

Request for Proposals

Mentoring: A School and Community Connectedness Strategy

The Connecticut Mentoring Fund

Announced: March 27, 2024 ***Due Date: April 22, 2024 – 3:00 pm***

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Governor’s Prevention Partnership (The Partnership) is actively seeking proposals from youth mentoring programs and organizations throughout Connecticut, aiming to bolster mentor recruitment activities in high-priority regions. Central to this initiative is the commitment to equip all participating mentoring programs with evidence-based practices, ensuring the effectiveness and quality of youth mentoring relationships. By prioritizing evidence-based approaches, The Partnership seeks to foster impactful mentorship experiences that positively influence the lives of young people across the state, particularly in areas of heightened need.

This competitive grant process underscores our commitment to fostering targeted interventions that address critical needs within the youth mentoring landscape. Proposals should prioritize initiatives aimed at bolstering mentor recruitment in urban communities, thereby expanding the reach and impact of mentoring programs.

Please note that this is a competitive grant process, and as such, unsolicited proposals will not be considered. All submissions must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the request for proposals (RFP) to be eligible for review and consideration.

In Connecticut, numerous youth mentoring programs operate with limited financial resources. The substantial demand for mentors for young people presents a significant challenge. All young people who want or could benefit from a caring adult mentor should have one. To address these pressing concerns, The Connecticut Mentoring Fund made possible by the Connecticut Legislature. By bolstering financial support and enhancing programmatic practices, the funding aims to support serving a larger number of young people through quality-based mentoring relationships.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Mentoring programs or mentoring organizations must have been operating for at least (2) years.
- Mentoring programs or organizations must be a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, public or private school, or a youth division within a municipality serving Connecticut youth;
- Programs must serve youth between the ages of 12-21;
- Priority will be given to existing programs in urban areas; programs and organizations that actively participate in any of The Partnership’s Regional Mentoring Collaboratives as of January 2024;
- Programs that can demonstrate an ongoing implementation plan and effort in increasing BIPOC mentors.

In limited instances, emerging programs with less than two years of experience that will be embedded within youth serving organizations, schools and/or municipalities may be considered for funding, and should clearly describe their:

- Current program planning, design, and management elements, noted in the Element of Effective Practice for Mentoring;
- Short-term funding sustainability plan;
- Evaluation and reporting plans to support continued program operation over the next 2-5 years;
- Anticipated staff capacity to train, monitor and support match relationships;
- Qualifications of core staffing to be involved in the program.

GRANT PERIOD AND AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

The grant period is May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025, and ***all applications must be received by April 22, 2024, by 3:00 pm.*** Anticipated grant awards will be **up to \$25,000 for 10 eligible programs or organizations.**

Project Descriptions

The Governor's Prevention Partnership is committed to ensuring that all youth-based mentoring programs and organizations can recruit mentors and match them with mentees to increase the number of mentors who can support youth academically as well as be an advocate for their social and emotional well-being. The projects of the grantees should focus on mentor recruitment efforts and sustainability through ongoing training and technical assistance for programs to support building positive mentoring relationships and a continuous stream of diverse mentors to match with mentees.

Getting Started:

1. Applicants select either Option A or Option B;
2. Develop a 2-page narrative describing your project and implementation efforts;
3. Develop 1-page action plan with steps and milestone to achieve the desired outcomes being proposed in the project you are requesting funding;
4. Develop a 1-page narrative and line item budget.

Option A: Mentor Recruitment

Individual program project that will address implementing or expanding one or more specific mentoring program operational standards and enhancements as described in the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*. Proposals that address the following program operations standards below and programs that address the recruitment of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ will receive the highest priority: The project should address how the program or organizations will begin addressing areas of:

- Recruitment (priority given to programs increasing BIPOC recruitment efforts)
- Screening
- Training
- Matching
- Monitoring and Support
- Closure

Option B: Program and Mentor Training in DEI and SEL

- Individual program projects will address implementing/expanding on program training, curricular tools and resources to ensure their staff and mentors receive training in diversity, equity and inclusion to support positive relationships with mentees, their families and communities in addition to incorporating social-emotional learning practices within their mentor training efforts.

APPLICATION

All applications must include cover sheet (two page - attached), organizational narrative and project description (2-3 pages), budget description (one page), and supporting materials (as applicable).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide a 2-page project description (narrative), and 1-page action plan that includes: *(please note: if a question does not apply, please answer N/A)*

- Overall description of the project which includes anticipated outcome(s) that will be achieved, such as number of additional youth served, number of mentors who receive additional training, increased capacity to implement program operational standards and enhancements as set forth in the Elements of Effective Practice, program innovation, etc.;
- Program need to be addressed;
- Description of how you plan to evaluate the project;
- Highlight current or expanded (new) staff capacity to implement the proposed scope of work that includes service delivery, data collection and reporting;
- Strategies for sustainability. How funding for this project will be implemented beyond the grant period **(required)**.

BUDGET DESCRIPTION

A one-page budget narrative must be submitted as part of the application. Grant awards to mentoring programs are expected to be in the \$10,000 to \$25,000 range, funding is intended for direct program expenses only, and no percentage will be awarded for administrative/indirect costs.

Funding for mentor trainings, mentor screenings, staffing to input data, expenses related to database upgrades and or increasing evaluation capacity, and staff time for increasing match support and supervision, are examples of allowable budget items.

The budget page should include a brief description of each expense. It is not the intention of this funding source to fund one-time or non-sustainable activities such as a one-time mentor recruitment event; however, staff time to build and implement a tailored mentor recruitment plan, with an anticipated outcome of recruiting X number of new mentors, is allowable.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS (as applicable)

- Board membership list with names and affiliations
- Most recent audit
- Copy of IRS determination letter

AWARD NOTIFICATION

The Governor's Prevention Partnership will review eligible proposals after April 22, 2024, and awards will be announced by May 1, 2024.

SUBMISSION

To submit your completed application, through our website.

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024 – 3:00 PM.

For questions regarding this notice please contact:

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