



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS**

**DWS Operational Guidance Number: OG 12-2021**

**Date: May 14, 2021**

**Subject: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)  
Youth Initiative Grant Application**

**From:**

**Chet Mottershead  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Workforce**

**Purpose:** To transmit guidelines for the WIOA Youth Initiative Grant Application. The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) has developed a systematic approach to reviewing and approving Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) requests for funding to support enhanced Youth WIOA services.

**Background:** The WIOA allows funding to be used for special projects relevant to workforce and labor market conditions that exist in the state. Generally under WIOA Title I Sections 129(b)(2)(B) and 134(a)(3) and 20 C.F.R. § 682.200, funds available under this section may be used for innovative programs and strategies and demonstration projects related to meeting the education and employment needs of eligible youth; supporting the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage such youth to reenter and complete secondary education, enroll in postsecondary education and advanced training, progress through a career pathway, and enter into unsubsidized employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

The DWS has designated \$500,000 in WIOA funds for special statewide youth initiative grants in amounts up to \$100,000 to Local Area WDBs. The awards are to serve youth during the period July 1, 2021 to April 30, 2023.

The DWS will review applications that are consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) commitment to providing high quality services for youth and young adults beginning with embracing virtual concepts, teleworking, intake and assessment, career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations and culminating with career employment via career pathway or enrollment in post-secondary education and to provide training opportunities, pre-apprenticeships, internships and job placement assistance programs for America's

youth; promote positive and safe work experiences for young workers; and to improve transition outcomes of youth and young adults with disabilities toward successful employment and adulthood.

Grants will be reviewed on the strength and viability of a piloted or existing conceptual framework and indications that projects are innovative in nature, with measurable outcomes and clarity of the budget.

It is important for disconnected youth to be able to obtain credentials for career employment in jobs that are in demand locally. These awards will provide resources for the Local Area WDB to expand services in its local region, equipment and software for social media, videos for advanced resumes, career expos and more. When Youth Initiative funds are expended for a young adult; i.e., Work Experience (WEX) Wages, On-the-Job Training (OJT), and tuition, the individual must be WIOA eligible as a WIOA Youth. Eligibility information for each training participant, including specific information identified for the project, must be entered in NCWorks.gov.

**Action:** A Local Area WDB may apply for one Youth Initiative Grant by submitting a completed application by **June 18, 2021**.

Prior to funding any Youth Initiative proposal, the DWS will consider the following Local Area WDB within the Sanctions Policy and/or:

- Failure to meet one or more of the Youth Federal Performance Measures
- Unresolved findings from the DWS's most recent Annual Monitoring
- Prior Year formula funding expenditures equaling less than 50% in the Youth funding category. (Based on most recent Quarterly Expenditure Report)
- No approved current Local Area Plan
- Not meeting 20% Youth Funding Expenditure rate for Prior Program Year funding
- Not meeting 75% Out-of-School Expenditure rate requirement for Prior Program Year funding

The Local Area WDB must document the amount of additional funds and reason(s) needed. Request may not exceed \$100,000.

The Local Area WDB must consider the need for training, supplies and support for customers. Should participants be served, he or she will be tracked as other enrollments and are included in performance calculations.

Note: Funds shall only be awarded based upon availability. Local Area WDBs are responsible for returning unexpended funds on the approved project.

**Effective Date:** May 14, 2021

**Expiration:** April 30, 2023

**Contact:** DWS Planner

**Attachment:** WIOA Youth Initiative Grant Application