Cover Sheet 2023 TANF Youth Innovation Project

Applicant Agency:				
Please use the legal nam	e and provide the full	address. This is the	fiscal agent with whom the	
grant agreement will be			・ To Tiple (All Port of March 1997)	
	Minnesota Valley Action Council, Inc. (Fiscal Agent for the South Central WorkForce Council)			
	nda Mackie	8. Contact Name:	Sara Carrigan	
3. Telephone: 507-3	45-2400	9. Telephone:	507-345-2402	
4. Fax: 507-3	45-2414	10. Fax:	507-345-2414	
5. Email: <u>aman</u>	da@mnvac.org	11. Email:	sara@workforcecouncil.org	
6. Agency Website: www	.mnvac.org www.workfo	prceccouncil.org		
7. Address:		12. Address:		
706 North Victory Drive		706 North Victory Dr	ive	
Mankato, MN 56001		Mankato, MN 56001		
13. Federal Tax ID: 41-6050)353	14. Minnesota Tax	94865358	
(required)		ID: (required)		
15. Unique Entity YY82LN.	!LD N U7	16. SWIFT Vendor	0000194809 001	
ID (UEI)		ID: (if known)		
Number: (required)				
Required Information:				
	<u> </u>			
17. Project Name:	IANF Yout	TANF Youth Project		
18. Geographic Area Served:	•	Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan Counties		
19. Number of Participants S				
20. Project Start Date:	January 1,	January 1, 2023		
21. Project End Date:	December	December 31, 2023		
22. Total Amount of Funding	Requested: \$42,500	\$42,500		

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

Authorized Signature	Title	Date
Suliff	Executive Director, MVAC	
		12/8/22
Meather Olcason	Executive Director, SC WorkForce	, ,
Coldins ours	Council	

2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Narrative Questions:

1. Describe the youth service provider's plans to assure collaboration with participants' MFIP Employment Service Providers regarding their Employment Service Plans, as applicable.

In five of the nine counties in our service area, Minnesota Valley Action Council provides MFIP Employment Services and performs both roles as youth counselor and employment counselor. In the four remaining counties, the MVAC staff work closely with the MFIP employment counselors to coordinate employment plans. To increase collaboration between employment and training providers and strengthen partnerships between youth counselors and MFIP employment service providers, a minimum of two training days are offered each year to CareerForce Partners.

Collaboration between youth counselors and MFIP employment service providers begins with a signed release of information so that the counselors can discuss the progress of the youth on a regular basis. The youth counselor provides a copy of the worksite agreement to the employment counselor so they are aware of the youth's work schedule and estimated hours per week. Youth staff communicate with MFIP counselors about barriers, successes, and learning moments from the work experience. The timesheets and/or payroll records are also provided to the financial worker as needed.

2. Describe how the youth service provider will identify and recruit eligible youth for the project. What percentage of participants do you expect to be from communities of color? Describe the youth service provider's plans to incorporate culturally responsive programming approaches when applicable.

As previously stated, MVAC provides MFIP Employment Services in five of the nine counties in our service area. MVAC staff review their current caseloads to identify teen parents on the MFIP program and youth in MFIP households. In the four remaining counties, MVAC has a strong working relationship with the employment service providers and has been in contact with them about the upcoming program. MVAC staff provide information letters, electronic referral link, and program applications to employment services providers and attend staff meetings to explain the program.

In addition to connecting to MFIP Employment Providers, we utilize additional recruitment methods to find eligible youth. MVAC administers a variety of programs creating an internal network for referrals including referrals from Energy Assistance Program, Head Start, homeless prevention programs and employment and training programs. We have also targeted marketing to places that individuals on public assistance may visit such as food shelves and thrift stores. Young adult programs are also marketed through social media, food drives, job fairs and community events.

We anticipate that 40% of the participants will be BIPOC. Youth will be placed at quality worksites that fit their interest and can accommodate their cultural beliefs. In addition, employers will be informed of any necessary accommodations to the worksite. For example, there are many cultures that prohibit people from touching pork. In that case, we would avoid a worksite that involves contact with pork, work with the employer to assign duties that

don't involve contact with pork or develop other worksite accommodations. Another example may include religious faiths that prohibit people from bathing another person. In the healthcare field, that could be a difficult job task to avoid as a nurse assistant. Youth counselors will provide thorough career exploration and guidance services so youth are fully prepared for job duties and expectations. In some cases, youth counselors have worked with youth and elders in their community for guidance on acceptable job opportunities and/or received permission to perform certain job related tasks. In addition, an annual cultural awareness training is offered to work experience supervisors and staff through the Greater Mankato Diversity Council.

Youth staff and MFIP employment counselors completed an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and attended five Equity Logic trainings through the Rochester Diversity Council. The IDI and Equity Logic trainings help staff identify their own cultural bias and learn tools and tips to enhance our culturally responsive services.

3. Describe the youth service provider's plans to introduce career pathways, prepare targeted youth for post-secondary education, provide information on high-growth, in-demand occupations in the region, and deliver financial literacy activities.

Youth will be assigned a youth counselor to provide career counseling and case management services to obtain and maintain employment as well as develop a career plan. MVAC will educate and encourage youth to pursue educational and employment opportunities in high growth and high demand occupations.

MVAC staff work with youth to investigate careers and labor market information such as number of jobs in the area, average wages, and projected outlook. There are a number of tools that staff utilize to review local labor market information including CareerForce website, Minnesota Works, Careerwise website, DEED website, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Know Before You Go Infographics, and the demand occupation list developed by the SC WorkForce Council.

In addition to their work experience, youth will participate in activities on career exploration, job search techniques, positive work habits, and daily living skills. Youth will participate in field trips to local business to gain hands on exposure to demand occupations, including the Tour of Manufacturing event. Youth will participate in college visits and Career Days to learn about post-secondary opportunities in demand occupations as well as workshops that address admission processes, financial aid and scholarship information. Youth interested in occupational training will develop a training plan with their counselor and complete an occupational research packet including a review of labor market, researching training options and informational interviews.

Youth services are provided in person and virtually to best meet the needs of the youth. A virtual course was developed during the pandemic called "Get Started" and is aimed at preparing youth for the world of work. Youth participate in 5 hours of online coursework each week covering the following topics: basic budgeting, communication, health and wellness and community exploration. The program is four weeks long and youth can earn up to \$200 upon completion of the course.

To reinforce financial fitness, youth are required to set up a savings or checking account prior to placement in a work experience. By setting up a bank account, youth develop a

relationship with a financial institution and it is a tool for teaching banking, budgeting, savings and the "pay yourself first" concept.

4. Describe how individual youth will be matched with employment opportunities.

Youth will participate in workshops and/or one-on-one instruction on career interest assessments, completion of job applications, resumes, cover letters, thank you letters, job interviewing skills, and financial fitness. MVAC recommends possible worksites based on youth's interests, abilities, skills, transportation needs and career goals. We utilize worksites that provide age appropriate jobs that will help youth achieve good work habits and new job skills. MVAC recruits employers who are able to provide work experience opportunities in high growth and high demand occupations. MVAC targets work experiences in the private sector where there are greater opportunities for youth to be hired after the completion of a work experience. Youth will contact employers of interest to request an interview. Upon completion of the interviews, employers rate youth participants on their interviewing skills including eye contact, appearance, enthusiasm and ability to answer questions appropriately. The employer decides if they are interested in providing a worksite placement for the youth.

5. Describe any work readiness or occupational training (in person or virtual) that will be part of the project.

As mentioned earlier, youth will participate in activities on career exploration, job search techniques, positive work habits, and daily living skills in individual and group settings when possible. Minnesota Valley Action Council developed a virtual work readiness course "Get Started" aimed at preparing youth for the world of work.

For youth that are interested in occupational skills training, they will receive credentials/certificates in their area of study from a post-secondary institution. Youth will receive funding to assist with tuition, books and fees to ensure that they have the support to achieve their training goals.

6. If the project design includes payment of stipends to participants, please describe the stipend structure (i.e. for what activities they will be awarded, amount, etc.) and include a copy of the local stipend policy with the plan.

Youth that participate in the "Get Started" virtual program will complete 5 hours per week of work readiness coursework. The program covers the following topics: basic budgeting, communication, health and wellness and community exploration. Youth will receive a \$50 stipend each week for 4 weeks after successfully completing the lessons.

7. If the project design includes payment of incentives to participants, please describe the incentive structure (i.e. for what achievements they will be awarded, amount, etc.) and include a copy of the local incentive policy with the plan.

We are not including incentives to TANF youth program.

8. Describe the youth service provider's plans to measure Work Readiness Indicators for targeted youth. Also identify any other LOCAL benchmarks/performance indicators for youth served under the 2023 TANF Innovation Project.

We plan to administer a pre and post-assessment of work readiness skills using our youth competency system. The goal of the work readiness skills component is to ensure that youth have: identified a career interest area, knowledge of the labor market for their career interest area, the job seeking skills necessary to find and obtain employment and the positive work habits and daily living skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.

Youth will demonstrate work readiness competency in the following areas:

Career Exploration

- 1. Making Career Decisions
- 2. Using Labor Market Information

Job Search Techniques

- 1. Preparing Resumes
- 2. Filling out Applications & Cover Letters
- 3. Interviewing & Follow-up Letters

Positive Work Habits

- 1. Being Consistently Punctual
- 2. Maintaining Regular Attendance
- 3. Demonstrating Positive Attitudes & Behaviors
- 4. Presenting Appropriate Appearance
- 5. Exhibiting Good Interpersonal Relations
- 6. Completing Tasks Effectively

Daily Living Skills

- 1. Budgeting/Opening a Bank Account
- 2. Driver's License/Public Transportation
- 3. Community Resources

An evaluation of work readiness skills will also be gathered through worksite monitoring visits by staff, worksite supervisor evaluations on youth's bi-weekly timesheets, and one-on-one observations. At worksite monitoring visits, supervisors evaluate youth on the following categories: attendance, initiative, customer service/public relations, and teamwork. On youth's bi-weekly timesheets, supervisors evaluate youth performance on attendance, punctuality, communication, cooperation, work quality and quantity.

We will also be tracking the following performance indicators:

- Work Readiness Skill Attainment Rate (measured pre and post by the worksite supervisor on the worksite)
- Attainment of Work Readiness and/or Education Goals identified on the Individual Service Strategy
- Earned Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit
- Earned a High School Diploma, Equivalent, Certificate or Credential

- Entered Employment, Post-Secondary Education, Occupational or Vocational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, Military
- Returned to School (dropouts)
- Remained in School (potential dropouts)
- Describe any plans to co-enroll TANF Youth participants in other DEED-funded youth programs. Include the programs in which participants are likely to be co-enrolled and the services to be provided through this co-enrollment.

For all funding sources, youth complete one application and the youth counselor determines the appropriate enrollment. Co-enrollments are utilized as needed due to funding, when appropriate. Youth could be co-enrolled in the MN Youth Program, WIOA Youth Program or other specialized youth grants targeting services to youth in foster care or BIPOC youth. Youth not in high school may also be co-enrolled in Adult Career Pathway programming.

10. Describe the planned wage structure for work experience. If a wage higher than the minimum wage will be offered, explain how the wage rate will be determined.

Work experience wages for youth ages 16 -24 years start at \$12.00 an hour. After youth completes 200 hours of work experience hours, youth staff and the work site supervisor will evaluate the youth's performance by reviewing the youth's rating on the work experience evaluation form. Youth that have a work readiness indicator score of 30 or higher out of a possible total of 40 will receive a .50 increase starting the next pay period. If a youth is not meeting satisfactory performance, another formal evaluation will be possible to be completed in 100 hours of additional work, or in a time frame agreed upon by the work site supervisor, MVAC Youth Staff, and young adult, to be eligible for an increase in pay. The wage increase is to reflect raises in unsubsidized employment and to affirm the importance of workplace skills. Youth under age 16 are paid minimum wage.

14-15 years old	Minimum Wage (Currently \$10.33, will increase to \$10.59 in January 2023)
16+	Starting wage \$12.00
	After 200 hours, successful performance evaluation: \$12.50

ATTACHMENT 1: WORK PLAN 2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

Provide a brief summary of planned services/activities provided in the project. Make additional copies of this form as needed.

Agency: WDA #7: South Central WorkForce Council/Minnesota Valley Action Council		Contact: Sara Carrigan			
Project Goal: To provide work experience activities and employment assistance to teen parents receiving MFIP benefits or youth in MFIP households.					
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date	
Identify eligible youth to participate in the program.	A minimum of 14 youth will be identified to participate.	14	01/01/2023	12/31/2023	
Youth will be assessed in the areas of education, employment, transportation, housing, health, childcare and legal issues.	100% of youth will complete an assessment.	14	01/01/2023	12/31/2023	
Youth will receive one-on-one career counseling and case management services.	100% of youth will receive career counseling and case management services to identify a career and develop a career plan.	14	01/01/2023	12/31/2023	
Youth will participate in individual/group activities on career exploration, career planning, life skills and financial fitness.	80% of youth will complete individual/group activities in person or virtually.	11	01/01/2023	12/31/2023	
Youth will participate in work experience.	80% of youth will successfully complete a work experience and/or work readiness programming virtually.	11	01/01/2023	12/31/2023	

Agency: WDA #7: South Central WorkForce Council/Minnesota Valley Action Council		Contact: Sara Carrigan		
Project Goal: To provide work experience activities and employment assistance to teen parents receiving MFIP benefits or youth in MFIP households.			FIP	
Strategies (activities, steps, and tasks to achieve the goal):	Expected Outcomes	Number Served	Start Date	End Date
Youth will demonstrate the mastery of the following work readiness competencies areas:	80% of youth will achieve competency in work readiness skills as measured by a pre and post-assessment utilizing our Youth Competency System.	11	01/01/2023	12/31/2023

APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF WORK EXPERIENCES (from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act "WIOA" Final Rules 20 CFR 681.600)

- (a) Work experiences are a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. A work experience may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act or applicable State law, exists. Consistent with § 680.840, funds provided for work experiences may not be used to directly or indirectly aid in the filling of a job opening that is vacant because the former occupant is on strike, or is being locked out in the course of a labor dispute, or the filling of which is otherwise an issue in a labor dispute involving a work stoppage. Work experiences provide the youth participant with opportunities for career exploration and skill development.
- (b) Work experiences must include academic and occupational education. The educational component may occur concurrently or sequentially with the work experience. Further academic and occupational education may occur inside or outside the work site.
- (c) The types of work experiences include the following categories:
 - (1) Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
 - (2) Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - (3) Internships and job shadowing; and
 - (4) On-the-job training opportunities as defined in WIOA sec. 3(44) and in § 680.700.

DEFINITION OF CAREER PATHWAY (from the WIOA law)

The term "career pathway" means a combination of high-quality education, training and other services that:

- a) align with the skills of industries in the region;
- b) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
- c) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- d) includes education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- e) organizes education, training and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the education and career advancement of the individual to the greatest extent possible.
- f) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized post-secondary credential;
- g) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

APPENDIX B

DEFINITION OF WORK READINESS SKILLS (from USDOL TEGL 17-05, Attachment B)

Work Readiness Skills - Work readiness skills include world-of-work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision making, and job search techniques (resumes, interviews, applications, and follow-up letters). They also encompass survival/daily living skills such as using the phone, telling time, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account, and using public transportation. They also include positive work habits, attitudes, and behaviors such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. This category also entails developing motivation and adaptability, obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills, and acquiring an improved self image.

METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING WORK READINESS (from USDOL TEGL 07-10, Attachment B)

A worksite evaluation measuring performance in the workplace is required to assess work readiness for the work readiness indicator. Previous feedback has demonstrated that the most effective method of assessing work readiness is to require the worksite supervisor to observe and evaluate workplace performance. Having youth complete true/false or multiple choice tests, which only measure knowledge and not behavior, is a less effective tool for measuring work readiness. This worksite evaluation must be conducted by the employer. The employer (i.e., worksite supervisor) who regularly observes performance at the worksite is in the best position to assess the quality of a young person's work performance.

The worksite evaluation tool should focus on attaining a satisfactory level of workplace proficiency as opposed to a measurable increase or gain (as previously defined in TEGL No. 17-05). The attainment of proficiency or competency in the foundational and worksite-specific skills necessary to be successful in the workplace should be determined by the employer and should be based on the attainment of work behaviors outlined in the worksite evaluation tool. This tool should clearly state the overall criteria necessary to achieve workplace proficiency. For example, worksite evaluation tools could state that work readiness proficiency can only be attained after: a) the supervisor indicates satisfactory performance; and b) a minimum numerical score for determining proficiency is achieved.'

APPENDIX C

Key Data Elements Entered in Workforce One for TANF Youth Innovation Project

Participant Data

- Name
- Residence County
- MAXIS Number
- WF1 ID Number
- Date the participant entered the program
- Pre-placement training provided to participant
 - Name of training provided
 - Date training began
 - o Date training ended
 - o Reason training ended
 - Certificates, etc. earned for completing training
- Supportive services provided to participant
 - Type of supportive service provided
 - Amount of supportive service provided
- Date the participant exited the program
- Reason the participant exited the program

Employer Data (for each placement)

- Name of employer/worksite
- Name of participant placed
- MAXIS number of participant
- Job Title
 - Hourly wage
 - o Hours per week
- Payments made to employer
 - Total wages paid
 - o Total fringe benefits paid
 - o Percentage of wage subsidized

ATTACHMENT 2: BUDGET 2023 TANF INNOVATION PROJECT

BUDGET PERIOD: January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

Agency	Contact Person Phone/ E-mail
SC WorkForce Council/MN Valley Action Council (fiscal agent for SC WorkForce Council)	Sara Carrigan 507-345-2402 sara@workforcecouncil.org

Budget Category	TANF Innovation Funds
833 - Administration (5% maximum)	\$2,125.00
881 - Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	\$21,400.00
885 - Direct Services to Youth	\$15,975.00
891 - Support Services	\$3,000.00
TOTA	L \$42,500.00

Budget Category	Provide a detailed breakdown of the items and amounts budgeted:			
833 – Administration (5% maximum)	Administrative staff time and expenses (fringe, overhead, travel) for grant management, coordination, fiscal processing and reporting. (Avg. of 1 hr/wk x 52 wks x \$37/hr)			
	(Please provide details on how funds will be allocated i.e. stipends, wages, etc.)			
881 – Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits	Youth wages for work experience: (Avg. of 153 hrs x \$12.46 (wage/fringe) x 11 youth)			
	Youth stipends for Get Ready virtual program (\$50 per/wk x 4 wks = \$200) (\$200 x 4 youth)			
	(Please provide details on how funds will be allocated i.e. direct staffing costs, training funds, tuition, etc.)			
885 – Direct Services to Youth	Staff time and expenses (fringe, overhead, travel) for 7 youth counselors throughout nine counties in the region. (Avg. of 8 hrs/wk x 52 wks x \$35.15/hr)			
	Training dollars to assist youth with GED or in post-secondary education including: GED exams, tuition, books, and fees. (2 youth x \$500/youth) = \$1,000			
891 – Support Services	(Please provide details on how you anticipate funds will be allocated i.e. transportation, clothing, tools, etc.)			
	Support dollars to assist youth with needs to participate in work experience or work readiness activities including: transportation, clothing for interviews or work. (12 youth x \$250/youth)			

BUDGET CATEGORIES

Administration: Costs are defined by Federal Rules at 2 CFR 200 and are generally associated with the expenditures related to the overall operation of the employment and training system. Administrative costs are associated with functions not related to the direct provision of services to program participants. These costs can be both personnel and non-personnel and both direct and indirect. Specifically, the project defines the following costs as administration:

- Accounting, budgeting, financial and cash management functions;
- Procurement and purchasing functions;
- Property management functions;
- Personnel management functions;
- Payroll functions;
- Audit functions;
- Incident reports response functions;
- General legal service functions;
- Costs of goods and services required for the administrative functions of the program including such items as rental/purchase of equipment, utilities, office supplies, postage, and rental and maintenance of office space;
- Systems and procedures required to carry out the above administrative functions including necessary monitoring and oversight; and,
- Travel costs incurred for official business related to the above administrative functions.

Youth Wages and Fringe Benefits – Wages and benefits paid directly to youth participants while engaged in program activities. Stipends provided for educational activities should be included in this cost category.

Direct Services to Youth – Costs associated with providing direct service to youth, **EXCLUDING** costs of youth participant wages and fringe benefits and support services. Wages and fringe benefits for staff providing direct services to youth participants should be included in this cost category. Tuition payments for training programs should also be included in this category.

Support Services – Items that are necessary for a youth to participate in the project, such as transportation, clothing, tools, child care, housing/rental assistance, school-related expenses (other than tuition), etc. These expenses may be paid directly to the youth or to a third-party vendor.

Workforce Development Area #7

Policy Letter #2-2021

Effective Date: March 10, 2021

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to communicate local policy regarding the

use of stipends for state and federal funded youth programming.

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA 20 CFR 681.640)

and MN Department of Employment and Economic Development allows

for the use of stipends for participation in activities such as work experience or classroom activities, including work readiness or

employability skills training.

Policy/Procedure: Prior to setting up a work experience, youth that need additional skills to

be successful in employment are referred to MVAC's Get Started Program. The Get Started Program is a virtual four week program focused on preparing youth for the world of work. Get Started provides youth and young adults (16-24 years of age) training in communication skills, budgeting, health and wellness, and community exploration, which are fundamentals in being successful in life and employment. Youth learn about the importance of effective workplace communication, how to budget their money, the impacts of health and wellness on employment and local community resources that are available. Youth received a \$50 stipend for each week of completed assignments, earning up to \$200 over the four week course. Stipends are provided in accordance to state and

federal funding requirements as outlined below:

Youth Fund	Allowable Expense	Budget Category	WF1 Activity
WIOA Youth	Yes	<u>Direct</u> – for non-training	Work Readiness Activity - for
		activities such as "Get	non-training activities such as
		Started"	"Get Started"
		<u>Training</u> – for training	Non-credential Training - for
		activities such as Coursera	training activities such as
			Coursera
MN Youth	Yes	Youth Wages	Work Readiness
Youth at Work	Yes	Youth Wages	Work Readiness
TANF Youth	Yes	Youth Wages	Work Readiness
CP3	Yes	<u>Direct</u> – for non-training	Work Readiness Activity - for
		activities such as "Get	non-training activities such as
		Started"	"Get Started"
		<u>Training</u> – for training	Non-credential Training - for
		activities such as Coursera	training activities such as
			Coursera