



Employment and Career Development Services 2026 Request for Proposal (RFP) Organization Narrative Form

Submit Application to: cddapplications@cityofmadison.com

Deadline: 4:30PM August 3rd, 2026

Official submission date and time will be based on the time stamp from the CDD Applications' inbox. Late applications will not be accepted.

The intent of this RFP application is for applicant organizations to have the opportunity to apply for funding towards programs/services under the umbrella of the Employment and Career Development Service Area in the Community Resources Unit. There are four priority areas in the Employment RFP, one of which has 2 sub-areas:

- Youth Employment
 - Programs and Services
 - Wanda Fullmore Internship
- Young Adult Employment- Programs and Services
- Adult Employment- Programs and Services
- Southwest Madison Employment Center Operator

Organizations can apply for each program type. Please refer to the RFP guidelines for full program type descriptions.

Responses to this RFP should be complete but succinct. Materials submitted in addition to **Part 1 - Organization Narrative, Part 2 - Program Narrative(s), and Part 3 - Budget Workbook** **will not be considered in the evaluation of this proposal.**

Do not attempt to unlock/alter this form. The font should be no less than 11 pt.

If you need assistance related to the content of the application or are unclear about how to respond to any questions, please contact CDD staff: Yolanda Shelton-Morris, Community Resources Manager yshelton-morris@cityofmadison.com or Community Development Specialist Dominic Davis ddavis2@cityofmadison.com. We are committed to assisting interested organizations in understanding and working through this application and funding process.

If you have any questions or concerns that are related to technical aspects of this document, including difficulties with text boxes or auto fill functions, please contact Madeline Bohrod – mbohrod@cityofmadison.com.

APPLICANT TYPES

Every organization applying for funding **must submit an organizational history narrative per program** detailing their organization's background, mission, and vision (Questions 1-4 below).

SINGLE APPLICANTS

If your organization is applying for multiple programs, **each program application must be submitted separately with all the required submission documents** (See RFP Guidelines, Required Information and Content of Proposals).

JOINT/MULTI-AGENCY APPLICANTS

For those choosing to submit a joint/multi-agency proposal, **only** the designated **LEAD Agency** is required to:

- 1) Complete and submit responses to questions 5-9 below pertaining to organizational history and mission statement, partnership history, rationale for partner selection, division of roles and responsibilities, anticipated challenges, and any previous collaborations or partnerships.
- 2) Submit the organizations' history partnership narrative per priority area or program type.

Part 1 - Organization Narrative Form

***Note: Please use the grey text boxes when completing this form**

Legal Name of Organization:	Rooted WI, Inc.	Total Amount Requested:	\$ 155,179
All program(s) connected to your organization:	Program Name: Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program Amount Requested: \$ 155,179		
	Applicant Type: Single Agency Application Program Type: Youth Employment- Programs & Services List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	Program Name: Choose an item. Applicant Type: Choose an item. Program Type: Choose an item. List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	Program Name: Choose an item. Applicant Type: Choose an item. Program Type: Choose an item. List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	Program Name: Choose an item. Applicant Type: Choose an item. Program Type: Choose an item. List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	Program Name: Choose an item. Applicant Type: Choose an item. Program Type: Choose an item. List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	Program Name: Choose an item. Applicant Type: Choose an item. Program Type: Choose an item. List Program Partner(s) (if applicable):		
	<i>If you are applying for more than four programs, please contact Dominic Davis Ddavis2@cityofmadison.com</i>		
Contact Person for application (Joint	Hedi Rudd	Email: hedi@rootedwi.org	

Applications - Lead Org):			
Organization Address:	517 E Badger Road, Madison, WI 53713	Telephone:	608-957-9352
501 (c) 3 Status:	☒ Yes ☐ No	Fiscal Agent (<i>if no</i>)	

Single and Lead Agency Qualifications: Complete this section if you are applying as a SINGLE AGENCY or serving as the LEAD AGENCY in a joint/multi-agency application.

1. Briefly describe your organization's history, core mission, and experience providing services relevant to this proposal.

If applicable, highlight any work related to crisis intervention, prevention, or serving the proposed population. Please keep your response concise (approximately 1–2 paragraphs).

Rooted WI, Inc. is a Madison-based nonprofit that grows community-led food systems through urban agriculture education, food production, and land access. Formed in 2020 through the merger of Center for Resilient Cities and Community GroundWorks, Rooted has nearly 30 years of combined experience connecting youth and families to opportunities that build skills, leadership, and community resilience. Through programs at Troy Farm, Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm, the Madison School Farm, school gardens, and community sites across Madison, Rooted serves thousands of youth annually with hands-on learning, workforce development, and food systems education.

Rooted has extensive experience supporting youth from historically underserved communities through paid employment, career exploration, and skill-building opportunities. Since 2018, our youth employment programs have provided meaningful work experiences in urban agriculture, food access, community engagement, and leadership development. Participants gain transferable job skills, build relationships with caring adult mentors, and contribute to projects that strengthen their neighborhoods. Rooted also has experience serving justice-involved youth through a longstanding partnership with Wisconsin's Grow Academy, where staff provide agricultural and culinary education as part of a comprehensive rehabilitative program.

2. Describe your organization's experience implementing programming aligned with the Employment Services and Career Development RFP Guidelines.

Please include specific examples relevant to the programs proposed in this application. If applicable, list all the current Employment programs your organization operates, along with their inception dates.

Rooted has more than a decade of experience providing employment, workforce development, and career exploration opportunities for youth and young adults in Madison. Our approach combines paid work experience, mentorship, leadership development, and hands-on skill building through urban agriculture, food production, education, and community engagement. We prioritize serving youth who face systemic barriers to employment, including youth from low-income households, youth of color, immigrant youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and justice-involved youth. Through long-standing partnerships with schools, neighborhood centers, community organizations, and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, we create accessible pathways for young people to gain work experience, build confidence, and explore future educational and career opportunities.

Current employment and career development programs include:

- Department of Corrections Grow Academy Agricultural Education Program (2014–present): Rooted provides agricultural and culinary education to justice-involved youth participating in Wisconsin's Grow Academy residential treatment program. Youth build technical skills, workplace habits, teamwork, and leadership while preparing for successful transitions back into their communities.
- Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program (2019–present): Rooted employs high school youth in paid positions at Troy Kids' Garden, Madison School Farm, and Badger Rock Neighborhood Center. Participants gain experience in food production, customer service, public engagement, food distribution, leadership, and community-based work while receiving mentorship from staff and community partners. Since its inception, the program has expanded from a single site to multiple locations and includes school-year and summer employment opportunities.

Rooted's youth employment model is intentionally designed as a career pathway. Youth often begin as participants in programs before transitioning into paid employment opportunities as teenagers. Once employed, youth receive individualized mentorship, workplace training, career exploration opportunities, and exposure to fields including agriculture, education, culinary arts, environmental stewardship, community development, and entrepreneurship. Historically, the program has also included financial literacy training, banking access, First Aid and ServSafe certifications, climate and sustainability education, and connections to educational opportunities through MMSD and Madison College.

Rooted has demonstrated success in retaining youth across multiple years and supporting advancement into leadership roles, higher-paying employment opportunities, youth apprenticeships, and post-secondary education pathways. By combining paid work experience with strong relationships, individualized support, and meaningful community impact, Rooted helps young people build the skills, confidence, and professional networks needed for long-term success.

- 3. Describe any significant changes or shifts at your agency in the past two years:** This may include changes in leadership, turnover of management positions, strategic planning efforts, or expansion/loss of funding and/or staff. Please describe how these changes may impact your agency's ability to provide the proposed services. If there are no changes to the report, write "No Changes."

Since the last City of Madison Employment Services funding cycle, Rooted has undergone a significant leadership transition. At the end of 2023, longtime Executive Director Marcia Caton Campbell retired after helping guide the organization through the 2020 merger that created Rooted. On January 1, 2024, Rooted transitioned to a Co-Executive Director model, with Ginny Hughes and Hedi Rudd stepping into leadership.

The Co-Executive Director structure builds on Rooted's longstanding collaborative leadership approach and aligns leadership responsibilities with each director's expertise. Ginny Hughes oversees finance, operations, organizational systems, and administration, while Hedi Rudd leads external relations, community partnerships, communications, and fundraising. This structure has strengthened organizational resilience by distributing leadership responsibilities and ensuring continuity across programs and operations.

Over the past two years, Rooted has also engaged in risk management and organizational development efforts focused on long-term financial sustainability, staff retention, program quality, and community impact. While the organization continues to navigate a challenging funding environment, Rooted has successfully secured several new public and private funding sources, expanded key food access and youth programming initiatives, and invested in organizational systems that improve effectiveness and accountability.

