U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of Disability Employment Policy

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR: EMPLOYER ASSISTANCE AND RESOURCE NETWORK ON DISABILITY INCLUSION (EARN)

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Initial

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: FOA-ODEP-23-11

ASSISTANCE LISTING: 17.720

KEY DATES: *The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is June 23, 2023*. We *must receive applications no later than* ***11:59 p.m. 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.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), is responsible for the grant award process for the Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Information on a pending Prospective Applicant Webinar will be posted to this FOA's Grants.gov page in the coming days. While a review of the Webinar is strongly encouraged to support successful grant applications, it is not mandatory. The Webinar will provide specific information related to this funding opportunity and guidance on how to apply. Applicants will also be able to ask questions during the Webinar.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department, or we), announces the availability of approximately $2,000,000 in grant funds authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, Public Law 117-328.

The work completed under this new cooperative agreement will build upon the prior work of the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN). The current Cooperative Agreement No. OD-33975-19-75-4-36 was issued in 2019. Since 2001, ODEP has funded various iterations of EARN. This national employer-focused policy, research, and technical assistance center provides information and resources to help employers recruit, hire, retain and advance people with disabilities.

The Department expects to award a total of approximately $10 million for one cooperative agreement, to be provided in annual increments of approximately $2 million during a five-year period of performance. Under this Funding Opportunity Announcement, applicants must apply for, and submit budget documents requesting no more than $2 million for the first year of operation. Subsequent incremental awards will be dependent upon federal funds availability, along with progressive project expenditures and outcomes.

The Department is committed to improving access to Good Jobs for all American workers. EARN's workplace research, policy development, and technical assistance center identifies and promotes the adoption of innovative and equitable evidence-based policy and practice solutions. These solutions help public and private sector employers of all sizes recruit, hire, retain, and advance people with disabilities into good jobs, including those from historically underserved communities. Executive Order 14091 defines "underserved communities" as "those populations as well as geographic communities that have been systematically denied the opportunity to participate fully in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as defined in Executive Orders 13985 and 14020." "Good Jobs" have been defined by the Departments of Labor and Commerce to be those that reflect certain Good Jobs Principals, including DEIA.

EARN's policy process includes analysis of current employment policies and practices, identification of workplace barriers, development of actionable policy and practice solutions for employer adoption, promotion of these through targeted communication channels, and evaluation of employer implementation. Wider adoption of disability-inclusive policies and practices depend upon engaged employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities.

To support policy adoption, EARN convenes a diverse range of organizations (i.e. ODEP Alliance Partners, the Circle, the Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability, and the Inclusion at Work Leadership Council). EARN identifies employers and labor management partnerships who adopt innovative policies and practices, analyzes and documents those policies and practices, and promotes their successes through the center's website. EARN's robust website at http://www.AskEARN.org also serves as a central repository of best and emerging polices, practices, and employment models from national employer-focused organizations.

EARN will continue to focus on expanding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in all aspects of its work. This meets the goal of Executive Orders 13985, 14035, and 14091 to ensure the Federal Government and the economy work for all Americans, including people from historically underserved communities. The EARN cooperative agreement awardee will be expected to engage a group of national employer intermediaries and labor management partnerships as well as intermediaries representing historically underserved communities. These groups will comprise the Inclusion at Work Leadership Council. The Inclusion at Work Leadership Council facilitates stakeholder engagement to assist EARN in identifying and promoting effective policies and practices to help employers recruit, hire, retain, and advance people with disabilities.

Community intermediary members of the Inclusion at Work Leadership Council will be expected to represent historically underserved communities. These organizations should be rooted in and work directly with members of historically underserved communities. Community intermediaries include community-based networks, alliances, commissions, or other organizations that can facilitate EARN's engagement with their membership. Community intermediaries may or may not have experience in the field of disability and employment. However, it is expected that they represent individuals from underserved communities, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. Community intermediary members of the Inclusion at Leadership Council will ensure EARN's workplace policy and practice solutions are culturally responsive and address the employment barriers of people with disabilities from historically underserved communities.

The lead applicant must be either 1) a non-profit business school or school that includes human resources or labor-focused programs that is part of a public or private institution of higher education or 2) a non-profit research institution, which can include stand-alone research institutions or a research institution that is part of a public or private institute of higher education. The lead applicant must, at a minimum, form a consortium with entities from the other eligible applicant category. For example, if the lead applicant is a non-profit business school, then a non-profit research institution must be included in the proposed consortium. Similarly, if the lead applicant is a non-profit research institution, then a non-profit business school or school that includes human resources or labor-focused programs must be included in the proposed consortium.

