

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration
Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications
for Workforce Innovation Fund Grants
Announcement Type: Initial
Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY-13-06
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.283

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is June 18, 2014. Applications must be received no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Addresses: Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management, Attention: Sara Gallagher Williams, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 13-06, 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:

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department), announces the availability of up to \$53 million in grant funds to be awarded under the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant program and anticipates awarding between 8 - 15 grants. These funds support innovative approaches that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system, outcomes for job seekers and employers, and cost-effectiveness. All projects funded under the WIF will be rigorously evaluated in order to build a body of knowledge about what works in workforce development.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Authority

The availability of approximately \$43 million in WIF grants is authorized by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (P.L. 113-6). ETA also intends to use up to \$10 million of Fiscal Year 2014 WIF funds, the availability of which is authorized in the Consolidated Funding Act, 2014 (P.L. 113-76).

B. Program Overview

It is critical that the policies and programs in the workforce investment system are designed to equip the nation's workers with skills matching the needs of businesses and other employers looking to hire. To achieve this goal, businesses must identify the skills and credentials required for in-demand jobs and help develop training programs; workers and job seekers must have access to education and training that meets their unique needs and the

requirements for good jobs and careers; and businesses must have easy ways to find workers who have or can acquire those skills.

The purpose of the WIF is to support this job-driven approach to workforce development by funding innovative approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system, outcomes for job seekers and employers, and cost-effectiveness. Background on the WIF can be found at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation.

ETA seeks to ensure that these innovative approaches form the basis for broader change and continuous improvement in the operation of the public workforce system. Therefore, ETA will invest in projects that focus on change at both the service delivery and the system levels, while requiring rigorous evaluation of each investment. The lessons learned and findings from the WIF grants will enable ETA to contribute to the identification and documentation of evidence-based practices within the field of workforce development. It is ETA's expectation that successful strategies will be sustained beyond the grant period through existing workforce system funding streams.

Grants funded under the WIF will achieve the following within the workforce system: 1) better results for jobseekers and employers – such as reduced duration of unemployment, increased educational gains that lead to work readiness, academic and industry-recognized credential attainment, increased earnings, increased competitiveness of employers, etc.; 2) greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services - such as more customers (job seekers or employers) served, decreased program attrition, increased customer throughput, faster entry into employment, achieving outcomes at a lower cost, or reduction in duplicative program components and related administrative costs; and 3) stronger cooperation across programs and funding streams – such as integrated data management information systems, braided funding¹, or changes that create a more seamless service delivery experience for participants who need help from multiple programs.

The WIF grant program allocates funds based on a “tiered evidence” framework: proposals that have not been rigorously tested receive the smallest grants, and proposals supported by the most rigorous evidence receive large grants that enable expansion. All WIF projects are required to conduct an independent evaluation in order to expand understanding of what

¹ Braided funding is a funding and resource allocation strategy that taps into existing categorical funding streams and uses them to support unified initiatives in as flexible and integrated manner as possible. Braided funding streams remain visible and are used in common to produce greater strength, efficiency, and/or effectiveness. Each public funder maintains responsibility for tracking and accountability of its funds.

works in workforce development, and to help answer questions about for whom and in what contexts specific interventions and activities are most effective.

ETA will support achievement of WIF goals by: 1) providing grantees with a comprehensive program of support for the achievement of grant objectives and outcomes throughout the life of the grant; 2) providing a national evaluation coordinator, who will work with grantees' evaluators to ensure consistent and high quality evaluations; and 3) broadly disseminating what ETA learns about what worked, and what did not. ETA expects that WIF grantees will actively participate in both implementation and evaluation technical assistance activities and facilitate dissemination activities, as a condition of grant award.

Because the WIF supports innovation at both the system design and service delivery levels, it presents an opportunity for states and local areas to create systemic change within their workforce systems that improves services and better aligns activities across programs. States and local areas that have good ideas about how to make those changes are strongly encouraged to apply through this solicitation for grants to fund projects that will achieve systemic reforms and program alignment.

In addition, potential applicants should note that the Department plans to offer a separate funding opportunity under the WIF in Fall 2014 consisting of planning grants for states interested in undertaking the types of large-scale systemic reform and systems alignment projects that require further planning and preparation. In 2015, the Department anticipates awarding implementation grants to recipients of the planning grants whose planning processes have yielded the most innovative and highest-impact ideas. More information on the Fall funding opportunity will be made available at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation.

C. Examples of Innovation

To provide a better understanding of the types of service delivery and system reform strategies that are appropriate for the WIF, ETA is providing examples in four categories. This list includes only a few of the many innovations and evidence-based practices that would be appropriate for the WIF. The list is intended to be illustrative, not limiting. Applicants should propose projects that best meet the specific challenges and needs in their state or local area, and should propose only those strategies that they are well-positioned to implement and evaluate during the grant period.

Improving coordination among programs and partners:

- Improving partnerships across WIA, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance, boards of education/educational institutions, economic development, and human service agencies including child care agencies and referral services, and state and local government commissions on the status of women with the goal of coordinating, braiding, and/or blending funds as appropriate and creating coordinated planning and governance structures;
- Improving the connection between the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Unemployment Insurance (UI) systems to enhance reemployment services for all unemployed job seekers and shorten durations of unemployment of UI claimants through the creative use of technology and integrated service strategies;
- Integrating services at a regional level to align with regional labor markets and existing and emerging economic growth strategies;
- Incorporating Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and pre-apprenticeship programs in partnerships that result in new Registered Apprenticeship program(s), and deliver Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for underserved populations, including women, minorities, veterans, and foster, homeless, disabled, and other at-risk youth given the strong evidence for the impact of Registered Apprenticeship and its potential for expansion in most states;
- Developing partnerships with and leveraging resources from non-government entities and privately-funded programs to meet the continuing needs of job seekers and business;
- Strengthening outreach and connections between American Job Centers (AJCs), formally known as One-Stop Career Centers, and libraries, as well as other community-based organizations, that guide jobseekers in primarily self-directed career exploration and job search;
- Implementing comprehensive career pathway approaches that align and bridge training, education, employment, and supportive services at the local and state level, partner with employers, and enable individuals to move beyond adult basic education to postsecondary education, earn industry-recognized credentials, and advance along a career path;
- Integrating adult basic education and occupational skills training to enable individuals to increase their educational learning gains and earn industry-recognized credentials while completing basic skills training;
- Connecting the multiple systems and structures that serve individuals with limited English proficiency through mechanisms such as coordinating WIA Titles I and II to support effective contextualized programs that result in increased fluency in the English language and the attainment of credentials that are relevant to employers;
- Connecting the multiple systems that serve disconnected youth, such as partnering with human service agencies to support summer employment and educational work experiences throughout the year; developing

innovative pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to successful placement with Registered Apprenticeship programs; or improving coordination among existing programs, such as Job Corps and Youth-Build;

- Designing and implementing a collaborative case management, intake, and assessment approach cutting across multiple funding streams; or
- Creating data-sharing agreements and/or additional statewide performance measures among agencies involved in the delivery of training, education, and employment services and in the development of economic development policies.

Improving service delivery at American Job Centers (AJCs) through activities such as:

- Developing models to help individuals easily navigate and access different programs for which they are eligible;
- Using data to provide information on expected employment and earnings outcomes to individuals; or
- Improving the customer service experience at AJCs.

Piloting or scaling programs and strategies that improve linkages between employment and training services and business needs, such as:

- Programs and activities to ensure that workers, job seekers, and businesses access high quality information regarding job demand, skills matching, supports, and education, training, and career options, including providing customers with information about in-demand jobs, including non-traditional occupations for both men and women;
- Programs for out-of-school youth that combine training in high-growth industry sectors with basic skills remediation and that incorporate placement into subsidized or unsubsidized employment opportunities;
- Innovative models to support and strengthen partnerships with business at the state and regional level; partnerships with businesses, business associations, and community colleges or high schools to combine general academic instruction with occupational training; or
- Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and other on-the-job training programs structured in innovative ways designed to lead to long-term career success.

Implementing new procurement strategies:

- Adjusting procurement and cost allocation strategies to allow the use of multiple funding streams for a common purpose with less administrative burden; for example, by finding more efficient ways to report time and effort for case managers serving participants in more than one program;
- Incentivizing effective services to those with the greatest barriers to employment by making a portion of a service provider's funding dependent on outcomes, and providing higher payments for achieving positive outcomes for the hardest-to-serve;

- Encouraging cost efficiency by driving down the costs of achieving successful outcomes through competition among multiple service providers; or
- Developing innovative ways to collaborate with and leverage funds from the private sector, foundations, and investors.

Piloting or expanding new uses of technology:

- Expanding the availability and quality of on-line job training, distance/blended learning, accelerated learning technology, virtual case management, and web-based career navigation tools;
- Leveraging social media, text messaging alerts, and other technology to provide job-matching services to the unemployed;
- Leveraging social media and other Web 2.0 technologies to support strong networks among job seekers and employers and improve outreach and strategic communication; or
- Enhancing the use of real-time labor market information and other data analysis to improve services to job seekers and employers.

D. Tiered Evidence Framework for Fund Allocation and Required Evaluation Activities

A critical design element of the WIF is its tiered structure that links the amount of funding that an applicant may receive to the amount and quality of existing scholarly, research-based evidence to support the efficacy of the proposed project. Applicants proposing new and untested practices are eligible to receive relatively small grants that support the development and evaluation of promising practices and help to identify new solutions to pressing challenges; applicants proposing practices supported by existing evidence from rigorous evaluations, such as large randomized controlled trial studies, are eligible to receive sizable grants to support significant expansion of those practices. This structure encourages applicants to build evidence of effectiveness of their proposed projects and supports evidence-based Federal investments.

All WIF projects are required to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovation proposed. All WIF grantees must use part of their budgets to conduct independent evaluations (as defined in this notice) of their projects. The projects and their evaluations must build upon and expand the current research literature by evaluating the proposed innovation using methods of higher rigor than the current evidence base for the innovation. This ensures that projects funded under the WIF contribute significantly to improving the information available to practitioners and policymakers about which structural and service delivery strategies work, for whom they work, and in what contexts they work.

The Department awards three types of grants under this program as described below:

Project Type A: New and Untested Ideas – Grants awarded for Project Type A provide funding to support the development of service delivery or system reform ideas that are supported by a strong logic model but whose efficacy has not been systematically studied. Projects proposed under this category should support new and more effective strategies for addressing widely shared challenges, and proposals and project documents should clearly state how the reform is a departure from existing workforce strategies. Type A projects are innovative, relatively untested, and significant to the broader workforce investment system.

Project Type B: Promising Ideas – Grants awarded for Project Type B provide funding to support structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that either 1) have been implemented and evaluated previously, where evaluation results indicate some potential for positive impacts on participant or system-wide outcomes; or 2) are supported by strong evidence of positive change, but have never before been implemented by the applicant. Projects that are new to the applicant, but have been implemented elsewhere and evaluated using: 1) pre-post data analysis showing statistically significant positive change; 2) quasi-experimental evaluation showing statistically significant positive change; and/or 3) random assignment impact evaluation showing statistically significant positive change should be proposed as Project Type B. These grants will expand knowledge about the projects' efficacy and provide more information about the feasibility of implementing proven projects in different contexts.

Project Type C: Adapting or Scaling Proven Ideas – Grants awarded for Project Type C provide funding to support significant expansion of structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that are supported by strong evidence of positive change from randomized controlled trial studies. Please note that applicant must demonstrate prior experience implementing the proposed ideas to qualify as Project Type C.

E. Partnerships

Applicants must include appropriate partnerships in all proposed WIF projects because they are critical to providing innovative and effective service delivery strategies that meet the employment needs of job seekers, workers, youth, and employers. ETA encourages applicants to look to a broad range of partners both within and outside of the workforce system when developing their strategies. Partners should be aware of the evaluation requirements of the project and what all partners will need to do to facilitate the implementation of both the innovation and the evaluation (e.g., data-sharing, performance measure-tracking, etc.). Grantees may make sub-awards to partners as part of

their grant implementation plans. Partnerships will vary depending on the nature and focus of individual projects, but examples include:

- Partnering with and leveraging resources from other Federally-funded programs, such as Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants, Social Security disability benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Small Business Development Centers, and many others.
- Partnering with organizations and/or institutions that represent underrepresented and historically excluded communities including, but not limited to: national disability organizations, LGBT organizations, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Federally-recognized or state-recognized American Indian/Alaska Native tribal governments or American Indian/Alaska Native tribally designated organizations.
- Partnering with workforce intermediaries to integrate new approaches to service delivery and stakeholder engagement into the workforce investment system.
- Partnering regionally with economic development entities and other critical stakeholders to better align education and workforce development activities with regional labor markets, economic growth strategies, and employer demand.
- Partnering with the business community, including business associations, and educational institutions, including secondary and post-secondary institutions such as community colleges, to design and implement programs and career pathways that lead to credentials and employment.
- Partnering with sponsors of Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, including individual employers, industry associations, and joint labor-management organizations to design new and/or expand scale of existing programs that provide industry-recognized credentials in sustainable careers.
- Partnering with community-based organizations, including disability organizations, as they are key providers of basic skills training, technical skills training, supportive services, and workforce development services in communities across the country.
- Partnering with local educational institutions, including community colleges.
- Partnering with youth-led organizations and/or youth-serving organizations to assist youth in identifying their interests and skills, exploring a range of educational and employment options, developing technical and soft skills, and setting and achieving educational and career goals.
- Partnering with state and/or local workforce agencies and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) within an economic region to enhance project

impact; or with state and/or local workforce agencies and WIBs in different economic regions to enhance the rigor of the evaluation.

F. Supporting Administrative Flexibility

Combined with grant funding, administrative flexibility can be a powerful tool to spur experimentation and innovation and support better coordination and improved outcomes. If, during the development of their proposal, applicants identify impediments in current laws and regulations, or Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars, the Department encourages applicants to submit, as an attachment to the project narrative (as described in Section IV.B.5.e.), either descriptions of waivers the applicant would request if selected for a grant award or formal waiver requests. Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage their partners in considering how administrative flexibility could enhance the impact of their innovation during their proposal development process. Applicants must construct their project narratives based on outcomes and deliverables they can achieve without waivers or with only the waivers they have currently, and describe in the attachment the additional outcomes and deliverables they could achieve with new waivers. The attachment may include potential waivers for a wide variety of Federal programs, including but not limited to workforce development, education, human services, social insurance, and economic development programs. In the case of TANF, applicants should describe any administrative flexibility that they believe could enhance the effectiveness of the demonstration effort.

The waiver content in the attachment will not be considered as part of the application scoring process described in Section V.C.; however, the Department encourages applicants to provide the attachment to inform Federal agencies about how waivers could enhance the project. This information will be useful in identifying specific barriers to innovation, and it may be used to inform future policy changes and WIF solicitations. All waiver descriptions and requests for analyses of opportunities of administrative flexibility under TANF will be shared with the relevant Federal agencies as they are received. For example waiver requests and descriptions related to the Adult Basic Education and Vocational Rehabilitation programs will be shared with the Department of Education.

Any formal waiver requests of WIA Title I received as part of the attachment will be processed and reviewed within 90 days of grant award in adherence with the policies in place at the time the waivers are granted. Applicants that submit only informal waiver descriptions will need to formally submit waiver requests according to the existing waiver approval process for the relevant Federal statute upon grant award. For additional information about waiver authority and formal submission processes for WIA Titles I-IV and the OMB circulars, see Attachment B.

II. Award Information

A. Award Type and Amount

Funding will be provided in the form of a grant. Approximately \$53 million is expected to be available to fund approximately 8 - 15 grants. No individual grant will exceed \$12 million. Applicants must conform to the specific funding limit associated with the proposed Project Type as listed below:

- Proposals under Project Type A must not exceed \$3 million, and evaluation costs must be no less than 15 percent of the total grant award.
- Proposals under Project Type B must not exceed \$6 million, and evaluation costs must be no less than 15 percent of the total grant award.
- Proposals under Project Type C must not exceed \$12 million, and evaluation costs must be no less than 15 percent of the total grant award.

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds. ETA reserves the right to fund proposals at lower amounts than requested; in such circumstances, the grantee would be expected to adjust its scope of work accordingly. In the event that additional funds become available, ETA reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this solicitation.

B. Period of Performance

ETA will make awards prior to the end of fiscal year 2014. The period of performance for grants will be 60 months from the effective date of the grant, which will consist of:

- 12 months for planning and start-up;
- 36 months for technical grant performance; and
- 12 additional months to complete evaluation activities.

Applicants should plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance while ensuring full transparency and accountability for all expenditures. The period of performance for these grants will not be extended. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

C. Two Phases of Award

All grants awarded under this Solicitation will be funded in two parts. Upon notification of selection, grantees will receive an initial partial award. The remaining balance of the award will be made available no later than September 30, 2015, contingent upon grantee completion of the start-up activities outlined below. Grantees that do not satisfy these Phase I requirements within the set timeframes may not receive the remaining balance of their grant funds. In this circumstance, a grantee would be required to work with ETA to modify the scope of the grant or the grant will be terminated.

1. Required Start-Up Activities and Documentation: In the first twelve months of grant award, grantees must satisfy a start-up series of requirements.

- a. Grantees must submit a copy of the executed contract with a qualified third party evaluator (as defined in Section VIII.E.).
- b. Grantees must submit an Initial Evaluation Design Report prepared by the evaluator, and a performance data template that lists the performance and evaluation measures and key milestones of the project that is consistent with the program evaluation plan submitted as part of the application, pursuant to Section IV of this SGA. Required elements of the Initial Evaluation Design Report are included in Section VIII.C. The quality, content, and methods of the Initial Evaluation Design Report must be in line with WIF evaluation standards, which are based upon best practices in evaluation. These standards will be provided early in the grant period. Grantees are expected to submit their Initial Evaluation Design Report as early as possible, but no later than nine months after grant award. The WIF National Evaluation Coordinator (NEC) will assess the quality and content of the Initial Evaluation Design Report to ensure that it meets all standards. The WIF NEC and DOL will provide comments on the Initial Evaluation Design Report and performance data template.
- c. Grantees and their third party evaluators must work with the NEC and DOL and respond to comments and direction from the NEC and DOL to strengthen the evaluation design. Grantees and their evaluators are further expected to participate in WIF NEC technical assistance webinars, discussion forums, and to take advantage of the NEC for evaluation technical assistance to support evaluation activities in Phase I and Phase II.
- d. Grantees must submit a Final Evaluation Design Report, final performance data template, and final evaluation budget as early as possible, but no later than eleven months after grant award. Grantees must resolve all comments and concerns identified by the WIF NEC and DOL in these final documents.

2. Determining Compliance with Phase I Requirements:

Grantees must submit all documentation related to satisfying Phase I requirements to their Federal Project Officer in a timely manner. Grantees are expected to submit their Initial Evaluation Design Report as early as possible, but no later than nine months after grant award, to allow time for the NEC to review and provide comments so the grantee may respond to those comments and integrate them into the final evaluation design report and final performance data template. ETA will confirm that the grantee has met all Phase I requirements, including both submitting the materials on time and in compliance with the WIF NEC evaluation standards specified above, before making available the balance of the grant funds. Grantees that can complete Phase I requirements sooner than the prescribed deadlines are strongly encouraged to do so.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

In order to be eligible for consideration under this Solicitation, the lead applicant must be an eligible institution, as defined in this section. Applicants must specify their applicant type in the Abstract, described in Section IV.B.4.a.

Eligible institutions are: 1) State Workforce Agencies; 2) Local Workforce Investment Boards; and 3) entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants. Current WIF grantees are eligible to apply; however, the proposed project cannot be an expansion of the current WIF project and must be entirely separate from any existing project funded under the WIF.

Requirements for each of these applicant types are provided below.

1. State Workforce Agencies. Eligible applicants under this category are State Workforce Agencies that are eligible for assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
2. Local Workforce Investment Boards. Under this category, an eligible applicant is a legal entity that represents the local workforce investment system. An entity applying under this category must be either:
 - i. A Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB), as established under Section 117 of the WIA, that has been legally organized; or
 - ii. In areas where the LWIB is not legally organized, the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Local Workforce Investment Board. To apply under this category, this entity must provide, as an attachment to their application, a letter from the chair of the Local Workforce Investment Board that: affirms that the applicant is the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the LWIB, confirms that the applicant is submitting the application on behalf of the LWIB, and includes the applicant's legal name and Federal Tax Identification Number.
3. Entities eligible for WIA Section 166 grants. Under this category, an eligible applicant is a tribe, tribal consortium, or tribal non-profit organization that is eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required for this program, but applicants are strongly encouraged to coordinate with and leverage resources from regular WIA formula funds, and/or other Federal, state, local, or private workforce development funding sources.

More information on leveraged resources may be found in Section IV.B.2. Applications that include any form of cost sharing or match will not receive

additional consideration under the review. Cost sharing or match is not one of the application screening criteria.

C. Other Information

1. Application Screening Criteria.

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

Application Requirement	Instructions	Complete?
The deadline submission requirements are met	Section IV.C	
The applicant must not exceed the ceiling amounts of \$3 million for Project Type A, \$6 million for Project Type B, and \$12 million for Project Type C	Section II.A	
Abstract	Section IV.B	
The applicant must designate a Project Type in the Abstract	Section I.D	
Applicant has registered with SAM and maintains an active account	Section IV.B	
Signed SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance	Section IV.B	
Signed SF-424 includes a DUNS Number	Section IV.B	
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section IV.B	
Budget Narrative	Section IV.B	
Project Narrative	Section IV.B	
Program Evaluation Plan and Supplementary Evaluation Budget Narrative	Section IV.B	
Letter Confirming Fiscal Agent (if applicable)	Section IV.B	
Documentation demonstrating Strategic Leadership	Section IV.B	

During the application review process, any applications that have not completed the above requirements will be deemed non-responsive and will not receive further review.

2. Number of Applications To Be Submitted.

Applicants may submit no more than one application.

3. Eligible Participants.

a) Participants Eligible to Receive Services

WIF grants are intended to seed innovation in the regular workforce programs; therefore, participants who receive grant-funded services must meet the eligibility criteria of WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, or Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service programs. Projects that leverage resources from other workforce programs must ensure that participants receiving such services meet those funding sources' eligibility criteria.

b) Veterans Priority for Participants

The Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) requires grantees to provide priority of service for 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.

Because priority of service mandates that veterans or eligible spouses always receive services for which they are eligible, projects with evaluations that use an experimental design (random assignment impact evaluation) must not include veteran participants in the evaluation.

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.

4. Allowable Costs.

A broad range of activities are allowable under the WIF. It is possible but not necessary to fund direct service delivery with grant funds, as such services could be funded with regular formula funds. In such cases, grant funds could be used to fund the technology, training, policy, partnership development, or other activities necessary to support the innovation. In proposing strategies, applicants must adhere to the applicable cost principles, which generally require that all expenditures be reasonable, necessary, and allocable. For more specific information, applicants may review the cost principles at OMB Circulars A-87, A-122, or A-21, or 48 CFR Part 31, as applicable.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This SGA, 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

Proposals submitted in response to this SGA must consist of five separate and distinct parts: 1) the SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance;” 2) Project Budget; 3) Project Narrative; 4) Program Evaluation Plan and Supplementary Evaluation Budget Narrative; and 5) Attachments to the Project Narrative. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application.

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

Applicants must complete the SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance;” (available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>).

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 shall be 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://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>). The SF-424B is not required to be submitted with the application.

In addition, the applicant’s signature in block 21 of the SF-424 form constitutes assurance by the applicant of the following:

As a condition to this award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any DOL—financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education

Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the grant-assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (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:

1. Grantees must notify potential sub-grantees that no entity may receive a sub-award from you unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.
2. Grantees may not make a sub-award to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.

Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Instructions for registering with SAM can be found at <https://sam.gov>. An awardee 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.

2. Project Budget

Applicants must complete the SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>). Applicants must include the total funding request on the SF-424A. The Department will determine the distribution of grant funds between Phase I and Phase II. A portion, the balance of the award, will be awarded upon completion of the Phase I startup activities. Successful applicants will be required to complete a separate SF-424A and budget narrative before funding will be made available for Phase II.

In preparing the Budget Information Form, the applicant 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 of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities. All grantees must participate in an in-person intensive orientation and training event sponsored by ETA, and at least one additional national meeting. Both meetings will be held in Washington, D.C. Grantees should include travel costs for this purpose in their Project Budget and SF-424.

Use the following guidance for preparing the budget narrative:

Personnel – List all staff positions by title. Give the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person’s time devoted to the project, the amount of each person’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 and a useful lifetime of more than one year. List the quantity and unit cost per item. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies.

Supplies – Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment.” 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 sub-recipient agreements, including purpose and estimated costs.

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. DOL does 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 DOL to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable. List any item, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere here.

Indirect Charges – If indirect charges are included in the budget, include the approved indirect cost rate with a copy of the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, a description of the base used to calculate indirect costs and total cost of the base, and the total indirect charges requested. See Section IV.B.5.c. and Section IV.E.1. for more information.

Note that the entire Federal grant amount requested (not just Phase I) must be included on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative. The Department will determine the distribution of grant funds between Phase I and Phase II. No leveraged resources should be shown on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Leveraged resources should be described in the budget narrative. The requested Federal grant amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative must be the same. The funding amount included on the SF-424 will be considered the official funding amount requested if any inconsistencies are found.

3. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must demonstrate the applicant’s capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Solicitation. 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 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. Any materials beyond the specified page limit will not be read or considered in the application review process. Applicants must number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1.

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Project Narrative. Applicants should carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in their Project Narrative. The Project Narrative will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V. Applicants should use the same section headers identified below for each section of their Project Narrative:

a) Statement of Need

In this section, applicants must describe current workforce policies, program designs, system designs and or partnerships that the proposed WIF project is intended to improve. Applicants may provide a statement of need that addresses a broad range of issues that impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce system, including issues pertaining to:

- the processes or mechanics of services and service delivery;
- services for target populations or industry sectors;

- alignment of service delivery to economic regions, policy, governance, and administrative rules that support the system;
- information systems and other structural supports; and
- other areas that may present barriers to improving the workforce system.

In articulating the problem or issue, applicants should demonstrate the extent of the problem in qualitative and quantitative terms to provide sufficient evidence of its impact on program or system performance. Applicants may present data that demonstrates: a) duplication or inefficiencies in the delivery or administration of services (such as cost inefficiencies or extended cycle times); b) evidence of administrative or policy barriers imposed at the state and/or local level that hinder the delivery of services (such as restrictions or requirements that the state has the authority to change); and/or c) other data and evidence that clearly demonstrate the severity of the problem or significant potential for improvement. Applicants, especially those who are applying under Project Type A, should also provide evidence that demonstrates how their project is innovative and/or a departure from the current status quo.

Please note: applicants must not submit a statement of need that focuses only on the needs of participants such as low educational attainment or high poverty rates; although being aware of these needs is important to the design of service delivery strategies, this section is intended to identify the systemic challenges that the proposed project is attempting to resolve.

b) Strategic Approach

In this section, applicants should describe the outcomes they want to achieve and the strategic approach they will use to achieve those outcomes and address the problem(s) or issues identified above. This section should include the following:

- i. **Project outcome goals.** Applicants must clearly identify the outcome(s) that will result from the project. Outcomes are the specific measurable results of the project. They are the positive benefits or negative changes or measurable characteristics that occur as a result of project activities. Examples of outcomes include a measurable increase in average earnings or the entered employment rate, a measurable change in a social indicator, or new knowledge that leads to new employment or advancement in a field.

While all WIF investments should ultimately result in improved employment and training outcomes for jobseekers and employers, the impact of certain types of innovation – particularly systemic reforms – may not be captured through traditional outcome measures over the course of a 60-month period of performance. In cases where the final impact of the proposed project on system customers cannot be

measured during the grant's life cycle, applicants must identify a set of measurable intermediate outcomes that will ultimately lead to improvements in training and employment outcomes for individuals and employers.

In addition to identifying the specific measurable outcomes of the project, applicants must clearly and concisely demonstrate how the outcomes align with the first and either the second or third goal of the WIF: 1) better employment outcomes for jobseekers and better results for employers; 2) greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services; and 3) stronger coordination across programs and funding streams.

- ii. The project type and strategic approach. Applicants must indicate which Project Type they are applying for (A, B, or C) (as described in Section I.D. of this Solicitation), describe their structural and/or service delivery reform they are proposing, and describe the specific strategy they will undertake to achieve their outcome goals. In describing their proposed strategy, applicants must show how the requested grant funds and other resources (or inputs) brought to bear on a project will support the activities they intend to undertake, and how those activities will in turn generate the interim outputs that ultimately lead to the outcomes and/or impact of the project.

