

Grant Application: Pathways to Work

Riverbend Youth Pathways (fictional) | Submitted to a regional community foundation | Request: \$60,000 | Grant period: February 1, 2027 to January 31, 2028

Applicant	Riverbend Youth Pathways, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit (fictional)
Program	Pathways to Work: credentials, mentoring, and job placement for young adults ages 18 to 24
Amount requested	\$60,000 of a \$72,000 program budget
People served	48 young adults in two cohorts of 24
Primary contact	Executive Director, Riverbend Youth Pathways

1. Executive Summary

Riverbend Youth Pathways requests **\$60,000** to expand Pathways to Work, a 16-week program that pairs young adults ages 18 to 24 with trained volunteer mentors while they complete an industry-recognized credential. With this grant, the program will grow from 30 to **48 participants** a year and add structured job-placement support after graduation.

Last year, 21 of 30 participants earned a credential, but only 14 were working or in school 90 days later. This proposal closes that gap. Our goal for the grant period: **25 young adults in stable jobs or further education within 90 days of completing the program**, nearly double last year's result.

2. Organizational Background

Founded in 2014, Riverbend Youth Pathways helps young adults in a three-county area move from disconnection to stable work. We operate with an annual budget of approximately \$480,000, a staff of five, and more than 60 active volunteers. Over ten years, more than 400 young adults have completed a Riverbend program.

Our model is built on two lessons from that decade of work. First, credentials open doors only when someone helps a young person walk through them. Second, the most common reasons participants drop out are practical, not motivational: a missed bus, an unaffordable exam fee, a crisis at home with no one to call.

3. Statement of Need

In our service area, young adults who are neither working nor in school face a widening gap between available jobs and the credentials those jobs require. Employers in healthcare support, logistics, and the skilled trades report entry-level positions they cannot fill. Many young adults lack the transportation, guidance, and test fees needed to qualify.

Demand for our program already exceeds capacity. Last year, **112 young adults applied for 30 seats**. Results for those 30 participants show where the program works and where it falls short:

Stage	Participants	Rate
Enrolled	30	100%
Completed 16-week program	26	87%
Earned a credential	21	70%
Employed or in school at 90 days	14	47%

The drop between credential and placement is the problem this grant addresses. Exit interviews with the seven graduates who earned a credential but were not placed point to two causes: no reliable transportation to interviews, and no structured support once the program ended.

4. Program Design

Pathways to Work combines three supports in one program, and this grant adds a fourth.

Core components

- **Credential track (weeks 1 to 16).** Participants enroll in one of three local certification courses: certified nursing assistant, forklift and warehouse safety, or entry-level HVAC. Riverbend covers exam fees.
- **Weekly mentoring.** Each participant is matched within two weeks of enrollment with a background-checked volunteer mentor who completes six hours of training and meets with the participant weekly for about 90 minutes.
- **Barrier support.** Transit passes and rideshare credits for class, exams, and interviews, averaging \$200 per participant.
- **New: 90-day placement support.** A program coordinator connects graduates with employer partners, prepares them for interviews, and checks in at 30, 60, and 90 days after graduation.

Program timeline

Period	Activity
February 2027	Recruit and train mentors for Cohort 1; enroll 24 participants
February 15 to June 7, 2027	Cohort 1: 16-week credential track and mentoring
June 2027	Cohort 1 graduation; placement support begins. Recruit Cohort 2
June 28 to October 18, 2027	Cohort 2: 16-week credential track and mentoring
September 5, 2027	Cohort 1 90-day follow-up complete; six-month report to foundation
January 16, 2028	Cohort 2 90-day follow-up complete
January 31, 2028	Grant period ends; final report submitted within 30 days

Staffing and partners

- **Program coordinator (0.75 FTE, funded by this grant):** recruits participants, manages mentor matches, leads placement support.
- **Executive Director (in-kind):** oversees the program, employer relationships, and reporting.
- **Training partners:** three local certification providers deliver coursework at negotiated rates.
- **Employer partners:** eight local employers have agreed to interview qualified graduates (letters of support attached).

5. Outcomes and Evaluation

Outcome	Target	Measured by	When
Young adults enrolled	48	Enrollment records	At enrollment
Mentor matches within 2 weeks	48 (100%)	Match log	Week 2 of each cohort
Completing the 16-week program	41 (85%)	Attendance records	Graduation
Earning an industry credential	30	Certification results	Within 30 days of graduation
Employed or in further education at 90 days	25	Coordinator follow-up, verified by employer or school	90 days after graduation

How we will use the data. The coordinator records every participant milestone in our case-management system. The program team reviews results monthly. If Cohort 1 placement falls below 50% at 60 days, we will adjust Cohort 2's placement approach before graduation, not after. An independent evaluator will review data quality and methods once, at the end of the grant period.

Reporting. The foundation will receive a six-month progress report and a final report with outcomes by cohort, spending against budget, and lessons learned.

6. Budget

Line item	Calculation	Amount
Personnel		
Program coordinator salary	0.75 FTE	\$34,500
Payroll taxes and benefits	Approximately 19.6% of salary	\$6,750
Mentoring		
Mentor background checks	48 at \$45	\$2,160
Mentor training facilitation	3 sessions at \$800	\$2,400
Mentor recruitment and recognition	Outreach, event, materials	\$2,240
Participant support		
Transportation	48 participants at \$200	\$9,600
Credential exam fees	40 exams at \$150	\$6,000
Workbooks	48 at \$35	\$1,680
Safety gear (warehouse and HVAC tracks)	24 sets at \$45	\$1,080
Classroom supplies	Two cohorts	\$590
Evaluation		
Case-management software license	Annual	\$3,000
Independent evaluation review	One review at grant end	\$2,000
Total program budget		\$72,000

Line item	Calculation	Amount
Less: Riverbend contribution	Unrestricted funds from annual event	(\$12,000)
Amount requested from foundation		\$60,000

Budget narrative

Personnel is the largest cost because placement support is the program's missing piece; the coordinator's time is what turns credentials into jobs. Exam fees are budgeted for 40 participants, not 48, based on expected completion. Unspent exam funds will be reallocated to transportation with the foundation's approval. Volunteer mentors will contribute an estimated 1,150 hours, which are not included in the budget.

7. Sustainability

This grant funds expansion and the new placement component during a year when we will prove its results. Our plan to sustain the program afterward has three parts:

- **Employer investment.** We will ask employer partners who hire graduates to sponsor exam fees for future cohorts, a model two partners have already agreed to test.
- **Public workforce funding.** With a year of placement data, we will apply to the local workforce development board for training funds that can cover credential costs.
- **Individual giving.** Our annual event currently raises \$12,000 for this program; our goal is \$20,000 by 2029.

8. Attachments

IRS determination letter; board of directors list; most recent audited financial statements; organizational budget for the current fiscal year; letters of support from employer partners; program logic model.

All names, figures, and results in this sample are fictional and were created to demonstrate structure and writing quality.