



Attachment: Youth Systems Building Academy Overview, Self-Nomination Guidelines, and Instructions December 2022

Academy Overview and Goals

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration is supporting this several month **Youth Systems Building Academy** (YSB Academy) to provide local workforce systems and their community partners with targeted and individualized training and technical assistance to explore, design, test, implement, or scale system-level approaches to engage and support young people in the workforce. This Academy specifically aims to build the capacity of organizations to serve youth with barriers to employment, particularly those from marginalized and underrepresented communities. Youth require not only strong education and training opportunities but also comprehensive service delivery models that weave together resources and approaches to offer a seamless set of supports. This no-wrong door approach helps communities holistically address young people's needs and set them on a path to career success.

This Academy will offer technical assistance to a cohort of local teams *led by their local workforce agencies* to convene and facilitate community partners to kickstart or accelerate systems-building work aimed to improve outcomes for youth. All local communities are encouraged to participate, whether they are in the early phases of implementing a systemic approach to service delivery for youth or have been engaged in youth system building efforts for some time.

Through the Academy, local teams will focus on understanding and deploying innovative approaches, incorporating data and youth feedback, and aligning local partners and investments—*all with a goal of improving the ecosystem of supports available to young people as they navigate the workforce*. An important goal of this Academy is to help local systems explore and support 'no wrong door' policies and strategies that provide young people with the supports they need—when they need them—to step into and be successful in high quality career paths. Another goal of this Academy is to bring together diverse communities at all stages of cross-system collaboration. Communities small and large; urban, rural, and suburban; local and Tribal are encouraged to participate.

The goals of the YSB Academy are as follows:

- Improve youth employment opportunities and outcomes.
- Increase understanding of equitable policies and practices for youth career pathways as well as what a quality job means for youth workers.
- Align local systems policies, resources, and programming, including among DOL-funded programs and investments as well as across other Federal, state, local and philanthropic funded investments.
- Use data to inform system improvements, including promoting a better understanding of how to use and share data to ensure equitable access and outcomes for youth served.

- Increase knowledge and access to resources related to youth workforce professional development and building skills of youth practitioners related to positive youth development and trauma-informed principles.
- Increase awareness of the public workforce system for youth and young adults by engaging youth and including youth voice in messaging, recruitment, and engagement and other programmatic decision making.

Anticipated Community Actions and Example Outcomes

As a part of this Academy, participating local communities may engage *one or some* of the following actions:

- Explore, design, test, implement, or scale strategies that aim to improve youth employment outcomes.
- Increase understanding of equitable access to quality jobs and career pathways for youth and review or revise policies and practices where needed.
- Explore, design, test, implement, or scale strategies that seek to align workforce resources, investments, policies, or programs with other community resources such as those in education, child welfare, or juvenile justice systems, TANF, SNAP, housing, transportation, or disability services.
- Identify, analyze, or use data (including from education, vocational, justice, and/or child welfare partners) to increase understanding of how to ensure equitable access and increase outcomes for youth and young adults.
- Explore or design efforts to share data across partners to increase employment opportunities and outcomes for youth and young adults.
- Design or scale opportunities to build knowledge and skills of youth workforce, education, housing, or other community practitioners, especially related to positive youth development and trauma-informed principles.
- Explore, design, test, implement or scale efforts to increase awareness among youth and young adults about the public workforce system.
- Explore, design, test, implement, or scale efforts to engage youth and young adults in decision-making around messaging, recruitment, and engagement in workforce and other support service programming.

Examples of outcomes sites may achieve from participating in the Academy:

- Developing strategic plans that have realistic and relevant activities intended to improve system efforts that support young workers.
- Revising policies or practices to increase young workers' access to quality career pathways.
- Building or scaling sustainable community partnerships (such as those with education, TANF, health, housing, transportation, child welfare or justice systems) to enhance youth workforce outcomes.
- Exploring how to offer seamless service arrays (along with other systems such as education, TANF, SNAP, housing, or disability services) to meet the needs of youth and young adult workers.

- Coordinating service delivery models across youth-serving programs to implement ‘no wrong door’ strategies.
- Improving the use of local workforce financial and other resources, with education or human service system resources while using them more flexibly to achieve system and service reforms.
- Using data insights (such as those from housing, education, and health systems) to increase equitable access to and understanding of quality career pathways for young people.
- Designing or creating data sharing agreements to increase knowledge sharing across community partners.
- Strengthening workforce, education, and other community partner staff skills, understanding, participation and commitment to youth and young adult workforce outcomes.
- Designing outreach campaigns or materials that increase awareness among young people of workforce system supports.
- Meaningfully engaging youth and young adults in providing feedback and designing programs that serve them.

Structure and Timeline of the YSB Academy

DOL in collaboration with its team of TA coaches will support a several month Academy to assist as many as ten local communities in developing, implementing, or scaling strategies to enhance system efforts that support youth employment outcomes.

The Academy will provide participating communities the opportunity to convene, gain exposure to knowledge and ideas, work collaboratively on shared challenges, and receive ongoing consultation and technical support, as each community works toward system-level change. *As a part of this Academy, DOL strongly encourages participating communities to create implementation teams (four or five individuals) that are led by the local workforce agency, and include other critical partners, such as those from the public, private, philanthropic, and faith-based sectors that may focus on education, transportation, TANF, SNAP, housing, child welfare, health and mental health, juvenile justice, or disability services.*

The Academy is a highly interactive and iterative team-based process for crafting strategies and solutions to complex challenges. It involves two (three day) convenings, during which teams will:

- Work with their members to explore issues and solutions in-depth.
- Engage in cross-team exchanges to share information.
- Receive TA coaching supports and expert consultations and learning.

The two convenings will be held in early March 2023 and mid-June 2023 in Washington, D.C. **Travel and on-site costs related to attending these convenings will be covered by DOL for approximately four or five individuals from each participating community.** If space is available, communities will be invited to bring additional participants to each convening at their own expense.

In addition to the two convenings, the Academy will also include consistent virtual coaching and tailored training and technical assistance (TTA) with a dedicated coach for each community, supplemented by group TTA activities that address shared challenges. This will include:

- **One-on-one expert coaching for each participating community:** Each community will be assigned an experienced coach who will host monthly one-on-one video calls with the local community implementation team. The focus of each targeted coaching session will be Academy topics, strategies, and customized community goals.
- **Peer learning opportunities:** Each community will have the opportunity to periodically participate in small-, large-, and targeted TTA sessions to share information and learn from other youth-serving peers and with DOL.
- **Other expert supports and consultations:** From DOL, TTA coaches, and other experts on topics relating to systems alignment, career pathways, communications, youth development, trauma-informed practices, youth engagement, and staff development.
- **Support with creating and implementing a strategic action plan:** This document will help guide each local community’s efforts to explore and realize its system-building Academy vision to support youth and young adult workers. It may be used by communities well after the Academy ends.

Anticipated High-Level YSB Academy Timeline	
Self-nomination opens	December 5, 2022
YSB Academy information session	December 13, 2022, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. ET
Self-nomination closes	January 13, 2023, 5:00 p.m. ET
Community selection and announcement	Late January 2023
Initial coaching call	February 2023
First convening	Early March 2023
Ongoing one-on-one coaching calls	At least monthly between February and June 2023
Virtual peer exchanges	Intermittent between February and June 2023
Drafting and updating strategic action plan	Ongoing
Second convening	Mid-June 2023
Academy ends	End of June 2023

A robust Academy brings together a diversity of experiences. We strongly encourage local and Tribal communities to apply whether they are exploring, designing, implementing, or scaling strategies to support youth employment outcomes; and are in urban, rural, or suburban areas.

Nominations will be reviewed by a panel of DOL staff and experts. Lead local workforce agencies will be notified of selection decisions in late January 2023. As many as ten communities will be selected to participate.

Selection Criteria

Communities will be selected for participation based on the following criteria:

Application Element	Scoring Criteria	
Letter of Interest and Commitment from Workforce Agency Executive Director or Equivalent	Demonstrates a full commitment to participate in the activities of the Academy and its timeline, including the two convenings, peer learning, and one-on-one coaching support.	Required
Letter of Interest and Commitment from at Least Two Community Partners	Demonstrates the partner’s full commitment to participate in the activities of the Academy and its timeline, including the two convenings, peer learning, and one-on-one coaching supports.	Required
Partnership Capacity	<p>Each self-nominee will be evaluated as to whether it has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong capacity statement of the local workforce agency to commit to exploring and addressing its vision proposed in its nomination. • A strong capacity statement of each partner organization to commit to exploring and addressing the vision proposed in the nomination with a clear statement of what each partner’s role will be. • The name and contact information of the nominee’s implementation team lead who will lead Academy efforts. • A list of three to four additional key personnel from the workforce agency and partner organizations who will actively support and participate in Academy efforts, including the two convenings, peer learning and one-on-one coaching supports. At least two of the personnel should be from partner organizations. 	30 points
Vision Statement	<p>Each self-nomination will be evaluated as to how well it has articulated its vision for building or strengthening a youth service delivery system that explores or addresses topics related to this Academy. The nominee should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly state its vision and how it relates to the goals of this Academy (see pages 3-4). • Provide a statement of its current interest or efforts to explore or address this vision. • Be able to show why the topics it hopes to explore, and address are particularly relevant to the community today. 	30 points

Application Element	Scoring Criteria	
Community Goals, Objectives, and Approaches	Each self-nominee will be evaluated on how well it has stated its objectives and proposed approaches related to its vision statement. The nominee should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State its primary goals and objectives to explore or address its vision. • State its proposed approaches to address its vision. • State its anticipated outcomes from participation in the Academy. 	40 points
Total: 100 points		

Self-Nomination Due Date

Self-nominations will be accepted *until 5:00 p.m. ET on January 13, 2023*. Provide responses in a Microsoft Word or PDF document and submit them along with the letters of interest and commitment via email to YSBAcademy@ICF.com. Responses are required for all questions. DOL will host a virtual information session about this Academy on December 13, 2022, from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET. During this session, we will provide additional details about the Academy as well as answer any questions. [Register here](#).

Self-Nomination Requirements

Every self-nomination must include:

- A signed letter of interest and commitment from the local workforce agency executive director or equivalent addressed to Ms. Jennifer Kemp, Division Chief, Youth Services, U.S. Department of Labor.
- Signed letters of commitment from at least two community partners addressed to Ms. Jennifer Kemp, Division Chief, Youth Services, U.S. Department of Labor.
- The name of the person who will lead Academy efforts along with their title, organization, office address, phone number, and email address.
- Responses to each question in the self-nomination form.

How to Self-Nominate

Provide responses to the below questions in a Microsoft Word or PDF document and submit them along with the letters of interest and commitment via email to YSBAcademy@ICF.com. Responses are required for all questions.

1. ***Letter of Interest and Commitment from Workforce Agency Executive Director or Equivalent***

This letter should not exceed two pages.

Please submit a letter of interest and commitment from the executive director or equivalent of the local workforce agency that will lead efforts as a part of the U.S. Department of Labor's Youth Systems Building Academy. The letter should demonstrate a full commitment to participate in the activities of the Academy and its timeline, including the two convenings, peer learning, and one-on-one coaching supports.

2. ***Letter(s) of Interest and Commitment from Community Partners***

Each letter should not exceed two pages.

Please submit at least two letters of interest and commitment from community partners of the local workforce agency. Each letter should demonstrate that partner's full commitment to participate in the activities of the Academy and its timeline, including the two convenings, peer learning, and one-on-one coaching support. Partners may include but are not limited to organizations in the public, private, philanthropic, and faith-based sectors and may focus on education, TANF, SNAP, housing, transportation, child welfare, health and mental health, juvenile justice, or/and disability services.

3. ***Partnership Capacity (30 points)***

Responses for this section should not exceed one and a half pages.

The purpose of this section is to illustrate the local community's ability to commit to full participation in the Academy. In this section, the self-nominee should:

- Share the capacity of the local workforce agency to commit to exploring and addressing its vision proposed in this self-nomination.
- Share the capacity of each partner organization to commit to exploring and addressing the vision proposed in this self-nomination along with a clear statement that describes each partner's role.

Share the following information about the individual who will lead Academy efforts:

- Full Name
- Title
- Organization
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Office Address

List three to four additional key personnel from the local workforce agency and partner organizations who will actively support and participate in Academy activities, including the two convenings, peer learning, and one-on-one coaching supports. **NOTE: At least two of the personnel should be from partner organizations.** For each additional individual, provide:

- Full Name
- Title
- Organization
- Email Address

4. ***Vision Statement (30 points)***

Responses for this section should not exceed one and a half pages.

Please provide the local community's vision for building or strengthening a youth service delivery system that explores or addresses topics related to this Academy. In this section, the self-nominee should:

- State its vision for what it will address that relates to the goals of this Academy (see pages 3-4).
- Share its current interest or efforts to address this vision.
- Share why the topics it hopes to explore, and address are relevant to the community today.

5. ***Community Goals, Objectives, and Approaches (40 points)***

Responses to this section should not exceed two pages.

Please provide the community's specific objectives and proposed approaches to explore and/or address its vision for the Academy. In this section, the self-nominee should:

- State what its primary goals and objectives are to explore or address its vision statement.
- State what its proposed approaches are to address its vision statement.
- State its anticipated outcomes from participation in the Academy.