and evaluate workforce development activities in the State as established by RI General Law, Title 42-102. The GWB consists of 23 members representing business, labor, education, community, and government who establish workforce development policy and plans and allocate resources from Rhode Island’s Job Development Fund (JDF). One of the GWB’s strategic priorities is to advance career pathways preparing youth and young adults for successful futures. Part of that strategy is scaling out career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for young people across the State. This RFP is part of the broader interagency [PrepareRI](#) initiative, with the goal of ensuring all Rhode Island youth are college and career ready.

B. Real Skills for Youth Overview

The goal of Real Skills for Youth is to prepare youth for success in college and/or career through meaningful **career exposure** and exploration of potential career paths and their on-ramps, **skill-building** with an emphasis on essential and professional skills and supported **work-based learning experiences** that allow participants to apply learning in a real-world setting. Real Skills for Youth programs often provide youth with initial exposure to the world of work, whether through a paid work experience, hands-on exposure to new careers, and practicing essential skills.

The Real Skills for Youth program is grounded in the following core values: ensuring that historically underserved populations have more access to opportunities and quality programming; cultural competency and being respectful and responsive to the beliefs and practices of diverse population groups; and high expectations for all youth and providing the necessary supports and mentorship for youth to meet those expectations. Applicants are asked to propose a plan for one calendar year (January 2023-December 2023) to provide participants with either career exploration and/or work-based learning opportunities aligned to the [priority industry sectors](#), in addition to mandatory work-readiness training.

Activities must support youth in meeting the following outcomes:

- Deeper understanding of available career options, career pathways, and decision points, including the connections between educational and skills attainment, relevant experience, and career advancement.
- Deeper development of essential skills such as collaboration and teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving, initiative and self-management, and professionalism.
- Learn and understand work norms and culture.
- Build professional networks.

C. Funding Stream and Authority

This grant is being funded by the GWB to Rhode Island General Laws § 42-102-6(e)1.

D. Notification to Applicants

The GWB reserves the right to amend, revise, or edit any part of this Request for Applications during the application period. Any amendments will be posted to the GWB website no later than September 14, 2022, along with Request for Applications questions and answers.

- 1) Potential applicants are advised to review all sections of this Request carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere will be denied.
- 2) Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, applications which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this request will be denied.
- 3) All costs associated with developing or submitting an application in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the applicant. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- 4) Applications are irrevocable for a period of not less than 60 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
- 5) Applicants are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this request for applications will be considered public records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
- 6) Interested parties are advised to visit the GWB web site (www.gwb.ri.gov) on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this Request for Applications.
- 7) All applications should include the applicant's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9 form, downloadable from the Division of Purchasing website:
<http://www.purchasing.ri.gov/rivip/publicdocuments/fw9.pdf>
- 8) In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a certificate of authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). This is a requirement of a successful vendor.
- 9) Divestiture of investments in Iran requirement: No vendor engaged in investment activities in Iran as described in R.I. Gen. Laws §37-2.5-2(b) may submit a bid application to, or renew a contract with, the Division of Purchases. Each vendor submitting a bid application or entering a renewal of a contract is required to certify that the vendor does not appear on the list maintained by the General Treasurer pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §37-2.5-3.

- 10) Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action: § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island State government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards, and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of State employment. This policy applies in all areas where the State dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in State licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 401-222-3090.

II. Award Information

A. Available Funding and Number of Awards

Awardees will be identified through this competitive process. Awards are subject to the availability of funds and the execution of a contract between selected recipients and the GWB. Most funds for this grant are expected to be dedicated towards paid work-based learning experiences during the summer months. One of the goals of the Real Skills for Youth program is to help advance the employment prospects of current and future youth workers and help them achieve sustainable employment, while also supporting the staff that help youth achieve these goals. As such, the following is a requirement for all applications: **All personnel and/or staff paid for in whole or in part with Real Skills for Youth program dollars will be compensated at a rate no less than \$15.00 per hour. All youth participants earning paid wages will be compensated at a rate no less than \$13.00 per hour.**

Award Duration and Timeline

The initial funding period for the recipients of this award will be in alignment with the calendar year cycle of programs, beginning January 1, 2023, and concluding on December 31st, 2023. The Awardee will have the opportunity to renew funding and performance for up to two (2) additional years. If the Awardee is provided with the opportunity to renew, the Awardee must submit an abbreviated application for the next calendar year. Initial contracts will begin no earlier than January 1st, 2023, and will end no later than December 31st, 2023, except by written approval of both parties. **Allocations will be based on available funds and performance for previous awardees. Renewal of funds if awarded initially will be at the sole discretion of the GWB.**

III. Eligibility and General Information

A. Eligible Applicants

We invite all community based-organizations, non-profit agencies, or others who have experience in the following to apply:

- Have experience in leading youth through career exploration activities as defined below
- Have extensive experience in providing quality work-based learning experiences for youth, as defined below, that lead to a potential career path in [priority industry sectors](#), as defined by the GWB
- Have strong relationships with other community-based organizations, schools, and local employers across the State

***Existing Real Jobs RI partnerships interested in this initiative are encouraged to work with their Program Coordinators to determine whether it is appropriate to respond to this solicitation.**

B. Major Elements of Programming

Applicants awarded funding through this grant will be expected to develop and execute programming with the following components:

- 1) **(Required) Work Readiness Training** that will prepare youth to be successful in any work setting. Please see [Section C below](#) for further details and how the GWB defines work-readiness and required components that must be included.
- 2) **(Option 1) Career Exploration** opportunities to understand career options, career pathways and decision points, including the connections between educational and skills attainment, relevant experience, and career advancement, further defined in [Section D](#).
- 3) **(Option 2) Work-Based Learning (WBL)**, to apply academic, technical, and essential skills in a real life or simulated work environment, further defined in [Section E](#).

