

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Employment and Training Administration

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**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**ANNOUNCEMENT FOR:** Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) Round 5: A Grant Initiative for the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border Regions

**ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE:** Initial

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER:** FOA-ETA-23-07

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER:** 17.280

**KEY DATES:** *The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is 06/13/2023. We must receive applications no later than **11:59 pm Eastern Time.***

*Submit all applications in response to this solicitation through <https://www.grants.gov>. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to Section IV.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department, or we), announces the availability of approximately \$44,200,000 in grant funds authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the fifth round of Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) Initiative grants.

The funding, as described in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Pub. L. 117-103), will build on previous rounds of WORC grants and fund projects supporting rural communities in aligning workforce development efforts with economic development plans, serving the following areas hard-hit by economic transition and recovering slowly:

- The Appalachian region, as defined in 40 U.S.C. 14102(a)(1),
- The Lower Mississippi Delta (Delta) region, as defined in 7 U.S.C. 2009aa(2), and
- The Northern Border region, as defined in 40 U.S.C. 15733.

The WORC Initiative provides funding to eligible applicants proposing projects that address the employment and training needs of the local and regional workforce, created in collaboration with community partners and aligned with existing economic and workforce development plans and strategies.

Successful applicants will demonstrate clear strategies to provide needed career, training, and support services to eligible individuals in counties, parishes, or areas currently underserved by other resources, particularly individuals from historically marginalized communities, so they may secure good jobs in stable, high-demand occupations.

Due to unique experiences and circumstances facing communities across the three targeted regions, the WORC Initiative partners—the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), and the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)—will provide technical assistance to prospective applicants in their respective regions, as well as assistance and support to grantees throughout the life of the initiative, including through sharing of promising practices, curricula and resources developed by current or previous grantees. Potential applicants are encouraged to visit [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov), [www.dra.gov](http://www.dra.gov), or [www.nbrc.gov](http://www.nbrc.gov) for more information, including dates and locations for pre-application technical assistance meetings.

## I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### A. PROGRAM PURPOSE

This announcement solicits applications for the WORC Initiative for grants serving the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border regions.

The Biden-Harris Administration has established the [Justice40 Initiative](#), which aims to ensure that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. The U.S. Department of Labor has designated the WORC Initiative as a Justice40 covered grant program. The White House Council on Environmental Quality developed a [Climate and Justice Screening Tool](#) that includes [a map of all Census tracts that meet the Justice40 criteria to be deemed disadvantaged](#). Many communities across the WORC Initiative meet the designation for distressed, and thus align with the principles of Justice40. As appropriate, applicants are encouraged to include distressed communities in their WORC applications.

**In alignment with the Justice40 Initiative, the purpose of the WORC Initiative grants is to create economic mobility, address historic inequities for marginalized communities of color, rural areas, and other underserved and underrepresented communities, and produce high-quality employment outcomes for workers who live or work in the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border regions, enabling them to remain and thrive in these communities.** The WORC Initiative is designed to address persistent economic distress by aligning community-led economic and workforce development strategies and activities to ensure long-term economic resilience and enable dislocated and other workers in the regions to succeed in current and future job opportunities.

### **WORC Initiative Core Principles**

Successful applications will propose projects that demonstrate clear and consistent strategies, activities, partnerships, and results that are built around the three Core Principles that are central to achieving the purpose of the WORC initiative: Promoting availability of good jobs, prioritizing equity, and driving and sustaining economic transformation.

Successful applicants will submit a proposed project that demonstrates a thorough understanding of, and strategies that are intended to achieve, each of the Core Principles, as described below, within the WORC regions.

#### **Core Principle 1: Promoting Availability of Good Jobs**

The first Core Principle of the WORC Initiative is promoting the availability of good jobs, and building, expanding, or improving training programs that provide a skilled workforce to fill those jobs. Generally, a good job helps workers achieve economic stability and mobility, while prioritizing diversity and worker voice.

In 2022, the Departments of Labor and Commerce published the [Good Jobs Principles](#), a framework fostering a shared federal vision of job quality. This framework contains eight

indicators that are designed to form the foundation of an equitable economy that uplifts workers and families and makes businesses more competitive. The indicators of good jobs that inform the WORC Initiative project design are:

- **Recruitment and Hiring.** Employers that prioritize good jobs are intentional in their recruitment and hiring activities. They actively recruit applicants from underserved communities to ensure equal opportunity as set forth under applicable nondiscrimination requirements. Further, applicants are evaluated using skills-based requirements, which may include nontraditional pathways and an emphasis on prior experience. Applicants and employees with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations, as appropriate. When offering good jobs, employers do not require excessive—as defined by industry and occupational standards—educational, credentialing, and experience requirements.
- **Benefits.** Employers that prioritize good jobs provide both full- and part-time workers with family-sustaining benefits. These include, but are not limited to, health insurance, retirement plans, workers' compensation benefits, equal access to remote work and telework opportunities, and family benefits (such as paid leave and caregiving supports). Further, workers are empowered and encouraged to use those benefits.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA).** All workers in a good job are respected, empowered, and treated fairly. DEIA is a core value in the workplace, and individuals from underserved populations (i.e., those adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality) must not face systemic barriers to advancement. Workers in a good job also receive any necessary disability accommodation without difficulties or additional barriers.
- **Empowerment and Representation.** Workers can form and join unions and can engage in protected activity without fear of retaliation. Workers contribute to decisions about their work and organizational direction. Workers are informed of their rights and ways to resolve any issues that may develop on the job.
- **Job Security and Working Conditions.** Workers have a safe, healthy, and accessible workplace, built on input from workers and their representatives. Workers have job security without arbitrary or discriminatory discipline or dismissal. Workers also have adequate hours and predictable schedules. Workers are also free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation at work, including at a minimum complying with EEO regulations. Finally, workers are properly classified under applicable laws; temporary or contractor labor solutions are minimized.
- **Organizational Culture.** All workers belong, are valued, contribute meaningfully to the organization, and are respected. This may be facilitated via strategies such as regular feedback sessions where workers can communicate with responsive, engaged leadership, through a transparent infrastructure including processes for sharing concerns.
- **Pay.** All workers are paid a stable and predictable living wage, as determined by the local area cost of living, before overtime, tips, and commissions. Workers' pay is fair, transparent, and equitable (i.e., workers with similar skills and experience are paid the same wage for the same work). Workers' wages grow commensurate with increased skills and experience.
- **Skills and Career Advancement.** Workers have equitable opportunities and tools to progress to future jobs. Workers have transparent promotion or advancement

opportunities. Workers have access to high quality occupational training, such as on-the-job training (OJT), and continued education opportunities.

To successfully address Core Principle 1, an applicant must propose a project that includes a focus on developing or improving access to good jobs or improving working conditions and include information on how the good jobs indicators will inform or support the project design. While employment opportunities supported by WORC grants are not required to include all of these indicators, as a good job can be specific to the context of a geographic region or the needs of an individual worker, applications will be scored on how the applicable indicators are expected to be implemented as part of the project.

### **Core Principle 2: Prioritizing Equity**

The second Core Principle of the WORC Initiative is equity. For WORC Initiative applications, this means that successful applicants will design programs that prioritize efforts to recruit and improve the lives of historically underserved workers adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality, including, but not limited to, Black, Indigenous, people of color; LGBTQ+ individuals; women; veterans; individuals with disabilities; individuals without a college degree; individuals with substance use disorder; and justice-impacted individuals.

### **Core Principle 3: Driving and Sustaining Economic Transformation**

The final Core Principle of the WORC Initiative is to ensure that the investment in the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border regions supports long-term, sustainable economic prosperity for individuals, businesses, and communities.

### **Alignment with Regional Priorities**

The WORC Initiative provides funding to eligible applicants proposing projects that address the employment and training needs of the local and regional workforce, created in collaboration with community partners and aligned with existing economic and workforce development plans and strategies.

In addition to the Core Principles listed above, and to ensure that WORC Initiative projects are aligned with existing, community-developed priorities and strategies, successful applicants will clearly describe components, strategies, priorities or other elements of the applicable federal and state strategic plans for the WORC region (Appalachian, Delta, or Northern Border) for which the applicant is applying, with which the proposed project will align, and a description of how those existing plans will support or contribute to the success of the WORC grant. The relevant plans for each of the three regional commissions representing the WORC regions can be found here:

#### Appalachian Region:

- The ARC Federal plan: <https://www.arc.gov/strategicplan/>
- ARC state plans: <https://www.arc.gov/appalachian-states/>

#### Delta Region:

- The DRA Federal plan and all DRA state plans: <https://dra.gov/funding-programs-states-economic-development/strategic-economic-development-plans-by-state/>

#### Norther Border Region:

- The NBRC Federal plan: <https://www.nbrc.gov/content/strategic-plan>
- NBRC state plans: <https://www.nbrc.gov/content/resources>

Applications may propose to serve communities in more than one WORC regional area, or more than one state. For applications that serve more than one WORC region, the applicant must demonstrate alignment with the Federal plan for the regional area they have designated the application (see section III.C.1 below for more information). For applications that cover more than one state, applicants must demonstrate alignment with the relevant Federal plan as well as all state plans for the covered states.

## **B. PROGRAM AUTHORITY**

WIOA sec. 169(c), as well as the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Pub. L. 117-103, Div. H), authorizes this program.

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. AWARD TYPE AND AMOUNT**

Funding will be provided in the form of a grant.

We expect availability of approximately \$44.2 million to fund approximately 35 grants. You may apply for a minimum award of \$150,000 and a maximum amount of up to \$1,500,000. Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. If additional funds become available, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement.

### **B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

The period of performance is 36 months with an anticipated start date of 10/01/2023. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

The period of performance end date will be 9/30/2026.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- State governments
- County governments
- City or township governments
- State or Local Workforce Development Boards
- Special district governments
- Independent school districts
- State or local education agencies
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Labor unions, worker organizations, or labor-management partnerships
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- Hispanic-serving institutions
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)
- Labor organizations or labor-management partnerships

#### **B. COST SHARING OR MATCHING**

This program does not require cost sharing or matching funds. Including such funds is not one of the application screening criteria and applications that include any form of cost sharing or match will not receive additional consideration during the review process. Instead, the agency considers any resources contributed to the project beyond the funds provided by the agency as leveraged resources. Section IV.B.2 provides more information on leveraged resources.

#### **C. OTHER INFORMATION**

##### **1. Application Screening Criteria**

You should use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package to ensure that the application has met all of the screening criteria. Note that this checklist is only an aid for applicants and should not be included in the application package. We urge you to use this checklist to ensure that your application contains all required items. If your application does not

meet all of the screening criteria, it will not move forward through the merit review process.

| <b>Application Requirement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Instructions</b>                           | <b>Complete?</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>The deadline submission requirements are met</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Section IV.C</b>                           |                  |
| <b>The applicant eligibility requirements are met.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Section III.A</b>                          |                  |
| <b>The components of the application are saved in any of the specified formats and are not corrupt. (<i>We will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.</i>)</b> | <b>Section IV.C.2</b>                         |                  |
| <b>The SF-424 includes a federal funds request within the range of \$150,000 to \$1,500,000, on line 18.a, Estimated Funding (\$), Federal.</b>                                                                                         | <b>Section II.A</b>                           |                  |
| <b>SAM Registration is current and reflects Applicant Information identified on SF-424, lines 8.a-d.</b>                                                                                                                                | <b>Section IV.B.1</b>                         |                  |
| <b>SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance is submitted.</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Section IV.B.1</b>                         |                  |
| <b>SF-424 includes a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).</b>                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Section IV.B.1</b>                         |                  |
| <b>SF-424 includes designation of ARC, DRA or NBRC Region, the primary region under which the application should be considered, on line 15, Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project.</b>                                               | <b>Section IV.B.4.a. and Section III.C.1.</b> |                  |
| <b>SF-424A, Budget Information Form is submitted.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Section IV.B.2</b>                         |                  |
| <b>Budget Narrative is submitted.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Section IV.B.2</b>                         |                  |
| <b>Project Narrative is submitted.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Section IV.B.3</b>                         |                  |

The applicant must include the federal funding request within the range of **\$150,000 to \$1,500,000**, on line 18.a on the SF-424. Amounts included on separate lines or forms will not be considered.

The applicant must include a point of contact for the project (other than the Authorized Representative) on line 8f on the SF-424.

The applicant must also include a "regional designation" on line 15 of the SF-424. This designation identifies the region, either the Appalachian, Delta, or Northern Border, with which the proposed project aligns. If the project area covers counties/parishes or communities located within more than one of these regional areas, the applicant must select just one region—the

Appalachian, Delta, or the Northern Border region—as applications will be reviewed and funded based upon these regional designations.

## **2. Number of Applications Applicants May Submit**

We will consider only one application from each organization. If we receive multiple applications from the same organization, we will consider only the most recently received application that met the deadline. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, we will not replace it with an earlier application.

## **3. Eligible Participants**

Applicants must propose a project that enrolls individuals from one or more of the following three targeted categories: new entrants to the workforce, dislocated workers, and/or incumbent workers. The definitions for each category are as follows:

New Entrants to the Workforce: For the purposes of this FOA, the category of “new entrants to the workforce” refers to those who have never worked before or who have been out of the workforce for a long enough time to make it as if they are entering the workforce for the first time. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, the long-term unemployed, formerly incarcerated individuals, caregivers returning to the workforce, and new Americans such as refugees or immigrants. Also eligible, consistent with federal and state wage and employment laws, are youth who are enrolled in high school and are currently eligible or will be eligible to be employed during or within six months after the end of the grant period, or youth who have dropped out of school and are seeking their first full-time job.

Dislocated Workers: For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to the definition found at Section 3(15) of WIOA. This definition can be found beginning on the bottom of page 7 of the WIOA law at <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>. The term generally means someone who was laid off, let go, or lost their job through no fault of their own. Applicants can also work with a local American Job Center or other public workforce development entity that frequently interprets and applies this definition.

Incumbent Workers: For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to individuals who are employed but need employment and training services to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their employment. This could include workers who are “under-employed” based on wages or other factors who would benefit from upgrading their skills to retain employment or advance in their careers, and workers who are currently working part-time.

Within these categories, applicants may serve a wide range of individuals as applicable, including high school or postsecondary students, individuals requiring adult basic and other education programs, individuals with disabilities, veterans, individuals with Limited English Proficiency, individuals who struggle to find work because of their previous incarceration, and individuals with a history of substance dependency or other behavioral health conditions.

Applicants must demonstrate that they will only enroll eligible participants who live or work in

the Appalachian, Delta, or Northern Border regions. Applicants may train eligible participants for jobs that are located outside of the regions, including remote work, so long as the applicant clearly demonstrates that employment in these occupations will not require participants to relocate outside the region. Such jobs must clearly align with the overall intent of the grant application and the statement of need.

### **Veterans' Priority for Participants**

38 U.S.C. 4215 requires grantees to provide priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL. The regulations implementing this priority of service are at 20 CFR Part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans' priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service, a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by DOL. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-10-09>.

The priority for veterans and eligible spouses is a requirement that applies when enrolling participants into an ETA-funded grant, and applies to all awarded grants. It is not a scoring criterion for this FOA.

### **4. Allowable Activities**

Applicants may propose projects that include any of the following types of activities:

#### **a. Training and Other Employment-Related Activities**

Workforce training strategies must be designed to enable the grant to achieve the purpose of the WORC Initiative in alignment with an existing strategic plan or economic development priorities. Allowable training approaches include, but are not limited to:

- work-based learning such as Registered Apprenticeships, customized training programs, incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, or internships as defined in WIOA, which can be found in [ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16](#); or
- traditional classroom or virtual training.

Other allowable employment-related activities include, but are not limited to:

- in-depth participant assessment and evaluation to identify employment barriers and develop individual employment plans;

- career planning including using labor market information to help participants select training and careers that lead to family-sustaining wages and benefits, job coaching, and job matching services; and
- employability skills training.

Training costs must be fully covered under the project (including via leveraged resources where applicable) and may not result in debt (including student loan debt) to the participant. In addition, stipends may be provided to encourage enrollment and retain participation in training or other program activities such as Registered Apprenticeships, paid internships, or other.

Applicants are encouraged to work with a local American Job Center or other workforce system partner who can advise on implementing planned activities in accordance with the requirements of the law.

#### b. Supportive Services for Grant Participants

Supportive services include activities or resources that enable individuals to participate in career and training services or other grant activities, or to gain or retain employment. Grant recipients are encouraged to offer necessary supportive services directly or through partner organizations.

Generally, supportive services are customized to meet the specific needs of an individual to help enable them to participate in or complete a workforce development program. Such supportive services may include, but are not limited to:

- assistance with transportation, child or dependent care, or housing;
- counseling or other mental health services;
- assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, safety equipment, and other items;
- assistance with laptops or tablets, books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in training, work-based learning, or other elements of the proposed grant project;
- payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; and
- workforce strategies addressing substance use disorder such as, but not limited to, recovery coaches, job/career coaches, and health navigator services.

#### c. Employer Services

Applicants are encouraged to provide services to local employers, particularly small and medium-sized employers, to help them in a wide range of areas including improving the quality of jobs, adopting more competitive wage scales, establishing more predictable work schedules, examining how benefits may be offered, creating opportunities for advancement, advising employers on how to adhere to nondiscrimination laws, and adopting practices that ensure

workers know their rights and that incorporate worker voice.

Applicants are also encouraged to provide services to employers that already offer good jobs, including those with family-sustaining wages, benefits, opportunities for advancement, and worker voice, to enhance their economic success, growth, or sustainability. This can most easily be accomplished by coordinating with local business services teams at American Job Centers or other local business and economic development partners. Efforts may focus on individual employers or have an industry-based approach for clusters or sectors, and may include activities such as: providing technical assistance materials to support job quality or ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws; designing/disseminating tool kits and training for employers to develop standards/processes for substance-use disorder or misuse recovery-friendly workplaces or to implement job accommodations to meet the needs of current or future employees; establishing peer coaching, counseling, and worksite mentoring programs; creating, expanding, or enhancing Registered Apprenticeships, internships, and other work experiences, including subsidies of apprentice and intern wages.

#### d. Strategic Planning for Economic Transformation

WORC Initiative success may be increased through alignment of community-focused workforce and economic development plans and strategies, and such activities are allowed under these grants. Strategic planning activities designed to promote and support economic transformation help ensure that project outcomes will lead to sustainable employment opportunities in the communities covered by the grant.

Strategic planning activities may assess the economic landscape to identify new or growing employment opportunities in high-quality jobs, including those which offer family-sustaining wages, benefits, career advancement opportunities and worker voice. Strategic planning processes also involve convening partnerships and assets from across the economic and social spectrum of the community(ies) covered by a proposed project, and may include the workforce investment system, industry, community colleges, labor unions and labor-management partnerships, nonprofit community organizations and other stakeholders. Activities may also support the development of new strategies or updates and expansion of preexisting plans and strategies, or to help create or enhance a vision for a better economic future. Depending on the specific needs, strategic planning might help a community diversify its industries to not be dependent on industries in decline. Ensuring community involvement in strategic planning is a critically important way to create a more inclusive, equitable future for all. WORC grant funds may be an important driver of strategic planning both to support the success of the specific project but also to catalyze long-term, broad-based economic transformation.

Strategic planning activities that WORC applicants may propose include, but are not limited to:

- Convening Community Partners and Leaders: Organizing a comprehensive group of leaders and partners representing major economic, workforce, education and other community assets and organizations, and companies, research institutions, investors, philanthropists, and labor unions and other worker organizations, and workers, to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have a voice in the project's success. Such a group should

include WORC grant partners as well as other organizations from the communities involved. To ensure that workers have a voice in the future of the region, impacted workers and organizations representing impacted workers in the grant area should be encouraged and supported to actively participate.

- Developing a Vision: Efforts to achieve sustainable, equitable economic transformation are more successful when they feature a community-led approach that develops a shared vision for the future.
- Conducting Data Analysis: Good strategic planning requires good information. To ensure that planning approaches are evidence-based, WORC funds may be used to obtain and analyze economic and workforce information, carry out asset mapping, conduct an objective analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and more;
- Aligning Education, Economic, and Workforce Development Strategies with Evidence and Opportunities: WORC funds may be used to identify and map the necessary skills and competencies for in-demand, high-quality jobs as well as potential new jobs of the future, working with employers to adjust recruitment and selection processes to increase consideration and inclusion of local talent, and organizing education, workforce development, and economic development to focus on creating these jobs, promoting job quality, and preparing a skilled workforce to ensure the success of the plans; and
- Identifying Resources and Sustainability: Developing a financial plan that supports the identification of resources needed to ensure that transformational activities are sustainable beyond the life and scope of the WORC grants.

Applicants may propose to expend no more than \$100,000 of a grant award on planning activities that support a broader implementation plan for a WORC grant.

e. Purchasing Equipment and Making Renovations

Capital expenditures, such as the purchase of equipment or capital improvements, are allowable with prior approval from the Grant Officer, provided they *directly facilitate or address the employment and training needs of enrolled grant participants as well as dislocated or other workers in the communities served by the proposed project*. These expenditures must follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 CFR Part 200, and the DOL supplemental requirements at 2 CFR Part 2900. For capital expenditures and equipment, see 2 CFR 200.439. Following a WORC grant award, a grantee must seek and receive written ETA approval in a subsequent modification request for all equipment purchases and renovations. The modification must demonstrate how these purchases and renovations will assist in the successful employment and training of participants. Award of a grant under this FOA does not constitute prior written approval of equipment purchase or renovations mentioned in the initial application.

Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements of buildings, facilities, or equipment, if specific to the project, are also allowable with prior written approval from the Grant Officer, provided they facilitate or address the employment and training needs of individuals enrolled in the grant as well as dislocated workers or other workers. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements may include the activities and associated costs of relocating, modifying,

replacing, or adding items (e.g. switches and outlets) related to internal environments (e.g. temperature, humidity, ventilation, and acoustics), and installation of fixed equipment (including fume hoods and audio/visual equipment). This could also include structural improvements or upgrades, including the relocation, modification, retrofitting, or enhancement of interior load-bearing walls or interior floors to accommodate training courses or equipment. This could also include implementing and/or enhancing the information technology infrastructure used to provide education and training and related activities.

Allowable costs also include leasing space that is used for the grant participant education, training, and related activities, as well as the altering or renovating of such facilities (in accordance with the Federal Cost Principles at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E and the DOL supplemental requirements at 2 CFR Part 2900, Subpart E). Allowable renovations include those related to federal architectural accessibility obligations requiring facilities to be readily accessible to, and usable by, qualified individuals with disabilities.

Following grant award, grantees must submit a subsequent grant modification request to obtain written Grant Officer approval before acquiring equipment or proceeding with proposed capital expenditures, renovation, or alteration of facilities. The Grant Officer must determine that all proposed equipment, capital improvements, and/or alterations and renovation are:

1. allocable, necessary, and reasonable;
2. tied to specific grant-related deliverables and outcomes outlined in the grantee's statement of work (SOW), including capacity-building and/or training outcomes;
3. consistent with the FOA; and
4. aligned with equipment requirements as outlined in 2 CFR Part 200. Applicants proposing in their SOW to spend grant funds on capital improvements and/or alterations and renovations must demonstrate how these expenditures will support the expansion and/or improvement of their project's education and training programs addressing the needs of dislocated workers and other needs of workers in the Appalachian, Delta and Northern Border regions.

Prohibited activities with regard to capital expenditures include new construction or property acquisition.

Grantees must complete all activities related to capital expenditures and other alterations within the period of performance of the grant.

*All WORC grants will be expected to enroll, and submit performance reporting for, at least one participant; applicants may propose to utilize funding sources other than WORC to provide allowable services to grant participants, but in such cases participants must meet the eligibility criteria, and activities must be allowable, under the terms of the FOA. Proposed WORC projects **must not exceed 50%** of the project budget for allowable equipment purchases and renovations.*

## IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### A. HOW TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

This FOA, found at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities> contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

### B. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications submitted in response to this FOA must consist of four separate and distinct parts:

1. SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”;
2. Project Budget, composed of the SF-424A and Budget Narrative;
3. Project Narrative; and
4. Attachments to the Project Narrative.

You must ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application.

#### **1. SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”**

You must complete the SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance” (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>).

- In the address field, fill out the nine-digit (plus hyphen) zip code. Nine-digit zip codes can be looked up on the USPS website at <https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action>.
- The organization’s legal name on the SF-424 should match its name registered in the System for Award Management at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).
- The SF-424 must clearly identify the applicant and must be signed by an individual with authority to enter into a grant agreement. Upon confirmation of an award, the individual signing the SF-424 on behalf of the applicant is considered the Authorized Representative of the applicant. As stated in block 21 of the SF-424 form, the signature of the Authorized Representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>). You do not need to submit the SF-424B with the application.

In addition, the applicant’s Authorized Representative’s signature in block 21 of the SF-424 form constitutes assurance by the applicant of compliance with the WIOA 188 rules issued by the Department at 29 CFR 38.25, which includes the following language:

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I WIOA, the grant applicant assures that it has the ability to comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the WIOA and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38, which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity),

national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship or status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or participation in any WIOA Title I—financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.

The grant applicant also assures, that as a recipient of WIOA Title I financial assistance [as defined at 29 CFR 38.4(z)], it will comply with 29 CFR part 38 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

Similarly, the applicant's Authorized Representative's signature in block 21 of the SF-424 form constitutes assurance by the applicant of compliance with all WIOA requirements, including the Page 23 of 84 requirement at sec. 181(b)(7) of WIOA that the recipient will not use any of the grant funds to "assist, promote, or deter union organizing."

#### **a. Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier**

All applicants for federal grant funding must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and must supply their UEI on the SF-424. The UEI is a 12-character (alpha-numeric) code that uniquely identifies all entities. Any entity registering to do business with the government is required to have one. UEIs are issued by SAM.gov and are a part of an entity's record in the Entity Information section of SAM.gov. If you do not have a UEI, you can get one for free at <https://sam.gov>.

Grant recipients authorized to make subawards must meet these requirements related to UEI:

- Grant recipients must notify potential subawardees that no entity may receive a subaward unless the entity has provided its UEI.
- Grant recipients may not make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its UEI.

(See Appendix A to 2 CFR Part 25.)

#### **b. Requirement for Registration with SAM**

Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Find instructions for registering with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov>.

A recipient must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is

current, accurate, and complete. For purposes of this paragraph, the applicant is the entity that meets the eligibility criteria and has the legal authority to apply and to receive the award. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time the Grant Officer is ready to make a federal award, the Grant Officer may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

## **2. Project Budget**

You must complete the SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>). In preparing the Budget Information Form, you must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the budget request, explained in detail below.

### **a. Budget Narrative**

The Budget Narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The Budget Narrative should also include a section describing any leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities. Leveraged resources are all resources, both cash and in-kind, in excess of this award. Valuation of leveraged resources follows the same requirements as match. Applicants are encouraged to leverage resources to increase stakeholder investment in the project and broaden the impact of the project itself.

Each category should include the total estimated cost for the period of performance. Use the following guidance for preparing the Budget Narrative.

**Personnel:** List all staff positions by title (including individuals hired by an employment contract) including the roles and responsibilities. For each position give the annual salary, the percentage of time devoted to the project, and the amount of each position's salary funded by the grant.

**Fringe Benefits:** Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement, etc.

**Travel:** For grantee staff only, specify the purpose, number of staff traveling, mileage, per diem, estimated number of in-state and out-of-state trips, and other estimated costs for each type of travel.

**Equipment:** Identify each item of equipment you expect to purchase that has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit (or if your capitalization level is less than \$5,000, use your capitalization level) and a useful lifetime of more than one year (see 2 CFR Part 200.1 for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. The total cost of equipment (including information technology systems) and renovations must not exceed 50 percent of the grant award.

Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies, not "equipment." In general, we do not permit the purchase of equipment during the last funded year of the grant.

**Supplies:** Identify the cost of supplies (e.g., general office supplies, desk/chairs, laptops/printers, other specialty items) in the detailed budget per category. Except for general office supplies, list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than "equipment" (see 2 CFR Part 200.1 for the definition of Supplies).

**Contractual:** Under the Contractual line item, delineate contracts and subawards separately. Contracts are defined according to 2 CFR Part 200.1 as a legal instrument by which a non-federal entity purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a federal award. A subaward, defined by 2 CFR Part 200.1 means an award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program.

For each proposed contract and subaward, specify the purpose and activities to be provided, and the estimated cost.

**Construction:** Construction costs are not allowed and this line must be left as zero. Minor alterations to adjust an existing space for grant activities (such as a classroom alteration) may be allowable. We do not consider this as construction and you must show the costs on other appropriate lines such as Contractual.

**Other:** Provide clear and specific detail, including costs, for each item so that we are able to determine whether the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allocable. List items, such as stipends or supportive services, not covered elsewhere.

**Indirect Costs:** If you include an amount for indirect costs (through a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or De Minimis) on the SF-424A budget form, then include one of the following:

a) If you have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), provide an explanation of how the indirect costs are calculated. This explanation should include which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Also, provide a current version of the NICRA.

or

b) If you intend to claim indirect costs using the 10 percent de minimis rate, please confirm that your organization meets the requirements as described in 2 CFR Part 200.414(f). Clearly state that your organization does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, and is not one described in 2 CFR Part 200, Appendix VII(D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (as defined by DOL below) as their cost allocation base. Provide an explanation of which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Note that there are various items not included in the calculation of Modified Total Direct Costs. See the definitions below to assist you in your calculation.

- **Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) Definition:** To avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, DOL defines MTDC as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards or subcontracts under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and

fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward or subcontract in excess of \$25,000.

- You will also note that participant support costs are not included in modified total direct costs. Participant support costs are defined below.
- 2 CFR Part 200.1 Participant Support Cost means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences or training projects.

See Section IV.B.4. and Section IV.E.1 for more information. Additionally, the following link contains information regarding the negotiation of Indirect Cost Rates at DOL: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/centers-offices/office-of-the-senior-procurement-executive/cost-price-determination-division>.

Indirect-type costs (such as top management salaries, financial oversight, human resources, payroll, personnel, auditing costs, accounting and legal, etc. used for the general oversight and administration of the organization) must not be classified as direct costs; these types of costs are recovered as part of charging the de minimis or NICRA rate. Note that the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative must include the entire federal grant amount requested (not just one year).

Do not show leveraged resources on the SF-424 and SF-424A. You should describe leveraged resources in the Budget Narrative.

Applicants should list the same requested federal grant amount on the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative. If minor inconsistencies are found between the budget amounts specified on the SF-424, SF-424A, and the Budget Narrative, ETA will consider the SF-424 the official funding amount requested. However, if the amount specified on the SF-424 would render the application nonresponsive, the Grant Officer will use his or her discretion to determine whether the intended funding request (and match if applicable) is within the responsive range.

### **3. Project Narrative**

The Project Narrative must demonstrate your capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Announcement. It provides a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project. It must be succinct, self-explanatory, and well-organized so that reviewers can understand the proposed project.

The Project Narrative is limited to 20 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with Times New Roman 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. You must number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1.

We will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process.

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Project Narrative. Carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in your Project Narrative. The agency will evaluate the Project Narrative using the evaluation criteria

identified in Section V.A. You must use the same section headers identified below for each section of the Project Narrative.

This FOA is structured around three Core Principles that will demonstrate the applicant's ability to achieve the purpose of the WORC Initiative. The three Core Principles are described in detail in Section I.A. of this FOA. Applicants will be expected to address each of these three Core Principles throughout the project narrative, which will support the development or expansion of an equitable economy in the area covered by the proposed project.

Application review will consider not only how well proposed projects address each Core Principle, but also that there is consistency in how project activities are based on the needs, challenges and opportunities described.

**a. Statement of Need (Up to 20 Points)**

The Statement of Need is the foundation of the application and must clearly explain the reason(s) for the proposed project. In addressing the sections of the Statement of Need, applicants must demonstrate an understanding of and alignment with each of the Core Principles of the WORC Initiative as described in Section I.A. of this FOA, as well as clearly demonstrate how their project aligns with, supports, or enhances the relevant ARC, DRA, or NBRC Federal and state plans.

NOTE: Applicants are expected to provide sufficient details and citations to demonstrate the information provided throughout the Statement of Need and attribute it to a verifiable source; however, applicants are not required to submit additional documentation.

**i. Project Service Area, Challenges and Opportunities (up to 8 points)**

Successful applicants must clearly and comprehensively describe:

- the communities covered by the project service area, including the barriers faced by the residents, businesses, and communities in addressing workforce challenges and achieving sustained economic success (e.g. unemployment rate, substance use rates, infrastructure challenges, high rates of pollution, or other factors the applicant deems relevant to demonstrating such challenges). You may use data from the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, available at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/> to support your description of the community and its needs;
- the service area's current challenges with regard to employment including low wages, educational attainment, workforce demographics, and other factors that the proposed project will address to help develop or sustain good jobs;
- the components, strategies, priorities or other elements of the applicable federal and state strategic plans for the WORC region (Appalachian, Delta, or Northern Border) for which the applicant is applying, with which the proposed project will align, and a description of how those existing plans and other local strategies will support or contribute to the success of the WORC grant; and

- the applicant's definition of good jobs that the proposed project will use as an employment goal for participants, and will communicate to participants and partner employers, including how this definition aligns with the indicators of good jobs as described in the Program Purpose section I.A. of this FOA.

ii. Target Population (up to 6 points)

To receive full points, applicants must:

- identify and define the population(s) of eligible participants intended to be served through the grant, including why this population was selected;
- identify and define historically-marginalized individuals or communities, in alignment with the equity Core Principle of the WORC Initiative, to be prioritized for participation in grant activities and outcomes, describe why these individuals or communities were chosen as a focus of the project, and demonstrate how serving this population will address inequalities or other barriers resulting from historic marginalization or exclusion;
- describe the planned approaches to successfully recruiting individuals from these populations to enroll in grant activities; and
- identify the specific inequalities and barriers these populations face and how serving this population through a WORC-supported project will enable them to achieve positive outcomes.

iii. Description of Workforce Needs (up to 6 points)

To demonstrate that the proposed project is designed to address the purpose of the WORC Initiative and ensure that participants are able to obtain good jobs (as described in Section I.A.), applicants must:

- include relevant information on the current or expected workforce needs of employers or industries that the proposed project activities will be designed to address; and
- describe the anticipated consequences of not addressing the identified workforce needs.

**b. Project Results and Achieving the Purpose of WORC (Up to 30 Points)**

Applications must clearly state expected project results, built around the three Core Principles, that are specific, measurable, achievable, and reasonable according to the project design. There are two subsections to be addressed in the Project Results: 1) any results, including appropriate outputs and outcomes, that are expected to be achieved by the end of the grant period; and 2) results demonstrating that the project will achieve the purpose of the WORC Initiative, including any long-term benefits that include outcomes expected after the end of the grant period to demonstrate sustainability. All project results must clearly align with the needs, challenges, or other information identified in the Statement of Need and the activities identified in the Project Description. All results included in the application must be consistent and logical; for example, the total number of participants receiving services should not be lower than the total number obtaining new or enhanced employment.

i. Expected Results (up to 10 points)

Applicants may include any relevant expected results as part of the application. However, all applications must include at least the following results projected to be achieved by the end of the grant period:

1. The number of participants obtaining new or improved employment outcomes; and
2. The total number of participants expected to be enrolled in grant-funded services (and for whom performance data are reported) during the grant period.

Examples of results expected to be achieved by the end of the grant period include:

| Activities                                                                                            | Expected Results                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total participants obtaining new or enhanced employment (required result)                             | 175 (job placements or incumbent workers entering a career pathway in jobs that pay above average for the area) |
| 1 apprenticeship program developed                                                                    | 100 workers/trainees awarded an industry-recognized credential or obtained increased wages after training       |
| 5 employer-focused trainings on substance use conducted                                               | 20 employers hired individuals with substance use disorder                                                      |
| Outreach to companies to support career pathways to promote opportunities for increasing job quality. | 5 employer partners implement career pathways programs that include wage increases.                             |

ii. Achieving the Purpose of WORC (up to 20 points)

The purpose of the WORC Initiative is to: create economic mobility, address historic inequities, and produce high-quality employment outcomes for dislocated and other underserved and underrepresented workers who live or work in the Appalachian, Delta and Northern Border regions, enabling them to remain and thrive in these communities. Applicants must demonstrate that their proposed project will produce results and benefits that will support or achieve the purpose of the WORC Initiative. Applicants may include specific results along with other information to make this demonstration.

To receive full points for this portion of the application, applicants must demonstrate how the successful completion of the proposed grant project will support each of the three Core Principles of the WORC FOA, and clearly connect the expected results to the issues raised in the

Statement of Need and the activities or strategies identified in the Project Description sections of this FOA. Reviewers will score these elements on clarity, alignment, consistency and that the proposed results are logical based on the rest of the application.

#### Core Principle 1: Promoting Availability of Good Jobs (up to 6 points)

To receive full points, an applicant must demonstrate that successful grant activities will result in the creation, expansion or improvement of employment that: 1) is aligned with the good jobs target criteria as described in the introduction to section IV.B.3 and 2) is further defined by the applicant in the Statement of Need.

An application could include information such as the number of employers or industries implementing or expanding good jobs, participants with increased skills to attain good jobs, expected wage increases, and other relevant factors that demonstrate the successful development, expansion, and sustainability of good jobs at the end of the grant period and beyond.

#### Core Principle 2: Prioritizing Equity (up to 6 points)

To demonstrate successful outcomes related to equity and addressing marginalized communities and individuals, applicants must address the following components:

- the success of the project in recruiting and enrolling individuals from marginalized communities;
- the long-term positive economic or other benefits of ensuring that all individuals with workforce needs, particularly those who have been historically-marginalized or underserved, have access to effective workforce programs; or
- the success of efforts to design or redesign programs or services to include a primary focus on equitable enrollment, participation, and outcomes in the communities that the grant expects to serve.

#### Core Principle 3: Driving and Sustaining Economic Transformation (up to 8 points)

Economic transformation, sustained over the long-term, is the third Core Principle of the WORC Initiative, and a fundamental element in the success and impact of the grant. To demonstrate success in this area, applicants must clearly identify the anticipated long-term benefits for the participants, employers, and communities served by the grant, explaining how the activities and investments made under the grant will continue to benefit the workforce and the economy after the end of the project, and how this economic success will enable residents to remain in the regions and achieve economic stability and mobility.

Measures that may be addressed in this section to demonstrate the role of the grant in achieving sustainable economic transformation include, but are not limited to:

- increased income and benefits for workers/trainees, and equitable gains for participants from different sub-communities of historically-marginalized populations, which also increases revenue generated by counties/towns as a result of job creation and/or employment;
- increased industry/employer and labor organization participation and investment in workforce development planning, or integration of an existing labor-management training program into grant-funded activities or the public workforce system;
- the impacts of aligning and integrating workforce development activities through the WORC Initiative with existing economic development strategies;
- increased employment opportunities in sectors addressing clean or renewable energy (including development, transmission, storage, etc.), infrastructure, the care economy, or other industry sectors that are expected to see economic growth;
- creating or expansion of Registered Apprenticeships funded by industries or employers, community partners, labor unions, labor management partnerships, workforce development resources, or others;
- decreased employee turnover rates as a result of more supportive work environments and improved awareness about substance use disorder; or
- examples of how the project's efforts to develop and expand partnerships, including industry partnerships that build and sustain capacity, will maximize available resources and establish community-based approaches for addressing workforce challenges and industry needs.

### **c. Project Design (Up to 40 Points)**

The project design is the heart of the project narrative. It must clearly describe how the proposed project addresses the need(s) identified in Section IV.3.a. above, along with how it facilitates the purpose of the WORC Initiative to create economic mobility, address historic inequities, and produce sustainable economic transformation that includes good jobs for eligible participants who live or work in the ARC, DRA and NBRC regions, enabling them to remain and thrive in these communities. Additionally, the project description must define the partnership(s) that will ensure the success of planned efforts.

#### **i. Project Description (up to 30 points)**

The Project Description provides the framework for the proposed grant by clearly aligning planned activities with the needs identified in the Statement of Need, and with the expected project results. To receive full points, the Project Description must:

1. describe all planned activities and the expected implementation plan including milestones and timeline;

2. describe how planned activities address the needs and challenges described in the Statement of Need;
3. describe how planned activities address the proposed service area's workforce demand and meet workforce needs, and overcome challenges to serve the target population;
4. ensure the described activities and planned expenditures are noted in the budget narrative;
5. explain strategies in place to keep activities on track and to achieve expected results; and
6. explain how the project will achieve each of the Core Principles for the WORC Initiative.

The Project Description must address each of the Core Principles for the WORC Initiative, as follows:

Core Principle 1: Promoting Availability of Good Jobs (up to 8 points)

Applicants must clearly and fully describe specific activities (training and employment services, employer services to create conditions for good jobs, strategic planning, and other allowable activities) that the project will carry out which are designed to incentivize, promote, create or improve the types of jobs for which participants are trained or in which they will be placed, in alignment with the good jobs target criteria. Applicants receiving full points must propose strategies designed to incentivize, promote, or create jobs that meet the good jobs target criteria as applicable for the area covered by the grant.

Applicants may demonstrate that proposed strategies support the development or expansion of good jobs by including information such as:

- Demonstration that employers commit to providing full consideration to grant participants for hiring, retaining, and promoting participants;
- Employer commitments and actions that assure the free and fair opportunity for workers to organize and collectively bargain (e.g., commitments to labor peace, remaining neutral during a union organizing campaign, entering a project labor agreement, etc.);
- Plans or strategies for supporting employers to adopt more transparent and inclusive hiring strategies (including those strategies designed to support and accommodate workers with disabilities, such as those with a history of substance addiction), to ensure free and fair opportunity for workers to organize and collectively bargain, description of prior activities resulted in improved labor relations, increased worker safety, or boosted wages and benefits;
- Description of how grant efforts might help increase wages and benefits and ensuring that they are family-sustaining for the area; or,
- Other information that provides a clear demonstration that jobs supported by grant funds will meet the definition for good jobs in the area or sector(s) covered.

**To receive full points for Core Principle 1, these activities must clearly align with the overall project as described in accordance with requirements above, i. Project Description, 1-5.**

Core Principle 2: Prioritizing Equity (up to 8 points)

An application receiving full points for this element must clearly and fully describe specific activities that the project will implement to address the priority on ensuring the provision of equitable services to and enrolling of marginalized individuals as defined in the Statement of Need. This means that successful applicants will design programs that prioritize efforts to improve the lives of underrepresented workers adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality, including, but not limited to, Black, Indigenous, people of color; LGBTQ+ individuals; women; immigrants and new citizens; veterans; individuals with disabilities; individuals without a college degree; individuals with substance use disorder; and justice-affected individuals.

Applicants should describe those activities that are designed to prioritize equity, and which might include, but are not limited to:

- how any strategic planning, research, or other activities that will be undertaken to ensure that all grant activities prioritize equity for participants;
- any plans to develop and implement culturally- and linguistically appropriate outreach efforts to recruit and enroll individuals from priority populations as described in the Statement of Need;
- how workforce services including training and targeted supportive services will increase the likelihood of participants completing program services and entering, improving, or retaining employment, in particular in good jobs; or
- any other activities that are designed to address the effects of historical marginalization on priority populations within the area covered by the proposed grant.

**To receive full points for Core Principle 2, these activities must clearly align with overall project as described in accordance with requirements above, i. Project Description, 1-5.**

Core Principle 3: Driving and Sustaining Economic Transformation (up to 14 points)

An application receiving full points for this element must clearly describe specific strategies and activities that are designed to promote, support, and sustain positive, long-term economic transformation and prosperity in the area covered by the grant. Such description might include:

- the strategies and activities that will be implemented and describe how these will align with existing or new strategic plans, to achieve sustainable economic transformation for the residents, businesses, and the community(ies) in the grant area;
- the new, innovative or necessary workforce training or other allowable activities that will be delivered to eligible participants, and how these activities will address the issues raised in the Statement of Need; or,
- activities that the grant will implement to align the good jobs focus and the equity focus with workforce training activities, including any relevant priority industry focus, to drive economic transformation within the area covered by the grant.

**To receive full points for Core Principle 3, these activities must clearly align with overall project as described in accordance with requirements above, i. Project Description, 1-5.**

Grant staff (or projected staff positions) should be capable of carrying out, or designed to support, the successful execution of the proposed project; to demonstrate this, applicants must submit **work experience or position descriptions** as described in Section IV.B.4.b below. Applicants must also meet the requirements of Section III.C.4.e. above.

ii. Project Partnerships (up to 10 points)

To ensure that the planned activities are designed to create, improve, or sustain employment opportunities in the region based upon addressing specific workforce needs in the proposed project area(s), applicants must demonstrate collaboration with a strong and diverse community-wide coalition that includes:

- at least two employers/industry representatives;
- at least one State or Local Workforce Development Board, American Job Center operator or partner program, (except where such organization is the applicant); and
- at least one organization representing the community(ies) (except where such organization is the applicant) covered by the proposed project to ensure that local input is part of the planning and execution of the grant.

For each partner entity an application must provide the following description in the project narrative:

- name of each partner entity;
- location/community of each partner;
- role of each partner in the project, explaining their planned activities and how it addresses the specific workforce needs identified by the employer/industry partners; and
- services and/or resources that each partner will contribute to the project in the short-term, as well as to the long-term sustainability of the project.

To demonstrate strong partnerships and receive full points, the application must include evidence of the partnerships; to do so an applicant must attach letters from each of the required partners listed above. See Section IV.4.b. Evidence of Required Partners, for information on requested attachments to the application.

In addition to the three types of required partners described above, recommended partnerships may include, but are not limited to:

- labor unions or labor management partnerships;
- local and regional employer/industry networks;
- local economic development organizations;
- local governments;
- regional planning organizations;
- institutions of higher education and other job training and adult education providers;
- supportive and human services providers; and
- other relevant community, economic and workforce development partners.

Note: For applications that include both communities that are in more than one of the WORC regions (ARC, DRA, and NBRC), employer/industry partners may be located within one or more regions. It is also possible for an employer/industry partner to not be located in any of the regions; however, in such cases the application must make the case as to why these employers were included as partners and demonstrate how employment with such employers would not require participants who live in one of the WORC regions to relocate. For example, the employer may be seeking skilled employees to fill positions located within a reasonable commuting distance for the area, or to fill positions not requiring grant participant relocation (e.g., truck driving or remote work).

Applicants may present this required partnership information in any manner that best meets their needs, including in a table.

#### **d. Organizational Capacity and Experience for Project Success (Up to 6 Points)**

It is important that applicants have the expertise and experience to develop and carry out a successful project that meets the needs of their target population(s) and the communities where they live and work. Therefore, applicants must describe how their organization (which includes the program team, partners, and others as necessary) has the capacity and expertise to achieve successful outcomes for their WORC Initiative grant. Applicants may provide information they deem appropriate to demonstrate their capacity to achieve the purpose of WORC and the program design that they have proposed.

Applicants must address their prior experience or successes in operating a federal or other grant program, where applicable, and provide clear and relevant information to support their proposal. Where an applicant does not have specific prior experience, they may provide alternative evidence that they will be able to successfully implement or achieve their programmatic plans, for elements of the FOA. Successful applicants will provide evidence of their:

- understanding of the community(ies) to be served, and specific needs, experiences, and history of the people and the place(s) and insights into how to address the needs of these communities;
- experience or capability to recruit, enroll and provided appropriate support to individuals from historically-marginalized communities as defined in the Statement of Need, and developing policies and procedures for validating participant eligibility in alignment with FOA requirements;
- previous successes in assisting individuals in achieving or retaining good jobs as defined in this FOA;
- prior experiences in developing or implementing projects designed to address workforce or economic challenges that reflect the organization's ability to successfully carry out the WORC grant;
- ability to successfully complete projects within the timeframe and budget allotted;
- staff skills, experience, history, knowledge, qualifications, and capabilities, or a demonstration of position descriptions, that will enable the organization to successfully implement the proposed project (including **work experience or position descriptions** as requested to be attached to an application in Section IV.B.4.b. below); and
- capacity, either within the organization or through external entities or partners, to accomplish required programmatic, performance and financial reporting activities.

See Section IV.B.4.b below for information on requested attachments to the application that will provide appropriate documentation to support this demonstration of capacity.

Note: This section and the required information is not designed to give advantage to organizations with prior experience managing Federal grants over those without such experience. Where an organization does not have prior experience operating Federal grants, an applicant should provide clear evidence of their capacity to achieve the purpose of WORC and successfully carry out their proposed project.

#### **e. Budget and Budget Narrative (Up to 2 Points)**

The Budget and Budget Narrative will be used to evaluate this section. Please see Section IV.B.2 for information on the requirements. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

- All items included in the budget and budget narrative, including personnel, equipment, and capital improvements, align with the project design as described.

#### **4. Attachments to the Project Narrative**

In addition to the Project Narrative, you must submit attachments. You must clearly label all attachments. We will exclude only those attachments listed below from the page limit. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

You must not include additional materials such as resumés or general letters of support. You must submit your application in one package because documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to the application for review.

Save all files with descriptive file names of 50 characters or fewer and use only standard characters in file names: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, and underscore (\_). File names may not include special characters (e.g. &, -, \*, %, /, #), periods (.), blank spaces, or accent marks, and must be unique (e.g., no other attachment may have the same file name). You may use an underscore (example: My\_Attached\_File.pdf) to separate a file name.

##### **a. Required Attachments**

##### **(1) Abstract**

You must submit an up to two-page abstract summarizing the proposed project including, but not limited to, the scope of the project and proposed outcomes. Omission of the abstract will not result in your application being disqualified; the lack of the required information in the abstract, however, may impact scoring. See III.C.1 for a list of items that will result in the disqualification of your application. Should you be selected for an award, the information provided in your abstract may be published to a public facing website as a summary of your project. The abstract must include the following:

The Abstract must contain the following information to receive **two (2) points**:

- The applicant's name;
- The WORC region (Appalachian, Delta, or Northern Border) for which the applicant is applying;
  - Note: If the project area covers counties/parishes or communities located within more than one of these regional areas, the applicant must select just one region—the Appalachian, Delta, or the Northern Border region—as applications will be reviewed and funded based upon these regional designations.
- The project title;
- A brief summary of the proposed project including but not limited to the scope of the project and proposed outcomes;
- The total number of participants projected to be enrolled **and** the number of participants projected to obtain new or enhanced employment as a result of the project;
- The funding level requested;
- A list of the counties, parishes, or communities included in the project area as well as a map of the area;
- Intended beneficiaries/eligible participants (e.g., dislocated workers, incumbent workers, new workforce entrants) to be trained; and

- A brief summary of subrecipients and the activities they are expected to carry out under the proposed project (if applicable).

#### **b. Requested Attachments**

We request the following attachments, but their omission will not cause us to disqualify the application. The omission of the attachment will, however, impact scoring unless otherwise noted.

#### **(1) Evidence of Required Partners**

To receive full points during review, your application must demonstrate partnerships by including letters of commitment as attachments for each of the following:

- two employer/industry representatives;
- one State or Local Workforce Development Board, American Job Center operator partner program, training provider, or similar entity (except where such organization is the applicant); and
- one community-based organization (except where such organization is the applicant).

These letters should provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the partners understand and agree with their role, which should align with the roles described in the application. These letters must be labeled “Letters of Commitment.”

#### **(2) Indirect Cost Rate Agreement**

If you are requesting indirect costs based on a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by your federal Cognizant Agency, then attach the most recently approved Agreement. (For more information, see Section IV.B.2. and Section IV.E.1.) This attachment does not impact scoring of the application.

This document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “NICRA.”

#### **(3) Financial System Risk Assessment Information**

All applicants are requested to submit Funding Opportunity Announcement Financial System Risk Assessment Information. See Section V.B.2 for a sample template and additional instructions. This attachment does not impact the scoring of the application.

#### **(4) Project Timeline**

Applicants are requested to submit a proposed Project Timeline that includes a brief summary of planned grant activities and the associated project milestones of the grant. The timeline should cover the entire proposed grant period of performance, which may not exceed 36 months. The Project Timeline should align with activities referenced in both the Budget and Project Narratives.

#### **(5) Key Staff Experience and Job Descriptions**

Applicants must attach existing and planned staff work experience and job descriptions for all current or planned key personnel who may staff the project. Job descriptions must be included

for positions that are planned or currently open. These positions must be included in the budget narrative. See Section V.A. for specific scoring criteria related to submission of these documents.

## **C. SUBMISSION DATE, TIME, PROCESS AND ADDRESS**

### **Due Date for Applications:**

June 13, 2023

You must submit your application electronically on <https://www.grants.gov> **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to minimize the risk of late receipt. We will not review applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by hard-copy, e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

### **1. Hardcopy Submission**

No applications submitted in hardcopy by mail or hand delivery (including overnight delivery) will be accepted for this funding opportunity.

### **2. Electronic Submission through Grants.gov**

Applicants submitting applications must ensure successful submission **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.** Grants.gov will subsequently validate the application.

The process can be complicated and time-consuming. We strongly advise you to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for time to resolve technical problems. Note that validation does not mean that your application has been accepted as complete or has been accepted for review by the agency. Rather, grants.gov verifies only the submission of certain parts of an application.

#### **a. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**

Read through the registration process carefully before registering. These steps may take as long as four weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for timely electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application.

Applicants must follow the online instructions for registration at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. We recommend that you prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information and save time.

An application submitted through Grants.gov constitutes a submission as an electronically signed application. The registration and account creation with Grants.gov, with E-Biz Point of Contact (POC) approval, establishes an Agency Organizational Representative (AOR). When an application is submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the AOR who submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The E-Biz POC must authorize the individual who is able to make

legally binding commitments on behalf of your organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

#### **b. How to Submit an Application to DOL via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For a complete workspace overview, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

When a registered applicant submits an application with Grants.gov, an electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. Grants.gov will send the applicant AOR an email acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) with the successful transmission of the application, serving as proof of timely submission. The applicant will receive two email messages to provide the status of the application's progress through the system.

- The first email will contain a tracking number and will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov.
- The second email will indicate the application has either been successfully validated or has been rejected due to errors.

Grants.gov will **reject applications if the applicant's registration in SAM is expired. Only applications that have been successfully submitted by the deadline and later successfully validated will be considered.** It is your responsibility to ensure a timely submission. While it is not required that an application be successfully validated before the deadline for submission, it is prudent to reserve time before the deadline in case it is necessary to resubmit an application that has not been successfully validated. Therefore, enough time should be allotted for submission (24-48 hours) and, if applicable, additional time to address errors and receive validation upon resubmission (an additional two business days for each ensuing submission). It is important to note that if enough time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, DOL will not consider the application.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .rtf or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent DOL from considering the application. We will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.

We strongly advise applicants to use the various tools and documents, including FAQs, which are available on the "Applicant Resources" page at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>.

We encourage new prospective applicants to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through WorkforceGPS at <https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2022/05/10/15/23/How-to-Apply-for-a-Grant>.

To receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users, and other time-sensitive updates as information is available, you may subscribe to “Grants.gov Updates” at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>.

If you encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, contact one of the following:

- call 1-800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or
- email [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week but closed on federal holidays. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number.

### **Late Applications**

We will consider only applications successfully submitted through Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated. **You take a significant risk by waiting to the last day to submit through Grants.gov.**

## **D. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW**

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

## **E. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS**

All proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the Cost Principles, now found in the Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), codified at 2 CFR Part 200 and at 2 CFR Part 2900 (Uniform Guidance-DOL specific). Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the Cost Principles or other conditions contained in the grant. Applicants, whether successful or not, will not be entitled to reimbursement of pre-award costs.

### **Indirect Costs**

As specified in the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that are incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective. An indirect cost rate is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether federally-assisted or not. You have two options to claim reimbursement of indirect costs.

**Option 1:** You may use a NICRA or Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) supplied by the federal Cognizant Agency. If you do not have a NICRA/CAP or have a pending NICRA/CAP, and in either case choose to include estimated indirect costs in your budget, at the time of award the

Grant Officer will release funds in the amount of 10 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs to support indirect costs. Within 90 days of award, you are required to submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal or CAP to your federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional indirect cost rate. (See Section IV.B.4. for more information on NICRA submission requirements.)

**Option 2:** Any organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, with the exceptions noted at 2 CFR Part 200.414(f) in the Cost Principles, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR Part 200.1 for definition), which may be used indefinitely. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. (See 2 CFR Part 200.414(f) for more information on use of the de minimis rate.)

### **Salary and Bonus Limitations**

None of the funds appropriated under the heading “Employment and Training” in the appropriation statute(s) may be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. This limitation does not apply to contractors providing goods and services as defined in the Audit Requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance (see 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F). Where states are recipients of such funds, states may establish a lower limit for salaries and bonuses of those receiving salaries and bonuses from subrecipients of such funds, taking into account factors including the relative cost of living in the state, the compensation levels for comparable state or local government employees, and the size of the organizations that administer federal programs involved including ETA programs. See Public Law 113-235, Division G, Title I, section 105, and TEGL number 05-06 for further clarification: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-05-06>.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

Pursuant to 2 CFR Part 2900.13, to ensure that the federal investment of DOL funds has as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials, the grantee will be required to license to the public all work created with the support of the grant under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) license. Work that must be licensed under the CC BY includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to pre-existing, grantee-owned content using grant funds.

This license allows subsequent users to copy, distribute, transmit, and adapt the copyrighted work and requires such users to attribute the work in the manner specified by the grantee. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work. For general information on CC BY, please visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>.

Instructions for marking your work with CC BY can be found at [https://wiki.creativecommons.org/Marking\\_your\\_work\\_with\\_a\\_CC\\_license](https://wiki.creativecommons.org/Marking_your_work_with_a_CC_license).

Questions about CC BY as it applies to this specific funding opportunity should be submitted to the ETA Grants Management Specialist specified in Section VII.

Only work that is developed by the recipient in whole or in part with grant funds is required to be licensed under the CC BY license. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to or purchased

by the grantee from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CC BY licensing requirement.

The purpose of the CC BY licensing requirement is to ensure that materials developed with funds provided by these grants result in work that can be freely reused and improved by others. When purchasing or licensing consumable or reusable materials, the grantee is expected to respect all applicable federal laws and regulations, including those pertaining to the copyright and accessibility provisions of the Federal Rehabilitation Act.

Separate from the CC BY license to the public, the Federal Government reserves a paid-up, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use for federal purposes (i) the copyright in all products developed under the grant, including a subaward or contract under the grant or subaward; and (ii) any rights of copyright to which the recipient, subrecipient, or a contractor purchases ownership under an award (including, but not limited to, curricula, training models, technical assistance products, and any related materials). Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. The grantee may not use federal funds to pay any royalty or license fee for use of a copyrighted work, or the cost of acquiring by purchase a copyright in a work, where the Department has a license or rights of free use in such work. If revenues are generated through selling products developed with grant funds, including intellectual property, DOL treats such revenues as program income. Such program income is added to the grant and must be expended for allowable grant activities.

If applicable, the following standard ETA disclaimer needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds.

**“This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it.”**

### **Credential Transparency**

The Department wishes to ensure that individuals, employers, educators and training providers have access to the most complete, current and beneficial information about providers, programs credentials, and competencies supported with these public, federal funds. To this end, the Department requires that information about all credentials (including but not limited to diplomas, badges, certificates, certifications, apprenticeships, licenses, and degrees of all levels and types) and competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) developed or delivered through the use of these public federal funds be made publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, such as through the use of credential transparency description language specifications. ETA will provide specific guidance and technical assistance on data elements to include in the published open data, such as information

about the credential provider, the credential and its associated competencies, delivery mode, geographic coverage, the industry sector(s) and occupation(s) for which the credential was developed, related assessments, related accreditations or other quality assurances where appropriate, costs, and available outcomes.

#### **Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages**

Grant funds may be used to pay reasonable and prudent wages for internships and work experience included in the scope of work with the approval of the Grant Officer. The applicant should state how the wages or other costs will be supported beyond the life of the grant if necessary to the continuation of the project. Grant recipients will be expected to have policies in place that employ sound management practices and adhere to consistent and equitable treatment; case managers and staff must be trained on such policies to ensure consistent treatment and application across all participants. Such policies should describe the frequency and value in which the payments will be issued, as well as participant eligibility, applicability, and accountability (supporting documentation, reconciliation, etc.).

Organizations receiving grants through this FOA may use grant funds to pay for the wages of participants where the objective assessment and the Individual Career Plan indicate that work experiences, including internships, are appropriate. Further, the provision of stipends to training enrollees is an allowable cost under this FOA. Payment may take the form of wages or stipends. Generally, participants may receive stipends for participating in classes and training. Wages are compensation for services performed for an employer.

Grantees must comply with WIOA Section 181 and WIOA regulations detailing the applicable wage and labor standards. When paying participant stipends, grantees must maintain documentation of the process for determining the amount of the stipend and the distribution. Grantees providing wages or stipends to participants should be aware of the implications under IRS provisions. Please consult [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more information.

### **F. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

**Withdrawal of Applications:** You may withdraw an application by written notice to the Grant Officer at any time before an award is made.

## **V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **A. CRITERIA**

We have instituted procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against which your application will be judged. The evaluation criteria are based on the information required in the application as described in Sections IV.B.2. (Project Budget) and IV.B.3. (Project Narrative). Reviewers will award points based on the evaluation criteria described below.

Section IV.B.3 (Project Narrative) of this FOA has several “section headers” (e.g. IV.B.3.a), Statement of Need). Each of these “section headers” of the Project Narrative may include one or

more “criterion,” and each “criterion” includes one or more “rating factors,” which provide detailed specifications for the content and quality of the response to that criterion. Each of the rating factors have specific point values assigned. These point values are the number of points possible for the application to earn for the rating factor.

| <b>Criterion</b>                                                     | <b>Points<br/>(Maximum)</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Statement of Need</b>                                          | <b>Section Total</b>        |
|                                                                      | <b>20</b>                   |
| • Project Service Area, Challenges and Opportunities                 | 8                           |
| • Target Population                                                  | 6                           |
| • Description of Workforce Needs                                     | 6                           |
| <b>2. Project Results &amp; Achieving the Purpose of WORC</b>        | <b>Section Total</b>        |
|                                                                      | <b>30</b>                   |
| • Expected Results                                                   | Subsection Total<br>10      |
| • Achieving the Purpose of WORC                                      | Subsection Total<br>20      |
| ○ Core Principle 1: Promoting Availability of Good Jobs              | 6                           |
| ○ Core Principle 2: Prioritizing Equity                              | 6                           |
| ○ Core Principle 3: Driving and Sustaining Economic Transformation   | 8                           |
| <b>3. Project Design</b>                                             | <b>Section Total</b>        |
|                                                                      | <b>40</b>                   |
| • Project Description                                                | Subsection Total<br>30      |
| ○ Core Principle 1: Promoting Availability of Good Jobs              | 8                           |
| ○ Core Principle 2: Prioritizing Equity                              | 8                           |
| ○ Core Principle 3: Driving and Sustaining Economic Transformation   | 14                          |
| • Project Partnerships                                               | Subsection Total<br>10      |
| <b>4. Organizational Capacity and Experience for Project Success</b> | <b>Section Total</b>        |
|                                                                      | <b>6</b>                    |

|                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>5. Budget and Budget Narrative</b> | <b>Section Total</b><br>2 |
| <b>Abstract</b>                       | <b>Section Total</b><br>2 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                          | <b>100</b>                |

Section IV.B.3, Project Narrative, provides a detailed explanation of the information an application must include (e.g., a comprehensive work plan for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic dates). Reviewers will rate each “rating factor” based on how fully and convincingly the applicant responds. For each “rating factor” under each “criterion,” panelists will determine whether the applicant thoroughly meets, partially meets, or fails to meet the “rating factor,” unless otherwise noted in Section IV.B.3, based on the definitions below:

| <b>Standard Rating</b> | <b>Definition</b>                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Standard for Calculating Points</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Thoroughly Meets       | The application thoroughly responds to the rating factor and fully and convincingly satisfies all of the stated specifications.                                                | Full Points                            |
| Partially Meets        | The application responds incompletely to the rating factor or the application convincingly satisfies some, but not all, of the stated specifications.                          | Half Points                            |
| Fails to Meet          | The application does not respond to the rating factor or the application does respond to the rating factor but does not convincingly satisfy any of the stated specifications. | Zero Points                            |

In order to receive the maximum points for each rating factor, applicants must provide a response to the requirement that fully describes the proposed program design and demonstrates the quality of approach, rather than simply re-stating a commitment to perform prescribed activities. In other words, applicants must describe why their proposal is the best strategy and how they will implement it, rather than that the strategy contains elements that conform to the requirements of this FOA.

## **B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

### **1. Merit Review and Selection Process**

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria to determine the merit of applications. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this FOA. Up to 100 points may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses provided. The final scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selection of

applications for funding. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to take into consideration other relevant factors when applicable. Such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds, availability of funds and other relevant factors. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to their attention.

The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussion with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussion, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <https://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

## **2. Risk Review Process**

Prior to making an award, ETA will review information available through various sources, including its own records and any OMB-designated repository of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), and Sam.gov. Additionally, ETA will comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 180 codified at 2 CFR Part 2998 (Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension). This risk evaluation may incorporate results of the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility (application screening) or the quality of its application (merit review). If ETA determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. Criteria to be evaluated include the following:

- i. Financial stability;
- ii. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Uniform Grant Guidance;
- iii. History of performance. The applicant's record in managing awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, if it is a prior recipient of such federal awards, including timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements and, if applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
- iv. Reports and findings from audits performed under Subpart F–Audit Requirements of the Uniform Grant Guidance or the reports and findings of any other available audits and monitoring reports containing findings, issues of non-compliance, or questioned costs;
- v. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, and other requirements imposed on recipients.

NOTE: As part of ETA's Risk Review process, the Grant Officer will determine the following:

- If the applicant had any restriction on spending for any ETA grant due to adverse monitoring findings; or
- If the applicant received a High Risk determination in accordance with [TEGL 23-15](#).

Depending on the severity of the findings and whether the findings were resolved, the Grant Officer may, at their discretion, elect not to fund the applicant for a grant award regardless of the applicant's score in the competition.

All applicants are requested to submit the following information as an attachment to their application (suggested template below) for ETA to assess the applicant's Financial System. This information will be taken into account as one component of ETA's Risk Review

Process. Applicants may use the suggested template or answer the questions in a separate attachment. It is unlikely that an organization will be able to manage a federal grant without the following system/processes in place. Applicants are expected to have these in place before applying for a grant with ETA.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <p align="center">U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING<br/>ADMINISTRATION<br/>(ETA)<br/><b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK<br/>ASSESSMENT</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>SECTION A:<br/>PURPOSE</b>                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                   |
| <p>The financial responsibility of grantees must be such that the grantee can properly discharge the public trust which accompanies the authority to expend public funds. Adequate administrative and financial systems including the accounting systems should meet the following criteria as contained in 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900.</p> <p>(1) Accounting records should provide information needed to adequately identify the receipt of funds under each grant awarded and the expenditure of funds for each grant.</p> <p>(2) Entries in accounting records should refer to subsidiary records and/or documentation which support the entry and which can be readily located.</p> <p>(3) The accounting system should provide accurate and current financial reporting information.</p> <p>(4) The accounting system should be integrated with an adequate system of internal controls to safeguard the funds and assets covered, check the accuracy and reliability of accounting data, promote operational efficiency, and encourage adherence to prescribed management policies.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>SECTION B: GENERAL</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                   |
| 1. Applicant Legal Name (as it appears in SAM.gov):                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
| a. When was the organization founded/incorporated ( <i>month, day, year</i> ):                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | b. Principal Officers Names,<br>Title, Email Address<br>President/Chair Board of Directors:<br><br>Chief Executive Officer:<br><br>Chief Financial Officer:<br><br>Accounting/Budget Officer: |                                                   |
| c. Employer Identification Number:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
| d. Number of Employees<br>Full Time:                      Part Time:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                   |
| 2. Is the organization or institution affiliated with any other organization: Yes                      No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                               | 3. Total Sales/Revenues in most recent accounting |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p align="center">U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING<br/>ADMINISTRATION<br/>(ETA)<br/><b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK<br/>ASSESSMENT</b></p>                                                                                                                           |  |                                                                                                    |
| If yes, please provide details as to the nature of the company (for profit, nonprofit, LLC, etc) and if it provides services or products to the organization in relation to this grant.                                                                                                                          |  | period. (12 months)<br>\$                                                                          |
| <b>SECTION C: ACCOUNTING SYSTEM</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |                                                                                                    |
| <i>NOTE: Provide a detailed response (on a separate page on your organization's letterhead and signed/dated by a Principal Officer) for any items 2-9 of Section C that have "No" or "Not Sure" answer(s), providing enough information to clearly reflect the expertise of the organization in these areas.</i> |  |                                                                                                    |
| 1. Has any Government Agency rendered an official written opinion concerning the adequacy of the accounting system for the collection, identification and allocation of costs under Federal contracts/grants?    Yes    No                                                                                       |  |                                                                                                    |
| a. If yes, provide name, and address of Agency performing review:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  | b. Attach a copy of the latest review and any subsequent correspondence, clearance documents, etc. |
| 2. Which of the following best describes the accounting system:                      State administered      Internally Developed      Web-based                                                                                                                                                                 |  |                                                                                                    |
| 3. Does the accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each contract/grant?                                                                                                                                                                                          |  | Yes   No   Not Sure                                                                                |
| 4. Does the accounting system provide for the recording of expenditures for each grant/contract by the component project and budget cost categories shown in the approved budget?                                                                                                                                |  | Yes   No   Not Sure                                                                                |
| 5. Are time distribution records maintained for an employee when his/her effort can be specifically identified to a particular cost objective?                                                                                                                                                                   |  | Yes   No   Not Sure                                                                                |
| 6. If the organization proposes an overhead rate, does the accounting system provide for the segregation of direct and indirect expenses?                                                                                                                                                                        |  | Yes   No   Not Sure                                                                                |
| 7. Does the organization have an approved indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan?<br>If so, who approved it (Federal Cognizant Agency or a Pass-through Entity)? What are the effective dates?                                                                                                               |  | Yes   No   Not Sure                                                                                |
| 8. Does the accounting/financial system include budgetary controls to preclude incurring obligations in excess of:<br>a. Total funds available for a grant?                                                                                                                                                      |  | Yes   No   Not Sure<br>Yes   No   Not Sure                                                         |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                     |                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p align="center">U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING<br/>ADMINISTRATION<br/>(ETA)<br/><b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK<br/>ASSESSMENT</b></p>                  |                                                     |                                      |
| <p>b. Total funds available for a budget cost category (e.g. Personnel, Travel, etc)?</p>                                                                                                               |                                                     |                                      |
| <p>9. Does the organization or institution have an internal control structure that would provide reasonable assurance that the grant funds, assets, and systems are safeguarded?</p>                    |                                                     | <p align="right">Yes No Not Sure</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>SECTION D: FINANCIAL<br/>STABILITY</b></p>    |                                      |
| <p>1. Is there any legal matter or an ongoing financial concern that may impact the organization's ability to manage and administer the grant?      Yes      No<br/>If yes, please explain briefly.</p> |                                                     |                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>SECTION E: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</b></p>       |                                      |
| <p>1. Did an independent certified public accountant (CPA) ever examine the financial statements?      Yes      No</p>                                                                                  |                                                     |                                      |
| <p>2. If an independent CPA review was performed please attach a copy of their latest report and any management letters issued.      Enclosed      N / A</p>                                            |                                                     |                                      |
| <p>3. If an independent CPA was engaged to perform a review and no report was issued, please provide details and an explanation below:</p>                                                              |                                                     |                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>SECTION F: ADDITIONAL<br/>INFORMATION</b></p> |                                      |
| <p>1. Use this space for any additional information (<i>indicate section and item numbers if a continuation</i>)</p>                                                                                    |                                                     |                                      |

## VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

## **A. AWARD NOTICES**

All award notifications will be posted on the ETA Homepage at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/>. Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the grant's execution. Non-selected applicants will be notified by mail or email and may request a written debriefing on the significant weaknesses of their application.

Selection of an organization as a recipient does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, we may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiations and decline to fund the application. We reserve the right not to fund any application related to this FOA.

## **B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Administrative Program Requirements**

All grantees will be subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the OMB Uniform Guidance, and the terms and conditions of the award. The grant(s) awarded under this FOA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions.

- i. Non-Profit Organizations, Educational Institutions, For-profit entities and State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments—2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and 2 CFR Part 2900 (DOL's Supplement to 2 CFR Part 200).
- ii. All recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law No. 113-328, 128 Stat. 1425 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. 3101 et. seq.) and the applicable provisions of the regulations at 20 CFR Part 675 et. seq. Note that 20 CFR Part 683 (Administrative Provisions) allows unsuccessful applicants to file administrative appeals.
- iii. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 2 CFR Part 180 (OMB Guidance to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)), and, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200 (Audit Requirements).
- iv. 29 CFR Part 2, subpart D—Equal Treatment in Department of Labor Programs for Religious Organizations; Protection of Religious Liberty of Department of Labor Social Service Providers and Beneficiaries.
- v. 29 CFR Part 31—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Labor—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- vi. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- vii. 29 CFR Part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- viii. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

- ix. 29 CFR Part 38 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- x. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.
- xi. The Department of Labor will follow the procedures outlined in the Department’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations (29 CFR Part 70). If DOL receives a FOIA request for your application, the procedures in DOL’s FOIA regulations for responding to requests for commercial/business information submitted to the government will be followed, as well as all FOIA exemptions and procedures. See generally 5 U.S.C. § 552; 29 CFR Part 70.
- xii. Standard Grant Terms and Conditions of Award—see the following link: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/resources>.

## **2. Other Legal Requirements**

### **a. Religious Activities**

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, applies to all federal law and its implementation. If an applicant organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled to receive federal financial assistance under this grant solicitation and maintain that hiring practice. As stated in 29 CFR 2.32(a), religious organizations are eligible on the same basis as any other organization, to seek DOL support or participate in DOL programs for which they are otherwise eligible. Guidance from DOL is found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/grants/religious-freedom-restoration-act/guidance>.

### **b. Lobbying or Fundraising the U.S. Government with Federal Funds**

In accordance with Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-65) (2 U.S.C. § 1611), non-profit entities incorporated under Internal Revenue Service Code section 501(c)(4) that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive federal funds and grants. No activity, including awareness-raising and advocacy activities, may include fundraising for, or lobbying of, U.S. federal, state, or local governments (see 2 CFR Part 200.450 for more information).

### **c. Transparency Act Requirements**

You must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. Law 109-282, as amended by the Government Funding Transparency Act of 2008, Pub. Law 110-252, Title VI, Chap. 2, Sec. 6202), as follows.

- Except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under sub-paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, you must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, should you receive funding.
- Upon award, you will receive detailed information on the reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, as described in 2 CFR Part 170, Appendix A, which can be

found at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2021-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2021-title2-vol1-part170-appA.pdf>.

The following types of awards are not subject to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act.

1. Federal awards to individuals who apply for or receive federal awards as natural persons (e.g., unrelated to any business or non-profit organization he or she may own or operate in his or her name);
2. Federal awards to entities that had a gross income, from all sources, of less than \$300,000 in the entities' previous tax year; and
3. Federal awards, if the required reporting would disclose classified information.

**d. Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**

Applicants submitting applications in response to this FOA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the Department of Labor and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order. By submitting an application, you are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable federal law and [TEGL 39-11](#) (issued June 28, 2012). All such activity conducted by ETA and/or recipient(s) will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal laws.

By submitting a grant application, you agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality by complying with the following provisions that are applicable in governing the handling of confidential information: You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DOL/ETA funded grants is securely transmitted.

- i. To ensure that such PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, all PII and other sensitive data transmitted via e-mail or stored on CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. You must not e-mail unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including ETA or contractors.
- ii. You must take the steps necessary to ensure the privacy of all PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals and to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure. You must maintain such PII in accordance with the ETA standards for information security described in TEGL NO. 39-11 and any updates to such standards we provide to you. Grantees who wish to obtain more information on data security should contact their Federal Project Officer.
- iii. You must ensure that any PII used during the performance of your grant has been obtained in conformity with applicable federal and state laws governing the confidentiality of information.
- iv. You further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through your ETA grant must be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed using recipient-issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by

ETA. Accessing, processing, and storing of ETA grant PII data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations, (e.g., employee's home), and non-recipient managed IT services, (e.g., Yahoo mail), is strictly prohibited unless approved by ETA.

- v. Your employees and other personnel who will have access to sensitive/confidential/proprietary/private data must be advised of the confidential nature of the information, the safeguards required to protect the information, and that there are civil and criminal sanctions for noncompliance with such safeguards that are contained in federal and state laws.
- vi. You must have policies and procedures in place under which your employees and other personnel, before being granted access to PII, acknowledge their understanding of the confidential nature of the data and the safeguards with which they must comply in their handling of such data, as well as the fact that they may be liable to civil and criminal sanctions for improper disclosure.
- vii. You must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
- viii. Access to any PII created by the ETA grant must be restricted to only those employees of the grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the scope of work in the grant agreement.
- ix. All PII data must be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving such records by computer, remote terminal, or any other means. Data may be downloaded to, or maintained on, mobile or portable devices only if the data are encrypted using NIST validated software products based on FIPS 140-2 encryption. In addition, wage data may be accessed only from secure locations.
- x. PII data obtained by the recipient through a request from ETA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor, except as permitted by the Grant Officer or by court order.
- xi. You must permit ETA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or conducting other investigations to assure that you are complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, you must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.
- xii. You must retain data received from ETA only for the period of time required to use it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, you agree that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

#### **e. Record Retention**

You must follow federal guidelines on record retention, which require that you maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of at least three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report. See 2 CFR Part 200.333-.337 for more specific information, including information about the start of the record retention period for awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, and when the records must be retained for more than three years.

#### **f. Use of Contracts and Subawards**

You must abide by the following definitions of contract, contractor, subaward, and subrecipient.

**Contract:** Contract means a legal instrument by which a non-federal entity (defined as a state or local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), non-profit organization, for-profit entity, foreign public entity, or a foreign organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient) purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a federal award. The term as used in this FOA does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-federal entity considers it a contract, when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a federal award or subaward (see definition of Subaward below).

**Contractor:** Contractor means an entity that receives a contract as defined above in Contract.

**Subaward:** Subaward means an award provided by a pass-through entity (defined as a non-federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program) to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program. A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract.

**Subrecipient:** Subrecipient means a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program, but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other federal awards directly from a federal awarding agency.

You must follow the provisions at 2 CFR 200.330-.332 regarding subrecipient monitoring and management. Also see 2 CFR Part 200.308(c)(6) regarding prior approval requirements for subawards. When awarding subawards, you are required to comply with provisions on government-wide suspension and debarment found at 2 CFR Part 180 and codified at 2 Part CFR Part 2998.

#### **g. Closeout of Grant Award**

Any entity that receives an award under this Announcement must close its grant with ETA at the end of the final year of the grant. Information about this process may be found in ETA's Grant Closeout FAQ located at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/grants/pdfs/GCFAQ.pdf>.

### **3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions**

Except as specifically provided in this FOA, our acceptance of an application and an award of federal funds to sponsor any programs(s) does not provide a waiver of any grant requirements and/or procedures. For example, the OMB Uniform Guidance requires that an entity's procurement procedures ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide full and open competition. If an application identifies a specific entity to

provide goods or services, the award does not provide the justification or basis to sole-source the procurement (i.e., avoid competition).

#### **4. Special Program Requirements**

##### **a. ETA Evaluation**

As a condition of grant award, grantees are required to participate in an evaluation, if undertaken by DOL. The evaluation may include an implementation assessment across grantees, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grantees, and a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. Conducting an impact analysis could involve random assignment (which involves random assignment of eligible participants into a treatment group that would receive program services or enhanced program services, or into control group(s) that would receive no program services or program services that are not enhanced). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor on participants, employers, and funding; (2) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, and operational and financial records, and any other relevant documents to calculate program costs and benefits; and (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services, including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of DOL.

##### **b. Performance Goals**

Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided, and failure to meet those outcomes may result in technical assistance or other intervention by ETA, and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with ETA.

#### **C. REPORTING**

You must meet DOL reporting requirements. Specifically, you must submit the reports and documents listed below to DOL electronically.

##### **1. Quarterly Financial Reports**

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired. Quarterly reports are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the second month after each calendar-year quarter. On the final Financial Status Report, you must include any subaward amounts so we can calculate final indirect costs, if applicable. You must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System and information and instructions will be provided to grantees. For other guidance on ETA's financial reporting, reference TEGL 20-19 and our webpage at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/management/reporting>.

##### **2. Quarterly Performance Reports**

The grantee must submit a quarterly performance report by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the second month after each calendar-year quarter. The report must include quarterly information on interim indicators and performance goals. The last quarterly progress report will serve as the grant's

Final Performance Report. This report must provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant performance. Submission requirements will be provided to grantees upon award. We will also provide you with guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis.

Grantees are required to submit their Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) files through the Workforce Integrated Reporting System (WIPS). The PIRL specifies the participant-level data to be provided by grantees for performance reporting. The PIRL collects data on individual participant demographics, services, and outcomes. The PIRL is available for download on [ETA's reporting webpage](#). ETA's [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 14-18](#) provides further detail regarding performance measures and reporting. Grantees must maintain source documentation for each grant participant in accordance with federal record retention policies. Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records are utilized to determine program exit outcomes for Median Earnings after Exit, Employment Rate Second Quarter after Exit, Employment Rate Fourth Quarter after Exit, and Employment Retention Rates.

### **3. Quarterly Narrative Performance Reports**

In addition to the Quarterly Performance Report, the grantee must submit the Joint Quarterly Narrative Performance Report Template (ETA 9179) progress report by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the second month after each calendar year quarter during which the grant is within the period of performance for the award. The report includes quarterly information regarding accomplishments, including project success stories, upcoming grant activities, and promising approaches and processes, as well as progress toward performance outcomes, including updates on product, curricula, and training development.

WORC grantees identify the performance measures they will collect and share as part of their proposed project in each application and will utilize the Quarterly Narrative Report to report on goals, outcomes, and outputs described in the approved grant proposal in WIPS. The final Quarterly Narrative Report summarizes accomplishments for the entire grant period.

## **VII. AGENCY CONTACTS**

For further information about this FOA, please contact Sabrina Guerrier, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at DOL-ETA-DWG@dol.gov. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to DOL-ETA-DWG@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-23-07, and along with question(s), include a contact name, and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants> and at <https://www.grants.gov>.

## **VIII. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. WEB-BASED RESOURCES**

DOL maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. These include the CareerOneStop portal (<https://www.careeronestop.org>), which provides national and state career information on occupations; the Service Locator function within the CareerOneStop webpage which provides a directory of the nation's American Job Centers, also known as one-stop centers, (<https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/service-locator.aspx>); and the

Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) Online (<https://online.onetcenter.org>), which provides occupational competency profiles.

## **B. INDUSTRY COMPETENCY MODELS AND CAREER CLUSTERS**

ETA supports an Industry Competency Model Initiative to promote an understanding of the skill sets and competencies that are essential to an educated and skilled workforce. A competency model is a collection of competencies that, taken together, define successful performance in a particular work setting. Competency models serve as a starting point for the design and implementation of workforce and talent development programs. To learn about the industry-validated models, visit the Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC) at <https://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel>. The CMC site also provides tools to build or customize industry models, as well as tools to build career ladders and career lattices for specific regional economies.

## **C. WORKFORCEGPS RESOURCES**

We encourage you to view the information on workforce resources gathered through consultations with federal agency partners, industry stakeholders, educators, and local practitioners, and made available on WorkforceGPS at <https://www.workforcegps.org>.

We encourage you to view the online tutorials, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” and “Grants Application 101: Budgetary Forms - SF-424, 424A, 424B, and Budget Narrative” available through WorkforceGPS at <https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2022/05/10/15/23/How-to-Apply-for-a-Grant>.

We created Workforce System Strategies to make it easier for the public workforce system and its partners to identify effective strategies and support improved customer outcomes. The collection highlights strategies informed by a wide range of evidence, such as experimental studies and implementation evaluations, as well as supporting resources, such as toolkits. We encourage you to review these resources by visiting <https://strategies.workforcegps.org>.

We created a technical assistance portal at <https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/> that contains online training and resources for fiscal and administrative issues. Online trainings available include, but are not limited to, Introduction to Grant Applications and Forms, Indirect Costs, Cost Principles, and Accrual Accounting.

## **D. SKILLSCOMMONS RESOURCES**

SkillsCommons (<https://www.skillscommons.org>) offers an online library of curriculum and related training resources to obtain industry-recognized credentials in manufacturing, IT, healthcare, energy, and other industries. The website contains thousands of Open Educational

Resources (OER) for job-driven workforce development, which were produced by grantees funded through DOL's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. Community colleges and other training providers across the nation can reuse, revise, redistribute, and reorganize the OER on SkillsCommons for institutional, industry, and individual use.

## **IX. OMB INFORMATION COLLECTION**

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires July 31, 2025.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 50 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Send comments about the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, to the attention of the Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N1301, Washington, D.C. 20210. Comments may also be emailed to: [DOL\\_PRA\\_PUBLIC@dol.gov](mailto:DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov).

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND ONLY COMMENTS ABOUT THE BURDEN CAUSED BY THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED EARLIER IN THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. DOL will use the information collected through this "Funding Opportunity Announcement" to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicants best suited to perform the functions of the grant. This information is required to be considered for this grant.

Signed 04/14/2023 in Washington, D.C. by:  
Jenifer McEnery  
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration