

## **Procedures for Awarding Grants for Youth Activities**

### **Competitive Process for Awarding Grants and Contracts for Youth Activities – 112(b)(16)**

In accordance with the sound purchasing requirements of the State of Arkansas, *Purchasing Law and Regulations*, Section 19-11-202, all entities involved in the competitive process for awarding grants and contracts will be assured fair and equitable treatment. Arkansas purchasing law provides safeguards for the maintenance of a procurement system of quality and integrity. Competition is the cornerstone around which public contracting is built. Arkansas' purchasing program is built on the principle of fair and open competition. Where fair and open competition is not sought or obtained, the reason for such action must be valid and must be documented. All purchasing personnel must maintain an awareness of the need for and value of competition in every procurement.

Local Workforce Investment Boards will follow standard competitive procurement procedures in awarding grants and contracts. All advertisements for Requests for Proposals and/or Requests for Qualifications shall be placed in newspapers with general circulation and regional coverage at least one time and at least five (5) days prior to the due date but no more than 30 days prior to that due date. Additional offers of solicitation through local and statewide newspapers, direct mailings, and other media sources may be employed.

### **Criteria Used by Local Boards in Awarding Grants for Youth Activities, including Criteria that the Governor and Local Boards Will Use to Identify Effective and Ineffective Youth Activities and Providers of Such Activities – 112(b)(18)(B)**

Newly formed Youth Councils play a significant role in developing programs and services for youth. In accordance with WIA, Section 117(h) and 20 CFR 661.340, Youth Council responsibilities include developing portions of the local plan related to eligible youth and making recommendations to the local workforce investment board regarding youth service providers.

As part of their local plan, each local area will develop written criteria to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers. The local boards will approve grants for youth activities and providers based on performance and program cost data provided by potential grantees and based on criteria that includes those youth activities and providers that:

- Develop relationships between youth and caring adults
- Involve family members
- Build youth responsibility
- Develop youth citizenship and leadership skills
- Place high expectations on youth and staff
- Provide appropriate services based on age and needs of each youth
- Demonstrate involvement of the business/employer community

- Provide accessible facilities and provide accommodations for special needs populations, including individuals with disabilities
- Demonstrate prior successes in providing employment and training services to youth
- Prepare youth for success in employment
- Advocate for the youth perspective
- Demonstrate the connection between work and learning
- Provide comprehensive guidance and counseling

Consideration of the above criteria, while following State procurement policies, will occur before a youth grant or contract is awarded. Local Boards will approve grants based on performance and program cost data provided by potential grantees, with guidance from the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. Youth Councils should make recommendations of eligible providers of youth activities to the local Board. Previous experience with the potential providers will be considered. State and local Boards will gather information regarding performance indicators and will use this information in evaluating the continuous improvement of the grantees and the future awarding of grants and contracts.