C. Work Readiness Training

Work readiness is the most important component needed for work preparedness, which youth have asked for more support in over the years. **This is a required component to any application**, no exceptions, and must be provided as either a standalone training or it must be embedded within the activities themselves. **Work readiness training should be scheduled incrementally and scaffolded throughout the entirety of the program in conjunction with other activities.** If work readiness is scheduled for the first few weeks of programming because it fits better within the overall structure of the program, (example: in the style of a “essential skills boot-camp week”), then workshops and trainings provided must be referred to and connected to the activities that take place thereafter. Work readiness training is not effective if exclusively taught in a short period (ex. in one 6-hour session) and is **not acceptable**. **Work readiness training must allow youth participants to learn the skill, actively practice the skill, and reflect on the learned and applied skill through continuous coaching and support.**

The following trainings (**in bold**) must be included in any work readiness curriculum included in the applicant’s application. The bulleted list underneath each category are suggestions of trainings that can be provided to youth. Work readiness curriculum development will be at the discretion of the awardee to allow for creativity and meet the need of the youth participants. Awardees may use existing online resources and adjust workshop content based on age and need of the youth participants.

WORK READINESS TRAINING WORKSHOP EXAMPLES:

Note: All materials are subject to review by the GWB youth program staff at any time of request.

- i. **Resume/Cover Letter Development:**
 - Role and function of a resume
 - Components/Structure of a resume
 - Self-assessment and including skills on a resume (how will they put your experience on their resume?)
 - Types of resumes
 - Cover Letters
- ii. **Job Search:**
 - Exposure to online and physical tools to assist in any job search
 - Effective methods when searching for a job
 - Job application process and how to prepare for that
- iii. **Job Interviews:**
 - Preparation process before an interview
 - Learning and practicing skills required for an interview
 - Attire required for an interview (depending on the type of job)
 - What to do after an interview
- iv. **Communication in a work setting:**
 - Learn and practice the components and structure of a professional email
 - Function, roles, and expectations around working on a team
 - Email Etiquette
- v. **Financial Literacy:**
 - Process of building a budget and understanding the function of a budget
 - Difference between credit/debit cards, common terms
 - Understanding credit, how it works, types of credit, how to build it over time and ways to manage your credit score
 - Bank accounts and how to open one, manage your account, etc.
 - Investing and what that can look like at a young age
 - Consumer Skills
 - Understanding taxes and how they work
 - Difference between checking/saving, best practices
 - Options for paying for secondary education (if that is their path of choice after high school)
- vi. **Health, safety, and rights on the job including sexual harassment**
 - The Governor’s Workforce Board will arrange for this training to be provided in partnership with the Institute for Labor Studies & Research; applicants need not include a plan for this in their application, **but awardees will be required to coordinate with the provider for this training.**
- vii. **Essential Skills:** learn, practice, and apply the skills below and understand the connections between the importance of these skills and how they impact the work experience:
 - **Collaboration and teamwork:** Works effectively within and contribute to teams, learns from, and works collaboratively with others, shows adaptiveness and flexibility, and effectively negotiates conflict.
 - **Communication:** Listens actively and articulates and presents information clearly and effectively in written, visual, and verbal forms.

- **Critical thinking and problem solving:** Distills and analyzes information, makes judgements based on evidence, and uses data and information to solve problems.
- **Initiative and self-management:** Works independently as needed, monitors, and prioritizes own time and tasks, takes initiative to solve problems as appropriate, and employs persistence to take tasks to completion.
- **Professionalism:** Follows and can articulate workplace norms such as punctuality, understands the styles of workplace communication and interactions, and professional dress according to the expectations set by the workplace.

The GWB will be focused on providing funds to programs that will occur in the summer months and are invited to propose plans for the academic year as well. As part of the GWB’s effort to measure essential skills growth **during the summer months**, youth participants will be required to respond to a retrospective, one-time, online work-based learning survey at the conclusion of programming. Awardees will be expected to plan for, facilitate, and communicate this process to participants and other survey responders.

D. Career Exploration

Career Exploration includes focused curriculum and activities geared towards youth participants that are in elementary or middle school. The purpose of career exploration is to learn about different industries, occupations, and career pathways, and how these fit into their personal interests, skills, and passions:

- Personalized career interest / strengths assessment surveys
- Job shadows and site visits to workplaces
- Interactive career fairs or career panels with industry representatives
- Building job portfolios
- Guided research about career fields (i.e., Wing Span, O*NET, VirtualJobShadow.com)
- Industry-driven curriculum

Career Exploration should be:

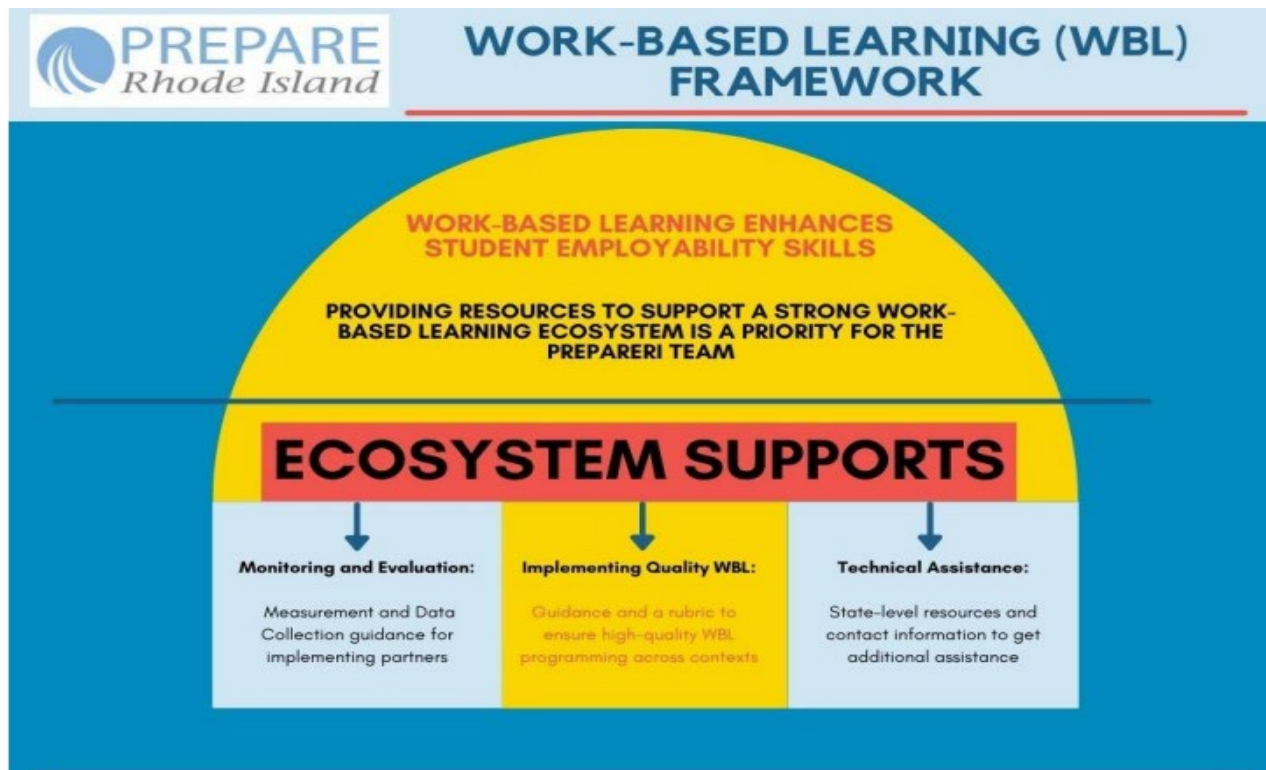
- **Rigorous:** Developmentally appropriate, experiential, and tied to measurable outcomes and concrete learning objectives; youth participants are building career-based knowledge and academic skills through structured and sustained activities that are not “one-off.”
- **Relevant:** Contextualized to [priority industry sectors](#) and occupations in the local area and youth participants’ personal interests and skills; and serve to build out academic and career goals.
- **Reflective:** Engaging youth participants in reflection and analysis throughout and after the activity.
- **Interactive:** Providing multiple opportunities to engage with peers, educators, industry professionals, and mentors, as opposed to passive learning.
- **Integrated:** Embedded into the youth participant’s school-based curriculum and academic learning, and into after-school programming or out of school learning, as applicable.

E. Work-Based Learning

As part of the [Prepare RI 2.0 Action Plan](#), (the Statewide action plan whose purpose is to create a connected and aligned system for college and career readiness, with supports to re-engage opportunity youth that get disconnected from the system), work-based learning will continue to expand, both inside and outside of the classroom. **As one of the lead agencies supporting the expansion of quality work-based learning experiences for youth in Rhode Island, the GWB expects that most Real Skills for Youth funds will be dedicated to covering wages, stipends, or other payments to youth for work-based learning in Summer 2023 and beyond. Funding to cover wages, stipends, or other payments to youth during the academic year will be limited.**

Definition of Work-Based Learning (WBL):

Work-based learning is a planned, structured learning experience that provides youth (**ages 14-24, in school or out-of-school**) with a real-life or simulated work experiences where they can develop and apply academic, technical, and essential skills; and contributes to the achievement of their postsecondary and employment goal(s).



Types of Allowable Work Based Learning Activities: Rhode Island employs a flexible definition of work-based learning, encompassing the following five (5) types of experiences-

- i. **Internship:** A position for a youth participant or trainee to work in a business or organization, sometimes without pay, to gain work experience, satisfy requirements for a credential, and/or gain course credit.
- ii. **Apprenticeship:** Highly formal job training experience that involves studying with a master of the trade on the job.
- iii. **Service-learning:** A program or project which combines community service with an outside organization with a structured opportunity for reflection about that service, emphasizing the connections between service experiences and academic learning.
- iv. **School-based enterprise:** Youth participants produce and sell goods or services in the school and learn about business skills and entrepreneurship. This may be part of an entrepreneurship course, and a business professional may serve as a mentor and advisor for the enterprise. (Note: while named “school-based enterprises,” it is noted that activities need not occur within a school setting)
- v. **Industry project:** Individual, group, or class-wide projects in which youth participants address a real-world, industry-focused question, or problem with the guidance of industry professionals.

Standards of Quality:

High-quality work-based learning activities as defined by the GWB are:

- **Rigorous:** Skill-based and tied to measurable outcomes. The experience should allow a youth participant to gain measurable skills, whether those be essential skills (also known as professional skills, soft skills, or 21st century skills) or hard technical skills. **The entire activity, including corresponding classroom time, should encompass no less than 80 hours and a maximum of 120 hours.**
- **Relevant:** Connected to a youth participant's interests and to the real world of work. Projects and tasks should mirror those that exist in a real workplace and should align [priority industry sectors](#) in Rhode Island.
- **Reflective:** Engages the youth participant in reflection and analysis throughout and after the experience, including guided self-reflection and meaningful evaluations from the industry professionals. In this process, youth participants should connect the work-based learning experience to their academic work as well as future professional and educational goals.
- **Interactive:** Providing multiple and extended opportunities for youth participants to interact with industry professionals, whether as supervisors, mentors, advisors, or collaborators.
- **Integrated:** Connected with the youth participant's school-based curriculum. A work-based learning is a practical application of academic and/or technical learning and should allow the youth participant to practice the theory learned in the classroom in a real-world setting.

***NOTE:** Detailed expectations and responsibilities for internships, service-learning, school-based enterprises, and industry projects are included in the [GWB's Work-Based Learning Standards](#). Additionally, a cross-agency team representing the RI Department of Education and the GWB collaborated with the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands created a rubric for high-quality work-based learning programs in the State. This [rubric](#) was developed using the GWB WBL standards and was initially released in 2020 and will be used in conjunction with the GWB standards to assess the quality of programs. This rubric is geared toward work-based learning experiences that will occur within a classroom setting.

All work-based learning experiences MUST:

- Be targeted to youth **ages 14 to 24**.
- Be safe and properly supervised, observe and comply with applicable safety and health standards, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable. Additional legal guidance is provided in the [GWB's Work-Based Learning Standards](#) document.
- **No less than 80 hours and a maximum of 120 hours**
- Provide financial compensation and/or academic credit (high school or college credit):
 - **For work experiences at a business or organization worksite (i.e., internships), youth must be paid no less than \$13 per hour.** One of the goals of the Real Skills for Youth program is to help advance the employment prospects of current and future youth workers and help them achieve sustainable employment.
 - For classroom-based activities, youth may be paid via stipend and/or be granted academic credit.
 - Classroom time to prepare and orient youth for work-based learning activities may be unpaid or paid through incentive payments like gift cards.

- Real Skills for Youth applicants will need to provide W-2s to all participating youth receiving wages, and other required tax paperwork as applicable.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTATION-

***The Applicant must properly maintain participant records, including enrollment forms, parental consent forms, timesheets, and payroll.**

***As applicable, the applicant must be responsible for being the employer of record and paying wages and/or stipends to youth, determining employment eligibility, managing payroll, and ensuring proper liability coverage.**

***Youth participants must be trained on paperwork requirements to receive wages, as applicable.**

Employer Responsibilities at a Worksite

In a work-based learning experience where youth participants are placed at a worksite (for example, an internship), the employer must:

- Agree to maintain records and prepare reports on the participant as prescribed by the Applicant or program partner.
- Observe and comply with applicable safety and health standards, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable.
- Maintain sufficient general liability insurance for tort claims protection.
- Ensure that the experiences shall not reduce current employees' work hours, displace current employees, or create a lay-off of current employees, replace the work of employees who have experienced layoffs, impair existing contract or collective bargaining agreements, and/or infringe upon the promotional opportunities of current employees.
- Ensure that the experiences are intended to increase work readiness skills of participants and not impact the profit margin of a for-profit company.
- Allow the Applicant or program provider and/or duly authorized representatives to visit the premises to observe work-place conditions, observe workplace activities, and follow up with the participant; and
- Agree to sign a worksite agreement outlining the expectations of the participant's workplan and supervisory schedule, and evaluations as required by the Applicant or other program partner.

NOTE: One of the goals of the Real Skills for Youth program is to help advance the employment prospects of current and future youth workers and help them achieve sustainable employment, while also supporting the staff that help youth achieve these goals. As such, the following is a requirement for all applications: **All personnel and/or staff paid for in whole or in part with Real Skills for Youth program dollars will be compensated at a rate no less than \$15.00 per hour. All youth participants earning paid wages will be compensated at a rate no less than \$13.00 per hour.**

F. Required Partnership Structure and Roles

Youth-serving Representative (required): A youth-serving representative is defined as one or more of the following: accredited public or public charter school; youth-serving community-based or non-profit agency; training and education provider; higher education institution; or other youth-serving organization. The presence of youth-serving organizations ensures that programming is age- and skill- appropriate and meets unique needs of youth.

Activities of the youth-serving representatives could include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- Work with industry representatives/employers to design career exploration and work-based learning opportunities.
- Screen potential worksites to increase the likelihood of a positive experience for participating youth, ensuring that there is a job description for summer employees (or help develop one if necessary) and identifying employer-requested skills.
- Recruit and enroll youth into programming and manage paperwork to determine employment eligibility.
- Provide mandatory work readiness training
- Match youth to work-based learning opportunities based on interests, skills, and work readiness.
- Design new or align existing curriculum to program activities, where curriculum teaches academic, technical, and/or professional skills.
- Assess and evaluate youth progress regarding skills attainment.
- Provide career counseling, case management, and connections to support services such as transportation, housing, and other assistance for youth as necessary.
- Support youth and employer supervisors to maximize learning and development, monitor progress over the summer, address problems that arise, and provide guidance to supervisors on working with young people.
- Manage the process for youth to earn academic or elective credit, or industry-recognized credentials.
- Manage payroll and liability coverage.

Industry Representative/Employer(s) (required): An industry representative/employer is defined as one or more of the following: trade association or sector intermediary; Real Jobs RI sector partnership; or employer(s). Industry and employer presence help align partnership programming with the real-time needs and demands of employers. Alignment to [priority industry sectors](#) are encouraged.

Activities of the industry representatives/employers could include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- Host youth for career exploration site visits or work-based learning opportunities or connect youth to host employers and opportunities.
- Create age-appropriate job descriptions for youth employees or help design work-based learning projects that authentically simulate the real world of work.
- Supervise and coach youth during work-based learning opportunities.
- Review curriculum and training content to ensure that training or education activities are relevant to industry or employer needs and realities.
- Deliver content or engage with youth directly in mentoring or other capacities to provide them with an employer perspective.

G. Youth Participant Eligibility

Applicants can work with youth participants between the ages of 12 to 24. Programs must be developed, structured, and delivered based on age appropriateness and activities should align to the needs of the target population the applicant is working with. For example, career exploration focused activities may be better suited for youth that are between the ages of 12 to 15 whereas work-based learning experiences are better suited for youth participants that are 16 and older. Regardless of which type of work experience the applicant chooses to provide, **work-readiness training is a mandatory component that is completed** during the youth participant's experience. **For a youth participant to be eligible for paid work-based learning experiences (i.e.:**

if the youth participant is receiving wages AND on payroll), they must:

- Be between the **ages of 14 -24**
- Reside in the State of Rhode Island and.
- Be **legally eligible** to work in the United States

ANY youth participants receiving wages AND is on a payroll MUST have the correct paperwork on file indicating eligibility to work, and it is the responsibility of the awardee to ensure compliance. This paperwork must include but is not limited to:

- A birth certificate
- A social security card
- Proof of address
- If a youth participant is 14 or 15 years of age, they must obtain a [Special Limited Permit to Work](#)

H. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

All expenses requested to be paid for with Real Skills for Youth program funds must be expenses proposed in the applicant's application and its implementation. The need for, and reasonableness, of all costs must be fully justified and detailed in the application budget and application narrative. For a cost to be charged to the program, the cost must meet the following provisions:

- **Necessary:** the cost must be ordinary and necessary to the performance of the grant, if awarded
- **Reasonable:** the cost must be in line with what is normally charged, you can't purchase something just because you have funds from this State grant
- **Allocable:** if a cost item is used for more than just this grant project, the cost must be allocated based on the percentage of the grant to the total operation
- **Allowable:** The item must be an allowable expense according to the conditions of the contract and State cost principles

All proposed project management expenses must be fully explained and justified in the application budget and application narrative. **GWB may limit the percentage of grant funds that may be used for project management costs.** If costs are allocated or percentages of salaries or other items are identified, the full expense must also be identified and explained. For example: The Program Manager's salary is \$75,000, and they will be spending 15% of their time on the grant for a total of \$11,250, thus \$11,250 is what will be allocated for that person from this budget request.

***Additional guidance on eligible and ineligible expenses will be provided if grant is awarded.**

IV. Application Format and Submission Information

Applications must be submitted with all the required documents, no exceptions. ALL required documents **MUST** be submitted in the same order as the checklist provided:

Those documents are as follows:

- Cover page (**Appendix A**)
- Application narrative and chart(s) (**Appendix B**)
- Work Readiness Training Plan, including a sample schedule and sample materials
- Staffing Plan (**Appendix C**)
- Budget(s) and Budget Narrative(s) (**Appendix D**)

- Taxation Letter of Good Standing
- A signed fiscal agent assurances form (**Appendix E**)
- A copy of the lead agency's W-9 Taxation Form
- **(Optional)** Letters of intent from partners organizations. **These do not count against the page maximum for applications.**

The Application Narrative must use 12-point font, at least 1.5 spacing, with page numbers and be no more than **19.5** pages long, not counting charts and supplemental materials. Citations for specific data points should be included within the narrative as footnotes; no works cited page is required. **The prescribed cover sheet must be the first page of the application.** Final applications must be submitted via email to dlt.realskillsforyouth@dlt.ri.gov in (1) PDF document, with your budget(s) and budget narrative(s) in Excel format as an additional attachment.

A. Cover Page

A template page that includes important program information about the application. **See Appendix A** for prescribed template.

B. Application Narrative

Using the prompts below, describe your application for up to one year of programming concisely that will be easy for a reader to understand. Separate your narrative into the following sections:

- Program Impact** (*Maximum 2 pages*): **(1)** What is the end goal of the Real Skills for Youth program you are proposing and how will it prepare youth for success in college and/or career? **(2)** Describe how the goals of the Real Skills for Youth Program fits into your organization's larger youth mission and scope of work, particularly if your organization receives other sources of funding for similar activities (ex. WIOA Youth funding). **(3)** If applicable, describe how Real Skills funding will be strategically braided with such funding to enhance the collective impact of each.
- Partner Engagement** (*Maximum 2 pages*): **(1)** How are you going to prioritize the youth experience and ensure strong connections between industry and their education? **(2)** Briefly describe past or present experience of and collaborations between other partnerships, including under the Real Skills for Youth program. **(3)** If applicable, describe how you will engage with schools, how your program(s) will align with local Career and Technical Education programs, and whether you have a plan and mechanism for communicating completed work-based learning and other experiences by youth back to their schools.
- Youth Recruitment, Placement, and Support** (*Maximum 1.5 pages*): **(1)** Describe the target population for your program including age range, demographics, geographic location and/or schools; a justification for serving that population; and how this application advances the Real Skills for Youth's goal of ensuring that historically underserved populations have expanded access to opportunities and quality programming. **(2)** What is your plan to identify, recruit, select, enroll, place, and retain youth participants for your program, and what supports will be available to those participants throughout the program? **(3)** Describe your messaging to families supporting youth participants in your program and how parent/guardian communication will be managed.

d) **Program Plan, Charts & Expected Outcomes** (*Maximum 9 pages, See Appendix B*):

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY

As an applicant, you can propose in your application, to run programs during the summer months (July to September) and/or during the academic months (October to June). Your proposed activities and any subcomponents of your program must be written in the format below:

WORK BASED LEARNING ACTIVITY NARRATIVE & CHART FORMAT:

Summer OR Academic Year (choose one)

Work Based Learning

Multiple Cohort Based? Circle One- Yes or No

Objective: Please give a description on how you will be executing your activity with the youth participants. If there are multiple cohorts within each activity, you must provide a description of the plan. Below is a list of guiding questions to assist you with the description of the objective. Please refer to **Appendix B** for career exploration and work-based learning narrative structure, charts, and guiding questions.

Work Based Learning Activity Guiding Questions:

How will youth engage in the work-based learning experience? What will they be doing?
 What type of WBL activity is it and what does it entail?
 How are you differentiating WBL activities by age, work-readiness, and career interests?
 How will the WBL activities (or how will this WBL activity) meet the standards of quality as defined in [Section III-E](#)
 How are you planning on collaborating with employer partners to deliver this experience?
 What are you expecting youth participants to get out of the program when they're done?
 How is this getting them ready for college and/or a career?
 Are students receiving certificates, certifications, or credentials of any kind upon completion?

EXAMPLE-

Summer WBL Cohort #

PERFORMANCE TARGETS – Work-Based Learning	
Type of WBL activity:	Choose 1 of the 5 types (see Section III E. Work-Based Learning)
Start Date:	
End Date:	
Age range of Youth Participants:	
Training/Program Provider:	
Training/Program Location(s):	
Program Schedule:	
Total Training/Program Hours:	
Certification(s) or Credit(s) Awarded:	
Target Enrolled:	
Target Completed:	
Target Credential(s):	
Target Occupation(s) for internships:	
Target Employer(s) for internships:	
Target Wage or Stipend:	
Any additional Details:	

RECRUITMENT, PLACEMENT, AND SUPPORT

Entity conducting participant recruitment:	
Recruitment methodology/mechanisms:	
Entity responsible for candidate screening:	
Screening methodology/mechanisms:	
Entity responsible for participant selection:	
Selection methodology/mechanisms:	
Entity responsible for participant enrollment:	
Entity managing participants during training:	
Entity providing support services:	
Support services to be offered/provided:	
Entity responsible for employer relationship management and for participant placement:	
Placement process methodology:	

CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITY NARRATIVE & CHART FORMAT:

Summer OR Academic Year (choose one)

Career Exploration

Multiple Cohort Based? Circle One- Yes or No

Objective: Please give a description on how you will be executing your activity with the youth participants. If there are multiple cohorts within each activity, you must provide a description of the plan. Below is a list of guiding questions to assist you with the description of the objective. Please refer to **Appendix B** for career exploration and work-based learning narrative structure, charts, and guiding questions.

Career Exploration Activity Guiding Questions:

How will youth engage in career exploration? What will they be doing?

How are you differentiating activities by age, work-readiness, and career interests?

How will the activities (or how will this activity) meet the standards of quality for career exploration as defined in [Section III-D](#)?

How does this career exploration focus activity align with current [priority industry sectors](#)?

How are you planning on collaborating with employer partners to deliver this experience?

What are you expecting youth participants to get out of the program when they're done?

How is this getting them ready for college and/or a career?

Are students receiving certificates or certifications of any kind upon completion?

PERFORMANCE TARGETS – Career Exploration

Start Date:	
End Date:	
Training/Program Provider(s):	
Training/Program Location(s):	
Training/Program Schedule:	
Total Training/Program Hours:	

Target Enrolled:	
Target Completed:	
Target Credential(s)	
Target Wage/Stipend:	
Any additional Details:	
RECRUITMENT, PLACEMENT, AND SUPPORT	
Entity conducting participant recruitment:	
Recruitment methodology/mechanisms:	
Entity responsible for participant selection:	
Selection methodology/mechanisms:	
Entity responsible for participant enrollment:	
Entity responsible for outcome reporting:	

- e) **Work Readiness Training Plan** (Maximum 2 pages)- see [section III C](#) for details.
- f) **Program Quality and Improvement** (Maximum 1 page): **(1)** Describe how you will assess program quality and progress toward program objectives and ensure a positive and high- quality experience for youth throughout the duration of the program. **(2)** Describe how you will gather youth and employer feedback throughout the program and respond to that feedback in real time. **(3)** Describe how you'd improve your program over time if awarded and given the opportunity to renew, pending available funding.
- g) **Organizational, Administrative and Fiscal Capacity** (Maximum 1 page): Describe how the applicant has the administrative and fiscal capacity to **properly and effectively manage grant funds and submit timely and accurate expense reports**. Who will serve as the employer of record, manage payroll, and cover liability and Worker's Compensation, as applicable, and what prior experience does the organization have in doing so? The applicant will further be required to complete a Fiscal Agent Assurances Form (**see Appendix E**).
- h) **Staffing Plan- See Appendix C** (Maximum 1 page)

C. Budget & Budget Narrative

All funding is subject to board approval and awardee performance. The proposed budget and budget narrative in your application must include a brief description of each budget item, be assigned to its corresponding category, and must identify what role the item will play in the execution of the grant. **See Appendix D** for the budget template and budget narrative template. **You must use the prescribed template and include them as an attachment with your application upon submitting electronically.** Your budget will be analyzed on the following:

- 1- Based on what you are doing with youth participants, what the expected outcomes are, and the expenses listed- does the funding amount you're asking for make sense?
- 2- Does the budget narrative adequately describe the expenses in the budget and reflect the scope of work in the application?
- 3- Does the budget in the application include leveraged resources and/or in-kind contributions from other sources?

NOTE: One of the goals of the Real Skills for Youth program is to help advance the employment prospects of current and future youth workers and help them achieve sustainable employment, while also supporting the staff that help youth achieve these goals. As such, the following is a requirement for all applications: **All personnel and/or staff paid for in whole or in part with Real Skills for Youth program dollars will be**

compensated at a rate no less than \$15.00 per hour. All youth participants earning paid wages will be compensated at a rate no less than \$13.00 per hour.

D. Additional Attachments

The GWB will not accept any additional documentation, except for what is outlined below:

- **Taxation Letter of Good Standing:** The applicant must submit a current Letter of Good Standing from the State Division of Taxation. If this letter is not available in time for application submission, the applicant may submit proof of request. More information can be viewed at: [Taxation Letter of Good Standing](#)
- **Fiscal Agent Assurances Form: See Appendix E** for the required form. This form is signed by the Applicant to affirm that they will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the GWB and the State of Rhode Island and have the fiscal capacity to administer the grant.
- **Copy of Applicant W-9 Taxation Form:** Downloadable from Division of Purchasing Website: [W-9 Taxation Form](#)
- **Letter(s) of Intent (optional):** These letters should show that the member is an active partner, understands and embraces their role, and is committed to the partnership. 'Form' letters are discouraged.

V. Grant Evaluation and Selection

A. Grant Award Evaluation and Selection Process

GWB staff will perform an initial screening of applications to ensure that submission requirements were met, and all required sections were included. An evaluation committee consisting of various staff at the Department of Labor and Training, Rhode Island Department of Education, and other State agencies. Mirroring the structure of the application components, evaluators will be directed to consider the following:

- a) **Program Impact**
 - Does the application clearly outline and define the overall intent of the program, keeping youth participants at the forefront of that goal?
 - Does the application explain how youth participants will be prepared for college and career through its programs?
 - Does the application explain how the Real Skills activities fit into the organizations larger? youth mission and scope of work?
- b) **Partner Engagement**
 - Is there a clear and cogent rationale for the selection of the Applicant and other partners? Does the partnership include the required youth-serving and industry/employer partners?
 - Does the Applicant have the capacity to fulfill its role? Is the Applicant credible, objective, and do they demonstrate knowledge and expertise of the youth they are working with?
 - Does the partnership include organizations with demonstrated success and experience delivering youth programming and ability to meet the needs of all their target youth?
 - Does the application clearly describe the specific roles each partner will play in executing the plan?
 - If applicable, does the application include a realistic plan to engage with schools, align with local CTE programs, and communicate activity completion back to schools?
- c) **Youth Recruitment, Placement, and Support**

- Is it clear what population of youth will be participate in the program in terms of age, demographics, schools, geographic region, or other characteristics?
 - Does the application explain how programming will advance the PrepareRI mission of ensuring that historically underserved youth participant populations have expanded access to quality programming?
 - Does the application explain how the partnership will identify, recruit, select, and enroll youth while providing equitable access to programming and supports along the way? Are roles and responsibilities for each State of the recruitment process reasonable, realistic, and clear?
 - Does the application clearly explain a plan of communication plan to parents/guardians?
- d) **Program Plan, Charts & Expected Outcomes:**
- Are the activities clear, detailed and logical, and meet grant solicitation requirements? Is it clear what youth will be doing throughout the program?
 - Does the application further the goals, core values, and objectives of the Real Skills for Youth program?
 - Do activities meet the standards of quality as outlined in the grant solicitation, or the GWB's Work Based Learning guidance, as applicable?
 - Are activities age-appropriate and differentiated for work readiness and youth interests?
 - Is career exploration and work-based learning programming employer-informed and aligned to existing careers and occupations, particularly in [priority industry sectors](#)?
 - Does the application provide an appropriate and reasonable timeline to implement program components?
 - Does the application clearly describe the expected outcomes and are those outcomes reasonable?
- e) **Work Readiness Training Plan**
- Does the application have all required components for work readiness training embedded in their plan?
 - Is the training provided experiential, interactive, and based on authentic challenges?
 - Is there a sample training calendar and curriculum in the application?
 - Is there anything missing?
- f) **Staffing Plan**
- Is there a reasonable adult to youth ratio?
 - Does the staffing plan seem appropriate and adequate for the activities planned?
 - Is it clear from the chart who is responsible for which task executing these programs?
- g) **Program Quality and Improvement**
- Does the Applicant have a clear plan to assess and ensure progress toward program objectives and positive youth experience throughout the duration of the program?
 - Does the application outline a plan for collecting youth and employer feedback in real time and how the Applicant will respond to that feedback?
 - Does the application provide a realistic, and well-thought-out plan for continuous improvement if given the opportunity to renew a contract for an additional two years?
- h) **Organizational, Administrative and Fiscal Capacity:**
- Does the Applicant have the administrative and fiscal capacity to manage grant funds properly and effectively?
 - If applicable, does the application adequately identify how a partner will be the employer

of record, manage payroll, and cover liability and Worker's Compensation?

Applications will be scored based upon the following criteria:

Application Section	Possible Points
Program Impact	10
Partner Engagement	10
Youth Recruitment, Placement, and Support	5
Program Plan, Charts, and Expected Outcomes	30
Work Readiness Training Plan	15
Program Quality and Improvement	10
Organizational, Administrative and Fiscal Capacity	5
Budget and Budget Narrative	15
TOTAL POINTS	100

B. Grant Award Selection Process

If necessary, oral presentation of the application may be required to clarify content in the proposed plan.

Final approval for the award recipient shall be determined by the Executive Director of the GWB, based on the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee and considering other factors such as: experience in developing and executing strong career exploration and/or work based learning experiences, strong employer partnerships, long term strategy to build career pathways towards [priority industry sectors](#), and for previous awardees, past performance and financial management of awarded funds.

VI. Grant Administration and Reporting

A. Negotiation and Post-Award Procedure

Finalists should be prepared to submit a copy of their most recent audit and/or audited financial statement (Pell-eligible institutions are exempt).

* All required organizations must follow the audit requirements of Federal OMB circular A-133 (www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2011)

* Commercial organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds must have either an organization-wide audit conducted in accordance with OMB circular A-133 or a program-specific financial and compliance audit. Those entities that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds may include audit costs to the grants on a pro-rated basis.

The GWB reserves the right to negotiate with proposers on costs and deliverables to contract with the proposer who best meets the Board's needs. Upon completion of the negotiation, a final contract will be drafted and signed, laying out and finalizing the applicant's scope of work, budget, payment terms, performance metrics, and reporting requirements. If for any reason, a contract cannot be negotiated, another proposer may be selected. **No activities may begin until the Award Agreement is completed and signed by all parties.** The GWB will engage in meetings with the Awardee periodically throughout the duration of planning for the event or as deemed necessary. **Invoices will not be paid unless expense reports are submitted correctly, with all the appropriate supporting documentation. Payment will not be made until a purchase order has been issued by the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division.** The department's invoicing procedure will be reviewed in detail if awarded funds. The applicant must have the financial capacity to pay the costs up front and receive reimbursement upon submission of invoices and other required materials. The reimbursement timeline will be determined and finalized during the contract negotiation.

B. Fiscal and Programmatic Oversight

The GWB Youth Programs Coordinator will be closely engaged with the Awardee, providing plan-specific support and technical assistance as needed. This support includes but is not limited to meetings between applicants, partners, and staff responsible for implementing the program, reporting and performance tracking. Fiscal oversight will consist of submission of expenditure reports, request for proof of expenditures, periodic onsite program monitoring, and/or an audit of Real Skills for Youth funds expended by the applicant and its sub-awardees/other vendors, if applicable.

C. Payment Process

Payment to awardees will be disbursed according to a schedule negotiated between the GWB and the awardee and will be conditioned upon meeting program requirements including but not limited to timely enrollment of participants in the GWB's Data Management System, ensuring that participant outcomes are reported in a complete, timely and accurate manner, and otherwise meeting negotiated performance metrics. Failure to meet identified requirements and deadlines will result in delay, diminution, or termination of funding.

Invoices will not be paid unless expense reports are submitted correctly, with all the appropriate supporting documentation. Payment will not be made until a purchase order has been issued by the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division. The department's invoicing procedure will be reviewed in detail if awarded funds. **The applicant must have the financial capacity to pay the costs up front and receive reimbursement upon submission of invoices and other required materials.** The reimbursement timeline will be determined and finalized during the contract negotiation.

D. Participant Data and Reporting Requirements

The Awardee will provide data about each youth participant enrolled in a program(s), on a schedule determined in the negotiation process. Applicants will use the GWB Data Management System to house all enrollment and outcomes data for each individual youth participant, for career exploration and work-based learning. Additional information will be provided if awarded regarding awardee data requirements and expectations.

Examples of data collection includes but is not limited to:

- First and last name of youth participants
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- School and grade level
- Hours of classroom and workplace activities
- Employer for work-based learning experiences
- Industry credentials earned
- Academic credit earned
- Wages earned
- Social Security numbers

The GWB will also require applicants to administer standardized surveys to participants to collect quantitative and qualitative data on essential skills gains and career knowledge. As awardees will necessarily collect personal information from participants as well as other potentially confidential or proprietary information from employer partners, it is expected that awardees will regard electronic data and other manually maintained records on individual persons, employers, and others as confidential, to be held in trust, and will protect data against unauthorized disclosure and/or use.

E. Performance Metrics

Specific metrics will be developed with the Awardee during the Award Agreement negotiation, to capture the unique features and proposed goals of each partnership. These unique performance metrics will allow the GWB to track the applicant's progress, collaborate with the applicant and other stakeholders to encourage open lines of communication, enhance accountability, improve results, and adjust program delivery and policy. Performance metrics include but are not limited to the number of youth participants enrolled in an activity; the number of youth participants that complete an activity; youth participant surveys; overall program performance. Each awardees performance will be publicly available. **Funding may be tied to the achievement of performance metrics.**

F. Right to Revoke Funding, Audit and Suspend Funds

The GWB reserves the right to revoke grant funding from the recipient entity of any grant and require the return of unspent funds if the goals and timelines consistent with the approved Award Agreement are not met. The GWB also reserves the right to request access to perform an audit of the applicant's activities. Audits can be part of regular monitoring or in response to an emergent concern, including but not limited to outside inquiries or even "whistleblower" complaints. **To meet its fiduciary responsibility for public funds, GWB reserves the right to suspend payment of any part of a Real Skills for Youth grant.**

To download all Appendices, please visit:

<https://gwb.ri.gov/solicitations>