CONNECT. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.

MENTOR
RHODE ISLAND

Rhode to Success

The Power of Mentoring

Deadline: August 5, 2022 5pm

MENTOR Rhode Island
Request for Proposals
2022

MENTOR Rhode Island is seeking applications for funding from organizations that serve youth in need of support from a caring adult role model—a mentor. This is a one-time opportunity that was appropriated by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse through Congressional Directed Spending and approved for FY 22 by the federal government. These funds are **non-recurring** so care should be taken to ensure programs are sustainable beyond this funding. This initiative will invest $500,000 in mentoring programs across the state of RI in three funding buckets:

To launch a new mentoring program (no active mentoring program exists): up to $35,000

To expand an existing mentoring program (these funds will help you expand numbers or increase quality for better youth outcomes): up to $25,000

To purchase equipment, supplies, or other non-staff expenses (seeking to maintain an existing program): up to $10,000

Each organization may only apply under **one** category.

MENTOR Rhode Island is a 501(c)3 dedicated to building the quality of mentoring programs, the number of mentoring programs, and the number of youth served through mentoring. Youth mentoring is a process of matching young people who need or want a caring, responsible adult (or older peer) in

their lives to build a meaningful and supportive relationship. Mentoring relationships foster positive youth development, increased social and emotional wellness, and academic success through use of the nationally accepted *Elements of Effective Practice in Mentoring™*.

Expected Outcomes of "Rhode to Success":

The ultimate outcome is the relationships our young people build and sustain while they are in school and beyond. Over the course of the project, MENTOR Rhode Island will evaluate the following:

- **Quantity of relationships** measures who is in a young person's network over time. With increased access to high quality relationships for young people, the better their chances of finding the support they need and the opportunities they deserve.

- **Quality of relationships** measures how young people experience the relationships they are in and the extent to which those relationships are meeting their relational, developmental, and instrumental needs. Different relationships offer different value as young people's needs evolve.

- **Structure of networks** gauges the variety of people a young person knows and how those people are themselves connected. A young person cannot be what they cannot see. Different people with varied backgrounds, expertise, and insights can provide young people with a wide range of options for discovering opportunities, exploring interests, and accessing career options.

- **Ability to mobilize relationships** assesses a young person's ability to seek out help when needed and to activate different relationships. Connecting a young person to relationships isn't enough. Young people must have skills to nurture relationships and recognize how and when to leverage relationships as resources in their life journey.

In the long-term, Rhode Island will become a relationship-centered state, where young people have a sense of belonging and trust.

Initiative Award Cycle: This funding will begin on or about September 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.

Who should apply: Any organization serving RI youth who wants to grow their capacity to mentor young people. Existing mentoring programs, youth development programs, community groups, and organizations wishing to begin or strengthen their ability to build relationships and mentor youth are encouraged to apply. If you are not currently a 501(c)3 organization, we will fund mentoring initiatives that use a fiscal sponsor (a 501(c)3 organization that will handle the financial obligations and reporting of this contract).

In the event your proposal is approved, please save the following dates on your calendar for MANDATORY orientation and training that will occur on each of these days for key personnel:
Wednesday, September 14, (full day) Thurs, September 15, (full day), and Friday, September 16, 2022 (morning only)

Please note – These are federal government funds so:
- **Food cannot be covered through this contracted period.**
- **We will ask for short monthly updates on your progress toward goals as well as a more robust final report to meet federal guidelines**

In addition to the costs you identify as part of your program expenses, please also include the following in your proposal:

1. Staff time to attend 2.5 days of orientation/training for at least 2 individuals plus monthly 2 hour "Community of Practice" gatherings and trainings.
2. Local mileage @ .585 per mile or other transportation costs for staff travel related to this funding
3. Staff time for deep dive on program practices depending on your current knowledge and implementation of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™* . Your current level will not impact your approval odds positively or negatively. Above all, we want to be sure you have the tools you need to implement an effective program for the youth you serve.
   a. Experienced programs, please add 24 hours of staff time to engage in technical assistance. New programs please include up to 75 hours of staff time. This is in addition to the orientation/training and community of practice hours from number 1 above.

Target Population – Grades K-12

MENTOR Rhode Island commits to a fair and transparent process for contract awarding, upholding the tenants of equitable selection as required by our values. The RFP process may prioritize proposals that commit to serving specific groups of youth that are underserved or are at particular risk for negative outcomes. Some examples may include:

- Focus on transitional years as elementary students transition to middle school and 8th graders transition to high school;
- Focus on areas of the state where no programs exist
- Focus on underserved or marginalized youth

Timetable

July 1, 2022	Announcement and release of Rhode to Success Mentoring Initiative Request for Proposals (RFP).
July 13, & July 18, 2022	Applicant Orientation sessions (choose one): • Wednesday, July 13, 2022 from 3:30-4:45 pm Via Zoom Register at link • Monday, July 18, 2022 from 10:00-11:15 am Via Zoom Register at link
July 25, 2022 by 5:00 pm	Deadline for applicant agencies to submit written questions regarding the Mentoring RFP. Submit to Jo-Ann Schofield at jschofield@mentorri.org
July 26, 2022 by 5:00 pm	Responses will be posted as questions are submitted. All responses to applicant questions will be posted on MENTOR Rhode Island's website at www.MentorRI.org by this date.

August 5, 2022 by 5:00 pm	**APPLICATION DEADLINE** – To be considered for funding, complete applications and all supporting documents must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. via the application link!
August 8, 2022 – August 26, 2022	Review Team reviews applications, conduct site visits/interviews (when applicable), and makes determinations regarding funding. Application reviews will be initiated by the MENTOR Rhode Island review team and final determinations by a group of statewide leaders. Distributions will be announced after applications have been decided.
August 31, 2022	MENTOR Rhode Island notifies applicants regarding the status of their applications (award or decline).
September 5-30, 2022	Contracts are negotiated and finalized.
October 1, 2022	Funding will be disbursed on or around this date. It is expected that all programing will begin no later than the fall of 2022. Monthly Community of Practice meetings begin – mandatory for subrecipients.
June 30, 2023	Funding ends. All funds must be spent by 6/30/23.

Save the Dates: All funded initiatives must attend mandatory 2 ½ day training and orientation for Mentor Program Coordinators on **Wednesday, September 14, Thursday, September 15, and Friday, September 16, 2022.**

Types of mentoring strategies to consider:

GOAL: Youth have access to a positive, caring relationship with a nonparental adult or older peer

STRATEGY: Youth involved with or at risk of entering the Juvenile Justice and/or Dependency System

Youth are matched with an adult mentor and they meet at various times and places throughout the community, at school or at a community center. The type of program will determine how often mentors and mentees will meet and where they will meet. These programs can either be one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring or a combination of both. The types of programs include:

- School-Based
- Site-Based
- Community-Based

One-on-One Mentoring Model

In this traditional model, one mentor is matched with one mentee, and trained program staff monitors the match's progress over the course of 9-12 months. Usually, the matches are deliberate; the mentoring program staff pairs two people based on certain criteria, such as experience, skill sets, goals, personality, and a variety of other factors. Because it's a "familiar" model, people tend to be comfortable with it. This model allows for—and even encourages—the mentor and mentee to develop a personal relationship. The one-on-one nature of the relationship provides the mentee with critical individual support and attention from not only the mentor, but also the program staff.

Best Practices for One-on-One Mentoring programs include:

- Follow all benchmarks of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring* ™(recruitment, screening, training and orientation, matching, monitoring and support, and closure)
- Matches meet regularly for a minimum of four hours per month for a minimum of 12 months
- Support and involve parents/guardians (DuBois et al., 2011)
- Provide on-going training for mentors (DuBois et al., 2011)
- Systematically monitor the implementation of the program and matches to ensure high-quality mentoring relationships (DuBois et al., 2011)
- Recruit mentors whose backgrounds are well-matched with program goals (DuBois et al., 2011)
- Match volunteers and youth based on shared interests and similarities (DuBois et al., 2011)