- 4. Describe any anticipated changes or shifts at your agency in the next two years.** Please describe how these changes may impact your agency's ability to provide the proposed services. If there are no changes to the report, write "No Changes."

Over the next two years, Rooted anticipates several organizational developments that will strengthen our ability to deliver high-quality youth employment and career development services. One significant change is the continued strengthening of our youth leadership pipeline. We are intentionally creating clearer pathways for youth to progress from participation in school and community-based programs into paid employment, leadership opportunities, and future careers in food systems, education, environmental stewardship, and community development. This work includes strengthening partnerships with schools, community centers, workforce development organizations, and post-secondary institutions to expand career exploration and skill-building opportunities for youth.

In addition, Rooted is implementing recommendations from recent strategic planning efforts focused on financial sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and program impact. These efforts include diversifying revenue sources, strengthening evaluation systems, and investing in staff development and cross-training. These changes will increase organizational stability and position Rooted to continue providing responsive, high-quality employment services that meet the evolving needs of Madison youth and young adults. We do not anticipate any changes that would negatively impact our ability to provide the proposed services. These planned investments are expected to strengthen program delivery, deepen participant support, and increase Rooted's capacity to serve youth over the coming years.

5. Describe your organization's required qualifications, education, and training for program staff.

Include how your organization supports staff in meeting these requirements and any ongoing professional development opportunities offered (e.g., trauma-informed care, culturally responsive services, etc.).

Rooted values both formal qualifications and lived experience when hiring program staff. Because our employment and career development programs are relationship-based and community-centered, we seek staff who can build trust with young people from diverse backgrounds while supporting their personal and professional growth. Minimum qualifications for youth employment program staff typically include experience working with adolescents and young adults, strong communication and organizational skills, demonstrated reliability and follow-through, commitment to equity and inclusion, and experience working with diverse communities. Experience in youth development, workforce development, education, community engagement, urban agriculture, food systems, or related fields is preferred. Staff working directly with youth must successfully complete a background check.

Rooted prioritizes hiring staff who reflect the communities we serve and who bring a combination of professional expertise and lived experience. Many staff members have backgrounds in education, youth development, community organizing, environmental education, food systems, or workforce development. Several current staff members began their involvement with Rooted as program participants, volunteers, or community members, bringing valuable firsthand understanding of participants' experiences. All new staff participate in our Rooted in Racial Equity onboarding training series, which explores the history of agriculture, food systems, and community development through a racial equity lens. The training examines national, state, and local histories of inequity, introduces concepts such as food justice and food sovereignty, and helps staff understand how Rooted's mission and programs contribute to more equitable food systems and communities. This shared foundation ensures that all staff approach their work with a common understanding of Rooted's values and commitment to racial justice.

Rooted provides each program team with a professional development allocation and encourages staff to pursue trainings, conferences, certifications, and learning opportunities that align with both their individual interests and organizational goals. Staff are also supported through cross-training, peer learning, collaborative leadership

practices, and ongoing coaching from supervisors. These investments help ensure staff have the knowledge, skills, and cultural competency necessary to provide high-quality, youth-centered employment and career development services.

Joint/Multi-Agency Qualifications: *Fill out if you are **THE LEAD AGENCY** in the Joint/Multi-Agency Application **ONLY***

Program name:

Program type: Choose an item.

List all joint or partner applicants involved in this program and include their website links (for reference to their mission and vision statements)

- 6. Provide an overview of your organization's partnership history with the collaborating agency or agencies.**
When and how did the partnership(s) begin, and what collaborative initiatives or projects have you worked on together in the past?
- 7. Explain the rationale for partnering with the agency or agencies identified in this application.**
What unique strengths or resources does each organization contribute, and how do these assets complement one another in achieving the goals of the proposed program?
- 8. Describe how roles and responsibilities will be divided between your organization and the collaborating agency or agencies in the proposed program.** How will each partner contribute to program design, implementation, and evaluation?
- 9. Outline any anticipated challenges or barriers related to the partnership and describe how you plan to address them collaboratively.**
- 10. If applicable, describe any past collaborations your organization has had with agencies providing Employment Services.** What lessons or insights did you gain from those experiences and how will they inform you in your approach to the current partnership?



Employment and Career Development Services 2026 Request for Proposal (RFP) Program Narrative Form

Submit Application to: cddapplications@cityofmadison.com

Deadline: 4:30PM August 3rd, 2026

Official submission date and time will be based on the time stamp from the CDD Applications' inbox. Late applications will not be accepted.

Program Narrative Form **MUST be completed for EACH PROGRAM** for which you are asking for funds.

JOINT/MULTI-AGENCY APPLICANTS

Only the designated 'LEAD AGENCY' is required to submit the Program Narrative form on behalf of each of the identified partners listed in the application.

Responses to this RFP should be complete but succinct. Materials submitted in addition to **Part 1 - Organization Narrative, Part 2 - Program Narrative(s), and Part 3 - Budget Workbook** **will not be considered in the evaluation of this proposal.**

Do not attempt to unlock/alter this form. The font should be no less than 11 pt.

If you need assistance related to the **content of the application** or are unclear about how to respond to any questions, please contact CDD staff: Yolanda Shelton-Morris, Community Resources Manager yshelton-morris@cityofmadison.com or Community Development Specialist Dominic Davis ddavis2@cityofmadison.com. We are committed to assisting interested organizations in understanding and working through this application and funding process.

If you have any questions or concerns that are related to **technical aspects** of this document, including difficulties with text boxes or auto fill functions, please contact Madeline Bohrod – mbohrod@cityofmadison.com.

Part 2 - Program Narrative Form

Program Name:	Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program	Total Amount Requested for this Program:	\$ 155.179
Legal Name of Organization:	Rooted WI, Inc.	Total amount Requested for Lead/Single Applicant	\$ 155,179
Legal Name of Partner(s) (Joint/Multi-Agency Applicants only):		Total Amount Requested for Partner 1:	\$
		Total Amount Requested for Partner 2:	\$
		Total Amount Requested for Partner 3*:	\$
Program Contact: Lead Organization Contact	Hedi Rudd	Email: hedi@rootedwi.org	Phone: 608 240 0409
Program Type: Select ONE Program Type for this form.			
☒ Youth Employment- Programs and Services ☐ Youth Employment- Wanda Fullmore Internship ☐ Young Adult Employment- Programs and Services ☐ Adult Employment- Programs and Services ☐ Southwest Madison Employment Center Operator			
PLEASE NOTE: Separate applications are required for each distinct/stand-alone program. Programs are considered distinct/stand-alone if the participants, staff and program schedule are separate from other programs, rather than an activity or pull-out group.			

1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- A. Need: What specific need(s) in the City of Madison does this program aim to address? Please cite the data or community input used to support your response.

Despite Madison's strong economy, opportunity is not shared equally. The Kids Forward Race to Equity: 10-Year Report found that Black Dane County residents continue to earn less, are more likely to work in low-wage jobs, are four times less likely to own homes than White residents with similar incomes, and continue to experience disproportionately high rates of poverty. While some economic indicators have improved over the past decade, the report concludes that a lack of shared prosperity continues to limit economic opportunity for many Black residents and families in Dane County. Other communities of color experience similar disparities in Madison, and Rooted hears stories about these inequities frequently directly from families and other community organizations we work with across our organization. Rooted sees these inequities reflected in the lives of the young people we work with every day across Madison's north, south, and east sides. We follow the lead of those most impacted in our communities through co-creating programming and initiatives that reflect what our community shares that they want and need. Some of the most consistent requests have been for positive, relationship-based, culturally relevant, experiential, engaging programming and employment opportunities where youth are learning life skills that contribute to the well-being of themselves, their families and their community.

Many participants in the Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program are seeking their first paid job and have limited access to professional networks, mentors, reliable transportation, or workplaces where they feel a sense of belonging and have an opportunity to make positive change in their own community. Our Youth Employment Program addresses these barriers by providing

paid, low-barrier jobs in urban agriculture coupled with workforce development skills. Youth leave the program with meaningful work experience, more confidence, expanded professional networks, and a clearer pathway toward future education, employment, and upward mobility.

- B. Goal Statement: What is the overarching goal of your program in response to the identified need? How does this goal align with the scope, priorities, and desired outcomes described in the RFP guidelines?

Rooted's goal is to cultivate the next generation of leaders with a focus on food, farming, and community service as a vehicle for youth development. We believe meaningful work can do more than prepare young people for a job: it can help them discover their strengths, build lasting relationships and develop social/emotional growth, contribute to their communities, help them develop transferable skills, and gain the confidence and skills to become capable leaders with the power to create positive change. Our program gives youth the tools and agency to be active participants in working towards food justice and food sovereignty. We provide opportunities that help them build job skills, learn how to grow food, address racial food disparities, understand food policies and processes, and different ways they can positively impact healthy food access in their communities. Rooted staff guide youth through many different aspects of the food system, including agriculture, culinary arts, food justice, and community engagement and whenever possible, staff follow our youths' lead to help them gain experience and develop skills around their interests. We not only want youth to have a means of earning income, but to understand their power in addressing food system-related issues and to support them in deepening their experience and skills in the areas of the food system they are most interested in.

