



Career Readiness and Exploration Services (CRAES) 2025 RFP Response to Questions

1. a. Does the work-based learning experience have to be a paid experience, or is an unpaid, structured work-based learning opportunity acceptable?

A Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunity does not have to be paid, but it is required to be structured, supervised, and connected to occupational or academic learning. Experience must provide youth with opportunities for career exploration and skill development through hands-on learning in a work environment. Examples include year-round work experience/internship (paid or unpaid), pre-apprenticeships (often unpaid, but may include a stipend), and job shadowing (unpaid).

If the WBL opportunity is unpaid, ensure the following 1) it is educational (includes learning objectives, mentoring, reflection, etc.); 2) it includes an identified plan that documents any skills and competencies being developed; 3) the participant is not performing work that displaces a paid employee; and 4) it complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) — especially regarding unpaid internships.

2. If the work-based learning experience is not paid, will the proposal lose points during the evaluation?

No, a Work-Based Learning opportunity does not have to be a paid experience.

3. Given that participants range from 14-24 years of age, what percentage of participants are expected to have a paid work-based learning experience?

All participants must be provided with a paid work experience or other structured work-based learning opportunity.

4. If a vendor plans to offer paid work-based learning opportunities to eligible participants, should the cost of these experiences be included in the RFP budget?

Yes

5. We want to pay youth participants using grant funds, how might we reflect youth stipends within the itemized budget?

Stipends paid to program participants are generally considered a form of supportive service, provided they are tied directly to participation in allowable program activities and documented appropriately.

Therefore as allowable and documented per grant provisions, this would be categorized as a program supportive service. Narrative should also describe expenditures planned for this line-item category.

6. Moreover, which line item category do you recommend inputting youth stipends?

a program supportive service.

7. Will CRAES 2025 applicants be responsible for participant recruitment? Or will participants be sourced by DESC?

Awardees will be responsible for Participant recruitment.