

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications for Cooperative Agreements Under the Disability Employment Initiative

Announcement Type: Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA)

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY-11-11

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.207

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **June 1, 2012**. Applications must be received no later than 4:00 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: BJai Johnson, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 11-11, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to section IV.

Summary:

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), in coordination with Department of Labor's (DOL's) Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), announces the availability of approximately \$20 million for a third round of cooperative agreements to state agencies that administer the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. These funds provide an opportunity for states to develop and implement a plan for improving effective and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce. DOL is using this funding to make six to ten grant awards designed to: 1) improve educational, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes of youth and adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed, and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits; and 2) help these individuals with disabilities find a path into the middle class through exemplary and model service delivery by the public workforce system. The DOL will award DEI grants for a three-year period of performance.

The Appropriation Committee Senate Report 111-66 on H.R. 3292, the Bill that proposed the DEI, states the purpose of the DEI as follows:

“these funds... will improve the accessibility and accountability of the public workforce development system for individuals with disabilities. The Committee further expects these funds to continue promising practices implemented by disability program navigators, including effective deployment of staff in selected states to: improve coordination and collaboration among employment and training and asset development programs carried out at a state and local level, including the Ticket to Work program and build effective community partnerships that leverage public and private resources to better serve individuals with disabilities and improve employment outcomes.”

The DEI was established under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010, Public Law 111-117. Funds for this SGA were appropriated in the Department of Labor Act 2012, Division F of

the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012, Public Law 112-74. This solicitation provides background information and describes the application submission requirements, outlines the process that eligible entities must use to apply for funds covered by this solicitation, and outlines the evaluation criteria used as a basis for selecting the grantees.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Overview of DOL Initiatives

On September 30, 2010, ETA awarded funds, using both ETA and ODEP money, to nine states (Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia) for 3 years to implement the first round of DEI projects. On September 30, 2011, ETA awarded funds, using both ETA and ODEP funds, to seven additional states (California, Ohio, Hawaii, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington State, and Wisconsin) for 3 years to implement the second round of DEI projects. To date, ETA has awarded approximately \$41 million in competitive grants under the DEI to WIA-administering agencies. Information on DEI projects can be found at <https://disability.workforce3one.org>. This SGA funds a third round of DEI projects.

Previous DOL grants to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities through systems change in the public workforce system include ETA's Work Incentive Grants (WIG), the Disability Program Navigator Initiative (DPN), and employment service models, such as ODEP's Customized Employment, Workforce Action (Olmstead), the START-UP Initiative, and State Intermediary Youth grants. DOL has incorporated a number of promising practices from these grants into this SGA. In addition, Federal, state, and local systems have developed numerous other successful employment service models, and this SGA incorporates these promising practices as well.

Systems Change Models. From Program Years (PY) 2000 through 2010, DOL/ETA funded 65 WIGs and 51 DPN Initiative cooperative agreements to states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands to improve services in the One-Stop Career Center system and improve employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. WIGs were competitively awarded to state and local workforce areas that addressed systemic issues in the workforce system and resulted in the development of numerous tools and protocols to improve services to job seekers with disabilities. By 2003, DOL shifted the focus of the WIG funds toward supporting a full-time, dedicated staff person with disability expertise because this strategy had shown promise in expanding the capacity of the One-Stop Career Center system to provide integrated, accessible, and comprehensive services, and promote career and employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. In PY 2003 the Department devoted funds previously used for WIGs to support the DPN initiative through 2010. DPNs were located in local workforce investment areas to: 1) conduct outreach to the disability community; 2) promote meaningful and effective access to the One-Stop Career Center system; 3) establish linkages to employers to increase job opportunities; and 4) create systemic change through: i) ongoing partnerships and comprehensive, wrap-around services for job seekers with disabilities; and ii) integrated resource teams to blend, braid, and leverage resources across workforce and disability systems. The DPN Initiative also facilitated youth transition services; promoted asset development and financial literacy training; implemented the Ticket to Work Program; and built upon Medicaid Infrastructure Grants (MIGs).

Employment Service Models. Federal and state service systems use a number of employment service models, including traditional vocational rehabilitation (VR), supported employment, transitional employment, self-employment, and various forms of self-direction that provide control and choice to the individual job seeker. These models complement and reinforce the WIG/DPN successful strategies in One-Stop Career Centers.

For example, from 2001 through 2006, ODEP funded development and research work on Customized Employment in the One-Stop Career Centers through 26 grants across the country. Customized employment personalizes the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. Customized employment will often take the form of: task reassignment, job carving, job sharing or self-employment. ODEP reported that these projects increased the capacity of service-delivery systems to effectively serve people with disabilities and other "hard-to-serve" populations through individualized employment and placement services.

ODEP funded the Self-Employment Technical Assistance, Resource, & Training (START-UP/USA) cooperative agreements to document the viability of self-employment for people with disabilities including those with significant disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. Congress appropriated these funds to ODEP for the further development of self-employment of individuals with disabilities. START-UP provided technical assistance and disseminated resources nationally to persons with disabilities interested in pursuing self-employment. START-UP/USA also provided technical assistance to three sub-national projects in Alaska, Florida, and New York. This initiative generated data and information to validate systems capacity building strategies and system change models for increasing self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and documented the success of self-employment for these individuals (<http://www.start-up-usa.biz>).

A 2005 study of ODEP's projects resulted in several key findings, including the importance of the following strategies for increasing employment and wages for individuals with disabilities: 1) Increasing partnership and collaboration among and across generic and disability-specific systems that provide employment or employment-support services to produce more effective and efficient services through leveraging resources and funding across multiple systems; 2) Increasing use of self-direction in service and integration of funding among and across generic and disability-specific systems (including the blending and braiding of resources and funding across systems and programs), and the use of self-directed accounts providing choice and control to the individual job seeker, including the use of "flexible dollars" to assist in achieving employment outcomes (such as individual career accounts/budgets for needed services and supports including but not limited to transportation, assistive technology, resource ownership) that the existing system does not provide due to funding and/or time restrictions; 3) Increasing economic self-sufficiency through leveraging relevant generic and disability-specific tax incentives, financial education, social security work incentives, benefits planning, and other strategies for enhancing profitable employment resulting in the ability of people with disabilities to accrue assets and resources through employment; 4) Increasing the use of "universal design"

as the framework for the organization of employment policy and the implementation of employment services (DOL uses the term “universal design” to mean the use of common strategies that reinforce the concept of an inclusive setting that welcomes diversity. It means products and environments that are accessible to and useable by all. The use of universal design strategies enables workforce staff to provide easier access, a welcoming atmosphere, and better customer service. Universal design strengthens practices to serve better persons with disabilities and other multiple challenges to employment with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligence, and abilities. It provides multiple and flexible methods to ensure that the learners acquire the information and knowledge they need; and 5) Increasing the use of customized and other forms of flexible work options for individuals with disabilities and others with complex barriers to employment (“Evaluation of Disability Employment Policy Demonstration Programs,” Westat, June 2005).

ODEP’s WorkFORCE Action grants supported local non-profit organizations in demonstrations of customized employment strategies for persons with disabilities covered by the Olmstead Supreme Court decision of 1999 (Olmstead v. L.C., 527 U.S. 581, 119 S. Ct. 2176-1999). Key organizations involved in these efforts included local workforce investment boards (LWIBs), disability organizations, and other community organizations in order to build the capacity to provide employment services to persons with disabilities covered by the Olmstead decision, and document their employability, particularly through individually negotiated, customized jobs. The WorkFORCE Action grants documented effective partnerships across several Federal programs to ensure that employment is a component of efforts to move and keep people out of institutions/nursing homes, and document their ability to obtain integrated employment at minimum wage or above.

Youth Transition Models. In 2003 eight states received State Intermediary Grants to assist them in improving transition outcomes for youth with disabilities and conducting local pilot demonstrations to ensure that youth with disabilities (ages 14 to 24) obtain transition services consistent with the *Guideposts for Success*. These grants assisted states, under the leadership of state workforce investment boards (SWIBs), in the design, implementation, and evaluation of systems changes needed to improve transition outcomes of youth with disabilities at the local level. ODEP’s research indicates that all youth, including those with disabilities, need exposure to: 1) school-based preparatory experiences; 2) career preparation and work-based learning experiences; 3) youth development and leadership; 4) connecting activities, including knowledge of transportation, health care, and financial planning; and 5) family involvement and support. ODEP branded these five areas the *Guideposts for Success* (<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/topic/guideposts>). In addition to articulating the general needs of all youth the *Guideposts for Success* also address the specific needs of youth with disabilities within each of the five categories. Because of the grants, both state and local level organizations began more effectively to coordinate services for youth with disabilities. State and local level intermediaries provided training that enabled many organizations and individuals to become knowledgeable about services and resources available to youth with disabilities. Grantees developed cross-agency, multi-year state plans to support broader educational, vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development plans.

The grants demonstrated that intermediaries could serve a key function by helping to define roles within a partnership.

B. DEI Project Description

The Department's grant initiatives before the DEI helped facilitate significant improvements in the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities through the workforce system, including: increased accessibility of the One-Stop Career Centers; expanded capacity to serve persons with disabilities; trained front-line and partner staff; and increased partnerships. DOL is now looking to refine and verify the effectiveness of these delivery strategies for further replication across the workforce system. This DEI SGA requires that applicants develop a project plan that includes all of the Required Project Components in Section I.C., a required partnership and collaboration strategy, and uses at least two of the additional Strategic Service Delivery Components in Section I.D. Due to the level of effort expected from grantees and the level of funding available, DOL requires applicants to focus primarily on either adults or youth (ages 14 - 24) in order to develop and refine replicable models and expertise. Almost all states and territories have received funding under ETA and/or ODEP grant opportunities made available from PY/Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 to PY/FY 2010. These grants helped identify a number of promising strategies (identified in Section I.D. of this SGA) to improve education, training, and employment outcomes of adults and youth with disabilities. Selection of a focus on adults or youth for the purposes of the DEI cooperative agreement must not preclude the provision of services to all individuals with disabilities, regardless of age, who are accessing the workforce system. If the project selects a youth focus, applicants are encouraged to include outreach to out-of-school and at-risk youth with disabilities (e.g., high-school drop-outs, youth involved in foster care and juvenile justices systems, young mothers, etc.). From prior experience, the Department expects that most customers of the public workforce system will benefit from the implementation of the DEI cooperative agreement, regardless of which population is the focus.

C. Required Project Components

The state's DEI technical proposal design must include the following components:

1. State Level DEI Project Lead – Applicants must designate an individual at the state level as a DEI project lead who will be responsible for the following:

- Identifying and coordinating with participating LWIBs to ensure that issues and challenges are addressed and that common goals are achieved (The reference to LWIBs throughout this SGA is not meant to eliminate states with single state workforce areas from the DEI.);
- Representing the state in administrative communications with the designated ETA Federal Project Officer (FPO), ETA Grant Officer, and National Office ETA and ODEP representatives;
- Facilitating state and local DEI participation in training and technical assistance activities;
- Establishing and coordinating partnerships, via both formal and informal mechanisms, with other state-level agencies that may be critical to the success of education, training, and employment activities, and that are often most effectively engaged at the state level (e.g., Education, Medicaid Agency and MIGs, VR, Mental Health, Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Projects (WIPA), and Intellectual Disability/Developmental Disability agencies, among others);
- Coordinating implementation of Ticket to Work administrative activities, such as

access to WIA and Wagner-Peyser (W-P) individual records and coordination with the Social Security Administration (SSA) or its representatives (e.g., MAXIMUS, CESSI); and

- Facilitating implementation of additional data collection and process evaluation requirements, as DOL may require, for evaluation purposes.

2. *Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC)* – LWIBs that participate in the DEI cooperative agreement must commit to hiring a new, or designating an existing, full-time staff person(s), as the disability resource coordinator(s) to implement the strategic approach of the applicant's proposal. This person or persons should have disability-related knowledge skills, experience (including experience with the employment and public workforce system challenges of persons with disabilities) and abilities that can be applied to implementing the project design at the local level. To the extent possible, LWIBs should consider former DPNs for employment in this role due to the extensive training and knowledge they acquired over the years. The Department also encourages LWIBs to hire individuals with disabilities for this employment position.

3. *One-Stop Physical, Programmatic, and Communications Accessibility* – Applicants must verify that all the participating LWIBs and all participating One-Stop Career Centers comply with physical, programmatic, and communication accessibility requirements established in non-discrimination regulations in 29 CFR part 37, which implements Section 188 of WIA. Applicants must address the status of the most recent accessibility survey in local workforce areas participating in the DEI cooperative agreement, along with the corrective actions identified and resolve any identified corrective actions within 90 days of grant award. The Department expects that applicants and LWIBs will continue to review and upgrade access to their One-Stop Career Center system as part of their on-going administration and compliance obligations.

4. *Participation in SSA's Ticket to Work Program as an Employment Network (EN)* – Operating as an EN under SSA's Ticket to Work program is required and an important strategic approach to sustainability and collaboration in addressing the needs of people with disabilities receiving SSI/SSDI cash benefits. Involvement in DEI by any state workforce agency or LWIB requires that either the agency or LWIB: 1) already operate as an EN under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act; or 2) agree to apply for EN status to SSA within 60 days after DOL selects the participating LWIBs to receive DEI funds for services via the modified site lottery process, as described in Section I.C.6. Establishing EN status for workforce programs at the state level is an important factor in successful execution of the EN role because it simplifies and expedites the application and payment processes for employment and training services already provided to Ticket holders. A number of WIBs and One-Stop Career Center operators have already become ENs and accept Tickets for the provision of training or employment services. Full participation in the Ticket to Work Program by the public workforce system can provide significant resources for services to individuals with disabilities. Active participation in the Ticket Program could greatly enhance funding and future sustainability of the DEI projects. The Department will work with state workforce agencies, LWIBs, One-Stop Career Centers, and SSA to identify and to eliminate administrative challenges that emerge. Information on SSA's procedures for requesting EN status is available at http://www.cessi.net/ttw/EN/one_stops/onestop.asp.

5. *Sustainability* – The applicant must include a plan to sustain the disability resource coordinator(s) after the grant period ends and to incorporate the promising practices that were successfully implemented by the project into state and LWIB policies and procedures. The applicant must provide specific examples of how it plans to sustain the DRC position and the successful strategies of the DEI.

6. *Mandatory Evaluation Process* – To be considered for the grant award, the state applicant must agree to participate in DOL’s data collection and evaluation activities and must have the capacity to do so. The DEI evaluation process will include a random selection by DOL of local workforce investment areas. State applicants must identify all the LWIBs in their states that have the capacity to implement the DEI and are willing to be part of the evaluation. The Department will only consider for inclusion in the DEI those local workforce investment areas that do not have significant monitoring findings under the WIA. After award, the Department will conduct a modified site lottery through which half of the identified LWIBs in each grantee state will be randomly selected to receive funding through the state to implement the DEI project. All adults and youth with disabilities in the selected DEI sites will have access to the services implemented under this SGA. All adults and youth with disabilities in the non-selected sites will have access to all the standard WIA and W-P services their LWIBs and the state offer, but not the services funded under the DEI grant. Please note that the Department will work with states that are single state workforce investment areas and receive a DEI grant award to determine an evaluation approach among districts in the workforce investment area that is consistent with this evaluation design.