This approach aligns with the city's priorities by providing paid employment experiences that foster upward mobility while helping youth build the confidence, leadership, and transferable skills needed for long-term success. At the same time, youth make tangible contributions through developing life skills in growing and preparing healthy food that can benefit themselves, their families, and their community, increasing food access in Madison's neighborhoods that need it most, being involved in urban agriculture education for people of all ages, and supporting stronger, more connected neighborhoods.

- C. Program Summary Briefly summarize your proposed program, including the population served, core services or activities, where and how services will be delivered, and key expected outcomes. This should provide a high-level snapshot of the program.

Rooted's Youth Employment Program began in 2018 at Rooted's Badger Rock location and with funding support from the City of Madison, expanded across Rooted programs in 2022. The program provides paid employment and workforce development opportunities for Madison youth ages 14–21, with priority given to youth who face barriers to employment, including those from low-income households and historically underserved communities. Youth are employed across Rooted's three urban farms on Madison's north, south, and east sides, where they gain hands-on experience in urban agriculture, farm-based education, food production, food access, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

Alongside meaningful paid work, participants receive mentorship from trusted adults, leadership development, financial literacy, career exploration, and opportunities to build transferable workplace skills such as advocacy, grant-writing, multi-media skill building, communication, teamwork, problem-solving and creativity, and managing responsibility. Youth contribute to strengthening Madison's local food system by growing and distributing fresh produce, supporting community events, mentoring younger kids, and helping expand access to healthy food in their neighborhoods. The program prepares participants for future employment, education, and leadership opportunities while fostering confidence, connection, and a lasting commitment to supporting the well-being of their communities.

This proposal will expand the program by increasing youth wages from \$12/hour to \$15/hour, adding two youth positions focused on production agriculture at Rooted's Troy Farm location, expanding two summer positions at Rooted's Madison School Farm location to include spring and fall, and increasing summer employment by 10 hours per week per participant in response to feedback from current and former youth employees who have requested additional work experience and income. Rooted also proposes adding a partnership with Madison College to offer youth employees a 'Mastering Mindfulness' course series to deepen social emotional development and give them tools to develop deeper relationships, live more mindfully, use their strengths, create positive habits and increase resilience overall. This series will also allow them to receive a digital badge, three college credits and a Mindful

Leadership Certificate while fostering skills that will benefit them now and throughout their lives regardless of what paths they ultimately pursue and give them some tools for managing the increased stress and anxiety many youth have shared they are experiencing currently.

The program will include a school year cohort of five youth at Rooted's Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm location, a growing season (spring-fall) cohort of three youth at Rooted's Madison School Farm location, and a summer cohort of 12 total youth including four youth at Rooted's Troy Farm and Troy Kid's Garden, three youth at Madison School Farm and five youth at Badger Rock.

2. POPULATION SERVED

- A. Proposed Participant Population: Describe the intended service population that will be impacted by this program (e.g., location, ages, race/ethnicities, income ranges, English language proficiency, if applicable etc.) AND how has your org/agency engaged members of this population in designing, informing, developing, implementing the proposed program?

Rooted's Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program currently serves approximately 10-12 Madison youth ages 14–18 each year and through this proposal would expand the program to include two additional positions, with priority given to youth from low-income households and those who have historically faced barriers to employment. We recruit participants primarily from Madison's north, south and east side neighborhoods through connections with youth and families participating in Rooted programs, and our longstanding partnerships with Madison schools, neighborhood centers, and community organizations, with a focus on reaching youth from Black, Latino, Hmong, immigrant, and other historically underserved communities. Programming takes place across Rooted's north, south, and east side sites, including Troy Farm, Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm, and the Madison School Farm. Our three production and education sites are located in some of the most diverse and under-resourced neighborhoods in Madison which are also designated by the City of Madison as Healthy Food Access Improvement areas.

Youth voice is central to the design and implementation of this program. Rooted has built long-term relationships with many participants through our school garden, after-school, and summer education programs before they become employees. We regularly gather feedback through weekly one-on-one check-ins, group discussions, and end-of-season reflections, using youth input to shape program activities, leadership opportunities, and professional development offerings. Staff also work alongside youth every day, creating ongoing opportunities for participants to identify their interests, take on leadership roles, and influence program decisions. This culture of shared ownership ensures the program continues to evolve in response to the strengths, goals, and lived experiences of the young people we serve.

- B. 2024 Participant Demographics: If your organization has offered similar or related programming in 2024, please provide available demographic data for participants served. This can include data collected through formal programs, pilot efforts, or community-based work—even if it was not funded by the City. If exact numbers are not available, please provide your best estimates and briefly note how the data was gathered (e.g., intake forms, surveys, observations). If you are a new applicant and do not yet have demographic data, please indicate that below.

Race	# of Participants	% of Total Participants
White/Caucasian	6	40%
Black/African American	5	30%
Asian	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0

Multi-Racial	0	0
Balance/Other	4	27%
Total:	15	
Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	4	27%
Not Hispanic or Latino	11	73%
Total:	15	
Gender		
Man	9	60%
Woman	6	40%
Non-binary/GenderQueer		
Prefer Not to Say		
Total:	15	

Comments (optional):

- C. Language Access, Cultural Relevance: Please describe how the proposed program will serve non-English speaking youth, individuals, and families. Describe how the proposed program builds and sustains adequate access and cultural relevance needs.

Rooted is committed to ensuring all youth and families can fully participate in our programs. We strive to employ bilingual staff, and provide interpretation and translation for key communications, forms, and family engagement whenever needed. Our long-standing partnerships with families participating in Rooted programs, neighborhood centers, schools, and community organizations also help us communicate with families through trusted relationships and ensure they receive information in ways that are accessible and culturally appropriate.

Cultural relevance is woven throughout the program. Youth explore food, agriculture, and leadership through the lens of their own and others identities, cultures, and lived experiences. They help grow culturally relevant crops, prepare and share foods from a variety of cultural traditions, and learn how food systems connect to culture, health, and community. Our broader educational approach celebrates the diversity of the communities we engage with while encouraging youth to share their own knowledge, traditions, and perspectives. Whenever possible, we invite a diversity of farmers, chefs, artists and other community members to offer their experiences and perspectives as guest educators across our programs.

Our staff receive ongoing racial justice and culturally responsive youth development training through Rooted's Rooted in Racial Equity onboarding series which youth employees are also invited to join where we explore the past and present of agriculture through an equity lens where we take a broad look from a national perspective, narrow it down to a Wisconsin perspective, and finally zoom in on the Rooted perspective. Rooted staff also participated in the YWCA Creating Equitable Organizations Process, created a Strategic Roadmap facilitated by EQT in Design, participated in Soul Fire Farm's Uprooting Racism in the Food System training, and have the opportunity to participate in the YWCA Racial Justice Summit annually, along with other professional development opportunities. Rooted also has an ongoing Change Team comprised of staff across programs and tiers and representative of the diversity within our organization with a goal of assessing our organizational structure and culture through the lens of racial justice/equity and making recommendations for changes in advancement of this goal, such as looking at hiring practices, organizational culture, etc.

We also take our youth on many service learning trips to learn from a diverse group of people and organizations in the community doing work related to food, culture, and environmental stewardship. Here are a few examples; we worked with Rachel Byington, the Madison Historical Society's Tribal Liaison, and Marena Fox, an intern with the UW Indigenous Arts and Sciences Program at the Wisconsin Historical Archives, on a project to help plant and maintain their Traditional Care Garden featuring Native plants where the harms done by museums in acquiring items and human remains are acknowledged and space intentionally created for healing for the Native Community. We went to the Farley Center for Peace, Justice and Sustainability to learn about Urban Triage's Healthy Black Agriculture Program and to help harvest for their produce distribution for South side families. We went on a birding walk with Dexter Patterson, who founded the BIPOC Birding Club of Wisconsin to amplify the

importance of representation in outdoor spaces. We explored the UW Arboretum with Jasmine Banks and Christopher Kilgour, founder of Color in the Outdoors, with a focus on appreciating, advocating for equitable access, and celebrating diversity in outdoor spaces. We will be visiting Operation Fresh Start's Conservation Crew this summer to learn about other young people and programs supporting environmental conservation work. We visited the UW Allen Centennial Gardens to learn more about and help maintain their cultural foodways gardens uplifting crops relevant to many Native, Latino, Black and Asian food cultures. We worked with Sei and Melissa Kidau who grow culturally relevant crops as part of the Troy Farm Collaborative such as scotch bonnet peppers for Madison's Jamaican and Liberian residents.

