

**Unity Works Request for Proposals (RFP)**  
**EPIN: 26020I0003**  
**Table of Contents**

**1. Program Overview**

- A. Program Background and Approach
- B. Program Goals
- C. Target Populations/Service Levels
- D. Administrative Requirements

**2. Program Expectations and Proposal Instructions**

- A. Organizational Experience 1 10 points
- B. Organizational Experience 2 10 points
- C. Staffing 25 points
- D. Program Approach 5 points
- E. Community Partnerships 10 points
- F. Enrollment and Comprehensive Assessment 10 points
- G. Program Services 10 points
- H. Transition Assistance and Follow-Up Services 10 points
- I. Program Facility 5 points
- J. Budget Management 5 points

**3. List of Attachments**

- Attachment A: General Information and Regulatory Requirements
- Attachment B: Structured Proposal Form
- Attachment C: Community Partnership Agreement
- Attachment D: Proposal Budget Summaries
- Attachment E: Doing Business Data Form
- Attachment F: Human Services Standard Contract

**4. Basis for Contract Award and Procedures**

- A. Evaluation Procedures
- B. Basis for Contract Award
- C. Responsibility Determination

IMPORTANT NOTE: This RFP is issued through the HHS Accelerator system to organizations that prequalify in the relevant service areas. Prequalified organizations are required to submit their proposals through the HHS Accelerator system as instructed in the “Procurements” section of the system. Go to [www.nyc.gov/hhsaccelerator](http://www.nyc.gov/hhsaccelerator) to learn more.

**Basic Information**

<b>Release Date</b>	January 24, 2020
<b>Proposal Due Date</b>	February 28, 2020 at 2:00PM
<b>Pre-Proposal Conference</b>	It is recommended, but not mandatory, that proposers attend.  <b>Date: February 4, 2020</b> <b>Time: 3:00PM</b> <b>Location: 2 Lafayette Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor</b> <b>New York, NY 10007</b>
<b>Anticipated Contract Term</b>	The contract term will be for a period of four (4) years starting July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2024.
<b>Service Option and Competition</b>	There will be one service option with one citywide competition. It is anticipated one award will be made.
<b>Agency Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:RFPQUESTIONS@dycd.nyc.gov">RFPQUESTIONS@dycd.nyc.gov</a> Please indicate “Unity Works” in the subject line.
<b>Anticipated Total Funding and Payment Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total anticipated funding for the 4-year contract term will be <b>\$2,703,887</b>. The funding will be divided over the 4-year term, as set out below, to take account of differing requirements in each year of the contract: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Year 1 FY21: \$621,098</li> <li>– Year 2 FY22: \$876,271</li> <li>– Year 3 FY23: \$841,373</li> <li>– Year 4 FY24: \$365,145</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The above funding does not include wages for program participants which will be paid separately by DYCD through its payroll vendor.</li> <li>• The anticipated payment structure for contracts awarded from this RFP will be based on line-item reimbursement.</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility for Award</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To submit a proposal, organizations must be prequalified for this RFP in the HHS Accelerator system.</li> <li>• To receive an award, the proposer must be a nonprofit organization.</li> <li>• Please refer to <b>Section 4 – Basis for Contract Award and Procedures</b> for details on the award recommendation process.</li> </ul>
<b>Subcontracting</b>	Subcontracting is allowed subject to the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations set out in the RFP that apply to the contractor apply equally to any subcontractor.</li> <li>• Proposed subcontractors must be identified in the proposal.</li> <li>• No more than <b>45 percent</b> of the total budget may be subcontracted.</li> <li>• A selected subcontractor for a subcontract in excess of \$20,000 shall not enter into any subcontract without the prior written approval of DYCD.</li> <li>• All subcontractor payments must be reported using the Payee Information Portal (PIP) at <a href="http://www.nyc.gov/pip">www.nyc.gov/pip</a>.</li> </ul>

<b>Annual Enrollment Requirements</b>	There will be two enrollment periods, with 45 youth enrolled in each period. DYCD expects 25 youth to be recruited by December 1, 2020 with full enrollment in the first period completed by March 1, 2021. Full enrollment during the second period will be completed by June 30, 2021.
<b>Liability Insurance</b>	<p>The contractor shall maintain, at a minimum, the following insurance:</p> <p>Commercial general liability insurance of at least \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million aggregate; workers' compensation insurance, employers' liability insurance, and disability benefits insurance; and professional liability insurance or errors and omissions insurance of at least \$1 million per claim for the services to be provided by the Licensed Clinical Social Worker(s) and/or Licensed Mental Health Counselor(s) under the Agreement. The contractor must demonstrate that necessary insurance coverage is in place from the first day of the contract by providing a certificate of insurance naming the City of New York, together with its officials and employees, as an Additional Insured with coverage at least as broad as the most recently issued ISO Form CG 20 10 or CG 20 26 along with the additional insured endorsement pursuant to which the necessary Additional Insured coverage is provided, and a Broker's Certificate. DYCD will not be able to proceed with processing an awarded contract until it has obtained proof of the necessary insurance coverage.</p>
<b>Use of Certified MWBE Businesses</b>	The contractor is encouraged to utilize businesses and individual proprietors listed on the NYC Online Directory of Certified MWBE Businesses, available at <a href="http://www.nyc.sbs">www.nyc.sbs</a> as sources for its purchases of goods, supplies, services and equipment using funds obtained through the Agreement. The contractor is also encouraged to utilize businesses and individual proprietors owned/operated by people with disabilities as sources for its purchases of goods, supplies, services, and equipment using funds obtained through this Agreement.
<b>Questions Regarding this RFP</b>	<p>Questions regarding this RFP must be transmitted in writing to the agency contact: <a href="mailto:RFPQUESTIONS@dycd.nyc.gov">RFPQUESTIONS@dycd.nyc.gov</a> by February 21, 2020. <b>Please indicate "Unity Works" in the subject line.</b></p> <p>Substantive information/responses to questions will be released in an addendum to the RFP to all organizations prequalified to propose in response to this RFP through the HHS Accelerator system, unless in the opinion of the agency, the questions are of a proprietary nature.</p>