Interim outputs should reflect discrete and tangible achievements that, together, lead to the ultimate outcomes of the project that address the problems and issues described in the Statement of Need above. Such interim outputs can take many forms. Some examples of interim outputs may be: 1) policy reforms that enable new processes such as integrating data across systems, co-enrolling participants among different programs, or blending and braiding funds from other workforce partners; 2) important milestones of the grant, such as completing a redesign of curriculum or services, or designing a new method of measuring repeat business customers; and/or 3) new or improved output measures from the innovation such as employer satisfaction, training capacity, and speed to credentials.

Applicants must describe appropriate and achievable outputs and show how they are clearly linked to the Project Outcome Goals identified in Section IV.B.3.a. above. Applicants must also show that the identified outputs will lead to those outcomes within the life of the grant. Finally, applicants should describe the challenges or any obstacles to success they foresee in their proposed strategy and describe how they plan to overcome those challenges. For Project Type C, the applicant must also describe the need and potential for success in expanding the scale of the proposed service, product, and/or system change for a broader

customer base, i.e., how the project will lead to better employment outcomes for job seekers and better results for businesses.

- iii. Evidence Base for Strategy. Applicants must provide evidence that the activities and interim outputs proposed will lead to the Project Outcome Goals identified in Section IV.B.3. In this section, applicants must describe the process they used to identify the evidence supporting their proposed strategy and project design, and demonstrate that they reviewed available research on Workforce System Strategies (<http://strategies.workforce3one.org/>) or other appropriate research and data clearinghouses.

Applicants for Project Type A must include in their proposal a logic model, that is, a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally, articulating the underlying theory of how the strategy will produce the intended outcomes. Additionally, applicants must describe any prior implementation of the idea and, if applicable, include outcome data. Applicants must show that the proposed strategy is a new and untested idea and demonstrate a clear lack of evidence from existing research for the strategy.

Applicants for Project Type B must cite scholarly research evidence of past effectiveness of the proposed strategy. The cited evidence must include: 1) a pre-post data analysis showing statistically significant positive change; 2) a quasi-experimental evaluation showing statistically significant positive change; and/or 3) a random assignment impact evaluation showing statistically significant positive change completed by others. This research may be for a related, similar intervention. Additionally, applicants must include in their proposal a logic model as discussed above.

Applicants for Project Type C must cite evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed strategy. The research cited must be scholarly, published randomized controlled trial studies that show statistically significant positive results for the proposed idea or closely related idea from which the proposed idea draws significantly. The applicant must also provide compelling arguments for the need and potential for success in expanding the scale of the proposed service, product, and/or system change for a broader customer base, i.e., how will the workforce system benefit by bringing this project to scale. Applicants for Project Type C must also show evidence that they have successfully piloted a version of the proposed project. Additionally, applicants must include in their proposal a logic model as defined above.

- c) Work Plan and Project Management
- i. Work Plan. Applicants must provide a detailed work plan and project management approach that demonstrates their experience implementing a project of the proposed scope. This work plan must provide a detailed description of how the proposed work will be accomplished and must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Applicants must discuss factors that might accelerate the work, identify any potential barriers and describe how the project will overcome those barriers. Applicants must use the format described below. The work plan counts against the page limit of the Project Narrative and must include all of the following categories:

Milestones: Identify each output described in Section IV.B.3.b.ii. above and identify clear and appropriate milestones leading to the completion of each output. Specifically, applicants must indicate when the following will be completed: any necessary preliminary planning; the execution of the contract with the evaluator; the start date of a project manager; establishing subgrants, contracts, and other agreements; and the engagement of key partners as evidenced by meetings or communications and identifying, for each partner, specific individuals responsible for key tasks. The applicant must also indicate when the data to measure the outputs will become available.

Alignment of Costs: Describe how the proposed budget and budget narrative align with the project work plan. Applicants must identify how each milestone will be adequately funded as outlined in the proposed budget.

Readiness for Implementation: Describe the readiness of the applicant and all partners to implement Phase I of the grant as defined in Section II.C. immediately upon grant award. Applicants must identify resources, personnel, established relationships that provide evidence that the project will begin implementation upon grant award.

Timeline: Applicants must include projected completion dates for the key milestones and deliverables for all planning, start-up, implementation, and evaluation activities, including the required Phase I deliverables described in Section II.C. Note that the timeline will become part of the grant agreement for successful applicants and deviations from the timeline will be grounds for corrective action plans and determinations of poor grant performance. The proposed timeline must be as realistic as possible.

ii. Project Management. Applicants must describe their capacity to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed project. Applicants must provide the following:

- The professional qualifications that will be required of the project manager and other key personnel. The applicant must describe how these qualifications will be sufficient to ensure proper management of all grant activities, including timely reporting and the ability to manage a strategic partnership. If the program manager or other key personnel are already on staff, provide her/his resume;
- Information about the procedures the applicant will follow to procure a third party independent evaluator. The applicant must describe their experience procuring and implementing an evaluation of the scope proposed;
- An organizational chart that clearly identifies all relevant leadership, program, administrative, and advisory positions. The applicant must describe how the project will facilitate communications between all levels of the project across partner organizations; and
- For the applicant's most recent grant or grants (formula or competitive), describe the applicant's capacity to submit reports (program and financial) on-time and describe the grant management practices the applicant used to complete grant activities within the period of performance.

d) Project Impact

Applicants must identify the key data elements and the ways in which data will be captured (e.g., tools and systems) that will allow them to fully demonstrate the impact of their project. Applicants must provide information about its capacity to capture the identified data, and demonstrate that the Management Information System (MIS) can begin collecting data when it first becomes available. Applicants must also demonstrate that they will collect detailed enough data to show a progression of grant activities in the quarterly reports. State applicants that have Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grants must demonstrate how their proposed projects align with their WDQI grants.

Applicants may need to propose collecting data that is not readily captured in the current WIA reporting system in order to accurately measure the project impacts, including the outputs, and outcomes of the projects. Traditionally, the workforce system tracks the success of workforce investment programs in terms of the common measures (e.g., entry to employment, retention, earnings, etc.). While all projects are expected to report these common performance measure outcomes, WIF projects must identify and capture additional sets of data that align with their activities, outputs, and outcomes, thereby allowing grantees and ETA to document a new set of achievements.

For example, different outcome measures may be appropriate for system change activities.

One of the goals of the WIF is to support service delivery strategies and structures that generate good outcomes at a lower cost. To determine whether this goal has been met, it is crucial that grantees can measure costs and efficiency. There are currently no Federal efficiency measures for WIA programs, and ETA is interested in using projects funded under this Solicitation to learn about ways to measure costs and efficiency that do not incentivize cheap, ineffective services or selection of participants who are the least in need of help to find employment. Applicants must describe how costs will be measured, include baseline costs before the project begins, and describe how it will determine whether the project has resulted in increased efficiency. Applicants may propose a variety of data sets, such as:

- Capturing service costs across multiple funding streams;
- Collecting administrative costs to track reduction as a result of better program coordination;
- Creating a cost per outcome measurement system that does not disincentivize serving those most in need; and/or
- The applicant also must demonstrate that it has experience using data to manage grant activities and monitor grant activities against the project timeline.

e) Strategic Leadership

Because the WIF is intended to catalyze system change and transformation at a variety of levels, ETA expects that strong, strategic leadership will be critical to achieve and, ultimately, to sustain the changes and innovative approaches resulting from the Federal investment. Strategic leadership may take several forms and may also vary depending on the complexity of the proposed innovation project.

- i. Strategic Relationships and Leadership Buy-In. Applicants must identify the organizations within and outside the public workforce system that are necessary to implement the proposed strategy and achieve the ultimate outcomes, as well as describe their roles and responsibilities within the proposed strategy. Applicants are encouraged to partner with other state agencies, intermediaries and other system leaders and include these entities as sub-recipients where appropriate to align the workforce system with other important workforce development investments including economic development opportunities. If the project includes changes to education, employment, and/or training service delivery strategies, the applicant must include well-established partnerships with employers, trade associations, and/or other business representatives.

In this section, applicants must also address the following:

- Identify key leaders and partners that are necessary for the ultimate success of the project and describe the role they will play in project implementation as well as in integration into the broader system at the end of the grant;
 - Describe the mechanisms that will be used to effectively coordinate the work of the various partners throughout the implementation of the project;
 - For each project output, include the name of the partner that will be responsible for implementing the activities leading to that output and any proposed subcontractor(s), if known, who may assist in implementing the strategy; and
 - Demonstrate that strategic relationships are already in place, each partner understands its roles and responsibilities and agrees to participate in the evaluation, and leadership is aligned with and support the proposed activities. Applicants must submit Memoranda of Understanding (i.e. substantive non-form letters) as attachments to their application to demonstrate that strategic relationships are already in place (see Attachments to the Program Narrative in Section IV.B.5).
- ii. Strategic Communication. The applicant must describe the strategies it will use to communicate the purposes, goals, and outcomes of the proposed project to key stakeholders, including their evaluator, over the period of the grant. These can be internal or external stakeholders, depending on the proposed activities.
- iii. Integration into Formula-Funded Activities. Applicants must provide a clear plan for ensuring that promising strategies continue after the grant ends, including a description of specific actions the applicant will take to a) highlight successful project components that are worthy of sustaining, b) identify early in the project funding sources to sustain the project, including WIA formula funds and other federal, state, local, or private funding sources, c) make organizational policy changes that will enable the integration of those components into regular workforce system funding streams, d) align and leverage appropriate regular workforce system funding streams during project implementation and e) any other actions the applicant deems necessary for sustainability.

4. Program Evaluation Plan and Evaluation Budget Narrative

The applicant must submit a Program Evaluation Plan and Evaluation Budget Narrative. The Program Evaluation Plan is limited to 15 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. Any materials beyond the specified page limit will not be read or considered in the application review process. Applicants must number the Project Evaluation Plan beginning with page number 1. There is no page limit for the

Evaluation Budget Narrative. Applicants must use the same section headers identified below for each section of their Program Evaluation Plan.

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Program Evaluation Plan. Applicants should carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in their Program Evaluation Plan. The Program Evaluation Plan will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.B. Reviewers will evaluate the materials described in this section separately from the Project Narrative, as described below in Section V.B. Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the guidance posted at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation in preparing this portion of the application.

a) Description of Evaluation Plan

Applicants must propose evaluation activities that will result in a quality evaluation that is at the level of rigor required by the applicant's project type. All evaluation designs under each project type must include a follow-up of program participants, activities, and system-wide outcomes for a minimum of 12 months upon completion of services. When describing its research methodology, the applicant must clearly identify the evaluation design type and must include all the required evaluation design components. Additionally, the applicant must fully explain the logic model and how the components of the innovation being tested will result in the outcomes identified for the project. Applicants must select an evaluation type that is appropriate for the project type selected, as described below and provide justification for the selection of that project type based on the amount and type of existing evidence available for the innovation. The justification must be based on scholarly research and the experience of the applicant implementing the proposed strategies.

Applicants for Project Type A must propose an evaluation study that includes an implementation study, an outcome (i.e., pre-post) study, and a Cost Allocation Analysis. The implementation study must examine the operating and implementation successes and challenges of the project and must show the feasibility of implementing the new idea into the workforce system. The outcome study must include, at a minimum, collection and analysis of implementation data (on processes and outputs), and outcome data (on participant-level outcomes or system-level outcomes, depending on the type of innovation proposed). A Cost Allocation Analysis must be completed that includes documentation on program operational costs at the per-participant or per-system level.

Applicants for Project Type B and C must propose an evaluation study that includes a random assignment impact evaluation, implementation study, and a Cost-Effectiveness Analysis. Please note that proposals with evaluations that

use an experimental design (random assignment impact evaluation) must not include veteran participants in the evaluation sample. For more information on requirements for veterans, please refer to Section III.C. The study must be powered (i.e. have a large enough sample size) such that the exclusion of veterans from the sample does not reduce the power to detect significant impacts.

Applicants for Project Type C must propose an evaluation study that includes a random assignment impact evaluation, an implementation study and a Cost-Effectiveness Analysis. All proposed evaluation designs under each project type must include a follow-up of program participants, activities and system-wide outcomes for a minimum of 12 months after completion of services. This evaluation follow-up must occur within the period of performance of the grant. Please note that proposals with evaluations that use an experimental design (random assignment impact evaluation) must not include veteran participants in the evaluation. For more information on requirements for veterans, please refer to Section III.C.3.b. The study should be powered (i.e., have a large enough sample size) such that the exclusion of veterans from the sample does not reduce the power to detect significant impacts.

As part of the description of the evaluation plan, applicants must include a timeline for the evaluation activities that includes preparing and submitting an Initial Evaluation Design Report and Final Evaluation Design Report within the prescribed deadlines set forth in Section II.C.I.

b) Contribution to Evidence Base

The applicant must explain how the proposed evaluation type builds on the scholarly evidence base for the project as described in Section IV.3.b. The applicant must explain the relevance of the cited evidence to the proposed project in terms of subject matter and past evaluation rigor. Finally, the applicant must describe how the proposed evaluation will yield knowledge that will support evidence-based decision making in the workforce investment system and contribute to general workforce knowledge and whether the evidence generated will fill a gap in currently available scholarly research.

c) Evaluator Procurement and Deliverable Plan

The applicant must describe its process for procuring the services of a qualified third party evaluator in a timely manner to satisfy the requirements of Phase I - the description must address the applicant's strategy for conveying the evaluation requirements and expectations to potential bidders. The applicant must include a description of relevant past experience(s) working with evaluators on projects of similar sophistication and scope. The applicant must describe how it will ensure that the third-party evaluator has the level of capacity and expertise to conduct the evaluation, including estimating the level of effort for the evaluator including the time, level of

expertise, and level of analysis required for successfully completing the proposed evaluation.

d) Evaluation Budget Narrative

The applicant must include an evaluation budget narrative that outlines the anticipated cost to develop the evaluation plan and to conduct the evaluation. The budget must include a breakout of costs by evaluation activity (e.g., data collection, participant follow-up). The applicant must describe the expectation for any additional evaluation-related costs to be incurred by partners other than the third party evaluator. The applicant must describe a strategy for refining the budget after evaluator procurement.

5. Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, the applicant must submit attachments. All attachments must be clearly labeled as Attachments. Only those attachments listed below will be excluded from the page limit. Additional materials such as resumes or general letters of support beyond what was requested in the Project Narrative must not be included. Applicants must submit their 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 be sure to 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). An underscore (example: my_Attached_File.pdf) may be used to separate a file name.

Attachments

- a. **Abstract:** All applicants 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 Abstract is limited to two double-spaced single-sided 8.5x11 inch pages with 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. The Abstract will be shared publicly and must include the following information: 1) applicant's name; 2) applicant/lead applicant city/state; 3) areas served by the grant; 4) project name; 5) funding level requested, broken out by project costs and evaluation cost; 6) the project type (A, B, or C); 7) description of the proposed project; 8) description of the proposed evaluation strategy; and 9) public contact information for the grant, which may be an email or website.

If using grants.gov for submission, this document must be attached under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled "Abstract." Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may have a significant impact on obtaining future grants with ETA.

- b.** Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form: All applicants must submit a Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form (available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>). While applicants will not be pre-screened for this form, it is required of all applicants. If using grants.gov for submission, this form must be attached under the required forms section. Please note that this is a standard form used for many programs and has a check box for applying as an individual. Disregard this box on the form as individuals are not eligible to apply for this solicitation.
- c.** Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: If the applicant is requesting indirect charges, attach the most recent Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the applicant and the cognizant Federal agency. While applicants will not be pre-screened for this document, it is required of all applicants. (For more information, see Section IV.B.2. and Section IV.E.1.)
- d.** Letter Confirming Fiscal Agent (if applicable): If the applicant is applying as the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) in an area where the LWIB is not incorporated, the applicant must provide, as an attachment to the application, a letter from the chair of the Local Workforce Investment Board that affirms that the applicant is the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the LWIB, confirms that the applicant is submitting the application on behalf of the LWIB, and includes the applicant's legal name and Federal Tax Identification Number.
- e.** Potential Waiver Description (if applicable): If the applicant believes a waiver of WIA or other Federal laws or rules would enhance the innovation(s) described in the application, submit a detailed description of the potential waiver request as an attachment. Also, describe any waivers the applicant already has for the formula program that the applicant wishes to incorporate into the grant agreement. If the applicant is a local area and believes the project would benefit from a waiver under WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser, consult with the state in the formation of the applicant's waiver description, since only states can request WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser waivers. Also describe waiver requests that the applicant intends to seek for programs under other Federal laws. The applicant may also submit formal waiver requests with the application, according to individual program requirements. Any formal waiver requests for WIA Title I received as part of the attachment will be officially processed and reviewed within 90 days of grant award. While applicants will not be pre-screened for this document, it is required of all applicants requesting a waiver of WIA or other Federal laws or rules.

- f.** Documentation of Strategic Leadership: The applicant must submit substantive non-form letters, Memoranda of Understanding, and other documentation from key leaders and partners to demonstrate their support of the proposed activities as described in Section IV.B.3.e.i.
- g.** Organizational Chart: that clearly identifies all relevant leadership, program, administrative, and advisory positions described in Section IV.B.3.c.ii.
- h.** Resumes of Personnel (if applicable): The applicant must submit resumes of program managers or other key personnel already on staff as identified in Section IV.B.3.c.ii.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is June 18, 2014. Applications must be submitted either electronically on <http://www.grants.gov> or in hard copy by mail or in hard copy by hand delivery (including overnight delivery). Hard copy applications must be received at the address below no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. Applications submitted on [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) must also be successfully submitted (as described below) no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. Applicants are cautioned that applications should be submitted before the deadline to ensure that the risk of late receipt of the application is minimized. Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX) will not be accepted.

Applicants submitting proposals in hard copy by mail or overnight delivery must submit an original signed application (including the SF-424) and one (1) “copy-ready” version free of bindings, staples or protruding tabs to ease in the reproduction of the proposal by DOL. Applicants submitting proposals in hard copy are also required to include in the hard copy submission an identical electronic copy of the proposal on compact disc (CD). If discrepancies between the hard copy submission and CD copy are identified, the application on the CD will be considered the official applicant 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>.

No exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice will be granted. Further, documents submitted separately from the application, before or after the deadline, will not be accepted as part of the application.

Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management, Attention: Sara Gallagher Williams, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 13-06, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. Applicants are advised that mail delivery in the Washington DC area may be delayed due to mail decontamination procedures. Hand-delivered proposals will be received 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.

Applications that are submitted through Grants.gov must be successfully submitted at <http://www.grants.gov> no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then subsequently validated by Grants.gov. The submission and validation process is described in more detail below. The process can be complicated and time-consuming. Applicants are strongly advised to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for time to resolve technical problems if necessary.

The Department strongly recommends that before applicants begin to write the proposal, they should immediately initiate and complete the “Get Registered” registration steps at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Applicants 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 registration checklists to help applicants walk through the process. The Department strongly recommends that applicants download the “Organization Registration Checklist” at <http://www.grants.gov/documents/19/18243/OrganizationRegChecklist.pdf/fc7e7c18-2497-4b08-8d9b-bfac399947a3> 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., applicants must have a DUNS Number and must register with the System for Award Management (SAM).

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. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant 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 subsequently successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant 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, sufficient 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 sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered.

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. DOL will attempt to open the document but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening. In such cases, the non-conforming application will not be considered for funding.

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-resources.html>.

ETA encourages new prospective applicants to view the online tutorial, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” available through Workforce3One at: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

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

If applicants 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 Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is closed on Federal holidays. The Grants.gov customer service process is described at <http://www.grants.gov/documents/19/18249/CustomerServiceProcess.pdf/35f168e0-49ea-426f-be2b-5b772178326d>.

Late Applications: For applications submitted on Grants.gov, only applications that have been successfully submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated will be considered. Applicants take a significant risk by waiting to the last day to submit through Grants.gov.

Any hard copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received 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,

applicants 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 applicable Federal cost principles. Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal 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 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular 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 (ICR) is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether Federally-assisted or not. Organizations must use the ICR supplied by the Federal Cognizant Agency. If an organization requires a new ICR or has a pending ICR, the Grant Officer will award a temporary billing rate for 90 days until a provisional rate can be issued. This rate is based on the fact that an organization has not established an ICR agreement. Within this 90-day period, the organization must submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal to their Federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional ICR. (See Section IV.B.5. for more information on ICR Agreement submission requirements.)

2. Salary and Bonus Limitations

None of the grant funds may be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II.ve Level II. This limitation does not apply to vendors providing goods and services as defined in OMB Circular A-133 (codified at 29 CFR Parts 96 and 99). See Public Laws 112-74 (Division F, Title I, section 105), 112-10 (Division B, Title I) and 111-117 (Division D, Title I, section 107), and Training and Employment Guidance Letter number 5-06 for further clarification:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2262.

3. Intellectual Property Rights

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 subgrant or contract under the grant or subgrant; and ii) any rights of copyright to which the grantee, subgrantee 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, these revenues are program income. 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. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.

4. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

Organizations that receive grants through this SGA may not use grant funds to pay for the wages of participants. Further, the provision of stipends to training enrollees for the purposes of wage replacement is not an allowable cost under this SGA.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Withdrawal of Applications: Applications may be withdrawn by written notice to the Grant Officer at any time before an award is made.

V. Application Review Information

A. Criteria for Project Narrative

Procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications have been instituted to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist the applicant in understanding the standards against which each application will be judged. The evaluation criteria are based on the information required in the application as described in Section IV.B.3. The evaluation criteria are described below:

Criterion	Points
1. Statement of Need (See Section IV.B.3.a. Statement of Need)	7
2. Strategic Approach (See Section IV.B.3.b. Strategic Approach)	45
3. Work Plan and Project Management (See Section IV.B.3.c. Work Plan and Project Management)	20
4. Project Impact (See Section IV.B.3.d. Project Impact)	15
5. Strategic Leadership (See Section IV.B.3.e. Strategic Leadership)	10
6. Budget and Budget Justification (See Section IV.B.2. Project Budget)	3
TOTAL	100

1. Statement of Need (7 points)

Reviewers will award points based on the extent to which applicants identifies problem(s) or issue(s) that significantly impact the workforce system. Points for this section will be based on the following factors:

Factor 1 (4 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must convincingly articulate that the current practice or system requires an improvement or change. The applicant must convincingly explain how the problem and its impact are relevant to the workforce system locally, regionally, and/or nationally.

Factor 2 (3 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must provide convincing evidence that current practices negatively impact workforce system performance, cost effectiveness, and/or program management. The applicant must provide data that clearly demonstrates the significant impact of the issue or challenge across the workforce system.

2. Strategic Approach (45 points)

Reviewers will award points based on the quality and completeness of the project's strategic approach. The strategic approach must convincingly articulate how the proposed project will address or resolve the problem(s) or issue(s) identified in the Statement of Need above. Points for this section will be based on the following factors:

Factor 1 - Project Outcome Goals (10 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must state specific project outcome goals that clearly address the problem/issue described in Section IV.B.3.a. and present specific, measurable, and achievable project outcome measures for those goals. In cases where the final impact of the proposed project on system customers cannot be measured during the grant's life cycle, applicants must identify a set of measurable intermediate outcomes and convincingly explain how these outcomes will ultimately lead to improvements in training and employment outcomes for individuals and employers. The applicant must also clearly demonstrate how the outcome goals align with the first and either the second or third goal of the WIF: 1) better employment outcomes for jobseekers and results for employers; 2) greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services; and 3) stronger cooperation across programs and funding streams.

Factor 2 - Project Type and Strategic Approach (20 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must:

- 1) Accurately identify their Project Type based on the descriptions provided in Section I.D.
- 2) Describe a strategy that directly aligns with and is likely to achieve the Project Outcomes Goals described in Section IV.B.3.b.i;
- 3) Propose activities and interim outputs that are discrete, appropriate, achievable, and clearly linked to the stated Project Outcome Goals;
- 4) Demonstrate a strong understanding of the challenges and obstacles to success involved in their proposed strategy and provide a clear plan for overcoming such challenges; and
- 5) Convincingly demonstrate that the proposed activities and interim outputs will lead to the Project Outcome Goals identified in Section IV.B.3.b.i. within the life of the grant.
- 6) For Project Type C, the applicant must also provide compelling arguments for the need and potential for success in expanding the scale of the proposed service, product, and/or system change for a broader customer base, i.e., how the project will lead to better employment outcomes for job seekers and better results for businesses.

Factor 3 - Evidence Base for Strategy (15 points): To receive full points for this section, the applicant must:

- 1) Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the available evidence regarding the proposed strategies;

- 2) Demonstrate the applicant's ability to identify relevant, scholarly research to inform project design; for Project Type A, this should include efforts made to find evidence;
- 3) Demonstrate that the applicant has communicated with experts in the field about implementing this strategy. For project Type B and C this should include efforts to work with previous implementers of the model in order to adhere as closely as possible to the evidence base for this model. For example applicants could speak to relationships with sites where these models have been implemented previously, or with technical assistance providers involved in the proposed projects.

For Project Type B and C, demonstrate that there is evidence that the proposed strategy will produce the identified outcome goals as appropriate for the project type by citing evaluation studies conducted with a level of rigor appropriate to the project type for which the applicant is applying and that are relevant to the project proposed. For Project Type A, applicants should describe any prior implementation of the idea and, if applicable, include outcome data and provide a strong logic model that provides compelling arguments that the strategy will produce the outcome goals. Note: Applicants that identify the incorrect Project Type based on the evidence base will receive no more than five (5) points for this factor.

3. Work Plan and Project Management (20 points)

Reviewers will assign points under this criterion based on the following factors:

Factor 1 - Work Plan (12 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must:

- 1) Provide a reasonable set of milestones that demonstrate a complete understanding of all responsibilities and costs required to implement each phase of the project within the timeframe of the grant;
- 2) Include feasible and reasonable timeframes for accomplishing deliverables for all planning, start-up, implementation, and evaluation activities. Include timeframes for accomplishing the required Phase I deliverables described in Section II.C. within the first eleven months of the anticipated grant start date. Specifically indicate when the following will be completed: any necessary preliminary planning; the execution of the contract with the evaluator; the start date of a project manager; the process of putting subgrant, contracts, and other agreements into place; the engagement of key partners as evidenced by meetings or communications and identifying, for each partner, specific individuals responsible for key tasks. Indicate when the data to measure the outputs will become available;
- 3) Provide an explanation of how the costs in the proposed project work plan align with the proposed budget and budget narrative, and

are justified as adequate, cost-effective, and reasonable for the resources requested; and

- 4) Provide strong evidence of readiness of the applicant and all partners to begin implementing the grant immediately upon grant award.

Factor 2 - Project Management (8 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must:

- 1) Provide compelling evidence of the applicant's ability to effectively manage programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the grant;
- 2) Provide compelling evidence that the applicant will recruit or has on staff a qualified project manager and other key personnel;
- 3) Provide an organizational chart demonstrating an understanding of the skills and partnerships needed to achieve the project goals;
- 4) Provide evidence that the applicant has procedures in place to procure a third party independent evaluator and that the applicant has the capacity to procure and implement an evaluation of the scope proposed; and
- 5) Provide evidence from the applicant's most recent grant or grants that the applicant submitted reports (program and financial) on time and used sound grant management practices to complete grant activities within the period of performance.

4. Project Impact (15 points)

To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must:

- 1) Provide a comprehensive data collection approach of sufficient quality to ensure that the project, if successful, can be documented as an evidence-based practice;
- 2) Correctly and comprehensively identify relevant existing data that is already collected by the workforce system or its partners and any new data needed to ensure that all project achievements can be properly accounted for;
- 3) Demonstrate that the data collected will be detailed enough to show a progression of grant activities in the quarterly reports;
- 4) Articulate those pieces of data that will help inform leading indicators of success during the early phases of the grant as well as ultimate outcomes, which will come later in the grant period;
- 5) Demonstrate that it has the capacity to capture the data identified, including that the Management Information System (MIS) can begin collecting data in time to begin tracking the data when they first becomes available;
- 6) Demonstrate a feasible method of measuring costs and/or efficiency that is likely to result in convincing data that demonstrates whether the proposed project has increased the efficiency of workforce programs; and

- 7) Demonstrate it has experience using data to manage grant activities and monitor grant activities against the project timeline.

5. Strategic Leadership (10 points)

Reviewers will assign points on the following factors:

Factor 1 - Strategic Relationships and Leadership Buy-In (5 points):

To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must:

- 1) Identify key leaders and partners that are necessary for the ultimate success of the project and show that their identified roles in project implementation are sufficient to ensure effective project implementation; these must include businesses or trade associations for projects with a service delivery component;
- 2) Identify a variety of effective strategies that will ensure effective coordination among the various partners throughout the implementation of the project; and
- 3) Demonstrate – in the form of Memoranda of Understanding, substantive non-form letters, or other documents – strategic relationships are already in place, each partner understands its roles and responsibilities, and leadership fully understands and supports the proposed activities including the planned evaluation.

Note: Projects that include changes to education, employment, and/or training service delivery strategies but do not demonstrate well-established partnerships with employers, trade associations, and/or other business representatives can receive no more than two (2) points for this factor.

Factor 2 - Strategic Communication (2 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must demonstrate that the communication strategy described is sufficient to help the project obtain buy-in from key constituents and position the project to be integrated into the regular workforce system at the end of the grant.

Factor 3 - Integration into Formula-Funded Activities (3 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must provide evidence that successful project components will be sustained after the grant period by describing specific actions it will take to a) highlight successful project components that are worthy of sustaining; b) identify early in the project funding sources to sustain the project, including WIA formula funds and other federal, state, local, or private funding sources; c) make organizational policy changes that will enable the integration of those components into regular workforce system funding streams; d) align and leverage appropriate regular workforce system funding streams during project implementation; and e) any other actions it deems necessary for sustainability.

6. Budget and Budget Justification (3 points)

Reviewers will assign points based on the extent to which applicant’s Budget Narrative in Section IV.B.2.:

- 1) Provides a complete description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A (as described in Section IV.B.1) in sufficient detail to justify the total cost for each line item;
- 2) Demonstrates that the budget is justified and reasonable given the scope of work of the project, including adequate staff personnel devoted to the project to support achieving project objectives; and
- 3) Provides an explanation of how the costs in the proposed budget and budget narrative align with the proposed project work plan, and are justified as adequate, cost-effective, and reasonable for the resources requested.

B. Review Criteria for Program Evaluation Component

The evaluation criteria are based on the information required in the application as described in Section IV.B.4. The evaluation criteria are described below:

Criterion	Points
1. Description of Evaluation Plan (See Section IV.B.4.a. Description of Evaluation Plan)	40
2. Contribution to Evidence Base (See Section IV.B.4.b. Contribution to Evidence Base)	30
3. Evaluator Procurement and Deliverables Plan (See Section IV.B.4.c. Evaluator Procurement and Deliverables Plan)	20
4. Evaluation Budget Narrative (See Section IV.B.4.d. Evaluation Budget Narrative)	10
TOTAL	100

1. Description of Evaluation Plan (40 points)

To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must clearly demonstrate that the proposed evaluation activities will result in a quality evaluation that contributes to and enhances existing evidence using a design type required for the project type, and within the timeframes as specified by DOL.

Factor 1 - Evaluation Design Type is Appropriate to Project Type (10 points): The reviewers will award points for this factor based on whether the proposed program evaluation plan is at the level of rigor required for the proposed the Project Type, as explained in Section IV.B.4.a. The applicant must identify the evaluation design type selected for the Project Type and justify it based on the amount and type of existing evidence available for the innovation. The justification must be based on the cited

scholarly research and the experience of the applicant implementing the proposed strategies. Evaluation plans that do not conform to the evaluation design type required for the Project Type for which they are applying will receive no points (0) for this factor.

Factor 2 - Description of Evaluation Components (20 points): Reviewers will award points for this factor based on the extent to which the applicant provides a complete program evaluation plan for evaluating the program. The applicant must accurately describe all evaluation plan components to be developed as required under Section IV.B.4.a. To receive full points, the evaluation plan components must provide a sophisticated description of the study methodology and data collection methods to be used. The applicant must thoroughly describe the research methodology including data collection methods. The applicant must also fully explain the logic model and how component(s) of the innovation being tested will result in the outcomes identified for the project.

Factor 3 - Evaluation Timeline and Schedule (10 points): To receive full points, applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements for completion of evaluation activities, including preparing and submitting an Initial Evaluation Design Report and a Final Evaluation Design Report within Phase I of the grant, participation in technical assistance activities, and participant follow-up requirements.

2. Contribution to Evidence Base (30 points)

To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed evaluation will add to the body of research evidence and yield knowledge that will support evidence-based decision making in the workforce investment system.

Factor 1 - Building on Evidence Base (15 points): Reviewers will award points for this factor based on the extent to which the applicant clearly explains how the proposed evaluation builds on the evidence base described in Section IV.B 3.b.iii. in the Project Narrative. The narrative will be evaluated based on how clearly the applicant's project and evaluation links with the existing evidence in terms of subject matter and past evaluation rigor.

Factor 2 - Contributing to the Knowledge Base of the Broader Workforce System (15 points): To receive full points for this factor, the applicant must provide a compelling description of how the evaluation findings will contribute to both evidence-based decision making in the workforce investment system and to general workforce knowledge. The narrative

will be evaluated based on whether the applicant shows that evidence generated will fill a gap in currently available scholarly research and whether the evaluation will have application to the broader workforce system.

3. Evaluator Procurement and Deliverables Plan (20 points)

Factor 1 - Process for Procuring Evaluator (10 points): Reviewers will award points for this factor based on the extent to which the applicant describes an effective evaluation procurement strategy that will result in the hiring of a qualified third party evaluator in timely manner to complete the deliverables for Phase I and Phase II. The reviewers will also consider whether the applicant has sufficient expertise in procuring evaluation services to ensure the evaluator will have an adequate level of capacity and expertise to meet the evaluation requirements of the proposed project.

Factor 2 - Strategy for Estimating Level of Effort and Conveying Requirements to Potential Bidders (10 points): Reviewers will award points for this factor based on the extent to which the applicant articulates an effective strategy for estimating the level of effort for the evaluator including the time, level of expertise, and level of analysis required for successfully completing the proposed evaluation. Reviewers will also award points based on the strength of the applicant's description of how it will convey the evaluation requirements, expectations, and deliverables to potential bidders, and whether this process will result in procuring a strong evaluator within Phase I of the grant.

4. Evaluation Budget Narrative (10 points)

Reviewers will award points for this factor based on the reasonableness and appropriateness of the proposed evaluation budget including related costs to be incurred by the applicant's partners and the applicant's strategy for refining the budget after evaluator procurement. Reviewers will consider the breakout of costs for each evaluation activity and award points based on reasonableness. Applications with an evaluation budget that is less than 15 percent of the total funding requested will receive zero (0) points for this factor.

C. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this Solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the specified time on the closing date. Applications submitted under this SGA will be reviewed according to a two-tier process. In the first tier, a technical review panel will carefully evaluate all responsive project narratives against the selection criteria discussed in Section V.A. of this Solicitation. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this SGA. Up to 100 points

may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in Section V.A.

Based on technical scores awarded in the first phase (which may include mathematical normalization of the technical review panel scores), the Grant Officer will identify finalists who will move on to the second phase of the selection process. During the second phase, a separate panel of evaluation experts will review the evaluation proposal using the factors laid out in Section V.B.

The ranked technical scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of the review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as Project Type A, B and C representation, the ranked Program Evaluation Component score (described in Section V.B.), variety of strategies, the evaluation materials review, geographic balance; the availability of funds; and which proposals are most advantageous to the government. The Department reserves the right to award additional grants depending on the number and quality of applications and the availability of additional WIF grant funds.

The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. 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.

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 proposal.

Selection of an organization as a grantee does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, ETA 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. DOL reserves the right to not fund any application related to this SGA. DOL reserves the right to conduct a limited competition to awardees who demonstrate good performance to receive a

follow-on grant for participant follow up, additional cohorts, and/or other activities to support rigorous evaluation.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees will be subject to all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and the applicable OMB Circulars. The grant(s) awarded under this SGA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions:

- a. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A-122 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 230, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- b. Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A-21 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 220, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- c. State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments – OMB Circular A-87 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 225, and 29 CFR Part 97 (Administrative Requirements).
- d. Profit Making Commercial Firms Governments – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 CFR Part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- f. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 CFR Part 96 (Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 CFR Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations).
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. 29 CFR Part 32 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- j. 29 CFR Part 35 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- k. 29 CFR Part 36 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- l. 29 CFR Part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- m. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30 - Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.

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 Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and maintain that hiring practice even though Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act contains a general ban on religious discrimination in employment. If a faith-based organization is awarded a grant, the organization will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

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 OMB Circular A-122).

c. Transparency Act Requirements

Applicants must ensure that they 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:

- All applicants, except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under sub-paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, must ensure that they 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, applicants 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 proposals in response to this SGA 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 a proposal, Grantees 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 Grantee/s will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and Federal laws.

By submitting a grant proposal, the applicant agrees 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. 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. Grantees must not e-mail unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including ETA or contractors.
2. Grantees 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. Grantees must maintain such PII in accordance with the ETA standards for information security described in this TEGL and any updates to such standards provided to the grantee by ETA. Grantees who wish to obtain more information on data security should contact their Federal Project Officer.
3. Grantees shall ensure that any PII used during the performance of their grant has been obtained in conformity with applicable Federal and state laws governing the confidentiality of information.
4. Grantees further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through their ETA grant shall be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed

using grantee 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-grantee managed IT services, e.g., Yahoo mail, is strictly prohibited unless approved by ETA.

5. Grantee 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.
6. Grantees must have their policies and procedures in place under which grantee 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.
7. Grantees must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. PII data obtained by the grantee through a request from ETA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor except as permitted by the Grant Officer.
11. Grantees 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 the grantee is complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, grantees must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.
12. Grantees 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,

the grantee agrees that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

e. Record Retention

Applicants must be prepared to follow Federal guidelines on record retention, which require grantees to maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of not less than three years from the time of final grant close-out.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

Except as specifically provided in this SGA, DOL/ETA's acceptance of a proposal 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 Circulars require that an entity's procurement procedures must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide open and free competition. If a proposal identifies a specific entity to provide services, the DOL's award does not provide the justification or basis to sole source the procurement, i.e., avoid competition.

4. Special Program Requirements

a. Evaluation

Funded projects must include an independent third-party evaluation, funded by the grant. DOL has procured a National Evaluation Coordinator (NEC) for this effort under a separate procurement. Grantees and their agents, including third-party evaluators, are also required to submit evaluation deliverables directly to the NEC and participate in evaluation technical assistance events. Grantees and their evaluators must adhere to the NEC's instructions regarding program start dates and the confirmation process for evaluation designs. By submission of this grant application, the applicant agrees to participate in all evaluation activities associated with the WIF. Additionally, grantees will be required to follow the NEC's instructions throughout the grant period regarding the implementation and finalization of the evaluation and evaluation results. Failure to participate or adhere to this guidance may result in grant termination.

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 regarding future grants with ETA.

C. Reporting

Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements. Quarterly financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and MIS data must be submitted by the grantee electronically. The grantee is required 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. Grantees must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System and information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

Quarterly performance and narrative reports, required of all grantees, will be the primary mechanism through which ETA will understand the significant innovations and successes, the challenges encountered and strategies for resolution, and technical assistance needs to ensure the successful implementation of projects. DOL will identify a few standardized data elements to be reported on by all grantees. DOL will provide a reporting template for grantees to report on all standardized data elements, other data elements identified in the application, and any other data elements developed or refined during Phase I of the grant. Additionally, grantees will be required to participate in monitoring of evaluation programs conducted by the NEC and evaluation TA activities throughout the grant period.

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report, including a narrative report and performance data, within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities, performance goals, and milestones. The last quarterly progress report that grantees submit 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 used by the grantee. DOL will provide grantees with 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.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information about this SGA, please contact Jeannette Flowers, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Flowers.Jeannette@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA PY 13-06, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This announcement is being made 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.5., 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. No other attachments to the application will be published. The Project Narratives and Abstracts will not be published until after the grants are announced. 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 information.

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 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 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, and PII redacted. All non-public information about the applicant's staff (if applicable) should be removed 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.)

Applicants are encouraged 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).

Redacted information in grant applications will be protected by DOL 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. Technical assistance to support application development under the WIF is available now at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation under “Resources.” The site includes a toolkit on developing evaluation designs, lessons learned from first round WIF grantees, and pre-recorded webinars. The site also includes a Frequently Asked Questions document—check back frequently as the document may be updated. That site also includes an annotated bibliography of sources that are cited or referenced within the SGA, informed the development of the SGA, and/or includes other pertinent information that may be of interest to grant applicants. Pre-recorded webinars about the evaluation toolkit will be available on May 23, 2014. While a review of this guidance is not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that applicants consult this guidance.

A pre-recorded Prospective Applicant webinar will be available for viewing on-line at <https://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001411544052420695/info> no later than May 23, 2014. While a review of this webinar is encouraged, it is not mandatory.

ETA has 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. ETA encourages applicants to review these resources by visiting <http://strategies.workforce3one.org/>.

ETA has created a technical assistance portal at <https://etareporting.workforce3one.org/page/financial> 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, Federal Cost Principles, and accrual accounting.

Additional resources include 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 AJCs.

ETA encourages applicants to view the online tutorial, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” available through Workforce3One at: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

C. Required Elements of Initial Evaluation Design Report

The Initial Evaluation Design Report must include at a minimum: 1) a clear description of the innovation and the aspects of the innovation to be evaluated; 2) a clear description of the evidence base for the innovation and how the evaluation will contribute to the evidence base; 3) a final logic model (showing at a minimum inputs, outputs, mediators, and outcomes); 4) a clear description of the study purpose; 5) clear and evaluable research questions; 6) a statement of the primary outcomes of interest and how they will be measured including any sources of data; 7) a description of intervention participants, the study sample(s), the population to which the study applies, and the units of analysis; 8) a clear description of the evaluation method chosen (e.g., pre-post study, randomized controlled trial study) and the justification for that method; 9) power analyses (for randomized controlled trial studies); 10) a description of the implementation study including research questions, variables, and data sources; 11) a description of the Cost Allocation Analysis (for Type A Projects) or a Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (for Type B and C Projects) including research questions, variables, and data sources; 12) the evaluation timeline; 13) a statement of intent to secure IRB approval (if necessary); and 14) a statement of intent to provide de-identified data sets to the WIF National Evaluation Coordinator (NEC). The quality, content, and methods of the Initial Evaluation Design Report should be in line with WIF evaluation standards, which are based upon best practices in evaluation. The WIF NEC will assess the quality and content of the evaluation design report to ensure that it meets all standards. These standards will be provided early in the grant period. Further details on the evaluation (e.g., data collection methods, sampling methods, analysis methods, etc.) will be submitted during Phase II. Further details on the evaluation (e.g., data collection methods, sampling methods, analysis methods, etc.) will be submitted during Phase II.

D. Definitions

Cost Allocation Analysis: Cost allocation is a management tool that involves establishing a budgeting and accounting system that allows program managers to determine a unit cost, or cost per unit of service. This type of analysis includes documentation on program operational costs at the per-participant or per-system level.

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: A “Cost-Effectiveness” Analysis examines costs in terms of a single outcome. This outcome is not monetized. In the context of an employment and training program, the outcome could be placement, employment (ever employed), or employment meeting specific criteria (in terms of wages, benefits, retention, or whatever). A cost-effective program is one that delivers its key outcome at a reasonable cost per outcome—i.e. at a cost that is similar to or lower than comparable programs. There are more complex forms of this analysis. It is also referred to, especially with

health programs, as 'cost-utility analysis' (where the single outcome is usually years of life in full health).

Implementation Study: An implementation study illuminates and explains “what is happening and why” in the design, implementation, administration, operation, services, and outcomes of social programs. This type of study can provide context and information that makes impact evaluation results more useful. Findings from implementation research can be used to inform future program development or replication.

Institutional Review Board (IRB): A review body consisting of researchers, representatives of the research subjects, and individuals knowledgeable in the rights of human subjects, established or designated by an entity to protect the welfare of human subjects recruited to participate in biomedical or behavioral research. IRB review of all study materials is required in studies that directly affect the participants in some way such as in a randomized controlled trial study and may be required in studies that do not involve the participants directly.

Innovation: A process, product, strategy or practice that significantly improves (or is expected to improve) the outcomes reached with existing options and that has the potential to ultimately reach widespread effective usage.

Inputs: Resources that go into a program such as grant funds, personnel, equipment, etc.

Logic Model: A description of a program/process that includes a conceptual framework showing what is being used and how to achieve relevant outcomes. It provides an overview of a program/process and identifies key components of the process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e. the active “ingredients” that are expected to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes). The logic model also describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes and can be displayed in the form of graphic and/or textual descriptions.

Outcomes: The intended results of a process or program (including changes in conditions, such as employment, earnings, or income, as well as changes in attitudes, values, and behaviors).

Outcome Study: Examines the changes in targeted conditions, attitudes, values, or behaviors between baseline measurement and subsequent points of measurement. Changes can be immediate, intermediate or long-term. An outcomes study seeks to provide information on the effectiveness of a program without attributing causality.

Outputs: What is produced that can be easily described and quantified as a result of program activities (for example, numbers of workshops held or people trained).

Pre-Post Data Analysis: A type of outcomes study where indicator before a program (or a subject's participation in it) began (pre-program) is compared to indicator at a point after the program was completed (post-program).

Power: Power refers to the ability of a study to detect meaningful program impacts at a given level of statistical certainty.

Power Analysis: A power analysis is used to determine the required sample sizes necessary to reach statistical conclusions (also known as statistical significance). Usually, the results of a power analysis are expressed as Minimum Detectable Impacts (MDI) or Minimum Detectable Effects (MDE). The MDI allows the researchers to know the level of impact the new intervention must have on an individual's desired outcomes such as earnings and employment for the impact to be detected with a given sample size and specified probability of error.

Qualified Third Party Evaluator: A qualified third party evaluator is one that coordinates with the grantee and Department of Labor but works independently on the evaluation and has the capacity to carry out the evaluation, including but not limited to: prior experience conducting evaluations of similar design (e.g., for random assignment evaluations, the evaluator will have successfully conducted a random assignment evaluation in the past); positive past performance on evaluations of a similar design, as evidenced by past performance reviews submitted from past clients directly to the awardee; lead staff with prior experience carrying out a similar evaluation; lead staff with minimum credential (e.g., a PhD plus 3 years of experience conducting evaluations of a similar nature, or a Master's degree plus 7 years of experience conducting evaluations of a similar nature); and adequate staff time to work on the evaluation. A qualified third party evaluator will have submitted a proposal that clearly and completely responds to a Request for Proposal (RFP) and demonstrates knowledge of evaluation methods and workforce evaluations and responds to the needs of the grantees' evaluation as well as the project implementation schedule. In procuring a qualified third party evaluator, grantees must follow the Administrative Requirements at 29 CFR 95 or 97, as applicable. Specifically, the OMB Circulars require that an entity's procurement procedures must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide open and free competition.

Quasi-Experimental Design: Means an impact study or evaluation that uses a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design without random assignment by identifying a group of individuals that is similar to the group of

individuals receiving services in important respects but is not receiving the services.

Randomized Controlled Trial/Random Assignment Study/Experimental Design: Refers to a research design in which participants are randomly assigned by lottery to a treatment group that receives services or a control group that does not receive services. The difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group is an estimate of the effectiveness of the intervention. Most social scientists consider random assignment to be the only method of assuring that observed effects are the result of a given program and not other factors.

E. Grantee Meetings

All grantees must participate in an in-person intensive orientation and training event sponsored by ETA, and at least one additional national meeting. Both meetings will be held in Washington, D.C.

IX. OMB Information Collection

Except as otherwise noted, this solicitation falls under OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires January 31, 2016.

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 THE COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND IT TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SOLICITATION.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. The information collected through this “Solicitation for Grant Applications” will be used by the Department of Labor to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicants best suited to perform the functions of the grant. Submission of this information is required in order for the applicant to be considered for award of a grant.

Signed May 14, 2014, in Washington, D.C. by:
Sara Gallagher Williams
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration