U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration
Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications for Workforce Innovation Fund Grants

Announcement Type: Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA)
Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY-11-05
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.283

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is March 22, 2012. Applications must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

A pre-recorded webinar will be on-line at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation and accessible for viewing no later than December 28, 2011 and will be available for viewing anytime after that date. While a review of this webinar is encouraged, it is not mandatory.

Addresses: Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management, Attention: Donna Kelly, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 11-05, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to section IV.

Summary:
The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), announces the availability of approximately $98.5 million in Workforce Innovation Fund grants authorized by the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10). These funds support innovative approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system, both in terms of outcomes for job seeker and employer customers and cost-effectiveness.

I. Funding Opportunity Description
A. Overview of the Grant Program.
The Federal government currently invests over $9 billion annually in employment and training programs designed to support an efficiently functioning labor market through the public workforce investment system[1]. That system is, and will continue to be, called upon to do more

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[1] The public workforce investment system is a network of federal, state, and local entities that support economic expansion and develop the talent of our nation's workforce. Businesses and job seekers primarily access services through nearly 3000 federally-funded One-Stop Career Centers. Required One-Stop partners include the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, Adult Education, and Post Secondary Vocational Training under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Wagner-Peyser-funded employment services, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs and benefits, and other employment and training programs such as the Senior Community Services Employment Program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant programs, the Indian and Native American Program, the National Farmworker Jobs Program, Community Services Block Grants, Employment and training activities by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Job Corps. Additional human

with less, while meeting the needs of a dynamic and rapidly shifting economy. In the 12-month period ending June 30, 2011, the system served over 37 million people facing a range of employment challenges, including long-term unemployment, skill and credential deficiencies, and high job seeker – to job vacancy ratios that made it difficult for even the most competitive job seekers to find employment. To succeed in this context, the workforce investment system must deliver services that are cost-effective, demand-driven and high-impact.

The Workforce Innovation Fund ("the Fund") is one of several new Federal grant programs (including the Department of Education's Investing in Education Fund (I3) and The Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund) in which grantor agencies fund projects that seek to use evidence to design program strategies. Grants made under the Fund will provide funds to states, local workforce areas, and entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants to a) retool service delivery strategies and/or policy and administrative systems and processes to improve outcomes for workforce system customers and b) evaluate the effectiveness of such activities. Why are we interested in both service delivery innovation and systems reform? While employment and training outcomes rest on the effectiveness of service delivery strategies, the policy and administrative frameworks in which these strategies are developed and implemented also have an enormous effect. ETA believes that innovation at the systems level, where policies, organizational structures, planning processes, performance measurement, procurement, investment priorities, and information management systems reside, is necessary to support service delivery strategies that result in better outcomes and lower costs. In support of such goals, the Administration is seeking ways to remove administrative, statutory, and regulatory barriers to support greater coordination in the delivery of services, particularly among agencies and programs with overlapping missions and clients[2]. Through the Workforce Innovation Fund, ETA seeks to support changes in structures and policies that enable a closer alignment and integration of workforce development, education, human services, social insurance, and economic development programs.

By focusing on change at both the service delivery and the systems levels, and by requiring rigorous evaluation of each investment, ETA seeks to ensure that these investments form the basis for broader change and continuous improvement in the operation of the public workforce system. By adding new value for our customers, ETA seeks to contribute to the identification and documentation of evidence-based practice within the field of workforce development.

The Fund will invest in strategies that:
1. Deliver services more efficiently and achieve better outcomes, particularly for vulnerable populations (e.g. low-wage and less-skilled workers) and dislocated workers, especially those who have been unemployed for many months;

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resources program partners include transportation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs.

[2] OMB Memorandum (M-11-21). *Implementing the Presidential Memorandum "Administrative Flexibility, Lower Costs, and Better Results for State, Local, and Tribal Governments.* April 29, 2011.
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2011/m11-21.pdf

2. Support both system reforms and innovations that facilitate cooperation across programs and funding streams in the delivery of client-centered services to jobseekers, youth, and employers;
3. Ensure that education, employment, and training services are developed in partnership with specific employers or industry sectors and reflect current and future skill needs; and
4. Emphasize building knowledge about effective practices through rigorous evaluation and translating "lessons learned" into improved labor market outcomes, the ability to bring such practices to scale in other geographic locations and increased cost efficiency in the broader workforce system.

To that end, it is our goal that grants funded under the Workforce Innovation Fund will achieve the following within the workforce system: 1) better results for jobseekers and employers – such as reduced duration of unemployment, increased educational gains that lead to work readiness, academic and industry-recognized credential attainment, increased earnings, increased competitiveness of employers, etc.; 2) greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services – such as, more customers (job seekers or employers) served, decreased program attrition/customer throughput, faster job placement, or achieving outcomes for lower cost or reduction in program overlap and administrative costs; and 3) stronger cooperation across programs and funding streams – such as integrated data management information systems, braided funding[3], or changes that create a more seamless service delivery experience for participants who need help from multiple programs. It is our expectation that successful strategies will be sustained beyond the grant period through existing regular workforce system funding streams.

More broadly, the Fund will expand the availability of evidence-based practices in the workforce development field through careful evaluation of each grant investment. The Fund will invest in projects along a continuum of innovation and evidence, from new ideas that have never been tried, to well-tested ideas being adapted to new contexts. By evaluating projects along this continuum, the Fund will significantly increase the body of knowledge about what works in workforce development.

We will ensure that the Fund achieves its goal by: 1) providing grantees with a comprehensive program of support for the achievement of grant objectives and outcomes throughout the life of the grant; 2) providing a national evaluation coordinator, who will work with grantees' evaluators to ensure consistent and high quality evaluation; and 3) broadly disseminating what we learn about what worked, and what did not.

B. Examples of Innovation
To provide a better understanding of the types of service delivery and system reform strategies we consider to be innovative, we are providing examples in four categories. This list includes only a few of the many innovations and categories of innovation that would be appropriate for

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

the Fund. Therefore, the list is intended to be illustrative, <u>not</u> limiting. You should propose projects that best meet the specific challenges and needs in your state or local area, and should propose only those strategies that you are well-positioned to implement during the grant period. All proposed projects – whether focused on service delivery or structural reforms - must show an impact on workforce system customers during the life of the grant. It is possible but not necessary to fund direct service delivery with grant funds, as such services could be funded with regular formula funds. We recognize that some of these innovations may be enhanced by waivers of Federal laws or regulations (as well as modifications of State requirements), and as discussed in section I.E, we encourage you to identify which specific requirements, if waived, could enhance the proposed innovations.

Better coordination among programs and partners
- Implementing comprehensive career pathway approaches that align and bridge training, education, employment, and supportive services at the local and state level, partner with employers, and enable individuals to move beyond adult basic education and succeed in postsecondary education, earn industry-recognized credentials, and advance along a career path;
- Integrating adult basic education and occupational skills training to enable individuals to increase their educational learning gains and earn industry-recognized credentials while completing basic skills training;
- Further integrating the public workforce system and other programs such as Adult Education, Registered Apprenticeship, Unemployment Insurance (UI), and Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), which can enhance the impact of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) investments;
- Connecting the multiple systems and structures that serve individuals with limited English proficiency through mechanisms such as coordinating WIA funding for Titles I and II to support effective contextualized programs that result in increased fluency in the English language and the attainment of credentials that are relevant to employers;
- Connecting the multiple systems that serve disconnected youth, such as partnering with human service agencies to support summer employment and educational work experiences throughout the year; developing innovative pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to successful placement with Registered Apprenticeship programs; or improving coordination among existing programs, such as Job Corps and Youth Build;
- Designing and implementing a collaborative case management, intake and assessment approach cutting across multiple funding streams;
- Developing data-sharing agreements and/or additional statewide performance measures among agencies involved in the delivery of training, education, and employment services and in the development of economic development policies;
- Improving the connection between the WIA and UI systems to enhance reemployment services for all unemployed job seekers and shorten durations of unemployment of UI claimants through the creative use of technology and integrated service strategies;
- Integrating services at a regional level to align with regional labor markets and existing and emerging economic growth strategies; or
- Developing better coordination with non-government partners and privately-funded programs to meet the continuing needs of job seekers in this climate of economic austerity by leveraging non-federal dollars in the delivery of employment services.

