

I. Background and Purpose

Acting in its capacity as the local Workforce Development Board for Marion County, Indiana, EmployIndy is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to select one or more qualified providers to deliver Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-compliant Out-of-School Youth (OSY) services in coordination with EmployIndy's YES network.

YES Indy service providers engage young adults throughout Marion County and connect them to coaching, education, training, work experiences, employment, and supportive services. Through this RFP, EmployIndy seeks a WIOA service provider that will work alongside those providers to serve a subset of YES Indy participants who meet WIOA OSY eligibility requirements. Participants will be jointly served according to their individual needs and goals.

The selected provider will lead WIOA eligibility determination and documentation; enrollment; objective assessment; Individual Service Strategy (ISS) development and updates; WIOA case management; service coordination; documentation in Indiana Career Connect; and required follow-up services. YES Indy providers will continue to deliver services within their areas of expertise. The selected provider will establish effective referral and information-sharing processes with YES Indy providers so that services delivered by either organization are coordinated, appropriately documented, and reflected in each participant's ISS.

Together, the selected provider, YES Indy providers, and other partners must ensure that participants have access to the WIOA Youth Program Elements appropriate to their needs. The selected provider is not expected to deliver all fourteen (14) elements directly, but must demonstrate how it will coordinate access to them and document services received by WIOA participants.

EmployIndy intends for this approach to build on the strengths of its community-based YES Indy providers while improving WIOA enrollment, participant service coordination, case-file quality, and outcomes. Services should support participants' progress toward education, training, credentials, employment, and long-term economic mobility.

The use of WIOA youth funds requires compliance with applicable federal, state, and EmployIndy eligibility, service delivery, documentation, reporting, and performance requirements. This RFP describes the services EmployIndy seeks and sets forth application requirements for eligible respondents.

This RFP does not commit EmployIndy to accept any proposal submitted, nor is EmployIndy responsible for costs incurred in preparing a response. EmployIndy reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, negotiate with respondents after review, award a contract in whole or in part as deemed in its best interest, and delay, amend, or reissue this RFP at any time.

II. Out-of-School Youth Program Overview & Governing Authority

By statute, EmployIndy has the responsibility of 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 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), applicable Federal Regulations, Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) policies, and EmployIndy guidance governing WIOA Youth programs.

Federal guidance can be found at the U.S. Department of Labor website: <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 Federal or State legislative changes.

The selected provider(s) must be capable of delivering or coordinating access to all fourteen (14) WIOA Youth Program Elements as part of an integrated service strategy that supports participants in achieving education, training, employment, and career pathway outcomes, including through services provided by YES Indy service providers and other partners.

The fourteen required WIOA Youth Program Elements include:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies;
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences;
4. Occupational skills training;
5. Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities;
6. Leadership development opportunities;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring;
9. Follow-up services;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Labor market and employment information services; and
14. Postsecondary transition activities.

Selected service providers will develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each participant based on objective assessment results. The ISS must identify short- and long-term education, training, employment, and supportive service goals aligned with career pathways and WIOA performance indicators. For participants jointly served with a YES Indy service provider, the selected provider(s) will develop and update the ISS in coordination with the participant and the YES Indy provider.

Providers must incorporate evidence-based approaches and career assessment tools to support participants in developing employability skills, career readiness competencies, digital literacy,

occupational awareness, and workforce preparation. The selected provider will coordinate with YES Indy providers to document services they deliver to WIOA participants in accordance with applicable federal, state, and EmployIndy requirements.

III. Target Population

Services funded through this RFP are intended for eligible WIOA Out-of-School Youth ages 16–24 who are not attending any school as defined by WIOA and who meet one or more of the following barrier criteria:

- School dropout;
- Within compulsory school attendance age but not attending school;
- Recipient of a secondary school diploma or equivalent who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
- Subject to the juvenile or adult justice system;
- Homeless, runaway, in foster care, aged out of foster care, eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement;
- Pregnant or parenting;
- Individual with a disability;
- Low-income individual requiring additional assistance to complete education or secure or retain employment.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals serving:

- Young adults disconnected from education and employment;
- Justice-involved youth;
- Youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
- Parenting youth;
- Youth residing in high-poverty or high-unemployment ZIP codes;
- Opportunity youth with significant barriers to employment.

IV. Funding Structure

EmployIndy anticipates awarding up to \$375,000 under this solicitation for one or more awards over a period of eighteen (18) months.

Funding availability may vary based on federal WIOA allocations, non-WIOA funding availability, participant enrollment, performance outcomes, and other variables.

The following represents EmployIndy's estimated funding level for the contract(s) resulting from this RFP:

- Maximum anticipated award: \$375,000

Award levels will be determined based on:

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Release Date: September 28, 2026

Proposal Due Date: October 16, 2026



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- Proposed service scope and intensity;
 - Enrollment projections and target populations;
 - Organizational capacity and demonstrated experience;
 - Past performance and compliance history;
 - Alignment with local workforce priorities;
 - Ability to achieve WIOA performance outcomes.

Funds may be used for:

- Staffing and case management;
- Occupational skills training;
- Work experience wages and stipends;
- Participant supportive services;
- Credential attainment costs;
- Employer engagement activities;
- Transportation assistance;
- Technology and digital access support;
- Participant incentives where allowable;
- Other allowable direct service expenses.

Administrative costs must be reasonable, necessary, allocable, and clearly justified.

V. Contract Term

The initial contract term will be eighteen (18) months from January 1, 2027, through June 30, 2028, with an option to extend for at least one additional year through June 30, 2029.

Continuation or renewal beyond the initial term is contingent upon:

- Funding availability;
- Performance outcomes;
- Participant enrollment;
- Compliance with federal, state, and local requirements;
- Successful contract management.

VI. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include:

- Nonprofit organizations;
- Community-based organizations;
- Educational and training providers;
- Organizations with demonstrated experience serving Out-of-School Youth and young adults;
- Organizations serving high-need Marion County communities;
- Organizations capable of meeting WIOA-aligned youth service requirements;

- Organizations with strong employer, training, and supportive service partnerships.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Cultural competency;
- Trauma-informed service delivery;
- Experience serving populations with barriers to employment;
- Fiscal and administrative capacity to manage federal funds;
- Ability to collect and report performance data.

VII. Scope of Services and Expectations

Selected providers will be required to:

- Serve eligible Out-of-School Youth ages 16–24;
- Coordinate with YES Indy service providers to identify and engage participants for WIOA assessment and enrollment, and conduct additional community-based outreach and participant recruitment as appropriate;
- Determine and document WIOA eligibility, enroll eligible participants in WIOA and maintain participant records in the State's case management system (currently Indiana Career Connect);
- Co-enroll participants in Project Indy when appropriate;
- Develop Individual Service Strategies (ISS) for all participants;
- Provide comprehensive case management and career coaching;
- Lead WIOA case management and required follow-up services, coordinating participant contact and service planning with YES Indy service providers as appropriate;
- Participate in regular meetings with EmployIndy staff;
- Collaborate with employers, training providers, WorkOne Indy, and community partners;
- Deliver or coordinate access to all fourteen (14) WIOA Youth Program Elements;
- Establish a two-way referral and service documentation process with the YES Indy service providers to ensure eligible youth and young adults are referred for WIOA assessment and services delivered by either provider are coordinated and accurately recorded.
- Assume and manage all active WIOA Out-of-School Youth participant files transitioned from current service providers, ensuring seamless service continuity and compliance with all WIOA documentation, case management, data entry, and reporting requirements;

VIII. WIOA Performance Goals & Eligible Applicants

Providers will be responsible for tracking all eligible WIOA participants in the Indiana Career Connect case management system.

The Indiana Career Connect system and associated DWD programs will generate official WIOA performance reports. Providers funded through this RFP will be expected to support achievement of negotiated local and state WIOA Youth performance goals.

Current WIOA Youth performance indicators include:

Credential Attainment: 76.3%

Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized credential or secondary diploma during participation or within four quarters after exit.

Employment, Education, or Training Placement (2nd Quarter After Exit): 77%

Measured in the second quarter after exit.

Employment, Education, or Training Retention (4th Quarter After Exit): 79%

Measured in the fourth quarter after exit.

Median Earnings (2nd Quarter After Exit): \$4,980.00

Median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment.

Measurable Skills Gains: 77.3%

The percentage of participants in education leads to credential or employment during program year, achieving measurable gains.

Providers must maintain timely and accurate participant documentation and case notes in accordance with EmployIndy and Indiana DWD policy guidance.

Eligible participant documentation requirements are contained within [EmployIndy's WIOA Participant Eligibility policy](#).

IX. Proposal Requirements

To support a fair, consistent, and high-quality review process, respondents must structure proposals using the sections below. Each section includes a brief description of what EmployIndy is seeking. **Using the provided fillable template**, respondents should provide sufficient detail to demonstrate alignment with WIOA Out-of-School Youth services and expectations without exceeding what is necessary.

1. Proposal Cover Sheet

2. Organizational Qualifications & Capacity

Describe your organization's mission, experience, staffing capacity, administrative readiness, and demonstrated ability to effectively serve Out-of-School Youth and manage WIOA-funded programming.

3. Outreach, Recruitment, & Participant Engagement

Describe your organization's strategy for identifying, recruiting, and engaging disconnected youth and young adults, including outreach approaches, referral partnerships, and community-based engagement strategies. Describe how your organization would receive referrals from YES Indy service providers, assess referred participants, and communicate referral decisions back to those providers.

4. Program Design & Integrated Service Delivery

Describe how your organization delivers WIOA out-of-School Youth services as an integrated participant journey from engagement through follow-up, including the role of Career Navigators and use of Individual Service Strategies. Explain how staff would coordinate assessment, service planning, and case management with YES Indy service providers for jointly served participants.

5. Employer Engagement, Training, & Career Pathways

Describe how participants are connected to occupational skills training and employment opportunities aligned with in-demand careers and long-term advancement.

6. Participant Support, Retention, & Barrier Removal

Describe how your program supports participant persistence, addresses barriers, and promotes retention and advancement.

7. Performance Measurement, Data, & Continuous Improvement

Describe your organization's approach to data management, performance tracking, continuous improvement, compliance monitoring, and participant outcome measurement.

8. Budget Request

Provide a budget and narrative that aligns proposed costs with the service model, demonstrating fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness.

9. WIOA 14 Service Elements Plan

Using the required WIOA Service Elements Delivery Plan template, respondents must describe how participants will access all fourteen (14) WIOA Youth Service Elements as part of an integrated service strategy, including which elements the respondent would deliver directly and which would be coordinated through other partners, including YES Indy service providers.

10. Projected Performance Outcomes

Provide proposed numeric targets for all required performance measures for the contract term and describe the plan and methods to be used to meet these goals.

11. Attachments

Attachments (as applicable): organizational chart; most recent audit and letters of commitment/MOUs for key partners.

X. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated for responsiveness, completeness, and alignment with WIOA Out-of-School Youth priorities. EmployIndy reserves the right to request presentations from top-ranked applicants and to adjust scores based on clarifying information provided during interviews or presentations.

Proposals will be scored on a 100-point scale using the rubric below.

Scoring Rubric

Evaluation Category	Description	Maximum Points
Organizational Qualifications & Capacity	Experience serving out-of-school youth; staff qualifications; fiscal, administrative, and data management capacity; past performance with EmployIndy or similar funders	15
Program Design & Integrated Service Delivery	Clear, integrated service model from outreach through follow-up; defined target population and geography.	20
Employer Engagement, Training & Career Pathways	Approach to leveraging employer partnerships, YES Indy providers, and community partners to align participants with in-demand careers through integrated training, work-based learning, and advancement opportunities.	10
Participant Support, Retention & Barrier Removal	Effective wraparound supports; barrier removal strategies; retention and advancement planning.	10
Performance Measurement, Data & Continuous Improvement	Data tracking capacity; performance monitoring; use of data for improvement; ICC readiness.	15
WIOA 14 Service Elements Plan	Clear plan identifying which elements the respondent will deliver directly, which will be available through YES Indy or other partners, and how participant access and services received will	10

Evaluation Category	Description	Maximum Points
	be coordinated and documented.	
Projected Performance Outcomes	Assesses the ambition, feasibility, and alignment of proposed performance targets with program design, staffing, and funding.	10
Budget	Reasonable, justified costs aligned to proposed services.	5
XBE Status / Leadership Representation	Certified XBE status and/or diverse leadership or board representation	5
Total Possible Points		100

XI. Timeline

Beginning Monday, September 28, 2026, the RFP will be available to download from the EmployIndy website: www.employindy.org. If you are unable to access or download the RFP, please contact Danielle Pamer at dpamer@employindy.org.

Key dates specific to this notification are scheduled as follows:

RFP Issued	Monday, September 28, 2026
Information Session	Monday, October 5, 2026, 9:30 a.m.
Deadline to Submit Questions	Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 5:00 p.m.
Response to Questions Posted	Wednesday, October 7, 2026, close of business
Proposal Due	Friday, October 16, 2026
Bidders Presentations (if needed)	October 28 & 29, 2026
Notice of Award (Pending Board Approval) *	Week of December 1, 2026
Effective Date of Contract	January 1, 2027

* Contracts will not be executed until board approval is granted.

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

An **information session** will be held on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams. EmployIndy Youth Services staff will review the RFP requirements and accept questions during the session to provide technical assistance to prospective respondents. Please note that questions will not be answered during the information session. All questions submitted will be compiled and included in the official Q&A document, which will be posted in accordance with the

procurement timeline. Teams meeting information is provided below, and the PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the EmployIndy website alongside this RFP following the session. Please note that this information session will not be recorded, and a recording will not be made available following the session.

Meeting Link:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/297741018216534?p=z8RX7TqWq0Hpw25FgJ>

Meeting ID:

297 741 018 216 534

Passcode:

MM3vn2cM

XII. Submission Instructions

Respondents are responsible for ensuring that proposals are submitted in full compliance with the submission requirements and deadlines outlined in this section.

Respondents must submit proposals using the fillable PDF templates provided by EmployIndy. Templates will include a cover sheet, the proposal narrative response form, and required attachments, including the budget template and narrative, and projected performance outcomes. Proposals submitted in any other format may be deemed non-responsive.

Required Submission Components

A complete proposal submission must include the following components using the required template provided [here](#):

- Cover Sheet
- Proposal Narrative Response
- Budget Template and Budget Narrative
- WIOA Service Elements Delivery Plan
- Projected Performance Outcomes
- Required Attachments (no template)
 - Org Chart
 - Audit
 - Letters of Commitment/MOUs

Submission Method

All questions and proposal submissions must be submitted through EmployIndy's Contract Opportunities webpage:

<https://employindy.org/contract-opportunities>

Submissions sent by email, mail, or any other method will not be accepted.

Respondents must ensure all required templates and attachments are uploaded successfully prior to the submission deadline.

Submission Deadline

Proposals must be submitted no later than Friday, October 16, 2026, by 11:59p.m. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Responsibility for Submission

It is the sole responsibility of the respondent to ensure that all required materials are submitted accurately, completely, and on time. EmployIndy is not responsible for technical difficulties, incomplete uploads, or failure to use the required templates.

Questions Regarding the RFP

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted through <https://employindy.org/contract-opportunities> in accordance with the timeline outlined in the Proposal Timeline. Responses to questions will be posted publicly and will become part of this RFP.