In addition to the consortium, the lead applicant will propose members for the Inclusion at Work Leadership Council collaborative. Members proposed in response to this solicitation may include current Inclusion at Work Leadership Council members. At a minimum, the collaborative will consist of at least five (5) national employer intermediary groups and labor management partnerships as well as include at least five (5) intermediary organizations representing historically underserved communities. The latter organizations will ensure workplace policy and practice solutions are culturally responsive and address the employment barriers of people with disabilities from historically underserved communities.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Program Purpose

This Announcement solicits applications under funding opportunity **Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN).**

The purpose of this program is to identify and promote adoption of innovative and equitable evidence-based policy and practice solutions to help public and private sector employers of all sizes recruit, hire, retain, and advance people with disabilities, including those from historically underserved communities. The awardee will accomplish this by:

- engaging with, and soliciting input from, employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities to identify and understand challenges related to creating more disability-inclusive workplaces;
- conducting research and policy analysis to identify inclusive and equitable policy and practice solutions to address the challenges identified;
- collaborating with employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities to develop equitable tools and resources tailored to support implementation of policy and practice solutions;
- providing technical assistance and promoting adoption of equitable and innovative policies, practices, tools, and resources; and
- evaluating center processes, stakeholder engagement, and impact of these policies and practices, with a particular emphasis on underserved communities.

The entity awarded the EARN cooperative agreement will conduct research that values the perspectives of historically underserved groups, conduct policy analysis to identify and validate effective disability-inclusive policy and practice models, translate that knowledge into engaging tools for employers and intermediary organizations, and provide technical assistance and training to help employers of all sizes, both public and private, create inclusive workplace cultures that support high-quality employment of people with disabilities.

The successful applicant must have the demonstrated capacity to conduct high quality research and policy analysis and identify new and innovative areas for research and policy inquiry. The awardee must also have demonstrated capacity to engage with employers and employer intermediaries and develop technical assistance materials that meet employer needs. In addition, the awardee will have the demonstrated capacity to address employer inclusion of workers with disabilities who are also members of other historically underserved communities. As defined by Executive Order (EO) 13985 and 14020, the term “underserved communities” refers to those populations as well as geographic communities that have been systematically denied the opportunity to participate fully in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. Historically underserved communities, include but are not limited to: Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

The Department is committed to producing strong evidence of the effectiveness of its grant programs, and full participation (by the recipient and any sub-recipients or sub-contractors) in any evaluation initiated by the Department is a condition of all grant awards.

B. Program Authority

This funding is appropriated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328) and authorized by 29 U.S.C. § 557b.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AWARD TYPE AND AMOUNT

Funding will be provided in the form of a cooperative agreement.

We expect availability of approximately $2,000,000 to fund one cooperative agreement. You may apply for a ceiling amount of up to $2,000,000. Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. In the event that additional funds become available, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional awardees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement.

The Department expects to award a total of approximately $10 million for this cooperative agreement, to be provided in annual increments of approximately $2 million during a five-year period of performance. Under this Funding Opportunity Announcement, applicants must submit budget documents requesting no more than $2 million for the first year of operation. Subsequent incremental awards will be dependent upon federal funds availability, along with progressive project expenditures and outcomes.

Funding for the project will be provided in the form of a cooperative agreement, requiring close cooperation and coordination between ODEP and the awardee. ODEP will have substantial involvement in the administration of the cooperative agreement, and input and approval must be obtained prior to conducting most activities. ODEP's involvement in cooperative agreement will consist of:

- Twice monthly conference calls with awardees throughout the period of performance;
- Prior approval of any related sub-contracts;
- Prior approval of all key personnel appointments and changes;
- Participation in site visits to project areas;
- Providing advice and consultation to project development and management;
- Providing awardees with technical and programmatic support, including training in DOL grant administration monitoring systems, and standard procedures regarding DOL management of cooperative agreements;
- Reviewing, at reasonable times, all required reporting documents pertaining to the project, including required metrics, status and technical progress reports, and quarterly financial reports. DOL will provide the format for the technical progress reports;
- Oversight and approval of all outward-facing work products, including but not limited to fact sheets, training materials, press releases, and publicity-related materials regarding the project; and
- Oversight and approval of all content for print and online resources developed through project activities including clearing topics for material production and final document

production (e.g., outreach flyers, training materials, information about the project on the applicant's website).

B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is 60 months with an anticipated start date of 09/30/2023. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

We anticipate total availability of approximately $10,000,000 over a 60-month period of performance. The selected recipient will receive approximately $2,000,000 annually, subject to productive program outcomes based on the EARN Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) requirements and the availability of federal funds. The initial 24-month period of performance will award approximately $2,000,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 and $2,000,000 in FY 2024. A second grant number with a subsequent three-year period of performance is anticipated to be awarded in FY 2025. In FY 2025, approximately $2,000,000 will be awarded with incremental funding awards of approximately $2,000,000 for FY 2026 and $2,000,000 for 2027.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

06 (Public and State controlled institutions of higher education)

12 (Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education)

20 (Private institutions of higher education)

- Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)
- Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions
- Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)
- Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs)

Eligible applicants are consortia with a lead applicant that must be either 1) a non-profit business school or school that includes human resources or labor-focused programs that is part of a public or private institution of higher education or 2) a non-profit research institution, which can include stand-alone research institutions or a research institution that is part of a public or private institute of higher education. The lead applicant must, at a minimum, form a consortium with entities from the other eligible applicant category. For example, if the lead applicant is a non-profit business school, then a non-profit research institution must be included in the proposed consortium. Similarly, if the lead applicant is a non-profit research institution, then a non-profit business school or school that includes human resources or labor-focused programs must be included in the proposed consortium.

The application submitted by the lead applicant must clearly identify all consortium members and document the expertise of each consortium member. Among the consortium partners, there must be extensive demonstrated experience and expertise in developing policy, conducting employer-focused research, collaborating with and providing compliance/technical assistance to employers on the full range of disability employment issues, and measuring and evaluating progress towards stated goals. Partnerships with additional relevant organizations and subject-matter experts are encouraged in order to effectively meet the requirements of this FOA. Applicants must have a formal consortium partnership with entities from the other eligible applicant category, as documented by a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). The MOUs must describe the roles of the partners towards achieving grant objectives. If there is not an MOU from each of the required partners, the application will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. Applicants must identify and provide written commitment from the partners for this project. See section IV.B.4 for additional information.

Applicants must identify their institution type in Section 9 of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. Please note that all elements of 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) apply to any entity that carries out a federal award as a recipient or sub-recipient, including for-profit organizations. This includes the monitoring and the examination of their records.

The award recipient will serve as DOL's counterpart in the cooperative agreement. The recipient must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424 Application Form. Additionally, the recipient must be: (1) DOL's point of contact to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this FOA and any subsequent cooperative agreement; (2) the entity with authority to withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS); (3) the entity responsible for coordinating with DOL on all deliverables, including all technical and financial reports related to the project, regardless of which partnership member performed the work; (4) the entity that may request or agree to a revision of the cooperative agreement; (5) the entity with overall responsibility for carrying out the programmatic functions of the cooperative agreement, as well as for the stewardship of all expenditures under the cooperative agreement; (6) the entity responsible for coordinating with any evaluator, including participating in an evaluation and other studies; and (7) the entity responsible for working with DOL to close out the cooperative agreement.

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

Application Screening Criteria

Please use the checklist below as a guide when preparing the application package to ensure that the application has met all the screening criteria. Note that this checklist is only an aid for applicants and should not be included in the application package. If the application does not meet all the screening criteria, it will not move forward through the merit review process, therefore applicants are strongly urged to utilize this checklist as a guide.

Application Requirement	Instructions	Complete?
The deadline submission requirements are met	Section IV.C	Y/N
Eligibility	Section III.A	Y/N
The components of the application are saved in any of the specified formats and are not corrupt. (*An attempt will be made to open the document, but additional measures will not be taken in the event there are problems with opening it*.)	Section IV.C.2	Y/N
Application for federal funds request does not exceed the ceiling amount of $2,000,000	Section II. A	Y/N
Applicant has registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) and maintains an active account.	Section IV.B.1	Y/N
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance	Section IV.B.1	Y/N
SF-424 includes a Unique Entity Identifier	Section IV.B.1	Y/N
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section IV.B.2	Y/N
Budget Narrative	Section IV.B.2	Y/N
Project Narrative	Section IV.B.3	Y/N
Abstract	Section IV.B.4	Y/N
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Consortium Members	Section IV.B.4	Y/N
Formal Letters of Commitment (LOC) from at least ten (10) Inclusion at Work Leadership Council members to include employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and community intermediaries representing historically underserved communities.	Section IV.B.4	Y/N

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.

Allowable Use of Funds

This funding will provide one cooperative agreement to a recipient working collaboratively with associated partners to plan for and establish the framework (i.e. personnel, technology, facilities, etc.) necessary for effective program implementation and for support of any related evaluation of EARN.

The recipient of this cooperative agreement may use awarded funding to cover their organization's reasonable, necessary and allocable expenses required for the effective implementation of program requirements associated with this initiative. Recipients may use funding to pay project staff to perform work associated with the program requirements of the cooperative agreement. Recipients may also use funds to conduct routine, internal program management activities.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. HOW TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

This FOA, found at www.Grants.gov 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 must match the name registered in the System for Award Management at https://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.

a. Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number

All applicants for federal grant and funding opportunities must have a UEI and must supply their UEI on the SF-424.The UEI is a 12-character alphanumeric 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 your organization does not have a UEI, one can be obtained for free at https://sam.gov.

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

- 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. If you do not renew your SAM registration, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent application submission in Grants.gov. Registration and renewal can take up to ten business days to 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 approve a federal award, the Grant Officer may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive the federal award and use that determination as a basis for approving 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. Applicants are advised that leveraging resources may increase stakeholder investment in the project and broaden the impact of the project itself.

Personnel: List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed) 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 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 200.1for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item.

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 categories 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 (pens paper, etc.), list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than "equipment" (see 2 CFR 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 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 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 incentives, 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 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 200, Appendix VII(D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (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)**: To avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect cost, DOL defines MTDC as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, and travel up to the first $25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and 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.
- **2 CFR 200.1 Participant Support Costs:** These are 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/business-operations-center/cost-determination.

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.

SF-424, SF-424A and Budget Narrative: The SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative must reflect the federal funding request for the first year of the cooperative agreement, which may not exceed $2,000,000. 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, ODEP 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 30 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 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.

A. Statement of Need (Up to 5 Points)
Applicants must demonstrate their understanding of the need for the program described within this Announcement. Scoring is based on the extent to which the applicant addresses the following:

1.Describe in both quantitative and qualitative terms the nature and scope of the problem. Incorporate demographic data whenever possible.

- Explain your understanding of the need for the proposed project and show how developing model employer policies and practices addresses that need. Demonstrate the value in improving the quality of the data reporting on the different demographics as it relates to DEIA and people with disabilities. Incorporate outcome and demographic data whenever possible (2 points).
- Describe how you will determine the need for workplace research, policy development, and technical assistance to help employers recruit, hire, retain and advance people with disabilities, with a focus on high-quality employment opportunities (1 point).
- Describe planned strategies to build upon the existing work of the current EARN Center, which is exhibited at www.askearn.org, to address current policy needs. Explain the strategy you will use to conduct outreach to community intermediary members representing a variety of demographics, including Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. Show how this information will be used to assess and prioritize the identified areas for policy assistance. (2 points)

B. Project Design (Up to 40 points)
The successful applicant will describe their comprehensive plan for providing the services and accomplishing the goals discussed in section I.A. (Program Purpose) of the FOA.
Applicants are scored according to the extent to which they describe the project design narrative within their comprehensive plan. This plan should include goals, strategies, activities, objectives, measures, and timelines that the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) will use in meeting the five project goals outlined below.

1. *Engaging with and soliciting input from employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries from historically underserved communities to identify and understand community-specific challenges for creating more disability-inclusive workplaces (Up to 8 points):*

Applicants must have extensive experience and demonstrated capacity to engage employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, disability organizations, and community organizations to conduct research with the goal of advancing employer-focused policy and practices. To demonstrate this, applicants must:

> a. Provide a detailed explanation of how the consortium is prepared and qualified to engage with employers and intermediaries to identify challenges faced by employers and by workers with disabilities in the recruitment, hiring, on-boarding, retention, and advancement employment life cycle stages. The applicant must describe how engagement will enhance its work to conduct research, develop policy recommendations, develop actionable products for employer implementation, promote adoption of these products, evaluate the effectiveness of these products, and deliver training and technical assistance.
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> b. Provide a detailed explanation of how the consortium will develop a strategy for EARN to advance, through stakeholder engagement activities, policy solutions and practices aligned with the Inclusion at Work Framework.
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> c. Describe a strategy for incorporating the involvement of intermediaries representing individuals with disabilities and historically underserved communities within EARN's policy development work.
>
> d. Describe how it will implement an annual series of at least four (4) listening sessions and/or an annual in-person Think Tanks for setting policy.

2. Conducting research and policy analysis to identify inclusive and equitable policy and practice solutions to address the challenges identified (Up to 6 points):

Applicants must have extensive experience and demonstrated capacity to perform research (e.g., primary and secondary research, surveys, focus groups, listening sessions, Think Tanks) and policy analysis necessary to develop recommendations for employer-focused policy and adoption. To demonstrate this, applicants must:

> a. Explain how the consortium is prepared and qualified to conduct high quality research, policy analysis (including analysis of legislation, regulations, and sub-regulatory guidance), and policy development activities on a wide variety of topics related to improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities from all communities. Relevant topics could include:

- Conducting an equity gap employment analysis.
- Developing policy and practice briefs based on elements of the Inclusion at Work Framework.
- Enhancing the Mental Health Toolkit to include resources for underserved communities.
- Developing tools and resources for small businesses related to creating a more disability-inclusive workplace.

b. Provide a detailed description of the overall strategy the consortium will use to identify, develop, and validate new and innovative policy and practice models including models that take into account historically underserved communities.

c. Identify research and policy development ideas that the consortium believes will be critical to enhancing, expanding, and supporting workplace DEIA efforts. These ideas should be based on experience and expertise in engaging with employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities to implement policy solutions and practices identified in the research.

3. Collaborating with employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities to develop equitable tools and resources tailored to support implementation of policy and practice solutions (Up to 8 points):

In this section, the applicant must include a detailed explanation of how the consortium is prepared and qualified to develop evidence-based policy and practice products. These toolkits, curricula, learning guides, model practice guides, policy briefs, checklists, etc. must be expertly reviewed and should be provided to ODEP in final form. This section must provide the following information:

a. Explain how the applicant will demonstrate results in translating the research into the highest-quality, user-friendly, resources and tools to assist employers, and other relevant stakeholders in integrating effective policies and practices. Special efforts must be made to ensure these are written in plain language and use culturally and linguistically competent approaches towards respecting cultural values, beliefs, and practices of all stakeholders including those from historically underserved communities. Specific examples of prior related research and policy work may be included in the project narrative appendix as attachments. See Section IV.A.4.a.

b. Explain in detail how the applicant will build upon EARN's existing resources to enhance the policy and technical assistance center.

4. Providing technical assistance and promoting adoption of equitable and innovative policies, practices, tools, and resources (Up to 12 points):

In this section, the applicant must provide a detailed explanation of how the policies and practices developed by EARN will be effectively communicated to employers and employer intermediaries including those from underserved communities. Applicants must provide the following information:

a. Explain how the applicant will develop and implement an annual communication plan that demonstrates results in promoting EARN products to assist employers and other relevant stakeholders in integrating effective policies and practices. In addition, provide innovative approaches (e.g., multimedia, articles placed in strategic news outlets) to reach new audiences including small and medium size businesses, employers from underserved communities, and labor management partnerships. These innovative approaches are expected to be detailed in an annual communication plan. The plan must be updated annually.

b. Explain how the applicant will use innovative and traditional approaches to provide technical assistance (e.g., webinars, targeted presentations at national conferences, expansion of the Inclusion at Work curriculum).

c. Explain how the applicant will demonstrate results creating expert-level training, outreach documents, and materials in accessible formats (in accordance with Section 508 standards at a minimum) for all audiences, including those from underserved communities. Include a sample of such materials in the attachments.

d. Explain how the applicant will demonstrate results in hosting and enhancing AskEARN.org. This should include a plan to:

- Transition the website from the current awardee
- Maintain and enhance the current website functionality
- Increase usage of the website by employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities
- Enhance the engagement capabilities of the site by instituting innovative tools and approaches towards receiving feedback from users
- Ensure full accessibility of the website using Section 508 standards as a minimum threshold

5. Evaluating center processes, stakeholder engagement, and business impact of these policies and practices with a particular emphasis on underserved communities. (Up to 6 points):

In this section, the applicant must provide a detailed evaluation plan (i.e., metrics for all activities) for assessing how the products EARN developed impact the behavior of employers, employer intermediaries, labor management partnerships, and intermediaries representing historically underserved communities. Applicants must:

a. Explain how they will demonstrate results in evaluating the progress of the funding opportunity announcement requirements, engagement of stakeholders, and overall business impacts of EARN's research, products, and technical assistance.

b. Propose methods that the project will use to address the stated outcomes and outputs. Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the project will accomplish the proposed work and include timelines for completion of work.

c. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state the reason for taking the proposed approach rather than other approaches. Identify any potential barriers and describe how the project will overcome those barriers.

d. Fully describe the partnerships in place for the project and provide written commitments from those partners.

C. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (Up to 10 points)

1.Clearly identify the outcome(s) and output(s) that will result from the project. Outcomes are the measurable results of the project. They are the positive benefits, negative changes, or measurable characteristics that occur as a result of project activities or outputs. Outputs are tangible products or services that result from the project.

Applicants will be scored on the extent to which:

a. The applicant describes their approach to policy development and technical assistance including methods for measuring and assessing outcomes and outputs resulting from those activities. This description must include how the applicant would deliver relevant and effective policies and tools focusing on employer's proficiency recruiting, hiring, retaining and advancing people with disabilities as well as increasing and improving data related to disability in the workplace. The description must also include methods for expanding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) consistent with the goals of Executive Orders 13985, 14035, and 14091 to ensure an economy that works for all Americans, including people with disabilities and people from historically underserved communities. (5 points)

b. The applicant explains how their proposed plan will produce the following requirements. (5 points)

- Research and Public Policy Analysis and Development by conducting employer-facing research and analysis on topics of interest to ODEP and their employer stakeholders.
- Partner Engagement through collaborations with national, state and regional business association networks, federal partners and other ODEP-funded initiatives.
- Compliance, Technical Assistance and Training by producing high quality tools, videos, courses and presentations.
- Website and Dissemination Activities utilizing a variety of channels, both reactive and proactive to deliver messages to more employers.

D. Third Party Evaluation (Up to 10 points)

1. The applicant must include a third-party evaluator to provide an ongoing, formative, and summative performance evaluation for continuous improvement of the project. This evaluation includes development of an initial evaluation plan with proposed metrics for measuring the project activities. In addition to these activities, it is expected that upon award, the applicant will provide quarterly reports and participate in quarterly evaluation meetings. Applicants will be scored on the extent to which they address the requirements in Section C.1.b (above) in regard to the following:

a. Points will be awarded based on:

i. The extent to which the proposed evaluation plan/design includes the use of objective performance measures and methods that will document the project's intended outputs and outcomes and will produce measurable quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation should include the following elements. (5 points)
    - Performance: Developing deliverables that meet the agreed upon performance indicators
    - Engagement: Conducting outreach to a large volume of people and organizations through research and engagement efforts; especially through targeted outreach, by promoting products and scheduled events
    - Impact: Influencing the various stakeholders to make changes in their work environments by adopting policies and practices

ii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the capacity to evaluate deliverables and outcomes or has developed a partnership with another organization to conduct the evaluation. (3 points)

iii. The strength and effectiveness of the measures, methods, techniques, and tools proposed to evaluate progress toward achieving the project results. (2 points)

E. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (Up to 15 points)

1.This section must include the following information pertaining to the lead applicant organization:

a. How the applicant will manage and staff the project. Describe how staff, organizational experience, and management contribute to the ability of the applicant to conduct the project and its requirements and meet program expectations. Submit the related documents listed in Section IV.B.4.3.b: the Organizational Chart and Key Personnel and Subject-Matter Expert Summary of Qualifications and Position Descriptions. (These will not count against the Project Narrative page limits.) (10 points)

b. Describe the applicant's fiscal and administrative controls in place to manage federal funds. Include the applicant's capability to sustain some or all project activities after federal financial assistance has ended. (5 points)

F. Past Performance - Programmatic Capability (Up to 10 points)

1. Applicants will receive points based on past performance data. Applicants must provide the information below in a separate attachment that does not count against the Project Narrative page limit. Scoring is based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates the following:

a. Demonstrate past performance managing federal and/or non-federal grants and contracts by providing a list of each project conducted within the last five years; the funding source name and contact information; the type of funding vehicle; the type of work performed, including the scope and scale of the projects; the period of performance; and a summary of project outcomes and outputs. This list will not count towards the page limit for the project narrative. (5 points)

b. Describe in detail the applicant's experience measuring the success or impact of prior work in this field, and how it contributes to the applicant's ability to track the success of the work described in this Announcement. (5 points)

G. Budget and Budget Narrative (Up to 10 points)

We will use the Budget and Budget Narrative to evaluate this section. Please see Section IV.B.2 for submission requirements. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

The budget documents are scored as follows:

a. The extent the proposed expenditures address all stated project requirements. (5 points)

b. Whether key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve project results as demonstrated by proposed personnel expenditures. (2 points)

c. The extent to which all items in the Budget Narrative reflect the level of detail requested in Section IV.B.2. (3 points)

H. Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) (Up to 5 bonus points)

Applicants may earn optional bonus points by developing and submitting an EARN DEIA plan, demonstrating their commitment in this area. The DEIA Plan does not count against the page limit requirements established for the Project Narrative and should be submitted as an attachment. The DEIA Plan should include information such as the diversity of the proposed project team, previous work with underserved communities on past projects, diversity of past partnerships and collaborations, demonstrated ability to develop culturally competent products for historically underserved communities and their ability to produce materials in other languages including Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL). Applicants should explain how they plan to engage national employer intermediaries and labor management partnerships as well as intermediaries representing historically underserved communities.

<u>4. Attachments to the Project Narrative</u>

In addition to the Project Narrative, you must submit attachments. All attachments must be clearly labeled. Applicants must take note regarding the identified implications for not including an attachment. We will exclude attachments listed below from the Project Narrative page limit. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

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

Abstract

Applicants must submit a one 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 result in your application being disqualified. See III.C.1 for a list of required items that will result in the disqualification of your application if not submitted. If your organization is selected for an award, the information included in the Abstract may be published on USASpending.gov, a public-facing website that acts as the official open data source for Federal spending information. The abstract attachment must be labeled "Abstract," and it must include the following:

- The applicant's name;
- The purpose of the project;
- A description of the area to be served;
- The funding level requested;
- The activities to be funded by the grant;
- The intended beneficiaries of the project; and
- The subrecipient activities, if applicable.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU): Submit signed Memoranda of Understanding between the applicant and consortium partners that propose to provide services to support the program model and lead to the identified outcomes. See Section IV.B.3.c. These letters must be uploaded as an attachment to the Grants.gov application package and labeled "Memoranda of Understanding." Omission of MOUs result in application disqualification, and it will not move forward for consideration.

Letters of Commitment (LOC): Submit at least 10 signed and dated Letters of Commitment between the applicant and partner organizations of the Inclusion at Work Leadership Council collaborative. See Section IV.B.3.c. These letters must be uploaded as an attachment to the Grants.gov application package and labeled "Letters of Commitment." Omission of LOCs result in application disqualification, and it will not move forward for consideration.

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.

Indirect Cost 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.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled "NICRA."

Financial System Risk Assessment Information

We ask all applicants 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.

Organizational Chart

The applicant must provide a project staffing organizational chart demonstrating it has the experience and capacity to carry out this proposed project. The chart must provide the qualifications and experience of executive, programmatic and administrative staff required to fulfill the needs of the project. Qualifications and experience must demonstrate the ability to manage the project, including fiscal and administrative management, programmatic work, and outreach/communication.

Key Personnel and Subject-Matter Experts

The applicant must submit the following information for each identified key personnel and subject-matter expert: Title, Position description in proposed project, resume summarizing qualifications, Percentage of time dedicated to the project. Please do not include personally identifiable information.

DEIA Plan

To be considered for the five (5) bonus points, a DEIA plan should be attached. (For more information, see Section IV.B.3.H. Bonus Point for the Applicant's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA))

C. SUBMISSION DATE, TIME, AND PROCESS

Due Date for Applications: June 23, 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.**

We encourage applicants 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 through Grants.gov must submit **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://strategies.workforcegps.org/resources/2014/08/11/16/32/applying-for-eta-competitive-grants-a-web-based-toolkit-for-prospective-applicants-438?p=1.

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.

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.

1. Indirect Costs

As specified in the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that have been 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 salaries and wages 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 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 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 200.414(f) for more information on use of the de minimis rate.)

2. 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 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 117-328, Division H, Title I, section 105, and TEGL number 05-06 for further clarification: https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2262.

3. Intellectual Property Rights

Pursuant to 2 CFR 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 recipient will be required to license to the public all work created with the support of the grant under open licensing. Work that must be licensed under open licensing includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to pre-existing, recipient-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 recipient. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work.

Questions about open licensing 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 open licensing. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to or purchased by the recipient from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the recipient receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the recipient without grant funds do not fall under the open licensing requirement.

The purpose of the open 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 recipient 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 open licensing 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 recipient 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 disclaimer needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds.

"This workforce product was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. 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."

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.

Criterion	Maximum Points
A. Statement of Need (See Section IV.B.3.a)	5
B. Project Design (See Section IV.B.3.b. Project Design)	40
C. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (See Section IV.B.3.c. Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	10
D. Third Party Evaluation (See Section IV.B.3.d. Third Party Evaluation)	10

E. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.B.3.e. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	15
F. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.B.3.f. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	10
G. Budget and Budget Justification (See Section IV.B.3.g. Project Budget)	10
TOTAL	**100**
H. Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA): See Section IV.B.3.h. Bonus Points for the Applicant's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) as provided within a DEIA Plan.	5

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:

Standard Rating	Definition	Standard for Calculating Points
Completely 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.	Partial Points, commensurate with the extent to which the applicant addresses the rating factor
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 an effective 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 105 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, 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, DOL 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), Dun and Bradstreet, and "Do Not Pay." Additionally, DOL will comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 180 and 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 the Risk Review process, the Grant Officer will determine the following:

- If the applicant had any restriction on spending for any DOL 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.

We request that all applicants submit the following information as an attachment to their application (suggested template below) for DOL to assess the applicant's Financial System. We will take this information into account as one component of the 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. We expect to have these in place before applying for a grant with ODEP.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (ETA)
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK ASSESSMENT</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>SECTION A: PURPOSE</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">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.
(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.

(2) Entries in accounting records should refer to subsidiary records and/or documentation which support the entry and which can be readily located.

(3) The accounting system should provide accurate and current financial reporting information.

(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.</td></tr>
</table>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (ETA)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK ASSESSMENT

	SECTION B: GENERAL	
1. Complete the following items:		
a. When was the organization founded/incorporated *(month, day, year)*	b. Principal officers	Titles
c. Employer Identification Number:		
d. Number of Employees Full Time: Part Time:		

2. Is the organization or institution affiliated with any other organization: Yes No 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.	3. Total Sales/Revenues in most recent accounting period. *(12 months)* $

	SECTION C: ACCOUNTING SYSTEM	

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.
	Note: If review occurred within the past three years, omit questions 2-8 of this Section and Section D.

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

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (ETA) **FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK ASSESSMENT**				
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? 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: a. Total funds available for a grant? b. Total funds available for a budget cost category (e.g. Personnel, Travel, etc)?		Yes Yes	No No	Not Sure Not Sure
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?		Yes	No	Not Sure

			SECTION D: FINANCIAL STABILITY	

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 If yes, please explain briefly.

	SECTION E: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	

1. Did an independent certified public accountant (CPA) ever examine the financial statements? Yes No
2. If an independent CPA review was performed please attach a copy of their latest report and any management letters issued. Enclosed N / A
3. If an independent CPA was engaged to perform a review and no report was issued, please provide details and an explanation below:

	SECTION F: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	

1. Use this space for any additional information *(indicate section and item numbers if a continuation)*

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

All award notifications will be posted on the ODEP Homepage at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/. Applicants selected for an 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.

- 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).
- 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).
- 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.
- 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.
- 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- 29 CFR Part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

- 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.
- 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.
- 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 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://ecfr.federalregister.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-I/part-170.

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

- 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);
- Federal awards to entities that had a gross income, from all sources, of less than $300,000 in the entities' previous tax year; and
- 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:

i. You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DOL/ODEP funded grants is securely transmitted.

ii. 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 ODEP or contractors.

iii. 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.

iv. 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.

v. You further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through your ODEP 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.

vi. 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.

vii. 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.

viii. You must not extract information from data supplied by ODEP for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.

ix. Access to any PII created by the ODEP 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.

x. 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.

xi. PII data obtained by the recipient through a request from ODEP must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor, except as permitted by the Grant Officer or by court order.

xii. You must permit ODEP 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.

xiii. You must retain data received from ODEP 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 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 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 2 CFR Part 2998.

g. Closeout of Grant Award
Any entity that receives an award under this Announcement must close its grant with ODEP 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/Closeout%20FAQs.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. ODEP Evaluation

As a condition of the cooperative agreement, the awardee is required to participate in an evaluation, if undertaken by DOL. The evaluation may include an implementation assessment, an impact and/or outcomes analysis, 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 the awardee to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of an award, the awardee 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 ODEP and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with ODEP.

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

Grant recipients are required to report quarterly financial data on the SF-425 *Federal Financial Rep*ort (FFR), which is due no later than 30 calendar days after the end of each specified reporting quarter. Reporting quarter end dates are March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. A final FFR for the last quarter of the period of performance must be submitted no later than 120 calendar days after the quarter ends. See 2 CFR 200.344. On the final FFR, grant recipients must be sure to include any subaward amounts so we can calculate final indirect costs, if applicable.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

The awardee must submit a quarterly performance report within 45 days after the end of 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 and report templates will be provided to the awardee 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.

3. Monthly Metric Performance Reports The awardee must submit a monthly metric performance report within 10 days of the beginning of each month. The report must include monthly information on metrics regarding website usage, social media engagement and technical assistance provided. This report must provide both monthly and cumulative information on the grant performance. The report must also include analysis of the performance metrics in meeting the purpose of the grant, lessons learned and ways to improve EARN's service, more specifically to underserved communities. Submission requirements and report templates will be negotiated with the awardee upon award.

4. Ad Hoc Reporting The awardee, upon request, must also provide ad hoc reporting to ODEP. ODEP will provide the awardee 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.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information about this FOA, please contact Jeannette Flowers Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at 000-000-0000. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Flowers.Jeannette@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ODEP-23-11, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This Announcement is available 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 Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (https://online.onetcenter.org), which provides occupational competency profiles; and America's Service Locator (https://www.servicelocator.org), which provides a directory of our nation's American Job Centers (formerly known as One-Stop Career Centers).

Additionally, general technical assistance on how to apply to grants, please view the Department of Labors 'How to Apply' step-by-step videos.

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://workforcegps.org.

We encourage you to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through WorkforceGPS at https://strategies.workforcegps.org/resources/2014/08/11/16/32/applying-for-eta-competitive-grants-a-web-based-toolkit-for-prospective-applicants-438?p=1.

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://www.workforcegps.org/resources/browse?id=b8dd0aa1ecfb4b2282d6cd30c7248790 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

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 by:

Carla Wills

Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX A

Definitions:

Accessibility: For the purposes of this Funding Opportunity Agreement (FOA), the term "accessibility" means the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them. Accessibility includes the provision of accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access to employment and participation in activities for people with disabilities, the reduction or elimination of physical and attitudinal barriers to equitable opportunities, a commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities can independently access every outward-facing and internal activity or electronic space, and the pursuit of best practices such as universal design. Source.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed by Congress in 1990. It was amended by Congress in 2008. This is the law that protects the civil rights of people with disabilities in many aspects of public life. Source.

Apprenticeship: An industry-driven, high-quality career pathway through which employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, mentorship, and a portable credential. Source.

Diversity: For the purposes of this FOA, the term "diversity" means the practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people, including underserved communities. Source.

Employer Intermediary Organization: The term "employer intermediary organization" means industry, trade, community, professional, or business organizations that facilitate EARN's engagement with their members.

Equity: For the purposes of this FOA, the term "equity" means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. Source.

Executive Order 13985: *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* aims to advance equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. Source.

Executive Order 14035: *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce* aims to ensure that as the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government, must be a model for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. Accordingly, the Federal Government must strengthen its ability to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain our Nation's talent and remove barriers to equal opportunity. Source.

Executive Order 14091: *Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* aims to ensure that advancing equity requires a systematic approach to embedding fairness in decision-making processes, executive departments and agencies. It requires agencies to recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity. Source.

Inclusion: For the purposes of this FOA, the term "inclusion" means the recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of employees of all backgrounds. Source.

Intermediaries representing historically underserved communities: The phrase "intermediaries representing historically underserved communities" means community-based networks, alliances, commissions, or other organizations that can facilitate EARN's engagement with their membership. These organizations should be rooted in and/or work directly with members of historically underserved communities. Community intermediaries may or may not have experience in the field of disability and employment. However, it is expected that they represent individuals who belong to communities that have often been denied fair and equal treatment, such as Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander persons and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; women and girls; LGBTQI+ persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; persons who live in United States Territories; persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality; and individuals who belong to multiple such communities.

Labor Organization: An organization engaged in an industry affecting commerce and includes any organization of any kind, any agency, or employee representation committee, group, association, or plan so engaged in which employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment, and any conference, general committee, joint or system board, or joint council so engaged which is subordinate to a national or international labor organization, other than a State or local central body.

Technical Assistance: For the purposes of this FOA, technical assistance is defined as a pre-planned event in which advice, assistance, and training (typically provided by disability employment-related subject-matter experts). Technical assistance is provided to assist in the adoption or implementation of disability employment policies and/or practices.

Underserved Communities: The term "underserved communities" refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied the opportunity to participate fully in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as defined in Executive Orders 13985 and 14020. Source.