

2014 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

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Budget Action Title: Statement of Legislative Intent on Career Bridge MOC funding.

Councilmembers: Budget Committee

Staff Analyst: Peter Harris; Christa Valles

Date		Total	SB	BH	TR	RC	TB	NL	JG	SC	MO
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

In approving \$400,000 for the Career Bridge Men of Color (MOC) program, Council intends the Human Service Department (HSD), the Office of Economic Development (OED), and the Community Based Development Organization (CBDO) selected to implement the Career Bridge MOC program in 2014 will work cooperatively with MEF Associates (MEF), the evaluation firm selected by the City Auditor’s Office.

MEF has recommended an evaluation plan for 2014 that will require the CBDO to collect and provide specific data needed to evaluate the project going forward. This data are identified in MEF’s Evaluation Plan, published by the Office of City Auditor on September 27, 2013. The selected CBDO should ensure it has the necessary information systems in place to collect the data needed by MEF to carry out the evaluation, or is prepared to contract this responsibility out if needed. HSD, OED, and the CBDO may also need to assist MEF with additional data collection activities, such as helping MEF reach out to program mentors and/or interact with Career Bridge participants.

2014 Evaluation Plan

The data collected should help stakeholders and decisionmakers assess the degree to which the program supports participants in moving towards a career pathway. In particular, data will be collected on the nature of services provided to support transitions to career pathways jobs. This includes capturing direct service provision (e.g., case management, job search services, mentoring) as well as referrals to employment, training, and education programs. These data will support an understanding of the intensity of these services and the timeframe in which participants move toward the ultimate outcome of self-sufficiency. MEF also recommends collecting data to track whether participants are able to progress beyond a “survival” job and on to a path leading to a living wage job. Metrics of success will include active participation in educational or vocational training or other job skills training, based on a theory of change that suggests these activities will help participants achieve the longer term goal of obtaining a living wage job.

Data will also be collected to allow stakeholders to determine if implementation issues identified in 2013 by MEF and others have been adequately addressed, including the degree to which evidence-based supports and services are in place that show promise in supporting participants to make progress towards obtaining a living wage job (this could involve participants achieving life-stability indicators that allow them to pursue career development activities). This initial, “pre-work” assistance may include help with finding housing, legal assistance, and drug/alcohol treatment. Specifically, the evaluation will seek to answer the following questions:

Participant characteristics

1. What are the characteristics of the individuals being served by Career Bridge?
2. Is the program serving the intended target population?

Service delivery

1. What services are Career Bridge MOC participants receiving and at what level and intensity?
2. To what extent do these services align with the program design?
3. What challenges, if any, did the program encounter in service delivery and program management?

Participant outcomes

1. What are participant outcomes for key measures identified in the logic model?
2. In particular, what successes have participants experienced in moving into career path jobs, including employment and education and training outcomes?
3. To what degree is variation in these outcomes associated with different participant characteristics, level of services received, or extent of program participation?
4. How do these outcomes compare to those of other interventions with similar program components?

Background

The Career Bridge Men of Color (MOC) program was initiated in October 2012. A 2013-2014 budget request for \$210,000 in 2013¹ was accompanied by the following program description in the 2013-2014 Proposed Budget under the Office of Economic Development:

“The Career Bridge program is designed to prepare people in crisis or facing barriers to employment for the education and training necessary to secure employment that provides greater economic security. Ultimately, the Career Bridge program will support the overall objectives of the Pathways to Careers initiative by helping adults in crisis find employment while preparing them for the difficult task of completing a professional credential that leads to better jobs with opportunities for career advancement.”

As part of Council’s approval of the 2013-14 Budget, Council passed a Statement of Legislative Intent requesting the City Auditor’s Office conduct an evaluation of Career Bridge MOC. The City Auditor hired the consulting firm MEF Associates to conduct the evaluation. As Career Bridge MOC is a new program, it was too soon to assess it on outcomes; thus, the evaluation focused on program design, implementation, and early outputs. The Council’s 2012 Statement of Legislative Intent provides for

¹ \$150k in GSF and \$60k in CDBG

an evaluation to be completed by July 2014 based on the September 2013 evaluation plan created by MEF Associates.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Economic Resiliency and Regional Relations

Date Due to Council: NA