



## Request for Qualifications (RFQ)/ Application for Mentors: Empowerment Exchange

- What: Empowerment Exchange is a program of [Seattle Mentors](#), a mayoral initiative promoting youth mentorship in the City of Seattle. Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) is seeking local industry leaders and career professionals to provide career exposure and inspiration to SPR youth participants to assist youth grow personally, academically, and professionally. **This application is for Fall 2025.** Mentorship is with small groups of approximately 3-6 youth ages 13-18. Focus is on post-secondary preparation, career path coaching, industry exposure, and skill building with hands-on learning.
- Objectives: The goals of Seattle Mentors are to:
  - Engage the Seattle community in mentorship and recruit mentors for young people
  - Promote meaningful support and opportunities for young people in the City of Seattle
  - Assist young people to prepare for their future, i.e. successful transition from middle school to high school and from high school to post-secondary education and/or career preparation
  - Support youth-adult partnerships that foster opportunities for young people to recreate, rejuvenate, strengthen our environment, and build community
- When: 8-week cohort offered in Fall 2025 (October 2025 – December 2025), with possible continuation for Winter 2025 and Spring 2026, pending funding availability (not guaranteed). While this RFQ process will be used for Fall 2025 contracts, proposals should contain a plan for Winter 2026 (January-March) and Spring (March-May) in case funding is available and contracts can be extended.
- Where: Mentorship will be delivered in person at an approved SPR Teen Life Center, SPR Community Center or Seattle Public School (SPS); site will be assigned by SPR prior to cohort start.
- Cadence: Mentors are expected to deliver one session per week during the eight (8) week program. Sessions will take place on the same day each week or on Saturdays. Each session will last a minimum of two (2) hours per session and be scheduled on the same day each week. Your cohort schedule should avoid City holidays where SPR facilities are closed and avoid SPS breaks.
- Mentorship Sessions: Sessions should include a facilitated ice breaker/ check-in, interactive skill building activities, engaging group discussion and activities, inclusive of identifying mentee needs, challenges, and networking opportunities, reflection and/or Q&A.

- Recruitment: Mentee recruitment will be a joint effort between the mentors, Seattle Mentors staff and SPR site staff. If a cohort does not meet the minimum enrollment, then the mentorship cohort and mentor agreement may be cancelled and agreements/ contracts canceled.
- Documentation: Mentees will be enrolled youth participants of Seattle Parks and Recreation. They will need a completed E-13 form including parent/guardian signature. Mentees will have the opportunity to earn a stipend, which also requires fiscal paperwork. Mentors must complete evaluation activities which include attendance reports, brief surveys after each session and a short report after each 8-week cohort. Mentors will also need to administer brief mentee surveys (mobile-friendly).
- Approved applicants will be asked to enter into a financial non-governmental agreement with Seattle Parks and Recreation. Requirements for this agreement include a criminal background check, City of Seattle business license, and a W-9. Mentorship work may not begin until an application is approved and the agreement is signed by all parties. Payment will be issued upon completion of program requirements after 4 sessions and again after 8 sessions. **Please attach a copy of your City of Seattle business license to this application.**

### Allowable Expenses & Mentor Requirements

Category	Description
Mentor's Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-hour training</li> <li>• Timely communication with coordination with SPR Staff</li> <li>• Initial SPR site visit &amp; meet staff at community center or Teen Life Center</li> <li>• Attend kick-off event</li> <li>• Prep time for 8 weekly mentorship sessions</li> <li>• Facilitate 8 x 2-hour mentorship sessions in person (weekly for 8 weeks per quarter)</li> <li>• Attend mid-cohort check in (virtual)</li> <li>• Attend culminating event</li> <li>• Documentation (including attendance and mentor survey for every session)</li> </ul>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase and secure all needed materials and consumable supplies</li> <li>• Purchase and secure snacks for mentorship sessions</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel expenses to and from SPR site, and to secure supplies</li> </ul>
Total cost (not to exceed \$3500 per cohort per quarter)	

### Timeline

Request for Qualifications released to the public: August 28, 2025

SPR begins reviewing applications (on a rolling basis\*): September 8, 2025.

*\*Applications may be scored upon arrival. Early submission is encouraged.*

Selection, Notification, and Contracting period: September 15, 2025-October 10, 2025 (contracting will occur on a rolling basis as applicants are accepted)

Application Final due date: September 22, 2025 by 4 pm

Anticipated Program Start Date: Week of October 13, 2025

**Scoring:** Applications will be scored on the following criteria:

Category & Point Value	What makes a perfect score?
Career Path / Theme of Mentorship 10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant represents an industry/ career path of interest to youth</li> <li>• The mentorship includes various ways to learn about and to enter a specific career path</li> <li>• The proposal mentions multiple roles and employment options within a given career field or industry.</li> </ul>
Career Experience and Training: 10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant has extensive experience in their respective career field.</li> <li>• The applicant has education/ training, professional and personal background that will inform their career-focused mentorship</li> </ul>
Youth Mentorship Experience: 15 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant has extensive experience mentoring, interacting with, employing, coaching, or supervising young people</li> <li>• The proposal demonstrates an understanding of youth empowerment and the reciprocal partnership between mentors and mentees</li> <li>• The applicant has experience with high quality group facilitation</li> </ul>
Equity and Access: 10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant provides evidence of increasing access to employment (or pre-employment) opportunities for underserved communities</li> <li>• Racial and socioeconomic equity, social justice principles are demonstrated throughout the proposal</li> <li>• Weekly plan includes activities that are culturally inclusive and responsive</li> </ul>
Documentation: 10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant demonstrates an ability to complete documentation within deadlines</li> <li>• Application is complete and follows guidelines; also includes at least one example of a positive outcome or impact from past mentorship</li> </ul>
Proposed Schedule and Availability: 5 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant has some flexibility in schedule and location</li> <li>• Applicant demonstrates commitment to mentor for full school year (24 sessions, if funding allows)</li> <li>• Proposed schedule follows a weekly schedule outside of school hours and City and SPS holidays for 2025-26 school year</li> </ul>
Topics and Activities for Mentorship Sessions: 40 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of work/weekly plan is developmentally appropriate for teens</li> <li>• Topics are related to exploring a career path and employment skills</li> <li>• Activities are fun, engaging, interactive and relevant for teens</li> <li>• Proposal includes a culminating project, community service, or field trip</li> </ul>
More detailed information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A panel of SPR employees will review applications and score them based on criteria listed above. If capacity allows, SPR may also seek youth input on applications.</li> <li>• Mentors will be selected based on youth interest. Some of the top areas of interest currently include careers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sports/ Athletic administration</li> <li>○ Entrepreneurship/ Starting a business</li> <li>○ Music &amp; Media</li> <li>○ Performing Arts</li> <li>○ Art &amp; Design</li> <li>○ Business/ Finance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Applications will be kept on file as additional mentors are needed, and as capacity and funding allows.</li> </ul>

## Application for Mentors

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Organization/Business/Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

City of Seattle Business License Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (please also attach a copy)

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Seattle Mentors seeks mentors who work in industries that the youth are interested in learning about. Please describe the overall theme for your mentorship cohort, i.e. the specific career path, industry, and/or skills training that will be covered with your mentees.**

**Seattle Mentors aims to pair mentees with mentors who have extensive experience in their respective career fields. Please share more about your educational, professional and personal background and how it will inform your mentorship.**

**The Empowerment Exchange uses a small group mentorship cohort (with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 mentees). Please describe your experience mentoring young people and how you have improved their access to career exploration, job training, and/or mentorship opportunities.**

Seattle Mentors is a mayoral initiative that has a high level of visibility and accountability. This requires timely communication and data collection. Describe your experience with producing documentation or deliverables, with specific examples from your mentorship experience if applicable.

Planning for Fall (October-December 2025)

We hope to extend mentorship agreements into Winter and Spring 2026, allowing mentorship groups to expand to the full school year, if all terms and conditions are met. This will rely on funding availability and is not guaranteed.

Preferred days and locations for your mentorship sessions:

Use the table below to describe your topic for each session, along with a brief description of activities

Fall Quarter 2025: October-December		
Session	Tentative Date	Topic of Focus and Brief Plan of Activities
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

<b>Winter Quarter 2026: January-March</b>		
Session	Tentative Date	Topic of Focus and Brief Plan of Activities
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

<b>Spring Quarter 2026: late March-May</b>		
Session	Tentative Date	Topic of Focus and Brief Plan of Activities
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

**Please describe any culminating event or project for the end of your mentorship cohort:**

**What impacts do you anticipate your mentorship cohort will have on your mentees?**

**Contact for inquiries:**

Romell Witherspoon

Mentorship Director

[Romell.Witherspoon@seattle.gov](mailto:Romell.Witherspoon@seattle.gov)

**To apply:**

E-mail completed applications to Romell Witherspoon with the subject line: “RFQ Seattle Mentors: [INSERT YOUR NAME]” *and* attach your City of Seattle business license.

