

REQUEST FOR Letters of Interest

National League of Cities
Center for Leadership, Education, Advancement, & Development

Reengaging Opportunity Youth in the South, Phase II

KEY INFORMATION

The National League of Cities (NLC) welcomes Letters of Interest (LOI) by October 30, 2023, from city government leaders interested in receiving 11 months of technical assistance to establish or expand local capacity to re-engage Opportunity Youth and Young Adults (OYYA) ages 16-24 in education and employment. NLC's Reengaging Opportunity Youth in the South (ROYS) initiative addresses the urgent need to develop cross-system and cross-sector approaches, **resulting in new or expanded infrastructure in the form of reengagement centers or programs**. Generous support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation makes this technical assistance offer possible. Selected participants will learn from the experience of seven ROYS Phase I sites and will also join the [NLC Reengagement Network](#).

Letter of interest Due: October 30, 2023,
by 6:00 PM ET

Selection Announcement: November 14, 2023

Project Dates: November 2023 –
September 2023

Submission Information: Please submit completed applications online at <https://www.nlc.org/initiative/nlc-reengagement-network/>

Questions? Email reengagement@nlc.org

BACKGROUND

Based upon 2020 US Census data, [Measure of America](#) most recently estimated a youth disconnection rate of 12.6%, or some 4.8 million persons nationwide. Rates of disconnection in Southern states have trended higher than the national average. These high rates “leave talent on the table” in cities seeking to develop and sustain solid workforces and tax bases, and deprive young people of the dignity and stepping stones that proceed from work and educational attainment.

For more than a decade, Reengagement Centers and programs have served as critical policy responses of city governments and their partners by connecting tens of thousands of out-of-school and out-of-work young adults back onto pathways that lead to academic achievement, professional skill development, credentials, and employment. In 35 locations nationwide, these programs have provided critical infrastructure with dedicated staff to support young people to re-enroll in school and progress in other ways while attending to a range of psychosocial and developmental needs. Centers and programs function as part of broad local Opportunity Youth and Young Adult (OYYA) strategies and alongside ongoing student retention efforts in schools.

Key References

- [Four Things City Leaders Need to Know about Opportunity Youth blog](#), CitiesSpeak, NLC 2023
- [Effective Approaches to Reengaging Young Adults report](#), Education Northwest, 2022
- [A Disrupted Year: How the Arrival of Covid-19 Affected Youth Disconnection](#), Measure of America 2022

BENEFITS

- ◆ Individualized support to carry out or update local policy and program scans, strengthen cross-sector teams, enlist youth voice in program and policy design, assemble financial and human resources, and develop implementation plans.
- ◆ Participation by a team of three in two in-person convenings.
- ◆ At least one in-person site visit by a YEF Institute staff member.

ELIGIBILITY

Cities in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia that did not participate in ROYS Phase I.

Groups of two or more neighboring cities may apply.

The YEF Institute will prioritize the participation of cities that hold NLC membership in good standing.

PROJECT TIMELINE

The technical assistance period will occur November 2023 – September 2023

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED DATES
INFORMATIONAL SESSION	October 18, 2023 12:00 PM ET Register Here
	October 20, 2023 3:00 PM ET Register Here
LETTER OF INTEREST DUE	October 30, 2023 6:00 PM ET

Selection Criteria

NLC will select participating cities based on criteria including:

1. Strength of demonstrated commitment by municipal leadership.
2. Demonstrated intent and capacity to form a diverse, city-led core team to engage consistently throughout the technical assistance and peer learning activities, as well as a broader group of stakeholders.
3. Demonstrated intent and capacity to collect and analyze relevant data using city government tools or with a designated partner(s).
4. Ability to demonstrate need among local OYYA and to describe a plan for obtaining input from OYYA regarding support and service needs.
5. Demonstrated commitment to develop an action plan by the close of the technical assistance period.

APPLICATION PROCESS

NLC will host two informational sessions on **October 18 at 12:00 PM ET and October 20 at 3:00 PM ET** for municipalities interested in learning more about this opportunity. The sessions will take place through Zoom. Interested cities are strongly encouraged to attend.

Submit your Letter of Interest online by 6:00 PM ET on Friday, October 30, 2023. NLC may contact cities following application submission for additional information and inform cities of final selections by close of business on Thursday, November 9.

If you have questions or would like more information, please email reengagement@nlc.org.

Letter of Interest

Please respond to the following eight prompts using the online application. Provide any supporting information (such as documents, reports, press releases, etc.) that clearly provides evidence related to your response. In your responses, please clearly indicate where the supporting information is relevant.

NLC especially welcomes letters of interest that demonstrate your city's interest and readiness in the form of candid appraisals of assets, as well as areas for growth and development.

A. City Commitment

Mayoral and city staff commitment to the TA initiative, and city commitment to serve in a team leadership role (or propose an alternate team leadership structure)

B. Assessment of Initiatives Focused on Opportunity Youth & Young Adults

Brief assessment of current status, scale, and momentum of local initiatives focused on Opportunity Youth & Young Adults, if any

C. Landscape of Opportunity Youth & Young Adults Disconnection

Baseline understanding of current scope of Opportunity Youth & Young Adult disconnection in the city/region (see [Measure of America](#))

D. Highest priority technical assistance items and key topics for discussion with peer cities

Additional Information

E. Principal staff point of contact for the applicant (name, title, email, phone)

F. Organizational/Institutional Partners

Use the table below to show the role of any partners that will participate on the cross-sector team (e.g., school district, community college, workforce board, chamber of commerce, alternative school, child welfare agency, juvenile justice agency, county, or regional agency, community-based/nonprofit organization(s))

Name	Title	Organization	City, State	Role in Cross-Sector Partnership

G. Partners that bring data collection and analysis expertise, e.g., city planning department, university or college, other

Organization	Type of Data and/or Expertise

H. Previous NLC Technical Assistance

Please indicate any involvement (if any) in other current or recent technical assistance initiatives of NLC or others, e.g., SCEI, SSCI, GJGC, Youth Excel, NC Our State Our Work, and ensuing momentum regarding OYYA reconnection.

Reengaging Opportunity Youth in the South

To submit your interest to be part of this initiative, please respond briefly to the following eight online prompts in this [form](#) by **October 30, 2023**. Taken together, these responses will constitute your city's expression of interest in receiving technical assistance.