We will compare the outcomes of these individuals across the two groups of LWIBs to evaluate the effects of DEI, specifically, to determine how services received differ between the two groups and the extent to which outcomes of the adults and youth with disabilities differ during the course of the grant project. To that end, all LWIBs listed in the application - whether they are selected or not in the lottery - must participate in the evaluation which will entail providing the evaluation contractor with the individual records of all adults and youth with disabilities served by the LWIBs. The state may use up to 5 percent of its DEI grant funds to help offset the cost of increased data requirements for all LWIBs in the evaluation. Successful state applicants will work with the Department and the evaluator to develop the lottery process that will select the LWIBs that will participate in the DEI grant project in order to ensure that all identified LWIBs and their workforce investment areas have an equal chance at receiving funding. DOL will make the final decision identifying which LWIBs will receive funding to implement the DEI project, and which LWIBs will be part of the control group and collect data for evaluation.

DOL will make maximum use of participant data from the Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) and W-P reporting system, and DOL will require additional data collection. For example, the evaluation contractor will conduct a series of site visits for the purposes of documenting grantee progress and to develop case studies. All LWIBs identified by the applicant as willing and able to participate in the state application (i.e., LWIBs selected to participate in the DEI plan and those designated as part of the control group) must collect additional participant data. DOL will require awardees to provide access to individualized records that contain sufficient information to allow data matching with SSA disability records.

D. Strategic Service Delivery Components

DOL requires that all applicants implement the first component, Partnership and Collaboration, as part of their service delivery approach for the adult or youth population they plan to serve. In addition, an applicant must identify at least two of the other six strategic components listed below to include in their service delivery approach. Note however, that applicants focusing on a youth population must choose the Youth Guideposts for Success components as one of their two additional strategies. These strategies, as defined in this SGA, are distinct from each other, but are not mutually exclusive and are complementary in the context of a state's overall implementation strategy. These are practices and strategies that DOL has identified through both ETA and ODEP grant initiatives to increase education and employment outcomes of persons with disabilities.

1. Partnerships and Collaboration

The Department requires that applicants use partnerships and collaboration as one of its strategies under this SGA. Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed project will include coordination with a variety of partners that impact the ability of adults and youth with disabilities to successfully participate in education, training, and employment opportunities at the regional, state, and local One-Stop Career Center levels. State-level partnership and collaboration efforts can greatly facilitate a state's ability to implement the strategic service delivery components of Integrating Services, Blending and Braiding of Funds, and Leveraging of Resources at the local One-Stop Career Center levels. Applicants must include a description of coordination plans, memoranda of understanding, and partnership strategies in the project proposal.

Coordination across multiple agencies includes outreach to customers and consumers, service and/or partner co-location and integration in One-Stop Career Centers, and leveraging available funds, resources, and organizational expertise. Partnering across multiple systems and programs is often a pre-requisite to providing all the supports that are needed to successfully address multiple challenges to employment. Potential partners include, but are not limited to: state and local VR; Medicaid/Medicare, MIGs, Mental Health; Developmental Disability/Intellectual Disability Agency; state and local Education Departments; SSA programs, such as WIPAs and Area Work Incentive Coordinators; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); higher education institutions; vocational training, health, and education programs; faith-based and community services organizations including employment service providers; national, state, and local financial literacy and asset development programs and resources; and older worker programs.

Finally, it is important that the application discuss partnerships and collaborations with relevant DOL-funded programs. DOL anticipates that applicants will consider the following DOL-funded programs in their strategic approach as persons with disabilities participate in these programs: WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Veterans Employment and Training Services programs (e.g., ReaLifelines); Job Corps; YouthBuild; Reintegration of Ex-offenders; Senior Community Service Employment Program; Registered Apprenticeship; WIA Indian and Native American program; National Farm Workers Jobs Program; and other relevant DOL-funded discretionary grant activities. All of these programs impact on persons with disabilities.

2. *Integrated Resource Teams (IRT)*

The IRT approach is a promising practice identified by the DPN Initiative whereby a team comprised of representatives from different agencies and service systems (both general workforce and disability-specific) coordinate services and leverage funding to meet the employment needs of an individual jobseeker with a disability. The jobseeker is the key member of the IRT and works with providers (e.g., WIA Case Manager, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, interpreter service, community college) to identify and strategize how their combined services and resources can benefit and support the individual's education, training, or employment goals.

IRTs can lead to improved communication and coordination of services for those impacted by multiple systems and variables. IRTs are organized around an individual jobseeker with a disability who experiences multiple challenges to employment and who has been enrolled in WIA intensive and/or training services (or is attempting to attain enrollment in these services). The concept from the IRT has now evolved to specifically refer to job seekers with disabilities who are currently enrolled and/or to be enrolled in WIA intensive and training services.

The DEI projects will work with the One-Stops to provide resource coordination for persons with disabilities who require a more intensive level of support in order to access services with the purpose of enrolling those who are eligible into WIA intensive and training services. An IRT starts as soon as WIA intensive and training services start (and no sooner). Persons who are ultimately determined ineligible for WIA and intensive and training services will still benefit from this active resource coordination

IRT members should include WIA staff (this may include but should **not** be limited to the Disability Resource Coordinator) and representatives from other systems from which the customer is receiving or in need of services. The members of each IRT should be based on the needs of each individual's employment plan and specific resource needs for obtaining and maintaining a successful employment outcome. IRTs differ from interagency committees or resource sharing agreements because they are informal and unique to each customer.

IRT's **do not** involve systems level agreements or modification of existing service delivery models or outcome requirements for participating service providers. IRTs require the alignment of existing individual service plans from two or more service providers and the coordination of those services with a customer to achieve his/her identified employment goal. IRT implementation involves the following steps:

- a) Identifying jobseeker customers with multiple resource needs and enrolling the jobseeker in WIA intensive/training services with a special emphasis on career exploration and resource planning;
- b) Providing active resource coordination for each individual customer to identify and respond to specific challenges impacting that individual's ability to obtain and maintain meaningful employment. Positive resource coordination is the first step prior to engaging targeted service providers in order to convene an IRT meeting. During the initial IRT meeting, the goal is to reach consensus on three key parameters: a shared employment goal; lines of communication; and a timeline for services;
- c) Engaging in ongoing communication with the customer and other service providers while the

plan is being implemented with the understanding that the IRT will meet as needed if the plan requires any significant modifications that cannot be accomplished through e-mail or phone communication. More information on IRTs and other DPN promising practices can be found at <http://www.doleta.gov/disability/> and <http://www.disability.workforce3one.org>.

3. Integrating Resources and Services, Blending and Braiding Funds, Leveraging Resources
Integrating services and the blending and braiding of funds from multiple funding sources are strategies that are often incorporated into IRT, *Guideposts for Success*, VR, customized employment, self-employment, and other employment models. Leveraging different Federal and state program funds involves two or more agencies agreeing to contribute resources to either an individual jobseeker or a group of shared job seekers as they attain education, training, or employment goals for example, one provider may cover supportive services, while another agency or program covers training costs. The individual job seeker or identified group of job seekers with disabilities may have multiple challenges to employment that are best addressed through a diversified funding strategy.

For the purposes of this SGA, we use the term “blended funding” to describe mechanisms that pool dollars from multiple sources and make them in some ways indistinguishable. “Braided funding” uses similar mechanisms, but the funding streams remain separate. Both mechanisms are used to provide greater efficiency and effectiveness by leveraging multiple resources to assist the individual customer in achieving his/her employment outcomes.

4. Customized Employment

Customized employment is a flexible process that involves negotiating an individualized relationship between a job seeker and an employer in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination and discovery of the strengths, requirements, and interests of a person with multiple challenges, as well as on an individualized match between these factors and the identified employer's business needs.

Customized employment uses an individualized approach to employment planning and job development - one person and one employer at a time. Customized employment may often take the form of: task reassignment; job carving (which analyzes work duties performed in a given job and identifies one or more, but not all, specific tasks that might be assigned to an employee with or without significant disabilities, typically used with individuals in supported employment who for a variety of reasons may not be in the market for full-time employment); job sharing; and self-employment. Customized employment provides an avenue to employment for job seekers who find that traditional job search methods do not meet their needs. More information on customized employment is available on ODEP's Web site at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/CE-FWA/>.

5. Self-Employment

Self-employment has long been an employment alternative for individuals seeking a new or better career. Today, many job seekers with disabilities are turning to the flexibility of self-employment to meet both their career aspirations and financial goals. Self-employed persons have increased latitude in determining the hours they work, the type of work they do, and how much money they make. Self-employment strategies for youth and adults with disabilities are consistent with ETA's policy guidance (Training and Employment Guidance Letter, No.12-10, “Supporting

Entrepreneurial and Self-Employment Training through the Workforce Investment System, November 15, 2010) in this area. Additional information on ODEP's self-employment initiative is available at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/SelfEmploymentEntrepreneurship.htm>.

6. *Youth Guideposts for Success*

ODEP, in collaboration with the National Collaborative on Workforce Disability for Youth, identified *Guideposts for Success* as a set of key educational and career development interventions that can make a positive difference in the lives of all youth, including youth with disabilities. The Guideposts, also described in Section I.A. of the SGA under "Youth Transition Models," are based on an extensive literature review of research, demonstration projects, and effective practices covering a wide range of programs and services, including youth development, quality education, and workforce development programs. For more information on *Guideposts for Success*, visit <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.

7. *Asset Development Strategies*

Asset development strategies include various approaches to enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency, including individual development accounts, financial literacy training for youth and adults, SSA Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) and other work incentives, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other tax provisions, and self-directed benefit and resource accounts, among others. Asset development strategies include benefits and services that are funded through resources other than those made available under WIA, such as tax filing assistance, housing, nutrition, health care, or child care assistance. You can find information on asset development strategies and tax credits, including their relevance for the workforce development system at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/findev.htm>.

E. Allowable Uses of Grant Funds

Grantees may use grant funds to fulfill the requirements identified above in the Sections I.C. and D. (required project components, strategic service delivery components) and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Disability resource coordinators or other project staff required to implement project design;
- 2) Partnership coordination and collaboration activities or meetings required to support the project objectives;
- 3) Necessary travel to conduct activities across the state or workforce investment area;
- 4) Necessary travel for the state lead and local area disability resource coordinators/project leads to attend one national conference per year; and
- 5) Service and programmatic activities to implement the objectives of the DEI cooperative agreement.

Up to 15 percent of grant funds are available for flexible spending purposes, which may include, but is not limited to, procurement of software upgrades, and other assistive technology equipment, supportive or intensive services to assure availability of training and employment services for individual job seekers, or other innovative approaches to meet the unique needs of an individual participant. The budget must include travel expenses to enable the state lead and local area disability coordinators/project leads to attend an ETA/ODEP-sponsored conference.

The applicants must budget for a conference to be held once a year, for example in Washington DC. Grantees must use WIA, W-P or other program resources to the greatest extent possible to fund all education, training, job search activities, and supportive services for participants. DOL believes that the successful outcomes of adults and youth with disabilities accessing the One-Stop Career Center systems during the life of DEI (and indeed the success of the DEI projects) depends upon the leveraging of funds and resources beyond the DEI grant funds for education, training, and other activities. Up to 5 percent of grant funds are available for possible additional data collection expenses.

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

The Department expects to award a total of approximately \$20 million, divided among six to ten cooperative agreements ranging from \$1.5 million to \$6 million each. Applicants should request an amount within this funding range proportionate to the needs and relative size of their project. DOL deems any grant application with a proposed value exceeding \$6 million as non- responsive and will not consider the application. DOL will issue the grants as cooperative agreements with the expectation that there will be considerable engagement by ETA and ODEP with states and their local workforce investment areas throughout the life of the initiative. DOL will make extensive technical assistance available to grantees and DOL will conduct an independent evaluation by using quantitative and qualitative data from grantees.

B. Period of Performance

The period of performance will be 36 months from the date of execution of the grant documents. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities. Applicants should plan to expend all grant funds during the period of performance while ensuring full transparency and accountability for all project expenditures.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Applicants must not have received DEI project funding in 2010 or 2011. Applicants must be the state WIA administrative agency, also known as the state workforce agency. Congress' intent was that these funds be used to "improve the accessibility and accountability of the public workforce development system for individuals with disabilities." (Appropriations Committee Senate Report 111-66 on H.R. 3292). Therefore, the state WIA administrative agency **must not** pass these funds through to any other entity for administration. As part of the application, states must identify local workforce areas that will be part of the DEI, for DOL to select via a lottery process as either pilot or control sites.

As discussed in Section I.B., where a state has at least four LWIBs, the state workforce agency must select at least two LWIBs that have the capacity to implement the state's proposal under this SGA. If a state workforce agency chooses to select only two, only one of the sites will be selected via the modified site lottery to implement the DEI. The other site must function as a control group. States with a single workforce area may select at least two distinct areas within the state that can serve in the same roles as states with multiple LWIBs. Also, states with fewer than four LWIBs may select two of their LWIBs that can serve in the same roles as LWIBs in

states with four or more LWIBs. In either case, DOL will score these applications on the same basis as those offering multiple LWIBs. All evaluation criteria, including the modified site lottery, will apply to these applications.

The Department will (in consultation with the state) conduct a modified site lottery of the identified LWIBs to select the participating LWIBs, and will require that the other half of the LWIBs not selected participate in the evaluation component and the collection of additional individualized data. However, please note that only LWIBS identified by the state participate in the DEI, either as pilot sites or as control sites. DOL will make the final decision on which LWIBs will receive funds to provide services under the DEI projects, plus receive funds for data collection, and which LWIBs will be control sites and only receive funds for data collection, as required by the evaluation.

The Department requires that LWIBs identified by states for inclusion in the DEI have: 1) demonstrated success in serving individuals with disabilities as evidenced by their WIA and W-P data and outcomes; 2) provided assurance of physical, programmatic, and communication accessibility; 3) demonstrated commitment to prior partner collaboration that suggests a high likelihood of success in the implementation of the DEI cooperative agreement's goals and objectives; 4) incorporated policies and procedures into the operations of One-Stop Career Centers to help them effectively serve people with disabilities; and 5) demonstrated ability to conduct outreach to the disability community and employers to facilitate the hiring of people with disabilities. Applicants must require LWIBs selected to implement the objectives of the DEI cooperative agreement to work with DOL training, technical assistance, and evaluation contractors as applicable. All LWIBs identified in the application must collect and provide relevant data, or other information identified by DOL as critical to the evaluation.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

We do not require cost sharing or matching funds as a condition for application, but we strongly encourage applicants to propose leveraged resources and they will affect the applicant's score in Section V.A. Leveraged resources can come from a variety of sources, including public (e.g., Federal, state, or local governments) and non-profit sectors.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

DOL will conduct a preliminary review of applications to determine whether they contain the required project components, identified in Sections I.C. and I.D. of the SGA. Applications that do not contain all of the elements described below will be considered non-responsive and will not be further reviewed.

1. State Level DEI Project Lead – Applicants must identify or designate a DEI project lead at the state level.

2. Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) – LWIBs participating in DEI must hire a new staff or designate existing full-time staff persons as DRCs. DOL expects the DRCs to work full time on the initiative and for grantees to consider former DPNs as a possible valuable resource to fill this position.

3. Accessibility – Applicants must verify physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility.

4. Become an EN(s) – The state workforce agency or LWIBs selected as DEI pilot sites must be an EN, or applicants must agree to apply for EN status to SSA within 60 days after the participating LWIBs that will receive DEI funds for services are selected via the modified site lottery process. DEI projects must remain an active EN according to established SSA performance standards which are monitored by the Operations Support Manager (OSM). We expect DEI sites to comply with OSM, and additional Technical Assistance guidance throughout the life of the DEI grant.
5. Evaluation – Applicants must agree to participate in the site lottery evaluation.
6. Strategic Service Delivery – Applicants must include the mandatory Partnership and Collaboration strategy, plus at least two additional service delivery strategies from a choice of six, to be part of the DEI project (Refer to pages 22 - 32).
7. Population Focus – Applicants must select either adult **or** youth as their primary population to be served.

D. Eligible Participants

1. Adults and Youth with Disabilities

These projects will serve adults and youth with disabilities. DOL will not define disability for this SGA nor ask for documentation of participants' disability. Applicants must focus on either adults or youth (ages 14-24) as the target population for the project. Selection of a focus on adults or youth for the purposes of the DEI cooperative agreement must not preclude the provision of services to all individuals with disabilities, regardless of ages, who are accessing the workforce system. If the project selects a youth focus, applicants are encouraged to include outreach to out-of-school youth and at-risk youth with disabilities (e.g., high-school drop-outs, youth involved in foster care and juvenile justices systems, young mothers). From prior experience, the Department expects that most customers of the public workforce system will benefit from the implementation of the DEI cooperative agreement, regardless of which population is the focus.

2. 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. 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.

E. Other Grant Specifications

1. 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 this grant competition, we will publish the abstracts required by Section IV, Part IIIa, for all applications on the Department's public website or similar publicly accessible location. Additionally, we will publish a redacted version of the Technical Proposal required by Section IV, Part II, for all those applications that are awarded grants, on the Department's website or a similar location. No other parts of or attachments to the application will be published. The Technical Proposals 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 confidential commercial/business information is information that is not usually disclosed outside your organization and the disclosure of which 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.¹

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. However, in order to ensure that PII and proprietary or confidential commercial/business information is properly protected from disclosure when DOL posts the winning Technical Proposals, applicants whose technical proposals will be posted will be asked to submit a second redacted version of their Technical Proposal, with any proprietary, confidential commercial/business and PII redacted. All non-public information about the applicant's staff should be removed as well.

The Department will contact the applicants whose technical proposals will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Technical Proposal. Submission of a redacted version of the Technical Proposal will constitute permission by the applicant for DOL to make the redacted version publicly available. If an applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Technical Proposal, DOL will publish the original Technical Proposal in full, after redacting personally identifiable information. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Technical Proposal will remain part of the complete application package, including an applicant's proprietary and confidential 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 is clearly proprietary, confidential commercial/business information, or PII. The redaction of entire pages or sections of the Technical Proposal 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

¹ Memorandums 07-16 and 06-19. GAO Report 08-536, *Privacy: Alternatives Exist for Enhancing Protection of Personally Identifiable Information*, May 2008, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08536.pdf>.

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. 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."

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This SGA 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 three separate and distinct parts: (I) a cost proposal; (II) a technical proposal; and (III) attachments to the technical proposal. Applications that do not contain all of the three parts or that fail to adhere to the instructions in this section will be deemed non-responsive and will not be reviewed. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application.

Part I. The Cost Proposal. The Cost Proposal must include the following items:

- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). 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. The signature of the authorized representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>).

- The SF-424B is not required to be submitted with the application. All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) number, and must supply their D-U-N-S® Number on the SF-424. The D-U-N-S® Number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. If you do not have a D-U-N-S® Number, you can get one for free through the D&B website: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

- The SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). 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.

- Note that the entire Federal grant amount requested (not just one year) must be included on the SF-424 and SF-424A and budget narrative. No leveraged resources should be shown on the SF-424 and SF-424A. The amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A and budget narrative must be the same. Please note, the funding amount included on the SF-424 will be considered the official funding amount requested if any inconsistencies are found. Applications that fail to provide an SF-424 including D-U-N-S® Number, SF-424A, and a budget narrative will be considered non-responsive and not reviewed.

- Regardless of the method of application submission, all applicants must register with the Federal Central Contractor Registry (CCR) before submitting an application. Step-by-step instructions for registering with CCR can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step2.jsp. An awardee must maintain an active CCR 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 CCR database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update on an annual basis from the date of initial registration or subsequent updates its information in the CCR 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. Failure to register with the CCR before application submission will result in your application being found non-responsive and not being reviewed.

Part II. The Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal must demonstrate the applicant's capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Solicitation. The guidelines for the content of the Technical Proposal are provided in section V of this SGA. The Technical Proposal is limited to 30 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. Applicants should number the Technical Proposal beginning with page number 1. Applications that do not include Part II, the Technical Proposal, will be considered non-responsive and not reviewed.

Part III. Attachments to the Technical Proposal. In addition to the Technical Proposal, the applicant must submit the following attachments:

- a) An up to two-page abstract summarizing the proposed project, including but not limited to the scope of the project and proposed outcomes, population focus (identifying adult or youth focus), and strategies selected. If using [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) for submission, this document must be attached under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled abstract.
- b) Project/Performance Site Location(s) form available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>. If using [grants.gov](http://www.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) Additional attachments:
 - 1) A work plan and implementation schedule, including staff responsibility, expected milestones, and outcomes (A sample work plan is attached to the SGA as

Attachment # 1);

2) A chart displaying the WIA and W-P data to address evaluation criteria in Section V.A. (Refer to Attachment # 2 for template);

3) A chart displaying state, population of state, a list of all LWIBs in the state, and the LWIBs identified for the DEI selection into control and participating (Refer to Attachment # 3 for template);

4) A chart providing verifiable information on grant performance for the last 2 years of DPN funding. The chart must include past cooperative agreement performance goals established by DOL and the actual grant outcomes obtained for: a) exiters with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement; b) entered employment rate for persons with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement; and c) employment retention rate for persons with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement (Applies only to applicants who have received an ETA-funded DPN cooperative agreement). This chart addresses evaluation criteria in Section V.A

5) A narrative statement describing a grant/cooperative agreement which served persons with disabilities, including the identification of two outcome goals required by the grantor and actual outcomes obtained, as well as information identifying the grant and grantor (Applies only to applicants who have **not** received an ETA-funded DPN cooperative agreement). This statement addresses evaluation criteria in Section V.A.;

6) A copy of the applicant's policy that explains how customers with disabilities are provided with meaningful and effective physical, programmatic, and communications access to the One-Stop Career Center services delivery system and all WIA-funded services. This policy addresses evaluation criteria in Section V.A.; and

7) Copies of policies and examples of practices that document how the objectives, related to providing integrated services to customers with disabilities of the ETA and ODEP-funded initiatives were sustained after Federal funding ended. These policies and practices address evaluation criteria in Section V.A.

Applications that do not include the required (abstract and project/performance site location) attachments and all the additional attachments listed under III c will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

Only those attachments listed above as required or additional attachments will be excluded from the page limit. The required attachments must be affixed as separate, clearly identified appendices to the application. Additional materials such as résumés or general letters of support or commitment will not be considered. Applicants should not send documents separately to DOL, because documents received separately will be tracked through a different system and will not be attached to the application for review. DOL will not accept general letters of support submitted by organizations or individuals that are not partners in the proposed project and that do not directly identify the specific commitment or roles of the project partners. Support letters of this nature will not be considered in the evaluation review process.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **June 1, 2012**. Applications may be submitted electronically on <http://www.grants.gov> or in hard copy by mail or hand delivery (**including overnight delivery**). Hard copy applications must be received at the address below no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. Applications submitted on grants.gov must also be successfully submitted (as described below) no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX) will not be accepted.

Applicants submitting proposals in hard copy 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 provide 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>. Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will be considered non-responsive. 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, Division of Federal Assistance, Attention: BJai Johnson, Grant Officer, Reference SGA-DFA-PY-11-11, 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 mail 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 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 the applicant begins to write the proposal, applicants should immediately initiate and complete the “Get Registered” registration steps at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. 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 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 you walk through the process. The Department strongly recommends that applicants download the “Organization Registration Checklist” at

http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf 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 above, applicants must have a D-U-N-S® Number and must register with the Federal Central Contractor Registry (CCR). 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 D-U-N-S® 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/applicants/org_step3.jsp.

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 CCR – 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 applicant as the AOR, thereby giving him or her permission to submit applications. To learn more about AOR Authorization visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step5.jsp, or to track AOR status visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step6.jsp.

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 you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your 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. 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, .xls, .rtf or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent us from considering the application. ETA 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/applicants/resources.jsp>.

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/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp.

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.

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 by 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 proposal 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 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

2. Administrative Costs

Under this SGA, an entity that receives a grant to carry out a project or program may not use more than 10 percent of the amount of the grant to pay administrative costs associated with the program or project. Administrative costs could be direct or indirect costs, and are defined at 20 CFR 667.220. Administrative costs do not need to be identified separately from program costs on the SF-424A Budget Information Form. However, they must be tracked through the grantee's accounting system. To claim any administrative costs that are also indirect costs, the applicant must obtain an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement from its Federal Cognizant agency, as specified above.

3. Salary and Bonus Limitations

Under Public Law 109-234, none of the funds appropriated in Public Law 109-149 or prior Acts under the heading "Employment and Training Administration" that are available for expenditure on or after June 15, 2006, may be used by a recipient or sub-recipient 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, except as provided for in section 101 of Public Law 109-149. Public Laws 111-8 and 111-117 contain the same limitation on funds appropriated under each of these Laws. This limitation applies to grants funded under this SGA. The salary and bonus 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 Training and Employment Guidance Letter number 5-06 for further clarification: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2262.

4. 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 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 are permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.”

5. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

Organizations that receive grants through this SGA may not use grant funds to pay 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. Evaluation Criteria

This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used for each category to evaluate grant proposals. DOL will award points based on how well an applicant fully demonstrates its approach and/or qualifications and clearly provides that required information. We recommend that applicants structure their Technical Proposal around the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria in the same order in which they are listed and described below:

CRITERION	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS
1. Program Delivery- Strategic Approach	30
a. Primary Focus, Rationale and Objectives	(5)
b. Strategic Approach	(25)
2. Partnership Commitment and Resources	15
a. Strategic Partners	(10)
b. Partner Resources	(5)
3. Demonstrated Experience	25
a. Services and Outcomes to Adults or Youth with Disabilities	(5)
b. Physical, Communication, and Programmatic Accessibility	(5)
c. Programmatic Experience and Initiative	(10)
d. Registration and Operation as an Employment Network	(5)

4. Project Management	10
a. Staff Capacity	(5)
b. Fiscal and Administrative Capacity	(5)
5. Outcomes and Sustainability	20
a. Outcomes	(15)
b. Sustainability	(5)
TOTAL POINTS	100

1. Program Delivery – Strategic Approach (30 Points)

Discuss the strategic approach and how you will incorporate required and strategic service delivery components set forth in Sections I.C. and I.D. into the project activities, including how the strategic approach will result in increased access to and use of the One-Stop Career Center system’s services by adults and/or youth with disabilities and their improved education, training, and/or employment outcomes. Note that depending on the selected Strategic Service Delivery Components in Section I.D., not all of the items in the paragraphs below will apply.

DOL will assess the 30 possible points for this criterion as follows:

a. Primary Focus, Rationale, and Objectives (5 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides a clear and compelling description of the need for a DEI project. In particular, applicants must describe the service delivery gaps or other challenges in service delivery or employment outcomes of persons with disabilities through the state/local workforce system;
- Describes the overall objectives of the project and explains how these objectives are consistent with and support the goals of the DEI;
- Clearly identifies the primary focus of the DEI project (i.e., adults or youth focus) and fully explains the rationale for the selection of adult or youth focus. For purposes of this SGA, youth are ages 14 - 24 (applicants may select the full age range or age limits within this range);
- Provides adequate demographic information on who the local workforce investment area currently serves and who will be served by the project, and explains whether the project will focus on urban or rural environments, as well as identifying any additional special focus of the project on other targeted populations, such as: veterans with disabilities; homeless individuals; TANF recipients; individuals with developmental, psychiatric, and/or other non-visible disabilities; out- of-school youth; ex-offenders; racial or ethnic minorities; or other populations with significant disabilities.

b. Strategic Approach (25 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant provides a convincing narrative that:

- Fully describes the overall strategic approach to be implemented and demonstrates how this approach addresses the challenges of service delivery gaps discussed above and the unique needs of the identified population for the project;
- Clearly identifies at least two LWIBs to participate in the DEI project (refer to Section I.C.6.), and explains the specific criteria and process that the state will use

for selecting them, including an overview of the number of local workforce areas that exist in the state, and how many local areas the state plans to include. The state must consider the following factors in the selection process:

- 1) demonstration of success in serving individuals with disabilities as evidenced by their WIA and W-P data and outcomes;
- 2) provision of assurances of physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility; 3) demonstration of commitment to prior partner collaboration that suggest a high likelihood of success in the implementation of the DEI cooperative agreements goals and objectives; 4) incorporation of policies and procedures to help the One-Stop Career Centers to effectively serve persons with disabilities; and 5) provision of outreach to the disability community and employers to facilitate the hiring of people with disabilities. Single workforce area states selecting districts that would serve in the same roles as LWIBs in the states with multiple LWIBs should explain the specific criteria and process that they will use in selecting the districts. These states should consider using as many of the above factor as are relevant in the selection process;
- Explains how the strategic service delivery components in Section I.D. will be deployed to achieve the stated objectives;
- Includes strategies for and demonstrates experience in outreach to the population(s) the project expects to serve, including marketing of One-Stop Career Center services to job seekers with disabilities;
- If not already an EN, presents a convincing plan for how it will become an EN;
- Explains how the project design will impact the workforce development system, expand comprehensive service delivery, facilitate systems change, incorporate universal design, and improve the effective and meaningful education, training, and employment opportunities for adults or youth with disabilities; and

i. Adult Focus – In addition, for projects which have an adult focus, scoring under this criterion will also be based on the extent to which the applicant provides a convincing narrative that:

- Explains how the overall approach addresses the specific challenges and needs of adult job seekers with disabilities in the state, such as the availability of learning and skill assessments, retraining options, on-the-job training, post-secondary education opportunities, part-time employment, self-employment options, among others;
- Provides information on the availability of supportive services, including assistance with transportation and other short-term requirements for participation in training or employment;
- Provides adequate information, using labor market information data, on the state's economy, including career opportunities in high-growth job sectors, and explains how the project will incorporate this information in the project design;
- Provides information on linkages to the business community and explains the strategies it will implement to engage businesses to improve employment outcomes and achieve DEI's goals;

- Includes early intervention strategies, including deployment of Medicaid Buy-in (work incentive so people with disabilities can maintain their health coverage) and explains how the project will use SSA work incentive strategies for SSI/SSDI beneficiaries to achieve the goals of the DEI.

Or

ii. Youth Focus – In addition, for projects which have a youth focus the applicant must identify the age range (e.g., age 14 to 18 years old or age 19 to 24 years old) of the youth to be served. DOL will score this criterion based on the extent to which the applicant provides a convincing narrative that:

- Explains how the overall strategic approach addresses the needs of the youth the project intends to serve, including providing detailed information on the extent to which the focus is on transitioning into the workforce;
- Explains how the project will incorporate *Guideposts for Success*, as referenced in Section I.D;
- Identifies what vocational assessments, transition and intermediary services and what kind of parental involvement will be components of the project;
- Identifies strategies for linkages with middle and secondary schools and other education components;
- Explains how the project will accomplish the availability of work experience, summer youth employment opportunities, mentoring opportunities, on-the- job training and other opportunities for youth to engage in work experience;
- Identifies linkages to the business community and explains how engagement of businesses will facilitate quality work experience and help achieve the project goals;
- Identifies the availability of education, training, and employment opportunities that focus on career opportunities, in particular in high-growth job sectors, and explains the applicant’s approach to further career pathways;
- Explains clearly the objectives of the project design in terms of education outcomes, including access to community college and other post-secondary education, and the extent to which youth with disabilities will obtain credentials or other certificates of accomplishment;
- Identifies the extent to which the project will make part-time, temporary and self-employment options available; and
- Includes apprenticeship options, if applicable.

2. Partnership Commitment and Resources (15 points)

Discuss the partners with which the applicant is planning to collaborate including the nature of the partnership (including informal arrangements, such as cross-staff training, shared data, cross-referral, or coenrollment, and formal agreements such as MOUs), and resources available to the partnership. Include the criteria that the applicant will use to develop and evaluate partnerships and linkages among the LWIBs participating in the cooperative agreement.

DOL will assess the 15 possible points for this criterion as follows:

a. Strategic Partners (10 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent

to which the applicant provides a convincing narrative that:

- Identifies and explains the specific roles and contributions of primary local partners that will actively participate in the DEI project in terms that demonstrate understanding of the adult or youth focus and makes clear how these partners are integral to the goals and objectives of the applicant's project design;
- Identifies partners involved at the state-level, and explains the extent to which these partnerships (both general workforce systems and disability-specific programs and systems) have already been forged, will achieve systems change efforts through the DEI cooperative agreement, and will increase service delivery and outcomes at the local levels;
- Identifies the linkages among partners the project plans to develop and explains how they will facilitate improved services and outcomes for SSI/SSDI beneficiaries, including partnerships to address work incentives, asset development, and SSA work provisions;
- Explains how the state's partnership and collaboration strategy will lead to the increased enrollment of customers with disabilities in WIA intensive and training services and the relevant DOL programs identified in the SGA;
- Describes how the state's strategy for partnership and collaboration will develop or improve: coordinating across multiple services/programs; establishing and implementing coordination plans and strategies for partnerships; conducting outreach; achieving co-location and integration in One-Stop Career Centers across Federal programs; leveraging available funds, resources, and organizational expertise; and implementing an integrated case management and reporting system across agencies.

b. Partner Resources (5 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant provides a convincing narrative that:

- Explains how the program will leverage and incorporate partner resources and programs in the project design and how these will improve the services and outcomes of the adults or youth with disabilities, as well as accomplish DEI objectives;
- Identifies resources and program dollars that the program plans to use for the education and training of adults or youth, including resources that will be available from WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; and
- Explains how flexible funding dollars (if applicant plans to use them), such as individual development accounts, IRTs, or other funds that expand the likelihood of individual success and economic independence, will augment the available resources of individual job seekers and identifies partner resources the program anticipates will be available to the adult or youth with a disability through individual development accounts, IRTs, or other funds that expand the likelihood of individual success and economic independence, including flexible funding available through partner systems or the 15 percent of grant funds available for flexible-spending.

3. Demonstrated Experience (25 Points)

In this section, an applicant must provide information about its achievements to-date in the education, training, and employment or self-employment of adults and/or youth with disabilities;

actions taken to assure physical, programmatic, and communication accessibility of the workforce system; and the extent to which the applicant has promoted services that addressed the needs of job seekers with disabilities. The discussion must also provide the criteria the applicant will use to identify LWIBs with significant accomplishments in the areas below. DOL will assess the 25 possible points for this criterion as follows:

a. Services and Outcomes of Adults and Youth with Disabilities (5 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides full and complete data on WIA and W-P services for adults and youth in PYs 2009 and 2010. Applicants must provide this information in chart form as an attachment. Applicants focusing the DEI project on adults must include data on the: 1) number of all exiters/registrants and the percent of exiters/registrants with disabilities; 2) total number and percent entering employment and the number and percent of persons with disabilities entering employment; 3) total number and percent retaining employment and the number and percent of people with disabilities retaining employment; and 4) average wage of all exiters and the average wage of exiters with disabilities. Applicants focusing the DEI project on youth must include data on the: 1) number of all exiters participating in older (age 19 to 21 years old) and younger WIA (age 14 to 18 years old) youth programs and the number and percent of youth with disabilities; 2) educational achievements of all youth and those with disabilities; and 3) employment outcomes of older youth and youth with disabilities. DOL will rate applicants on the extent to which they have achieved successful outcomes when providing services to adults or youth with disabilities; and
- Identifies whether the state currently collects SSI/SSDI status as part of registration in WIA and W-P funded programs.

b. Physical, Communication, and Programmatic Accessibility (5 Points) – We will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides full and complete information on the status of physical, communication, and programmatic accessibility in the state's workforce system, including the status of accessibility surveys, workforce areas covered in the survey, corrective actions identified, and current status of resolution of any corrective actions. Also include information that demonstrates a high level of commitment to and innovation in achieving accessibility that has occurred at the state level and the LWIB level;
- Demonstrates the implementation of deliberate strategies to address accessibility and the applicant's serious commitment to improve accessibility and assure accessibility requirement have been met since the implementation of WIA. The applicant must provide a copy of its policy that explains how customers with disabilities are provided with meaningful and effective physical, programmatic, and communications access to the One-Stop Career Center services delivery system and all WIA-funded services. The applicant must include the policy as an attachment to the Technical Proposal. DOL will review the policy for and evaluate it on the extent to which it is designed to ensure accessibility, considering such factors as: availability of assistive technology for a variety of disabilities - physical, mental, learning, sensory, etc; reasonable accommodation process; communication access for person who are deaf or hard of hearing; and outreach to persons with disabilities;

and

- Explains implementation of assistive technologies, percent of workforce areas that use these technologies, and what improvements are still needed.

c. Programmatic Experience and Initiative (10 Points) – We will score this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides full and complete information on any special initiatives or projects it has used to address the employment needs of adults or youth with disabilities, including veterans, TANF recipients, homeless individuals, and ex-offenders.
- Applicants that have received ETA-funded DPN cooperative agreements in the past must provide in chart format, as an attachment to the Technical Proposal, verifiable information on grant performance for the last 2 years of DPN funding, including past cooperative agreement performance goals established by DOL and the actual grant outcomes obtained for: (1) exiters with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement; (2) entered employment rate for persons with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement; and (3) employment retention rate for persons with disabilities in the workforce areas receiving a DPN cooperative agreement.
- Applicants that have not received an ETA-funded DPN cooperative agreement must provide a narrative statement as an attachment to the Technical Proposal describing a grant/cooperative agreement (government or privately-funded) involving employment of persons with disabilities (e.g., ODEP's Customized Employment Grants and/or Youth Demonstration Grants), preferably completed within the last 6 years. Specifically, applicants must select and provide two goals required by the grantor and the actual outcomes obtained.
- Applicants that did not receive an ETA-funded DPN cooperative agreement must also provide the project grant number along with the name, title, organization, e-mail address, and telephone number of an individual from the previous grantor entity or agency who had oversight for the program referenced above and can verify the information stated by the applicant.

ETA reserves the right to confirm this information for all applicants.

- DOL will rate applicants on the extent to which they have achieved successful outcomes under the above-referenced cooperative agreements/grants.
- Provides copies of policies and examples of practices that document how the objectives, related to providing integrated services to customers with disabilities, of ETA and ODEP funded initiatives (for those that have received such funding) were sustained after Federal funding ended; and
- Provides evidence of how the state has succeeded in using partnership involvement and contributions (e.g., resources leveraged) to enhance outcomes for persons with disabilities.

d. Registration and Operation as an Employment Network (5 Points) – We will score this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates registration as an EN; and
- Demonstrates prior success (e.g., accepting Tickets, serving Ticket Holders, achieving successful employment outcomes for Ticket Holders) in participation as an EN at the state or local level; and
- Provides, if not already an EN, a plan for becoming an EN, which reflects the applicant's' knowledge of the EN application process and the Ticket to Work Program.

4. Project Management (10 Points)

Describe the capacity of the state to implement effectively the proposal. Applicants must complete a work plan (please find an example in Attachment # 1) and submit it as an attachment to the technical proposal. In addition to the work plan, in a separate narrative explain how you will monitor progress in achieving the goals of the grant through the work plan, implementation schedule, staff responsibilities, expected milestones, and outcomes. The narrative must demonstrate that you have the management and administrative capacity to collect the data required by the evaluation and to participate in each of the evaluation phases.

Describe how you will use management information systems to report on the performance outcomes of WIA and W-P adults and youth with disabilities in local workforce areas, and whether those adults and youth with disabilities have access to the DEI interventions or the standard WIA and W-P services. Explain how you will make full use of participant data from the WIASRD and W-P reporting system and additional data collections available from the Department to guide and evaluate the program.

DOL will assess the 10 possible points for this criterion as follows:

a. Staff Capacity (5 Points) – DOL will score this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates that the project lead has significant workforce and disability knowledge;
- Provides a plan to hire an experienced and knowledgeable disability resource coordinator (or more than one) at the LWIB level and identifies the criteria that the applicant will use to assure that participating LWIBs hire individuals with disability expertise and include current or former DPNs in the DEI disability resource coordinator positions when possible; and
- Identify any use of consultants anticipated during the course of the DEI project.

b. Fiscal and Administrative Capacity (5 Points) – DOL will score this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates the state's capacity to administer the DEI project, including fiscal and oversight capability, its capacity for early start-up, its capacity to timely and completely submit WIA quarterly fiscal, and program reporting, and its ability to make participant data available to the Department;
- Identifies the status of common intake, Management Information Systems (MIS), and integrated data sets for WIA, W-P, VR, and non-mandated WIA programs such as TANF and presents an effective plan for developing or further developing these

systems;

- Discusses state and LWIB audit or FPO findings and recommendations since PY 2007 and the status of corrective action(s);
- Describes its management and administrative capacity to collect the data required by the evaluation and to participate in all phases of the evaluation;
- Identifies how the state will provide access to the Department's duly designated contractor for evaluation purposes. DOL will protect the confidentiality of these records and they will be protected to the fullest extent possible under the law; and

5. Outcomes and Sustainability (20 points)

DOL will assess the 20 possible points for this criterion as follows:

a. Outcomes (15 Points) – DOL will score this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Clearly and specifically identifies an achievable set of anticipated outcomes for adults or youth participants that will result from grant activities, including establishing goals for: 1) retention and entered employment rates; 2) average wages and increased wages (if an applicant states that it expects employment outcomes that will result in sub-minimum wages for participants, DOL will consider the grant applicant **non-responsive and not consider it for funding**); 3) numbers of participants to receive core, intensive, and training services; 4) education outcomes; 5) increase in the number of LWIBs and One-Stop Career Centers becoming participating ENs (i.e., accepting Tickets); 6) increase in the number of Tickets; 7) increase in the number of persons with disabilities, including those receiving SSI and SSDI benefits, served through the One-Stop Career Center service delivery system in the states; 8) number earning an industry-recognized credential; 9) number earning Work Readiness Credential; 10) number of One-Stop customers with disabilities who are co-enrolled with One-Stop partners;
- Demonstrates its ability to achieve the stated outcomes and provide timely data on results within the timeframe of the grant; and
- Demonstrates the capacity of the workforce system to capture program co-enrollments (e.g., individuals enrolled in WIA and at least one other program, such as TANF, VR, ENs).

b. Sustainability (5 Points) – DOL will score under this criterion based upon the extent to which the applicant:

- Develops, explains, and documents specific sustainability strategies for implementing successful approaches that are demonstrated to improve the education and employment outcomes of adults and youth with disabilities beyond the end of the DEI grant; and
- Provides detailed information on WIA and W-P, Ticket to Work, and other program resources that the applicant will use to replicate or expand the promising practices implemented by the project to other LWIBs and One-Stop Career Centers.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this Solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the closing date. A technical review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria. 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 application, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in section V.A.

The ranked scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as urban, rural, and geographic balance; the availability of funds; and which proposals are most advantageous to the government. 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.

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:

- i. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A-122 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 230, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements)
- ii. Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A-21 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 220, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- iii. 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).
- iv. Profit Making Commercial Firms – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 CFR part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- v. All Grant Recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law No. 105-220, 112 Stat. 936 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.) and the applicable provisions of the regulations at 20 CFR 660 et seq. Note that 20 CFR part 667 (General Fiscal and Administrative Rules) includes unsuccessful applicant

appeal information.

vi. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Governmentwide 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).

vii. 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.

viii. 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.

ix. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

x. 29 CFR Part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.

xi. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

xii. 29 CFR Part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

xiii. 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:

i. 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 your 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 you are awarded a grant, you will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

ii. 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).

iii. Transparency Act Requirements

- Applicants must ensure that it has 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.

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, unless the activity is regarded as the primary work of an official partner to the application.

4. Special Program Requirements

i. Mandatory Participation in the Evaluation

Grantees must participate in an evaluation of the DEI conducted by an independent DOL contractor using the methodology discussed in Section I.C.6. By accepting grant funds, grantees agree to fully cooperate in the evaluation.

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

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities. The last quarterly progress report that grantees submit will serve as the grant's Final Performance Report. This report should 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 should thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches used by the grantee. This reporting will require post-program exit follow-up and tracking of participants. 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. Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements.

3. 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.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information about this SGA, please contact Eileen Banks, Grants Management Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance, at (202) 693-3403. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to banks.eileen@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA-DFA-PY-11-11, 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. Additional Resources of Interest to Applicants

A. DOL Web-Based Resources

1. DOL maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. For example, the Disability and Employment Web site on Workforce3One, <https://disability.workforce3one.org>, provides disability and employment resources for the workforce development system, including promising practices to promote the positive employment outcomes of persons with disabilities and DPN successful strategies and promising practices. It also has archived materials from the past seven years of DPN training and technical assistance activities.

2. In addition to ODEP's Web-based resources noted in other parts of this SGA, applicants may find additional helpful information on disability and employment issues at <http://www.dol.gov/odep>.

3. ETA encourages applicants to view the on-line tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through Workforce3One at:
http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

IX. Other Information

OMB Information Collection No. 1225-0086

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires November 30, 2012.

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 applicant 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 this grant.

Signed April 16, 2012, in Washington, D.C. by:

B. Jai Johnson
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration