

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR:
America's Promise Job Driven Grant Program**

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: *Initial*

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: *FOA-ETA-16-12*

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: *17.268*

KEY DATES: *The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is August 25, 2016. We must receive applications no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time.*

ADDRESSES: *Address mailed applications to:*

***The U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management
Attention: Eric Luetkenhaus, Grant Officer
Reference FOA-ETA-16-12
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716
Washington, DC 20210***

For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to Section IV.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Over the past six-plus years, American businesses have created over 14.6 million new jobs¹ and today there are over 5.8 million job openings²—nearly as many as any point since the data have been tracked³. This progress comes at a time when innovation and technology are rapidly changing the nature of work in many sectors—allowing businesses to locate anywhere, and making traditional jobs and sometimes even entire industries obsolete. In the face of these shifts, companies are choosing to innovate, grow, and invest in the U.S. in large part because we have an educated, creative, and adaptable workforce.

Maintaining America's position and supporting the growth of regional economies in the years ahead will require that businesses have access to a pipeline of skilled workers. To accomplish this, regions must have robust workforce development capacity through an education and training system that adapts quickly to businesses' changing needs.

¹ <https://blog.dol.gov/2016/05/06/what-you-should-know-about-the-april-jobs-report/>

² http://www.bls.gov/web/jolts/jlt_labstatgraphs.pdf

³ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/jolts.pdf>

The President recognizes the importance of this opportunity. That is why in July 2014, under the leadership of Vice President Biden, the Administration released a plan to expand the number of pathways for Americans to gain the skills they need to get better, higher-paying jobs and increase access to those pathways, and in January 2015, the President announced a vision for America's College Promise to make two years of community college free, letting responsible students earn the first half of a bachelor's degree or earn skills needed in the workforce at no cost by creating a new partnership with states. Since then, communities across the country have made strong progress in taking steps to make our workforce system more "job-driven," including through the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

This new law requires state and local areas to develop, implement, and expand sector strategies and sector-based training strategies in economic regions with a focus on growth industries. This competitive grant program will build on the momentum of WIOA to develop and expand regional partnerships and training opportunities particularly for middle- to high-skilled H-1B industries and occupations, ensuring that communities fully maximize their Federal, state and local funds to build a competitive workforce.

One of the primary vehicles for driving these strategies is regional workforce partnerships that are creating sector-based career pathways and offering tuition-free training to meet the needs of workers and businesses. Rather than working in siloes, training providers, economic development and industry, and the workforce system are coming together to align public and private resources in response to employer demand and to offer innovative, evidenced-based education and job training.

To advance these efforts, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department, or we), announces the availability of approximately \$100,000,000 in grant funds authorized under the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA), as amended (codified at 29 USC 3224a) for America's Promise Job-driven Grant Program. We expect to fund approximately 20-40 grants, with individual grant amounts ranging from \$1 million to \$6 million.

This grant program is designed to create or expand regional partnerships between employers, economic development, workforce development, community colleges, training programs, K-12 education systems, and community-based organizations that make a commitment – or a "promise" – to provide a pipeline of workers to fill existing job openings, meet existing employer needs for expansion, fuel the talent needs of entrepreneurs, and attract more jobs from overseas. These funds will be used to cover tuition and the costs of training-related activities on a first-dollar basis ensuring that training and education are free to individuals. Participants may use other sources of aid—such as Federal financial aid—to cover supplies, books, room and board, and other training-related expenses.

Through strong regional partnerships and commitments, communities will maximize the use of their resources and minimize duplication of effort. Projects funded through the America's Promise Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) will leverage resources from Federal place-based partnerships and sector-based programs, such as EDA's Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership (IMCP) communities and Department of Transportation's (DOT) Ladders programs, among others.

Grants will be awarded to a regional workforce partnership of public and private sector entities that includes the following partners:

- Employer and industry representatives that align with the partnership's regional sector strategies;
- Workforce investment system representing the regional service area;;
- Economic development agencies representing the regional service area; and
- Education and training providers representing the regional service area, including community and technical colleges or systems; joint labor-management training partnerships; and nonprofit and community-based organizations that offer job training.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. PROGRAM PURPOSE

This Announcement solicits applications for the H-1B America's Promise Job-driven (America's Promise) grant program. The purpose of America's Promise grant program is to strengthen the pipeline of skilled workers to expand an economic region's middle- to high-skilled workforce within one or more prioritized industry sector(s), thereby creating economic opportunities for America's workforce to gain the necessary skills to fill in-demand jobs and increasing the long-term competitiveness of an economic region. To help achieve this goal, the grant will provide individuals the opportunity to get high-quality, tuition free education and training that leads to in-demand and industry-recognized credentials and degrees.

Over the past six-plus years, the United States has enjoyed the longest recorded streak of private sector job growth in American history. Over the past year, seven of the monthly job openings readings (including the last three consecutive ones) have been at the highest levels since the measurement began in 2000. But many Americans still do not feel the benefit of this growing economy in their own lives. Too often they lack the skills and experience to access better jobs with bigger paychecks. There is greater need for more skilled workers with technical associate degrees and postsecondary certificates. Two industries each have more than one million job openings today: professional and business services; and education and health services. The McKinsey Global Institute also estimates that by 2020 the U.S. will have a potential shortfall of 1.6 million "middle skill" workers—those with greater education than high school, but less than a bachelor's degree.

As an effective way to build a skilled workforce that addresses knowledge and skills shortages in specific industry sectors, this FOA requires applicants to develop new or expand and strengthen existing regional workforce partnerships to implement sector strategies and industry partnerships. Sector strategies focus on organizing multiple employers from a high growth industry sector that collectively define their skill needs and the credentials they use to make hiring and advancement decisions. In addition, sector strategies can help to align state programs and resources for employers and workers⁴ in a region by aligning the regional workforce system's training programs to adapt to employer skill needs through sector-based career pathways.

Sector strategies provide a means to engage directly with multiple employers from a similar industry sector across traditional boundaries. Economic regions do not typically correspond to state, county, local workforce investment area, or municipal boundaries, but rather are defined by the interdependence of their people and organizations. Businesses operate in economic regions that may cross city, county, and state lines and education and economic development

⁴ State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Policy Makers (2013). National Governors' Association. <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/1301NGASSSReport.pdf>.

areas. Sector strategies work across these boundaries to identify and address specific workforce needs in almost every industry.

A fundamental goal of America's Promise is to accelerate the development of new and the expansion of existing 21st century regional workforce partnerships with business and industry leaders committed to providing a pipeline of skilled workers in a specific industry sector(s). These partnerships will bring together industry leaders with senior level leadership from workforce and economic development, secondary and post-secondary education, elected officials, and other important community stakeholders. To keep pace with the rapid shifts we are seeing in today's economy, we encourage these partnerships to leverage data and technology to increase communication between employers, workforce and training providers, and job seekers. These partnerships will be focused on four key priorities:

- **Increasing opportunities for all Americans:** By 2020, an estimated 35 percent of job openings will require at least a bachelor's degree and another 30 percent will require at least some college or an associate's degree.⁵ Unfortunately with the rising costs of higher education, pursuing post-secondary education is not an affordable option for many, including low-income or lower skilled workers. Grantees will be developing strategies that increase tuition-free opportunities for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers – including disadvantaged populations such as low-income, underrepresented in the targeted industry (including women and minorities), dislocated workers, and other populations with employment barriers – into middle-to high-skilled occupations and industries. These strategies will encompass income and support needs, and preparatory training needed to support the targeted populations' attainment of middle- to high-skilled employment. Up to 25 percent of participants served by applicants may be incumbent workers, particularly lower-skilled and lower-wage workers who need training to upgrade their skills.
- **Expanding employer engagement:** The Regional Workforce Partnerships will actively engage a range of employers and partners committed to participating in the sector strategies. Grantees will secure commitments for deep employer involvement in various aspects of program design and delivery, including defining program goals and activities; identifying career pathways; informing training design; identifying necessary skills and competencies for targeted occupations; providing resources to support training, such as instructors, funding, and offering innovative and creative ways for skills attainment through work-based learning and customized upskilling strategies including OJT, registered apprenticeship, paid-work experience, and/or paid internship opportunities; and considering hiring trainees after program completion.
- **Using evidence-based design:** There is growing evidence that sector strategies can increase the employability, employment, earnings, and outcomes of job seekers, and at the same time benefit employers through improved worker productivity, job retention, and enhanced profitability. For example, studies randomly assigning people to job training programs with sector partnerships found that participants were employed at a higher rate with higher earnings (an additional \$4,500 over 24 months)

⁵ Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith and Jeff Strohl. "Recovery, Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020." Georgetown Public Policy Institute Center on Education and the Workforce (2014). Available at: https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR_Web_.pdf.

than those who went through other employment and training programs⁶. For applicants that already have sector strategies in place, we are interested in seeing data and demonstration of strong outcomes for job seekers and employers alike that are outlined later in this document.

- **Leveraging and aligning additional resources:** Another important aspect of sector strategies and this FOA will be the improved alignment and use of Federal resources, particularly those invested in a region through the Administration's place-based initiatives. These include Federally-supported sector programs, such as EDA's Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership (IMCP) communities⁷, Department of Transportation's (DOT) Ladders programs⁸, Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Jobs Strategy Council programs⁹, DOL's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program¹⁰, Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, Registered Apprenticeship¹¹ programs, and other applicable sector-based and place-based efforts. Projects developed through this FOA should be aligned with and build upon, but not duplicate, the WIOA Plan sector strategies. Leveraged resources are a critical component of the project design, and in addition to leveraging federal resources, applicants should also seek to leverage private, public, and foundation resources to ensure resources are sufficient to meet the service and training needs of all participants served.

B. PROGRAM AUTHORITY

The America's Promise grant program is authorized under Section 414(c) of the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA), as amended (29 U.S.C. 3224a). America's Promise grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the United States under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program.

C. TARGETED INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS

America's Promise grants will fund projects that support well-paying, middle- and high-skilled, and high-growth jobs across a diversity of H-1B industries in the area applicants are proposing to serve. "High-growth" jobs, are defined as those which: 1) are projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy; 2) have substantial job vacancies currently available; 3) are being transformed by technology and innovation that require workers to obtain new skill sets; or 4) have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations.

⁶ Barnow, B.S. & Spaulding, S. (2015). Employer Involvement in Workforce Programs, in C.V. Horn, T. Edwards, & T. Greene (Eds). Transforming U.S. Workforce Development Policies for the 21st Century (pp. 231-263). Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

⁷ Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership: <https://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp>

⁸ Ladders of Opportunity: <https://www.transportation.gov/opportunity>

⁹ Fact Sheet: Department of Energy's Job Strategy Council: <http://energy.gov/downloads/fact-sheet-department-energy-s-jobs-strategy-council>

¹⁰ Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: <https://doleta.gov/taaccct/>

¹¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Apprenticeship: <http://www.dol.gov/featured/apprenticeship/grants>

Occupations at the H-1B skills level generally require a bachelor's degree or comparable experience and are middle- to high-skill level. America's Promise grants will help individuals pursue the education and training necessary to reach middle- to high-skill levels by accumulating college credits to earn a postsecondary degree, including credits leading up to a bachelor's degree, or attaining other industry-recognized credentials. While program participants do not need to have these educational credentials or skill levels to enter the program, programs should help participants earn the education and experience that can lead to job placement during the grant period in middle- and high-skill jobs and grantees must provide information about the sector-based career pathway to these jobs.

To meet the legislative intent of positioning American workers to reduce the need for skilled foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their programs to support occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified, or other occupations in industries in which a significant number of H-1B visas are certified, and which align with the regional workforce partnership's sector-based strategy.

Refer to Appendix B to see a list of H-1B industries we have identified as permissible for applications to target under this grant competition. If proposing to target a specific occupation or occupations that fall outside of the identified industries, the application must provide data showing that the occupation is one for which H-1B visas have been certified.

D. PROGRAM DESIGN ELEMENTS

America's Promise Regional Workforce Partnerships are committed to providing a pipeline of skilled workers in a specific industry sector(s) through sector strategies and sector-based career pathways. Sector strategies will align industry with the regional workforce system and training programs. Integrating sector-based career pathways into the sector strategies ensures that the overall career pathways approach incorporates the needs of employers through skills training and attainment of portable credentials, supporting an individual's advancement to middle- to high-skilled employment within an industry sector. These sector-based strategies can be highly effective in increasing an individual's employability, employment, and earnings when pursued in context of a regional workforce partnership, ensuring a direct connection between training and employment in the local area.

Applicants must design workforce development strategies that comprise the following types of activities:

- 1) tuition-free education and training in a high-quality program that enables individuals to advance along a career pathway that supports the growth of a regional workforce within a specific H-1B industry or occupation, including providing participant support services necessary to successfully move individuals into middle- to high-skilled employment; and assurance from community and technical colleges and other training providers to modify offerings to align with industry needs over time;
- 2) the development and expansion of regional workforce partnerships through: enhanced regional leadership; alignment of regional workforce development strategies, including those required under WIOA and economic development plans; and, alignment with existing federal resources in the region;
- 3) employer engagement in sector strategies by ensuring active employer involvement in the regional workforce partnership, design of the program, training, and hiring of successful participants; as well as a plan to develop a more seamless, real time and possibly tech-enabled way to collect feedback from employers about the quality of participants from training programs; and

- 4) strong commitment to customer-centered design and excellence in customer service, so that the program responds to the needs of industry, employers, and participants, through human-centered design methodology and other methods of design thinking.¹².

1. Sector Strategies

Sector strategies directly engage employers within a specified industry sector to better align with and respond to employer hiring needs and career advancement opportunities. Sector strategies typically incorporate the following key elements:

- target a specific industry and/or cluster of occupations that may or may not cross industries;
- convene multiple employers from the specific industry sector;
- validate labor market data and projections with employers;
- identify common skills and credentials required by the industry;
- design education and training programs to address skills needs, including the development of sector-based career pathways;
- include workforce intermediaries or industry associations; and
- support workers gaining the skills and competencies necessary for entry into good jobs.

Sector strategies are the backbone of a regional workforce partnership, aligning industry workforce systems, training programs, and employers. Under this FOA, projects must identify sector-based activities that will lead to and support regional economic growth and respond to the current and future needs of workers; develop or strengthen systems and structures that will be sustainable and responsive to changes in the local economy; remove silos and minimize duplication within a region; and, develop or strengthen workforce strategies to enhance and sustain the region's education and training along sector-based career pathways, providing workers with the skills needed for employment in middle- to high-skilled employment in H-1B industries and occupations.

To the extent possible, applicants should align their strategies with other workforce activities, particularly the WIOA regional planning and training activities and other regional economic development initiatives, including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), or other state or local economic development strategies. The CEDS contribute to effective economic development in America's communities and regions through a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process.

2. Sector-based Career Pathways

Under this FOA, training along a career pathway may start with entry-level occupations, but must lead to employment in middle- and high-skilled positions in H-1B industries and occupations that align with the regional sector strategy(ies). In addition, projects must include viable ways for each participant to pursue a career pathway that may include paid work-based learning models such as Registered Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, paid work experience or paid internships, or postsecondary degree or certificate programs that are appropriately matched to the participant's individual needs

¹² Human-centered design and customer-centered methodologies are approaches to systems design that consider usability and particularly, the needs and limitations of a system's users and/or customers.

and skills requirements of the intended occupation of employment. Individual assessments provided by staff, such as career counselors, should include determining a customized sector-based career pathway to employment, career preparation as well as adequate training that will lead to the identified employment, and stackable and portable industry-recognized credentials, where appropriate.

Career pathways must be sector-focused and incorporate the needs and hiring opportunities of employers within a specific industry sector, and provide planned and sequenced coursework, training, or work experience that leads to attainment of industry-recognized skills and credentials. The involvement of employers in the design of career pathways ensures that training prepares workers for a range of occupations along a career pathway of the industry sector, making participants more employable and giving businesses a stronger workforce pool.

Projects must develop career plans for participants that will help each participant navigate and assess their various career pathway options within a specific sector strategy, including identifying skills and competencies needed for those occupations, and describing how the education and training provided will assist individuals in moving along a career pathway within the targeted industry sector. Career Pathway programs integrate academic and occupational skills training aligned with employer validated work readiness standards and competencies. The clear sequence of coursework and/or credentials allows progression through a variety of post-secondary credentials that demonstrate marketable skills in various occupations in a particular industry sector. For a full description of Career Pathways please refer to Appendix A, "Definition of Terms."

Based on individual assessments, projects should provide strategies for placing individuals into training interventions that align with one or more of the following three strategies that also include participant supportive services, as appropriate:

- a) **Short-term or Accelerated Training:** This strategy is intended to serve participants who need intensive training resulting in a degree or industry-recognized credential and that improves skills and competencies needed to refresh or upgrade their skills and to obtain employment in middle- and high-skilled jobs in targeted H-1B industry(ies) and occupation(s). The Department encourages applicants to consider accelerated or intensive competency-based training options that will rapidly train participants efficiently and effectively so they are ready for direct entry into employment. This strategy should aim to shorten the length of time to program completion, credential attainment, and reemployment, where appropriate. Projects may include:
 - Integrated employment and training programs that combine academic skills with occupational skills training to enable individuals to acquire skills at a faster pace;
 - Competency-based education and training programs designed to give participants credit for skills already developed and allows participants to move through coursework based on the mastery of a set of skills; and/or
 - Online course work, or distance learning modules, that builds work-based skills and competencies and results in industry-recognized credentials or college credit toward a stackable credential.
- b) **Longer-term Intensive Training:** This strategy is intended to serve participants who need more intensive training that results in a degree or credential to gain new knowledge, skills and competencies, supporting their progression along a career

pathway and placement into middle- and high-skilled employment in H-1B industries and occupations upon program completion. Training through this approach should include a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that provide participants with a sequence of education and training courses or career options that allow opportunities for professional growth and upward mobility.

- c) **Upskilling Incumbent Workers:** This strategy is intended to serve incumbent workers (refer to Appendix A for a definition of incumbent workers) in need of training that will lead to career advancement within the same H-1B industry. Up to 25 percent of individuals served through America's Promise programs may be incumbent workers who are eligible participants as defined in section III.G.3, Eligible Participants. The purpose of this effort is to provide additional skills and credentials for workers to advance in their careers and to assist employers in strengthening the skills of their existing workforce. Applicants that propose to serve incumbent workers must work with employer(s) and employer partners to develop individual skill advancement training that is designed to fill existing or projected job vacancies in middle- to high-skilled positions. As such, we encourage you to work with employer partners to develop plans to create career pathways towards middle- and high-skill jobs for workers by using incumbent worker training to move existing workers into higher-skill jobs in H-1B industries and occupations. This activity may also include customized training, for particular employers or groups of employers. Applicants proposing incumbent worker training will also need to demonstrate strategies for how they will:
- Collaborate with employers and/or training providers in identifying skill advancement strategies; and
 - Set goals for each incumbent worker training participant for achieving outcomes such as credential attainment, skills gains, job retention, career advancement, and wage gains.

Within these training strategies, employment and training activities can include a variety of types of training within a sector-based career pathway, allowing participants to obtain the skills, competencies, and credentials necessary to gain or advance in employment in middle- to high-skilled H-1B industries and occupations through tuition-free training.

Types of Training Activities:

- i. **Registered Apprenticeships**
Registered Apprenticeship programs combine job-related technical instruction with structured on-the-job learning experiences. Registered Apprenticeships are innovative work-based learning and post-secondary "earn-and-learn" models that meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor or federally recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs). Most Registered Apprenticeship programs include on-the-job training and classroom instruction, including in the community and technical college setting, which is provided through apprenticeship training centers, labor management partnerships, technical schools, community colleges, and even distance learning. Often Registered Apprenticeship sponsors work directly with community colleges that ultimately provide college credit for Registered Apprenticeships. 21st century apprenticeship approaches are flexible and can be easily customized to meet the needs of the employer and apprentice. Apprentices are hired and earn a wage upon registration, and receive progressive wages commensurate with their skill attainment throughout the training program.

After completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program, the apprentice earns a nationally recognized credential from the Department of Labor that is portable and stackable. Registered Apprenticeship training is distinguished from other types of workplace training by several factors: (1) participants who are newly hired (or already employed) earn wages from employers during training; (2) programs must meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor (or federally-recognized SAAs); (3) programs provide on-the-job learning and job-related technical instruction; (4) on-the-job learning is conducted in the work setting under the direction of one or more of the employer's personnel; and 5) training results in an industry-recognized credential and/or college credit.

ii. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

OJT can bridge the divide between unemployment and employment by addressing gaps in an individual's skills and what is required for a particular occupation. Individuals who participated in OJT in the past have demonstrated improved labor market attachment and enhanced job tenure, as illustrated by higher rates of job placement and retention. OJT also offers participants a "learn and earn" training option, allowing individuals to learn new skills while earning a regular paycheck.

OJT is distinguished from other types of workplace training, including customized training, in several ways: (1) participants are hired and earn wages from employers during training; (2) it is based on an individualized training plan that reflects the results of an individual skills assessment and analysis of job requirements; (3) training is conducted in the workplace under the direction of one or more of the employer's supervisory personnel; and (4) the grantee pays the employer a reimbursement to cover the extraordinary costs of the training. Under this FOA, OJT has specific requirements which are detailed in Section IV.E, Funding Restrictions. Incumbent workers are not eligible to participate in OJT.

iii. Paid Work Experience

Work experience is defined as a planned and structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. For the purposes of this FOA, work experiences are required to be paid work experiences. The specific requirements of these paid work experience are detailed in Section IV.E, Funding Restrictions. Incumbent workers are not eligible to participate in paid work experience.

iv. Paid Internships

Internships provide a monitored or supervised work or service experience in an individual's career field where he or she has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what is learned throughout the experience. These learning goals can include: academic learning, career development, and skill development. Internships are part of a structured program where the grantee establishes the criteria for determining who will participate in these programs; are for a set period of time that is generally limited in duration, but may be flexible to allow interns to spend limited time in the classroom; support the attainment of credentials in the individual's expected career field (where such credentials exist); relate to training provided through the grant and help participants prepare for employment opportunities on which the grant focuses; and, do not necessarily carry an offer of regular employment upon successful completion of the internship.

For the purposes of this FOA, internships are required to be paid internships. Under this FOA, paid internships have specific requirements which are detailed in Section IV.E, Funding Restrictions. Incumbent workers are not eligible to participate in paid internships.

v. Classroom, Competency- and Technology-based Training Strategies

In addition to the types of work-based training previously listed, a variety of other types of training strategies may include but are not limited to: classroom occupational training that is accelerated and contextualized, including in the community and technical college settings; distance learning and technology-based learning; and accelerated and competency-based training. Accelerated and competency-based training strategies can rapidly train participants efficiently and effectively for employment. They can include competency-based programs that give participants credit for skills they have already developed and allow participants to move through coursework based on mastery of skills or online programs that prepare those with little technical know-how for jobs in middle- to high-skill and high-growth jobs in H-1B industries and occupations.

All grant-funded training is required to lead to industry-recognized credentials, degrees, or portfolios (see Appendix A) that align with the skills and competencies necessary for employment in the targeted H-1B industry(ies) and occupation(s). For employers, credentials demonstrate and document a worker's skills. At the same time, credentials improve a worker's labor market experience through higher wages, greater mobility, and enhanced job security. Training and Employment Guidance Letter 15-10, Increasing Credential, Degree, and Certificate Attainment by Participants of the Public Workforce System, describes among other pertinent topics, the strategies that state and local workforce agencies, their strategic partners, and ETA discretionary grantees can adopt to both increase the rate of credential attainment among workforce program participants and improve the quality of those credentials.

3. Allowable Program Activities

Under this FOA, we will fund projects that support the provision of tuition-free training to participants along a sector-based career pathway within a specific H-1B industry, including providing participant support services, as necessary; supporting the development and expansion of regional workforce partnerships; and increasing employer engagement in sector strategies. Only activities and services that support individuals seeking

employment in middle- to high-skilled employment in H-1B industries and occupations are allowable activities under this grant. This includes but is not limited to:

- Convening key regional stakeholders to develop or strengthen plans that will lead to regional economic growth and will respond to the current and future needs of workers;
- Conducting regional asset mapping and analysis;
- Conducting outreach to potential stakeholders;
- Establishing or strengthening collaborative partnerships, networks, and organizational structures, including expanding staff resources as necessary to successfully collaborate with partners in the region and to manage the process and plan development, including partnerships for credit transfer and articulation agreements;
- Conducting a detailed assessment to identify the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as they pertain to the region's economic competitiveness;
- Developing or strengthening workforce strategies to enhance and sustain the region's educational and training capacity to provide workers with the skills needed for employment in middle- to high-skilled employment in targeted H-1B industries and occupations;
- Leveraging and aligning existing federal resources to ensure that efforts can move from planning to implementation to sustainability;
- Developing and implementing working agreements with key regional stakeholders;
- Developing and implementing effective and regular external and internal communications among planning partners and the region;
- Developing, implementing and/or maintaining a tech-enabled mechanism to collect ongoing feedback from employers and job seekers about the quality of the training program, how well the training program meets the needs of employers and participants, and any necessary updates to the education and program training throughout the project;
- Designing innovative programs that are shaped by a deep understanding of the customer experience for employers and participants in order to improve customer experience and outcomes;
- Adapting existing industry-recognized curricula to support direct education and training provided through the grant;
- Obtaining accreditation for employer- and/or industry-recognized credentials;
- Engaging in other program development activities, such as using subject matter experts from industry, education, and other areas to assist in program design and delivery;
- Accessing real-time labor market information, as it relates to identifying the labor market demand, skills transferability, and job openings;
- Developing and implementing articulation agreements with colleges, universities, and other education and training partners that allow for recognition of course credits in exchange for the education and/or training provided;
- Conducting outreach and recruitment of eligible participants;
- Implementing an initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, competencies, integrated participant services, supportive service, and employment needs;
- Providing direct education, training, including providing tuition-free training to participants;
- Providing job development, job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, academic and career counseling;
- Providing case management services; and

- Providing supportive services that will allow individuals to participate in and successfully complete the training provided through the grant (see Section IV.E, Funding Restrictions).

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AWARD TYPE AND AMOUNT

Funding will be provided in the form of a grant. Approximately \$100 Million is expected to be available to fund 20-40 projects ranging from \$1 million to \$6 million each. You may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$6 million for four years. You should request funding that is commensurate with the scope and scale of the project proposed. Rural and smaller regional communities may propose to serve their economic region or to collaborate through regional partnerships with other regions to support smaller-scale projects, as appropriate. 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 grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement.

To ensure that grant funds result in services to significant numbers of participants, we established goals for the minimum numbers of participants to be served during the period of performance based on the amount of funds requested by the applicant (see table below). The number of participants served should reflect those individuals who receive grant funded services in support of their training and/or education project goals. Applicants must identify in the project narrative (described in more detail in Expected Outcomes and Outputs under Section IV.B.3, Project Narrative) the number of participants to be served through the project, in alignment with the FOA-established goals based on the amount of funds requested.

While this grant investment is intended to offset costs of support services and provide tuition-free training to participants, to help ensure a successful project and meet the minimum goal for participants served, applicants must secure leveraged resources in an amount equal to at least 25 percent (25%) of the total requested funds to support higher service and training costs and accomplish the project's overall goals and milestones. In addition to leveraging and alignment with Federal resources, applicants should ensure public, private, and foundation leveraged resources are sufficient to meet the service and training needs of all participants served. This includes cash or in-kind support (e.g., Pell/Title IV financial aid, federal work study, GI Bill benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education & training funds, WIOA), state and local funding, (e.g., on-the-job training funds, state workforce dollars, funding for participating community colleges), and private sector investment funds (e.g., training investment funds, social impact bonds, industry association or labor organization funds). This also includes funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, education and training providers, and/ or Federal, state, and local government programs (i.e., staff, time, services, products, and other non-cash resources). Leveraged resources are a critical component of the project design and applicants will be scored based on the strength of these leveraged resources as described in section IV.3.(6)(b), Project Narrative.

The Department is also interested in programmatic, financing and technological innovations that deliver high-quality training at substantially lower costs. Long-term sustainability of the project is likely to be impacted by costly training designs, presenting barriers for both

individuals and employers after the grant period of performance. Therefore, we are interested in applications that produce quality employment outcomes that are cost-effective and, where federal investment is used, applications that propose to scale up the project when the grant is completed.

Figure 1. Minimum Goals for Participants Served during the Grant Period Based on Funding Request*

Funding Request	Minimum Participants Served
\$1,000,000 –\$2,000,000	175-355
\$2,000,001 - \$3,000,000	355-535
\$3,000,001 - \$4,000,000	535-715
\$4,000,001 - \$5,000,000	715-890
\$5,000,001 - \$6,000,000	890-1,070

*The minimum goals, listed above in Figure 1, identify the minimum number of participants to be served during the grant period, based on the funding amount requested by applicants. These numbers are minimum outcome goals applicants must propose for the numbers of participants to be served through the grant, and applicants are strongly encouraged to serve more than the minimum thresholds. Applicants should propose participant targets based on the FOA requirements and that are appropriate for the scope of their project. Applicants should refer to the scoring criteria for more information on how they will be scored on proposed targets specifically, Section IV.B.3.(2) Expected Outcomes and Outputs.

B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is 48 months. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities. These activities include: startup activities; increasing employer engagement in sector strategies by ensuring employer involvement in the regional workforce partnership; activities related to the development and expansion of regional workforce partnerships; providing training to participants; placement activities; and, participant follow-up for tracking and reporting performance outcomes. We expect that start-up activities such as hiring appropriate grant program staff and project design activities will begin immediately. We also expect that grantees will begin serving participants no later than 6 to 9 months after the date of grant award. We strongly encourage grantees to develop their project work plans and timelines accordingly. Grantees must plan to expend fully grant funds during the period of performance.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

In keeping with the authority provided by Congress under ACWIA, grants under this program will be awarded to a partnership of private and public sector entities. Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of a regional workforce partnership, which will serve as the grantee and

have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant. Eligible lead applicants must be public or nonprofit organizations that: 1) meet the definition of one of the three types of eligible entities described below; and 2) include at least one representative of each of the four types of required regional workforce partnership entities, which collectively form the “regional workforce partnership.”

1. Eligible Lead Applicants

This funding opportunity is open to all eligible applicants as identified below. The following organizations are eligible to apply as a lead applicant:

To be eligible for consideration, the lead applicant in the regional workforce partnership must represent one of the following types of entities: a) the workforce investment system; b) education and training providers, including community and technical colleges and systems; and c) business-related nonprofit organizations, an organization functioning as a workforce intermediary for the express purpose of serving the needs of an industry, or a regional or industry association. Applications that do not include a lead applicant that meets the eligibility requirements of one of the three types of entities mentioned above will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed. Detailed eligibility requirements for each type of entity are provided below.

a. The Workforce Investment System

For the purpose of this FOA, the Workforce Investment System entities are state and local Workforce Development Boards and American Job Center Operators under Section 121 of WIOA and Native American Program entities eligible for funding under Section 166 of WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3221). These organizations have expertise in workforce development and may provide leadership in implementing the following types of activities: 1) understanding and analyzing the need for education and training in the local area, including identifying targeted industries, occupations, sector strategies, and hiring needs, and populations to be served, and providing relevant sources of data, including labor market information, and other tools or reports; 2) assessing potential participants for the grant program; 3) identifying and referring candidates for education and training in the grant program; 4) providing additional supportive services; 5) connecting and placing participants with employers that have job openings; and 6) collecting, tracking, and reporting participant data to ETA.

b. Education and Training Providers

For the purposes of this FOA, training providers include: institutions of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001), including, community and technical colleges and systems; joint labor-management training partnerships; nonprofit and community-based organizations that offer job training, including those organizations that have been approved as WIOA Eligible Training Providers. Eligible lead applicants must be a public or nonprofit organization. Therefore, a for-profit education/training provider is not an eligible entity to apply as the lead applicant.

Institutions of higher education include public or other nonprofit educational institutions. Generally, institutions of higher education include 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions (including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and/or Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions, such as those designated by the U.S. Department of

Education at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>), among others.

While not a requirement under this FOA, we encourage the inclusion of education and training providers that have been approved as a WIOA Eligible Training Provider and/or intend to apply for approval as a WIOA Eligible Training Provider.

Education and training providers provide a range of customizable and short-term training, competency-based training, as well as longer-term training programs that result in industry-recognized credentials, such as associates degrees and certificates and may include basic skills training, technical skills training, supportive services, and workforce development services. We are especially interested in partnerships that include more than one training provider.

- c. Business-related Nonprofit Organizations, an Organization Functioning as a Workforce Intermediary for the Express Purpose of Serving the Needs of an Industry, or a Regional or Industry Association that represents at least five employers

The primary partnership must include at least one business-related nonprofit organization, an organization functioning as a workforce intermediary for the express purpose of serving the needs of an industry, or a regional or industry association that represents at least five employers. Business-related nonprofit organizations include trade or industry associations such as local Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs), Technology Associations, Chief Information Officer Roundtables, small business federations, and labor-management organizations. Eligible lead applicants must be a public or nonprofit organization. Therefore, a for-profit business or economic development organization is not an eligible entity to apply as the lead applicant.

Any of these organizations can provide expertise on the skills needs of the workplace. Industry and business associations lend their expertise on skills development by: 1) defining the program goals and activities; 2) informing program design; 3) identifying necessary skills, competencies, and credentials; 4) identifying career pathways; 5) providing assistance with program design and implementation; and 6) helping to solicit employer feedback on the skills and competencies of workers completing training and placed into employment. Organizations functioning as workforce intermediaries for the express purpose of serving the needs of businesses lend their expertise by: 1) having credibility with employers and workers; 2) serving as partner, coordinator, and management services organizations; and 3) bringing together project partners to plan, govern, manage, and track performance of customized services to program participants and employers.

2. Partnership Structure

As noted above, the lead applicant must apply as the lead applicant in the regional workforce partnership and must represent one of the three types of eligible entities defined in the preceding section. In the required Abstract (see Section IV.B.4, Attachments to the Project Narrative), you must clearly identify which entity will fulfill the role of each of the required members of the regional workforce partnership described in Section III.B Regional Workforce Partnership.

The lead applicant will serve as the grantee, must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424 Application Form, and will be: 1) the point of contact with the Department to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this FOA and any subsequent grant award; 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 submitting to the Department all deliverables under the grant, 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 or amendment of the grant agreement or statement of work; 5) the entity with overall responsibility for carrying out the programmatic functions of the grant, as well as for the stewardship of all expenditures under the grant; 6) the entity responsible for coordinating with the national evaluator; including participating in a random assignment evaluation and other studies, if selected by DOL; and 7) the entity responsible for working with DOL to close out the grant.

B. Regional Workforce Partnership

The lead applicant must include at least one representative of each of the four types of required regional workforce partnership entities listed below, which collectively form the “regional workforce partnership,” and demonstrate strong engagement of the regional leaders necessary to advance a sector strategy. Additionally, applicants should consider including additional optional partners that support the goals of the regional workforce partnership.

1. Required Partners

Applicants must include in their regional workforce partnership at least one senior-level representative from each of the entities identified below. To demonstrate the active involvement of the required regional workforce partnership entities, applicants must provide signed documentation of commitments – such as signed memoranda of understanding, an organizational charter, a partnership agreement, or other types of signed agreements – which demonstrate the commitment of senior-level leadership for each type of entity listed below. Applicants will be scored based on the inclusion of this documentation, as well as the level and quality of involvement in the project in Section IV.B.3, Project Narrative.

Required partners in the regional workforce partnership include:

1. Employers and industry representatives that align with the partnership’s regional sector strategies;
2. The Workforce Investment System, as defined in Section III.A.1.a, representing the regional service area;
3. Economic development agencies representing the regional service area;
4. Education and training providers, as defined in Section III.A.1.b, representing the regional service area, including community and technical colleges or systems; joint labor-management training partnerships; and nonprofit and community-based organizations that offer job training.

To ensure that projects have strong employer engagement, applicants are required to partner with at least five employers or a regional industry association with at least five employer members representing each industry sector and service area targeted through the sector strategy. To satisfy this requirement, applicants must partner with five or more independent employers, a consortium of at least five employers, or a regional industry association with at least five employers.

Consortia of at least five employers and regional industry associations that serve as a lead applicant can also serve as the required employers or regional industry association, if appropriate. We encourage applicants to form additional partnerships with employers, consortia of employers, and regional industry associations.

To demonstrate the active involvement of employers, applicants should provide signed documentation of employer, employer consortium or regional industry association commitments – such as signed letters of commitment, memoranda of understanding, a partnership agreement, or other types of signed agreements – which demonstrate the commitment of each employer or regional industry association. Applicants will be scored based on the inclusion of this documentation, as well as the level and quality of employer involvement in the project in Section IV.B.3, Project Narrative.

This documentation should identify that each industry sector targeted through the project has representation from at least five employers or is a regional industry association with at least five employer members. At minimum, this documentation of commitment should:

- Include the signature of an authorized representative, such as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), or other authorized representative with sufficient authority to commit to the partnership, from at least five employers, an employer consortium or regional industry association with at least five employers;
- Describe employer commitments to consider hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs. For any individuals hired, describe how employers will provide ongoing feedback on the suitability of trainees;
- Describe how the employers are involved in the project, including their role in program design; identifying necessary skills, competencies, and credentials; providing OJT, Registered Apprenticeship, paid work experience, paid internships, or other work-based training opportunities with specific numbers of targeted participants for work experience opportunities, if applicable; and
- Identify what specific resources, such as mentors, the donation of equipment, or other contributions, are being provided by those employers to support the proposed project, if any.

We particularly encourage partnerships that include participation with employers that have current vacancies or are projected to have an emerging demand for workers, as well as multiple employers in an industry or occupational cluster, which is a concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, research and development, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are linked by common workforce needs. Working with multiple businesses helps ensure that training prepares workers for a range of employer needs in a specific industry, making participants more employable and giving businesses a stronger employee pool.

2. Optional Partners

Beyond the required regional workforce partners, we strongly encourage you to collaborate with other partners that reflect the scope of the regional workforce partnership and may include: workforce intermediaries; community-based organizations; state and local governments, including government agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, State Apprenticeship Agencies; foundations and philanthropic organizations; other Federally-funded programs, such as Adult Basic Education, Social Security disability benefits, Centers for Independent Living, Employment Networks, Small Business

Development Centers, as well as other programs administered by the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Commerce, Transportation, and/or Energy; providers of supportive and specialized services; for-profit organizations that provide job training; disability service providers, faith-based organizations; and, a data or technology partner to support the development, implementation, and/or maintenance of a tech-enabled mechanism to collect ongoing feedback from employers and participants.

While secondary education is outside of the scope of allowable training activities for this FOA, regional workforce partnerships are encouraged to collaborate with K-12 or K-16 education councils to bridge secondary to post-secondary pathways.

C. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required for this program. Applicants should not propose matching funds as it is not a requirement of this FOA. Please note that any resources contributed to the project are considered leveraged resources and do not constitute cost sharing or matching funds. Cost sharing or match is not one of the application screening criteria.

While there is no match requirement and applicants should not propose matching funds, applicants will be scored based on the strength of leveraged resources (leveraged resources are not match) and these leveraged resources should be considered a critical component of the Project Design. More information on leveraged resources may be found in Section IV.B.3.(6), Project Budget and Budget Justification.

D. Geographic Scope

Applicants can propose to serve a regional area located within or across state lines, as long as the service area comprises a single economic region. Economic regions are defined primarily by the movement of goods, capital, labor, consumption, and other economic forces within a geographic area. Defining an economic region involves identifying the surrounding areas, communities, counties, and municipalities that have similar industry and employment characteristics, looking beyond traditional political boundaries; and identifying the workforce needs of the identified areas.

Rural and smaller regional communities may propose to serve their economic region or to collaborate through regional partnerships with other regions to support smaller-scale projects, as appropriate.

Communities identified as High Need Communities – defined as a community with a poverty rate of 20 percent or higher – or areas that propose to serve participants that reside within these communities are encouraged to apply.

E. Other Information

1. Application Screening Criteria

The chart below lists the required elements of the application. An application that fails to provide any of these required elements will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed.

Application Requirement	Instructions	Complete?
The deadline submission requirements are met	Section IV.C	
If submitted through Grants.gov, the components of the application are saved in any of the specified formats and are not corrupt. (We will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.)	Section IV.C.	
Application does not exceed the ceiling amount of \$6,000,000	Section II.A	
Application meets the minimum amount of \$1,000,000		
Lead Applicant is eligible and all required regional workforce partnership partners are included	Section III.A	
Applicant has registered with SAM and maintains an active account	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424 includes a DUNS Number	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section IV.B.2	
Budget Narrative	Section IV.B.2	
Project Narrative	Section IV.B.3	

2. Number of Applications Applicants May Submit

You may only submit one application as the lead applicant in response to this FOA. However, you may submit one application as lead applicant, and in addition may be included as a partner in one or more applications submitted where you are not the lead applicant.

Multiple applications from an organization as lead applicant are not allowed. If multiple applications are received, the most recent application submitted will be reviewed. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, we will not replace it with an earlier application.

3. Eligible Participants

a.) Participants Eligible to Receive Training

The intent of this FOA is to fund projects that provide tuition-free education/job training to unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers – including disadvantaged populations such as low-income, underrepresented in the targeted industry, dislocated workers, and other populations with training and employment barriers – to help them pursue or advance in middle- to high-skilled employment in H-1B industries and occupations that align with the targeted industry sector(s) during the grant period of performance.

Applicants must design their program and outreach strategies to ensure successful inclusion of low-income individuals, but grantees are not required to conduct an individualized means-

test. Outreach strategies to reach low-income individuals can be specific to this population and/or can include strategies targeting broader populations that include large numbers of low-income individuals, such as: underrepresented groups within a targeted industry or occupation; and individuals who face barriers to training and employment, including long term unemployment, limited English proficiency, disabilities, child care needs, prior criminal conviction, or other barriers. While applicants are not required to conduct an individualized means-test as part of these strategies, they are required to ensure that their outreach strategies and education/job training programs are designed to address barriers for the individuals served. For applicants proposing to serve incumbent workers, no more than 25 percent (25%) of the total participants served may be incumbent workers that meet the eligibility criteria.

All training participants must be older than 16 years of age and not currently enrolled in school within a local educational agency.

Within these types of participants eligible to receive training, grantees may serve a wide range of individuals, such as veterans, minorities, Indian and Native Americans, foreign-trained immigrants (as defined in Appendix A), underrepresented populations in H-1B industries including women, low-income individuals, and other individuals.

For the purposes of this FOA, the following definitions apply:

- i. Unemployed workers: We define “unemployed worker” as an individual who is without a job and who is seeking employment and is available to work.
- ii. Underemployed workers: This term refers to individuals who are not currently connected to a full-time job commensurate with the individual’s level of education, skills, or wage and/or salary earned previously, or who have obtained only episodic, short-term, or part-time employment.
- iii. Incumbent workers: This term refers to individuals who are employed, particularly in lower-skill, lower-wage, and front-line jobs, but need training to upgrade their skills to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations in an H-1B occupations and industries. Incumbent workers are workers who typically are employed in lower-skilled and/or entry level positions and where attaining new skills and competencies could help advance them into middle- and high-skilled jobs. The training provided to incumbent workers is developed with an employer or employer association.

Participants served through the project must pursue a middle- and/or high-skilled occupation, and develop the competencies to enable them to enter middle and high-skilled jobs along a career pathway in H-1B industries and occupations during the grant period of performance. This means that programs need to build individuals’ skills such that at the conclusion of the program they are prepared to be placed into middle- and high-skill occupations, or along a career pathway to such occupations in H-1B industries or occupations. To facilitate the inclusion of less-skilled and disadvantaged workers, applicants may include components in their programs that will assist those who do not have particular educational prerequisites and/or experience, as long as the program will provide them with the competencies and skills necessary to enable them to enter middle- and high-skilled jobs during the grant period of performance.

b) Veterans’ Priority for Participants

38 U.S.C. 4215 requires grantees to provide priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL. The regulations implementing this priority of service can be found at 20 CFR Part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans' priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service, a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by DOL. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2816.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This FOA, found at www.Grants.gov and http://www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm, 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) the SF-424 "Application for Federal Assistance;" (2) Project Budget; (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 http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_2_1-V2.1.pdf).

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 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, 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 <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). The SF-424B is not required to be submitted with the application.

Requirement for DUNS Number

All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a DUNS number, and must supply their DUNS Number on the SF-424. The DUNS Number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. If you do not

have a DUNS Number, you can get one for free through the D&B website: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>. As authorized under 2 CFR 25, grant recipients authorized to make subawards must be aware of the following requirements related to DUNS Numbers:

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

Requirement for Registration with SAM

Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Instructions for registering with SAM can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/#1>. A recipient must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate, and complete. For purposes of this paragraph, the applicant is the entity that meets the eligibility criteria and has the legal authority to apply and to receive the award.

If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time the Grant Officer is ready to make a Federal award, the Grant Officer may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

2. Project Budget

You must complete the SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424A-V1.0.pdf>). In preparing the Budget Information Form, you must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the budget request, explained in detail below.

Budget Narrative: The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. It should also include a description, including the source and amount, of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.

Use the following guidance for preparing the budget narrative:

Personnel – List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed). Give the annual salary of each position, the percentage of each position's time devoted to the project, the amount of each position's salary funded by the grant, and the total personnel cost for the period of performance.

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

Travel – Specify the purpose, 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 to be purchased which 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 200.33 for the definition of Equipment). List the quantity and unit cost per item. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies. In general, we do not permit the purchase of equipment during the last funded year of the grant.

Supplies – Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment” (see 2 CFR 200.94 for the definition of Supplies). The detailed budget should identify categories of supplies (e.g. office supplies). List the quantity and unit cost per item.

Contractual – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. If applicable, identify any subrecipient agreements, including purpose and estimated costs. See Section VI.B.2.f. for more information on the distinction between contractor and subrecipient.

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 the costs must be shown on other appropriate lines such as Contractual.

Other – List each item in sufficient detail for us to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable. List any item, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere here.

Indirect Costs – If indirect costs are included in the budget, then include either, a) the approved indirect cost rate with a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), a description of the base used to calculate indirect costs along with the amount of the base, and the total indirect costs requested, or b) if you meet the requirements to use the 10 percent de minimis rate as described in 2 CFR 200.414(f), then include a description of the modified total direct costs base (see 2 CFR 200.68 for definition) used in the calculation along with the amount of the base, and the total indirect costs requested based on the 10 percent de minimis rate. 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:

<http://www.dol.gov/oasam/boc/dcd/index.htm>.

Note that the entire Federal grant amount requested (not just one year) must be included on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative.

No leveraged resources should be shown on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Leveraged resources should be described in the budget narrative. See Section IV.B.3.6., Budget and Budget Justification, for additional requirements for the discussion of leveraged funds in the Budget Narrative. The requested Federal grant amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative must be the same. If minor inconsistencies are found between the budget amounts specified on the SF-424, SF-424A, and the budget narrative, ETA will consider the SF-424 the official funding amount requested. However, if the amount specified on the SF-424 would render the application nonresponsive, the Grant Officer will use his or her discretion to determine whether the intended funding request is within the responsive range.

(3) Project Narrative

Preparing the 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 25 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with Times New Roman 12 point text font and 1 inch margins with standard word spacing. You must number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1.

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

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Project Narrative. Carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in your Project Narrative. The agency will evaluate the Project Narrative using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A. The point(s) assigned to each criterion reflect the percentage that each criterion will impact the overall score. You must use the same section headers identified below for each section of the Project Narrative:

(1) Statement of Need (11 points)

a. Targeted Industries and Occupations (3 points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which the discussion of the following factors is clear, logical, and an accurate interpretation of labor market data. All data sources should include citations that provide information that enables the identification and verification of data. You must provide a:

- i. Clear identification and description of the high-growth H-1B industry(ies) and occupations targeted by the proposed program, including identifying how they align with the industry sector(s) targeted by the regional workforce partnership (Refer to Appendix B to see a list of permissible industries (1 point);
- ii. Complete description of the training, skills, competencies, and degrees/credentials necessary for entry into or retention in the selected high-growth H-1B industries and occupations (1 point); and
- iii. Clear assessment of the current training available to meet these needs and why the available training it is not providing the needed capacity to prepare people within the proposed service area for the identified occupations because of lack of scale, resources, support systems, etc. (1 point)

b. Employer Demand (2 points)

- i. Detailed description of the current and future projected demand for employment in the selected high-growth H-1B industries and occupations. You must cite the source for the projected demand, such as Bureau of Labor Statistics or other DOL sources, state workforce agencies' sources, employers, or other written labor market information provided by employers, or other knowledgeable parties. You must provide strong evidence, with citations, that identifies the average current wages offered for the selected well-paying, high-growth H-1B industry(ies) and occupations, based on national, state, or local data. To the extent possible, data should reflect the service area proposed (1 point); and
- ii. Clear description of how local employers have been engaged in regional planning related to identifying the targeted industries/occupations, skills and

competencies necessary for employment in the targeted industry/occupations, and gap in the current workforce. (1 point)

c. Populations Served (4 points)

- i. Clear identification of the specific population(s) to be served through the project, including demographic characteristics, skill levels, and barriers to employment), and a description of how the targeted population(s) to be served in the project will meet the requirements of this FOA as identified in section III.a. Eligible Participants. The applicant must describe its strategy on how it will serve targeted populations (2 points); and
- ii. Provide current and compelling evidence from credible regional, state, and local data sources that demonstrates the need to serve the targeted population(s), including identifying any barriers to training. (2 points)

d. Service Area (2 points)

- i. Clear description of the economic region, including identifying a list of counties and municipalities (1 point); and
- ii. Identify the factors that contributed to the definition of the region. Discussion should include, but is not limited to, factors such as economic interdependence (e.g., common industries or economic sectors); assets (e.g., human capital, financial capital, research and development institutions, educational institutions, and infrastructure); and networks (e.g., leadership and investor) that demonstrate the existence of a regional economy (1 point).

(2) Expected Outcomes and Outputs (10 points)

Your performance in meeting your outcome projections may impact our decision to award you any future grants. You must provide the following:

a. Projected Performance Outcomes (4 points)

- i. Comprehensive numerical outcome projections for each of the seven outcome measures, identified and defined in Appendix E:
 - (1) Total Participants Served,
 - (2) Total Participants Enrolled in Education/Training Activities,
 - (3) Total Participants Completing Education/Training Activities,
 - (4) Total Participants Who Complete Education/Training Activities and Receive a Degree or Other Credential,
 - (5) Total Number of Unemployed and Underemployed Participants who Complete Training Activities and Obtain Employment,
 - (6) Total Number of Incumbent Worker Participants who Complete Training Activities that Advanced into a New Position, and
 - (7) Median Hourly Wage at Employment Placement

Applicants must provide the targets in raw numbers for each of the outcome measures. Percentages, percent increases, or other types of data projections are not acceptable. The targets must be provided for each year of the grant as well as for the total grant period; and applicants must present their information in a performance outcomes table (see Appendix E for a sample format), to be included as an attachment to the project narrative. The table should be formatted to include sub-totals for each type of targeted population group served for each outcome goal, as appropriate, as well as total sums for each outcome goal (2 points); and

- ii. Feasible explanation of how the outcome projections are appropriate numerical targets for the program design by providing an explanation of how the targets were derived and how the targets fit into the overall timeline of grant implementation. (2 points)
- b. Ability to Report Outcomes (4 points)
 - i. Clear identification of existing or planned systems for tracking participant-level data on characteristics, services, activities, and employment outcomes of participants served through the project to report to the Department during the life of your grant. In addition, you must describe in detail how you will use these systems to regularly to assess progress towards your identified performance goals (2 points); and
 - ii. Comprehensive explanation of how you will collect employment outcomes of participants during the grant period of performance, including the processes and procedures for collecting these outcomes after participants have completed the program, as necessary. (2 points)
- c. Cost Effectiveness (2 points)
 - i. Clear description that demonstrates that the number of participants to be served meets or exceeds the minimum number of participants served for the requested grant amount as illustrated in Figure 1, Minimum Goals for Participants Served during the Grant Period Based on Funding Request (See Section II.A) (1 point); and
 - ii. Strong evidence that demonstrates how the training costs proposed align with similar programs you, your partners, or other organizations have conducted, including a justification for how costs may differ for the proposed program, based on the characteristics of the population(s) served. (1 point)

(3) Project Design (54 points)

All proposed program models must incorporate the following program design elements that will address the unique needs of the targeted population:

- a. Demonstration of Regional Workforce Partnership (12 points)
 - i. Comprehensive description of your regional workforce partnership, including identifying all partners included in the regional workforce partnership, their roles and contributions, and how each partner supports the overall partnership (3 points);
 - ii. Clear demonstration of the active involvement of the required regional workforce partnership entities by attaching partnership agreements, organizational charter, or other types of signed agreements (as described in Sections III.B, Required Regional Workforce Partners and IV.B.4, Attachments to the Project Narrative). Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying and including the signature of at least one senior-level representative for each required entity in the regional workforce partnership will receive zero points for this rating factor (3 points); and
 - iii. Detailed explanation of the required regional workforce partner roles included in the attached partnership agreements, letters, or other documentation (as described in Section IV.B.4, Attachments to the Project Narrative) which demonstrate the engagement of senior-level leadership of each required entity, including identification of which partners bring expertise on and access to diverse populations served through the sector strategy, including, but not limited to, the expertise on successfully training the targeted populations

identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c Populations Served (e.g. low-income individuals, individuals underrepresented in the targeted industry, dislocated workers, and other populations with training and employment barriers) in these occupations. (3 points)

- iv. Demonstrate that you have at least one partner that has engaged in sector work, has an existing regional workforce strategy, or has engaged in previous sectoral work. This can include identifying previous experience with leveraging federal resources in your region, such as DOC/EDA's IMCP communities, DOT's Ladders programs, and DOE Energy Jobs Strategy Council programs, DOL's TAACCCT program, and/or other sector-based and placed based efforts. (3 points)

b. Demonstration of Sectoral Strategy (6 points)

- i. Describe your involvement in a previous sector partnership engagement strategy (including the partners involved) or demonstrate that you have engaged in previous sectoral work where you leveraged federal resources in your area (3 points); and
- ii. Demonstrate linkage to and alignment with local WIOA regional planning (see Appendix C at the end of the FOA for list of WIOA partners). (3 points)

c. Demonstration of Employer and Industry Engagement (8 points)

- i. Describe and explain how the regional partnerships with business and industry leaders will provide an effective pipeline of talent in the target industry sector(s) by aligning the regional workforce system and training programs with comprehensive sector-based career pathways (2 points);
- ii. Comprehensive description of the activities and contributions each employer and/or regional industry association with at least five employers committed to the project, and how these roles support the goals of the project, including identifying their involvement with the following, as applicable: OJT, paid-work experience, paid internships, Registered Apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, or other training opportunities to be provided through these partnerships; providing assistance with program design; prioritizing job openings to consider hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs; providing resources, such as mentors, the donation of equipment, or other contributions to support the proposed project; plans to work with the program to upskill front-line incumbent workers and other incumbent workers; and plans to work with the program to hire unemployed participants to backfill job vacancies left by incumbent worker participants who move into higher-skilled jobs (2 points);
- iii. Clear demonstration of employer support by attaching at least five partnership agreements, letters, or other signed documentation (as described in Sections III.B, Required Regional Workforce Partners and IV.B.4, Attachments to the Project Narrative). Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying at least five employer partners will receive zero points for this rating factor (2 points); and
- iv. Provide documentation of the active employer roles included in the form of attached partnership agreements, letters, or other documentation (as described in Sections III.B, Required Regional Workforce Partners and Section IV.B.4, Attachments to the Project Narrative). (2 points)

d. Outreach, Recruitment, and Assessment Strategy (4 points)

- i. Comprehensive description of an effective participant outreach and recruitment plan for engaging the targeted population(s). Clear identification of outreach partners – including those specific to one or more target populations identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c Populations Served - and the process to ensure collaboration between the applicant, applicant's outreach partners, and other relevant partners in these activities (1 point);
 - ii. Complete description of a feasible set of strategy(ies) to reach the targeted population and recruit the individuals with barriers to training and employment, you propose to serve (such as partnering with the public workforce system, job clubs, community organizations, faith-based organizations, business entities, or using online social media) (1 point);
 - iii. Complete description of an effective process to be used to determine whether individuals are eligible to be served through the program and likely to be successful in completing the program with the appropriate education/training and supportive services (1 point); and
 - iv. Detailed description of a feasible assessment process that will be used after eligibility determination has been made to determine which of the training strategies is needed to assist each participant in navigating and assessing their various career pathway options within a specific sector strategy. Include a description of how the program will effectively provide information on and opportunities for entering into and progressing along a career pathway. This process should include identifying skills and competencies needed for those occupations and describing to participants how the education and training provided will place them along sector-based career pathway as described in Section I.C, Program Design (1 point).
- e. Employment and Training Strategy (10 points)
 - i. Detailed description of a comprehensive sector-based career pathway(s), effectively leading to middle- to high-skilled jobs. This description should identify how the pathway includes articulation agreements between secondary and post-secondary institutions and apprenticeship programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials, credit, AA degrees, or other degrees and credentials, as well as pathways that offer a combination of occupational and academic credentials (2 points);
 - ii. Clear description of feasible education and training strategies included in the sector-based career pathway, as identified in Section 1.D, Program Design Elements, that will be used to serve the targeted population(s) following completion of the assessment process including those that incorporate an earnings component (such as OJT, paid work experience, paid internship, or Registered Apprenticeship), incumbent worker training strategies, as applicable, and any other training activities within each strategy. This includes describing the process that will be used to update curricula and training approaches over time as employer needs change and they provide feedback (2 points);
 - iii. Thorough explanation of a feasible way that education and training strategies will be matched with the skill needs and hiring opportunities of employers and, where appropriate, leverage existing standards, assessments, curricula, etc. that have proven effectiveness (2 points);
 - iv. Thorough and convincing description of how the proposed education and training strategies are appropriate for the targeted populations described in Section IV.B.3.1.c, Populations Served, to be served and how the strategies

- will address skills, training gaps, and other needs of participants identified in the Statement of Need (2 points); and
- v. Clear and convincing demonstration that participants will have, upon completing the grant program, the necessary degree(s) and/or industry-recognized credential(s) to qualify for placement into middle- to high-skilled jobs (2 points).
- f. Supportive Services (6 points)
- i. Clear description that demonstrates the proposed supportive service strategy(ies) for individuals served, including a thorough description of the specific services included and a discussion on how services will support participants identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c, Populations Served, in successfully completing training and obtaining employment in middle- and high-skilled jobs (2 points);
 - ii. Clear description of how you will effectively provide these services to participants, identifying the specific service providers (or specifying a plan to procure specific types of service providers), describing and explaining how supportive services from WIOA and other providers are leveraged, how these services will be administered through effective case management, and strong evidence that supports the effectiveness of the services you propose to address barriers to training and employment (2 points); and
 - iii. Clear description of how the programs help eliminate financial barriers for participants to participate in training, such as support and counseling around completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and information on other types of financial assistance (2 points).
- g. Job Placement Strategies (4 points)
- i. Comprehensive description of the specific job placement service/activities included in these strategies to be used for the targeted population(s) identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c, Populations Served, including fully describing how you will effectively provide job placement services to participants including those in specific targeted populations, the specific organization(s) that will be responsible for job placement, and rationale for why that organization is well positioned to serve this role (2 points);
 - ii. Clear and convincing explanation that the proposed job placement strategies will ensure that participants from the targeted population(s) will obtain employment in middle- to high-skilled H-1B industries and occupations (2 points).
- h. Project Work Plan (4 points)
- i. Detailed and feasible project work plan that demonstrates a cohesive, well-designed, and feasible approach to implement the project. Applicants can present their information in a table format (see Appendix F for a sample format), to be included as an attachment to the project narrative (2 points); and
 - ii. Comprehensive description of the activities, timeframes, deliverables, and key implementers required to implement the regional workforce partnerships and the training and service strategies described in this Project Design section within the grant period of performance. Include detailed timeframes for accomplishing all start-up activities immediately following the start of the grant period of performance and serving participants no later than 6 to 9 months after the grant start date. Applicants can present their information in a

table format (see Appendix F for a sample format), to be included as an attachment to the project narrative (2 points).

(4) Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (8 points)

Applicants must describe and demonstrate the capacity of the lead applicant to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the project, as well as demonstrate experience and/or capacity to bring together strategic partnerships that will support the project's goals. Scoring under this criterion will be based upon how well applicants address the following factors:

- a. Capacity of Lead Applicant and Partners (6 points)
 - i. Detailed description that demonstrates the lead applicant's capacity to manage the project, as well as the role of any partners included in management of the project, including identifying a plan for efficient and effective communication between staff at all levels of the project, including partners (2 points);
 - ii. Complete description of the capacity of all entities involved in the project to effectively implement the components of the program approach for which they are responsible, including demonstrating a commitment to customer-centered design and excellence in customer service, so that the program responds to the needs of industry, employers, and participants, through human-centered design methodology and other methods (2 points); and
 - iii. Full description that demonstrates the effectiveness of the lead applicant's procurement processes, systems, and procedures and, if applicable, those of partners (2 points).
- b. Financial and Performance Reporting Systems (2 points)
 - i. Comprehensive description of the effective systems and processes that the lead applicant will use to provide timely and accurate financial and performance reporting. Provide evidence that identifies whether reports (program and financial) for the most recent grant(s) from ETA or other sources have been submitted on time, and describe the grants management practices used to complete grant activities within the period of performance (2 points).

(5) Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (10 points)

- i. Fully describe the lead applicant's capacity to lead the development or expansion of the regional partnership during the grant period, based on previous experience of the lead applicant or a partner in managing a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements,¹³ leading sector partnership engagement strategies, sector work, or other sector-based activities similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project within the last five years, as of the closing date of this Announcement (2 points);
- ii. Describe in detail any evidence and experience of the lead applicant and partners in sustaining sector partnerships, sector work, or other sector-based

¹³ Assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements, but not Federal contracts.

- activities following completion of a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements related to sector partnerships, sectoral work, or other sector-based activities. This can include identifying a lead applicant or a partner's role in sustaining sectoral work following the completion of a TAACCCT grant or other sector strategy-focused grants and projects (2 points);
- iii. Describe in detail any previous evidence and experience of lead applicant, or of a partner included in the agreement or project, such as a training provider, in a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements or other project(s) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project where there is documented success in participant outcomes for participant training program completion, employment placements, and/or wage increases (2 points); and
 - iv. Describe in detail any previous evidence and experience of the lead applicant and partner organizations in serving target populations identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c, Populations Served, providing a comprehensive explanation of strategies used to remove individuals' barriers to training and employment (2 points); and
 - v. Describe in detail any previous experience of specific organization(s) that will be responsible for job placement. This can include: identifying a success rate of employment placement; feedback from employers, training providers, and/or workforce entities that have worked with the specific organization(s); or, other documentation that identifies job placement success and is relevant to the proposed project. This should include evidence of success with target populations identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c. (2 points).

(6) Budget and Budget Justification (7 points)

Please see Section IV.B.2. for information on requirements related to the budget and budget justification. The Budget and Budget Justification do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

a. Budget Narrative (1 point)

The extent to which the budget is reasonable based on the activities outlined in the project narrative. In the Budget Narrative you must provide a:

- i. Thorough identification of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A., including a clear description of how proposed expenditures will support service, tuition-free training, and job placement for the target populations identified in Section IV.B.3.1.c, Populations Served. (1 point)

b. Amount of Leveraged Resources (2 points)

- i. Detailed description of the leveraged resources to be provided that indicates the project will have leveraged resources equal to at least 25 percent of the total requested funds to support grant activities, including a complete account of these leveraged resources, and demonstration of how these leveraged resources and grant funds will cover the cost of training and related activities. Applicants will be scored based on the extent to which they fully demonstrate that 25 percent or more in leveraged resources will be provided. (2 points)

c. Scope of Leveraged Resources (4 points)

- i. Full description of how the leveraged resources described in Section IV.B.3.6.i, Amount of Leveraged Resources, will support grant activities and how these funds and other resources will be used to contribute to the projected outcomes for the project, including the provision of supportive

services for program participants. Detailed description of which costs will be paid by the grant and which costs will be covered by leveraged resources. This includes cash or in-kind support (e.g., Pell/Title IV financial aid, federal work study, GI Bill benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education & training funds, WIOA), state and local funding, (e.g., on-the-job training funds, state workforce dollars, funding for participating community colleges), and private sector investment funds (e.g., training investment funds, social impact bonds, industry association or labor organization funds, etc.). This also includes funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, education and training providers, and/ or Federal, state, and local government programs (i.e., staff, time, services, products, and other non-cash resources). You will be scored based on the extent to which you fully demonstrate the leveraged resources provided, the type(s) of leveraged resources provided, the strength of commitment to provide these resources, the breadth and depth of the resources provided, and how well these resources support the proposed grant activities (2 points); and

- ii. Describe how resources will be leveraged to support tuition-free training that will be provided to participants served during the grant, and identify plans to ensure sustainability of tuition-free training following completion of the grant (2 points).

(4) Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, you must submit attachments. All attachments must be clearly labeled as Attachments. We will only exclude those attachments listed below from the page limit.

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

Save all files with descriptive file names of 50 characters or less and only use 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 (i.e., no other attachment may have the same file name). You may use an underscore (example: my_Attached_File.pdf) to separate a file name.

Required Attachments

The following attachments must be included with the application package.

- a. **Abstract:** The applicant must submit an up to two-page abstract summarizing the proposed project, including, but not limited to, the scope of the project and proposed outcomes. The proposed project must include the following: (1) lead applicant name; (2) lead applicant entity types; (3) lead applicant city/state; (4) regional workforce partners, including at least five employer partners or an industry association with at least five employer partners; (5) area to be served; (6) total funding requested; (7) total leveraged resources; (8) project title/name; (9) summary of program activities and list of credentials to be awarded; (10) population(s) to be served; (11) targeted industry sector(s); (12) targeted H -1B industry(ies) and occupation(s); (13) additional key partners (optional partners); and, (14) public contact information. The Abstract is limited to two double-spaced single sided 8.5x11 inch pages with 12 point text font

and 1 inch margins. When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and specifically labeled "Abstract."

Requested Attachments

The following attachments are requested. If the omission of the attachment will impact scoring, such an impact will be noted in the description of the attachment.

- a. **Documentation of Employer Commitment:** You will be scored on the documentation of employer(s), or regional industry association commitment, that includes signatures of a senior-level representative of the employer(s) or regional industry association as described in Section III.B, Required Regional Workforce Partners, and description of their role(s) and responsibility(ies) in the project. This documentation does not eliminate the need to follow the procurement requirements specified at 2 CFR 200 where the parties enter into a contract for supplies or services, if applicable.
- b. **Documentation of Regional Workforce Partnership Commitment:** You will be scored on the documentation showing representation from of at least one senior-level representative from each of the required entities, as described in Section III.B, Required Regional Workforce Partners.
- c. **Performance Outcomes Table:** You will be scored on the completion and detail of the projected performance outcomes information in a performance outcomes table. For an example, see Appendix E, Outcome Measures. The table should be formatted to include sub-totals for each type of targeted population group served for each outcome goal, as appropriate, as well as total sums for each outcome goal.
- d. **Documentation of Commitment to Participate in Evaluation, if selected:** You may be required to participate in a Federal evaluation of the America's Promise grant program. The evaluation may include an experimental impact evaluation where eligible participants will be randomly assigned to the program or to a control group that does not receive the program. You must submit a statement of commitment to participate in a national evaluation initiated by DOL, for the applicant and all partners, including employers or regional industry associations. The evaluation may involve making records on participants, employers, and funding available; providing access to program and partner personnel and participants; facilitating random assignment by conducting a lottery of participants to program services (including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants); and following evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluator(s) under the direction of DOL ETA and the Chief Evaluation Office, including after the period of operation. This attachment does not impact scoring of the application.
- e. **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement:** If an applicant requests indirect costs based on a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the applicant's Federal Cognizant Agency, the applicant must 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.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

We will accept applications under this Announcement until **August 25, 2016**. You must submit your application either electronically on <http://www.grants.gov> or in hard copy by mail or in hard

copy by hand delivery (*including overnight delivery*) **no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to ensure that the risk of late receipt of the application is minimized. We will not accept applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

Applicants submitting applications in hard copy by mail or overnight delivery must submit a “copy-ready” version free of bindings, staples or protruding tabs to ease in the reproduction of the application by DOL. Applicants submitting applications in hard copy must also include in the hard copy submission an identical electronic copy of the application on compact disc (CD). If we identify discrepancies between the hard copy submission and CD copy, we will consider the application on the CD as the official submission for evaluation purposes. Failure to provide identical applications in hardcopy and CD format may have an impact on the overall evaluation.

If an application is physically submitted by both hard copy and through <http://www.grants.gov> , a letter must accompany the hard-copy application stating which application to review. If no letter accompanies the hard copy, we will review the copy submitted through <http://www.grants.gov> .

We will grant no exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice. Further, we will not accept documents submitted separately from the application, before or after the deadline, as part of the application.

Address mailed applications to the
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Grants Management
Attention: Eric Luetkenhaus, Grant Officer
Reference FOA-ETA-16-12
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716
Washington, DC 20210

Please note that mail decontamination procedures may delay mail delivery in the Washington DC area. We will receive hand-delivered applications at the above address. All overnight delivery submissions will be considered to be hand-delivered and must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time.

Applicants submitting applications through Grants.gov must ensure successful submission at <http://www.grants.gov> **no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.** Grants.gov will subsequently validate the application.

We describe the submission and validation process in more detail below. The process can be complicated and time-consuming. You are strongly advised 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. Rather, grants.gov only verifies the submission of certain parts of an application.

- We strongly recommend that before you begin to write the application, you immediately initiate and complete the “Get Registered” registration steps at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> .

You should read through the registration process carefully before registering. These steps may take as much 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. The site also contains the Step-By-Step Guide to Organization Registration to help applicants walk through the process.

- We strongly recommend that you download the Guide at <http://www.grants.gov/documents/19/18243/GrantsgovOrganizationRegistrationGuide.pdf/be70525d-59aa-45ee-b196-5e8951faca0a> and 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.

As described earlier in Section IV.B.1., you must have a **DUNS Number** and you must **register with SAM.gov** before submitting an application.

The next step in the registration process is creating a username and password with Grants.gov to become an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). AORs will need to know the DUNS Number of the organization for which they will be submitting applications to complete this process.

- To read more detailed instructions for creating a profile on Grants.gov visit: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-3-username-password.html>

After creating a profile on Grants.gov, the E-Biz point of Contact (E-Biz POC) - a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM – will receive an email to grant the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of their organization. The E-Biz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and approve an individual as the AOR, thereby giving him or her permission to submit applications.

To learn more about AOR Authorization visit:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-4-aor-authorization.html> ,

or to track AOR status visit:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-5-track-aor-status.html>

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 POC approval, establishes an AOR. When an application is submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. You must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for your organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

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. Within two business days of application submission, Grants.gov will send the applicant two email messages to provide the status of the application's progress through the system.

- The first email, sent almost immediately, 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 sole 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 (two business days) 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 <http://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,” at: <https://www.doleta.gov/grants/resources.cfm>

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 <http://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,

- **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, seven days a week. However, it is closed on Federal holidays.

Late Applications

For applications submitted on Grants.gov, we will consider only applications successfully submitted no later than 4:00:00 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.

We will not consider any hard copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice, unless we receive it before awards are made, it was properly addressed, and it was: (a) sent by U.S. Postal Service mail, postmarked not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application required to be received by the 20th of the month must be postmarked by the 15th of that month); or (b) sent by professional overnight delivery service to the addressee not later than one working day before the date specified for receipt of applications. “Postmarked” means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service. Therefore, you should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Failure to adhere to these instructions will be a basis for a

determination that the application was not filed timely and will not be considered. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt.

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% 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 has never received a negotiated indirect cost 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% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 for definition) which may be used indefinitely. If you choose this option, this methodology must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as you choose to negotiate for an indirect cost rate, which you may apply to do at any time. (See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for more information on use of the de minimis rate.)

2. 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 grantee will be required to license to the public all work created with the support of the grant under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) license. Work that must be licensed under the CC BY includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to pre-existing, grantee-owned content using grant funds.

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

Instructions for marking your work with CC BY can be found at http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Marking_your_work_with_a_CC_license .

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

Only work that is developed by the recipient in whole or in part with grants funds is required to be licensed under the CC BY license. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to, or purchased by the grantee from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CC BY license requirement.

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

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

If applicable, the following needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds:

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

continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it.”

3. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

For the purposes of grants awarded under this FOA, the following will apply:

Organizations may only use grant funds to pay for the wages of participants in three specific activities: OJT, paid work experience, and paid internships. Incumbent workers' salaries are not allowable costs.

a. Work Experience and Internships

Work experience and internships are defined as a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time, and for the purposes of this Announcement must be paid. Labor standards apply in any work experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), exists. For more information on the FLSA, applicants may visit <http://www.dol.gov/whd/>.

For a work experience or internship that supports training, you will need to document how the work experience or internship is connected to and supports the education and training activities included in the grant. Grantees have flexibility in the design and implementation of work experience and internships; however, they must meet the following parameters:

- i. Provide an individual with monitored or supervised work or service experience in his or her expected career field where the individual has prescribed learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience. These learning goals can include: a) academic learning, career development, and skill development; and b) the attainment of credentials in the individual's expected career field;
- ii. Are part of structured programs where the grantee established the criteria for determining who will participate in these programs; and
- iii. Are for a set period of time.

b. Incumbent Worker Salaries

- i. For applicants that are serving incumbent workers, the following applies:
 - (a) Incumbent worker salaries paid by the employer are NOT allowable costs to be reimbursed under this grant.

4. On-the-Job Training

Under this Announcement, on-the-job training (OJT) is only available for unemployed individuals. Incumbent workers are not eligible for OJT under this FOA and grantees are specifically prohibited from spending grant funds on payment of wages of incumbent workers. OJT is provided under a contract with an employer in the public, private-nonprofit, or private sector. Under the OJT contract, the employer pays wages to the participant and occupational training is provided for the participant in exchange for the reimbursement to the employer of a percentage of the participant's wage rate to compensate for the employer's extraordinary costs of training the individual (subject to the policy exceptions described below). The OJT contract must not be with an employer who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing to provide OJT participants with continued long-term employment with wages, benefits, and working conditions that are equal to those provided to regular employees who have worked a similar length of time and are doing the same type of work. The OJT contract must be limited to the period of

time required for a participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided. Funds provided to employers for OJT must not be used to directly or indirectly assist, promote, or deter union organizing.

- a. The following are additional restrictions for OJT:
 - i. Eligible participants cannot be currently employed by the employer;
 - ii. Participant placements may only occur in private for-profit and nonprofit sectors (i.e., the grant does not allow for public sector placements);
 - iii. No placement may be made in staffing agencies providing workers on a temporary basis to employers for which the agency receives compensation from an employer;
 - iv. The period of reimbursement should be an adequate length to ensure the participant has acquired the technical skills needed for employment but no longer than 12 months. Individuals may not be co-enrolled in other ETA programs for the purpose of extending OJT beyond 12 months. Twelve months exceeds the average length of time for current OJT activities, so grantees should negotiate contracts with employers that lead to transitioning participants to permanent employment as soon as possible. Grantees may establish contracts that will be longer than 12 months for multiple participants; however, the reimbursement for each individual that participates in OJT cannot be longer than 12 months.

Typically, the negotiated reimbursement percentage for OJT may be as high as 50 percent of the participant's hourly wage. However, for grants awarded under this Announcement, the negotiated reimbursement percentage may be as high as 90 percent of the participant's hourly wage based on employer size, as follows: up to 90 percent of the participant's wage rate for employers with 50 or fewer employees; up to 75 percent of the participant's wage rate for employers with 51-250 employees; and up to 50 percent for employers with more than 250 employees. We also encourage grantees to negotiate lower rates or variable rates (such as starting at the maximum allowable reimbursement rate and reducing the subsidy over time) where possible to ensure that the maximum number of participants will be served by the project.

Finally, grantees must develop sound OJT contracts. The contract process sets the ground-rules for OJT with an employer and assists in making the determination if an employer is eligible to provide an OJT opportunity. The contract must include the federally-required elements of an OJT agreement; however, states, counties or municipalities may have additional OJT contract requirements. Contracts also outline the terms and conditions that the employer and OJT provider agree to provide for an OJT experience. Contracts with an employer can be set up for a specific period of time but need not necessarily specify the individual trainees to whom they apply. This allows the employer to provide training to more than one trainee. If an employer only has one position or plans to limit the training experience to one employee, then a contract must also include the individual trainee's information. For these grants, contracts must provide that the employer is responsible for documenting skills gained by participants during the training period. It should also include a description of how the reimbursement level was determined. For sample templates and other resources, grantees may access ETA's online technical assistance related to an OJT contract at the following web address: <https://strategies.workforcegps.org/resources/2014/08/11/16/32/building-the-next-generation-ojt-toolkit>.

5. Use of Funds for Supportive Services

Grantees may use up to 10 percent of grant funds to provide supportive services to individuals who are participating in education and training activities provided through the grant. Under this Announcement, supportive services for training participants include services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and training activities funded through this grant. Supportive services activities may include, but are not limited to, provision of the actual supportive service (i.e. childcare); providing participants with a voucher for the service (i.e. public transportation cards or tokens); or providing a stipend directly to the participant. Where stipends for supportive services are provided, the stipend amount must be for costs of a specific supportive service (i.e. childcare), rather than simply based on an unidentified need.

For the purposes of this FOA, grantees may use grant funds, up to the percentage specified above, to provide supportive services only to individuals who are participating in education and training activities provided through the grant when: 1) they are unable to obtain such services through other programs, and 2) such services are necessary to enable individuals to participate in education and training activities under the grant. Grantees may establish limits on the provision of supportive services or provide their sub-recipients with the authority to establish such limits, including a maximum amount of funding and maximum length of time for supportive services to be available to participants. Grantees must ensure that their use of grant funds on supportive services is consistent with their organization's established written policy on the provision of supportive services. Additionally, we encourage grantees to leverage other sources of funding for supportive services, including formula funds.

6. Use of Funds for Incentive Payments to Collect Employment Outcomes

For purpose of this FOA, grantees may use up to 1.5 percent of grant funds for the provision of gift cards or other payments to participants for providing information on their employment status after they leave the program, for the purposes of increasing reported employment and retention outcomes to the Department. These incentive payments must be tied to the goals of the grant. You must have policies and procedures in place governing the awarding of incentive payments and the incentives provided under the grant must comply with these organizational policies.

7. Prohibition on Use of Funds for Economic Development

General economic development projects do not meet the requirements for training and development of job opportunities in high-growth H-1B industries and occupations. Examples of general economic development that may not meet this standard include but are not limited to infrastructure investments in businesses, increases in inventory, participation in trade shows, revolving loan accounts, new or additional equipment used for purposes other than training activities, capital asset purchases, and other costs not specifically related to increases in actual job opportunities. However, nothing in this Announcement is intended to discourage coordination of grant activities with economic development projects, so long as the funds from this grant are not used for the infrastructure and other investments detailed above.

8. Sub-Grant Profit

For commercial organizations, the earning of profit is not an allowable cost item. For governmental, nonprofit, and public or nonprofit educational institutions, earnings above

actual costs incurred are to be treated as program income. Any program income earned must be used for program purposes.

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:

Panelists reviewing applications will evaluate the quality of each applicant's responses to each individual requirement as described in Section IV.B.3. Scores will then be calculated based on the ratings assigned to each requirement as described in the chart(s) below.

Standards for Evaluating the Applicant's Response to each Requirement

Section IV.B.3 of this FOA provides a detailed explanation of the information an application must include (i.e. a comprehensive work plan for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic dates). Panel 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," based on the definitions below:

Standard Rating	Definition
Thoroughly Meets	The application thoroughly responds to the rating factor, and fully and convincingly satisfies all of the stated specifications.
Partially Meets	The application responds incompletely to the rating factor or the application convincingly satisfies some, but not all, of the stated specifications.
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.

Standards for Calculating Point Values

Within each "criterion," each "rating factor" is weighted equally. For example, if a "criterion" is worth 5 points and has 5 "rating factors," each "rating factor" is worth 1 point. Scores for each "rating factor" will be calculated based on the panelist's assigned rating as explained in the table below:

If a rating factor is rated...	...the rating factor will receive:
Thoroughly Meets	Full points
Partially Meets	Half points

Fails to Meet	Zero points
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Scores for each “criterion” will be calculated automatically by totaling the points received for each “rating factor” listed under that “criterion.” For example, if a “criterion” is worth 5 points and has 5 “rating factors,” and the panelist rates 2 “rating factors” at thoroughly meets, 2 “rating factors” at partially meets, and 1 “rating factor” as fails to meet, the applicant would receive 3 out of a possible total 5 points ($1 \times 2 + 0.5 \times 2 + 0$) for that “criterion.” The following table provides the maximum points available under each “criterion.”

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Points (maximum)
1. Statement of Need (See Section IV.B.3.a.(1) Statement of Need)	11
2. Expected Outcomes, and Outputs (See Section IV.B.3.a.(2) Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	10
3. Project Design (See Section IV.B.3.a.(3) Project Design)	54
4. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.B.3.a.(5) Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	8
5. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.B.3.a.(6) Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	10
6. Budget and Budget Justification (See Section IV.B.2. Project Budget)	7
TOTAL	100

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Merit Review and Selection Process

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria to determine the merit of applications. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this FOA. Up to 100 points may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses provided. The final scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to take into consideration other relevant factors when applicable. Such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds, distribution among H-1B industries and/or occupations and/or other relevant factors. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to his/her attention.

The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on

the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <http://www.grants.gov> , which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

2. Risk Review Process

Prior to making an award, ETA will review information available through 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, ETA will comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 180 codified by DOL at 29 CFR Part 98 [Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)]. 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:

- (1) Financial stability;
- (2) Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Uniform Grant Guidance;
- (3) 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;
- (4) 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;
- (5) The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on recipients.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

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

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

- a. 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 2900 (DOL's Supplement to 2 CFR Part 200)
- b. Appeal – This program is authorized under section 414(c) of the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA), as amended (codified at 29 USC 2916a). Therefore, appeal under sections 186 of the Workforce Investment Act or the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is not available.
- c. 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)), 29 CFR Part 98 (Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200 (Audit Requirements).
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- g. 29 CFR Part 35— Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- h. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- i. 29 CFR Part 38 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- j. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.
- k. General Terms and Conditions of Award—See the following link:
<http://www.doleta.gov/grants/pdf/2015template.pdf>.

2. Other Legal Requirements:

a) Religious Activities

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. Section 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. If a faith-based organization is awarded a grant, the organization will be provided with more information.

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 section 6202 of Pub. Law 110-252) (Transparency Act), 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 they 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 the following website:
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-22705.pdf>

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

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

d) Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Applicants submitting applications in response to this FOA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the Department of Labor and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order. By submitting an application, you are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal law and TEGL NO. 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 their handling of confidential information:

1. You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DOL/ETA funded grants is securely transmitted.
2. To ensure that such PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, all PII and other sensitive data transmitted via e-mail or stored on CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. You must not e-mail unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including ETA or contractors.

3. 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.
4. 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.
5. You further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through your ETA grant must be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed using recipient issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by ETA. Accessing, processing, and storing of ETA grant PII data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations e.g., employee's home, and non-recipient managed IT services, e.g., Yahoo mail, is strictly prohibited unless approved by ETA.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. You must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
9. Access to any PII created by the ETA grant must be restricted to only those employees of the grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the scope of work in the grant agreement.
10. 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 only be accessed from secure locations.
11. PII data obtained by the recipient through a request from ETA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor except as permitted by the Grant Officer or by court order.
12. You must permit ETA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or conducting other investigations to assure that you are complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, you must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.

13. You must retain data received from ETA only for the period of time required to use it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable Federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, you agree that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

e) Record Retention

You must follow Federal guidelines on record retention, which require you to 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, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), nonprofit 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 governmentwide suspension and debarment found at 2 CFR Part 180 and codified by DOL at 29 CFR Part 98.

g) Closeout of Grant Award

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

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

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

4. Special Program Requirements

a) ETA Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, America's Promise grantees are required to participate in a national evaluation. The national evaluation may include an implementation assessment across grantees, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grantees, and a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment to employers. Conducting an impact analysis could involve random assignment (which involves random assignment of eligible participants into a treatment group that would receive program services or enhanced program services, or into control group(s) that would receive no program services or program services that are not enhanced). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the America's Promise evaluation. As a part of the national evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to: (1) make records on participants, employers, and funding available; (2) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, and operational and financial records, and any other pertaining documents to calculate program costs and benefits; and (3) 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 national evaluator under the direction of DOL including after the grant period of performance.

Additionally, grantees must ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232G; 34 CFR Part 99). Grantees must establish policies for compliance, including policies for accessing student education records when connected with audit or evaluation of Federal or State programs and enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements of those programs, standard practices or agreements for disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) through written agreements, and other PII and records management practices.

b) Performance Goals

Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may result in technical assistance or other intervention by ETA, and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with ETA. While grantees are required to propose goals for the seven outcome categories identified in Section IV.B.3.(2) Expected Outcomes and Outputs, which are specific to this FOA,

you will also be required to report outcomes in alignment with outcomes identified in WIOA, as applicable.

5. Grant Recipient Training

Grant recipients are required to participate in all ETA training activities related to orientation, financial management and reporting, performance reporting, product dissemination, and other technical assistance training as appropriate during the life of the grant. These trainings may occur via conference calls, through virtual events such as webinars, and in-person meetings. Applicants should budget for at least two staff members to attend two in-person training events during the life of the grant.

C. REPORTING

You must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements. Quarterly financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and MIS data must be submitted by the recipient electronically. You must agree to provide the reports and documents listed below:

1. Quarterly Financial Reports

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired. Quarterly reports are due 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. On the final Financial Status Report, you must include any subaward amounts so we can calculate final indirect costs, if applicable. You must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System and information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

You must submit a quarterly progress report within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. This report includes a quarterly narrative report that details all grant activities that occurred during the quarter, as well as a quarterly performance report which is produced online using a data file upload function that contains participant records. In order to submit these quarterly reports, the grantee will be expected to track participant-level data on all individuals who are provided grant-funded services and enrolled in education/training and other services provided through the grant. Performance reporting for these grants will align with the WIOA performance reporting requirements.

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 activities. It must summarize project activities, employment outcomes and other deliverables, and related results of the project, and must thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches that you used.

We will provide you with an online reporting system along with detailed formal guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis. As noted above, these grants will align with WIOA performance reporting requirements, including the online reporting system. Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information about this FOA, please contact Ariam Ferro, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at (202) 693-3968. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to ferro.ariam@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-16-12, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA Web site at <http://www.doleta.gov/grants> and at <http://www.grants.gov>.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. TRANSPARENCY

DOL is committed to conducting a transparent grant award process and publicizing information about program outcomes. Posting grant applications on public websites is a means of promoting and sharing innovative ideas. For all applications in this grant competition, we will publish the Abstracts required by Section IV.B.4., and selected information from the SF-424 for all applications on the Department's public website or similar publicly accessible location. Additionally, we will publish a version of the Project Narrative required by Section IV.B.3. for all those applications that are awarded grants, on the Department's website or a similar location. We will publish no other attachments to the application. We will not publish the Project Narratives and Abstracts until after we have announced the grant recipients. In addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

DOL recognizes that grant applications sometimes contain information that an applicant may consider proprietary or business confidential information, or may contain personally identifiable information (PII). Proprietary or business confidential information is information that is not usually disclosed outside your organization and disclosing this information is likely to cause you substantial competitive harm.

PII is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information¹⁴.

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. Applicants should not include any proprietary or confidential business information or PII in this summary. In the event that an applicant submits proprietary or confidential business information or PII, DOL is not liable for the posting of this information contained in the Abstract. The submission of the grant application constitutes a waiver of the applicant's objection to the posting of any proprietary or confidential business information contained in the Abstract. Additionally, the applicant is responsible for obtaining all authorizations from relevant parties for publishing all PII contained within the Abstract. In the event the Abstract contains proprietary or confidential business information or PII, the applicant is presumed to

¹⁴ OMB Memorandum 07-16 and 06-19. GAO Report 08-536, *Privacy: Alternatives Exist for Enhancing Protection of Personally Identifiable Information*, May 2008, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08536.pdf>.

have obtained all necessary authorizations to provide this information and may be liable for any improper release of this information.

By submission of this grant application, the applicant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States, the U.S. Department of Labor, its officers, employees, and agents against any liability or for any loss or damages arising from this application. By such submission of this grant application, the applicant further acknowledges having the authority to execute this release of liability.

In order to ensure that proprietary or confidential business information or PII is properly protected from disclosure when DOL posts the winning Project Narratives, applicants whose Project Narratives will be posted will be asked to submit a second redacted version of their Project Narrative, with any proprietary, confidential commercial/business information, and PII redacted. You should remove all non-public information about the applicant's and consortium members' staff (if applicable) as well.

The Department will contact the applicants whose Project Narratives will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Project Narrative.

Submission of a redacted version of the Project Narrative will constitute permission by the applicant for DOL to make the redacted version publicly available. We will also assume that by submitting the redacted version of the Project Narrative, the applicant has obtained the agreement to the applicant's decision about what material to redact of all persons and entities whose proprietary, confidential business information, or PII is contained in the Project Narrative. If an applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Project Narrative within 45 days of DOL's request, DOL will publish the original Project Narrative in full, after redacting only PII. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Project Narrative will remain part of the complete application package, including an applicant's proprietary and confidential business information and any PII.)

We encourage applicants to maximize the grant application information that will be publicly disclosed, and to exercise restraint and redact only information that clearly is proprietary, confidential commercial/business information, or PII. The redaction of entire pages or sections of the Project Narrative is not appropriate, and will not be allowed, unless the entire portion merits such protection. Should a dispute arise about whether redactions are appropriate, DOL will follow the procedures outlined in the Department's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations (29 CFR Part 70).

DOL will protect redacted information in grant applications from public disclosure in accordance with Federal law, including the Trade Secrets Act (18 U.S.C. § 1905), FOIA, and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a). 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 29 CFR § 70.26. Consequently, it is possible that application of FOIA rules may result in release of information in response to a FOIA request that an applicant redacted in its "redacted copy."

B. WEB-BASED RESOURCES

DOL maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. For example, the CareerOneStop portal (<http://www.careeronestop.org>), which provides

national and state career information on occupations; the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (<http://online.onetcenter.org>) which provides occupational competency profiles; and America's Service Locator (<http://www.servicelocator.org>), which provides a directory of our nation's One-Stop Career Centers.

C. 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 <http://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.

D. WORKFORCEGPS RESOURCES

We encourage you to view the information gathered through the conference calls with Federal agency partners, industry stakeholders, educators, and local practitioners. The information on resources identified can be found 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.

IX. OMB INFORMATION COLLECTION

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires May 31, 2019.

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 20 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, DC 20210. Comments may also be emailed to DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. ONLY SEND 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 June 6, 2016 in Washington, D.C. by:
Eric D. Luetkenhaus
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

Appendix A: Definition of Terms

Career Pathways: For the purposes of this FOA, a career pathway is defined as a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
- Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- As a sequence of education and training courses or career options which allows opportunities for professional growth and upward mobility.

Individual components of a career pathways include: (1) Integrated education and career-focused training programs that offer accelerated and/or contextualized remediation; (2) Multiple entry and exit points that allow individuals with varying levels of skills enter or advance within the industry, including through assessment and credits for prior learning; (3) Technology-based or enhanced solutions that provide personalized student support services and career guidance; (4) Competency-based courses and programs that include performance-based assessments and direct assessment training courses; and (5) Stacked and latticed credentials.

Competency-based Education: An outcomes-oriented approach in which student mastery of learning outcomes is assessed and certified through observational methods, such as task performance, exams, demonstrations, or other direct measures of proficiency. Credentials are awarded based on the mastery of specific competencies as demonstrated through performance-based assessments.

Foreign-trained Immigrant: A foreign-trained immigrant is an immigrant who is legally authorized to work in the United States, but has a degree or credential that was attained in a foreign country and is not recognized in the United States.

Incumbent Workers: This term refers to individuals who are employed, particularly in lower-skill, lower-wage, and front-line jobs, but need training to upgrade their skills to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations in an H-1B occupations and industries. Incumbent workers are workers who typically are employed in lower-skilled and/or entry level positions and where attaining new skills and competencies could help advance them into middle- and high-skilled jobs.

Industry-Recognized Credentials: The term credential refers to certification of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an occupation. Industry-recognized credentials are either developed or endorsed by a nationally-recognized industry association or organization or are sought or accepted by employers within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment. The credential must be awarded by a third party, such as an educational institution or a professional, industry, or employer organization. Industry-recognized credentials demonstrate core competencies and meet industry standards for specific industry occupations. Examples of industry-recognized credentials include: Associates and Bachelor's degrees; Registered Apprenticeship certificates; occupational licenses (typically, but not always, awarded by State government agencies); industry-recognized or professional association certifications, also known as personnel certifications; and other certificates of skills completion for specific skill sets or competencies within one or more industries or occupations. For more information on credential, degree, and certificate attainment, please refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 15-10, "Increasing Credential, Degree, and Certificate Attainment by Participants of the Public Workforce System," particularly Attachment 2 of the TEGL (<http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL15-10.pdf>).

Industry-Recognized Portfolio: The term industry-recognized portfolio refers to the creation of artifacts representing real-world application of learned skills in a format that is accessible for review, clearly delineates an individual's contribution, and demonstrates mastery of specific employable skill sets. Such portfolios are of increasing and specific importance in response to the significant presence of Open Source platforms in the tech sector (e.g., Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP, Ruby on Rails), which do not operate in the same company-authorized credentialing process but instead have a community of practice regularly requiring access to portfolio repositories (such as GitHub, Bitbucket, Launchpad, and others) through which assessments of technical capabilities is made

Job Readiness Skills: Also referred to as Employability Skills, Soft Skills, or Work Readiness Skills; are a set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job such as, social competence, job seeking and interview skills, workplace norms, conflict resolution, and communication skills, to name a few.

Quarters: The calendar year can be divided into 4 quarters. The first quarter is from the first day of January through the last day of March; the second quarter is from the first day of April through the last day of June; the third quarter is from the first day of July through the last day of September; and the fourth quarter is from the first day of October through the last day of December.

Stackable Credentials: Credentials that can be earned in sequence and build upon previously-learned content as individuals progress along a career pathway or up a career ladder. They allow individuals the ability to build a portfolio of credentials as they transition from learning to work or to different and potentially higher-paying jobs.

Supportive Services: Services that are designed to address needs and ensure participant success. Refer to Section IV.E, Funding Restrictions

Underemployed Workers: Individuals who are not currently connected to a full-time job commensurate with the individual's level of education, skills, or wage and/or salary earned previously, or who have obtained only episodic, short-term, or part-time employment.

Unemployed Workers: An individual who is without a job and who wants and is available to work.

Upskilling: Strategies that aim to increase skills of incumbent workers to advance into middle and high-skilled H-1B industries and occupations.

Work-Based Learning: Educational training that combines rigorous academic preparation with hands-on career development experiences to connect classroom instruction to the world of work and future career opportunities.

Appendix B: List of H-1B Industries

America's Promise grants will fund projects that support well-paying, middle- and high-skilled, and high-growth jobs across the entire range of H-1B industries. To meet the legislative intent of positioning American workers to reduce the need for skilled foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their programs to support occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified, or other occupations in industries in which a significant number of H-1B visas are certified. A list of these industries is below. To view specific occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified, visit the Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site (<http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/performance/data.cfm>) for the latest database of occupations approved under H-1B petitions.

According to recent data, a wide range of industries may meet these criteria in local and regional areas across the country, such as Information Technology (IT), Cyber Security, and Broadband, as well as a variety of non-IT industries and occupations that require technology skills, including but not limited to advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and financial services. In fact, more than two-thirds of technology jobs are outside of the technology sector.

Applicants should review below the list of industries that are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers to assist your program alignment.

H-1B Industries that are using a significant number of visas to hire foreign workers include:

- IT and IT-related industries
- Healthcare
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Financial Services
- Educational Services

These are the H-1B industries that we have identified as permissible for applicants to target under this grant competition. Applications that propose to train participants in occupations that do not fall within these industries must show that they are occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified. This may be shown by using the data provided on DOL's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site.

Appendix C: List of WIOA Partners

1. Federally funded Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities
2. Employment Service Programs under the Wagner-Peyser Act
3. Federally Funded Adult Education and Literacy Programs
4. Federally funded Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education
5. Senior Community Service Employment Activities
6. Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Adjustment Assistance
7. Veterans Employment and Training Programs
8. Employment and Training Programs of the Federal Community Services Block Grant
9. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Administered Employment and Training Programs
10. Programs under State unemployment insurance laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law)
11. Federally funded Training and Employment Programs for non-violent ex-offenders
12. Federally funded programs under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Appendix D: Labor Market Information

Traditional labor market information is produced by agencies of the Federal or state governments and is provided free of charge. Other data that is aggregated from job postings, or from resumes or online career profiles of individuals may be available from certain vendors of what is sometimes referred to as 'real-time' LMI. To learn more about the various sources of such data, please see: ETA Real-Time LMI Environmental Scan of Vendors and Workforce Development Users available using the following link:

<https://winwin.workforce3one.org/view/Real-Time%20LMI,%20R-T%20LMI,%20RT%20LMI/info>

1. Each state produces industry and occupational employment projections every two years for the state and for selected local areas within a state. This information is the primary source to identify what is considered to be high-growth based on whether or not the industry or occupation has a projected growth rate that is at least above average for all industries or occupations, respectively, or above another determined threshold than the average rate. These employment projections data are available from each State's labor market information agency. Links to state LMI websites can be found using the following link:
<http://www.servicelocator.org/StateProfiles.asp>

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) also publishes employment projections by occupations at the national level every two years, which may be useful as a benchmark for comparing state employment projections. BLS information on projections can be found at www.bls.gov/emp

2. Information on skills and competencies required for occupations can be found in O*NET OnLine or My Next Move including related education and training requirements and credentials. Information on industry sector competencies can be obtained for 26 industry sectors from the competency model frameworks on the DOL-sponsored Competency Model Clearinghouse site using the following link:
www.CareerOneStop.org/CompetencyModel
3. Data from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey on occupational wages is available for the nation and states through state LMI websites, CareerOneStop, O*NET OnLine and My Next Move, and from the Bureau of Labor Statistics website using the following link:
www.bls.gov/oes

Appendix E: Outcome Measures

	Outcome Measure		
1	Total Participants Served Total number of all participants served (receiving a grant-funded service and/or grant-funded education/training). Figures provided for total participants that receive services and total participants enrolled in Education/Training Activities should not exceed total participants served.	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
1a	Target Population (please specify)	Sub-Total	
1b	Other population(s) (please specify)	Sub-Total	
		Targets for all Participants	
2	Total Participants Enrolled in Education/Training Activities	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
3	Total Participants Completing Education/Training Activities	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
4	Total Participants Who Complete Education/Training Activities AND Receive a Degree or Other Credential	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
5	Total Number of Unemployed and Underemployed Participants who Complete Training Activities and Obtain Employment Total number of all unemployed and underemployed participants who obtain employment. Incumbent Workers should not be included in this outcome	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
6	Total Number of Incumbent Worker Participants who Complete Training Activities that Advanced into a New Position This includes incumbent workers that advanced into a new position with their current employer or a new employer following the completion of a training program. Incumbent workers that did not advance into a new position (i.e. retained their existing position or layoff aversion) following the completion of a training program should not be included in this outcome.	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
7	Median hourly wage earnings at employment placement: This is the participant's average hourly wage earned when they are placed into employment.	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:

Please Note:

- Applicants should provide targets in raw numbers; percentages or other types of data projections are not acceptable with the exception of Outcome 1: Total Participants Served sub-totals.
- For the "Total Participants Served" outcome measure, in addition to providing a total for all participants served, applicants should also include sub-totals for the target population and other populations to be served, as appropriate.
- Applicants should provide targets for each year of the grant and for the total grant period. The figure provided for the total should equal the sum of the projections for each year.
- While grantees are required to propose goals for the seven outcome categories identified in Section IV.B.3.(2) Expected Outcomes and Outputs, which are specific to this FOA, you will also be required to report outcomes in alignment with outcomes identified in WIOA, as applicable.

Appendix F: Suggested Project Work Plan Format

Activity						
		Implementer(s)	Costs		Time	
Activity #1			Strategy Total: Equipment: Year 1: Year 2: Year 3:	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Start Date: End Date: Milestones:	
Deliverable #1			Strategy Total: Equipment: Year 1: Year 2: Year 3:	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Start Date: End Date: Milestones:	
Activity #2			Strategy Total: Equipment: Year 1: Year 2: Year 3:	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Start Date: End Date: Milestones:	
Deliverable #2			Strategy Total: Equipment: Year 1: Year 2: Year 3:	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Start Date: End Date: Milestones:	

Please Note:

- Applicants may replicate this chart in order to submit information on all activities and deliverables proposed during the period of performance.
- Applicants should provide the name of the institution engaged in each activity or producing each deliverable, including any partner organizations, if applicable.

Appendix G: Suggested Abstract Format

1. Lead Applicant Name: _____

2. Lead Applicant Entity Type: _____

3. Lead Applicant City/State: _____

4. **Regional Workforce Partners:** (Lead applicant must include its name below if fulfilling the role of one of the required partners)

- Name of Employers and Industry Representatives (including the Names of the Required Five or more Employer Partners or Regional Industry Association): _____
- Name of Workforce boards : _____
- Name of economic development agencies: _____
- Name of Education and Training Providers: _____

5 **Area to be served by Grant (by city, county, and state):**

- State: _____
- Counties: _____
- Cities: _____
- Additional State(s): _____
- Additional Counties: _____
- Additional Cities: _____

6. **Total Funding Requested:** _____

7. **Total Leveraged Resources:** _____

8. **Project Title/Name:** _____

9. **Summary of Program Activities and List of Credentials to be Awarded:** _____

10. **Population to be Served:** _____

11. **Targeted Industry Sector(s):** _____

12. **Targeted H-1B Industry(s) and Occupation(s):** _____

13. **Additional Key Partner(s) (Optional Partners):** _____

14. **Public Contact Information:** _____

Appendix H: List of Suggested Resources

Career Pathways Community of Practice (<https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/>): The U.S. Department of Labor has developed a Community of Practice (CoP) to help workforce development leaders, practitioners, and policymakers expand state and local career pathways efforts currently underway or being planned. The CoP will enhance users' knowledge, skills, and expertise in building effective career pathways systems. By participating in the CoP, users will be able to: Explore promising strategies that have been working for others and might be easily replicable; Access training modules and toolkits designed to help support users' efforts; Easily stay up-to-date with the latest information on live training, webinars, and events; and Learn from state and local peers who are successfully implementing career pathways.

Career Pathways Exchange (<https://lincs.ed.gov/programs/movingpathways/career-pathways-exchange>): The U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Energy have all partnered to support the Career Pathways Exchange, which is a free information service that consolidates and distributes career pathways-related resources, events, and information from Federal and State agencies and partner organizations. The Exchange streamlines information from multiple outlets to facilitate a deeper national dialogue on career pathways systems development and implementation.

Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development

(https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_17-15_Attachment_Acc.pdf): The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has developed a toolkit that provides the workforce system with a framework, resources, and tools for states and local partners to develop and implement career pathways systems and programs.

Competency Model Clearinghouse (<http://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/>): ETA and industry partners have collaborated to develop and maintain the Competency Model Clearinghouse, which is designed to inform the workforce investment system about the value of competency models, their development, and use. The clearinghouse consists of dynamic models of the foundational and technical competencies that are necessary in economically vital industries and sectors of the American economy. The goal of the Industry Competency Model Initiative is to promote an understanding of the skill sets and competencies that are essential to educate and train a globally competitive workforce. It does this by providing competency models for key industry sectors. There are currently 26 models in industries as diverse as the economy itself, including transportation, hospitality, cybersecurity, and engineering.

SkillsCommons (<https://www.skillscommons.org/>): The US Department of Labor's [Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training \(TAACCCT\) program](#) has created a free and open online library called SkillsCommons containing free and open learning materials and program support materials for job-driven workforce development. The Open Educational Resources (OER) are produced by community colleges across the nation and can be found, reused, revised, retained, redistributed and remixed by individuals, institutions, and industry.

ETA Sector Strategies Technical Assistance Initiative Self-Assessment Pilot Tool

(<https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/04/12/13/41/Sector-Strategies-Self-Assessments>): This self-assessment tool is designed to help local and regional workforce organizations (and current sector partnerships) determine how well they are implementing full-scale sector strategies today and where they should prioritize future enhancements.

U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) Content Guidelines

(<https://www.eda.gov/ceds>): The CEDS Content Guidelines provide practical recommendations about the content and format of a CEDS that will result in an engaging, technically-sound strategy for guiding regional development. The Guidelines encourage the incorporation of employer-driven workforce development in the creation and implementation of the CEDS.

U.S. Cluster Mapping Website (<http://www.clustermapping.us/>): The U.S. Cluster Mapping website is a national initiative funded by EDA that provides open data on regional clusters and economies to support U.S. business, innovation and policy. The site provides interactive, robust data and tools to understand clusters and regional business environments, improve institutions, and locate appropriate partners.