**Proposal Submission Information**

<b>Service Unit</b>	Enter Amount of Total Funding Request														
<b>Proposal Title</b>	Unity Works														
<b>Custom Question 1</b>	What is the address and borough of the proposed program facility?														
<b>Custom Question 2</b>	Which program component(s) would be provided directly by the proposer?														
<b>Custom Question 3</b>	Which services, if any, would be provided by subcontractors?														
<b>Required Documents</b>	<p><b>Proposal Documents</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Document Type</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Proposal</td> <td>Completed Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organizational Chart</td> <td>Proposer's Organizational Chart</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resumes/Job Descriptions</td> <td>Resumes for key staff identified for positions/ Job Descriptions for key staff not yet identified</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Partnership Agreements</td> <td>Signed Community Partnership Agreement, Attachment C, for all proposed community partnerships including both the required nine (9) partnerships listed in Section 2.E. of the RFP and any additional partnerships selected by the proposer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Budget</td> <td>Completed Proposal Budget Summaries, Attachment D</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doing Business Data Form</td> <td>Completed Doing Business Data Form, Attachment E</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>If any of the required documents are not submitted, the proposal may be considered non-responsive and will not be further considered.</b></p> <p><b>Formatting Requirements:</b>            Proposal document file size cannot exceed 12 MB.            Proposal documents must be in one of the following file formats: Word (.doc, .docx), PDF (.pdf), and Excel (.xls, .xlsx). Please note: only one document file can be added to each required document slot.</p>	Document Type	Description	Proposal	Completed Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B	Organizational Chart	Proposer's Organizational Chart	Resumes/Job Descriptions	Resumes for key staff identified for positions/ Job Descriptions for key staff not yet identified	Community Partnership Agreements	Signed Community Partnership Agreement, Attachment C, for all proposed community partnerships including both the required nine (9) partnerships listed in Section 2.E. of the RFP and any additional partnerships selected by the proposer	Budget	Completed Proposal Budget Summaries, Attachment D	Doing Business Data Form	Completed Doing Business Data Form, Attachment E
Document Type	Description														
Proposal	Completed Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B														
Organizational Chart	Proposer's Organizational Chart														
Resumes/Job Descriptions	Resumes for key staff identified for positions/ Job Descriptions for key staff not yet identified														
Community Partnership Agreements	Signed Community Partnership Agreement, Attachment C, for all proposed community partnerships including both the required nine (9) partnerships listed in Section 2.E. of the RFP and any additional partnerships selected by the proposer														
Budget	Completed Proposal Budget Summaries, Attachment D														
Doing Business Data Form	Completed Doing Business Data Form, Attachment E														
<b>General Guidelines</b>	All proposals must be submitted utilizing the procurement tab of the HHS Accelerator system at <a href="http://www.nyc.gov/hhsacceleratorlogin">www.nyc.gov/hhsacceleratorlogin</a> by providers with approved HHS Accelerator Applications, including Business Application and required Service Application(s) for the areas listed in the Services and Providers Tab.														

## Section 1 - Program Overview

### A. Program Background and Approach

***DYCD***

---

***Our Mission:***

*The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) invests in a network of community-based organizations and programs to alleviate the effects of poverty and provide opportunities for New Yorkers and communities to flourish.*

***Our Vision:***

*DYCD strives to improve the quality of life of New Yorkers by collaborating with local organizations and investing in the talents and assets of communities to help them develop, grow, and thrive.*

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP) the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), in collaboration with the New York City (NYC) Unity Project and the NYC Center for Youth Employment, is seeking a qualified not-for-profit organization to provide education and workforce development services through a new program: the NYC Unity Works program (hereinafter referred to as “Unity Works”).

The target population for Unity Works is runaway and homeless youth (RHY) and youth at risk of homelessness ages 16-24 years, including youth with disabilities, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or other sexual/gender minorities (LGBTQI+) and are currently not working or underemployed, not in school, or who lack essential employment or literacy skills.

Unity Works is designed to prepare participants for entry-level employment in a career pathway of their choice through a continuum of education and employment services including literacy instruction, HSE preparation, work-readiness training, paid work experiences, industry-recognized credentials and placement in employment, advanced training, or post-secondary education. Participants will also receive comprehensive support services tailored to their needs.

