

# EmployIndy

GUIDING MARION COUNTY'S WORKFORCE

## NOTIFICATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Provision of  
**JOBS FOR AMERICA'S GRADUATES SERVICES**

Issued April 2, 2021

**Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 pm EST  
Friday, April 30, 2021**

**Contract Period:**

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

*With the option to extend for up to two additional years*

**RFP# 2021 - 004**

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Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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## I. Introduction

EmployIndy, the workforce development board for Marion County, is working to meet regional and statewide workforce development goals by removing barriers to quality employment as well as connecting individuals to entry-level positions. As part of the workforce ecosystem, EmployIndy invests federal, state and philanthropic funds to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Regionally, there is a high demand for skilled workers in industries such as technology, manufacturing, logistics, and financial services, however, with only 42% of Central Indiana residents holding post-secondary credentials, there is a gap between available skilled workers and these jobs. To combat these numbers, EmployIndy is working with regional partners to detect gaps in employer needs and partnering with WorkOne locations and community-based organizations to provide access to training to create a pipeline of talent to fill these positions.

EmployIndy's vision for this critical economic development work in Central Indiana is outlined in the organization's Strategic Plan (2017-2022) and centered on three primary objectives:

1. Address employers' need for a strong pipeline of entry-level workers;
2. Provide opportunities and outline pathways by which young adults (both in school and out of school) can actively participate in the workforce;
3. Meet the needs of residents living in areas of the city that are most affected by poverty and unemployment;

EmployIndy meets its obligations and strategic commitments through a mix of direct service delivery, management of contracted entities engaged to deliver specialized services, and informal coordination of multiple, diverse partners present in Marion County's workforce ecosystem.

Refer to the EmployIndy website, Resources page at <https://employindy.org/resources/> for details regarding the Strategic Plan and EmployIndy's 2019-2020 Annual Report.

The term "ecosystem" is intentionally and consistently used by EmployIndy to reinforce the reality that meeting the diverse needs of job seekers and employers in Marion County requires healthy interaction between a community of partnering entities – including each of the WIOA Required Partners, the City of Indianapolis, community-based providers, economic development professionals working at the county level and on behalf of specific neighborhoods, employers of every size from every sector of the economy, diverse education providers working with students at every academic level, occupational trainers, and many more.

With emphasis on the ABC Method – Any Job, Better Job, Career – EmployIndy drives growth in Indianapolis by investing in innovative jobs-to-careers strategies that ensure youth and young adults have access to career pathways where they

gain the skills they need to enter into jobs, and ultimately careers, that Indianapolis' employers have available.

EmployIndy is deliberately deepening its effort by aligning resources and services in five high-priority neighborhood clusters in the Near East (46201), North West (46208), Mid-North (46205), North East Corridor (46218), and Far East (46235). In these neighborhood clusters and beyond, an estimated 80,000 Marion County residents are unemployed, under-employed or marginally attached to the workforce. EmployIndy is increasingly applying an intentional, place-based approach to delivering education, training, employability skills, and work-based learning at the neighborhood level to advance strong and supportive communities. In so doing, we believe we have the responsibility and capability to serve as a catalyst for community-level progress by strengthening the public workforce system and our local network of employment and training service providers.

## **II. Purpose**

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit and contract with one or more in-school youth service providers to implement and operate the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program in selected Marion County high schools during the 2021-2022 school year using multiple funding streams that include but are not limited to: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), and State JAG funding. The exact number and location of schools is subject to funds available, as well as interested and suitable high schools. For the purposes of this proposal, we will establish a target of 18 programs and JAG specialists. As stated, that number may vary based on multiple and changing factors.

The use of WIOA youth funds places specific requirements on this JAG initiative:

- Dual case management in the State identified case management (client tracking) system (Indiana Career Connect) and the JAG National Data Management System ;
- Requirement to meet federally defined WIOA youth measures;
- WIOA youth eligibility requirements including low income; and
- Adherence to federal, state and local (EmployIndy) laws, regulations and policies.

## **III. Overview**

### **A. JAG National**

JAG is a state-based national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing high school dropouts among young people who are most at-risk. In more than four decades of operation, JAG has delivered consistent, compelling results – helping over one million young people stay in school through graduation, pursue postsecondary education and secure quality entry-level jobs leading to career advancement opportunities.

Originally chartered in Delaware in 1980, the JAG National Board of Directors is comprised of a cross-section of JAG stakeholders from elected state officials,

government, corporations, community-based organizations, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, professional associations, and employers. It is believed that JAG is unique among private non-profit corporations since current and former governors serve on the JAG Board of Directors. JAG is led by Kenneth M. Smith who has led the national organization since 1980 as the President and Chief Executive Officer.

JAG National's mission is....

... to help young people of great promise succeed both in school and on the job, leading to productive and rewarding careers. .

...equipping JAG Specialists with proven programs and unique services for middle school, high school and out-of-school youth to stay in school through graduation from high school to pursuing a collegiate education and/or enter and advance in their chosen career field.

...developing future leaders for families, employers, communities, states and the nation.

For additional information on the Job's for Americas Graduates program go to <http://www.jag.org/>.

## **B. JAG Indiana**

Originally chartered in 2006, JAG Indiana is one of 35 state affiliates in the JAG National Network and oversees 136 active JAG programs serving high school juniors and seniors; college success program JAG students; and out-of-school participants that possess significant barriers to academic and career success (securing an entry level job leading to a career). The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) oversees and funds the JAG Indiana program with WIOA dollars from the U.S. Department of Labor and other state funding.

In addition, DWD is responsible for the state client tracking system and the JAG National Data Management System. Each JAG program in Indiana is required to utilize both systems to track their participant's service delivery and will be accountable for doing so.

## **C. JAG in Marion County**

In 2007, EmployIndy, in partnership with the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) and Arsenal Tech High School, began a pilot JAG program with a small class of seniors. Since that time, the local program has increased the number of schools, classes and specialists participating. In PY20, EmployIndy's JAG program operates with 18 JAG Specialists in 15 Marion County high schools. Since 2007, the JAG program has served over 6,066 Marion County high school students.

JAG Specialists consider students' academic, personal, environmental, income and work-related barriers when determining whether a student is a good fit for the JAG program. Trained JAG Specialists teach students the 37 core

employability competencies from the JAG National curriculum as well as provide individual attention and identify specific barriers to success.

The JAG program offers dropout-prevention strategies; job-readiness training; work experience, internships and job shadowing opportunities; access to occupational skills training; leadership development through the JAG Career Association; mentoring; assistance in job placement and exposure and assistance in attaining postsecondary education. While a JAG Specialist is required to provide all of the fore mentioned services, they may also be assisted in providing these services through a JAG Business and Community Outreach Coordinator.

After the student graduates or exits during their senior year, each JAG Specialist will continue to provide follow-up to their participants for an additional 12 months.

#### **IV. Scope of Work**

EmployIndy will expect a progressive program with full classes, superior outcomes, college and business involvement, as well as features or initiatives that will be considered as national “best practices” not only for the JAG program, but youth programs in general. Responses that demonstrate progressive program design and operation will receive additional consideration in the evaluation process.

##### **A. Strategic Objectives**

1. Increase the graduation rate for youth with barriers in Marion County.
2. Increase the number of Marion County students that obtain postsecondary education or training.
3. Increase the number of Marion County youth that obtain employment in careers within growth industries.
4. Increase the involvement of Marion County businesses and colleges in the JAG program through internships, work experience, job shadowing, employer mentoring, college and business presentations to the classes, career exploration opportunities, and other innovative ways of involving businesses and colleges.
5. Develop leadership qualities in the JAG students through the career association and community service activities.
6. Leverage WIOA funds with other funds to provide the JAG in-school program in Marion County to all interested and eligible Marion County students. These leveraged funds may come from multiple sources and may be provided to the program through EmployIndy, the host JAG school or the JAG service provider. All such leveraged funds will be reported to EmployIndy.
7. Link youth with the Marion County WorkOne system, so that they are aware of the tools, services and assistance that WorkOne provides.

##### **B. Program Requirements**

If selected to run a JAG site, each designated service provider is expected to meet the following requirements and participate in the following activities:

1. Provide at least one JAG Specialist for each school
2. Provide at least one Business and Community Outreach Coordinator that will coordinate with the EmployIndy Talent Solutions Team and the JAG students in finding postsecondary education and employment which includes, but is not limited to assisting JAG students in:
  - a. Facilitating educational and employer speakers for the JAG students;
  - b. Completing admissions and employment paperwork;
  - c. Preparing for and taking standard school admission tests;
  - d. Assisting in completion of the FAFSA;
  - e. Exploring postsecondary education and training options;
  - f. Visiting postsecondary campuses and other postsecondary education provider sites;
  - g. Removing administrative barriers preventing entry into postsecondary education and/or employment;
  - h. Facilitating site visits to local employer sites as part of career exploration for the JAG students;
  - i. Securing work experience, internship opportunities and other such activities with local employers;
  - j. Manage a virtual internship/work experience for JAG students seeking additional skill advancement;
  - k. Assisting the JAG youth in securing permanent or temporary employment
  - l. Organize JAG student leadership events such as the Regional Leadership and Career Development Conferences
2. JAG Specialists must participate in intensive training workshops to learn how to deliver the model services and implement all components of the model. These workshops will be in-state and conducted by a nationally certified trainer. When a JAG Specialist terminates service and is replaced, the new specialist must also receive this training prior to entering the classroom.
3. JAG Specialists must participate in all scheduled EmployIndy Learning Management System and WIOA training classes including, but not necessarily limited to:
  - a. overview of the WIOA youth program including the WIOA legislation, federal regulations, state and local policies and local procedures;
  - b. training on the Indiana Career Connect case management system or other state required client tracking system
4. The service provider must also participate in policy development sessions as they relate to youth programs operated by EmployIndy
5. The national JAG organization sponsors a National Training Seminar (NTS) each July. JAG staff may attend to receive updated technical knowledge and professional development if funding allows. This training is highly encouraged, but not required.
6. One component of the model is to have a student organization called "Career Association" for students to learn and practice leadership skills. A few competitive events allow students to compete against other schools. Some of these are currently required events such as participation in a

Regional and a State Career Development Conference. These events typically occur in February and March in Central Indiana.

7. Separate curricula exists by grades because the competencies taught to seniors are different than those taught to underclass students. However, separate classes are not always possible based on JAG enrollments at specific schools and student class schedules. The JAG Specialists must be prepared to adapt the curricula to accommodate both the seniors and the juniors when this situation exists.
8. Each JAG specialist will have a computer with internet access. The data entry requirements of both case management systems (DWD's Indiana Career Connect system and Jag's National Data Management System) must be kept current to meet requirements. Both systems are internet-based. Specialists will be required to enter data on a daily basis. EmployIndy or the host school will supply the JAG Specialists' computer, internet connectivity and associated technology needs.
9. At a minimum, JAG specialists should be scheduled the equivalent of 1 hour per day to conduct job development, job marketing, and follow-up activities. A minimum of 5 hours per week should be scheduled for these combined activities.

### **C. Governing Authority**

By statute, EmployIndy has the responsibility for developing the workforce of Marion County. EmployIndy establishes policy and operating processes for its youth programs as mandated by WIOA. Applicants to this RFP are expected to be familiar with the contents of the WIOA and Federal Regulations guiding the WIOA youth program and must be capable of operating the JAG program within WIOA Federal/State and EmployIndy regulations, policies and guidance. The federal guidance can be found at the U. S. Department of Labor's site at <http://www.doleta.gov>. State policy and guidance can be found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/> . The terms and conditions of this RFP and resulting contracts may change based on any Federal or State legislative changes.

Providers must be able to incorporate fourteen (14) service elements required as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and as identified in a participant's Individual Service Strategy (see below) to successfully achieve employment.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential.
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include –

- a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
  - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
  - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
  - d. On-the-job training opportunities.
4. Occupational skills training, which may include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area;
  5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
  6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.
  7. Supportive services;
  8. Adult mentoring face-to-face for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
  9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate; youth or young adult has right to opted out of follow-up services.
  10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
  11. Financial literacy education;
  12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
  13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
  14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

JAG service provider(s) will develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) in the form of a written plan of action, based on an objective assessment, to identify age-appropriate short and long-term goals that may include career pathways, education and employment goals, and supportive service needs. The ISS must directly link activities/services to one or more indicators of performance. EmployIndy considers the ISS a living document that requires an on-going review of the progress of each participant toward goals, with updates as needed.

JAG service providers will integrate career assessment tools and strategies to deliver job readiness training to JAG students, including developing job readiness portfolios and curriculum to deliver employability (soft) skills, labor market information, resumes, applications, cover letters, job search and interview skills. JAG service providers will be required to align their job ready portfolios and curriculum to EmployIndy's Job Ready Indy skills competencies or adopt Job Ready Indy as its preferred employability skills training program.

#### D. Program Period

The intent of this RFP is to select a service provider(s) as early as possible, so that start-up activities can begin before the end of the current school year. Such activities include, but may not be limited to:

1. Enrollment of students in the WIOA and the JAG program for the Fall 2021 semester.
2. Establishing relationships with selected high schools.
3. Establishing a School Advisory Committee comprised of faculty administrators, and counselors at each site.
4. Hiring and certification of JAG Specialists.
5. Identifying and equipping classrooms in each of the selected schools.
6. Establishing and executing a plan for business involvement.
7. Creating community linkages that will help to support the youth during the school year.
8. Preparing/finalizing/customizing curricula, etc.

In addition, carry-in youth must continue to receive services through their exit from the program and follow-up services for a minimum of one year after such exits. The selected service provider(s) must be prepared to conduct these on-going and follow-up services.

The program period for the operation will run from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. While the contract will be for one year, there are options for two one-year extensions at the discretion of EmployIndy. Initial startup activities may start prior to July of 2021 to ensure that classes are full, and that students, schools, and JAG specialists are ready when the 2021-2022 school year commences. The actual contract dates will be set during contract negotiations and will encompass both startup and operational time periods.

#### E. JAG Model

JAG Model Components include:

1. **Student Selection.** Students receiving services should be those with multiple barriers to success.
2. **Classroom Instruction.** A trained "JAG Specialist" provides individual and group instruction to 35-45 students carefully selected for the program by a school Advisory Committee comprised of faculty, administrators, and counselors.
3. **Adult Mentoring.** The JAG Specialist provides individual attention to reduce the number of barriers preventing students from receiving a high school diploma, securing employment, or pursuing a postsecondary education and/or training that leads to a career.
4. **Leadership Development.** In-school students participate in the highly motivational student-led JAG Career Association to develop leadership and teaming skills.
5. **Guidance and Counseling.** JAG Specialists provide informal guidance to students on career and life decisions and based on the individual needs of

students, connect them to professional counseling services to address more serious barriers.

6. **Job and Postsecondary Education Placement Services.** Specialists engage in intensive employer marketing and job development activities to identify quality job placement opportunities for students upon graduation. Likewise, they assist students in the exploration of postsecondary education opportunities and help navigate the financial aid and application processes.
7. **Linkages to School- and Community-Based Services.** JAG programs serve as a school-based “one-stop center” to ensure that they receive academic and social services from in-school and community-based resources as needed.
8. **12-Month Follow-up Services.** JAG provides a full 12 months of post-graduation follow-up services and support on the job and/or in pursuit of a postsecondary education.
9. **Accountability System.** Systematic Internet-based tracking of program activities, including: students served, services delivered, and performance results achieved. The JAG National Data Management System allows monitoring of the data captured in the national, state, and local database. The required data and information are essential in conducting JAG’s National Accreditation Process including local site reviews and funding sources.
10. **Professional Development.** Continuous improvement of results through the professional development of state and local staff is an ongoing service provided by JAG-State Organizations.

## F. Performance Goals

### *WIOA Youth Participant Performance Measures*

Providers will be responsible for tracking all eligible WIOA participants in the Indiana Career Connect case management system. Specialists are the key to entering data into this system and must enter the data in compliance with appropriate EmployIndy and DWD policy and guidance. The Indiana Career Connect system and associated DWD programs will generate official WIOA performance reports. WIOA in-school youth that are enrolled in the JAG program will have six WIOA Youth performance measurements.

1. **Credential Attainment Rate: 62%**
  - a. Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized credential or secondary diploma during participation or within four quarters after exit.
2. **Placed in Employment, Education, or Training: 78.4%**
  - a. Measured in the second quarter after exit.
3. **Retention in Employment, Education, or Training: 79%**
  - a. Percentage of participants in education, training, or unsubsidized employment.
  - b. Measured in the fourth quarter after exit.
4. **Earnings after entry into unsubsidized employment:**
  - a. Median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment: \$3,341

- b. Measured in the second quarter after exit.
- 5. **Measurable Skills Gain:** 44.1%
  - a. The percentage of participants in education leads to credential or employment during program year, achieving measurable gains.

*JAG Participant Performance Goals*

JAG Specialists are required to track participants in the JAG National Data Management System which is a web-based computerized system designed to track and report participants served, services delivered, and outcomes achieved. Specialists are the key to capturing data and information. This system aggregates the data and produces reports which are used by the State JAG Project Director, EmployIndy, program managers and supervisors to evaluate process and performance outcomes. As a results-driven and highly accountable organization, JAG affiliates use this tool to improve and recognize performance.

The JAG Model values the following Multi-Year Program performance outcomes:

1. **Graduation/ GED (General Equivalency Degree) Completion Rate.** The word “graduates” appears in the name of the organization and represents the importance of graduation (or GED completion) to the JAG National Network. The goal is to achieve a 90% completion rate by the close of the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase.

The Graduation Rate is computed by subtracting the non-graduates from the number of participants enlisted as Seniors on the Program Roster and dividing the graduates by the total number of participants. For example:

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

2. **Full-Time Positive Outcome Rate.** The goal is for 75% of the participants to achieve a positive outcome by the close of the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. The positive outcomes valued in the JAG Model include employment (full-time); postsecondary enrollment; or full-time military.

The Positive Outcome Rate is computed by dividing the number of Positive Outcomes by the number of graduates (550). For example:

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

3. **Job Placement Rate.** The goal is for 60% of the participants to be employed full-time (30 hours or more) or a part-time job (less than 30 hours). The word

“jobs” is prominent in the name of the organization - “Jobs for America’s Graduates.”

The Job Placement Rate is computed by dividing the number of employed graduate participants (full-time, part-time, and full-time military) by the number of graduates. For example:

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

- 4. Full-time Jobs Rate.** The goal is for 60% of the graduates to be employed in a full-time job including: full-time employment (30 or more hours per week) or two part-time jobs (totaling 30 or more hours).

The Full-time Jobs Rate is computed by dividing the number of full-time employed graduates (full-time civilian and full-time military) by the total number of employed graduates (full-time civilian, part-time civilian and full-time military). For example:

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

- 5. Further Education Rate.** The goal is for 35% of the graduates to be engaged in post-secondary education and/or training by the close of the follow-up phase. Specialists are committed to encouraging graduates to pursue a postsecondary education if it is appropriate and feasible given the graduate’s situation. The Further Education Rate is tracked to emphasize the importance that the JAG Model places on a postsecondary education especially when combined with part-time employment.

The Further Education Rate is computed by dividing the total number of full-time enrolled and employed graduates by the number of graduates. For example:

Total number of graduates:	550
Postsecondary enrollment:	193
Further Education Rate:	35% (193 divided by 550)

- 6. Unable to Contact Rate.** The goal is a less than 5% “unable to contact” rate during the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. An escalating “unable to contact” rate is of considerable concern because performance outcomes can’t be claimed if the Specialist is unable to make contact with graduates.

Total number of graduates:	550
Unable to contact:	25

Unable to Contact Rate:

4.5% (25 divided by 550)

7. **Average Wage/Positive Change in Status.** The average wage is computed by adding the hourly wage for all graduates and dividing by the number of graduates. There is no average wage goal; however, Specialists are encouraged to assist graduates to secure a positive status change during the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. The national performance goal is that 50% of graduates will achieve a positive change of status before the conclusion of the Follow-up Phase. Positive change in status includes; job promotion, increase in hours worked, increase in wage rate, new assignment with advancement opportunities, inclusion in fringe benefits program, employer provided training, and/or employer financed education.

## **G. Eligible Applicants**

### ***Eligible JAG Applicants***

The JAG Model is not for everyone. JAG Specialists recruit and interview students interested in the program. Before a decision is made to finalize the Program Roster, the school Advisory Committee meets and reviews candidates for the program. Participants are selected based on their barriers to academic and career success. Recruitment and enrollment of eligible youth are keys to program success. Below is a listing of academic, personal, environmental, income and work-related barriers that are used to determine if a young person would be eligible for the JAG program.

#### Academic Barriers

- A.1. One or more modal grades behind peers
- A.2. Low academic performance (a grade point of C or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of the class)
- A.3. Basic skills deficient (reading and math in particular)
- A.4. Failed state proficiency exam
- A.5. A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials
- A.6. Has been suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school
- A.7. Has repeated a grade in high school
- A.8. Has dropped out of school previously
- A.9. Limited English proficiency

#### Personal Barriers

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

#### Environmental Barriers

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

#### Income and Work-Related Barriers

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

#### Other Barriers

- O.1. Other

### **Eligible WIOA Applicants**

Since WIOA is one of the program funding streams, applicants must include those who are WIOA eligible. Guidelines for WIOA eligibility with appropriate documentation are contained in the EmployIndy WIOA Participant Eligibility Policy #2015-004.

The JAG Specialist must be fully knowledgeable of the WIOA Youth eligibility requirements. An overview of those basic WIOA Youth requirements is outlined below.

EmployIndy has made the following refinements and additions to the federal and state requirements:

- Age – 16-21 (modified);
- Low-income individual/family (see EmployIndy WIOA Participant Eligibility Policy #2015-004 for determining low-income status);
- If a male, 18 or older, must be registered with or agree to register with the Selective Service or able to provide acceptable documentation exempting themselves from registration;
- Either a United States Citizen or has a right-to-work in the United States;
- Possess a WIOA defined barrier. Those barriers shall be:
  - Basic skills deficient in reading or math;
  - English Language Learner;
  - Offender or ex-offender;
  - Homeless;
  - In foster care or has aged out of foster care;
  - Pregnant or parenting;
  - Have a disability; or"

Needs additional Assistance" to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. The EmployIndy WIOA youth "needs additional assistance" barriers and the WIOA youth 5% barriers shall be the same barriers. EmployIndy defines the following factors to satisfy this criterion:

- Youth who have educational attainment that is one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the age of the individual
- Youth who attend schools that are currently rated as an "F" school by the Indiana State Board of Education or are currently designated as turnaround academies by the State Board of Education
- Youth who have not passed all parts of their High School Equivalence (HSE) or End-of-Course assessment and who have taken the exam at least once
- Youth who have a parent or guardian who does not have a high school diploma
- Youth who would be the first in their family to earn an associate or higher degree from a postsecondary institution
- Youth who have parent or guardian who has been chronically unemployed during the past year
- Youth whose parent or guardian's primary language is not English
- Youth who have a parent or guardian who is or has been incarcerated during the past two years
- Youth who have been referred by a secondary school because they need assistance to graduate
- Migrant youth
- Youth who have had behavioral problems at school
- Youth with family literacy problems
- Youth who have been the victim or whose family members have been the victims of domestic violence
- Youth who struggle with substance abuse
- Youth with chronic health conditions
- Youth who are refugees
- Legally emancipated minors
- Youth who have been suspended or expelled within the last year

Bidders should read the EmployIndy policy referenced above and be familiar with the WIOA eligibility requirements and associated documentation requirements.

## **V. Specifications**

### **A. Contract Type and Available Funding**

EmployIndy will contract up to \$1,855,000 for one or more awards under this solicitation over a period of 12 months. The contract period for this RFP will begin on July 1, 2021. through June 30, 2022, with the possibility to extend contracts and services for up to two successive years through June 30, 2024.

EmployIndy does reserve the right to expand or reduce the size of its JAG program based on funding, performance, and other factors.

Funding availability may vary based on federal WIOA allocations, the availability of non-WIOA funding and other variables. The following is EmployIndy's estimated funding level for the first year of the contract(s) resulting from this RFP. The actual funding levels to the selected service provider(s) will be specified in contract(s) that are executed as a result of this RFP. For subsequent years, funding available will be subject to federal WIOA allocations, State Drop-Out Prevention allocations, other available funding and federal and state policies and guidance.

The resulting contracts from this RFP will be pay-for-performance contracts. Please see Attachment B for more details.

## **B. Technical Qualifications**

To be eligible for consideration, individuals or organizations submitting proposals may not have a financial or policy interest in EmployIndy and must demonstrate:

- Experienced staff or subcontractors to provide the services described in this proposal or must show the ability to acquire such staff.
- At least three years of experience in performing JAG, WIOA Youth or similar types of services.
- Ability to contract with EmployIndy for the delivery of services to at-risk youth in a timely manner for the delivery of these services.
- Ability to deliver employment and other training opportunities and other services to at-risk youth who select to enroll in the JAG program.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 funding that amends the Workforce Investment Act, P.L.105-220, 20 USC 9201.
- Ability to fulfill contract requirements, including indemnification and insurance requirements.
- Satisfactory performance under a current or past contract with EmployIndy or another Workforce Development Board for similar services, when executing existing and/or previous contracts.
- Capacity to maintain adequate files and records and meet reporting requirements, as prescribed by EmployIndy.
- Capability to fiscally and administratively provide and manage the proposed services on a cost-reimbursement basis, to ensure adequate audit trail, to maintain audit ready files, and to monitor its own organization files (internal audit function).
- Knowledge and understanding of Federal Fair Labor Standard Act and Indiana Department of Employment and Training Act (IC 22-4 et seq.) and accompanying rules, regulations and policy directives regarding the Workforce Investment Act programs issued by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.
- Knowledge and understanding of OMB's Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. part 200. More information can be found at:
  - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/C.F.R.-2014-title2-vol1/C.F.R.-2014-title2-vol1-part200/content-detail.html>;

- [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/02/16/2016-02473/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/02/16/2016-02473/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards); or
- [cfo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/9.9.15-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf](http://cfo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/9.9.15-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf)

### **C. Terms & Conditions**

- A bidder or its principals shall be in good standing, not debarred or suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or otherwise excluded from entering into a financial agreement of federal or state funds.
- Local, small, minority owned businesses are encouraged to respond and shall not be discriminated against during proposal review.
- EmployIndy is an equal opportunity employer. All bidders shall certify the same.
- The bidder certifies and agrees that it will provide and maintain a drug-free workplace.
- Issuance of the Request for Proposal does not commit EmployIndy to award a contract, to pay cost associated with proposal development or to procure or contract for goods and/or services. Payment for services will be negotiated.
- EmployIndy reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if it is in the best interest of EmployIndy to do so and waive any minor informalities or irregularities in the RFP process. EmployIndy shall be the sole judge of these irregularities.
- For the top-ranked bidder(s) selected, references or other points of contact as necessary will be made and any comments will be used to complete the evaluation process. EmployIndy reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more bidders as a result of the RFP evaluation process and enter into a best and final negotiation with one or more of the bidders.
- EmployIndy will consider non-responsive any submittal for which critical information is omitted, lacking or represents a major deviation from the RFP.
- Proposals received after the due date of April 30, 2021 at 12:00 PM EST will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed or evaluated.
- Other issues of grievances, hearing resolutions and authority shall be addressed prior to award of contract and relevant issues may be stated within contract. EmployIndy reserves the right to negotiate proposed outcomes, budget, and other matters prior to actual execution of the contract.
- Bidders shall certify either no real or apparent conflict of interest exists in carrying out the scope of work described, or where conflict(s) of interest may exist; such potential conflicts must be clearly disclosed in the proposal.

## **VI. Proposal Requirements**

### **A. Proposal Timeline**

Beginning Thursday, April 1, 2021 the RFP will be available to download from the EmployIndy website: [www.employindy.org](http://www.employindy.org). If you are unable to access or download the RFP, please contact Carla Montgomery at [cmontgomery@employindy.org](mailto:cmontgomery@employindy.org) or (317)684-2222.

Key dates specific to this notification are scheduled as follows:

RFP Issued	April 2, 2021
Bidders Conference	April 7, 2021, 3 p.m.
Deadline to Submit Questions	April 12, 2021, 5 p.m.
Response to Questions Posted	April 14, 2021, 5 p.m.
Letter of Intent to Bid Due	April 16, 2021, 5 p.m.
Proposal Due	April 30, 12 p.m.
Bidders Presentations (if needed)	May 11, 2021
Contract Negotiations Period	May 15, - June 30, 2021
Effective Date of Contract	July 1, 2021

EmployIndy reserves the right to modify this schedule at any time as deemed necessary.

A bidder's conference, open to eligible applicants, will be held on Wednesday April 7, 2021, at 3:00 p.m. EST. [Click here to join the meeting](#) . EmployIndy Youth Services staff will present the RFP requirements and accept questions during the bidder's conference to offer technical assistance to respondents.

Entities may submit questions to [cmontgomery@employindy.org](mailto:cmontgomery@employindy.org) until Monday, April 12, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. ET. A response to all questions will be available no later than close of business on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 and posted at [www.employindy.org](http://www.employindy.org). If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will also be posted on the EmployIndy website.

A Letter of Intent to Bid must be submitted to EmployIndy by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 16, 2021. The letter may be submitted to [sphillips@employindy.org](mailto:sphillips@employindy.org).

**B. Proposal Submission**

The proposal must be received by EmployIndy no later than 4:00 pm (ET) on Friday, April 30, 2021. Please submit an electronic proposal with original signature(s) to:

ATTN: Carla Montgomery, Associate Director, Grants and Procurement  
[cmontgomery@employindy.org](mailto:cmontgomery@employindy.org)

**C. Formatting**

Proposals must be typed in Microsoft word in 12-point font, double-spaced, with numbered pages at the bottom of each page. Page limits per section are specified with the outline format and required details below. The entire proposal should not exceed 20 pages. The page limitation does not include the required attachments.

## **D. Required Proposal Outline and Components**

Each respondent is expected to submit a proposal in a format suitable for ease of review. To maintain comparability of proposals, respondents must follow the outline below, including all section and relevant sub-section headings as they appear, and within the maximum page limits for each section as specified below.

### **i. Proposal Cover Sheet**

The Proposal Cover Sheet should not exceed a single (1) page and must

include:

- The title of the proposal;
- The respondent's organization name, address, phone number and web address;
- The name of the person authorized to negotiate contracts and make decisions for the organization, their direct phone number and email address;
- The total funds requested;
- A proposal summary briefly describing the services to be provided; and
- The authorized signature and submittal date.

### **ii. Organization and Staffing**

A description of the organization and staff experiences, capacity and qualifications including details on successful projects that are similar in nature and scope.

- Maximum three-page narrative covering the organization and their staff
- Copy of the organization's most recent audit
- An organizational chart for organization
- An organizational chart specific to this initiative
- Resumes, job descriptions and/or profiles for the staff to be assigned to this initiative
- Listing of two (2) contacts where your organization has provided JAG services or other services similar to JAG. If the services are not JAG, the similarity should be shown such as "works with at risk in-school youth" or "objectives were high school diploma and placement" –

### **iii. Proposal Narrative**

The Proposal Narrative will consist of the answers to the below specific questions asked. There are fifteen questions, and each must be answered. The answers must be limited in length to no more than 1 page per response. Each answer must be clearly numbered to reflect the question being asked.

1. The desired ratio of youth to JAG specialist is 45 youth for each specialist. Because of WIOA eligibility requirements, it can be difficult to achieve this ratio. What actions and activities will the bidder take to ensure that the ratio is achieved? Why will those actions/activities be

successful?

2. Eligibility for both JAG and WIOA must be determined very quickly and must be fully documented. How does the bidder propose to accomplish this? What innovative steps will be taken to ensure enrollment with proper documentation, in a timely manner and with appropriate signatures occur?
3. WIOA requires individual service strategies that incorporate information from a comprehensive assessment including goal setting for basic skills, workforce literacy skills and occupational skills. Please describe how this process would be incorporated in a manner that would be timely, individualized and continually updated.
4. Career exploration is critical in assisting youth in finding potential careers. As an example, studies have indicated that most young people only know 2-5 medical occupations out of the hundreds that exist. How will the bidder make certain that students fully understand the careers and occupations that are available? How will you provide information on career opportunities including career ladders?
5. Internships, summer employment and job shadowing are key elements in introducing the students to the world of employment. How will the respondent increase internships, summer employment and job shadowing activities for the students? The target industries and employers should be provided as appropriate.
6. This JAG program requires the use of dual case management systems that do not share data. How will the bidder guarantee that complete and accurate services and case notes are maintained in each system?
7. Describe the actions that will take place to ensure that JAG youth are placed in postsecondary education or employment following their graduation from high school. Why will this strategy work?
8. Please describe the oversight and internal monitoring that will be in place to make sure policies and practices are followed. Why will this be successful?
9. Our JAG programs operate in Indianapolis area high schools. Besides assisting specific students in gaining skills, obtaining high school diplomas and entering employment or postsecondary employment, what will the JAG program bring to the school? Please identify ideas for activities that would benefit the school and all of the students.
10. The Marion County JAG program is to be a source of “best practices” that will be adopted by programs around the State and the country.

What aspects of the respondent's program are envisioned as innovative and potential best practices?

11. Please address any other important aspects of the respondents JAG design that provide insight as to why the respondent's proposal is deserving of funding.
12. EmployIndy strives to develop a workforce ecosystem within Marion County by leveraging partnerships with local organizations who collaborate to ensure job seekers are skilled to meet the needs of area employers. How can your organization contribute and participate in the greater workforce ecosystem through delivering JAG?
13. The JAG National organization annually hosts the National Student Leadership Academy for JAG participants in Washington D.C. Students who attend this participate in leadership development and teambuilding activities plus there are opportunities for competitive events to demonstrate their employability skills. Marion County has been underrepresented at this event, so what can your organization do to ensure more JAG students from Marion County have the opportunity to participate in NSLA?
14. Employment opportunities are highly increasing in trades that require more than a high school diploma, but less than an Associate degree. These high-paying in-demand jobs face a workforce shortage. What strategies would implement to increase JAG student entries to trade careers?

### **Budget and Budget Narrative**

The respondent should provide an outline of their financial management structure, including experience and or expertise managing and accounting for federal and/or State funds. A brief description of the staff structure and internal control system in place should also be included in the narrative, and a copy of the organization's most recent financial audit should be attached.

Each proposal must include a Budget Summary using Attachment A and must include a sub-total cost for each allowable budget category below. The budget narrative should consist of the proposed costs for executing the service delivery plan, along with a justification of the costs, the narrative should not exceed three (3) pages. For the purpose of this RFP, the cost categories must include:

- Salaries and Wages – Includes the staffing costs and position types. Levels and numbers of positions should be specified in the narrative.
- Fringe Benefits – Includes FICA unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, disability, life insurance, retirement costs and medical coverage as per your policies. Fringe rates must not be less than 7.65%

or exceed 25% of total salaries and wages. The types of fringe benefits should be specified in the narrative.