Youth in our program have also been involved in creating videos for Rooted's virtual workshop series including interviews, cooking demos, gardening and farming techniques uplifting a diversity of people and organizations in the community and have also used this platform to share from their own experiences and cultures.

D. Recruitment and Engagement Strategy:

i. Recruitment & Outreach:

How does your program plan to recruit and reach members of the identified service population? Please describe any community outreach strategies, partnerships, or referral pathways you will use.

Rooted recruits youth through long-standing partnerships with Madison schools, neighborhood centers, and community organizations. Recruitment begins with youth who participate in our school garden, after-school, summer, and neighborhood-based programs, creating a natural pathway into paid employment. We also work closely with MMSD schools, community centers, and partner organizations to share opportunities with youth and families who may not otherwise have access to employment experiences.

To reach a broad and diverse pool of applicants, Rooted promotes opportunities through direct outreach by staff and referrals from teachers, counselors, neighborhood center staff, and youth-serving organizations. Because our staff maintain year-round relationships with youth and families, recruitment is highly relational rather than transactional. We intentionally reduce barriers by providing paid positions, locating worksites in neighborhoods where youth already live, offering flexible scheduling around school, and supporting transportation needs whenever possible. These trusted partnerships and relationship-based outreach strategies help ensure that youth who can benefit most from the program are aware of and able to participate. We have a commitment to prioritize two positions annually for graduates of the GROW Academy, a program for justice-involved youth who already have a relationship with Rooted as we provide an urban agriculture and culinary arts program to participants. We consistently have more interest in the program than we have the capacity to support and frequently hear feedback from youth and their families about the positive impact of this program.

ii. Addressing Barriers to Participation:

What specific barriers to participation (e.g., transportation, scheduling, language, trust) might the population face, and how does your program plan to address them?

Rooted recognizes that many youth face barriers that make it difficult to access traditional employment opportunities. Transportation is often a challenge, so we offer positions at multiple sites across Madison's north, south, and east sides to provide employment near where youth live, and pay for transportation to work as needed. We also coordinate schedules around school, family responsibilities, and extracurricular activities to make participation possible for youth with competing demands. Paid employment itself removes a significant barrier by ensuring youth can earn income while developing valuable workforce skills. Bilingual staff, translated materials when needed, and strong partnerships with schools and neighborhood organizations help reduce language and communication barriers.

We also recognize that a young person's first job can feel intimidating, particularly for youth who have had limited employment opportunities or who have not always experienced workplaces where they feel welcomed and supported. Our program emphasizes relationship-building, mentorship, and hands-on learning in a supportive team environment. Staff work alongside youth every day, providing coaching, encouragement, and regular feedback while fostering a culture of belonging and mutual respect. Rooted staff already have trusting

relationships built with many of the youth who join our youth employment program because many have been involved in our programs as elementary and/or middle school students. It is a testament to the impact of the program that many of our youth employees chose to stay with the program throughout their high school careers despite the fact that they may be able to find higher-paying positions elsewhere. We have also experienced youth who have aged out of the program and have then applied to and been hired into adult staff entry-level positions at Rooted and would ultimately like to create a young adult program as an intermediate step between youth employment and adult employment.

iii. **Enrollment & Engagement Approach:**

Describe how participants will be enrolled and engaged in the program. Include any tools, processes, or approaches you will use that are responsive to the needs and preferences of the population served (e.g., Individual Service Plan (ISP), intake forms, assessment tools, culturally responsive practices).

Youth are enrolled through a simple application and interview process designed to assess interest, readiness, and goals rather than requiring prior work experience which can be a barrier for first-time employment. Rooted works closely with families, schools, neighborhood centers, and community partners to identify youth who would benefit from the program, and staff provide additional support throughout the application and onboarding process as needed. We consistently have a waiting list of youth interested in participating in the program, many of whom have come up through Rooted programs, already have trust-based relationships with Rooted staff, and want to go deeper into some aspect of food systems work. New employees participate in an orientation that introduces workplace expectations, safety procedures, communication practices, and the Rooted in Racial Equity Onboarding training. Participants also have one-on-one support to complete employment paperwork and establish direct deposit and other employment-related requirements. Returning youth employees also help train and orient new youth employees, providing opportunities for youth to step into leadership roles while building peer-to-peer support and relationship building that fosters a positive and comfortable workplace culture built on mutual respect and support.

Each semester youth and adult staff co-create a shared agreements document, a living document that can be changed with the whole group's consent, to describe what the group collectively agrees is needed to create a positive, supportive, welcoming and productive work place that we can refer back to when issues arise that need to be addressed and to keep us accountable to being in right relationship with one another. Culturally responsive practices, restorative practices, youth voice, and relationship-building are integrated throughout the program, ensuring participants feel supported, valued, and empowered to shape their own learning experience.

3. PROGRAM LOCATION, DESCRIPTION, AND STRUCTURE

- A. Activities: Describe your proposed program activities. Please be sure to specify your program type, i.e. shelter services, workshops, helplines, classes, etc.,).

Our Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program is a paid workforce development and youth leadership program that combines meaningful employment, hands-on learning, career exploration, leadership development, and mentorship through urban agriculture and community food systems. Youth work alongside experienced staff at Troy Farm, Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm, and Madison School Farm, where they gain real-world job experience while contributing to their communities. Returning youth take on increasing leadership responsibilities by mentoring newer participants, helping lead projects, and shaping their own learning experience as they progress through the program.

Throughout the year, youth choose one or more employment tracks based on their interests. In Food Production, youth gain experience in all aspects of operating an urban farm, including planting, cultivation, harvesting, post-harvest handling, food safety, and produce distribution. In Garden and Culinary Education, youth work with K-8 students from schools, neighborhood centers, and community organizations to deliver hands-on garden and cooking education. In Community Engagement, youth support Rooted's community dinners, food pantry, produce

distributions, neighborhood farm stands, community markets, Garden Nights, and other events that increase access to healthy food while strengthening relationships across Madison.

The program intentionally brings youth from all three worksites together throughout the summer for shared learning and professional development. Weekly activities include service-learning field experiences with organizations advancing food justice, environmental stewardship, community engagement, and equitable access to nature. Youth also participate in financial empowerment education with Summit Credit Union and CEOs of Tomorrow, CPR and First Aid certification, digital media production through the Madison Public Library Bubbler, and a new partnership with Madison College to complete the Mastering Mindfulness series. This three-course sequence allows youth to earn college credit, digital badges, and a Mindful Leadership Certificate while developing skills in self-awareness, resilience, and leadership.

Youth are encouraged to move beyond employment into leadership through authentic, community-based projects. Many participate in By Youth For Youth (BYFY) by writing grants, managing project budgets, and implementing projects they have designed to improve their communities. Previous youth-led projects include designing and building a chicken coop, aquaponics system, season extension structures, community garden raised beds, and a food forest. These projects culminate in multimedia presentations that allow youth to share their work and its impact with the broader community.

Youth also have opportunities to engage in regional and statewide leadership initiatives. Through Wisconsin 4-H's Regional Youth Leadership Advisory Team (RYLAT), participants collaborate with youth from across the North Central United States to conduct Youth Participatory Action Research addressing food system challenges in their communities. Participants build leadership skills and connections with other diverse youth across the midwest through virtual meetings, regional gatherings, and the national IGNITE Conference in Washington, D.C to explore food systems careers and build relationships with youth from across the country. Rooted youth also created a Youth Climate Leadership Cohort with support from the Wisconsin Climate Action Network, where they gather community input on climate priorities, develop educational workshops and curriculum, and present their findings to community members and statewide audiences to help inform statewide climate policy and action.

Throughout the year, participants continue their employment while expanding educational and career opportunities. Through the MMSD Experiential Learning Program, eligible youth earn high school credit, complete Employability Skills Development Plans, participate in weekly reflections, and earn Employability Skills Certificates. Youth also support community nutrition programming for older adults, assist with Rooted's in-person and virtual cooking and gardening workshops, and continue financial literacy, leadership, and career exploration activities throughout the fall and spring semesters.

Youth share with us the positive impacts of the Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program regularly. Three of our youth employees shared that they were accepted into the Madison College STEM program for their junior and senior years of high school allowing them to receive a high school diploma and Associate's degree in part due to the experiences they were able to put in their applications from their experiences at Rooted. Many of our youth employees have gone on to secondary education, many with full scholarships, again citing experiences at Rooted as instrumental in providing experiences for them to include in their applications.

Just this year, three youth who we have worked with for seven years, first as students then as youth employees, are going on to college. Diego was accepted to UW-Madison to study Political Science informed by the community engagement and advocacy work he was involved with at Rooted where he also secured an internship in state government with State Rep Francesca Hong, and this summer he was hired as a Fitchburg Neighborhood Navigator to share resources with Fitchburg residents. Henry is going to UW-Whitewater to study Agriculture and Forestry, he shared this path was directly connected to the passion for the natural world and food and ecological systems he developed through his experience at Rooted. Dahjenae, who was one of five youth to receive recognition for leadership at the Common Council Meeting for the Juneteenth resolution, was accepted at Edgewood College where she will pursue a path in the medical field tracking with the community support work she was most drawn to in her time at Rooted. One of our former youth employees who aged out of the program four years ago still visits regularly and reported that his experience with Rooted where he always preferred hands-on work helped him secure well paid employment in the trades. He is still gainfully employed and supporting himself while also able to contribute financially to supporting his parents.

This proposal builds on an already successful and highly sought-after program while responding directly to feedback from current and former participants. Youth consistently shared that they wanted more time to build skills, contribute to meaningful projects, and earn additional income. In response, Rooted will increase youth wages, add two new food production positions at Troy Farm, extend two summer positions to include spring and fall, increase summer employment by 10 additional paid hours per participant, and launch the Madison College Mastering Mindfulness certificate series. These enhancements will provide deeper workforce experiences,

stronger educational pathways, expanded leadership opportunities, and greater economic benefit for participating youth while strengthening Rooted's impact on the community.

- B. Employment and Career Development Equity Areas: Describe your agency's ability to serve one or more of the equity areas highlighted in [Appendix A: Employment and Career Development Equity Area Map](#). Your agency does NOT need to be located within an equity priority area however you should address and how you will serve individuals in the areas. Please include the general location (use a nearby landmark like a school, streets, neighborhood name, etc.). How will residents in these areas access transportation if needed?

Rooted serves youth across multiple priority areas at our three urban farms: Troy Farm, Badger Rock Urban Farm, and the Madison School Farm. Troy Farm is located on Madison's Northside near the intersection of Troy Drive and North Sherman Avenue, within and adjacent to several of the City's core equity priority areas. Youth are recruited from nearby neighborhoods through partnerships with Northport and Packer Community Learning Centers, Vera Court Neighborhood Center, Kennedy Heights Neighborhood Center, and other Northside organizations. Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm is co-located with Badger Rock Middle School and Lori Mann Carey Elementary near Rimrock Road and the Beltline, serving youth and families from South Madison neighborhoods identified as a Low High School Graduation Rates Priority Area on the City's map. Youth are recruited through our daily partnerships with the schools, neighborhood residents, and nearby community organizations. Madison School Farm, located adjacent to Kennedy Elementary School on Madison's east side, serves youth from Eastside schools and neighborhoods, including several designated equity priority areas.

Rooted intentionally places youth at the site that is most accessible to them whenever possible, reducing transportation barriers while strengthening neighborhood connections. All three worksites are accessible by Madison Metro bus service and are within biking or walking distance for many participants. Recognizing that transportation remains a barrier for some youth, Rooted also includes transportation assistance in the program budget to help participants travel to and from work. Staff work individually with youth and families to identify transportation solutions, ensuring that transportation is never a barrier to participation.

- C. Program/Service Schedule and Location: Please fill out the charts below to describe the schedule for your proposed program or service, including days and hours that services, classes, workshops, or other activities will be operating (if your staff operates during varied hours, please give your best overview of when your staff are interacting with clients).
- i. If your program operates at **multiple locations** with the **same schedule**, please list all locations TOGETHER in **TABLE 1** and include the schedule of operation
 - ii. If your program operates at **multiple locations** with **different schedules**, use **TABLE 2 in addition** to table 1 to detail each location's unique schedule
 - iii. If you are submitting a JOINT/MULTI-AGENCY application:
 - a) Use **TABLE 1**, if the service operates at **multiple locations** with the **same hours** (Please list all locations)
 - b) Use **TABLE 2**, in addition to table 1, if the service is operating at **multiple locations** with **different hours**

Table 1:

PROGRAM LOCATION(s):		
Day of the Week	Start Time	End Time

Monday	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Tuesday	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
	4pm (school year)	7pm (school year)
Wednesday	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
	4pm (school year)	7pm (school year)
Thursday	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Friday	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Saturday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	9am (school year)	1pm (school year)
Sunday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

****If hours are different than those listed, please use rows below drop-down list***

Table 2: (Optional/if needed)

PROGRAM LOCATION(s):		
Day of the Week	Start Time	End Time
Monday	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Tuesday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Wednesday	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Thursday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Friday	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Saturday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Sunday	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

****If hours are different than those listed, please use rows below drop-down list***

If applicable, please list the third and any subsequent service locations. Include the specific program schedule(s) differences as compared to the programs included in the tables above:

Table 1 is for Badger Rock. Table 2 is for Troy Kids' Garden/Troy Farm. The Madison School Farm schedule is as follows: Monday (summer) 9am-3pm; Tuesday (summer) 8:30-3:30; Tuesday (spring/fall): 4-6:30pm; Thursday (summer) 8:30-3:30; Thursday (spring/fall): 4-6:30pm; Friday (summer) 8:30-3:30

4. ENGAGEMENT COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

- A. Family Engagement: Describe how your program engaged youth, individuals, and families in the development of this proposal, and how they will be involved in the implementation and assessment of the program activities.

Rooted developed this proposal based on ongoing input from youth employees, families, staff, and community partners gathered through regular check-ins, conversations, end-of-season reflections, and informal feedback throughout the year. Current and former youth employees consistently shared that they wanted more hours during the summer to earn additional income, to earn higher wages comparable to other positions available, and to participate in the entire growing season from spring through fall. As a result, this proposal includes an increased hourly wage, an increase of 10 additional paid summer hours for each youth participant and extending employment at Rooted's Madison School Farm location to include spring and fall. Staff also identified an opportunity to expand learning by adding two youth positions at Troy Farm, providing participants with hands-on experience in commercial-scale food production and exposing them to additional career pathways within agriculture and the local food system. In addition, the Madison College series added in this proposal will give youth the opportunity to start building towards secondary education while fostering skills that will benefit them now and throughout their lives regardless of what paths they ultimately pursue and give them some tools for managing the increased stress and anxiety many youth have shared they are experiencing currently.

Family engagement begins before employment through the application and onboarding process and continues throughout the program. Families receive program information, employment paperwork, and ongoing communication from staff, and are invited to participate in community events, celebrations, volunteer opportunities, and youth showcases throughout the season. Youth play an active role in implementing the program by helping shape projects, taking on leadership responsibilities, mentoring peers, and sharing ideas for future improvements. Program assessment is equally participatory. Staff conduct regular check-ins, facilitate end-of-season reflection activities, and gather feedback from youth and families to evaluate participant experiences and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. This ongoing cycle of listening, adapting, and responding ensures the program remains relevant to the needs, interests, and goals of the youth and families we serve.

- B. Neighborhood/Community Engagement: Describe how your program engaged neighborhood residents or other relevant community stakeholders in the development of this proposal, and how they will be involved in the implementation and assessment of the program activities.

Feedback gathered through conversations with school partners, parents of current and former Rooted youth employees, neighborhood center staff, youth-serving organizations, volunteers, and farm staff helped shape the proposed program. Because Rooted operates year-round in the neighborhoods we serve, community feedback is continuous and informs both program design and day-to-day operations.

Community stakeholders are integral to implementing and evaluating the program. Rooted partners with schools, neighborhood centers, community organizations, and volunteers to recruit participants, provide referrals, host programming, and connect youth to additional resources and career opportunities. Community members also engage with youth through volunteer events, community meals and markets, produce distributions, and educational activities, allowing participants to develop workplace skills while making visible contributions to their neighborhoods. Throughout the program year, Rooted gathers feedback from partners through regular meetings, informal conversations, and program evaluations to assess community needs, participant experiences, and opportunities for improvement.

Rooted youth also have many opportunities to make connections with and learn from people and organizations in the community through our service learning field trips, their involvement in doing interviews with community members for our virtual workshop series, the opportunity to engage with farmers, chefs and educators Rooted

invites to join as guest educators, and through building relationships in the community at our many community events. See letters of commitment and our response to 2.C for some examples. All of these people and organizations have expressed enthusiasm for this program and a desire to continue to engage with Rooted youth employees in the future.

C. Collaboration: Please complete the table below and respond to the narrative questions regarding program collaboration with community partners.

Note:

- Single applicants **MUST** list all partners/collaborators below and include a letter of commitment/support from the agency partner highlighting the ways in which the agency will support the program.
- Joint Lead applicants **MUST** include the program partners list, their role & responsibilities, contact person, and attach a Memorandum of Understanding MOU.

Partner Organization	Role & Responsibilities	Contact Person	Signed MOU (Yes/No)?
By Youth for Youth	Annual outreach with dates and priorities for BYFY grants, as well as opportunities for youth to apply to join the youth team to determine grant priorities, review proposals and recommend funding Rooted commits to an annual presentation for BYFY youth by staff and youth employees hosted at our Badger Rock Neighborhood Center location to share about Rooted and some of the projects funded through the BYFY program	Taylor Seal-UW Extension Nathan Beck-City of Madison Michelle Van Asten-United Way of Dane County	Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow
CEO's of Tomorrow	CEO's will share their Financial Literacy Curriculum as part of the 3 financial literacy trainings offered each year. Their Youth Money Mentors, age-level peers with Rooted's Youth Employees, will deliver the financial literacy trainings. They will continue to offer year-round Rooted Youth Employees the chance to be involved in the semester-long social entrepreneurship class we offer to	Lorena Guimaraens-Assistant Director CEOs of Tomorrow, Inc.	Lorena Guimaraens-Assistant Director CEOs of Tomorrow, Inc.

	Badger Rock Middle School students.		
Wisconsin Department of Corrections	Work with Rooted staff to identify and mentor potential youth employee candidates. Provide assistance to GROW Academy students/graduates to complete appropriate employment paperwork. Help facilitate transportation (when appropriate) to and from worksites for GROW Academy students/graduates. Provide Rooted staff with general data concerning recidivism and violence prevention statistics relevant to program evaluation. This data will not provide any youth identifying information. Utilize GROW aftercare programming to assess employee performance and success. Ongoing support in identifying possible funding sources for program enhancement.	Jared Hoy-Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Corrections	Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow
MMSD	Review youth employees' monthly reflections (check-ins) and culminating projects. Award ¼-credit of high school credit for every 45 hours of work successfully completed by youth employees. Award an Employability Skills Certificate to youth employees who complete 90 hours of work.	Joe Gothard-Superintendent of Schools, Madison Metropolitan School District	Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow
Wisconsin 4-H for RYLAT (Regional Youth Leadership Advisory Team)	RYLAT schedules and facilitates regular Zoom meetings with RYLAT teams from participating states with a focus on building connections between youth, skill building and	Jill Jorgensen, WI 4-H Agriculture and Animal Science Specialist	Signed letter of commitment in hand; MOU to follow

	providing support around each team's regional projects Provides opportunities for travel to bi-annual face-to-face meetings hosted in the Spring and Fall of each year, including the annual IGNITE conference in Washington DC where youth from across the country explore food systems topics and careers.. All the traveling expenses will be covered RYLAT		
Summit Credit Union	Coordinate with Rooted and CEOs of Tomorrow to collectively provide a total of 4 financial literacy trainings per year for Rooted's youth employees. Offer opportunities for youth to start bank accounts with debit cards and set up direct deposit of their paycheck. Host an annual field trip for Rooted's youth employees so that they can meet staff, learn how to use ATM machines, and receive any additional support they need to establish a financial relationship with the credit union.	Hannah Altwegg- Financial Education Specialist Community Partners, Summit Credit Union	Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow

List any additional partners, their role & responsibilities, contract person and MOU information (if applicable):

1. The Madison Public Library Bubbler Program will Offer an 8 week program at Rooted's educational farming sites and the Madison Public Library media lab following youth employee's lead and interests to create a multi-media project of their choosing connected to the food system and their work at Rooted. Rooted offers programming in partnership with the Department of Corrections Grow Academy Program, as does the Bubbler. Rooted is committing to hold some spaces in our Youth Employment Program open for Grow Academy graduates and the Bubbler will offer support to these youth to step into leadership roles through sharing what they have already learned with other Youth Employees as part of the 8 week program. Contact: Jesse Vieau-Teen Services Librarian, Madison Public Library; Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow.
2. Madison College will offer three one-credit courses, each offered twice (for 2 cohorts of up to 12 students) over a 5-year period. These courses would be considered custom contracts tailored to your schedules at your location. Each course would include a co-branded badge (Rooted + Madison College). These courses align to the

9-credit Mindful Leadership certificate as well as many programs across the college. Contact: Dr. Mark Thomas-Madison College Executive, Policy and Strategy; Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow.

3. Sustain Dane will plan one collaborative field trip each summer with their Powerful Teen Leaders and Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employees to build relationships and build applicable skills. SD's Powerful Teen Leaders go on a field trip to a Rooted site each summer to learn about the work in food access, land access and urban agriculture education through a lens of sustainability. Powerful Teen Leaders present to Rooted in Urban Agriculture students once annually about climate change and different careers they have learned about through their PTL programming. Contact: Claire Schaefer Oleksiak, Executive Director, Sustain Dane; Signed letter of support in hand; MOU to follow.

Additional partners include the many people and organizations youth engage with and learn from during service learning field trips, at our sites when community members join our programs as guest educators, on our farms with Rooted community gardeners, volunteers and program participants, community members they engage with at our many community events, and more. Our programs are embedded in the fabric of our community and the youth in our program benefit from all of these connections in both formal and informal ways.

How do these partnerships enhance this proposal?

Rooted's Youth Employment Program is strengthened by a diverse network of community partners that expand the opportunities available to youth far beyond traditional employment. These partners provide financial literacy, entrepreneurship education, academic credit, leadership development, multimedia storytelling, mentoring, and connections to future education and career pathways.

These partnerships also help Rooted reach and support youth who face the greatest barriers to employment. Schools, neighborhood organizations, and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections help recruit and mentor participants, reduce barriers such as transportation and employment paperwork, and provide ongoing support throughout the program. Community partners are actively engaged in implementation by delivering workshops, mentoring youth, providing educational and leadership opportunities, and helping evaluate program outcomes. This collaborative approach ensures the program reflects community priorities, leverages each partner's expertise, and creates a comprehensive workforce development experience that no single organization could provide alone.

What are the decision-making agreements with each partner?

Rooted serves as the lead agency and is responsible for overall program design, participant recruitment, employment, supervision, budgeting, and evaluation. Community partners contribute specialized expertise and services within their respective areas, including financial literacy, academic credit, leadership development, multimedia education, banking, and youth mentoring. Program decisions are made collaboratively through regular communication, with each partner responsible for delivering the activities outlined in their partnership agreement.

- D. Resource Linkage and Coordination: What resources are provided to youth, individuals, and families participants by your proposed program/service? How does the program coordinate and link participants to these resources?

Rooted's Youth Employment Program provides participants with a comprehensive network of support that extends beyond paid employment. Participants also gain exposure to entrepreneurship, multimedia storytelling, regional leadership opportunities, and specialized agricultural training, including expanded production farming

experience at Troy Farm through this proposal. Families receive information, referrals, and support throughout the program to help youth successfully participate and connect to additional community resources.

Staff work closely with each participant to identify interests, goals, and potential barriers, then connect youth with opportunities that best support their development. For example, youth are connected to peer-led financial literacy workshops through CEO's of Tomorrow and Summit Credit Union, academic credit through MMSD, multimedia and creative expression through the Madison Public Library Bubbler Program, leadership opportunities through By Youth For Youth and RYLAT, and additional mentoring and support for justice-involved youth through the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Grow Academy. Rooted ensures participants experience these resources as one connected pathway rather than a series of separate programs.

5. PROGRAM QUALITY, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES AND MEASUREMENT

A. Program Outputs – Please tell us how you are measuring your output data such as: unduplicated participants, program hours, program completion etc. Please see Guidelines for more examples.

- Unduplicated youth participants
- Total program hours
- Certifications or credentials earned

B. Program Outcomes

Please describe the data and the data source used to choose your outcome objectives:

Rooted's outcome objectives were developed using a combination of historical program data, City of Madison reporting requirements, and participant feedback. The selected outcomes align with the City's Youth Employment performance measures and reflect the knowledge, skills, and experiences that have consistently demonstrated positive impacts for participants, including workforce readiness, financial literacy, leadership development, credential attainment, and successful program completion.

Please complete the table(s) with your selected outcome objectives. Applicants must choose from the measurable outcomes listed in the RFP that correspond to the priority area for which they are applying. Please see the "Measures of Success" section of the RFP guidelines for a list. Applicants may propose additional program-specific outcomes they plan to track and evaluate. **Note: Outcome EXAMPLE Objective is not required and is ONLY meant to serve as an example outcome to reference as you complete the other tables**

Outcome EXAMPLE Objective: 75% of program participants obtained an industry recognized certificate by end of program.				
Performance Standard	Targeted Percent	75%	Targeted Number	90 of 120 clients
	Actual Percent	78%	Actual Number	94 out of 120 clients
Measurement Tool(s) and Comments: Client exit survey				
Methodology: The primary measurement tool was an exit survey that used open-ended and multiple-choice prompts to allow participants to elaborate on their experiences. Surveys were distributed to all program participants at time of exit from services/at the point of program completion, surveys are voluntary and anonymous.				
Outcome Objective #1: Youth will complete 90 hours or more of youth employment programming.				

Performance Standard	Targeted Percent	80%	Targeted Number	10 out of 12 youth
	Actual Percent		Actual Number	
Measurement Tool(s) and Comments: MOST Management Information System (MIS), attendance records, supervisor evaluations, and employment records.				
Methodology: Program completion will be documented through the MOST MIS using attendance, employment records, and supervisor verification that participants successfully fulfill program expectations annually.				

Outcome Objective #2: Participation in Financial Empowerment program				
Performance Standard	Targeted Percent	80%	Targeted Number	10 out of 12 youth
	Actual Percent		Actual Number	
Measurement Tool(s) and Comments: Workshop attendance records, MOST MIS, Summit Credit Union and CEOs of Tomorrow participation records.				
Methodology: Youth employees will participate in financial empowerment programming delivered through partnerships with Summit Credit Union and CEOs of Tomorrow. Training includes banking, budgeting, saving, direct deposit, and financial decision-making. Participation will be tracked through attendance records and documented in the MOST MIS.				

Outcome Objective #3: Youth-led end of summer/project presentation				
Performance Standard	Targeted Percent	100%	Targeted Number	12 out of 12 youth
	Actual Percent		Actual Number	
Measurement Tool(s) and Comments: Staff sign-off on project completion and completion recorded in MOST Management Information System (MIS).				
Methodology: Youth employees will collaborate to plan and deliver a presentation or culminating project, highlighting their work, leadership development, community impact, and personal growth. Presentations may include multimedia storytelling, project summaries, demonstrations, and reflections developed throughout the program. Staff will document participation through attendance records and observations, with participation recorded in the MOST MIS.				

To add additional outcome objectives, please copy and paste the table below as needed.

- C. **Data Tracking:** What data tracking systems are in place or will be in place to capture the information needed to document demographics, program activities, outcome measures, and expenses?

Rooted currently captures and reports data using the MOST Info System (MIS), a data tracking system used by the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) that works in collaboration with the City of Madison to create tracking systems and reports that can be used to track all details needed for the Rooted in Urban Agriculture Youth Employment Program including attendance, hours, wages, credits and credentials, financial literacy, demographics, narratives, outcomes and other related information. Rooted also uses quickbooks to track expenses for other aspects of the program, and BambooHR for human resources information such as timesheets and payroll.

6. PROGRAM STAFFING AND RESOURCES:

- A. **Program Staffing:** Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) – Include employees, with direct program implementation responsibilities. **Please be sure to list all required certifications and training.** FTE = % of 40 hours per week. Use chart below and use one line per individual employee.

Position Title	FTE	Required Certifications and Training	Location(s)
Education Director - Madison South		20%FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Badger Rock Urban Farm

Education Director - Madison North		9%FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Madison School Farm
Troy Kids' Garden Manager		3% FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Troy Farm, Madison School Farm
Badger Rock Assistant Farm and Education Manager		15% FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Badger Rock Urban Farm, Madison School Farm
Badger Rock Assistant Farm and Education Manager		15% FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Badger Rock Urban Farm
Troy Farm Manager		3% FTE; Mandated Reporter Training, First Aid and CPR	Troy Farm

- B. Volunteers: Describe your process for screening, training, and supervising volunteers who will have direct contact with program participants.

Rooted follows a comprehensive Child Protection Policy to ensure the safety and well-being of all youth participants. Volunteers who have direct contact with youth complete an application, participate in an interview, provide references appropriate to their level of responsibility, and undergo criminal background and child abuse registry checks before serving in the program. Volunteers are supervised by Rooted program staff and work within clearly established safety protocols, including the two-adult rule, appropriate staff-to-youth ratios, and ongoing oversight by Program Managers and Directors. Volunteers are never placed in roles beyond their training or level of responsibility, and all concerns related to child safety are addressed immediately in accordance with Rooted's reporting and response procedures.

- C. Other Program Resources Please list any other program resources or inputs (e.g., program space, transportation, equipment, or other supports) that are necessary for the success of your program. Are these resources currently in place? If not, describe your plan and timeline for securing them.

Rooted has the infrastructure, staffing, partnerships, and facilities necessary to successfully implement this program. Youth employment activities take place at Troy Farm, Badger Rock Neighborhood Center and Urban Farm, and Madison School Farm, providing established worksites equipped with gardens, production fields, tools, equipment, kitchen space, classrooms, and meeting areas. Youth also have access to personal protective equipment, hand tools, harvest supplies, food safety equipment, technology, and educational materials needed to participate safely and successfully. Rooted employs experienced program staff who provide supervision, mentorship, and workforce development throughout the program. Transportation assistance is included in the program budget to ensure youth can access employment opportunities regardless of transportation barriers. No additional facilities or major infrastructure are needed to implement this expansion.

7. BUDGET

- A. The budget workbook should be submitted with the proposal using the template provided in an Excel document or as a PDF. There are six tabs within the Excel spreadsheet: Cover Page, Board & Staff Demographics, Revenue, Expenses, Personnel, and Program Summary. **The Cover Page, Program Summary, and relevant Program Budgets must be submitted with this document for a proposal to be complete.**

Joint/Multi-Agency Applications

- B. The Lead Applicant will be responsible for submitting the Budget Workbook and Budget Narrative(s) alongside all required materials.
 - a. The budget template and budget narrative can be found on the [CDD Funding Opportunities Website](#).

8. If applicable, please complete the following:

A. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Disclose any potential conflict of interest due to any other clients, contracts, or property interests, e.g. direct connections to other funders, City funders, or potentially funded organizations, or with the City of Madison.

N/A

B. Disclosure of Contract Failures, Litigations

Disclose any alleged significant prior or ongoing contract failures, contract breaches, any civil or criminal litigation.

N/A

APPLICATION FOR 2026 EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROGRAMS**1. ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Legal Name of Organization	Rooted WI, Inc.
Mailing Address	517 E Badger Road, Madison WI 53713
Telephone	608 240 0409
FAX	
Director	Hedi Rudd
Email Address	hedi@rootedwi.org
Additional Contact	Ginny Hughes
Email Address	ginny@rootedwi.org
Legal Status	Private: Non-Profit
Federal EIN:	

2. PROPOSED PROGRAMS		2027	If currently City funded	
Program Name:	Letter	Amount Requested	2026 Allocation	Joint/Multi Application - SELECT Y/N
Youth Employment Program	A	\$155,179	\$55,000	No
Contact:	Hedi Rudd			
	B			
Contact:				
	C			
Contact:				
	D			
Contact:				
	E			
Contact:				
TOTAL REQUEST		\$155,179		

DEFINITION OF ACCOUNT CATEGORIES:

Personnel: Amount reported should include salary, taxes and benefits. Salary includes all permanent, hourly and seasonal staff. Taxes/benefits include all payroll taxes, unemployment compensation, health insurance, life insurance, retirement benefits, etc.

Operating: Amount reported for operating costs should include all of the following items: insurance, professional fees and audit postage, office and program supplies, utilities, maintenance, equipment and furnishings depreciation, telephone, training and conferences, food and household supplies, travel, vehicle costs and depreciation, and other operating related cost

Space: Amount reported for space costs should include all of the following items: Rent/Utilities/Maintenance: Rental costs for office space; costs of utilities and maintenance for owned or rented space. Mortgage Principal/Interest/Depreciation/Taxes: Costs with owning a building (excluding utilities and maintenance).

Special Costs: Assistance to Individuals - subsidies, allowances, vouchers, and other payments provided to clients.

Payment to Affiliate Organizations - required payments to a parent organization. Subcontracts - the organization subcontracts for service being purchased by a funder to another agency or individual. Examples: agency subcontracts a specialized counseling service to an individual practitioner; the agency is a fiscal agent for a collaborative project and provides payment to other agency.

3. SIGNATURE PAGE**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

If funded, applicant hereby agrees to comply with City of Madison Ordinance 39.02 and file either an exemption or an affirmative action plan with the Department of Civil Rights. A Model Affirmative Action Plan and instructions are available at cityofmadison.com/civil-rights/contract-compliance.

CITY OF MADISON CONTRACTS

If funded, applicant agrees to comply with all applicable local, State and Federal provisions. A sample contract that includes standard provisions may be obtained by contacting the Community Development Division at 266-6520. If funded, the City of Madison reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of a contract with the selected agency.

INSURANCE

If funded, applicant agrees to secure insurance coverage in the following areas to the extent required by the City Office of Risk Management: Commercial General Liability, Automobile Liability, Worker's Compensation, and Professional Liability. The cost of this coverage can be considered in the request for funding.

4. SIGNATURE

Enter name:

By entering your initials in the box you are electronically signing your name and agreeing to the terms listed above.

DATE

INITIALS:

ff costs.

t,

.s.

ng

ies.

5. BOARD-STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Indicate by number the following characteristics for your agency's current board and staff. Refer to application instructions for definitions. You will receive an "ERROR" until you finish completing the demographic information.

DESCRIPTOR	BOARD		STAFF		MADISON*		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	GENERAL Percent	POVERTY Percent	R/POV** Percent
TOTAL		100%		100%			
GENDER							
MAN	4	36%	14	44%			
WOMAN	7	64%	16	50%			
NON-BINARY/GENDERQUEER	0	0%	2	6%			
PREFER NOT TO SAY	0	0%	0	0%			
TOTAL GENDER	11	100%	32	100%			
AGE							
LESS THAN 18 YRS	0	0%	10	31%			
18-59 YRS	7	64%	22	69%			
60 AND OLDER	4	36%	0	0%			
TOTAL AGE	11	100%	32	100%			
RACE							
WHITE/CAUCASIAN	7	64%	22	69%	80%	67%	16%
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN	2	18%	3	9%	7%	15%	39%
ASIAN	1	9%	1	3%	8%	11%	28%
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE	0	0%	1	3%	<1%	<1%	32%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN/OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
MULTI-RACIAL	1	9%	2	6%	3%	4%	26%
BALANCE/OTHER	0	0%	3	9%	1%	2%	28%
TOTAL RACE	11	100%	32	100%			
ETHNICITY							
HISPANIC OR LATINO	0	0%	3	9%	7%	9%	26%
NOT HISPANIC OR LATINO	11	100%	29	91%	93%	81%	74%
TOTAL ETHNICITY	11	100%	32	100%			
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	1	9%	0	0%			

*REPORTED MADISON RACE AND ETHNICITY PERCENTAGES ARE BASED ON 2009-2013 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY FIGURES.

AS SUCH, PERCENTAGES REPORTED ARE ESTIMATES. See Instructions for explanations of these categories.

**R/POV=Percent of racial group living below the poverty line.

6. Does the board composition and staff of your agency represent the racial and cultural diversity of the residents you serve? If not, what is your plan to address this? (to start a new paragraph, hit ALT+ENTER)

7. AGENCY GOVERNING BODY

How many Board meetings were held in 2025

11

How many Board meetings has your governing body or Board of Directors scheduled for 2025?

12

How many Board seats are indicated in your agency by-laws?

13

List your current Board of Directors or your agency's governing body.

Name	Polly Dalton			
Home Address	3213 Thorp Street, Madison WI 53714			
Occupation	Farmer, Law Student			
Representing	FField Notes Farm			
Term of Office		From:	05/2024	To: 12/2029
Name	Francesca Hong			
Home Address	101 N. Blount St., #801, Madison WI 53703			
Occupation	State Legislater			
Representing	State of Wisconsin			
Term of Office		From:	02/2023	To: 12/2028
Name	Brigid Elliott-Boger			
Home Address	1106 Southridge Court			
Occupation	Partner			
Representing	Baker Tilly Virchow Krause			
Term of Office		From:	01/2020	To: 12/2027
Name	Joe Sensenbrenner			
Home Address	818 Prospect Place, Madison, WI 53703			
Occupation	Retired			
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	01/2020	To: 12/2027
Name	Jim Bradley			
Home Address	2210 Van Hise Ave			
Occupation	Retired			
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	01/2020	To: 12/2026
Name	Deirdre Garton			
Home Address	250 S. Hamilton St., #406, Madison WI 5303			
Occupation	Retired			
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	01/2020	To: 12/2027
Name	Nina Gehan			
Home Address	6580 Monona Drive, Unit 1044			
Occupation	Business Owner			
Representing	MeaningFULL Development			
Term of Office		From:	05/2024	To: 12/2029
Name	Jasmine Banks			
Home Address	2670 Milwaukee Street, Madison WI 53704			
Occupation	Deputy Director for Empowerment Initiatives			
Representing	Operation Fresh Start			
Term of Office		From:	05/2024	To: 12/2029

AGENCY GOVERNING BODY cont.

Name	Christopher Kilgour			
Home Address	W2653 WI-33 Mayville, WI 53050			
Occupation	Founder			
Representing	Color in the Outdoors			
Term of Office		From:	06/2023	To: 12/2028
Name	Allen Houston			
Home Address	5120 East Cheryle Pkway, Apt 105 Fitchburg, WI 53711			
Occupation	Compliance Officer			
Representing	Forward Community Investments			
Term of Office		From:	03/2025	To: 12/2030
Name	Louise Root-Robbins			
Home Address	3436 Sunset Drive, Madison, WI 53705			
Occupation	Retired			
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	03/2025	To: 12/2030
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy
Name				
Home Address				
Occupation				
Representing				
Term of Office		From:	mm/yyyy	To: mm/yyyy

****Instructions: Complete this workbook in tab order, so the numbers will autofill correctly. Only fill in the yellow cells.**
Only use whole numbers, if using formulas or amounts with cents, convert to whole number before submitting to CDD.

Please fill out all expected revenues for the programs you are requesting funding for in this application.
 All programs not requesting funding in this application, should be combined and entered under NON APP PGMS
 (last column)

REVENUE SOURCE	AGENCY 2027	PROGRAM A	PROGRAM B	PROGRAM C	PROGRAM D	PROGRAM E	NON APP PGMS
DANE CO HUMAN SVCS	0						
UNITED WAY DANE CO	0						
CITY CDD (This Application)	155,179	155,179					
City CDD (Not this Application)	0						
OTHER GOVT*	0						
FUNDRAISING DONATIONS**	0						
USER FEES	0						
TOTAL REVENUE	155,179	155,179	0	0	0	0	0

*OTHER GOVERNMENT: Includes all Federal and State funds, as well as funds from other counties, other Dane County Departments, and all other Dane County cities, villages, and townships.

**FUNDRAISING: Includes funds received from foundations, corporations, churches, and individuals, as well as those raised from fundraising events.

****List all staff positions related to programs requesting funding in this application, and the amount of time they will spend in each program.**

	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027	2027
Title of Staff Position*	Program A FTE**	Program B FTE**	Program C FTE**	Program D FTE**	Program E FTE**	Total FTE	Annualized Salary	Payroll Taxes and Fringe Benefits	Total Amount	Hourly Wage***	Amount Requested from the City of Madison
Director of Urban Agriculture Education - Madison South	0.20					0.20	62,400	11,232	73,632	30.00	14,726
Troy Farm Manager	0.03					0.03	54,080	9,734	63,814	26.00	1,914
Troy Kids' Garden Manager	0.03					0.03	50,960	9,173	60,133	24.50	1,804
Director of Urban Agriculture Education - Madison North	0.09					0.09	62,400	11,232	73,632	30.00	6,627
Badger Rock Assistant Farm and Education Manager	0.15					0.15	45,760	8,237	53,997	22.00	8,100
Badger Rock Assistant Farm and Education Manager	0.15					0.15	45,760	8,237	53,997	22.00	8,100
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
						0.00			0	0.00	0
SUBTOTAL/TOTAL:	0.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	321360	57845	379205	155	41271

CONTINUE BELOW IF YOU NEED MORE ROOM FOR STAFF POSITIONS

****Full Time Equivalent (1.00, .75, .60, .25, etc.) 2,080 hours = 1.00 FTE**

[illegible]

**Full Time Equivalent (1.00, .75, .60, .25, etc.) 2,080 hours = 1.00 FTE

Program Summary

This tab should be completely filled in by your previous answers.

Pgm Letter	Program Name	Program Expenses	2026 City Request
A	Youth Employment Program	PERSONNEL	41,271
		OTHER OPERATING	2,000
		SPACE	14,107
		SPECIAL COSTS	97,801
		TOTAL	155,179
B	0	PERSONNEL	0
		OTHER OPERATING	0
		SPACE	0
		SPECIAL COSTS	0
		TOTAL	0
C	0	PERSONNEL	0
		OTHER OPERATING	0
		SPACE	0
		SPECIAL COSTS	0
		TOTAL	0
D	0	PERSONNEL	0
		OTHER OPERATING	0
		SPACE	0
		SPECIAL COSTS	0
		TOTAL	0
E	0	PERSONNEL	0
		OTHER OPERATING	0
		SPACE	0
		SPECIAL COSTS	0
		TOTAL	0
TOTAL FOR ALL PROGRAMS			155,179