Recent research on youth workforce preparation and labor market success indicates a growing emphasis on the importance of combining academic progress with work-readiness skills (e.g., critical thinking, communication, teamwork, self-advocacy), employment experience, and industry-recognized credentials. This emphasis reflects a longer-term developmental perspective that requires ongoing commitment on the part of youth to engage in activities designed to help them stay on track, and a commitment on the part of workforce preparation systems to provide participants with coordinated, comprehensive supports in addition to training and employment opportunities.

DYCD currently oversees the largest system of services for RHY and youth at risk of homelessness in NYC. In addition to drop-in centers and street outreach efforts, DYCD invests in residential programs for youth who are in crisis as well as those transitioning to independent living. In addressing the work readiness and employment needs of this population, RHY contractors rely on referrals to service providers that offer employment programs to the general public and do not specialize in employment programs serving RHY or LGBTQ+ youth. Unity Works is designed to fill this gap and be an important resource for existing RHY programs.

Unity Works will target youth at the intersection of two vulnerabilities, i.e., being homeless or at risk of homelessness and identifying as LGBTQI+. The over-representation of LGBTQI+ youth among RHY is well documented: in NYC, it is estimated that 28-44 percent of RHY identify as LGBTQI+. Homeless youth often experience disruptions to their education, unstable housing, lack of resources, isolation, and histories of trauma. All these factors make it harder for them to secure jobs and stay engaged in education and

employment preparation programs. LGBTQI+ populations, in addition, experience more employer discrimination and bias which results in lower hiring and promotion rates, lower salaries, and higher rates of harassment and firing compared to heterosexual peers. If youth are neither in school nor working, by definition, they are not engaging in activities that could help them get back on track. The aim of Unity Works is to prepare youth facing these combined challenges to find a career path that will lead to future labor market success.

### *Feedback that informed this RFP*

In developing the Unity Works approach, extensive interviews were conducted with current RHY providers, experts, advocates, chief executive officers of LGBTQI+-focused organizations and program directors of DYCD's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program for out-of-school youth. In addition, DYCD received written comments in response to the Unity Works Concept Paper and held a "listening session" to gather further input from stakeholders. The following recommendations were incorporated into the design of Unity Works:

- Support services tailored to match the individual needs of the participants;
- Services that include provision of basic resources such as food and clothing;
- Navigators who meet regularly with youth and ensure their access to a broad range of services, especially, to clinical mental health/health and housing services;
- Case management services that help keep participants engaged in the program;
- Trauma-informed mental health services and supports, including appropriately trained and supervised mental health counselors who can address youth's emotional needs and help prevent participants from dropping out of the program;
- Requirement that deliberate efforts be made, through screening and training, to ensure that employers and internship sponsors are sensitive and culturally responsive to the needs of LGBTQI+ youth;
- Services, including post-exit follow-up services, that are delivered over a sustained period to ensure that participants have a realistic chance to achieve the desired outcomes;
- Flexibility and choice for participants in the attainment of advanced training opportunities;
- Some flexibility in the timeframe for gathering information that is needed to create each enrollee's Individual Service Plan;
- Youth with disabilities and youth who are underemployed explicitly included in the target population;
- Although most services would be provided at a one site, specific services/activities (such as literacy or workforce training) provided by another organization could be delivered at a different location;
- Expected community partnerships would include partnerships with clinical mental health service providers and housing specialists;
- Workshop topics must include financial literacy.

### *The Unity Works Program Model*

The LGBTQI+ RHY population identifies employment as one of its top three needs together with housing and acceptance/affirmation of their LGBTQI+ identity. The Unity Works approach is intended to ensure that participants not only have the skills to secure employment, but the necessary support to build a career plan that will serve them well in the future.

The model is designed to provide youth who face the kinds of barriers outlined above with the services needed to build resiliency and confidence; acquire work experiences; and gain skills, competencies, and credentials. Thus, it combines robust, culturally competent literacy instruction with workforce training and experience, wraparound support services focused heavily on mental health, and group-building activities that build life skills and foster peer support and ongoing connections to program services. Finally, as already indicated, Unity Works is designed to provide services that are both holistic and tailored to the needs of each participant.

DYCD assumes that most youth who are likely to enroll in Unity Works will require preparation for New York State’s High School Equivalency (HSE) exam. Therefore, it is anticipated that literacy instruction and HSE preparation will be the basis for initial engagement in the program for most enrollees. Attainment of a high school diploma is necessary but not on its own sufficient for economic success. In addition, youth need to acquire employability skills. Accordingly, while they build literacy skills, they will simultaneously develop work-readiness skills, through training and placement in paid internships. Those who have already attained a 9th grade reading level or above (or attain this level in the program) will receive training that leads to a DYCD-approved occupational credential. When ready to exit the program, staff will help participants secure employment or placement in postsecondary education or advanced training. The credentials, combined with work experience, are intended to provide the foundational skills that youth must have to secure full-time employment with career advancement opportunities.

Given the special vulnerability of the Unity Works target population, a key program component will be enriched supports during and after exit from the program when the youth continue their career development through employment, postsecondary education, or advanced occupational training. Thus, each participant will be assigned to a “navigator” who will ensure that appropriate services are received throughout, including the follow-up period of up to a year. In addition, the program will be expected to ensure that internship sponsors and employers are welcoming and responsive to the needs of LGBTQI+ youth. To this end, Unity Works staff will receive training on how to assess the suitability of potential worksites, advise participants, and identify areas where an internship sponsor or employer could benefit from training to improve LGBTQI+ cultural competency.

