

RFP: Unity Works

OVERVIEW

On January 24th, the New York City (NYC) Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), in collaboration with the NYC Unity Project and the NYC Center for Youth Employment, released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Unity Works program.

Unity Works is a new program that will provide education and workforce development services to runaway and homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness between the ages of 16 and 24. The program is designed to prepare participants for entry-level employment in a career pathway of their choice through a continuum of education and employment services. DYCD will award over \$2.7 million in total funding to one not-for-profit organization through this RFP.

The full RFP is attached. Applications are due on February 28th.

FUNDING

In order to account for different requirements in each year of the program, DYCD anticipates awarding annual contracts over four years to one eligible organization as outlined below:

Year	Funding Amount
Year 1 (2021)	\$621,098
Year 2 (2022)	\$876,271
Year 3 (2023)	\$841,373
Year 4 (2024)	\$365,145

This funding does not include wages for program participants, which will be paid separately by DYCD through its payroll vendor. The anticipated payment structure for contracts will be based on line-item reimbursement. No more than 45% of the total budget may be subcontracted.

Contracts will last for four years starting July 1, 2020.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants must be not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. Organizations and any subcontractor must have:

- At least three years of successful experience in the last five years operating program(s) that serve the target population;
- Experience providing training designed to ensure that all program staff are affirming of and culturally responsive to LGBTQI+ youth;

- At least three years of successful experience in the last five years providing literacy and numeracy instruction to the target population in the context of workforce development OR experience securing referral arrangements to organizations that deliver such services to the target population;
- At least three years of successful experience in the last five years providing advanced occupational training services to the target population OR experience securing referral arrangements with organizations providing such services to the target population; and
- A minimum of three years of experience in the last five years developing and facilitating internship, employment, educational, and training opportunities.

The awarded organization must also have experience providing transition services to the target population that support youth in their post-exit placements by promoting smooth transitions when participants exit workforce programs to take up job, educational, or training placements.

Additionally, the awarded organization must have at least one community partnership for each of the following nine services:

- DYCD runaway and homeless youth drop-in center services;
- DYCD runaway and homeless youth crisis services;
- DYCD Transition to Independent Living services;
- Literacy instruction/High School Equivalency exam preparation;
- Advanced occupational training;
- Internships;
- Post-secondary education;
- Intensive clinical mental health services;
- Housing services specializing in the target population.

Community partners may also include other NYC agencies and specialists in areas such as housing, mental health, dental health, legal services, childcare, financial literacy and counseling, arts/culture, and recreation.

TARGET POPULATION

The target population for services provided through this program are runaway and homeless young adults and youth at risk of homelessness between the ages of 16 and 24, including those:

- With disabilities;
- Who identify as LGBTQI+; and
- Who are not currently working, are underemployed, are not in school, or lack essential employment or literacy skills.

There will be two enrollment periods with 45 youth enrolled at the end of each period. For the first period, DYCD expects 25 youth to be recruited by December 1, 2020 and full enrollment completed by March 1, 2021. Full enrollment during the second period should be completed by June 20, 2021.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The awarded organization must provide the following to the target population through this program:

- Orientation to program;
- Case management;
- Literacy instruction;
- Work readiness;
- Subsidized paid work experiences;
- High-quality work experiences by identifying and developing relationships with employers;
- Post-secondary education and career exploration;
- Training for an industry-recognized occupational credential; and
- Group activities, such as team-building exercises, networking sessions, and workshops.

Services may be provided through this program for up to three years, with two years of direct services and one year of post-exit follow-up services.

APPLICATION

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Organizational Experience (20 points)
- Staffing (25 points)
- Program Approach (5 points)
- Community Partnerships (10 points)
- Enrollment and Comprehensive Assessment (10 points)
- Program Services (10 points)
- Transition Assistance and Follow-up Services (10 points)
- Program Facility (5 points)
- Budget Management (5 points)

Funding will be awarded based on the above criteria and a consideration of which proposals are deemed to be the most advantageous to NYC. In the event of a tie, the proposal with the higher score in Organizational Experience will receive an award.

Timeline

Applications are due on February 28th. There will be an optional pre-proposal conference on February 4th at 3pm at 2 Lafayette Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10007.

Questions may be submitted to RFPQUESTIONS@dycd.nyc.gov with “Unity Works” in the subject line by February 21st. Answers to questions will be released in an addendum to the RFP.