

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications for the Workforce Data Quality Initiative

Announcement Type: Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA)

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY-11-01

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.261

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **April 19, 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: Latifa Jeter, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 11-01, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to section IV.

Summary:

The U.S. Department of Labor (the Department), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), announces the availability of approximately \$12.1 million from funds made available through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 DOL appropriation for Training and Employment Services for grants to State Workforce Agencies (SWA) to develop the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). For the remainder of this document, reference to the databases being created under the WDQI may be called “workforce longitudinal administrative databases” or “workforce longitudinal databases” interchangeably.

Grants awarded will provide SWAs the opportunity to develop and use State workforce longitudinal administrative data systems. These State longitudinal data systems will, at a minimum, include information on programs that provide training, employment services, and unemployment insurance, connect with education data contained in Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) databases and will be linked longitudinally at the individual level to allow for enhanced opportunity for evaluation of Federally and State supported education programs and lead to better information for customers and stakeholders of the workforce system. Where such longitudinal systems do not exist or are in early development, WDQI grant assistance may be used to design and develop workforce data systems that are longitudinal and which are designed to link with relevant education data or longitudinal education data systems. WDQI grant assistance may also be used to improve upon and more effectively use existing State longitudinal systems. Current WDQI grant recipients are ineligible for this competition.

This solicitation provides background information on workforce longitudinal database systems, describes the application submission requirements, outlines the process that eligible entities must use to apply for funds covered by this solicitation, and details how grantees will be selected.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

This initiative will support development of these longitudinal databases over a three-year grant period. Applicants will be expected to clearly demonstrate their plans to build or expand these databases, store and use the data in adherence to all applicable confidentiality laws and to identify what types of analysis they will conduct with their data while protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for all data collected.

A. Preparing to Apply for this Solicitation: The following are important considerations for the development of State Workforce Longitudinal Administrative Data Systems (for more details, please see Section V. further in this SGA).

1. Determining Capacity

In order for applicants for WDQI grants to submit plans to develop and fully implement workforce longitudinal data systems, they will have to identify their existing stage of development. Expectations for grantees will differ depending on their launch point, which will fall into one of three categories:

i. States without workforce longitudinal data systems are expected to: 1) develop and fully implement their systems, 2) enable their new workforce systems to be linked to existing education longitudinal data systems, and 3) begin conducting basic analysis and research, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws, with their completed systems within the three-year grant period.

ii. States with partial systems are expected to: 1) fully implement their systems, 2) enable linkages to existing education longitudinal data systems, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, which only permits the non-consensual disclosure of PII from these systems in limited circumstances, and 3) conduct significant analysis and research, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws, with their completed systems that will be accessible to policymakers and practitioners.

iii. States with comprehensive workforce longitudinal systems are expected to: 1) expand the breadth of workforce data collected, 2) improve linkages with educational systems consistent with FERPA, 3) complete and publicize extensive longitudinal analysis and research with their systems, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws, including developing prototype models of analysis that can be useful to other less advanced States, and 4) develop user-friendly platforms to show consumers performance data and analytical reports about education and workforce service providers, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws.

2. Collection of Longitudinal Workforce Data

Applicants will be expected to explain the scope of the longitudinal data system or data system enhancements which will be funded by this grant. Applicants will be asked to describe which programs will be included in the data system. At a minimum, the data systems should include disaggregated individual record data for the following programs: 1) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I, 2) Wagner-Peyser Act, 3) Trade Adjustment Assistance program data, 4) Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record data, 5) UI benefit data including demographic information associated with UI benefit payments, and 6) linkages to existing SLDSs housing K12 and post secondary data consistent with FERPA. Applicants are also encouraged to include data from other workforce and education programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult

Education, Career and Technical Education, or Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs¹. States will need to describe any State legislative barriers that impede the linking of data sources and address how such impediments will be overcome. It will also be incumbent upon SWA applicants to determine the source of all planned workforce data used to build the workforce longitudinal databases. This is particularly relevant in the case of the RA program as DOL is the registration agency and collects and houses the data for many of the State's RA programs.

Applicants must specify the planned data files – data records, elements, and fields - that will be contained in their workforce longitudinal data systems. Applicants should provide a detailed plan for designing, developing, storing and using the data as well as describe ongoing data-sharing and data storage procedures for both security and data quality purposes.

Applicants must also describe what procedures will be implemented to assure high standards of data quality as well as the protection of PII. Applicants should consult recommendations released from the National Institute of Standards and Technology on the protection of PII². WDQI grantees are expected to be a focal point for data quality assurance and must therefore indicate what steps they will take to assure that workforce data and data received from partner agencies meets rigorous data quality standards.

3. Partnerships Among Agencies Within the State

Applicants must indicate which organizations will participate in the WDQI along with their authority and willingness to provide regular access to their data and to take an active role. Workforce data may be supplied by organizations within the SWA as well as outside organizations. For example, UI wage records are kept by the State revenue agency in some States. The WIA program is also located outside the SWAs in some States. At a minimum, partnerships must be made with State education agencies, but cooperation is also encouraged with other State agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation or Apprenticeship agencies (in applicable States). Applicants should be prepared to describe potential legal or other barriers to data-sharing among partner agencies along with the strategies to overcome such barriers. Applicants should provide information about the firmness of the commitment of the partners in their efforts to assemble data. Commitments should be demonstrated by submitting descriptions or evidence of planned or existing memoranda of understanding (MOU), letters of intent from partners, data-sharing agreements, or other supporting materials including legally binding agreements with partners.

4. Working with a Research Partner

One common model that has been employed by many successful states (e.g., Kentucky, New Jersey and Wisconsin) has the State research university build and maintain the workforce longitudinal data system. However, alternative approaches that would maintain PII confidentiality and result in high-quality data systems will be considered for funding as well.

¹ Reed, Debbie, et. Al, “An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States” – Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Employment and Training Administration (forthcoming).

² McCallister, Erika, Grance, Tim, & Scarfone, Karen. “Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce. Special Publication 800-122. Retrieved from <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-122/sp800-122.pdf>.

Legislation in many States does not support data-sharing between the State workforce and education agencies. As a result, for some SWAs, an alternative data storing and/or data analysis intermediary may be necessary. Private and non-profit organizations with the capacity to safely house and manipulate large data sets in accordance with State and Federal confidentiality provisions may be able to serve as partners, though under FERPA, these organizations generally could not re-disclose PII from education records, except back to the providing entity. Many State research universities have the capacity to carry out the building of longitudinal administrative databases and are situated advantageously throughout the country. Partnerships with a State research university are a proven model.

When working with a State research university or research organization, applicants should investigate the additional security measures that may be expected by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of that university/research organization. The IRB will have to give approval for the State research institution's involvement in this partnership that is based on its satisfaction that the plan for confidential transfer, storage and usage of data and protection of PII is sound. Alternative models will be considered under the WDQI grant programs and it will be critical that the following considerations are incorporated into any partnership model.

- i. The research partner chosen by the SWA must have demonstrable capacity to assist in the collection and storage of the longitudinal workforce data.
- ii. This research partner entity must be able to ensure that the data collected will be stored in accordance with local, State and Federal confidentiality and PII protective provisions.
- iii. This research partner will be responsible for processing data requests, conducting in-depth data analysis, preparing standard reports, responding to requests for additional papers and reporting on State and local workforce and education issues and trends as requested by external entities, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws.

5. Confidentiality

Applicants must describe the methods and procedures (e.g. through demonstrating existence of or plans to develop MOUs, letters of intent, and data-sharing agreements) for assuring the security and confidentiality of collection, storage and use of all data contained in the workforce longitudinal data system, including protection of PII. Methods must describe how confidentiality in research, evaluation and performance management will be maintained. The responsibilities of the SWA and its partners should be enumerated and explained. Procedures for ensuring compliance with the State and Federal PII privacy and confidentiality statutes and regulations should be discussed, especially for the actual collection of data, data transmission, and the maintenance of computerized data files. Applicants should describe confidentiality procedures that will be used to protect PII, including requirements for the reporting and publication of data. Applicants should describe under what circumstances the PII data will be made available, to whom and to what level of specificity in accordance with confidentiality laws.

The applicant should also include within their description of personnel (see Section V.A.5 of this SGA) reference to the level of confidentiality or access to data to which those employees will be held based on their employment status. For example, generally employees of State research universities are State employees, are therefore agents of the State workforce or education agencies and are granted access to or restricted from sensitive data and PII based upon State laws. In addition, they are expected to observe rules set by the State university's IRB. It can be

assumed, for the purpose of this application, that all proposed employees will be subject to Federal laws governing data-sharing, transfer of data, and PII confidentiality, including but not limited to, the requirements of FERPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99.

6. Data-Sharing Agreements

Grantees must have partnership agreements outlining the storage, use and ongoing maintenance of the longitudinal databases. These data-sharing agreements must address: how data will be exchanged between partners, the purposes for which the data will be used, how and when the data will be disseminated, which entity maintains control of the data, which entity actually owns the data, the intended methods of ensuring confidential collection, use and storage of the data, and which entities inside and outside of the data-sharing agreements will have access to the data. Data-sharing agreements that involve the disclosure of PII from education records also must:

- i. designate the entity collecting the data as the authorized representative of the State educational authority to evaluate a Federally or State supported education program;
- ii. specify: (A) the PII to be disclosed; (B) the purpose for which the PII is disclosed to the authorized representative; and (C) a description of the activity with sufficient specificity to make clear that the work falls within the exception of 34 CFR §99.31(a)(3), including a description of how the PII will be used;
- iii. require the authorized representative to destroy the PII when it is no longer needed for the purpose specified;
- iv. specify the time period in which the PII must be destroyed; and
- v. establish policies and procedures, consistent with FERPA and other Federal and State confidentiality and privacy provisions, to protect PII from further disclosure (except back to the disclosing entity) and unauthorized use, including limiting use of PII to only authorized representatives with legitimate interests in the audit or evaluation of a Federal- or State-supported education program. Data-sharing agreements also should contain specific plans for secure data transfer and storage.

It may also be advantageous for grantees to develop data-sharing agreements with DOL to obtain individual level data for various programs for which the DOL is the data administrator. DOL encourages the production of full or limited scope public use data files that will be hosted by the SWA or an agreed upon designated host.

7. Integration of Efforts with State Education Agencies

SWAs must assemble and use longitudinal administrative data beyond workforce data. It is important to connect workforce and education data to analyze individuals' receipt of both education and training services and to determine ways to maximize the outcomes of these services.

- i. SWAs with longitudinal administrative databases are encouraged to develop new approaches to link these databases with education entities collecting comparable education data as well as with other State agencies.
- ii. SWAs which will be proposing to have their State workforce longitudinal data systems operated by a State university should assure that the State university staff will work closely with the State education agency as well as the SWA. It is important to note that many of the statewide educational data systems are also in the process of development. If the State's SLDS only contains K12 data, applicants would have to connect workforce data to the K12 SLDS as well as

any relevant postsecondary databases. In States where that data is not stored longitudinally, applicants would have to plan to link to available non-longitudinal education data, for example, individual-level post-secondary education data, consistent with FERPA. If a State's education agency has a partially or fully developed SLDS with both K12 and post secondary data, it will be the responsibility of the workforce grantee to work with that agency to link the education and the workforce data, consistent with FERPA. This is one example of the partnership that is expected between State workforce and education agencies in developing these linked longitudinal data systems.

Applicants must provide a description of the status of the development of the statewide longitudinal education data system in their State, including what data it houses and the institutions from which the State collects data; however, they will not be penalized for planning to incorporate, consistent with FERPA, education data which are not yet gathered longitudinally.

For those States where the education statewide longitudinal data system is emerging or undeveloped, DOL understands that it will take time to link education data into the State workforce longitudinal database, consistent with FERPA, in order to contribute to longitudinal analysis. However, these grantees must use these education data to evaluate Federally or State supported education programs as soon as they have sufficient periods of longitudinal education data matched to the workforce data.

iii. Coordinated data-sharing and analysis: There are many urban labor markets that span State lines, presenting opportunities for innovative models in this initiative. States may choose to work alone in developing a longitudinal database and still partner with agencies across State lines to share data for expanded analysis through the use of MOUs. In this case, applicants must demonstrate how they will ensure that the confidentiality provisions of each State and protection of PII under all applicable State and Federal laws will be adhered to.

B. Grant Purpose

The WDQI will provide funding to selected SWAs to accomplish a combination of the following objectives:

i. Develop or improve State workforce longitudinal data systems. Workforce data are already reported by localities, States, and nationally so grantees will not be creating entirely new data collection systems. What will be new, however, is coordinating or expanding/strengthening the coordination of these workforce data sources so individual-level records can be matched to one another across programs and over time.

ii. Enable workforce data to be matched with education data, to ultimately create longitudinal data systems with individual-level information from pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through post-secondary and into the workforce system to build capacity to evaluate the outcomes of Federally or State supporting education programs while protecting PII. For many years DOL has supported efforts to create workforce longitudinal administrative databases linked to data from other programs, including education data. The WDQI will greatly extend and expand this effort and complement the SLDS grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED's National Center for Education Statistics administers the SLDS grant program and provides technical assistance to all States on best practices and effective strategies to support their projects on areas critical to SLDS development. The Department's Privacy Technical Assistance Center offers technical assistance to State education agencies, local

education agencies, and institutions of higher education related to the privacy, security, and confidentiality of student records, which is also crucial to the development of these systems.

iii. Improve the quality and breadth of the data in workforce longitudinal data systems. It is important that data in the longitudinal systems are complete and accurate and include an array of performance information in order to enhance knowledge about the workforce system and the impact of State workforce development programs. Data collection systems might also be improved to strengthen data validity and to minimize the reporting burden on State agencies and training providers.

iv. Use longitudinal data to evaluate the performance of Federally and State supported education and job training programs. Policymakers and practitioners can use this data analysis to make programmatic adjustments that improve these programs.

v. Provide user-friendly information to consumers to help them select the education and training programs that best suit their needs. For example, Washington State displays information about training program outcomes at www.careerbridge.wa.gov, allowing consumers to compare the performance of different training providers.

The relative prominence of each objective for a given State will primarily be determined by the State's "launch-point" for developing a workforce longitudinal data system that will ultimately be linkable to education data and will reflect high data quality standards while protecting individual privacy (see the Section I.A.5).

C. Background

President Obama's FY 2011 Budget requested \$13.75 million and the Congress appropriated \$12.475 million for the development of workforce longitudinal data systems. Approximately \$12.1 million will be awarded to state workforce agency applicants; the remaining 3 percent, or \$374,250, is designated for technical assistance. Single-state applicants can qualify for up to \$1 million in funding (see Section III.A for more information on funding eligibility). In order to expand this Initiative to new states, applications will be accepted only from SWAs in states which are not current WDQI grantees (as a result of the prior solicitation SGA/DFA PY 09-10).

These funds will be made available through competitive WDQI grants administered by DOL in support of a parallel and much larger effort, the SLDS grants. This year, ED is providing \$38 million to support statewide longitudinal education data systems that link early childhood, K through grade 12, postsecondary, and workforce. An allowable priority for ED's SLDS program is using funds to capture data on workforce participation and outcomes of students after they leave education systems.

Some innovative States already have shown the advantages of SWAs partnering with education and other entities to create comprehensive, longitudinal data systems. The State of Florida, for example, has developed a comprehensive system that links individuals' demographic information, high school transcripts, college transcripts, quarterly UI wage data, and workforce services data. Such data systems can provide valuable information to consumers, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers about the performance of education and workforce development programs.

D. Classification of Workforce System Data

Workforce system administrative data are collected as part of the operations of a variety of programs administered at the State and local level. These programs provide employment and training services, pay UI benefits to unemployed workers, and collect employer-paid UI payroll taxes that pay for UI benefits. The employment and training data come from a number of large and small workforce programs that provide employment and/or training services to employed and unemployed workers. Information is available for each service that is provided to each worker by each program. Below are examples of the most common types of workforce data.

i. Wage Records: The UI administrative data come from State UI programs through regular employer reporting on contributions to the UI payroll tax system. An important source of data on the employment and earnings of American workers comes from these UI wage record reports that are derived from the tax forms on covered establishments' wage and salary employment filed quarterly by employers. UI wage record reports include: the number of workers, worker names, Social Security numbers (SSN), earnings, and employers' industry codes and locations. UI wage records are comprehensive, as over 90 percent of wage and salary employment is in covered establishments. Data are also available for civilian and military Federal employees, but not for the self-employed.

ii. Employment and Training Services: Each of the workforce system programs provides employment and/or training services to unemployed, underemployed or employed individuals. Some programs also provide services to new entrants to the labor market (with the exception of the UI program). Data on types of employment and training services received, such as self-service and informational activities, prevocational services, and specific training services, are available from a number of workforce programs including those authorized under the WIA, the Wagner-Peyser Act, from the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, the Registered Apprenticeship program and other workforce programs. Transaction information is available for each service (e.g., training receipt, job referral, job search assistance) that is provided to participants in each program, together with their personal characteristics and other demographic information. Not only is information provided on participation numbers for employment services and training programs, information includes employment status, pre-program earnings, occupation of employment, and education participation or completion levels of individuals.

iii. Unemployment Insurance Benefits: The UI program also collects data on applicants for and recipients of UI benefits, including the number of persons that apply for UI benefits, the number that collect benefits, and the amount of benefits paid. Administrative data collected in the UI benefit claims process include worker demographic information such as age, former occupation and industry, in addition to residency information (including the street, city, State, and zip code).

iv. The Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES): This data system provides States access to Federal civilian and military employment and earnings records maintained by the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Defense.

Data for all of these programs can be linked for any worker in the database because all of these programs collect the SSN of the participating individual. Workforce data can determine whether individuals have been employed, what their earnings and industry of employment are if they work, whether they become unemployed, whether they collect unemployment insurance upon unemployment, what employment services they receive from SWAs, and whether they use training services.

E. Workforce Longitudinal Administrative Data Systems That Are In Place or In Progress
DOL awarded first round WDQI funding to the following thirteen states: Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Nine states are expanding, improving, and enhancing current systems. Louisiana, Massachusetts, and Minnesota are creating new longitudinal data systems.

DOL also has supplementary information on the development of workforce longitudinal databases from a consortium of nine States that currently maintain longitudinal administrative data on the Department's Web site. ETA has had a longstanding contractual relationship with this consortium of States to conduct workforce research, analysis, and evaluations. The ADARE alliance³ members consist of California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, Texas, and Washington. DOL has funded the ADARE project since 1998.⁴ However, recently funds have not been available to support research and analysis to make full use of the linkage between longitudinal workforce and education data. Nonetheless, the ADARE partners have developed working relationships with State education or research entities.

The goal of the WDQI is to substantially reduce variation among currently existing state databases and build stronger longitudinal data systems through workforce data matching which can link to education data, consistent with FERPA.

F. Existing State Examples of Workforce Longitudinal Data Systems

Altogether, about a dozen States (including the nine ADARE States) have developed substantial State workforce longitudinal data systems. Most of these States created these systems using State funds for a variety of applications, including tracking program performance, analyzing program activities and conducting research and analysis. A small number of these States have accumulated workforce and other longitudinal data for several decades.

As of 2011, nine States continued to participate in the ADARE alliance – California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, Texas and Washington. All but two – Florida and Washington – use a State research university to assemble, house, and analyze their data. In all cases, cooperative arrangements through MOUs and data-sharing agreements have been developed, to enable the State WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, and UI programs to share their workforce data as input to the workforce longitudinal administrative database.

In all cases, State agencies receive analyses and reports derived from the databases that can be used to understand and improve workforce programs. However, each State has initiated and operated its workforce longitudinal data system in a different manner.

WDQI applicants may be able to learn from the various approaches of the ADARE States. These ADARE models form a useful set of examples for any SWA considering applying for a WDQI grant. While innovation is encouraged, applicants should make full use of the existing

³ Administrative Data Research and Evaluation (ADARE) Alliance Web site. 2009.
<http://www2.ubalt.edu/jfi/adare/>

⁴ Stevens, David W. 2004. Responsible Use of Administrative Records for Performance Accountability: Features of Successful Partnerships. <http://www.ubalt.edu/jfi/adare/reports/ADAREcookbook504.pdf>

knowledge and various models for building workforce longitudinal databases that have been developed in this field. Provided below is a brief description of four different State approaches that highlight successful workforce longitudinal databases models and applications of the information these databases provide. We note that we take no position on whether any of the data sharing agreements that were used under these different models complied with applicable Federal and State privacy laws, including FERPA.

1. University-led Partnership to Manage Statewide Data-Sharing– Maryland: In Maryland, the research component of longitudinal data-sharing was prioritized at the outset of the partnership between the Jacob France Institute of the University of Baltimore and the Maryland SWA, now the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR). The Jacob France Institute has been authorized through data-sharing agreements with DLLR and various other State agencies to hold shared performance evaluation responsibilities for Maryland’s WIA Title I-B (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training services), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy) and Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation) programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) performance calculations, and core indicators of the Carl D. Perkins Act secondary and post-secondary adult vocational education and training services. As the steward of this performance reporting system, the Jacob France Institute has formed partnerships with the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, the Maryland Department of Human Resources, the University System of Maryland, and locally with the Montgomery County Public Schools, the Baltimore City Public Schools, the Empower Baltimore Management Corporation, and individual community colleges.

2. University-led Partnership with Common Performance Management System – Illinois: The longitudinal data system developed in Illinois is an example of a productive evolution of data-sharing among State agencies and educational institutions. In the mid-1980’s the Center for Governmental Studies (Center) at Northern Illinois University connected with the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) to link UI wage records to program participant records under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Less than a decade later, after having established themselves as an authority on linking administrative databases, the Center was awarded a grant to fund a project linking UI administrative data from multiple States.

Beginning in 1994, the Center undertook a project to develop and implement a common performance management framework which led to the Illinois Common Performance Management System (ICPMS) linking UI wage records with client data from JTPA workforce development programs, adult education, primary and secondary vocational education, and welfare-to-work. With the implementation of WIA, the Center began a project to expand its administrative database longitudinally to include historical archives of UI wage records which were easily accessible. The Center benefits from the partnership by gaining access to data which allows for in-depth research. Likewise, the Illinois workforce agencies benefit from being able to use the database and related research to improve system performance. The partnership is based on transparency and cooperation and has led to analysis of longitudinal data that has influenced frontline program management and public policy.

3. Vendor Contracted Analysis of Longitudinal Data – Washington: The Washington State longitudinal administrative database began as a DOL project in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but has been maintained and expanded by Washington State since that time. Today, Washington State provides an alternative model for developing statewide longitudinal administrative databases of workforce and education information. The State workforce investment board (the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board or WTECB) collects and maintains the longitudinal State workforce data, but has contracted with a private, non-profit research organization, the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, to conduct analysis of the longitudinal administrative data.

By using a research organization, WTECB has been able to securely and effectively manage its commitment to accountability and performance monitoring. Furthermore, WTECB is able to track the outcomes of individuals in terms of achievement of workplace competencies, placement in employment, increases in levels of earned income, increased productivity, advancement out of services and overall satisfaction with program services and outcomes. In Washington State, there has been a focus on evaluating the returns on investment of the State workforce system in recent years.

Aside from using a research institution instead of a research university, Washington State is also unique because the SWA's high level of commitment to program evaluation through longitudinal data analysis is mirrored in the governor's office.

4. State-led Education and Workforce Longitudinal Data System – Florida: In 1971, State legislation designed to spur improved accountability in education resulted in creation of the Florida Statewide Assessment Program. This program was deliberately designed to collect a broad array of data on individuals moving through the educational system (kindergarten through post-secondary, undergraduate levels) for the express purpose of assessing student strengths and weaknesses to assist with education reform efforts. In the 1980s, the focus for data collection expanded to include career and technical education data⁵, particularly at the post-secondary level. Since 1991, Florida State law has required community colleges and State universities to contribute their data to this data collection system.

The breadth of this data system relies upon a collaborative data collection and retention commitment from both the Office of Educational Accountability and Information Services and the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (FAWI). In addition to tracking student progress through career or technical education, university or community college, FAWI compiles information from workforce and social service programs that complements the education data. This information includes data from WIA programs, TANF, and State UI and Employment Service programs.

Not only is Florida's longitudinal data system a unique example of the potential uses of a longitudinal data system, but it also shows the diversity of partnerships formed in the creation of this data system. Through the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), agencies such as the Florida Department of Corrections, the Florida Department of

⁵ Florida Case Study: Building a Student-Level Longitudinal Data System. The Data Quality Campaign, August 2006. http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/files/State_Specific-Florida_2006_Site_Visit.pdf

Education, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. Postal Service, the Florida Department of Management Services, the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Workforce Florida and numerous others have benefitted from information sharing or analysis of available data. The analysis from the Florida workforce longitudinal database has resulted in a detailed performance measurement system that goes far beyond the measures required by DOL or ED and has allowed for in-depth evaluation of State labor and education programs.

For more information about longitudinal data systems in other ADARE States, visit the Weblinks available in the first and second footnotes.

G. Selected Benefits and Uses of State Longitudinal Data Systems

State workforce longitudinal data systems can be used for a variety of purposes. DOL has primarily used the data to conduct evaluation and research. Most States have used these systems for measuring performance of workforce and educational programs, and generally to guide program operations and program development. Localities have been interested in how their school district or local One-Stop Career Centers are performing.

- In recent years, DOL funded two evaluations⁶ of WIA programs to determine the effectiveness of the program and its components.
- In conjunction with welfare reform in the United States, DOL began administering grants for welfare-to-work programs. The ADARE alliance members came together to evaluate the welfare-to-work programs in six urban areas located in six of the ADARE States⁷.
- Washington State had a number of its State-and Federally-funded workforce programs evaluated by an outside research organization, by awarding this organization a contract and giving it access to their workforce longitudinal administrative data⁸.
- Currently, Maryland makes use of its longitudinal data system for a wide variety of purposes. A recent study followed the employment history of graduates from high schools in a single county, for seven years. It used UI wage record data from Maryland and surrounding States, as well as data on Federal civilian and military employees to conduct analysis.

The examples above show some of what can be done with State workforce longitudinal data systems. Many other uses are possible. For example, by developing these statewide workforce longitudinal databases and linking them to comparable education databases, DOL, the States, and

⁶ Heinrich Carolyn J., Peter R. Mueser and Ken Troske. 2009. Workforce Investment Act Non-Experimental Evaluation: Final Report. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Labor.

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2419&mp=y
Hollenbeck, Kevin, Daniel Schroeder, Christopher T. King, and Wei-Jung Huang. 2008. Net Impact Estimates for Services Provided Through the Workforce Investment Act. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor.
http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2367&mp=y

⁷ King, Christopher T. and Peter R Mueser. 2005. Welfare and Work: Experience in Six Cities. Kalamazoo MI: W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.
<http://www.upjohninstitute.org/publications/titles/waw.html>

⁸ Hollenbeck, Kevin M. 2003. Net Impact Estimates of the Workforce Development System in Washington State. Upjohn Institute Staff Working Paper No. 03-92.
http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2367

localities could more effectively: 1) determine the employment outcomes for students (for secondary and post-secondary students alike) to evaluate Federally or State supported education programs, 2) analyze the cost effectiveness of Federally or State supported training programs in terms of increased earnings for individuals, 3) relate employment outcomes to Federally or State supported training and education program funding, and 4) illustrate the cost effectiveness of providing employment services programs by demonstrating whether there is a corresponding reduction in payment of UI and TANF benefits among individuals exiting the WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs. In the future, DOL is likely to fund projects focusing on program evaluation made possible through the development of these longitudinal workforce databases similar to the work of the ADARE States. As these databases are built, therefore, grantees should be prepared to address national research queries.

In addition, SWAs (or their data analysis partner) will be expected to use outside data resources to improve the breadth and depth of State workforce analysis. The following are examples of potentially useful data sets that can either be directly incorporated into the workforce longitudinal data system or used in conjunction with findings generated through that data system:

i. Local Area Unemployment Statistics program – This is a Federal-State joint program providing monthly estimates of total employment and unemployment for areas including, census regions and divisions, States, some metropolitan areas, small labor market areas, counties and county equivalents and cities and towns of 25,000 people or more.

ii. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) file – the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) collects data on establishments reported by UI-covered employers, including information on industry, domain (public or private), geographic location etc., which could add information on the type of employment held by individuals in addition to wage levels and duration of employment. The establishment-level information in the QCEW database is protected by the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficient Act (CIPSEA) and therefore may not be shared outside the cooperative statistical system. However, States have the capability of generating a version of this dataset that is not protected by CIPSEA. Further, BLS provides to the State cooperative statistical agency the linkages of establishments from quarter to quarter. Depending on State law and policy, the version of the establishment data not protected by CIPSEA and the quarter-to-quarter establishment linkages may be provided for use in the State longitudinal data system.

iii. Business Employment Dynamics (BED) – is a set of statistics generated from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, or ES-202, program. This data set is focused on employer data at the establishment level enabling BLS to track which firms are changing hands, ceasing to exist or acquiring additional resources. The BED file is built on the UI tax reports of each establishment which shows employment changes when companies form and fold. By showing quarterly gross job losses and gains (from 1992 onward) these data can highlight the dynamic changes occurring in the job market at a very local level or aggregated up to the State level.

iv. Mass-Layoffs Statistics program – BLS uses the volume of unemployment claims reported by each establishment in the U.S. to determine monthly mass layoff numbers. These mass layoffs are charted by month and by quarter for regions and industries and can be an effective tool to show major job losses affecting the local or State workforce.

v. Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) – The U.S. Census Bureau uses modern statistical and computing techniques to combine Federal and State administrative data on

employers and employees with core Census Bureau censuses and surveys while protecting the PII confidentiality of people and firms that provide the data. The LEHD research program is centered on the creation and empirical analysis of confidential, longitudinally linked employer-household micro-data for Federal and State administrative purposes as well as confidential Census Bureau surveys and censuses. The LEHD's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) is a voluntary partnership between State labor market information agencies and the U.S. Census Bureau. LED uses State UI Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage data micro-data provided by States. In many of the 47 participating States, longitudinal data reaches back nearly 20 years. The LED Internet-based tools include geographic information system mapping and localized workforce and industry reports.

vi. Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Program Data – An additional source of data on individuals who may not be represented in other workforce programs or in the education system is through the RA program. Applicants that include data from RA programs should note that the DOL Office of Apprenticeship is the registration agency for RA programs in 25 States and the data for RA programs in these States are maintained in DOL's Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS). In the other 25 States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories, the registration agency is a State Apprenticeship Agency recognized by DOL that has responsibility for registering apprenticeship programs and maintaining apprenticeship data. In cases where successful applicants propose to include apprenticeship data that are maintained in DOL's RAPIDS, an MOU, letter of intent, data-sharing agreement, or other supporting materials legally binding the use of RAPIDS, are not required. DOL will work with these grantees to provide access to apprenticeship data. Applicants should visit the DOL Office of Apprenticeship's Web site (<http://www.doleta.gov/oa/stateoffices.cfm> and <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/stateagencies.cfm>) to identify the Registration Agency appropriate for their State.

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

ETA has approximately \$12.1 million available under this competition and expects to fund approximately twelve grants. Individual grant amounts will not exceed \$1 million, for any single-state grant. Any grant application with a proposed value greater than \$1 million from a single state grantee will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered. In the event additional funds become available, ETA reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this solicitation.

B. Period of Performance

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

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this solicitation are those SWAs within the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands that were not recipients of a round one WDQI grant (as a result of solicitation SGA/DFA PY 09-10). States ineligible for this round of funding

consists of the following: Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required as a condition for application. Applicants should note that their plan for WDQI sustainability will be taken into account in the scoring under Section V.A.2 further in this SGA.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

There are no other eligibility criteria for submitting an application.

D. Eligible Participants

This section does not apply to this SGA.

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 Web sites 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 Web site 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 Web site 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 PII. Proprietary or confidential commercial/business information is information that is not usually disclosed outside your organization and when its disclosure 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, SSN, 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.⁹

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

⁹ 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>.

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 PII. (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 clearly is 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 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. As stated in block 21 of the SF-424 form, the signature of the authorized representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at

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

In addition, the applicant's signature in block 21 of the SF-424 form constitutes assurance by the applicant of the following in accordance with 29 CFR § 37.20:

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIA, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I—financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

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 Web site: <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 will not be 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 will not be 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 will not be 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 one-page abstract summarizing the proposed project, including but not limited to the scope of the project and proposed outcomes. The proposed project must include the applicant's name, project title, a description of the area to be served, and the funding level requested. The abstract will not count against the page limit for the Technical Proposal. If using grants.gov for submission, this document must be attached under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled abstract. Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may have a significant impact on future grants with ETA.
- b) Project/Performance Site Location(s) form (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). If using grants.gov for submission, this form must be attached under the required forms section. Please note that this is a standard form used for many programs and has a check box for applying as an individual. Disregard this box on the form as individuals are not eligible to apply for this solicitation.

The applicant may supply evidence or descriptions of planned or existing MOUs, Letters of Intent or other statements attesting to the formation of data-sharing partnerships as attachments to the Technical Proposal. Detailed descriptions/qualifications for proposed staff positions to be included in the development of these workforce longitudinal databases may also be included as an attachment. However, attachments may not exceed 30 pages, not including the one-page Abstract and project/performance site location form described above.

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

Only those attachments listed above as required 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.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **April 19, 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: Latifa Jeter, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 11-01, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., 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. Grants.gov will reject applications if the applicant's CCR is expired. Only applications that have been successfully submitted by the deadline and subsequently successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure a timely submission. While it is not required that an application be successfully validated before the deadline for submission, it is prudent to reserve time before the deadline in case it is necessary to resubmit an application that has not been successfully validated. Therefore, sufficient time should be allotted for submission (two business days) and, if applicable, additional time to address errors and receive validation upon resubmission (an additional two business days for each ensuing submission). It is important to note that if sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .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 proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles. Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles or other conditions contained in the grant.

Applicants, whether successful or not, will not be entitled to reimbursement of pre-award costs.

1. Indirect Costs

As specified in 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 U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner."

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. The evaluation criteria are described below:

Criterion	Points
1. Statement of Current Capacity	10
2. Plan Outline	15
3. Description of Partnership Strategies	30
4. Description of Database Design, Data Quality Assurance and Proposed Uses	35
5. Staffing Capacity	10
6. Bonus Points – Other Data Linkages	3
Total Possible Points	103

Please refer back to Section I.A of this SGA for more information on the components of the application requirements listed below. Please keep in mind that the Attachments to the Technical proposal may serve as space to include additional details on components such as the planned or existing MOUs, data-sharing agreements, letters of intent or job descriptions of key staff positions, however, a brief description of such must be included in the relevant sections below.

1. Statement of Current Capacity (10 points)

Applicants must submit a Statement of Capacity (for more information, please refer back to Section I.1) that clearly outlines the applicant’s launch point, which is the extent to which the SWA (or the lead research/data-sharing entity) has developed or plans to develop data-sharing partnerships, established or plans to establish longitudinal linkages among the different data sources, and produced or plans to produce useful analysis based on linked data. Proposals from applicants with new or partially developed data systems will be evaluated based on the thoroughness of their descriptions of the potential capacity existing in their States to create a longitudinal workforce data system based on the factors below. Applicants with planned or partially developed workforce longitudinal databases are encouraged to use this section to discuss the opportunities that exist in their State for formation of the longitudinal database. Scoring for this criterion will be based on the applicant’s ability to clearly demonstrate the following:

i. The capacity for maintaining secure data storage, including any partnerships that have or will be established between the SWA and another entity capable of maintaining secure data storage, such as a research entity (State university or otherwise). Partnerships are demonstrable through MOUs, data-sharing agreements or other legally binding contracts. Descriptions of existing agreements or plans to enter into agreements may be submitted as an attachment to the application, subject to the page limitations stated in Section IV.B of this SGA.

ii. Any planned or established partnerships between the SWA and the State education agency that are demonstrable through planned or existing MOUs, data-sharing agreements or other legally binding contracts. Descriptions of these may be submitted as an attachment to the application, subject to the page limitations stated in Section IV.B of this SGA. Applicants with new or partially developed longitudinal workforce databases should provide a detailed description of the steps they plan to take to develop these partnerships.

iii. Any existing or planned data linkages for data sets such as (but not limited to) wage record data, employment and training services data, UI benefits data, TANF data, WIA, Wagner-Peyser and Trade Adjustment Assistance program data.

iv. The extent to which the existing or proposed data-sharing partnerships have yielded or will yield statistical analysis and/or reporting on the State workforce system to inform stakeholders such as employment services customers, educators, policy makers, service providers and elected officials. Applicants with new or partially developed longitudinal workforce databases may also describe the need to have such data available for research and analysis.

v. Any partnerships with agencies in neighboring States which have come about through a commitment to share data in an effort to gather information on individuals traveling over State lines in pursuit of education or employment. Partnerships are demonstrable through MOUs, data-sharing agreements, or other legally binding contracts. Applicants with new or partially developed longitudinal workforce databases should provide a detailed description of the steps they plan to take to develop these partnerships. Descriptions of these planned or existing agreements may be submitted as an attachment to the application, subject to the page limitation stated in Section IV.B of this SGA.

Responses to the criteria in this section establish the baseline status of each applicant. A thorough statement will give the applicant as well as the grant reviewers valuable insight into the true scope of the project design.

2. Plan Outline (15 points)

Once an assessment of capacity is complete, it will be possible to make a plan for expanding or improving workforce longitudinal databases. It is important that the applicant integrate information about the current status of any existing longitudinal workforce database with the plan to proceed forward under this grant opportunity. For this section applicants should provide a complete, but brief overview since many of the same requirements listed below will be expanded upon in Sections V.A.3 through V.A.6. Scoring of this section will be based on of the ability of the applicant demonstrate a sound structural plan. The plan outline must:

i. Describe the State's objectives for creating or upgrading and using its workforce longitudinal data system and explain how the State plans to achieve these objectives. The appropriateness of the objectives and plans will be judged relative to the State's current data system capacity. Depending on the State's launch point, objectives should include a description of the plans for:

- creating or expanding workforce longitudinal databases
- improving the quality of workforce data
- developing or expanding the capacity to match workforce and education data
- using data for analysis that will help policymakers and practitioners understand the performance of workforce and education programs

- for applicants with a partially or fully developed workforce longitudinal database, creating user-friendly portals to publicize the data in ways that help consumers choose between different education and training programs.

ii. Describe the status of the statewide longitudinal education data system in their State.

Applicants will have to work with the State education agency to determine whether that State has begun to plan for their SLDS, has a partially developed or fully implemented SLDS program. The application should include a description of the SLDS plan and which sets of education data are part of the SLDS. If neither of these exist, the applicant must be prepared to indicate what education data sets (consistent with the requirements of Section V.A.4 in the SGA) they will incorporate into their workforce longitudinal data system until the State education agency is able to generate longitudinal education data to match with. (For basic information on the SLDS, see the following ED Web site: <http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/> and the following Data Quality Campaign Web site: <http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/>).

iii. Explain plans for sustaining these workforce longitudinal databases beyond the three-year grant period. Applicants should consider how their planned or existing MOUs and Data-Sharing Agreements will be renewed with their partners to ensure continued maintenance and analysis of the longitudinal workforce data. Continued Federal funding cannot be guaranteed, so applicants must research viable alternative funding sources and describe them in this section.

3. Description of Partnership Strategies (30 points)

Applicants must describe their strategy to create, sustain, strengthen or expand partnerships and maintain working relationships within and outside the State workforce system. In each of these partner relationships, the SWA applicants must document their proposed arrangements with State education agencies, which may include providing brief descriptions of existing or proposed MOUs, letters of support, and/or detailed plans for working relationships and shared responsibilities.

SWAs without the internal capacity to operate the longitudinal data system will need to partner with an external entity (such as a research university, private, for-profit or non-profit organization) to develop, maintain and use the longitudinal database, both operationally and for research purposes. In all cases, partnerships must be forged to gather relevant workforce and education data. The applicant must clearly describe the existing or proposed partnerships and briefly describe the data that the partner will be providing for the initiative (for more details, please refer to Section I.A of this SGA).

Note that States with a developed or partially developed workforce longitudinal database should focus on describing maintenance and expansion of partnerships, as a description of existing partnerships should have already been provided in the Statement of Current Capacity.

Scoring under this section will be based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates an effective plan to execute or to expand the following:

i. Partnerships within State Workforce Systems

Applicants must demonstrate capacity to either establish or improve arrangements for sharing workforce data.

ii. Partnerships with State Education Agencies

Applicant must demonstrate their capacity to establish or maintain a relationship with the State education agency leading the SLDS initiative. Partnerships must be established that will create the capacity to link data between education and workforce databases, consistent with FERPA, to support longitudinal data analyses and to provide performance information from secondary and post-secondary training providers to the workforce system and consumers.

iii. Partnerships with Research Universities or Other Research Entities

If the applicant does not have internal capacity to develop or operate a longitudinal data system, it must demonstrate the ability to establish or further develop a relationship with the research entity (State university or otherwise) or other entities that will be/are engaged in the development of longitudinal data systems. Partnerships must be established/expanded that will ensure that the collection of longitudinal workforce data adheres to local, State and Federal confidentiality laws, including but not limited to FERPA. Further, these partnerships must support the ongoing security and confidentiality of these databases for as long as they are in existence. The research university or other entity will be expected to conduct in-depth analysis of this longitudinal data and to produce standard reports and conduct specialized research projects and ongoing analysis.

iv. Partnerships with Additional State Agencies

These partnerships include (but are not restricted to) agencies such as the State revenue department or other agency outside of the SWA, where UI, WIA or other programs are administered in full or in part in that agency. Moreover, partnerships with State economic, human services or other agencies provide an opportunity to match individual level data to the workforce longitudinal database. MOUs or letters of intent must be included for each additional State agency.

4. Description of Database Design, Data Quality Assurance and Proposed Uses (35 points)

Applicants must provide the details of the existing or proposed database design and explain how the design will help achieve the applicant's objectives. Applicants with a developed or partially developed workforce longitudinal database must describe the existing database design, confidentiality measures and data analysis, and provide a detailed description of the intended design of or expansions to data content and usage. Applicants with no longitudinal database must provide a complete project plan that outlines system specifications, confidentiality measures and data analysis, and a detailed description of the intended design of data content and usage. Applicants will be scored under this section on the extent to which they are able to demonstrate the actual or intended use of the following elements:

i. Personal Identifier

Applicants must explain how the database will be developed or has been developed using the SSN as a unique personal identifier for individuals entering into the workforce system, in addition to jobseekers and employees already in the workforce system. The SSN is already in use throughout the workforce system and will allow States to gather this data longitudinally in order to accurately track movement into and out of workforce and education systems. Collection of the client's SSN is not required throughout the workforce system and may not be required as a condition of receiving workforce development services, and though it is nearly uniformly collected on a voluntary basis, DOL recognizes that the workforce longitudinal databases will be restricted to those individuals having supplied their SSN and therefore may not represent a complete database of all persons receiving workforce development services. These longitudinal

databases should also include the capacity to link, consistent with FERPA, to unique identifiers developed by the statewide longitudinal data systems.

ii. Data Quality Measures

Applicants must provide a description of how they will develop or improve data validation measures and other quality assurance measures used to promote the quality, completeness, validity, and reliability of the data collected.

iii. Scope of the Longitudinal Data

Applicants must describe which programs are or will be included in the data system and the extent to which the following data will or can be matched through their longitudinal data system:

- WIA, Title I
- Wagner-Peyser Act
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and Trade Readjustment Allowances program data
- UI wage record information from quarter to quarter measuring employment and income earning gains
- UI benefit claims and demographic data
- FEDES data
- Existing State education agency data (including early childhood, K-12, and post-secondary education student demographic data, test scores, teachers, graduation rates, and transcripts)

Applicants must also include a description of the types of analysis and research projects that will be conducted with the workforce longitudinal database to improve program performance and enhance customer choice. For examples of effective uses of workforce longitudinal databases, please refer above to “Selected Benefits and Uses of State Longitudinal Data Systems” in Section I.C., the “Background” section of this SGA.

iv. Security Measures

Applicants must specify the plans they will develop or improve to protect the confidentiality of these records, including but not limited to robust protection of PII. The method for storing, transferring, analyzing and sharing data must be detailed in accordance with State and Federal confidentiality provisions, including, but not limited to, FERPA. Applicants should also specify the planned data files – data records, elements, and fields - that will be contained in their workforce longitudinal data systems. Applicants should describe who will be designing, developing, storing, protecting and using the data.

v. Planned Reports/Deliverables

Applicants creating a longitudinal database must include in this section of the application their plans to produce reports that provide information about statewide performance of the workforce system. Applicants with partially or fully developed workforce longitudinal databases must describe the extensive research and analysis products that will be generated beyond the regular reporting and analysis requirements. Applicants must address how data from each partner will be incorporated into these reports, and how stakeholders can use the reports to improve the workforce system. Applicants should also describe their plan for disseminating reports and materials to the general public. These deliverables are for statewide use and though DOL reserves the right to request access to these planned reports, submission of these deliverables to DOL is not required. (Required reports on performance in development of the workforce longitudinal databases to be submitted to DOL are outlined in Section VI.C below)

5. Staffing Capacity (10 points)

Applicants must describe the proposed or existing staffing structure for this project, including project manager(s) and support staffing needs. Applicants will be scored on this section based on the thoroughness and realism of their description of the following:

i. The workforce longitudinal database must be overseen by a Database or Project Manager who is qualified to work with large and complex administrative longitudinal databases. The applicant must clearly list the duties and responsibilities of this position. The applicant must also describe the kinds of prior experience that the Database or Project Manager must possess in order to fulfill these duties and responsibilities.

ii. The duties and responsibilities of a data analyst(s).

iii. The identification and qualifications of proposed staff positions including knowledge, skills and abilities as well as examples of the kinds of previous experience that make a candidate for the position highly qualified to assist with planning, implementing and conducting analysis with these longitudinal databases. Detailed position descriptions may be included in the “Attachments to the Technical Proposal” within the page limits.

iv. How each staff member will be expected to facilitate or contribute to the various data-sharing partnerships. Be sure to include a brief discussion of how the applicant will ensure that any staff of this project will comply with State and Federal confidentiality laws. Please verify that State employees (with the workforce agency, other agencies or a State research institution for example) are already subject to State and institutional laws, regulations or procedures governing confidential data-sharing and/or transfer (please refer back to Section I.A.5 for more details) and be sure to include this in your description of such staff under this section.

v. What entity is to be the actual employer of each proposed staff member. For those who are not direct employees of the SWA, discuss how these individuals will contribute to the project and describe what their compensation levels will be.

6. Bonus Points – Other Data Linkages (3 points)

Up to three additional points may be awarded to applicants based on the extent to which they demonstrate concrete and feasible plans to include additional sources of data in their proposed longitudinal data system and/or that they have the necessary agreements in place to participate in the voluntary Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) 2, to facilitate the sharing of aggregate UI wage records with non-DOL Workforce Investment Act partner programs. These additional data sources may include Vocational Rehabilitation program information, Adult Education program data, RA program data, TANF records, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps) records, Career and Technical Education information, and data from other similar programs which may yield workforce-related outcomes. These points will be awarded based on the ability of applicants to present concrete and feasible plans to incorporate additional data sets and also on the number of additional data sets they intend to include into their proposed or existing longitudinal databases, as well as their agreements to participate in WRIS2.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this Solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the specified time on the closing date. 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 103 points may be awarded to an application, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in

section V.A. Please see Section V.6. for additional information about Bonus Points. The ranked scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as 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 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 CFR Part 96 (Audit Requirements for

Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 CFR Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations).

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 subparagraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the sub-award 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 Web site: <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.

iv. Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Applicants submitting proposals in response to this SGA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the Department of Labor and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order. By submitting a proposal, Grantees are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal law. All such activity conducted by ETA and/or Grantee/s will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and Federal laws. By submitting a grant proposal, the applicant agrees to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality by complying with the following provisions that are applicable in governing their handling of confidential information:

1. Grantees shall not extract information from data supplied by DOL/ETA for any purpose not stated in the SGA.
2. Grantees shall retain data received from DOL/ETA only for the period of time required to utilize it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, the Grantee agrees that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and permanent deletion of electronic data.
3. Grantees shall ensure that any information used during the performance of this Grant has been obtained and is being transmitted in conformity with applicable Federal and state laws governing the protection of PII and the confidentiality of information. Information transmitted to DOL/ETA containing sensitive information including personally identifiable information (PII) must be encrypted using National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 validated products. The encrypted information must be encrypted in a form that would allow the receiver of the information to decrypt the information without installing additional software or tools.
4. Access to any information created by DOL/ETA shall be restricted to only those employees of the Grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the Scope of Work outlined in this SGA.
5. Grantee employees and other personnel who will have access to sensitive/confidential/proprietary/private data and PII shall be advised of the confidential nature of the information, the safeguards required to protect the information, and the civil and criminal sanctions for noncompliance with such safeguards that are contained in Federal and state laws.
6. Prior to being able to have access to PII and other confidential data, Grantee employees and other personnel shall execute a standard document acknowledging their

understanding of the confidential nature of the data and the safeguards with which they must comply in their handling of such data as well as the fact that they may be liable to civil and criminal sanctions for improper disclosure.

7. Grantees further acknowledge that all data obtained through DOL/ETA shall be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed using grantee issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by DOL/ETA. Accessing, processing, and storing of DOL/ETA data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations e.g. employee's home, and non-Grantee managed IT services e.g. yahoo mail, is strictly prohibited unless approved by DOL/ETA.
8. All PII and other data shall be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving such records by computer, remote terminal or any other means. Data may be downloaded to, or maintained on, mobile or portable devices only if the data are encrypted using NIST FIPS 140-2 validated products. In addition, wage data may only be accessed from secure locations.
9. Data obtained by the Grantee through a request shall not be disclosed to third parties except as permitted by the Grant Officer.
10. Grantees shall permit ETA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or to conduct other investigations to assure that the Grantee is complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, Grantees shall make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.
11. Grantees shall take the steps necessary to ensure the privacy of all PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals and to protect such information from disclosure to unauthorized individuals. Grantees shall maintain such PII in accordance with the DOL/ETA standards for information security provided herein, including any updates to such standards provided to the Grantee by DOL/ETA. Grantees shall report immediately to the DOL ETA Information Security Officer (ISO) any suspected or confirmed breaches or compromise of PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals.

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

A. Evaluation

DOL will require that the program or project participate in a formative evaluation of the grant. DOL has reserved 3 percent of this round's total grant funding (a maximum amount of \$374,250) to provide both a technical assistance and evaluation contractor to assist grantees in developing

and implementing their WDQIs to ensure smooth implementation and execution. Grantees must agree to work with DOL's designated formative evaluation contractor and to provide access to program operating and technical personnel, as specified by the evaluator(s) under the direction of DOL, including after the expiration date of the grant.

B. 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. 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. Design Plan

Sixty days after execution of final grant award grantees must submit a detailed design plan which will expand upon and operationalize the activities proposed in this grant application as outlined in Part V of this SGA. This report must include a timeline which incorporates all project stages, milestones, targets and proposed schedule of deliverables stemming from the analysis of State workforce data for statewide dissemination. The grantee must submit a Cost proposal allotting the expenditure of this grant over the three year period including, but not limited to, considerations for equipment, personnel, fees and fixed costs.

4. Final Report

A draft final report must be submitted no later than 60 days before the expiration date of the grant. This report must summarize project activities, outcomes, and related results of the project, and should thoroughly document approaches. After responding to DOL questions and comments on the draft report, an original and two copies of the final report must be submitted no later than the grant expiration date. Grantees must agree to use a designated format specified by DOL for preparing the final report.

5. 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 Gerald Tate, Grants Management Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance, at (202) 693-3703. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to tate.lonnie@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA--PY 11-01, 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. Web-Based Resources

DOL maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. For example, the CareerOneStop portal (<http://www.careeronestop.org>), which provides national and state career information on occupations; the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (<http://online.onetcenter.org>) which provides occupational competency profiles; and America's Service Locator (<http://www.servicelocator.org>), which provides a directory of our nation's One-Stop Career Centers.

B. Industry Competency Models and Career Clusters

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

Career Clusters and Industry Competency Models both identify foundational and technical competencies, but their efforts are not duplicative. The Career Clusters link to specific career pathways in sixteen career cluster areas and place greater emphasis on elements needed for curriculum performance objectives; measurement criteria; scope and sequence of courses in a program of study; and development of assessments. Information about the sixteen career cluster areas can be found by accessing: www.careerclusters.org.

C. Workforce3One Resources

1. ETA encourages applicants to view the information gathered through the conference calls with Federal agency partners, industry stakeholders, educators, and local practitioners. The information on resources identified can be found on Workforce3One.org at: <http://www.workforce3one.org/view/2001008333909172195/info>.
2. ETA encourages applicants to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through Workforce3One at: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

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 N.W., 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 February 21, 2012 in Washington, D.C. by:

Latifa Jeter

Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration