Pre-Bid RFP Questions

- **Q: To what extent should providers anticipate receiving participant referrals from Reinvest Birmingham versus conducting their own recruitment?**
    - A: Selected providers are responsible for recruiting and enrolling eligible residents from North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield. The Reinvest Birmingham team will support these efforts through partner referrals, demographic information, and access to existing community engagement resources.

      Providers should propose an active recruitment strategy that may include community events, neighborhood outreach, social media, and partner engagement. The RFP does not guarantee a minimum number or percentage of referrals from Reinvest Birmingham; therefore, applicants should not base their enrollment projections solely on City-generated referrals.

      RFP references: Training Program Delivery & Credentialing, pages 6–7.

- **Q: Will participants referred by Reinvest Birmingham already have been screened and verified for program eligibility?**
    - A: As described in Reinvest Birmingham's referral process, participants referred by the Reinvest Birmingham team will have been screened and verified for applicable federal program eligibility requirements. Training providers should also conduct their standard admissions screening to determine whether participants meet any prerequisites for their specific training program.

      Program eligibility verification and training-specific admissions screening serve different purposes. Providers should coordinate with the Reinvest Birmingham team regarding eligibility documentation and any questions that arise before enrollment.

- **Q: If providers are responsible for eligibility verification, what documentation will be required to verify and retain evidence of eligible residency and age?**

- A: Providers must maintain documentation supporting participant eligibility, including eligible residency and age. Under the documentation approach described by Reinvest Birmingham, this includes proof of physical address and government-issued identification establishing age.

- **Q: Is there a required or preferred period for post-placement support and retention tracking, such as 30 days, 90 days, six months, or one year?**
  - A: Yes. Reinvest Birmingham requires providers to provide post-placement support and track employment retention for one year following a participant's job placement. Providers must maintain documentation of follow-up activities, employment status, support services provided, and participant follow-up summaries or retention reports. These activities support both the evaluation of participant outcomes and the initiative's federal reporting and compliance obligations.

  - Record retention is a separate, continuing responsibility. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.334 and applicable agreement requirements, records supporting program activities and expenditures—including placement documentation, employment retention records, and follow-up summaries—must generally be retained for three years from the date of submission of the applicable final financial report. Records must be maintained longer when required under the regulation, including for unresolved audits, claims, or litigation, or when an authorized written extension applies.

  - Applicants should account for both the one-year participant follow-up period and the separate records-retention obligation in their staffing, service delivery, and data-management plans.

- **Q: Do the two required employer letters need to include a commitment or intent to hire Reinvest Birmingham participants, or may they serve as references from current or prior employer partners that can speak to the applicant's workforce training, employer engagement, and participant outcomes?**

  - A: No. The RFP requires at least two letters of support from employer partners who can speak to the applicant's performance on workforce training and related initiatives. Letters may describe current or prior partnerships, the work performed, and resulting outcomes. Each reference

must include the contact's name, title, organization, email address, and phone number.

- A hiring commitment is not expressly required for these two letters. However, applicants with established employer relationships and demonstrated placement capacity are strongly preferred, particularly when supported by formal commitments to hire. Applicants are encouraged to include hiring commitments or letters of intent where available.

RFP references: Project Outcome, page 2; Job Placement & Soft Skills Support, page 7; Supplemental Application Materials, page 12.

- **Q: If an applicant partners with an educational institution or other training provider to deliver the industry-recognized credentialing component, should that organization be included as a subcontractor or vendor within the applicant's proposed scope and budget?**
- **Alternatively, are there circumstances in which Reinvest Birmingham would contract with or pay the credentialing provider separately?**

  - A: When an applicant's proposed program depends on another organization to deliver training or credentialing services, the proposal should identify that organization, describe its responsibilities, and include the associated costs in the proposed budget. The RFP expressly requires applicants to identify partner or subcontractor roles and connect scope-of-work activities to budget line items.

  - The appropriate contractual classification will depend on the proposed arrangement and applicable requirements. The City of Birmingham will contract with the primary submitter named in the RFP. All associated costs with the separate credentialling partner should be incorporated and considered in the Budget Narrative. Applicants should therefore include the full cost of their proposed delivery model unless the City provides written direction otherwise.

RFP references: Available Training Program Grant Proposal Types, pages 4–5; Supplemental Application Materials, pages 11–12.

- **Q: Should providers first connect participants to existing Reinvest Birmingham resources and budget only for needs that cannot be met through those resources, or should applicants plan and budget independently for these**

supports? If Reinvest resources are available to training-provider participants, how will referrals and coordination be handled? Is there a total amount per participant allowed through existing Reinvest Birmingham resources?

- A: Training providers should serve as the primary point of contact for participants' wraparound support needs, using their established services, partnerships, and referral processes as part of regular program operations. Proposed budgets should include the funding needed to provide or coordinate these supports, with costs calculated based on the provider's service delivery model, anticipated participant needs, and reasonable costs consistent with its regular operations and the RFP's allowable expenses.

- When a participant's needs exceed the resources available through the training provider, the provider should contact the Reinvest Birmingham team for assistance identifying additional resources. Referrals and coordination will be facilitated through Reinvest Birmingham's Workforce Development Technical Assistance team and Admissions and Partnerships Coordinators. The training provider will remain the participant's primary point of contact and coordinate the connection to the identified resource.

- There is no predetermined per-participant allocation available through Reinvest Birmingham's broader support resources. Applicants should calculate and justify their proposed participant-support costs within their budgets rather than assume a separate supplemental allowance will be available. Access to additional resources will depend on availability and applicable eligibility requirements.

- **Q: For training sessions scheduled during evening meal hours, is food or a light meal an allowable program expense? If so, under which budget category should applicants include this cost**?

  - A: No. Under this funding opportunity, food, meals, and refreshments provided during training sessions are not eligible for reimbursement, including sessions scheduled during evening meal hours. Applicants should not include these expenses in any budget category within their funding request. Providers wishing to offer meals may use separate, non-grant resources.

- **Q: Are devices or other technology provided directly to participants an allowable cost when they are necessary for participation in the training program? If so, are there specific restrictions or documentation requirements associated with those purchases?**
    - A: Yes. Digital access support is an allowable barrier reduction service, and funding may support books, supplies, and other resources necessary for training. Applicants should identify and justify any proposed participant technology expenses in the budget narrative, explaining how the items support participation in the proposed program.
    - Devices purchased with grant funds must remain the property of the training partner and may be loaned to participants for program-related use. Ownership may not be transferred to participants, and devices must be returned at the conclusion of the participant's program participation.

    - Training partners must maintain records documenting purchases, ownership, inventory, and participant use. This includes a checkout and return process identifying the device, the participant receiving it, the date issued, and the date returned. Grant-funded devices may not be purchased for distribution as gifts or for participants to keep permanently.

RFP references: Available Training Program Grant Proposal Types, page 4; Funding Stipulations, pages 5–6; Barrier Reduction and Wrap Around Services Support, page 8.

- **Q: If an applicant proposes an initial training track and plans to use participant outcomes and employer-demand data to inform the selection of future tracks, would changing or adding a training track later in the grant period require a formal contract amendment or prior City approval?**
    - A: Applicants should identify the training tracks included in their proposed scope and explain any anticipated phased approach. Using participant outcomes and employer-demand data to improve programming is consistent with the RFP's emphasis on continuous improvement, but it does not automatically authorize changes to the funded scope.

    - Providers should submit proposed changes to the City for written review before implementation. Whether a formal amendment or additional approval is required will depend on the executed agreement and whether the change affects the approved scope, budget, credentials, deliverables, or performance targets.

- **Q: Are administrative or indirect costs allowable under this RFP? If so, what are the permissible roles/staff titles? And is there a maximum allowable rate or required methodology applicants should use when calculating those costs in the budget?**
    - A:No. Under the City's contracting approach for this opportunity, selected training providers will serve as contractors and execute professional services agreements rather than receive subawards.

    - The City will not consider administrative overhead or indirect-cost charges in proposed budgets for this opportunity. Applicants should not include an administrative fee, an indirect-cost percentage, or an allocation for general organizational overhead. Accordingly, no administrative or indirect-cost rate or calculation methodology applies.

    - Proposed budgets should identify allowable costs directly associated with delivering the approved training, participant supports, and other required services. Any proposed personnel costs must clearly describe the duties performed and their direct connection to the contracted scope of work; a position title alone does not establish eligibility for funding.

- **Q: Could you please provide the five scored Comparative Evaluation Criteria and clarify how the seven listed evaluation areas correspond to those five scoring categories?**
    - A: Proposals will be evaluated using all seven evaluation areas listed in the RFP. Each area will be scored from one to five points, for a maximum total of 35 points:
        - Alignment with Employer Needs.
        - Organizational Capacity.
        - Training Quality and Relevance.
        - Target Population Reach.
        - Planned Wrap-around Services and Support.
        - Data Collection and Reporting Capability.
        - Potential for Scalability and Sustainability.

  The references to five evaluation categories and a maximum of 25 points were errors. This correction was communicated during the pre-bid webinar and is documented in these publicly available pre-bid questions and answers.

Applicants should address all seven evaluation areas in their proposals.

RFP references: Selection Framework, pages 13–14.