Improving linkages between employment and training services and labor market needs
- Developing new programs for out-of-school youth that combine training in high-growth industry sectors with basic skills remediation and that incorporate placement into subsidized or unsubsidized employment opportunities;
- Building sector strategies that align employment and training services with the skill needs of regional employers in new or changing industry sectors;
- Developing new models to support and strengthen partnerships with business;
- Building partnerships with employers and community colleges or high schools to combine general academic instruction with occupational training; or
- Expanding Registered Apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs or structuring these models in innovative ways designed to lead to long-term career success.

New procurement strategies
- Adjusting procurement and cost allocation strategies to allow the use of multiple funding streams for a common purpose with less administrative burden, for example by finding more efficient ways to report time and effort for case managers serving participants in more than one program;
- Incentivizing effective services to those with the greatest barriers to employment by making a portion of a service provider's funding dependent on outcomes, and providing higher payments for achieving positive outcomes for the hardest-to-serve;
- Encouraging cost efficiency by driving down the costs of achieving successful outcomes through competition among multiple service providers; or
- Developing innovative ways to collaborate with and leverage funds from the private sector, foundations, and investors.

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

Please note that we anticipate making up to $20 million in additional funds available through a separate grant competition for Pay for Success (PFS) projects. Pay for Success (PFS) projects represent an innovative approach to funding public social service programs, for example through leveraged capital from private and philanthropic investors. Under this model the government pays for services only after clearly defined outcomes are achieved. This allows effective and evidence-based solutions to be identified and implemented while maximizing taxpayer dollars by paying only for demonstrated results. Pay for Success models will not be funded under this grant solicitation (SGA/DFA PY-11-05).

C. Partnerships

Partnerships are critical to providing innovative and effective service delivery strategies that meet the employment needs of job seekers, workers, youth and employers, and must be included in your proposal. We encourage you to look to a broad range of partners both within and outside of the workforce system when developing your strategies. Partnerships will vary depending on the nature and focus of individual projects, but examples may include:

- Partnering regionally with economic development entities and other critical stakeholders to better align education and workforce development activities with regional labor markets, economic growth strategies and employer demand.

- Partnering with the business community, including business associations, and educational institutions, including secondary and post secondary institutions such as community colleges, to design and implement programs and career pathways that lead to credentials and employment.

- Partnering with and leveraging resources from other federally-funded programs, such as Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Small Business Development Centers, and many others.

- Partnering with community-based organizations, as they are key providers of basic skills training, technical skills training, supportive services, and workforce development services in communities across the country.

- Partnering with local educational institutions, including community colleges.

- Partnering with workforce intermediaries to integrate new approaches to service delivery and stakeholder engagement into the workforce investment system[4].

D. Integrating Evaluation into Grant Activities: Three Project Types

One of the overarching goals of the Workforce Innovation Fund is to build evidence-based practices in the workforce development field. Therefore, every grant application must include a budget, design, and implementation plan for an appropriate third-party evaluation to be funded as part of the grant. We expect that the innovation strategies proposed under the Fund will fall on a continuum – some might be new ideas that have never been tried, while others might be well-tested ideas that applicants plan to adapt to new contexts. Since the appropriate evaluation strategy will depend on the degree to which the strategy has previously been tested, we have created three project types. Applicants must identify the project type in their technical proposal and include an evaluation strategy that falls into one of the following three project types:

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[4] A workforce intermediary is an entity that brings together various stakeholders in an entrepreneurial fashion for the purpose of integrating workforce information, resources, strategies, partners, and results, with a goal of meeting the needs of business and workers.

Project Type A: New and Untested Ideas – If you are proposing new or emerging structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that have been tried in limited circumstances (if at all) but are supported by strong logic models[5] and/or successful outcomes data, you should apply as Project Type A. ETA and the public workforce system will want to learn whether or not such ideas can be implemented, how, and at what cost. In proposing such a project, it will be particularly important that you construct a strong logic model showing the underlying theory of how your strategy will produce your intended outcomes and how you will demonstrate cost savings or cost effectiveness. You should also describe any prior implementation of the idea if the idea has been carried out in any manner. The proposed evaluation strategy should consist of at least collection and analysis of process, output, and outcome data, and if feasible within the financial constraints, a rigorous method to evaluate impact.

Proposals under Project Type A must range in size from $1 – 3 million dollars, and evaluation costs must be no more than 20 percent of the total.

Project Type B: Promising Ideas – If you are proposing structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that have been implemented and tested previously, and the testing indicates some potential for success and that more rigorous evaluation is needed, you should apply as Project Type B. ETA and the workforce system will want to learn more about the strategy's effectiveness. In proposing such a project, you must include positive evidence of effectiveness and past success. The cited evidence may consist of a variety of studies ranging from a simple pre-post data analysis or return on investment analysis to a study that includes an impact evaluation that employs a comparison group design. Your proposed evaluation strategy should be of a higher level of rigor than the evidence cited in the proposal, and should include the most rigorous strategy available to demonstrate impact given the financial constraints; such as a comparison group or random assignment (where applicable).

Proposals under Project Type B must range in size from $3 – 6 million dollars, and evaluation costs must be no more than 20 percent of the total.

Project Type C: Adapting Proven Ideas – If you are proposing structural and/or service delivery projects that a) further develop ideas that are already supported by strong evidence and/or b) take ideas supported by strong evidence to a larger scale, you should apply as Project Type C. For example, you may propose a service, product and/or a system change previously shown to be effective for one target group that you might now plan to offer to additional groups. In your application, you must cite existing evidence showing a positive significant effect and provide compelling arguments for the need and potential for success in expanding the scale of the proposed service, product and/or system change for a broader customer base. Your proposed evaluation strategy must consist of the highest level of evaluation rigor that is applicable to the proposed project. For example, the highest level of rigor for a service delivery innovation that is directly focused on participant outcomes is a random assignment study, while the highest level of rigor for a structural innovation may be a quasi-experimental evaluation. All proposed

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[5] As described in Section V.A.2. More information about logic models can be found at:
http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation.

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evaluations under project type C must include designing and conducting a minimum 12-month follow-up of program participants upon completion of services.

Proposals under Project Type C must range in size from $6 – $12 million dollars, and evaluation costs must be no more than 20 percent of the total.

We reserve the right to conduct a limited competition among type B and C awardees who demonstrate good performance and promising evaluation results to receive a follow-on grant for additional cohorts and a longer participant follow up plan.

E. Supporting Administrative Flexibility

Combined with grant funding, administrative flexibility can be a powerful tool to spur experimentation and innovation and support better coordination and improved outcomes. If, during the development of your innovation strategies, you identify impediments in current laws and regulations, or Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost circulars, we encourage you to submit, as an attachment to the technical proposal of your application (as described in IV.B. – Part III), either descriptions of waivers you would request if selected for grant award or formal waiver requests. You should construct your technical proposal based on outcomes and deliverables you can achieve without waivers or with only the waivers you have currently, and describe in the attachment the additional outcomes and deliverables you could achieve with new waivers. The attachment may include potential waivers for a wide variety of Federal programs, including but not limited to workforce development, education, human services, social insurance, and economic development programs. In the case of TANF, you should describe any administrative flexibilities that you believe could enhance the effectiveness of your demonstration effort.

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

Any formal waiver requests of WIA Title I received as part of the attachment will be processed and reviewed within 90 days of grant award. Applicants that submit only informal waiver descriptions will need to formally submit waiver requests according to the existing waiver approval process for the relevant federal legislation upon grant award. For additional information about waiver authority and formal submission processes for WIA Titles I-IV and the OMB cost circulars, see Attachment B.

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

Under this SGA, ETA has approximately $98.5 million available and expects to fund approximately 20 to 30 grants. Individual grant amounts will range from $1 million to $12

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million. There are specific funding ranges depending on the project type proposed, which are listed in Section I.D.

ETA will consider any grant request outside the specified ranges as non-responsive, and such applicants will not be considered for funding.

Applicants may submit no more than one application as the lead applicant. Applicants that do submit more than one application as the lead applicant will be deemed non-responsive and none of their lead applications will be considered for funding. Applicants may participate in an unlimited number of applications as a consortium member. ETA reserves the right to fund proposals at lower amounts than requested; in such circumstances, the grantee would be expected to adjust its scope of work accordingly. In the event additional funds become available (including if any funds set aside for PFS grants become available), ETA reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Solicitation.

B. Period of Performance
ETA expects to make awards by summer, 2012. The period of performance for grants awards pursuing project type B or C will be up to 40 months from the effective date of the grant for the technical grant performance, with an additional 12 months available for evaluation activities. The technical grant performance period for project type A will be up to 36 months, and includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities as well as grant close-out activities and the completion of the evaluation for grants.

Applicants should plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance (including both the period of technical grant performance and any additional period of evaluation activities) while ensuring full transparency and accountability for all expenditures. ETA will closely monitor grantee progress towards stated goals and may choose to terminate grants that are not on pace to complete technical activities by the end of their technical grant performance period or evaluation activities by the end of their evaluation period of performance. It is highly unlikely that the period of performance for these grants will be extended.

III. Eligibility Information
A. Eligible Applicants
1. In order to be eligible for consideration under this Solicitation, the lead applicant must be an eligible institution, as defined in this section. You must specify your applicant type in the Abstract, described in Section IV.B Part III. If you do not meet the applicant eligibility requirements of the SGA, we will consider your application non-responsive and it will not be reviewed.

Eligible institutions are: (i) State Workforce Agencies; (ii) Local Workforce Investment Boards; (iii) entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants; (iv) consortia of State Workforce Agencies; (v) consortia of Local Workforce Investment Boards; and (vi) consortia of entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants.

Requirements for each of these lead applicant types are provided below.

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i. State Workforce Agencies. Eligible applicants under this category are State Workforce Agencies that are eligible for assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

ii. Local Workforce Investment Boards. Under this category, an eligible applicant is a legal entity that represents the local workforce investment system. An entity applying under this category must be either:

    a. A Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB), as established under Section 117 of the WIA, that has been legally organized; or

    b. In areas where the LWIB is not legally organized, the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Local Workforce Investment Board. To apply under this category, this entity must provide, as an attachment to their application, a letter from the chair of the Local Workforce Investment Board that: affirms that the applicant is the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the LWIB, confirms that the applicant is submitting the application on behalf of the LWIB, and includes the applicant's legal name and Federal Tax Identification Number.

iii. Entities eligible for WIA Section 166 grants. Under this category, an eligible applicant is a tribe, tribal consortium, or tribal non-profit organization that is eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants.

iv. Consortia of State Workforce Agencies. To apply under this category, an eligible State Workforce Agency (as defined above) must apply as the lead applicant on behalf of a consortium of eligible State Workforce Agencies representing two or more states. Applicants under this category are eligible for up to 5 bonus points, as described in Section V.A.6. Entities eligible for WIA Section 166 grants may also be part of a state consortia.

v. Consortia of Local Workforce Investment Boards. To apply under this category, an eligible Local Workforce Investment Board (as defined above) must apply as the lead applicant on behalf of a consortium of eligible Local Workforce Investment Boards. Applicants under this category are eligible for up to 5 bonus points, as described in Section V.A.6. Entities eligible for WIA Section 166 grants may also be part of a state consortia.

vi. Consortia of entities eligible for WIA Section 166 grants. To apply under this category, an entity eligible for WIA Section 166 grants (as defined above) must apply as the lead applicant on behalf of a consortium of eligible WIA Section 166 grantees. Applicants under this category are eligible for up to 5 bonus points, as described in Section V.A.6.

2. Special Requirements for Consortium Applications

Consortium applications under Categories ii and iv of Section III.A.1 must identify a lead applicant in the consortium, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant. This lead applicant must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

For the purposes of this Solicitation, the lead applicant specified on the SF-424 will be: 1) the point of contact with ETA to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this SGA and any subsequent grant award; 2) the entity with authority to withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS); 3) the entity responsible for submitting to ETA all deliverables under the grant, including

all technical and financial reports related to the project, regardless of which consortium member performed the work; 4) the entity that may request or agree to a revision or amendment of the grant agreement; 5) the entity with overall responsibility for carrying out the programmatic functions of the grant; and, 6) the entity responsible for working with ETA to close out the grant.

An applicant applying as a consortium must provide, as an attachment to its technical proposal, a consortium agreement. This agreement may take many forms, including a letter or Memorandum of Understanding. The consortium agreement must be signed by each consortium member, and: 1) reflect an agreement among consortium members to work together on the grant; 2) declare the intent of each consortium member to carry out its assigned goals and activities contained in the project work plan included in Section V.A.3. of the SGA; 3) specify the amount of funds and the specific deliverables for which each consortium member will be responsible; 4) designate one member of the consortium as the lead institution that will serve as the grantee for ETA; and, 5) reflect a commitment of all consortium members to provide the lead institution all information needed to meet the reporting and other requirements of the grant. Only eligible entities as defined in this section may be members of the consortium. We will consider applications that include entities other than eligible entities as consortium members as nonresponsive.

If any entity identified in the application as a consortium member drops out of the consortium before or upon award of the grant, the grantee must provide, within 60 days of award, an explanation of why that entity will not be participating in the project. We reserve the right to re-evaluate a consortium award in light of any such change in the consortium membership and may terminate the award if deemed appropriate. Please note, if a consortium member drops out, the funds and activities committed to in the application and consortium agreement must not be shifted automatically to another consortium member or to a new eligible entity; the grantee must conduct a competition to award the remaining funds.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching
Cost sharing or matching funds are not required as a condition for application, but applicants are strongly encouraged to coordinate with and leverage resources from regular WIA formula funds, and/or other federal, state, local, or private workforce development funding sources.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria
    1. You are required to submit a budget, design, and implementation plan for an independent third-party evaluation of your proposed strategy. This evaluation will be funded as part of the Federal grant award. The evaluation plan must be suitable for the proposed project type, as listed in Section I.D. Applications without an evaluation component will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.
    2. You may submit only one application as the lead applicant. There is no limit on the number of applications you may participate in as a non-lead consortium member.
    3. If you submit more than one application as the lead applicant , you will be deemed non-responsive and none of your lead applications will be considered for funding. It is our intent that no organization will be funded more than once as a lead applicant under this SGA.

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D. Eligible Participants

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

E. Veterans Priority for Participants

The Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) requires grantees to provide priority of service for veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL. The regulations implementing this priority of service can be found at 20 CFR Part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service, a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by DOL. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2816.

F. Other Grant Specifications
    1. Transparency

DOL is committed to conducting a transparent grant award process and publicizing information about program outcomes. Posting grant applications on public websites is a means of promoting and sharing innovative ideas. For this grant competition, we will publish the abstracts required by Section IV, Part IIIa, for all applications on the Department's website or similar location. Additionally, we will publish a version of the Technical Proposal required by Section IV, Part II, for all those applications that are awarded grants, on the Department's website or a similar location. No other parts of or attachments to the application will be published. The Technical Proposals and abstracts will not be published until after the grants are awarded. In addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

DOL recognizes that grant applications sometimes contain information that an applicant may consider proprietary or business confidential information, or may contain personally identifiable information. Proprietary or confidential commercial/business information is information that is not usually disclosed outside your organization and the disclosure of which is likely to cause you substantial competitive harm. Personally identifiable information is information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, Social Security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, or other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information.[6]

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[6] 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.

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. However, in order to ensure that personally identifiable information 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 version of their Technical Proposal, with any proprietary, confidential commercial/business, and personally identifiable information redacted. All non-public information about the applicant's staff should be removed as well. The Department will contact the applicants whose technical proposals will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Technical Proposal. Submission of a redacted version of the Technical Proposal will constitute permission by the applicant for DOL to make the redacted version publically available. If an applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Technical Proposal, DOL will publish the original Technical Proposal in full, after redacting personally identifiable information. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Technical Proposal will remain part of the complete application package, including an applicant's proprietary and confidential information and any personally identifiable information.)

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 capable of identifying a person. 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. Section 1905), FOIA, and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. Section 552a). If DOL receives a FOIA request for your application, the procedures in DOL's FOIA regulations for responding to requests for commercial/business information submitted to the government will be followed, as well as all FOIA exemptions and procedures (29 CFR 70.26). Consequently, it is possible that application of FOIA rules may result in release of information in response to a FOIA request that an applicant redacted in its "redacted copy."

IV. Application and Submission Information
A. How to Obtain an Application Package
This SGA contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

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

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

- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (available at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15). The SF-424 must clearly identify the applicant and must be signed by an individual with authority to enter into a grant agreement. Upon confirmation of an award, the individual signing the SF-424 on behalf of the applicant shall be considered the authorized representative of the applicant. The signature of the authorized representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15). The SF-424B is not required to be submitted with the application. All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) number, and must supply their D-U-N-S® Number on the SF-424. The D-U-N-S® Number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. If you do not have a D-U-N-S® Number, you can get one for free through the D&B website: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do.

- The SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15). In preparing the Budget Information Form, the applicant must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the budget request, explained in detail below.

- Budget Narrative: The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. Two separate budget narratives must be provided. One must describe the costs of technical grant activities, and the other must describe the costs of evaluation activities. The evaluation budget narrative must be included with the program evaluation plan attachment, as explained in Part III.C. and section V.B., below. Budget narratives should also include a description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities. All grantees must participate in an in-person intensive orientation and training event sponsored by ETA, and at least one additional national meeting. Both meetings will be held in Washington, D.C.. Grantees should include travel costs for this purpose on their Budget Information Forms (see Section IV.B. Part I – The Cost Proposal).

- Note that the total Federal grant amount (costs of technical activities and of the evaluation) requested (not just one year) must be included on the SF-424, and SF-424A. No leveraged resources should be shown on the SF-424 and SF-424A. The amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and two budget narratives must be the same. Please note that 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 a signed SF-424 including D-U-N-S® Number, SF-424A, and two budget narratives 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 (its information in the CCR database) on an annual basis from the date of initial registration or subsequent updates 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 25 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins for all grantees except consortia applicants; consortia applicants' technical proposal is limited to 27 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, which do not count against the page limit for the Technical Proposal:

(a) You must provide an Abstract (See Attachment A for template), not to exceed three pages, which will serve as a summary of the proposal. The abstract will be shared publicly and must include the following information: 1) applicant's name; 2) a clear designation of the applicant category – individual applicant or consortium applicant; 3) applicant/lead applicant city/state; 4) areas served by the grant; 5) project name; 6) funding level requested, broken out by technical proposal costs and evaluation cost; 7) the project type (A, B, or C); 8) description of the proposed project; 9) description of the proposed evaluation strategy; and 10) public contact information for the grant, which may be an email or website. If using grants.gov for submission, this document must be attached under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled "abstract".

(b) You must provide a one-page graphic of the project's logic model as described in Section V.A.2 More information about logic models can be found here: http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation.

(c) You must submit a separate evaluation budget narrative and program evaluation plan for an independent third party evaluation of your proposed strategy, as described in section V.B. The program evaluation plan does not count against the technical proposal page limit, but cannot exceed 15 pages. There is no page limit for the evaluation budget narrative.

(d) 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.

 (e) If you are applying as the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) in an area where the LWIB is not incorporated, you must provide, as an attachment to your application, a letter from the chair of the Local Workforce Investment Board that affirms that the applicant is the legal entity that serves as the fiscal agent

for the LWIB, confirms that the applicant is submitting the application on behalf of the LWIB, and includes the applicant's legal name and Federal Tax Identification Number.

(f) If you are applying as a consortium applicant, you must provide a consortium agreement as described in section III.A.2.

(g) If you believe a waiver of WIA or other Federal laws or rules would enhance the innovation(s) described in your application, you should submit a detailed description of the potential waiver request as an attachment. You should also describe any waivers you already have for your formula program that you wish to incorporate into the grant agreement. If you are a local area and feel your project would benefit from a waiver under WIA Title I and Wagner Peyser, you should consult with the state in the formation of your waiver description, since only states can request WIA Title I and Wagner Peyser waivers. You should also describe waiver requests that you intend to seek for programs under other federal laws. You may also submit formal waiver requests with your application, according to individual program requirements. Any formal waiver requests for WIA Title I received as part of the attachment will be officially processed and reviewed within 90 days of grant award.

(h) You should submit substantive non-form letters, Memoranda of Understanding, and other documentation from key leaders and partners to demonstrate their support of the proposed activities as described in Section V.1., Criterion 4 – "Strategic Leadership."

Applications that do not include the required attachments – an abstract, a logic model, an evaluation cost proposal and program evaluation plan, Project/Performance Site Location(s) form, and (if appropriate) required documentation for consortium applicants and unincorporated WIB applicants – 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. Additional materials such as resumés or general letters of support or commitment will not be considered.

Applicants should not send documents separately to DOL, because documents received separately will be tracked through a different system and will not be attached to the application for review. DOL will not accept general letters of support submitted by organizations or individuals that are not partners in the proposed project and that do not directly identify the specific commitment or roles of the project partners. Support letters of this nature will not be considered in the review process.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses
The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is March 22, 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. Applications submitted on grants.gov must also be successfully submitted (as described below) no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. 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

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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. For multiple submissions through www.grants.gov we will review the latest submittal.

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: Donna Kelly, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 11-05, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. Applicants are advised that mail delivery in the Washington DC area may be delayed due to mail decontamination procedures. Hand-delivered proposals will be received at the above address. All overnight mail will be considered to be hand-delivered and must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time.

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

The Department strongly recommends that before the applicant begins to write the proposal, applicants should immediately initiate and complete the "Get Registered" registration steps at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. Applicants should read through the registration process carefully before registering. These steps may take as much as four weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application. The site also contains registration checklists to help you walk through the process. The Department strongly recommends that applicants download the "Organization Registration Checklist" at http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last minute searches for required information and save time.

As described above, applicants must have a D–U–N–S® Number and must register with the Federal Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

The next step in the registration process is creating a username and password with Grants.gov to become an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). AORs will need to know the D-U-N-S® Number of the organization for which they will be submitting applications to complete this process. To read more detailed instructions for creating a profile on Grants.gov visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step3.jsp.

After creating a profile on Grants.gov, the E-Biz point of Contact (E-Biz POC-) – a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for CCR – will receive an email to grant the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of their organization. The E-Biz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and approve an applicant as the AOR, thereby giving him or her permission to submit applications. To learn more about AOR Authorization visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step5.jsp, or to track AOR status visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step6.jsp.

An application submitted through Grants.gov constitutes a submission as an electronically signed application. The registration and account creation with Grants.gov, with E-Biz POC approval, establishes an AOR. When you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

When a registered applicant submits an application with Grants.gov, an electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. Within two business days of application submission, Grants.gov will send the applicant two email messages to provide the status of the application's progress through the system. The first email, sent almost immediately, will contain a tracking number and will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov. The second email will indicate the application has either been successfully validated or has been rejected due to errors. Grants.gov will reject applications if the applicant's CCR registration is expired. Only applications that have been successfully submitted by the deadline and subsequently successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure a timely submission. While it is not required that an application be successfully validated before the deadline for submission, it is prudent to reserve time before the deadline in case it is necessary to resubmit an application that has not been successfully validated. Therefore, sufficient time should be allotted for submission (two business days) and, if applicable, additional time to address errors and receive validation upon resubmission (an additional two business days for each ensuing submission). It is important to note that if sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .rtf, or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent 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/app_help_reso.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

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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. As specified in 20 CFR 667.220(c) costs for various information systems such as tracking and monitoring of participants, employment statistic information and performance and program cost information on eligible providers of training services are considered program costs and do not count against the administrative cost limitation. 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
In order to further the goals of the Fund and ensure that the Federal investment of these funds has as broad an impact as possible, as a condition of the receipt of a Workforce Innovation Fund grant, the grantee will be required to license to the public (not including the Federal Government) all work created with the support of the grant (Work) under a Creative Commons

Attribution 3.0 (CCBY) license. Work that must be under the CCBY license includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to pre-existing content using grant funds. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the Work.

Only work that is developed by the grantee with the grant funds is required to be licensed under the CCBY license. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to, or purchased by the grantee without grant fund remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CCBY license requirement.

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

Separate from the CCBY license to the public, the 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 products developed through a subcontract under the grant; and ii) any rights of copyright to which the grantee 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.

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. Scoring Criteria for Technical Proposals
This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used to evaluate technical proposals. The scoring criteria are described below:

Criterion	Points
1. Description of the Problem or Issue	10
2. Describing Your Project: Strategic Approach and Logic Model	45
3. Work Plan and Project Management	20
4. Strategic Leadership	10
5. Performance Accountability Framework: Data Collection and Reporting	15
6. Bonus Points for Consortium Applications	5

TOTAL	105

1. Description of the Problem or Issue (10 points)
In this section, you must clearly articulate the specific service delivery or policy/governance/ administrative problem(s) or issue(s) that your proposed project will address, as well as demonstrate the extent of the problem(s) by citing appropriate research or logical constructs and providing quantitative and/or qualitative evidence as appropriate and available. We will award points for this section based on the extent to which you address the following factors:

Factor 1 (5 points): You must clearly and convincingly articulate the problem(s) or issue(s) and its relevance to the workforce investment system locally, regionally and/or nationally. In addressing this factor, applicants may provide problem statements that address a broad range of issues that impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce investment system, including issues pertaining to: the processes or mechanics of services and service delivery; services for target populations or industry sectors; alignment of service delivery to economic regions, policy, governance, and administrative rules that support the system; information systems and other structural supports; and other areas that may present barriers to improving the workforce system.

Factor 2 (5 points): In articulating the problem or issue, you must demonstrate the extent of the problem in qualitative and quantitative terms to provide sufficient evidence of its impact on program or system performance. In addressing this factor, you may present data that demonstrates duplication or inefficiencies in the delivery or administration of services (such as cost inefficiencies or extended cycle times), evidence of administrative or policy barriers imposed by the workforce system at the state and/or local level that hinder the delivery of services (such as restrictions or requirements that the state has the authority to change, and/or other data and evidence that clearly demonstrate the severity of the problem.

2. Describing Your Project: Strategic Approach and Logic Model (45 points)
You must provide a full and clear explanation of your strategic approach, describing how the proposed project will address or resolve the problem identified in Criterion 1 and the goals and outcomes to be achieved through the proposed investment. In addition, you must describe your conceptual framework or theory of change using a logic model that clearly delineates interim indicators and outputs and testable hypotheses upon which the proposed strategy is based, including evidence if available. We will assign points under this criterion based on the extent to which you fully address the following three factors:

Factor 1: Goals and Outcomes (10 points): In this section, you should identify and describe the goals of your project and the expected outcomes from the proposed activities. We will assign points under this factor based on the extent to which you fully address the following: a) you clearly articulate a set of goals and outcomes for the project that address the problem(s) identified in Criterion 1 and align with one or more of the Workforce Innovation Fund's stated goals in Section I.A. of this Solicitation; b) you present goals and outcomes that are relevant, reasonable, and achievable during the life of the grant.

In addressing this factor, start by articulating a set of goals for your project that address the problem identified in Criterion 1 and that align with one or more of the Fund's impact goals as

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stated in Section I.A.: 1) better results for jobseekers and employers – such as reduced duration of unemployment, increased educational learning gains and credential attainment, increased earnings, increased economic competitiveness, etc.; 2) greater efficiency in the delivery of quality services – such as more customers served, decreased program attrition, faster job placement, lower cost, or reduction in program overlap; and 3) stronger cooperation across programs and funding streams – such as integrated data systems or braided funding streams. While all Workforce Innovation Fund investments should ultimately result in improved employment and training outcomes for jobseekers and employers, we understand that the impact of certain types of innovation – particularly systemic reforms – may not be captured through traditional outcome measures over the course of a three-year grant period of technical grant performance. In cases where the final impact of the proposed project on system customers cannot be measured during the grant's life cycle, you must identify a set of measurable intermediate outcomes that will ultimately lead to improvements in training and employment outcomes for individuals and employers.

Factor 2: Strategy and Logic Model (25 points): In this section, you will present a logic model and theory of change that explain how your proposed grant activities will generate the outcomes and achieve the goals you identified in factor 1.

A logic model describes, in the form of a graphic, how a project will achieve its goals by clearly showing how the *resources (or inputs)* brought to bear on a project support the *activities* undertaken as part of the strategy, which in turn generate the *interim outputs* that ultimately lead to the *outcomes and/or impact of the effort*. A narrative theory of change that identifies a set of connected actions or steps that will generate the change necessary to realize the project's long-term goals must accompany the logic model. A compelling theory of change identifies key assumptions upon which the strategy is based, as well as a set of testable hypotheses that can be used to measure the effect of the proposed strategy. Interim outputs within the logic model reflect discrete and tangible achievements that, together, lead to the ultimate outcomes of the project. Such interim outputs can take many forms. For example, interim outputs may be: 1) policy reforms that enable new *processes* such as integrating data across systems, co-enrolling participants among different programs, or blending and braiding funds from other workforce partners; 2) important *milestones* of the grant, such as completing a redesign of curriculum or services, or designing a new method of measuring repeat business customers; and/or 3) new or improved output *measures* from the innovation such as employer satisfaction, training capacity, and speed to credentials. A compelling theory of change will include an explanation of how data will be used to measure progress toward short-, medium- and long-term goals. For more information about logic models and developing theories of change, please visit http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation.

We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you address the following: a) you clearly and fully describe a strategy for overcoming the problem identified in Criterion 1 and present a graphical logic model and narrative theory of change that effectively link the strategy to both intermediate and ultimate goals; b) you propose activities and interim outputs that are appropriate and achievable given your stated goals; c) you propose interim outputs that are discrete and clearly linked to your ultimate goals; d) you demonstrate a strong understanding of the challenges and obstacles to success and have a clear plan for overcoming such challenges;

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and e) you provide a compelling theory of change that makes a strong case that the proposed activities and interim outputs will lead to the identified project outcomes within the life of the grant.

Factor 3: Evidence Base for Strategy (10 points): In this section, you must indicate which project type you are proposing – A, B, or C – and provide evidence or for project type A, a logic model that demonstrates that the activities and interim outputs you propose will lead to your stated outcome goals. We understand that the amount and strength of evidence available will necessarily vary depending on the proposed strategy and project type. You should demonstrate your familiarity with available research and evidence related to your proposed strategy and cite evidence that your strategy has been shown to have positive impacts by well-designed and well-implemented evaluation studies, if they are available. However, we recognize that strong, compelling evidence is not available for many effective employment and training strategies, particularly those involving systems change. If no compelling evidence exists because you are proposing a new and untested strategy under project type A, you must describe the information, experiences, and assumptions that lead you to believe your proposed strategies will be effective and include a strong logic model showing the underlying theory of how your strategy will produce your intended outcomes and how you will demonstrate cost savings or cost effectiveness. Projects proposed under project type B must provide evidence of positive evaluation impacts. Projects proposed under project type C must provide evidence of substantial positive evaluation impacts and evidence that the proposed adaptation design will maintain those aspects of the strategy found by previous evaluations to lead to successful outcomes.

We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you use the existing range of evidence to link your proposed strategies to your identified outcome goal(s) and cite evaluation studies conducted with a level of rigor appropriate to the project type for which you are applying. If formal evaluation studies do not exist for your proposed strategies under project type A, you must use information, experiences, and assumptions to make a compelling case that your proposed strategies will be effective.

3. Work Plan and Project Management (20 points)
In this section, you should provide a detailed work plan and project management approach that demonstrate your experience with implementing a project of your proposed scope. We will assign points under this criterion based on the extent to which you fully address the following factors:

Factor 1: Work Plan (12 points): You should present a comprehensive project work plan that follows the format described in this section and aligns to the proposed strategy described in Criterion 2. The work plan counts against the page limit of the technical proposal. It must include all of the following categories:
- Milestones: You must identify each output in the logic model as well as identify clear and appropriate milestones leading to the completion of each output. You must specifically indicate when the following will be completed: any necessary preliminary planning; the execution of the contract with the evaluator (subject to approval of the plan by the Grant Officer); the start date of a project manager; the process of putting subgrant contracts or agreements into place, including those related to consortium members; the engagement of

key partners as evidenced by meetings or communications and identifying, for each partner, specific individuals responsible for key tasks. You must also indicate when the data to measure your outputs will become available.

- Implementer(s): For each output, you must include the name of the partner that will be responsible for implementing the output and any proposed subcontractor(s), if known, who may assist in implementing the strategy.
- Timeline: You must include projected completion dates for the key milestones specified above, as well as all other milestones critical to the success of your project and outputs for each year of the proposed period of performance. Note that the timeline will become part of the grant agreement for successful applicants and deviations from the timeline will be grounds for corrective action plans and determinations of poor grant performance. Do not propose timelines you cannot achieve.

We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you address the following: a) you present a coherent set of milestones that demonstrate your complete understanding of all responsibilities and costs required to implement each phase of the project within the timeframe of the grant; b) your milestones reflect a reasonable plan for achieving your project outcomes within the life of the grant; c) you include feasible and reasonable timeframes for accomplishing all procurement and other necessary grant start-up strategies mentioned above within the first four months of the anticipated grant start date; d) you explain how the costs in the proposed project work plan align with the proposed budget and budget narrative, and are justified as adequate, cost-effective, and reasonable for the resources requested; and e) you present evidence of readiness to begin implementing the grant immediately upon grant award.

Factor 2: Project Management (8 points): You must also fully describe your capacity to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed investment. You must provide the following:

- The professional qualifications you will require of the project manager and other key personnel. You should demonstrate that these qualifications are sufficient to ensure proper management of all grant activities, including timely reporting and the ability to manage a strategic partnership. If the program manager or other key personnel are already on staff, you should provide her/his resume;
- An organizational chart that clearly identifies all relevant leadership, program, administrative, and advisory positions and demonstrates that the project will be implemented through a comprehensive management structure that allows for efficient and effective communications between all levels of the project across partner organizations;
- A brief description of how you will solicit a third-party independent evaluator and work with your evaluator in developing an evaluation plan before the strategy is implemented;
- A brief description of your past experience and/or management capacity to work with Technical Assistance and Evaluation coordinators;
- A brief description of how you will use data to manage grant activities, monitor grant activities against your timeline, and support continuous improvement; and
- For your most recent grant or grants (formula or competitive), demonstrate that you submitted reports (program and financial) on-time and describe the grant management practices you used to complete grant activities within the period of performance.

We will award points for this section based on the extent to which you address the following factors: a) you provide clear evidence of your ability to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed investment; b) you provide evidence that you will recruit or have on staff a qualified project manager and other key personnel; c) your organizational chart demonstrates an understanding of the skills and partnerships needed to achieve your project goals; d) you provide a brief plan for recruiting a third party independent evaluator and working effectively with that evaluator; e) you demonstrate how you will use data to manage grant activities, monitor grant activities against your timeline, and support continuous improvement; and f) you demonstrate that you submitted reports (program and financial) on-time and used sound grant management practices to complete grant activities within the period of performance. .

4. Strategic Leadership (10 Points)
Because the Fund is intended to catalyze system change and transformation at a variety of levels, ETA expects that strong, strategic leadership will be critical to achieve and, ultimately, sustain the changes and innovative approaches resulting from the Federal investment. Strategic leadership may take several forms and may also vary depending on the complexity of the proposed innovation project. Points for this section will be based on three factors:

Factor 1: Strategic Relationships and Leadership Buy-In (5 points): You must identify the organizations within and outside the public workforce system that are necessary to implement the proposed strategy and achieve the ultimate outcomes, as well as describe their roles and responsibilities within the proposed strategy. Critical partners may include a variety of entities, such as employers, trade associations, educational institutions and human services programs. If your project includes changes to education, employment, and/or training service delivery strategies, you must include robust partnerships with employers, trade associations, and/or other business representatives. We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you address the following: a) you identify key leaders and partners that are necessary for the ultimate success of the project and describe the role they will play in project implementation as well as in integration into the broader system at the end of the grant; b) you describe the mechanisms you will use to effectively coordinate the work of the various partners throughout the implementation of the project; and c) you demonstrate – in the form of Memoranda of Understanding, substantive non-form letters, or other documents – that strategic relationships are already in place, that each partner understands its roles and responsibilities, and that leadership are aligned with and support your proposed activities. Projects that include changes to education, employment, and/or training service delivery strategies but do not demonstrate robust partnerships with employers, trade associations, and/or other business representatives can receive no more than two points for this factor.

Factor 2: Strategic Communication (2 points): You must describe your strategy for communicating the purposes, goals, and outcomes of the proposed project to key stakeholders over the period of the grant. These can be internal or external stakeholders, depending on the proposed activities. We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you demonstrate that the communication strategy described is sufficient to help the project obtain buy-in from key constituents and position the project to be institutionalized into the regular workforce system at the end of the grant.

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Factor 3: Integration into Formula-Funded Activities (3 points): You must provide a clear plan for ensuring that promising strategies continue after the grant ends. We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you demonstrate you will identify successful project components that are worthy of sustaining, and identify funding and changes in organizational policies that will enable the integration of those components into regular workforce system funding streams.

5. Performance Accountability Framework: Data Collection and Reporting (15 points)
To fully realize the value of the Workforce Innovation Fund, it is vital that the products, lessons learned, and effective approaches that result from these grants can be broadly distributed to and replicated by the public workforce system and its strategic partners. To help capture grantee learning and achievement as it happens, we expect you to create a performance accountability framework that fully supports the innovation strategy.

In the previous sections, you described the problem statement, a plan to resolve the problem, and a logic model complete with goals, activities, and measurements (process impacts, outputs, and outcomes). In this section, you must provide a full and clear explanation of how you will operationalize a performance accountability framework.

Traditionally, we track the success of our workforce investment programs in terms of the common measures (e.g., job placement, retention, earnings, etc.). While many projects will continue to use these measures, we expect Workforce Innovation Fund projects to identify and capture <u>new sets of data</u> that align with the activities, outputs, and outcomes described in the logic model, thereby allowing grantees and ETA to document a new set of achievements. For example, different outcome measures may be appropriate for system change activities.

You must capture data that can demonstrate cost savings. A major goal of the Workforce Innovation Fund is to support service delivery strategies and structures that generate good outcomes at a lower cost. To determine whether this goal has been met, it is crucial that grantees can measure costs and efficiency. There are currently no Federal efficiency measures for WIA programs, and we are interested in using projects funded under this solicitation to learn about ways to measure costs and efficiency that do not incentivize cheap, ineffective services or selection of participants who are the least in need of help to find employment. You should describe how you will measure costs, including baseline costs before the project begins, and determine whether the project has resulted in increased efficiency. You may propose a variety of data sets, such as:
- Capturing service costs across multiple funding streams;
- Demonstrating reduced administrative costs as a result of better program coordination;
- Creating a cost per outcome measurement system that does not dis-incentivize serving those most in need; and/or
- Conducting cost-benefit analysis, perhaps as part of the third-party evaluation, that measures a variety of costs and benefits to the individual and society.

Quarterly performance and narrative reports, required of all grantees, will be the primary mechanism through which ETA will understand the significant innovations and successes, the

challenges encountered and strategies for resolution, and technical assistance needs to ensure the successful implementation of projects.

Scoring for this section will be based on the extent to which the applicant addresses the following factor:

Factor 1: Data Collection and Reporting (15 points): You must identify the *key* data elements *and* the ways in which data will be captured (e.g., tools and systems) that will allow you to fully demonstrate the innovation. Grantees may need to collect data that is <u>not</u> readily captured in the current WIA reporting system in order to accurately measure the process impacts, outputs, and outcomes of the projects. We will award points for this factor based on the extent to which you address the following: a) you provide a comprehensive data collection approach of sufficient quality to ensure that your project, if successful, can be documented as an evidence-based practice; b) you clearly distinguish between existing data that is already collected by the workforce system or its partners and any new data needed to ensure that all innovation achievements can be properly accounted for; c) you demonstrate that the data you collect will be detailed enough to show a progression of grant activities in the quarterly reports; d) you clearly articulate those pieces of data that will help inform leading indicators of success during the early phases of the grant as well as ultimate outcomes, which will come later in the grant period; e) you demonstrate that your Management Information System (MIS) can accommodate the data you will capture for this project in time to begin tracking your data as it becomes available; f) you demonstrate a feasible method of measuring costs and/or efficiency that is likely to result in convincing data that demonstrates whether the proposed project has increased the efficiency of workforce programs; and g) you demonstrate how you will use data to manage grant activities and monitor grant activities against your timeline.

6. Bonus points for consortium applications (5 points).
Applicants proposing a consortium project as applicant type ii or iv (as defined in Section III.A.1.) may earn up to 5 points by demonstrating the existence of a robust cross-state, cross-local area; or cross-Section 166 grantee partnership and providing evidence of a strong management plan for both technical implementation and evaluation. Consortia applicants must also fully discuss the roles of each member of the consortium, their strategic partnership, and each partner's impact on outputs/outcomes of the project. To receive the full points for this section, you must demonstrate that the proposed strategies will be tested in sites that offer diverse policy, governance, and economic contexts, as this diversity supports stronger evaluation.

B. Review Criteria for Program Evaluation Component
You must submit an evaluation budget narrative and program evaluation plan for an independent third-party evaluation of your proposed strategy. This evaluation will be paid for with grant funds. We will evaluate the materials described in this section separately from the Technical Proposal, as described below in section V.C.

1. Content and Form of Evaluation Application Materials
You must submit: (a) a Program Evaluation Plan; and (b) a Supplementary Evaluation Budget Narrative.

Applicants submitting proposals in hard copy must include these supplementary materials in their hard copy application as a separate document, as well as in an electronic format on a CD. The CD containing this information must be labeled and submitted as an additional CD, separate and apart from the CD required with the original proposal.

a. Program Evaluation Plan
The Program Evaluation Plan does not count against the 25-page limit for the Technical Proposal, but must not exceed 15 pages.

This section identifies and describes the four factors that will be used to evaluate the program evaluation plan. In reviewing your plan, we will rate your plan as either "strong", "moderate", or "weak" based on the extent to which the following factors are fully addressed:

Factor 1 – Your proposed evaluation is of an appropriate level of rigor for your proposed project type (A, B, or C), as described in Section I.D..

Factor 2 – You provide a detailed plan for rigorously evaluating the program, including a complete description of the study methodology and data collection methods. You provide information about control or comparison groups if applicable to the proposed evaluation. If you are proposing a random assignment methodology, you fully explain how the recruitment plan will yield a sufficient number of qualified applicants (both program and controls) to produce valid estimates, how random assignment will be performed, and what procedures will be in place to ensure the fidelity of random assignment (i.e., that all eligible individuals that apply are randomly assigned and that no one who is randomly assigned to the control group receives the services being studied). If you are proposing a comparison group methodology, you must fully explain the source of the comparison group; how the comparison group will be drawn from it, including showing that data on both the comparison group and the program participant group will be from compatible sources (e.g., based on the same questionnaire); and any selection bias issues. You also explain how you will ensure that the anticipated follow-up data will be successfully collected from participants and the control/comparison group.

Factor 3 – You fully explain how funding the proposed program evaluation will provide knowledge that can be used to enhance the broader workforce system.

Factor 4 –You clearly describe your process for procuring the services of a third-party evaluator, including the levels of capacity and expertise you will require of the selected organization(s) to conduct rigorous evaluations of your proposed strategy.

Evaluation plans will be rated as "strong," if they fully address the factors above. Evaluation plans will be rated as "moderate," if the information provided only partially addresses the factors above but has the potential to be improved by minimal technical assistance from DOL. Evaluation plans that do not meet the qualifications for "moderate" or "strong" ratings will be rated as "weak."

b. Project Evaluation Budget Narrative

The Evaluation Budget Narrative must include a supplementary budget narrative, which is separate and apart from the budget narrative submitted in the main application. The budget narrative does not count as part of the 15 page program evaluation page limit. The supplementary budget narrative must provide a description of the costs associated with funding the proposed program evaluation component. All costs included in the supplementary budget narrative must be reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline and deliverables. Please note that that costs for this evaluation must be included together with the other grant activities on the main SF-424 and SF-424A forms.

C. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this SGA will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the closing date. Applications submitted under this SGA will be reviewed according to a two-tier process. In the first tier, a technical review panel will carefully evaluate all responsive technical proposals against the selection criteria discussed in section V.A. of this Solicitation. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this SGA. Up to 100 points may be awarded to an application, depending on the quality of the response to the required information described above. Up to 5 bonus points may be awarded for consortium applicants, as discussed in section V.A.6.

Based on technical scores awarded in the first tier, the Grant Officer will identify finalists who will move on to the second tier of the selection process. During the second tier, a separate panel of evaluation experts will review the evaluation proposal using the factors laid out in section V.B.1.a.

The panel score for the technical proposal will serve as the primary basis for selection in conjunction with other factors such as project type (A, B, and C) representation, variety of strategies, the evaluation materials review, 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, we may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to

support grant implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiations and decline to fund the application. We reserve the right to not fund any application related to this SGA.

Grant awards will contain a condition allowing 45 days to finalize the grant agreement. Selection as a grantee does not mean that the proposed evaluation design has been accepted as-is. We will work with grantees modify the evaluation design, as needed, in collaboration with the national evaluation coordinator. If after 45 days DOL concludes that the evaluation design cannot be sufficiently improved to be "strong" based on the factors described in V.B.1.a., the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the grant award.

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. Workforce Innovation Fund grants will be administered within the WIA system. Applicable provisions of law and regulations will be identified in the grant agreement.
  vi. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 CFR Part 96 (Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 CFR Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations).
  vii. 29 CFR Part 2, subpart D—Equal Treatment in Department of Labor Programs for Religious Organizations, Protection of Religious Liberty of Department of Labor Social Service Providers and Beneficiaries.
  viii. 29 CFR Part 31—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Labor—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
  ix. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
  x. 29 CFR Part 35— Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
  xi. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
  xii. 29 CFR Part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
  xiii. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship

Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.

2. Other Legal Requirements:
i. Religious Activities

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. Section 2000bb, applies to all Federal law and its implementation. If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled to receive Federal financial assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and maintain that hiring practice even though Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act contains a general ban on religious discrimination in employment. If you are awarded a grant, you will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

ii. Lobbying or Fundraising the U.S. Government with Federal Funds

In accordance with Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-65) (2 U.S.C. 1611), non-profit entities incorporated under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c) (4) that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive Federal funds and grants. No activity, including awareness-raising and advocacy activities, may include fundraising for, or lobbying of, U.S. Federal, State or Local Governments (see OMB Circular A-122).

iii. Transparency Act Requirements

Applicants must ensure that it has the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. Law 109-282, as amended by section 6202 of Pub. Law 110-252) (Transparency Act), as follows:

- All applicants, except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under sub-paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, should they receive funding.
- Upon award, applicants will receive detailed information on the reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, as described in 2 CFR Part 170, Appendix A, which can be found at the following website: http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-22705.pdf

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

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

iv. Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information

Applicants submitting proposals in response to this SGA must recognize that confidentiality of 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, you are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal law. 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, you agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality by complying with the following provisions that are applicable in governing their handling of confidential information:

1. Grantees shall not extract information from data supplied by DOL for any purpose not stated in the SGA.
2. Grantees shall retain data received from DOL 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 confidentiality of information. Information transmitted to DOL 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 shall be restricted to only those employees of the Grantee 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 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. Before being able to have access to 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 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. Accessing, processing, and storing of DOL 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 the Grant Officer.
8. All 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, 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
Funded projects must include a plan for an independent third-party evaluation in their grant application, to be funded as part of the grant, as described in section V.B. We are procuring a national evaluator for this effort under a separate procurement. Grantees are also required to cooperate with a national evaluator that will coordinate across all grantee evaluations. Intake of new clients under the grant will not be allowed until the grantee's proposed evaluation design is certified as feasible by the national evaluator.

C. Reporting
Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements. Quarterly financial reports, quarterly progress reports, annual performance report data, 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; information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

2. Quarterly Progress and Annual Performance Reports
We will identify a few standardized data elements to be reported on by all grantees. We will provide a reporting template for grantees to report on all standardized data elements, other data

elements identified in the application, and any other data elements developed or refined during subsequent discussions with grantee evaluators, the national evaluation coordinator, and DOL.

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress and performance report – both narrative and performance 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. 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 Ariam Ferro, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at (202) 693-3968. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Ferro.Ariam@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA PY 11-05, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This announcement is being made available on the ETA website at http://www.doleta.gov/grants and at http://www.grants.gov.

VIII. Additional Resources of Interest to Applicants

A. Web-Based Resources

ETA maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. Technical assistance to support application development under the Fund is available at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation. That site also includes an annotated bibliography of sources that are cited or referenced within the SGA, informed the development of the SGA, and/or include other pertinent information that may be of interest to grant applicants. Additional resources include the CareerOneStop portal (http://www.careeronestop.org), which provides national and state career information on occupations, the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (http://online.onetcenter.org), which provides occupational competency profiles, and America's Service Locator (http://www.servicelocator.org), which provides a directory of our nation's One-Stop Career Centers.

B. Workforce3One Resources

ETA has created an online community focused on system innovation at https://innovation.workforce3one.org. We encourage you to visit the community, which hosts a vibrant dialogue on innovation needs and approaches, and contains resources on logic models and theories of change. The site also hosts information on innovation gathered through conference calls and webinars with Federal agency partners and workforce system stakeholders.

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.

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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 December 22, 2011, in Washington, D.C. by:

Donna Kelly
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

Attachment A: Abstract Template

Abstract
Workforce Innovation Fund Application

Applicant Name:

Applicant Category: *individual state, individual WIB, consortium of states, or consortium of WIBs*

Lead Applicant City/State:

Areas Served:

Project Name:

Funding Level Requested: _____ technical costs
                                 _____ evaluation costs

Project Type: *(A, B, or C)*

Description of Proposed Project:

Description of Proposed Evaluation Strategy:

Public Contact Information: *(email or website)*

Attachment B - Waiver Authority for Select Federal Programs

Workforce Investment Act, Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act

Section 189(i)(4) of WIA and the Department's regulations at 20 CFR 661.400-661.420 authorize the Secretary to waive certain statutory and regulatory provisions of WIA, title I and of the Wagner-Peyser Act. This general statutory and regulatory waiver authority provides increased flexibility to states and local areas, and it provides an opportunity for states and local areas to organize services in ways that best meet the needs of the state, regional, and local economies and overcome legal or regulatory barriers that may impede innovation. Waivers provide flexibility in exchange for improved programmatic outcomes and must be consistent with WIA's key reform principles.

Please note that section 189(i)(4)(A) of the WIA prohibits waivers for certain WIA, Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act provisions including requirements relating to wage and labor standards, allocation of funds to local areas, eligibility of participants and providers, the establishment and functions of local areas and local workforce investment boards, procedures for review and approval of plans, the provision of Wagner-Peyser services to unemployment insurance claimants and veterans, or universal access to basic labor exchange services without cost to job seekers. Detailed information about the waiver authority under WIA title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act is available at http://www.doleta.gov/waivers/.

Waiver Request Elements and Process: Eligible Workforce Innovation Fund applicants have two options for incorporating WIA title I or Wagner-Peyser waivers into their submissions. Applicants may submit either an informal description of the desired flexibility in an addendum to their application (with the understanding that they would be required to submit a full waiver request upon award) or a full formal request. Please note that states are the only statutorily eligible entity to submit formal waiver requests. Other eligible applicants that want to submit full requests must work with their state to apply for a waiver on their behalf.

Option I: Applicants that wish to submit an informal request with their proposal must identify the statutory or regulatory requirements that are requested to be waived and the goals that the applicant intends to achieve as a result of the waiver.

Option II: Applicants submitting a formal waiver request with their submission must include the information described in Option I as well as the following:

1. Describe the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers.
2. Describe the goals of the waiver and how the applicant's project would be improved if the request is granted.
3. Describe the individuals impacted by the waiver.
4. Describe the process used to monitor the progress in implementing such a waiver, and the process by which notice and an opportunity to comment on such request has been provided to the local board.

Entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants may request waivers to any statutory or regulatory requirement of WIA Title I except for those relating to wage and labor standards, worker rights, participation and protection of workers and participants, grievance procedures and judicial review, and nondiscrimination. For further information related to this waiver authority, consult http://www.doleta.gov/waivers/submissions.cfm#nativeam.

Workforce Investment Act, Title II, Adult Education and Literacy

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act does not allow the Secretary of Education authority to grant waivers to states, except in waivers related to Maintenance of Effort (MOE). Section 241 of WIA allows the Secretary to waive the requirements of the MOE for one fiscal year, if the Secretary determines that a waiver would be equitable due to exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or an unforeseen and precipitous decline in the financial resources of the State or outlying area of the eligible agency. The eligible agency must submit a written request to the Department of Education that includes an explanation for the request.

While waivers are unallowable in other instances, the Department does encourage states to utilize existing flexibilities already in place within Title II to provide more effective services to Adult Education participants that are aimed at eliminating fragmentation and promoting program alignment within the public workforce system, supporting integration of education and training, and encouraging co-enrollment with Title I and other WIA partner programs, where possible and appropriate. Last year, the Department of Education issued a program memorandum on how funding under AEFLA, in combination with other funding sources, may be used to support Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs to design career pathways models. IET combines occupational skills training with adult education services to increase the educational and career advancement of participants. For more guidance on IET models, please visit: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/aefla-funds-for-iet.pdf.
AEFLA state leadership activities funds also provide greater flexibility to states in promoting linkages to adult education and literacy activities. Examples of permissive state leadership funding activities under Section 223 include, but are not limited to:

- Professional development to improve instructional quality;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education and literacy services;
- Incentives for program coordination and integration;
- Coordination with existing support services, such as transportation, child care, and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in, and successful completion of, adult education and literacy activities, to adults enrolled in such activities;
- Integration of literacy instruction and occupational skill training, and promoting linkages with employers;
- Linkages with postsecondary educational institutions; and
- Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

Workforce Investment Act, Title IV, Rehabilitation Act

The Rehabilitation Services Administration and the VR program have a strong commitment to promoting cross-program collaboration to leverage scarce resources and build capacity to achieve better employment outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities. State VR agencies are doing this successfully across the country through co-enrollment in workforce programs, schools and veterans programs; by jointly participating with education for new approaches like Project SEARCH; and through partnerships with a wide range of disability organizations and community partners and employers, without the need for waivers.

In addition to the considerable ability to work with community partners, the VR program has broad flexibility with regard to the types of services that can be provided to eligible individuals with disabilities. VR services are individualized to meet the needs of the individual with regard to choice of vocational objective, choice of services, and choice of service provider. Essentially, for an individual participant in the VR program, the state VR agency can provide almost any service that is found necessary to reach the employment outcome that has been agreed upon in the Individual Plan for Employment. This flexibility may be modified by allowable state policies regarding individual financial participation and the existence of comparable benefits from other programs or sources, but in general, at the individual participant level the VR program has great flexibility.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1998 (Rehab Act), as amended, does not allow the Secretary of Education or the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration to grant waivers to states, except for waivers related to Maintenance of Effort (MOE), and waivers of the requirements for statewideness of services. There are no other waiver options authorized in the Rehab Act.

MOE Waiver: Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act (the Act: also Title IV of WIA) and 34 CFR 361.62 allows the Secretary to waive the requirements of the MOE for one fiscal year, if the Secretary determines that a waiver would be equitable due to exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or an unforeseen and precipitous decline in the financial resources of the state or outlying area served by the eligible agency.

Waiver of Statewideness: In general, Section 101(a)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.25 make it clear that the overall intent of the Act is that the vocational rehabilitation services described in the state plan be provided in all political subdivisions of the state, unless a request has been made and approval given for a waiver of statewideness.

Section 101(a)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.26 contain the conditions for approval of a waiver of statewideness. With a waiver of statewideness, the state VR agency may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase or expand the services available statewide under the state plan. This does not mean that the State VR agency can cease provision of services required under the state plan and conduct different services. The waiver of statewideness only allows for the provision of additional services in some subdivisions of the state.

How to Apply for a Waiver of Statewideness: 34 CFR 361.26(a)(3) states that the State includes in its State plan, and the Secretary of Education approves, a request for a waiver of statewideness requirement. The request for the waiver of statewideness must:

1. Identify the types of services to be provided;
2. Contain a written assurance from a local public agency that it will make available to the State unit the non-Federal share of funds;
3. Contain a written assurance that State unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
4. Contain a written assurance that all other State plan requirements, including a State's order of selection requirements, will apply to all services provided under the waiver. (34 CFR 361.26(b))

The waiver of statewideness requests are usually made as part of the state plan submission. A State VR agency waiver of statewideness request could be made as part of a unified plan submission, as part of the VR agency submission of the annual State plan attachments, or as part of a state plan modification. State VR agencies may modify the State plan at any time, and therefore may submit a State plan modification for the purposes of requesting approval of a waiver of statewideness at any time.

2 CFR Part 225, Appendix B.8(h) Support of salaries and wages (OMB Circular A-87) and 2 CFR Part 230, Appendix B.8(m) Support of salaries and wages (OMB Circular A-122)

Both 2 CFR Part 225 and 2 CFR Part 230, Appendix B.8, *Compensation for personal services*, provide that substitute systems for allocating salaries and wages to Federal awards may be used in place of activity reports, as long as they are approved by the Federal cognizant agency. In addition, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has authority to relax or waive requirements in 2 CFR 225 and 230 for Federal agencies administering programs, including those that mandate time-and-effort reporting. Both 2 CFR 225 and 2 CFR 230 require verification that individuals whose salaries are supported by a Federal program are spending the appropriate amount of time carrying out the allowable activities of that program. For example, case managers at One-Stop Career Centers may have to report the amount of time they spend each day serving clients under multiple funding streams.

Though time-and-effort reporting is intended to ensure the proper allocation of Federal funds, the process may be overly burdensome. This type of reporting also does not provide information on the services given or, more importantly, the impact of those services on program participants.

Therefore, OMB will consider allowing ETA to waive the cost principles requirements for Innovation Fund grant awardees, including those for Personnel Activity Reports for Innovation Fund grantees that come forward with alternative proposals that ensure the appropriate use of Federal funds. For example, grantees could provide semi-annual or annual certifications of time distribution that are reasonably supported by data, such as case counts. Grantees could also propose other methods of ensuring that Federal dollars are appropriately used to meet overarching program goals for example, by measuring outputs or outcomes such as employment placements associated with Federal investments.

Applicants interested in receiving a waiver of the cost principles requirements should indicate their interest in an addendum to their application, provide information on the specific provisions they want to be waived, describe what benefit will confer to the grant, and provide information on the proposed alternative methods they would use to ensure the appropriate use of Federal funds. ETA will work with successful applicants to obtain the formal specific waiver after grant award.