#### *DYCD’s Common Approach and Expectations*

DYCD has a common set of expectations that apply in all the human services programs it funds. The way these common expectations are met may vary, since programs funded by the agency comprise a diverse range of services. The contractor will be expected to incorporate all the following elements into the Unity Works program:

- a. Safe and Welcoming Environment
- b. Strengths-based Approach
- c. Circles of Support/Family Engagement
- d. Community Partnerships
- e. Youth Voice

For details of DYCD’s expectations relating to the above elements, see below under Section 2.D.1 of the RFP.

#### **B. Program Goals**

Unity Works is intended to give participants solid footing on a career path that will move youth towards long-term success in the labor market. Among the most consequential skills needed to achieve these desired labor market outcomes are literacy and numeracy. Ability to read, write and do mathematical calculations is essential if youth are to progress in their chosen career. Employers view the attainment of a high school diploma as the basic indicator that someone has sufficient skills to handle tasks involved in entry-level jobs. Accordingly, the goals for Unity Works are to provide participants from the target population with the following:

- a. Literacy instruction;
- b. Foundational occupational credentials;
- c. Workforce development opportunities;
- d. Referrals to needed services outside the contractor’s domain;

- e. Supports that help them secure a job with career possibilities;
- f. Placement in postsecondary education or advanced training (in the short term); and
- g. Paths to economic self-sufficiency and a successful career (in the long term).

To ensure that participants are provided with services for a period that will allow them to meet the program goals and related outcomes, Unity Works will offer up to three years of services, comprising two years of direct services and one year of post-exit follow-up services.

### **C. Target Populations/Service Levels**

The target population for Unity Works is RHY and youth at risk for homelessness who are:

- a. 16-24 years of age;
- b. LGBTQI+; and
- c. Not working or underemployed, not in school, or in need of additional employment or literacy skills to secure entry-level employment on a career pathway. It is anticipated that a high percentage of eligible youth will lack a high school diploma or HSE credential.

Youth with disabilities who meet the above criteria would be eligible to enroll in the program.

### **D. Administrative Requirements**

Each contractor will be required to:

- a. Comply with all DYCD policies and administrative procedures. These include compliance with DYCD contract obligations; cooperation with DYCD regarding site visits, operations, participant services, and documentation required to demonstrate compliance with DYCD contract obligations.
- b. Use DYCD’s Participant Tracking System and any other data systems, as directed; comply with all reporting requirements, including enrollment, daily attendance records, other individual level data; maintain files, including each participant’s enrollment form, individual service plan (ISP), case notes, test scores, other documentation that validates achievement of the specified performance measures.
- c. Ensure that designated staff members attend all meetings related to Unity Works that DYCD deems mandatory.
- d. Create and maintain accounts through the Payee Information Portal (PIP) system, an online reporting system that allows contractors and subcontractors to manage their own contact information, view financial transactions with the City of New York, and record subcontractor payments. For more information, see [www.nyc.gov/PIP](http://www.nyc.gov/PIP).
- e. Have an appropriate social media policy to guide social media communications between staff and participants. At a minimum, the contractor’s policy must match the requirements set out in DYCD’s social media policy: [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/DYCD\\_Provider\\_Social\\_Media\\_Policy.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/DYCD_Provider_Social_Media_Policy.pdf)
- f. Ensure Unity Works staff members have access to computers and a high-speed Internet connection; a Microsoft Windows operating system (currently, Windows 10 build 1809). Windows operating systems will no longer be supported by DYCD after Microsoft extended support deadline has passed, current expiration dates are Windows 7 Service Pack 1 in January 2020 and Windows 8.1 in January 2023. An up-to-date browser, antivirus software, a computer system that employs multilevel password protection to define and restrict access to specified users, and firewall software or hardware are required. Support for multi-factor authentication will be required beginning in July 2019, using the Microsoft Authenticator application. Contractors must notify DYCD immediately (no later than within 24 hours) if an employee who has access to any DYCD system leaves employment or loses access rights for any other reason. Each case manager would have an individual computer.

- g. Provide computer access for participants for training, test-taking, resume writing, job applications, etc.
- h. Provide the option for participants to complete the TASC readiness assessment using either the online or paper version.

## Section 2 - Program Expectations and Proposal Instructions

### **A. Organizational Experience 1**

#### **1. Program Expectations**

- a. The contractor and any subcontractor would have at least three (3) years of successful experience within the last five (5) years operating program(s) that serve the target population (see Section 1.C. above).
- b. The contractor would have experience providing, either directly or through a subcontractor/consultant, training designed to ensure that all program staff are affirming of and culturally responsive to LGBTQ+ youth.

#### **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

#### **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposer demonstrates successful relevant experience to operate the program according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

### **B. Organizational Experience 2**

#### **1. Program Expectations**

- a. The contractor and if applicable, any subcontractor would have at least three (3) years of successful experience within the last five (5) 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.
- b. The contractor and any subcontractor would have at least three (3) years of successful experience within the last five (5) years providing advanced occupational training services to the target population OR experience securing referral arrangements with organizations providing such services to the target population.
- c. The contractor and/or subcontractor would have a minimum of three (3) years of experience within the last five (5) years developing and facilitating internship, employment, educational, and training opportunities.
- d. The contractor would 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.

#### **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

#### **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposer demonstrates successful relevant experience to operate the program according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

## C. Staffing

### 1. Program Expectations

- a. The contractor would have a staffing plan that reflects the requirements and staff positions referred to below. All program staff, including volunteers, would have the following qualifications:
  - i. Experience working with the target population through lived experience, past employment, volunteering, or working with RHY and/or LGBTQ+ communities.
  - ii. Experience utilizing the trauma-informed approach outlined by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Please see Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach Prepared by SAMHSA’s Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative in July 2014 which can be accessed through the following link: <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4884.pdf>

Anticipated required staffing by contract year:

Staff Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Program Director	1 Full Time (FT)	1 FT	1 FT	1 FT
Job Developer	1 FT	1 FT	1 FT	1 FT
Navigators	2 FT	4 FT	4 FT	2 FT
Mental Health Counselor	1 FT	1 FT	1 FT	N/A
Workforce Facilitator	1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	1 FTE	1 FTE	N/A
Education Specialist	1 FTE	1 FTE	1 FTE	N/A
Administrative Support Staff	.5 FTE	.5 FTE	.5 FTE	.5 FTE

Job descriptions and Job qualifications for required staff positions:

#### i. Program Director

*Job description:* Manages the overall program and relationships with subcontractors, if any; oversees program staff.

*Job qualifications:* A master’s degree and a minimum of three (3) years of relevant supervisory and managerial experience OR a bachelor’s degree and a minimum of five (5) years of such experience within the last seven (7) years.

#### ii. Job Developer

*Job description:* Develops relationships with employers and external training programs and supports youth in applying for jobs and occupational training.

*Job qualifications:* At least some college and a minimum of three (3) years within the last five (5) years of relevant experience developing jobs and/or occupational training placements for participants in workforce development programs.

#### iii. Navigators

*Job description:* The navigators would function as case managers for participants. They would be responsible for ensuring that participants receive the services they need to meet the program’s goals and outcomes, especially those relating to work readiness and successful transitions. The navigators would also be responsible for creating peer-support groups and

organizing workshops on topics that are relevant to needs of participants. **The maximum caseload for each navigator would be 25 participants.**

*Job qualifications:* A bachelor’s degree in social work, counseling, education or related relevant field and a minimum of three (3) years of experience within the last five (5) years providing case management and workforce preparation services to RHY and LGBTQI+ youth. At a minimum, the navigator would also have at least three years of trauma-informed counseling; experience managing caseloads of 20 or more clients; and successful experience creating and maintaining strong working relationships with other organizations for referral, case conferencing, and sharing resources.

iv. **Mental Health Counselor**

*Job description:* Assists with initial assessments of needs and provides onsite mental health counseling services for participants.

*Job qualifications:* **Must have at least one of the following credentials:**

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW).
- Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC).

v. **Workforce Facilitator**

*Job description:* Provides work readiness and related skills training (e.g., resume and cover letter writing, soft skills training) and may also provide training toward attainment of foundational occupational credentials.

*Job qualifications:* A bachelor’s degree in education or relevant field, and a minimum of three (3) years within the last five (5) years of relevant experience providing basic skills education and work-readiness training.

vi. **Education Specialist**

*Job description:* Provides literacy and numeracy, and HSE test prep instruction; able to deliver “contextualized instruction,” i.e., instruction tailored to targeted industry sector needs.

*Job qualifications:* A Bachelor’s degree in education or relevant field and a minimum of three (3) years within the last five (5) years of relevant experience supporting youth in High School Equivalency (HSE) preparation, college preparation, and college application assistance.

vii. **Administrative Support Staff**

*Job description:* Manage routine administrative tasks and ensure completion of contract’s administrative and fiscal obligations.

*Job qualifications:* A track record that demonstrates ability to perform the job functions outlined above and relevant experience in office management and in managing administrative and fiscal aspects of government contracts.

b. **Professional Development**

- i. The contractor would offer training and professional development activities to ensure that staff members have the capacity to effectively serve the target population.
- ii. Staff involved in efforts to secure internship and job placements would receive training on screening employers for knowledge and ability to be culturally responsive to LGBTQI+ youth.

- iii. Staff would be provided with opportunities to share challenges and successes, learn from one another, and find support from each other.
- iv. All staff would receive, at a minimum, 21 hours of professional development per year of the contract.
- v. The proposer would have a professional development plan.

## 2. Proposal Instructions

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.
- b. Attach the resumes of all key staff. If a candidate has not been identified for a position, attach a job description.

## 3. Evaluation

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the staffing plan according to the criteria listing in this section. It is worth a maximum of **25 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

## D. Program Approach

### 1. Program Expectations

All programs would adhere to the following requirements that reflect common expectations in all DYCD human services programs:<sup>1</sup>

- a. Safe and Welcoming Environment: The contractor would ensure a friendly and supportive environment where youth feel welcome and are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, or background.
- b. Strengths-based Approach: The contractor would embrace DYCD’s strengths-based approach in which the strengths and assets of individuals and communities are valued. Since many opportunity youths have experienced trauma, programs would adopt trauma-informed practices and address the emotional and mental health needs of the participants. A central focus would be caring, empathic relationships that reflect an understanding of the effects of trauma on the youths’ development.

The contractor would adopt the interconnected concepts of Positive Youth Development (PYD), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and Youth Leadership set out in DYCD’s Promote the Positive frameworks. Program staff would function as responsible, caring adults and positive role models, promoting participant safety, engagement, confidence, and empowerment. Programs would demonstrate the benefits of prosocial behaviors and responsible decision-making, reliability, critical thinking, and good communication skills and offer youth opportunities to be good team players, leaders, and role models. These could include opportunities for youth to be peer leaders, provide input into planning activities such as community service, and assist with recruitment and outreach as peer connectors. See DYCD’s online “Promote the Positive Flip Book” at <https://www.flipsnack.com/NYCDYCD/dycd-promote-the-positive-flipbook-for-rfp.html>.

- c. Circles of Support/Family Engagement: The contractor would embrace the principles and vision underpinning DYCD’s Circles of Support family engagement framework. DYCD defines family in broad terms to include those individuals who care for and support participants but are not blood relatives. Programs would create opportunities for those who have positive influences on program participants to engage with the program. These might include involving families in marketing and recruitment strategies, providing them with ongoing program information, and inviting families to

---

<sup>1</sup> All requirements under Program Approach and Program Elements also apply to subcontractors, as appropriate.

program events and celebrations. See [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/16-5268b\\_v12SONYC\\_FamilyEngagement\\_Brief03739.001.02\\_FNL.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/16-5268b_v12SONYC_FamilyEngagement_Brief03739.001.02_FNL.pdf).

- d. **Youth Voice:** The contractor would provide a mechanism for ongoing feedback from youth (e.g., anonymous online comment card survey, monthly feedback session) for program improvement.

## 2. Proposal Instructions

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.
- b. Attach an organizational chart demonstrating how the proposed program would be integrated into the contractor's overall operations.

## 3. Evaluation

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the program approach according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **5 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

# E. Community Partnerships

## 1. Program Expectations

- a. The contractor would have knowledge of local and citywide resources relevant to RHY and youth at risk of homelessness who are LGBTQI+ as well as a related set of established community partnerships with external organizations relevant to the Unity Works program.
- b. Community partnerships may take different forms and would include referral agreements, co-location of services, joint projects, and subcontracted services. If the contractor would not provide all the components of the Unity Works program within its own organization, it would do so through a subcontract agreement that would identify the specific responsibilities of the contractor and the subcontractor and describe in detail the collaborative mechanisms to be used for shared work.
- c. The community partnerships would intentionally promote service integration at the local level and build provider networks that maximize options and chances of achievement of program goals and outcomes for the participants.
- d. The contractor would have a range of community partnerships that enhance the quality and scope of services provided through Unity Works. **At a minimum, the contractor would have at least one community partnership for each of the following nine (9) services:**
  - i. DYCD RHY drop-in center services
  - ii. DYCD RHY crisis services
  - iii. DYCD Transition to Independent Living (TIL) services
  - iv. Literacy instruction/HSE preparation
  - v. Advanced occupational training
  - vi. Internships
  - vii. Post-secondary education
  - viii. Intensive clinical mental health services
  - ix. Housing services specializing in the target population

Note: Community partners may include other DYCD-funded youth workforce development programs and other services funded through DYCD. The *Discover DYCD* digital tool is available at <https://www.dycdconnect.nyc/> to help identify DYCD-funded programs by neighborhood. Community partners might also include other City agencies and specialists in areas such as housing, mental health, health, dental health, legal services, childcare, financial literacy and counseling, arts/culture, and recreation.

## 2. Proposal Instructions

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.
- b. Complete a Community Partnership Agreement for each proposed community partnership, Attachment C.

## 3. Evaluation

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the community partnerships according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

## F. Enrollment and Comprehensive Assessment

### 1. Program Expectations

- a. Outreach and Recruitment: Unity Works will conduct intentional outreach and recruitment to LGBTQI+ youth and work closely with DYCD-funded RHY Drop-in centers, Crisis Services, and Transitional Independent Living (TIL) programs that will refer appropriate youth to the program. Unity Works may also enroll youth living on the street or who walk through the door seeking services. Accordingly, it will have established partnerships and coordinate services with providers of RHY residential facilities so that staff can help street homeless youth secure housing.
- b. Enrollment: A total of 90 youth would be enrolled over two enrollment periods. 45 youth would be enrolled in each period. The contractor would propose a recruitment plan and timeline indicating when full enrollment would be reached for each period. Ideally, full enrollment during the first period would be attained by March 1, 2021, with 25 youth recruited by December 1, 2020. Full enrollment for the second period must be attained by June 30, 2021 to ensure that participants are able to receive up to two full years of program services and one year of follow-up support by the end of the contract term. Once enrolled, participants would receive services according to their individual needs and may complete the program at different times.

Program staff would be expected to make every effort to retain participants and re-engage all youth who drop-out. The program would only be able to replace a participant who drops out in exceptional circumstances, where convincing justification is presented and DYCD gives approval.

- c. Comprehensive Assessment: Upon enrollment, each youth would participate in a comprehensive assessment. The purpose is to determine current social, medical, and mental health needs and explore the participant's career interests and goals. The assessment would be conducted by the assigned navigator or the mental health counselor. The staff member who conducts the assessment would gather all necessary information to determine the services required to address the participant's needs. Ideally, all information needed to create the ISP would be collected during the initial interview(s) conducted. If Unity Works does not gather all the information required to determine a participant's literacy level and/or suitability for occupational training at the initial interview(s), the contractor would be expected to obtain it within four (4) weeks from the date of enrollment.

Literacy skills would be assessed using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). The contractor would undertake reassessments at multiple points throughout the program to determine any changes in youth interests and needs, as part of its case management services.

### 2. Proposal Instructions

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

### 3. Evaluation

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposed approach to achieving the outreach and recruitment, enrollment and comprehensive assessment expectations according to the criteria listed in the section above. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

## G. Program Services

### 1. Program Expectations

Program services would be tailored to the needs of individual participants and cover a wide range of areas. They would include, as required, helping youth obtain identity documents and benefits for which they are eligible, ensuring youth have necessities like food and clothing, and addressing any other presenting needs. Services would also include referrals to other organizations in cases where the contractor lack the capacity or expertise to address specific needs such as housing assistance, and physical and mental health services. Additional service requirements are included below under descriptions of key program components.

- a. Orientation: Youth would take part in an orientation that includes a review of program expectations, opportunities for building positive relationships among fellow Unity Works participants and staff, and an introduction to other DYCD-funded programs. If a participant leaves the program, the contractor would be expected to focus its efforts on re-engagement, rather than on replacement of the youth.
- b. Case Management: Program staff would work with each participant at the outset to develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP). Each youth would be assigned to a navigator (see above, Section 2.C.). The navigator would meet regularly with each participant according to need and at a mutually agreed frequency. The navigator is the case manager who connects participants to services, reassesses and revises the ISP, helps with securing participant placements, and provides post-exit follow-up services for a period of one year.

The navigator would play a key role in sustaining participant engagement. Ideally, each youth would work with the same case manager throughout all components of the program. The contractor would use up to \$600 per participant per year out of the program budget for stipends and other items such as food and participant supplies as incentives to sustain engagement in the program.

The navigator's case management responsibilities would also include case conferencing among program staff and staff of other agencies providing services to the participants, including, as applicable, staff at RHY facilities where the youth are living.

- c. Literacy Instruction: Youth would access literacy instruction and HSE preparation classes, as needed. These services may be provided directly by the contractor or through subcontract or other arrangements with external providers. It is anticipated that most enrolled youth would need literacy services. The provider of these services would make intentional efforts to create literacy learning communities among participants who are at the same level of instruction.
- d. Work Readiness: All youth would participate in work-readiness activities to build the foundational skills needed in any work setting, as well as in college and career exploration. This training would be tailored to the demands of the participants' internship placements. In all cases, it would include financial literacy and topics such as workplace dress codes, appropriate workplace behavior, and conflict resolution.
- e. Subsidized Paid Work Experiences: All participants would take part in subsidized paid work experiences through internships or job placements. They will receive wages of up to \$1,500 per

- year. The contractor would secure placements with enough hours to entitle participants to receive the full amount of \$1,500.
- f. Relationships with employers: The contractor would have effective strategies to recruit and work with employers, identify employer needs and set up high-quality work experiences for participants that lead to career-track employment. Strategies would include participating in employer networks to better understand local labor markets and identifying employers that are a good fit for LGBTQI+ young adults.
  - g. Post-Secondary Education and Career Exploration: All youth would participate in activities to explore post-secondary education and career options.
  - h. Industry-recognized Occupational Credential: Youth would be offered access to training that results in an industry-recognized occupational credential. Before youth exit the program, they are expected to attain at least one foundational occupational credential such as the National Retail Federation credential, the ServSafe credential, or the Microsoft Office User Specialist credential. DYCD will consider and approve additional foundational credentials on a case-by-case basis.
  - i. Group Activities: Unity Works will offer group activities that build and reinforce positive relationships and cohesion among participants and foster peer-support opportunities and a peer learning community in addition to providing knowledge and building skills. To this end, the program would offer a range of group activities such as team-building exercises, networking sessions, and workshops on topics relevant to participants. These could include self-advocacy, techniques for building resilience, college exploration, career planning, LGBTQI+ rights, worker rights, and healthy living.
  - j. Program Operating Hours and Activity Scheduling: The contractor would establish program operating hours and weekly activity schedules that fit the needs of participants and employers, taking account of curfew hours to which youth who reside in RHY facilities may be subject.
  - k. Employment and Education Partnerships: The contractor would have strategies to recruit and work with employers, identify employer needs and set up high-quality work experiences for participants that should lead to career-track employment. Strategies would include participating in employer networks to better understand local labor markets and identifying a range of employment options that are a good fit for LGBTQI+ young adults. Unity Works will also develop partnerships with advanced-training providers and post-secondary institutions to support its program services and aid transitions.
  - l. Reporting Requirements: The contractor would be required to submit regular reports to DYCD on enrollment, daily attendance, selected output measures, and outcome achievement using DYCD's online data system. The contractor may also be asked to participate a program evaluation which could include additional reporting requirements. The contractor would also be required to track and share with DYCD information including but not limited to, the following items:
    - i. Number of:
      - Partnerships developed
      - Activity schedules and calendars
    - ii. Enrollment
    - iii. Attendance and duration of participation by program activity (e.g., literacy/HSE prep classes, internships/work experiences) for each participant
  - m. Expected Outcomes:
    - i. 60 percent of participants find placement in a job, post-secondary education, or advanced occupational training in 2nd Quarter after program exit;
    - ii. 50 percent of participants are retained in placement in 4th Quarter after exit;
    - iii. 75 percent of participants attain a High School Diploma OR an HSE credential OR a DYCD-approved foundational occupational credential (e.g., National Retail Federation, ServSafe, Microsoft Office User Specialist, Commercial Driver's License), OR an advanced occupation training credential approved by DYCD by end of 4th Quarter after exit;
    - iv. 65 percent of participants show skills gain using pre- and post-TABE tests; and

- v. 50 percent of participants who have a high school credential (attained prior to or during Unity Works) enroll in advanced training or postsecondary education.

## **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

## **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the program services according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

# **H. Transition Assistance and Follow-Up Services**

## **1. Program Expectations**

- a. The contractor would create effective transition strategies that motivate the participants to progress from literacy instruction and HSE preparation to occupational training and post-exit placements. To support successful transitions, the contractor would provide funding to cover, for example, tuition expenses at community colleges or advanced training fees. All transition expenditures will be subject to prior DYCD approval.
- b. The contractor would provide one year of post-exit follow-up support services. A key factor in the effectiveness of follow-up services will be maintaining the relationships established with program staff, in particular, the Mental Health Counselor and the Navigator, and with other program participants.

## **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

## **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the program services. It is worth a maximum of **10 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

# **I. Program Facility**

## **1. Program Expectations**

The contractor would have one program site where most of the services are delivered and have control of a program facility, by the date of contract award, that meets the following conditions:

- a. Appropriate in size and design to adequately accommodate program staff, participants, services and program activities.
- b. Complies with local fire, health, and safety standards.
- c. Easily accessible by public transportation and for people with disabilities.
- d. Complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or, if not, access to other suitable space must be in place to make activities accessible to persons with disabilities.

Note: Specific services such as literacy instruction or workforce training may be offered at a different location, but all the above requirements would apply wherever program services are delivered.

## **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.

### **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposed program facility according to the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **5 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

## **J. Budget Management**

### **1. Program Expectations**

- a. The proposed total funding request for each year of the contract would not exceed the maximum available funding amount.
- b. The costs associated with the budget would enable the effective delivery of services for the proposed program in each year of the contract. The budgets would be consistent with the proposed program design.

### **2. Proposal Instructions**

- a. Complete the relevant section of the Structured Proposal Form, Attachment B.
- b. Complete and attach a Proposal Budget Summary for each year of the contract, Attachment D.

### **3. Evaluation**

- a. This section will be evaluated based on the appropriateness of the proposed budget for each year of the contract based on the criteria listed in this section. It is worth a maximum of **5 points** in the Proposal Evaluation.

### **Section 3 - List of Attachments**

All attachments for this RFP can be found in the RFP Documents tab in the HHS Accelerator system.

- Attachment A: General Information and Regulatory Requirements
- Attachment B: Structured Proposal Form
- Attachment C: Community Partnership Agreement
- Attachment D: Proposal Budget Summaries
- Attachment E: Doing Business Data Form
- Attachment F: Human Services Standard Contract

## Section 4 - Basis for Contract Award and Procedures

### **A. Evaluation Procedures**

All proposals accepted by DYCD will be reviewed to determine whether they are responsive or nonresponsive to the requisites of this RFP. Proposals that DYCD determines to be nonresponsive will not be further considered. DYCD's evaluation committee will evaluate and rate all remaining proposals based on the evaluation criteria prescribed below. DYCD reserves the right to make site visits, conduct interviews, or request that proposers make presentations as DYCD deems applicable and appropriate. Although DYCD may conduct discussions with proposers submitting acceptable proposals, it reserves the right to award the contract based on initial proposals received, without discussions; therefore, the proposer's initial proposal should contain its best technical and price terms.

### **B. Basis for Contract Award**

DYCD will award the contract to the responsible proposer whose proposal receives the highest technically-rated score and is determined to be the most advantageous to the City, taking into consideration factors or criteria set forth in this RFP. In the event of a tie score, the proposal with the higher score in sections Organizational Experience 1 and Organizational Experience 2 combined (maximum 20 points) will be recommended for a contract award.

Contract award shall be subject to:

- i. Availability of funds and timely completion of contract negotiations between DYCD and the selected proposers.
- ii. Demonstration of compliance with the NYC Comptroller's Office mandate that all contractors have the proper insurance.
- iii. Demonstration of control of the program site facility through documentary proof.
- iv. DYCD's review and approval of fully executed subcontracting agreements, if applicable. Proposers using subcontractors must submit fully executed subcontracting agreements for DYCD's review after award notification and in advance of contract signing.

### **C. Responsibility Determination**

In accordance with the City's Procurement Policy Board Rules, DYCD can only make an award to a "responsible" prospective contractor. (See PPB Rules Section 2-08.) Factors such as financial and personnel resources and whether an organization is delinquent in any payment plans with DYCD, or another governmental entity, are among the factors taken into consideration during the responsibility determination process. As a result, a high score on a proposal is not a guarantee of contract award.