

ORDER NO. 2021-05

AN ORDER OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION

To direct the Executive Director to allocate up to \$2.0 million from the COVID-19 Emergency Fund to support the Port of Seattle's 2021 Opportunity Youth Initiative and to exempt all related contracts from the requirements of Chapter 53.19 RCW.

**ADOPTED
MAY 11, 2021**

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Port of Seattle is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce, and job creation in an equitable, accountable and environmentally responsible manner. The Port's stewardship of aviation and marine operations, infrastructure, and environmental assets is essential to Washington State's economy and quality of life and is critical to the Port's ability to fulfill its mission.

The Port is well-positioned to stimulate economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing short-term workforce development opportunities through accelerated investment in the preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of Port assets programs, and Port-related economic activity. Examples include habitat restoration and clean-up projects that support Port developments, environmental enhancements, improvements to near-port communities' quality of life, expansion of public art, training, and collaboration with regional partners to promote responsible travel through Port facilities.

This Order seeks for related programming to be implemented to support the Port's 2021 Opportunity Youth Initiative from approximately between the months of June 2021 through December 2021, pending final negotiations.

TEXT OF THE ORDER

The Commission directs the Executive Director to execute workforce development contracts for Partner in Employment, Seattle Goodwill, Seattle Parks Foundation, and Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle for up to a total of up to \$2,000,000.

The Commission exercises its authority under RCW 53.19.020(5) to determine that a competitive solicitation process is not appropriate or cost-effective to address the emergency nature of the youth facing the highest unemployment rates in King County, among other indicators in King County. Consistent with the direction by Commissioners during the May 26, 2020, Commission meeting, the workforce development contracts will best benefit areas with the highest rate of youth unemployment, including for Black/Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) youth, and youth in South Seattle and South King County; create connections with Port industries; enhance the breadth

of industries/opportunities; promote career trajectory for students, connecting to another program; work with organizations that have a strong track record and can deliver solid results; and deliver more experience and economic benefit to students, achieved through lower overhead.

The Commission has determined that a competitive process with these four nonprofit organizations is not appropriate or cost-effective because:

1. The Port continues to operate under the State’s Healthy Washington – Roadmap to Recovery Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with on-going uncertainty. The Port’s own road to recovery has had many program and financial adjustments impacting program delivery.
2. The organizations have the ability to promptly provide youth opportunities during the summer months in 2021 in support of workforce development and economic recovery while the State is under the Roadmap to Recovery phases. Economic recovery continues to be an urgent need since COVID-19 impacts youth internship opportunities, particularly for our BIPOC youth community.
3. The organizations are operating during the COVID-19 shutdown and are utilizing social distancing practices, as required in the State’s Roadmap to Recovery plan.
4. The organizations have pre-established, successful workforce development programs supporting youth opportunities serving South King County youth in Port-related industries allowing for a more reasonable program launch and flexibility should the State change the Roadmap to Recovery requirements during the program timeframe.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE ORDER

While workers in nearly every sector of Washington’s economy have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the loss of employment opportunities for low-skilled workers between 16-24 years of age is the most substantial. According to the Washington State Employment Security Department in 2020, the highest number of claims per capita were workers with a high school equivalent education or less between the ages of 18-24, living in south Seattle or the south King County area, and workers of color.

The pandemic continues to cause significant hardships on people in these demographics. They were laid-off at higher rates, had fewer employment opportunities, and had fewer career-training opportunities. For example, opportunities in leisure and hospitality—sectors in which young people often find employment—represented 42 percent of all job losses in the state. Similarly, the unemployment rate in King County for February 2021 (5.3%) was more the double the rate for the same month in 2020 (2.5%).

2020 Opportunity Youth Initiative Results

OYI successfully provided internships, valuable income, and job-training for 196 people within the targeted demographics in 2020.

Demographics

Interns in OYI programs in 2020 were of the following demographics:

- 78% were between the ages of 16-19
- 22% were between the ages of 20-23
- 93% identified as BIPOC
- 32% identified as female

Program Costs

A total of \$1,338,087 program expenditures (89% of the \$1.5 million budgeted) funded 196 paid internships at a rate of \$15 per hour, plus wraparound services, program management, and materials. Had the program been extended an additional one to two months, the Port's program partners could have expended the full budgeted amount while producing more and/or longer internships.

Educational Benefits

The program received high marks from its internship-participants:

- 90% reported learning new skills to help them be successful in finding a job.
- 81% said they gained an understanding of their future career and/or educational goals and how to reach them.
- 87% said they felt more knowledgeable about job opportunities in the industries.

Demand for OYI Services is Increasing

Four well-established nonprofits in King County produced OYI internships in 2020—Seattle Goodwill, Seattle Parks Foundation, Partner in Employment, and the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle. Leaders from each of these nonprofits stated to Port staff that they're eager to provide comparable programming in 2021 and most of them have had requests from students and parents inquiring about 2021 opportunities.

Similarly, Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales reached out to Port Commissioners and staff, asking if the City could contribute to a 2021 iteration of the program, probably using portions of the City's allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act.

Program Implementation

Facilitated by community-based providers who specialize in employment readiness, cultural enrichment, mentorship, educational opportunities, and career readiness training in the focus areas of the Port of Seattle—aviation, maritime, green careers, and construction—the program offers participants an opportunity to explore career interests and develop work-readiness skills through learning experiences designed to strengthen civic and leadership abilities.

OYI has specific programmatic elements that must be met by each organization in furtherance of its workforce development program:

- Best benefit areas with the highest rate of youth unemployment for youth of color and youth in communities most impacted by COVID-19. (Data provided by Seattle-King County Public Health and the Workforce Development Council);
- Connection with Port-related industries—aviation, maritime, green careers, and construction;
- Career trajectory for students as part of a workforce development program in accordance with RCW 53.08.245 and the Port’s Workforce Development Resolution and Policy Directive;
- Working with organizations that have established and effective youth internship programs, and;
- A requirement of financial compensation for interns at a minimum rate of \$15/hour.

Projects must provide youth with opportunities to participate in economic activities like occupational job training, placement, advancement, retention, pre-apprenticeship training, or occupational education programs associated with the Port’s tenants, customers, and local economic development related to the Port’s tenants or Port-related economic activities.

Project staff must have at least five years demonstrated experience in education, mentorship, leadership development, and empowerment of "opportunity youth," which is defined as young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor market.

Project staff must have demonstrated cultural competency and possess a strong understanding of operationalizing racial equity. Project facilitators must evaluate outcomes with quantitative information including: number of trainees, recruited, placed in jobs, and retained; the types of jobs and range of compensation; the number and types of businesses that are served; and any other tangible benefits realized by the Port, workers, businesses, or the public.

In 2020, the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion created a working group with Port employees from various departments with expertise in youth employment. A similar working group will collaborate to oversee the 2021 iteration of the program, as identified below:

- Partner in Employment: This organization has strong ties with communities in South King County, workforce development, and expertise in youth employment. It is uniquely equipped and positioned to create solid career paths for incarcerated youth, youth at risk of entering the juvenile justice system, immigrant populations, and low-income youth within the South King County area.

- Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle: This organization will develop, own and operate housing for the benefit of low-income, homeless and formerly homeless people in Washington State. This summer both programs will employ youth to help build tiny cottages for the homeless. These programs are a bridge to link people of color to apprenticeships or pre-apprentice construction training programs.
- Seattle Goodwill: This organization has a long history (almost 100 years) of understanding how to execute student-centered cultural competency within King County. Seattle Goodwill has three dynamic programs: Youth Maritime Program; Youth Aerospace Program and Youth at Work which center on professional development designed to help youth identify their strengths and set goals. Goodwill's partnerships with various established organizations helps this program to fast track connecting students with career opportunities within Port-related industries.
- Seattle Parks Foundation: This organization will be the cluster lead and fiscal sponsor for five grass roots organizations in the Duwamish Valley. This funding structure helps smaller community-based organizations lead by people of color navigate the governmental process. These programs will create internships within maritime, aerospace, and environmental industries.

The competition waivers are justified on the basis that they will help the Port expeditiously meet the extremely high need for summer 2021 internships for youth, in particular, the emergency nature of the continuing skyrocketing BIPOC youth unemployment and secure the limited number of programs that can meet the specific Port requirements. The Port is continuing its partnership with organizations that could handle a ramp-up of activities during the pandemic and identified those groups that could meet our legal, financial, programmatic and emergent issues. Identifying projects and programs that can advance the Port's mission, including the creation of short-term internships emphasizing this age group, will continue to provide material benefit to the Port as it looks to maintain, preserve, and enhance the assets and programs of statewide significance necessary to continue Washington State's economic recovery in 2021.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

May 11, 2021 Presentation on 2020 Opportunity Youth Initiative Results and 2021 Proposal