



Opportunity Works

About: Opportunity Works connects young adults ages 16 – 24 to career exploration and paid internships in targeted high-growth and high-demand sectors such as Manufacturing; Information Technology (IT); and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL).

Partners: The Office of the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership are leading the effort, with additional support from offices under the President, including Economic Development, Transportation and Highways, Technology and the Justice Advisory Council. Businesses from the targeted sectors and workforce development service providers will provide internship placements and direct support to the Opportunity Works participants.

Response to a Challenge: In suburban Cook County there are more than 33,000 young adults between the ages of 16 -24 who are disconnected from both work and school. At the same time, many employers report a skills shortage and need for a talented labor force. Opportunity Works will bridge the gap between young adults seeking to build a career and employers looking to build their talent pipeline. Young adults will participate in a paid internship that will expose them to a viable career, expand their skill set, and connect them to the training and resources they need to achieve long-term employment. This collaboration will change the trajectory of young adults and promote the economic vitality of Cook County.

Program Model:

- Upon completion of foundational skills training, youth will participate in a paid internship and other career exploration activities.
- Career mentors will provide individualized support and connect youth to resources needed for long-term success.
- Community-based organizations will serve as a liaison between employers and young adults, conducting employer training and frequent visits to the work site.

Requests for Proposals (RFP):

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is seeking proposals from organizations to provide services and training to young adults and employers.

- The RFP can be found at workforceboard.org/OpportunityWorks
- Bidders Conferences:
 - In-person: Thursday April 20, 2017, 10:30 a.m. - Noon
 - 69 W. Washington, 17th Floor Conference Rm, Chicago IL 60602
 - Online: Tuesday April 25, 2017, Noon-1:30 p.m.
 - RSVP at <http://bit.ly/OppWorksWebinar>
- RFP Deadline: May 5, 2017 at Noon CDT
- Anticipated contract start date: May 15, 2017

Other than during the Bidders Conferences, staff members are unable to provide technical assistance during the application process. Please submit questions to opportunityworks@workforceboard.org