- Occupancy – Includes the costs to maintain the physical space necessary to deliver services to the number of participants targeted during the duration of the service plan.
- Furniture and Equipment – Includes all furniture and equipment costs.
- Staff Travel and Development – Includes all local travel and staff development training costs.
- Insurance – Includes insurance coverage premiums for performance under this agreement.
- Direct Participant – Includes costs to provide direct services to participants including items like training, work experience, and supportive services.
- Work Experience – Includes costs for participant wages and staffing costs.
- Non-Direct – Includes supplies and consumables not included elsewhere.
- Administrative/Overhead – Includes administrative and overhead costs for operating the program.
- Total – This is the total proposed cost for operating the proposed program between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

**VI. Selection Criteria**

All respondents are advised that each proposal will be evaluated based on responsiveness to this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed for completeness, clarity and adherence to stated requirements. Proposals will be rated based on the selection criteria and in rank order from the highest to lowest. Selections will normally be made in rank order. However, to ensure availability for services, EmployIndy reserves the right to select lower ranked proposals when warranted. Such a selection of proposals shall be made at the sole discretion of EmployIndy.

The top bidders or “finalists” may be requested to deliver presentations. Following presentations, evaluators may adjust applied points based on clarifying data provided during the presentation. At a minimum, the presentation will consist of a short formal presentation and a question/answer period.

Proposals may score a maximum of 100 points and will be evaluated as follows:

Evaluation Factors	Maximum Points
<p><b>Organization and Staffing</b></p> <p>Points will be applied based on the experience and perceived capabilities of both the organization and their staff to successfully operate the program both as it relates to WIOA and to JAG.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>

<p><b>Proposal Narrative</b></p> <p>Points will be applied based on the quality and insightfulness of the answers and information provided in this section of the proposal.</p>	<p><b>60</b></p>
<p><b>Budget/Financials</b></p> <p>Points will be applied based on the overall cost proposed by the bidder including an evaluation of what services are being received for the cost. If leveraged funding is proposed, the budget score can be impacted in a positive manner.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>
<p><b>Total Points</b></p>	<p><b>100</b></p>



## Attachment A

### EmployIndy RFP# 2021-004 Budget Summary

Please complete the worksheet below and provide as an attachment to the full proposal.

Youth Employment System Services July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022	
Cost Category	Category Sub-Total
Salaries and Wages	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$
Occupancy	\$
Furniture and Equipment	\$
Staff Travel and Development	\$
Insurance	\$
Direct Participant	\$
Work Experience	\$
Non-Direct	\$
Administrative/Overhead	\$
<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	<b>\$</b>



## Attachment B

### Request for Proposal #2021-004

#### Pay for Performance

The objective of pay-for-performance is to provide incentives to the service providers for successfully addressing key elements that affect our performance or the quality of the services provided. The pay-for-performance categories should target problem areas that need improvement or additional focus.

For PY2018 we are looking at the (2) performance measurements listed below:

- JAG "5 of 5" Goals
  - As a service provider, how well are you meeting or exceeding the JAG "5 of 5" performance goals?
- Participant Enrollment
  - Are you maintaining the 35-45 participants/site in accordance with the JAG Model?

#### JAG 5 of 5 Performance Goals

- *Description* – The objective of the JAG "5 of 5" performance target is to achieve the goals set forth by JAG National during the 12 months of required follow-up. These are active JAG participants listed on the AE (Alternative Education), MY (Multi-Year) and SR (Senior Year) rosters for the current JAG program year that will be served in follow-up during PY18. The participants must have been active from June 1, 2021 through the May 31, 2022 time period.
  - Measurement Date – June 10, 2022
  - Announcement Target Date – June 17, 2022
  - Measurement Period – June 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022
- Targets with Associated Awards (based on service provider performance):
  - Base- 2 of 5 Performance Measures Attained: \$0.
  - Level 1- 3 of 5 Performance Measures Attained; \$5,000
  - Level 2- 4-5 of 5 Performance Measures Attained; \$5,000
  - Total Incentive Available- \$10,000 towards National Student Leadership Academy Costs (Terms for receiving incentive funds will be outlined in the contract)

#### Participant Enrollment Goals

- *Description* – The objective of the enrollment target is to average a caseload of 40 enrolled participants per JAG Specialist in multi-year programs and 30 in alternative education programs. These are

participants that are active on the PY (Program Year) 2021 JAG rosters. The participants must have been listed on a PY 2020 JAG roster as a junior or senior during August 1 through January 31, 2021 time period.

- Measurement Date – February 1, 2022
- Announcement Target Date – February 14, 2022
- Measurement Period – August 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022
- Targets with Associated Awards (based on 14 MY JAG Specialists and 4 AE JAG Specialists):
  - Base- 680 enrolled (40/MY Specialist and 30/AE Specialist). \$5,000
  - Level 1- 681-742 enrolled (>40; <43/MY Specialist and >30; <35/AE Specialist); \$5,000
  - Level 2- 743 or more enrolled (44+/MY Specialist and 35/AE Specialist); \$5,000
  - Total Incentive Available: \$10,000 to support Staff Professional Development Grants (Terms for distributing Staff Professional Development Grants will be outlined in the contract.)

#### **Pay-for-Performance Earnings and Resulting Contract Modification**

The contractor will receive a written notification on the announcement target date for each pay-for-performance measure regarding their achievement. EmployIndy will modify the contract in accordance with the pay-for-performance awards achieved.

If the service provider hits level 2, they receive \$5,000 for level 1 and \$5,000 for level 2 for a total of \$10,000.