Group Mentoring Model

In a national survey executed by the National Mentoring Partnership, it was found that just as many youth enrolled in mentoring programs in the United States are served through group mentoring models as traditional one-to-one models. There is evidence that group mentoring programs can be effective in fostering at least short-term improvements in a broad range of youth outcomes, including those in the behavioral, academic, emotional, and attitudinal/motivational domains. Additional relational processes, such as group cohesion and belonging and a strong group identity, may also contribute to the outcomes youth experience from group mentoring. A 2002 study found that group mentors facilitating positive peer interactions and promoting behavioral changes in youth were central goals of such programs (Herrera, et al., 2002). Group mentoring programs offer a context for activities that develop mentee skills, change mentee attitudes, and offer positive peer interactions; and that these processes may lead to behavioral outcomes for participants (Kuperminc, 2016). American society tends to support an "independent" sense of self where children are taught to value individuality, and workplaces encourage taking initiative and standing out from others. Group or team mentoring may be a more appropriate cultural fit for youth from cultures or communities that honor an interdependent worldview- in which a greater emphasis is placed on interconnectedness with family and community (Mentoring.org – Critical Mentoring Curriculum).

Best Practices for Group Mentoring programs include:

- Follow all benchmarks of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring* ™ (recruitment, screening, training and orientation, matching, monitoring and support, and closure)

- Keep groups small. Larger groups may make it difficult for mentors and mentees to develop close relationships, may make formation of subgroups of "cliques" that exclude some members more likely, and may place additional burdens on mentors. Group ratio of mentor to mentee should be no more than 1**:**4 (Kuperminc, 2016). Programs will be expected to have a strong explanation as to why their program's mentor to mentee ratio is beneficial to the specific population of youth served.

- A match length of one school or calendar year is necessary to build effective mentoring relationships. Group mentoring programs whose match length is shorter than 10-12 months will be expected to have a strong explanation as to why this shorter match length is beneficial to the youth served or the goal to be accomplished.

- Provide on-going training for mentors (DuBois et al., 2011). On-going post-match training should be planned in response to challenges that may arise for mentors or mentees as the group dynamic develops, including healthy closure of the matches as a group as well as when one member of the group (either mentor or mentee) is exited early.

- Facilitating mentors should be trained in skills such as group facilitation, stages of group development and managing group dynamics (Maslow, G. et al, 2013).

- Program staff should pay specific attention to how groups are formed in order to best serve their unique population. Grouping based on shared experiences or challenges may be beneficial, so long as there is a variety of strategies and viewpoints on how these challenges can be navigated.

- Program staff should ensure that relationships, rather than knowledge or skill-building activities are at the heart of their program. Group mentoring programs should provide moments for facilitated conversation, sharing, and interpersonal connection and continue to offer ongoing support to both mentors and mentees (Kuperminc, 2016).

Peer Mentoring Model

A new wave of research is highlighting the effectiveness of near-peer mentoring relationships in which older youth and young adults offer their support to those coming up behind them. It is a model of mentoring service delivery in which an older adolescent or child is matched in an explicit mentoring relationship with one or more younger peers. These peer mentoring relationships are especially helpful around educational transitions—such as into high school or for college access and persistence—and effective entry onto a career path. These relationships have also proven to be impactful for the young people serving in the mentoring role as well, such as in boosting their leadership and communication skills.

Best Practices for Peer Mentoring programs include:

- Follow all benchmarks of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring* ™ (recruitment, screening, training and orientation, matching, monitoring and support, and closure)

- A peer tutor may do a good job of building an academic skill for a mentee, but a peer mentor may go well beyond that simple achievement by using the context of the relationship to help the mentee grow developmentally, in addition to learning skills, and may be a more salient role model because of the proximity in age — older enough to be someone to look up to, but young enough to be relatable and a true friend.

- Improvements in grades or broader academic achievement, connectedness to school, and self-esteem, as well as social skills and leadership development.[1]

- In most programs, a minimum of a two-year age gap between mentor and mentee seems to be a critical aspect of the change mechanisms driven by mentor-mentee interactions.

- Connectedness to school and school engagement or retention is reported as a benefit of peer mentoring across the developmental spectrum

Why This Strategy is Important

Based on data from The Mentoring Effect (2014), it is estimated that in Providence 1 in 3 youth directly involved or at-risk of entering the juvenile justice/dependency system need a mentor. High quality, enduring relationships with caring adults can lead to a wide range of positive outcomes for young people,

including social emotional well-being, leadership skills, higher rates of volunteerism and post-secondary success (The Mentoring Effect, 2014). As an example, the study <u>The Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) in the Lives of Juvenile Offenders</u> surveyed 64,329 juvenile offenders, only 2.8% reported no childhood adversity compared to 34% surveyed in the original Center for Disease Control and Prevention study. That means 97% of them had at least one ACE. 50% of the offenders surveyed <u>reported 4 or more ACEs</u> putting them in the high risk category (this compared to just 13% in the original study). This data is incredibly significant because numerous studies link <u>a high ACE score</u> with chronic disease, mental illness, violence, being a victim of violence, and early death. When you raise a child with violence, they have a tendency to become violent" (Center for Child Counseling, ACES and Juvenile Justice Blog, November 7, 2019). Fortunately, the same is also true when you raise a child with a supportive adult including a mentor, the child is better equipped to exemplify love and kindness which are critical elements of a trauma sensitive approach to build resiliency.

<u>How to apply</u>

A completed application must include:

1) Completed application including all narrative sections
2) Budget Proposal
3) Operating Budget Current Fiscal Year

Please submit your application and upload all required documents via the application link!

What will readers look for?
- Well-rounded programming centered on young people's needs
- Innovation and passion for mentoring
- How program will be sustained after funding ends
- Programs that serve young people where no mentoring program currently exists may be given priority

Please note that each organization is required to have liability insurance for the duration of the contract period and each organization is responsible for managing and mitigating safety and risks.

Application Review Criteria

*Each type of application has different scoring weights and different questions based on funding type requested.

The following criteria are used during the review of applications submitted to MENTOR Rhode Island:

Need for Program

- The application describes how the program aligns with the outcomes listed on page 2 of this document.
- The need being addressed by the program is described using local data.
- The application describes why it is timely and/or urgent to address the identified need.
- The application describes the program's targeted population.

Organizational Capacity

- The organization indicates a strong commitment to the program.
- The qualifications of the organization suggests that the program will be implemented and/or managed successfully.
- The organization has experience in the implementation/operation of programs of similar size and scope in serving the target population and in achieving identified program outcomes **or is willing to commit the time and talent necessary to build the infrastructure by participating in the "Mentoring Accelerator" intensive training and technical assistance capacity building, designed for subrecipients wanting to do this work but without the current bandwidth or expertise to do so.**

Program Approach and Design

- The program uses an innovative approach to addressing the identified need.
- The program's overall design and activities are reasonable and are likely to achieve the program's stated outcomes.
- The program's overall design and activities reflect one or more strategies identified on pages 5-7 of this document.
- The program's overall design and activities integrate with relevant existing services.
- The program's activities are well designed and logical given the identified need and target population.

Explain your current program

- The current program model serves youth K-12
- The program is seeking to improve program practices

Explain the success you have had and how these funds will expand the program:

- The program's current strength
- What is the expected return on investment?

How will the equipment, materials and/or supplies strengthen your program's impact?

- The proposed purchase will enhance services to youth

Evaluation

- The evaluation model clearly identifies Projected Program Activities and projected outcomes.
- The evaluation model includes assessment of the mentoring relationships as well as youth outcomes.
- Projected Measurable Outcomes/Indicators (other than Required and Recommended Success Indicators) are realistic and appropriate, capturing changes or benefits for clients served.

Sustainability

- The proposed strategy to continue the program when MENTOR RI funding ends is reasonable and realistic.

Budget and Budget Narrative

- The total program budget is adequate to successfully implement/operate the program and address the identified problem, need or issue.
- The total program costs are reasonable, given the scale and scope of the program.
- The budget and budget narrative clearly describe how MENTOR RI/City of Providence funds and other funds necessary to provide the program will be applied to the various program budget line items.
- The budget narrative is sufficiently detailed to provide programmatic justification for each line item in the total program budget.
- The applicant has sought additional funders (pending and/or confirmed) and has secured sufficient funding to adequately implement/operate the program as described.

Explain your current Program

- Explain the successes you have had and how these funds will expand the program.

Total Possible Points = 100

Click here for link to the Funding Application

Application Submission and Review Process

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend one of the Virtual Applicant Orientation Sessions.

Register to receive log-in information:

- Wednesday, July 13, 2022 from 3:30-4:45 pm
  Via Zoom
  Register at link

- Monday, July 18, 2022 from 10:00-11:15 am
  Via Zoom
  Register at link

General Application Information

Terms of Agreement

MENTOR RI seeks to invest this funding in 501(c)(3) nonprofit agencies and organizations which serve youth in grades K-12 with multiple risk factors with program-based services that align with the strategy identified in this RFP for Youth Mentoring.

Agencies selected to receive funding through this RFP process will be required to:

- Sign an agreement with MENTOR RI, with the application serving as a component of the agreement.
- Attend all mandatory trainings, meetings, and engage in technical assistance throughout the contract period as described in this RFP:
  - 2 ½ days of orientation/training plus <u>monthly</u> 2 hour "Community of Practice" gatherings and trainings.
  - Allot staff time for deep dive on program's individual implementation of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™* .
  - Remember to save the following dates on your calendar in the event your proposal is approved: **Wednesday, September 14, Thursday, September 15, and Friday, September 16, 2022**
  - Monthly data collection is required along with a more robust final report
- Along with the measurements you are including in your proposal, we will Include some standardized questions for outcome measurement across all funded programs: Here's a sample of the types of questions we may ask with final questions to be determined:
  - Compared to when you started in our program, do you feel happier with your life?
  - Compared to when you started in our program, do you feel more hopeful for your adult future?
  - Compared to when you started in our program, do you feel like you know who you are as a person (e.g., your values, your heritage, etc.)?
  - Compared to when you started in our program, do you think you have grown as a person? (open-ended: how so?)
  - Compared to when you started in our program do you feel more of a sense that you belong in this community? Do you feel like you belong and matter in this world?
  - Has mentee been involved in violence as a perpetrator, victim, or witness?

Data collection is integral to the success of this initiative and will allow us to make the case for additional years of funding as we report on the amazing work of our subrecipients. Through this proposal, we will cover the initial setup and first year fees for Innovative Mentoring Software a cloud-based tracking and evaluation tool designed specifically for mentoring programs. https://www.innovativementoring.net Although we will seek continued funding for subsequent years to support this software, we cannot guarantee it. (You will have the option of continuing it at your organization's expense if necessary.) MENTOR RI will be able to see **aggregate data only** which will simplify your reporting. Your specific data is private and is not able to be viewed or accessed by us. **Use of this database is required for new and expanding funded programs.**

MENTOR RI will commit funds in support of selected programs for 10 months ending on June 30, 2023. While we have applied for additional year(s) of funding, none has been allocated to date and cannot be anticipated nor guaranteed.

If additional funding is secured for subsequent year(s), subrecipients may be considered for additional funding if there is:

- The continued demonstrable need for program services;
- Satisfactory performance of the program to be measured as mutually agreed upon in each separate agreement between the agency and MENTOR RI; and
- The availability of sufficient funding to MENTOR RI.

The deadline to submit applications is FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022, prior to 5:00 p.m.

Post-Award Requirements and Disbursement of Funds

In addition to the training, and engagement in the program improvement process, and community of practice meetings previously mentioned, MENTOR RI requires periodic progress reports (both programmatic and financial) along with a more extensive final report. Additional information may be requested from time-to-time, based on our reporting requirements for the funding. The disbursement of funds typically occurs when the contract is executed or shortly thereafter in accordance with the funding agreement between MENTOR RI and the agency.

All subrecipients will be expected to attend a press conference to celebrate the awards with Senator Whitehouse. Date to be determined.

We anticipate subrecipients' funds will be disbursed on or around 10/1/2022 in full.