

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Disability Employment Policy

[SGA 10-XX]

Add Us In; Solicitation for Cooperative Agreements.

Announcement Type: New Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) for Cooperative Agreements.

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA 10-XX

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.720

Dates: Applications must be received by 30 days after the publication date in the *Federal Register*

Executive Summary: The U.S. Department of Labor (“DOL” or “Department”), Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) announces the availability of approximately \$1.8 million to fund up to three cooperative agreements with consortia ranging from \$500,000 to \$625,000. The objectives of this new initiative, Add Us In, are: 1) to increase the ability of targeted businesses to employ adults and youth with disabilities; 2) to develop and evaluate replicable models, strategies and policies¹ that would ensure that youth and adults from diverse communities with disabilities have access to a broader

¹ Replicable models, strategies and policies are methods of connecting people with disabilities to employment and might include, but are not limited to, mentoring, entrepreneurial activities, internships, leadership training and leadership opportunities.

range of employment and mentoring opportunities; and 3) to form and strengthen connections between targeted businesses, diversity-serving organizations, youth-serving organizations and disability-serving organizations, building a national and local network of experts skilled in serving individuals with disabilities from diverse communities. These objectives will be accomplished through the competitive funding of consortia tasked to design, implement, and evaluate innovative systems models that support integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities within targeted businesses.

For the purposes of this solicitation, the *target population* consists of members of the following groups: African American, Asian American (including Asian Americans of West Asian decent, e.g., India, and Asian Americans of East Asian decent, e.g., Japan and Korea), Latino or Hispanic American, federally recognized Tribes and Native American communities (including American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Native Pacific Islanders (including American Samoan Natives)), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) individuals, and women. A *targeted business* is a for-profit enterprise such as a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or joint venture of any kind, regardless of size, physically located in the United States or its trust territories which is at least 51 percent owned, operated and controlled on a daily basis by a United States citizen (or citizens) who are members of a target population.

For the purposes of this solicitation, “disability” is defined as set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAA) of 2009.

Add Us In addresses ODEP's goal of building knowledge and advancing disability employment policies in a fast growing area of the American economy. In the United States today, there are approximately 4.1 million minority-owned firms² accounting for more than \$668 billion total annual gross receipts. Between 1997 and 2002 the growth of minority-owned firms outpaced the national rate, as they increased by 30 percent compared to 10 percent for all classifiable firms.³

According to the American Community Survey (ACS) more than 10 million civilian, non-institutionalized Americans from ethnic and racial minorities have long-lasting disabling conditions or impairments.⁴ According to the ACS in 2008, among racial and ethnic groups, the highest overall estimated disability rate was for American Indians and Alaska Natives at 16.2 percent. Among Blacks or African Americans, the disability rate was 13.7 percent. Among persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, the disability rate was 7.7 percent. Among Asian Americans, the disability rate was 6.7 percent.

The Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics released the first official data on the employment status of people with disabilities on February 6, 2009. As of March 2010, the percentage of people with disabilities in the labor force was 35.2 compared with 77.2 for persons with no disability. The March 2010 unemployment rate for those with disabilities was 14.7 percent, compared with 10.2 percent for persons with no disability,

² Minority business firms in this statistics are classified in terms of the race and ethnicity, and/or gender of ownership. These firms are owned by African Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, Hispanics, and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders.

³ U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency. (2006). The state of minority business enterprises: An overview of the 2002 survey of business owners. Retrieved from <http://www.mdba.gov/minoritybizfacts/StateofMinorityBusiness2002SurveyofBusinessOwners.pdf>.

⁴ Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (2010, March 17). *Disability Statistics from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS)*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics (StatsRRTC). Retrieved from www.disabilitystatistics.org.

not seasonally adjusted.⁵ Over 20 million people with disabilities ages 16 and over were not even in the labor force.⁶ For individuals with disabilities, obstacles to employment and participation in the labor market, and the resulting unemployment and underemployment of these individuals are demonstrated by a median household income for working-age people with disabilities of \$39,600 compared to \$61,200 for working-age people without disabilities.⁷

When looking at the relationship between disability and employment, researchers have found that minorities with disabilities are often at increased risk for unemployment.⁸ For people with severe disabilities, the labor force participation rate is about 30 percent for Whites, 21.2 percent for Latinos or Hispanics, and 17.8 percent for Blacks or African Americans.

Under this initiative, three consortia will be awarded funding through a competitive process to design and implement innovative models, strategies and policies that will: 1) create replicable models that can be used by targeted businesses and associations of targeted businesses nationwide to reach out to people with disabilities in their communities, and 2) lead to improved employment outcomes for people with disabilities in these communities.

⁵ Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, New monthly data series on the employment status of people with a disability. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability.htm> (Last viewed, April 28, 2010).

⁶“Not in the labor force” includes persons aged 16 years and older in the civilian noninstitutional population who are neither employed nor unemployed. The Current Population Survey collects information on their desire for and availability for work, job search activity in the prior year, and reasons for not currently searching.

⁷ Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (March 2010). Disability Statistics from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics (StatsRRTC). Retrieved April 28, 2010 from www.disabilitystatistics.org.

⁸ Smith Randolph, D. & Andresen, E.M. (2004). Disability, gender and unemployment relationships in the United States from the behavioral risk factor surveillance system. *Disability & Society*, 19, 403-413.

This solicitation provides background information, describes the application requirements, outlines the process that eligible entities must use to apply for funds covered by this solicitation, and outlines the evaluation criteria that will be used as a basis for selecting the grantees.

Part I. Funding Opportunity Description

1. Background

ODEP provides national leadership to employers and service delivery organizations by developing and influencing disability-related employment policies and practices. A five-year strategic plan guides ODEP in achieving its mission by identifying: annual performance goals and performance output measures; intermediate outcome goals and measures; long-term outcome goals and measures; and strategic outcome goals and measures. ODEP's strategic plan not only sets forth a road map for prioritizing the formulation and dissemination of innovative employment policies and practices, but it also requires that the agency measure and report on its performance, as mandated by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).

ODEP's strategic plan requires the agency to develop policies and strategies that will:

- Enhance the capacity of service delivery systems (e.g., workforce development, education, health care, housing, etc.) to provide appropriate and effective services and supports to youth and adults with disabilities
- Increase planning and coordination within service delivery systems to develop and improve systems, processes, and services

- Improve individualization of services to better assist youth and adults with disabilities in seeking, obtaining, and retaining employment or self-employment
- Increase employer access to support and services to meet their employment needs
- Increase the quality of competency-based training for service delivery systems
- Increase the adoption of universal design strategies for service provision⁹
- Develop partnerships with and among critical stakeholders (e.g., workforce development practitioners, educators, employers, community organizations, individuals with disabilities, policy makers, public agencies, etc.) to effectively leverage available resources and facilitate implementation of practices and policies that increase employment and self-employment opportunities and the recruitment, retention, and promotion of youth and adults with disabilities

ODEP's annual goal is to build knowledge and advance disability employment policy that affects and promotes service delivery system changes. The strategic plan not only sets forth a road map for prioritizing the formulation and dissemination of innovative employment policies and practices to service delivery systems, employers and people with disabilities, but measures agency performance, as required by GPRA. The following three output measures are used by ODEP to measure its progress in meeting this annual goal.

1. The number of policy-related outputs

⁹ Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities Center for Universal Design. Retrieved April 28, 2010 from http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/about_ud.htm.

2. The number of formal agreements

3. The number of effective practices

In addition, these performance measures contribute to the success of ODEP's efforts to achieve Secretary Hilda L. Solis' "Priority Outcome Goals." For ODEP these goals include: increasing the labor market participation rate and earnings for people with disabilities; reducing barriers to fair and diverse workplaces for workers with disabilities; and, reducing Federal system barriers to return to work for people with disabilities.

Typically, workplace diversity efforts have included race and gender, but not disability.

At the same time, disability systems and disability advocacy groups often have not focused their outreach or public education efforts on minority communities to ensure people with disabilities in those communities are engaged. The result of these two practices is that people with disabilities from racial and ethnically diverse populations may not have benefited as much from the employment services outreach, nor have they benefited from employment opportunities in their own communities.

The workforce investment system is in a position to play a vital, two-fold role: 1) addressing the need to develop talent pools of workers with disabilities from the targeted population groups who serve as a "supply pipeline", and 2) creating best practices that help to improve employment outcomes for adults and youth with disabilities from the targeted population groups. ODEP strongly supports the workforce investment system by ensuring that the system provides skills development, training, and employment

opportunities for minorities with disabilities. In addition, ODEP is dedicated to encouraging effective employment strategies and supports for employers to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities from the targeted population. Increasing employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities will have significant impact on the economic development of communities, states, regional economies and ultimately that of our Nation.

Disparities between unemployment rates experienced by racial and ethnic minorities in the United States compared to the white majority are a significant and long-standing concern. From 1972 through 2008, the unemployment rate experienced by African Americans averaged 12 percent, or 2.2 times the unemployment rate experienced by White workers, and from 1973 through 2008 the unemployment rate experienced by Hispanic/Latino-Americans averaged 8.9 percent, or 1.6 times the rate for all Whites.¹⁰

For women with disabilities (ages 21-64), only about one-third are employed. Women with physical disabilities earn a median income of \$25,201 per year, which is substantially less than men with physical disabilities (\$32,345) or women without disabilities (\$28,164); they earn only 77 percent of the U.S. median income. More than a quarter of women with disabilities live below the poverty line. More than 2.5 times as many women with disabilities live in poverty as women without disabilities (26.4 percent

¹⁰ Hispanics may be of any race. For the more recent data referenced in this report, comparisons are made to non-Hispanic Whites. Prior to 1995, however, the available data do not facilitate desegregation of racial categories by Hispanic or non-Hispanic ethnicity. Because White Hispanics generally experience higher unemployment rates than other Whites, comparisons of unemployment rates between Whites and other racial groups are slightly understated if white Hispanics are not removed from the comparison data. Over time, as the Hispanic proportion in the labor force has grown, this effect in the data has become more pronounced. Since 1995, the Current Population Survey (a primary data source for analysis of minority unemployment rate disparities) has included data items that facilitate distinguishing racial groups by Hispanic or non-Hispanic ethnicity.

versus 10.5 percent). In every age group, more women with disabilities live in poverty than men with disabilities.¹¹

Currently, no large-scale, nationally representative data exist to indicate the percentage of LGBT individuals in the nation's workforce. However, it should be noted that LGBT individuals may experience discrimination in many areas of their lives; this marginalization exposes them to tremendous social and economic insecurity including in the workplace. As an example, a recent National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force survey highlighted that transgender individuals experience unemployment at twice the rate of the population as a whole; 97 percent of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment or mistreatment on the job and 47 percent had experienced an adverse job outcome such as being fired, not hired or denied a promotion.¹²

Youth (ages 16-24) are being disproportionately impacted by unemployment in the current economy. In early 2010, though they made up 13.5 percent of the workforce, young adults accounted for 26.4 percent of unemployed workers. Additionally, a notable difference in unemployment rates between males and females in this age range existed with young men having a 22.5 percent unemployment rate compared to 15 percent for young women. When adding race to the unemployment rates of youth the impact on minority communities grew. African American youth had the highest unemployment rate (32.5 percent), followed by Latinos (24.2 percent); and then Whites (15.2 percent).¹³

¹¹ Center for Research on Women with Disabilities, Baylor College of Medicine, Characteristics of the U.S. Population of Women with Disabilities. Last accessed: May 4, 2010 at <http://www.bcm.edu/crowd/?PMID=1330>.

¹² *National Transgender Discrimination Survey*, National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. http://transequality.org/Resources/NCTE_prelim_survey_econ.pdf Last accessed: May 4, 2010.

¹³ Edwards, K. A., & Fernandez, A. H. (2010, April). *The kids aren't alright-A labor market analysis of young workers*. (EPI Briefing No. 258). Retrieved from the Economic Policy Institution Web site:

While, there are no current data indicating the national unemployment rate of LGBT youth, it is legal in 29 states to discriminate against someone based on their sexual orientation in employment and it is legal in 38 states to discriminate based on gender identity or expression. In addition, preliminary findings from a nationally representative sample of transgendered individuals show an unemployment rate that was double the unemployment rate of the general population.¹⁴

Work status is significant for youth. Research suggests paid work experience may improve educational and employment outcomes for at-risk youth.¹⁵ In addition, youth who are disconnected from the labor market miss out on the opportunity to develop their applied or soft skills that are valuable to obtaining and retaining employment. Federal and state efforts to improve policies and practices to increase both preparation for employment and employment outcomes for young people in general and young people with disabilities over the past decade have resulted in some positive gains including increases in graduation rates, postsecondary education enrollments, and in the number of youth with disabilities entering the workforce.¹⁶ Nonetheless, significant challenges remain. National studies and reports have shown that up to two years after leaving high

<http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/bp258/>.

¹⁴ National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2009) Retrieved from the National Center for Transgender Equity and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Web site http://transequality.org/Resources/NCTE_prelim_survey_econ.pdf.

¹⁵ Sum, A. et al. 2008. "Out With the Young and in With the Old: U.S. Labor Markets 2000-2008 and the Case for an Immediate Jobs Creation Program for Teens and Young Adults." Boston, Mass.: Center for Labor Market Studies.

¹⁶ United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Data Analysis System (DANS), 2006 Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Garza, N., & Levine, P. (April 2005). After High School: A First Look At The Post-school Experiences Of Youth With Disabilities: A Report from The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2. Prepared For: Office Of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department Of Education, SRI Project P11182. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

school, about four in ten youth with disabilities are employed as compared to six in ten same-age out-of-school youth in the general population.^{17 18}

Young people with disabilities also face obstacles to employment although the effect of these obstacles varies depending on the type of disability the young person has. The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS-2) indicates that employment rates vary considerably across disability categories for students with disabilities who were enrolled in special education. Youth with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, other health impairments, or speech impairments are the most likely to be employed in a 1-year period (50 percent to 60 percent). In contrast, youth with significant disabilities have significantly lower employment rates, e.g., 15 percent for youth with autism, 25 percent for youth with multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, or orthopedic impairments, and 33 percent for youth with mental retardation or visual impairments.¹⁹

2. Description and Purpose

The primary goal for this solicitation is to increase the ability of targeted businesses to employ adults and youth with disabilities. A successful consortium would develop replicable models, strategies and policies that would ensure that youth and adults with disabilities from diverse communities have access to a broader range of employment and mentoring opportunities. The consortium would also form and strengthen connections between targeted businesses, diversity-serving organizations, youth-serving

¹⁷ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2000). Digest of Education Statistics, 2000. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

¹⁸ Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., & Levine, P., (June 2005). Changes Over Time In The Early Post-school Outcomes Of Youth With Disabilities. A Report from The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2. Prepared For: Office Of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department Of Education, SRI Project P11182. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

¹⁹ National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) www.nlts2.org.

organizations, disability-serving organizations and disability advocacy organizations by building a network of disability and diversity experts.

Add Us In - Goals:

- Sustain and expand employment for people with disabilities in targeted businesses
- Increase involvement in, and support for, employment of people with disabilities by targeted businesses and by target population communities.
- Develop and strengthen the workforce participation of people with disabilities through increased mentoring, partnerships and knowledge of small targeted businesses
- Coordinate workforce development through creation of a network within and across systems of business and industry, disability organizations, youth-serving organizations and local organizations that provide employment and training services
- Shape disability employment policies that meet the needs of employers (e.g., policies related to recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion)
- Validate effective policies and strategies developed under the cooperative agreement through rigorous project evaluation

Add Us In - Objectives:

- Improve access to jobs for qualified individuals with disabilities in targeted businesses
- Coordinate culturally and linguistically appropriate community-based efforts for the effective recruitment and retention of individuals from target population groups with disabilities
- Build community/job-seeker/business relationship models that can be replicated in other communities and nationally, and that address the intersections between race, gender, ethnicity, LGBT identity, and disability in employment
- Implement marketing and promotional approaches, campaigns, and strategies for the recruitment and retention of businesses owned by target population groups desiring to participate in the network to train and hire individuals with disabilities
- Validate policies, strategies, and results developed under the cooperative agreement for national dissemination

Add Us In - Expected Impact:

- Increased access to jobs and increased employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in targeted businesses and target population communities
- Increased targeted business and target population community support for assuring access to employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities
- Coordinated outreach, training, and employment programs for individuals with disabilities in target population communities

- Creation, evaluation and dissemination on a national level of successful innovative systems models for integrated employment opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities within target population communities
- Documentation and dissemination of effective culturally and linguistically appropriate employer practices
- Build the business case for hiring people with disabilities, recognizing the unique perspectives of targeted businesses

Consortia are expected to create models, policies and strategies that will not only be applicable to their local communities, but also to ensure that any policies or best practices developed are scalable and replicable on a national level. This will require that consortia conduct rigorous project evaluations. It is also expected that consortia will leverage their partnerships and relationships with national affiliates, association members or business organizations to achieve this goal. Consortia are also expected to use resources available through ODEP Technical Assistance centers and reciprocate through an exchange of expertise to the centers with regard to diversity, individuals with disabilities, target population communities, and with targeted businesses.²⁰

²⁰ Among ODEP's technical assistance centers are the National Technical Assistance, Policy and Research Center for Employers on Employment of People with Disabilities (EARN), the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the National Collaborative on Workforce and Youth (NCWD/Youth), and the National Technical Assistance and Research Center (NTAR). EARN (www.earnworks.com) provides employers with free consulting services and resources to support the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities. EARN assists employers in understanding the practical business reasons for, as well as the practices that facilitate the recruitment, hiring and retention of people with disabilities. EARN also offers assistance to employment service providers and jobseekers with disabilities through its Web site and a toll-free call center. JAN (<http://askjan.org/>) is a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by: (1) providing individualized worksite accommodations solutions; (2) providing technical assistance regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability related legislation; and (3) educating callers about self-employment options. NCWD/Youth (www.ncwd-youth.info) assists state and local workforce development systems to better serve youth, including minority youth with disabilities, as they transition to the workforce. NTAR's (<http://www.ntarcenter.org/>) mission is to build capacity and leadership at the Federal, state and local levels to enable change across workforce development and disability specific systems that will increase employment and economic self-sufficiency for adults with disabilities.

Consortia will be able to provide not only data related to increased employment opportunities for people with disabilities in their businesses and communities, but also products and documents reflecting both informational content and describing their process for achieving the goals of “Add Us In.” ODEP expects consortia to work to address the goals of “Add Us In” on a national level through partnerships with national affiliates, partners or organizations to encourage dissemination of promising practices developed as a part of the project.

3. Definitions

Definitions for purposes of this solicitation include:

- *Business Association* is defined as a membership organization engaged in promoting the business interests of its members. These associations may perform activities that would be unduly costly or time-consuming for an individual company to perform by itself but are beneficial and achievable in the aggregate, including lobbying, information gathering, research, education, peer support and setting industry standards.
- *Consortium* refers to a group formed to undertake a project. The consortium required for this solicitation must, at a minimum, have representation from each of the following four organization types: (1) a targeted population group chamber of commerce, consortium of targeted businesses, association of targeted business-owners or other similar entity (including tribal, LGBT, and women entities); (2) a disability-serving organization; (3) a Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) or an organization with

demonstrated experience providing employment and training services and employment-related support services; and (4) a youth-serving organization.

- *Systems Change* is defined as examining changes to the workforce development system in six focus areas: (1) capacity, (2) coordination, (3) consumer choice, accommodation and workplace/employer supports, (4) development/adaptation/evaluation of new practices, (5) dissemination of effective practice, and (6) sustainability of effective project elements once ODEP funding has ended.

Part II. Award Information

1. Award Amount

Funding is expected to be provided for up to 3 cooperative agreements in the range of \$500,000 to \$625,000 for FY 2010. While these awards will be funded for a period of performance of 24 months from the date of execution of award documents, ODEP in its discretion may make available up to three (3) additional years of funding, after giving consideration to such factors as: the availability of funding, the demonstrated satisfactory performance of grant activities and other relevant factors. Applicants are required to submit budgets within this financial range.

The Department of Labor reserves the right to negotiate the amounts to be awarded under this competition. Please be advised that requests exceeding \$625,000 will be considered non-responsive. Additionally, there will be no reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Grantees must support the travel and associated costs of sending at least four representatives (one from each required partner) to an annual grantees' meeting to receive administrative support, to discuss the national implications of "Add Us In", and to assist in the creation of a national network necessary for collaboration, dissemination, and implementation of successful policies and practices. Monthly conference calls with ODEP, consortium members and eventually national network members will be a required component of consortium cooperative agreement activity. In addition, the partners must be aware of the necessity of logistics costs, listening sessions and materials. It is anticipated that during the first 12 months no more than \$150,000 will be expended by the consortium, due to the necessity of planning and design with funding needs increasing as the project moves closer to implementation. Because of the Federal requirements in a cooperative agreement, close cooperation and coordination between ODEP and the grantees is required. It is expected that grantees will avail themselves of ODEP's expertise and that of its Technical Assistance (TA) centers. ODEP and TA centers support will provide grantees with significant assistance in creating a working collaboration to address the employment needs of youth and adults with disabilities in target population communities. Grantees must also support resources for validating the models implemented.

Inasmuch as the award will be made in the form of a cooperative agreement, DOL will have substantial involvement in the administration of the agreement. This DOL involvement will consist of:

- 1) Approval of any sub-contract related to the cooperative agreement awarded by the grantee after the cooperative agreement award;
- 2) Participation in site visits to project areas;
- 3) Providing advice and consultation to the grantee on specific project criteria;
- 4) Providing the grantee(s) with technical and programmatic support, including training in DOL monitoring and evaluation systems, and standard procedures regarding DOL management of cooperative agreements;
- 5) Reviewing, at reasonable times, all documents related to the grant pertaining to the project, including status and technical progress reports, and financial reports. ODEP will provide the format for the reports;
- 6) Oversight and approval of all deliverables, including but not limited to fact sheets, training materials, press releases and publicity-related materials regarding the project;
- 7) Oversight and approval of all content for online resources developed through project activities, including clearing topics for material production and final document production; and
- 8) Reviewing project evaluation design, and participating with ODEP's independent evaluator.

Part III. Eligibility Information and Other Cooperative agreement Specifications

Period of Performance and Performance Requirements

While these cooperative agreements will be funded for a period of performance of 24 months from the date of execution of award documents, ODEP in its discretion may make available up to three (3) additional years of funding, after giving consideration to such factors as: the availability of funding, the demonstrated satisfactory performance of grant activities and other relevant factors. Consortia will be able to provide not only data related to increased employment opportunities for people with disabilities in targeted businesses and target population communities, but also products and documents reflecting both informational content and the collaborative process for achieving the goals of “Add Us In.” These documents will then be disseminated through existing ODEP Technical Assistance Centers (<http://www.dol.gov/odep/>) and other national organizations.

Grantee Requirements

To be considered for an award, consortium applying for the cooperative agreement must have representation from each of the following four organization types:

1. An association of targeted businesses, a business association located in a target population community, targeted business entities, association of targeted businesses, association of targeted business owners or other similar entity;
2. A disability-serving organization;

3. A Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) or other organization with demonstrated experience in providing employment and training services and employment-related support services (e.g., One-Stop center); and
4. Youth-serving organization.

All four required partners must be involved in the strategic planning and implementation activities. Consortia are encouraged to have additional community and service partners beyond the four required partners.

Selection of an organization as a grantee does not constitute approval of the cooperative agreement application as submitted. Before the actual cooperative agreement is awarded, DOL may enter into negotiations about such items as project components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support cooperative agreement implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the application.

Specific Allowable Uses of Cooperative Agreement Funds:

- Organizing and participating in strategic alliances with business groups and organizations
- Bringing together local education and training programs and connecting them to Federal, State, tribal, and local programs to address effectively the learning and employment needs of youth and adults with disabilities

- Providing staff development and training to teachers, employers, mentors, counselors, community rehabilitation agency personnel, Social Security Work Incentive Specialists, State Medicaid support agencies, One-Stop staff, and others critical to successful transition outcomes
- Peer mentoring services and related activities, such as comprehensive guidance and counseling to other targeted businesses on the business case for hiring individuals with disabilities
- Activities that support the *Guideposts for Success* (<http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/youth/>) including career-related mentoring of youth and adults with disabilities by members of targeted business associations
- Implementing strategies/activities to increase targeted business' awareness of, interest in, and support for hiring individuals with disabilities from their communities
- Follow-up services and data gathering activities that focus efforts on job retention, wage gains and career progress through regular contact with participant employers, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise, assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education, mentoring, and tracking of progress made by participants in employment after training
- Creating and distributing materials that are culturally relevant to the target population communities the consortium is working with (this may include producing documents in languages other than English)
- Researching, testing, and evaluating the project model(s)

1. Eligible Applicants

Under this announcement only consortia may apply for and receive a cooperative agreement. Each consortium must, at a minimum, have representation from each of the following four organization types: (1) A an association of targeted businesses, association of targeted business owners or other similar entity; (2) A disability-serving organization; (3) A Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) or other organization with demonstrated experience in providing employment and training services and employment-related support services (e.g., One-Stop center but not limited to); and (4) youth-serving organization. We encourage the participation of diverse consortia members including, but not limited to: national disability organizations, LGBT organizations, women-owned businesses, small business development centers, minority business development centers, community-based organizations, colleges and universities (including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)), Federally recognized or state-recognized American Indian/Alaska Native tribal governments or American Indian/Alaska Native tribally designated organizations.

Consortia must be legal entities, or partnerships or joint ventures of legal entities. If a partnership or joint entity, then each partner will be individually responsible for the performance of the cooperative agreement, and for the funds awarded there under. All applications must clearly identify the lead cooperative agreement recipient and fiscal agent, as well as all other members of the consortium applying for the cooperative agreement. The fiscal agent must have proof of successful operation of federal or other

grants of this size and scope. In addition, the application must identify the relationship between all of the members of the consortium, and their respective roles in carrying out the project.

According to section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization, as described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, that engages in lobbying activities will not be eligible for the receipt of Federal funds constituting an award, grant, or loan. See 2 U.S.C. 1611; 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4). Funding restrictions apply.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing, matching funds, and cost participation are not required under this SGA. The leveraging of public and private resources to foster inclusive service delivery and achieve project sustainability is highly encouraged and included under evaluation criteria.

Leveraged resources can come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to: public sector (e.g., Federal, State, or local governments); non-profit sector (e.g., community organizations, faith-based organizations, or education and training institutions); private sector (e.g., businesses or industry associations); investor community (e.g., angel networks); philanthropic community; and the economic development community. Applicants must describe in detail how such leveraged funds will be used and demonstrate how these funds will contribute to the goals of the project.

3. Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses

The Jobs for Veterans Act (Pub. L.107–288) requires 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 the Department of Labor. On December 19, 2008, the Department published a Final Rule (at 20 CFR Part 1010) implementing this statutory requirement to provide priority of service, effective January 19, 2009. A copy of these regulations can be accessed at:

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/E8-30166.pdf>. Section 1010.220 of these regulations requires all recipients of Department job training funds to agree to implement priority of service as a condition for the receipt of funds and also requires all recipients of funds to ensure that priority of service is implemented by all of their sub-recipients. Employment and Training Administration Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 5–03 (September 16, 2003), which was issued prior to publication of the regulations, provides guidance on the scope of the Jobs for Veterans Act and its implications for employment and training programs. TEGL No. 5–03, along with additional guidance, is available at the “Jobs for Veterans Priority of Service” Web site (<http://www.doleta.gov/programs/vets>).

Part IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

This announcement contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for this funding opportunity. Additional application packages and amendments to this SGA

may be obtained from the ODEP Web site address at www.dol.gov/odep, and the Federal Grant Opportunities Web site address at <http://www.grants.gov>.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission The three required sections of the application are titled below and described thereafter:

Part I: The Cost Proposal/Budget (No page limit).

Part II: Executive Summary--Project Synopsis (Not to exceed three pages).

Part III: Project Narrative (Not to exceed 25 pages excluding timeline, organizational chart, and resumes).

Applications that fail to adhere to the instructions in this section will be considered non-responsive and may not be given further consideration.

A. Part I is the Cost Proposal/Budget and must include the following three items:

- The Standard Form (SF) 424, “Application for Federal Assistance” (available at http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp). The SF-424 must clearly identify the applicant and 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 representative of the applicant.
- The SF-424–A Budget Information Form (available at: http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp). In preparing

the Budget Information Form, the applicant must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the request. The budget narrative should break down the budget and leveraged resources by the activities specified in the technical proposal. The narrative should also discuss precisely how the administrative costs support the project goals.

Applicants that fail to provide a SF-424, SF-424–A and/or a budget narrative will be removed from consideration prior to the technical review process. Leveraged resources should not be listed on the SF-424 or SF-424–A Budget Information Form, but must be described in the budget narrative and in Part II of the proposal. The amount of Federal funding requested for the entire period of performance must be shown on the SF- 424 and SF-424–A Budget Information Form.

- Applicants are also required to submit OMB control number 1890–0014 Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants, which can be found at: http://www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm and a completed Assurance and Certification signature page must be submitted.
- Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) number. All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a DUNS number. See OMB Notice of Final Policy Issuance, 68 FR 38402 (June 27, 2003). Applicants must supply their DUNS number on the SF-424. The DUNS number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access the Web site: <http://www.dnb.com/us/> or call 1–866–705–5711. If no DUNS

number is provided then the grant application will be considered non-responsive and it will not be evaluated. Requests for exemption from the DUNS number requirement must be made to the Office of Management and Budget.

B. Part II is the Executive Summary of the technical proposal which must contain the following information:

- A Project Synopsis of no more than three single-spaced, single-sided pages on 8 1/2" x 11" paper with standard margins throughout that identify the following:

- 1) The lead entity;
- 2) The list of consortium members, and additional members; and
- 3) An overview of how the applicant will carry out research activities described in this solicitation.

C. Part III is the Project Narrative which must satisfy the requirements outlined below:

- The Project Narrative is limited to 25 double-spaced single-sided with a 12-point font and one-inch margins. Any pages submitted in excess of this 25 page limit will not be reviewed.²¹

²¹ Any Appendices, including letters of cooperation and resumes are not included in the 25 page limit. The Timeline and Organizational Chart are also not included in this page limit. A page is 8 1/2" x 11" (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, and captions must be double-spaced (no more than three lines per vertical inch); and, if using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch (if using a non-proportional font or a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters per inch).

•The Project Narrative includes the applicant’s capability to plan, implement, and evaluate a pilot project in accordance with the provisions of this solicitation.

Following the outline provided in Section V (Significance of the Proposed Project, Project Design, Organizational Capacity and Quality of Key Personnel, Budget and Resource Capacity, Quality of the Management Plan, and Quality of the Project Evaluation), successful applicants will describe in the Project Narrative their innovative and comprehensive plan for accomplishing the research activities described in Part (1), Description and Purpose and Part I (2)

Background. The Project Narrative must:

- 1) Identify members of the consortium (including the lead entity, the required partners and any other members) and provide documentation (such as letters of intent and memorandum of agreement which must be included in an Appendix) of a formal agreement of participation, discuss what role and tasks the entities will perform, and identify members of consortia leadership who are individuals with disabilities or members of targeted groups;
- 2) Demonstrate each of the consortium members' relevant experience and expertise;
- 3) Describe in detail the key features of the project model that will be developed and tested for effectiveness using these cooperative agreement funds. Specify the targeted communities that will be the focus of the program; how any disability-related needs of participants will be

addressed; and the potential contribution of the proposed project to increasing the quality and availability of employment opportunities to people with a full range of disabilities in targeted businesses and target population communities;

4) Identify the number of individuals that will be served by this project when fully operational;

5) Describe how participants (both business and individuals with disabilities) will be identified and selected for the project;

6) Describe the characteristics of the participants the project expects to serve (i.e., age, gender, LGBT status, number of participants, targeted population, types of disabilities, educational level, ethnicity, business type);

7) A detailed description of how the consortium will address the development of a network through collaboration with the larger association or national partners to take the model to scale. This would include the creation of materials; and dissemination and replication of successful policies and practices nationally;

8) Describe the types of employment or disability-related training, support, and follow-up services (if any) that will be provided to assist project participants (both business and individuals with disabilities) and how they will be funded;

9) Describe what efforts will be undertaken to establish workforce system, community, business, disability and school-based partnerships sufficient to support project implementation and sustainability;

10) Describe the efforts that will be undertaken to encourage the active involvement of targeted individuals with all types of disabilities;

11) Identify additional Federal, State, and other resources beyond those specifically mentioned in this solicitation, that will be leveraged and used to support and sustain the overall objectives of the cooperative agreement;

12) Describe in detail the design and analysis that will be used to validate the model being tested and the methods and procedures that will be used for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data in order to evaluate the project. It must also state the project's commitment to work with ODEP's independent evaluator; and

13) Describe the procedures and approaches that will be used to work with multiple Federal, State, and local public agencies, and business, disability, and other entities to sustain, replicate, and expand the workforce systems model being tested.

- Each Project Narrative must also include:

1) A detailed 24 month management plan for project goals, objectives, and activities;

- 2) A detailed 24 month timeline for project activities, including producing and submitting a final report;
- 3) A detailed outline for an evaluation of the project which references the applicant's commitment to working with ODEP on all evaluation activities;
- 4) A description of procedures and approaches that will be used to provide ongoing communication, collaboration with, and input from ODEP's Project Officer on all cooperative agreement -related activities;
- 5) A detailed description of how the consortia will work with multiple Federal, State and local public and private partners in carrying out project activities; and
- 6) A detailed description of measures that will be taken during the cooperative agreement period to ensure the sustainability of the model implemented after Federal funding ceases.

- The Project Narrative must describe the proposed staffing for the project and must identify and summarize the qualifications of the personnel who will carry it out. In addition, the applicant must provide an organizational chart for staff that will operate the proposed project. In instances where the project is part of the work of a larger organization (e.g., a lead human services agency), please include a diagram that indicates where the proposed project will fit within the larger

organization. (The organizational chart does not count toward the 25 page limit for the Project Narrative.)

- In addition, the evaluation criteria listed in Section V, below, include consideration of the qualifications, including relevant education, training and experience of key project personnel, as well as the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Resumes must be included in the appendices. Key personnel, which need not all be from the same consortium organization, include: Principle Investigator, Project Director, Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Research Analyst, and any other individual playing a substantial role in the project. In addition, the applicant must specify in the application, the percentages of time to be dedicated by each key person on the project. ODEP strongly encourages diversity in key personnel participating as a part of a consortium.

- For each staff person named in the application, please provide documentation of all internal and external time commitments. In instances where a staff person is committed on a federally supported project, please provide the project name, Federal office, program title, the project Federal Award Number, and the amount of committed time by each project year. This information (e.g., Staff: Jane Doe; Project Name: Succeeding in the General Curriculum; Federal Office: Office of Special Education Programs; Program Title: Field Initiated Research; Award Number: H324C980624; Time Commitments: Year 1- 30 percent; Year 2- 25

percent, and Year 3- 40 percent) can be provided as an appendix to the application.

In general, ODEP will not reduce time commitments on currently funded grants from the time proposed in the original application. Therefore, we will not consider for funding any application where key staff are bid above a time commitment level that staff have available to bid (i.e. 100 percent). Further, the time commitments stated in newly submitted applications will not be negotiated down to permit the applicant to receive a new grant award.

- The Project Narrative should also describe how the applicant plans to comply with the employment discrimination and equal employment opportunity requirements of the various laws listed in the assurances section.

Applications may be submitted electronically on http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp#faqs or in hard-copy via U.S. mail, professional delivery service, or hand delivery. These processes are described in further detail in Section IV (3). Applicants submitting proposals in hard-copy must submit an original signed application (including the SF-424) and two (2) “copy-ready” versions free of bindings, staples or protruding tabs to ease in the reproduction of the proposal by DOL. Applicants submitting proposals in hard-copy are also requested, though not required to, provide an electronic copy of the proposal on CD-ROM.

3. Submission Date, Times, and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is 30 days after the publication date in the *Federal Register*. Applications must be received at the address below no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Applications submitted electronically through Grants.gov, must be successfully submitted <http://www.grants.gov> no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on that same 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.

Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (fax) will not be accepted.

If an application is submitted by both hard-copy and through www.grants.gov a letter must accompany the hard-copy application stating why two applications were submitted and the differences between the two submissions. If no letter accompanies the hard-copy we will review the copy submitted through www.grants.gov. For multiple applications submitted through www.grants.gov, we will review the latest submittal.

Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will not be honored. No exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice will be granted.

Mail/overnight mail/hand delivery—To apply by mail, please submit one blue-ink signed, typewritten original of the application and two signed photocopies in one package to the U.S. Department of Labor, Procurement Services Center, Attention: Cassandra Mitchell,

Reference SGA (***?***), 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room S-4307, Washington, D.C. 20210. Information about applying online through www.grants.gov can be found in Section IV.B of this document. Applicants are advised that mail delivery in the Washington, D.C. area may be delayed due to mail decontamination procedures. Hand delivered proposals will be received at the above address.

Electronic submission—Applicants may apply online through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). It is strongly recommended 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. These steps may take multiple days or 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. It is highly recommended that applicants use the “Organization Registration Checklist” at http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf to ensure the registration process is complete.

Within two business days of application submission, Grants.gov will send the applicant two e-mail messages to provide the status of application progress through the system. The first e-mail, almost immediate, will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov. The second e-mail will indicate the application has either been successfully validated or has been rejected due to errors. Only applications that have been successfully submitted and successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure a timely submission, therefore sufficient time should be allotted for submission

(two business days), and if applicable, subsequent 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. The components of the application must be saved as either .doc, .xls or .pdf files. Documents received in a format other than .doc, .xls or .pdf will not be read.

The Grants.gov helpdesk is available from 7:00 a.m. (Eastern Time) until 9:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Applicants should factor the unavailability of the Grants.gov helpdesk after 9:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) into plans for submitting an application.

Applicants are strongly advised to utilize the plethora of tools and documents, including FAQs, that are available on the “Applicant Resources” page at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp#faqs. 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 to speak to a customer support representative or e-mail support@grants.gov.

Late Applications: For applications submitted on Grants.gov, only applications that have been successfully submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the closing date and successfully validated will be considered. For applicants not submitting on Grants.gov, any 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, was properly addressed, and: (a) was sent by U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail 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) was sent by professional overnight delivery service to the addressee not later than one working day prior to 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 the above instructions will be a basis for a determination of non-responsiveness. 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.

4. Withdrawal of Applications

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice or telegram (including mailgram) received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by the applicant or by an authorized representative thereof, if the representative’s identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal.

5. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

6. Funding Restrictions

All proposed costs must be necessary and reasonable in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles, e.g., Non-Profit Organizations—OMB Circular A-122. Disallowed costs are those charges to a cooperative agreement that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal Cost Principles or other conditions contained in the cooperative agreement. Applicants will not be entitled to reimbursement of pre-award costs.

7. Indirect Costs

As specified in OMB Circulars on Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular cost objective. In order to utilize cooperative agreement funds for indirect costs incurred, the applicant must obtain an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with its Federal Cognizant Agency either before or shortly after the cooperative agreement award. The Federal Cognizant Agency is generally determined based on the preponderance of Federal dollars received by the recipient.

8. Administrative Costs

An entity that receives a cooperative agreement to carry out a project or program may not use more than 15 percent of the amount of the cooperative agreement to pay administrative costs associated with the program or project, excepting tribal entities which require a 25 percent cap due to the unavailability of taxation resources.

Administrative costs could be both direct and indirect costs and are defined at 20 CFR 667.220. Administrative costs do not need to be identified separately from program costs on the SF-424A Budget Information Form. They should be discussed in the budget narrative and 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.

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

A technical panel will review cooperative agreement applications against the criteria listed below, on the basis of the maximum points indicated.

(a) Significance of the Proposed Project (20 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed research, the Department will consider the following factors:

- 1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increase knowledge or understanding of challenges, issues, or effective strategies related to the employment of youth and adults with disabilities in targeted businesses and

- communities; and related to policies and practices to increase employment for these individuals;
- 2) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in systems change or improvement;
 - 3) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the people with disabilities in target population communities as they relate to employment;
 - 4) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build upon, or are alternatives to, existing strategies;
 - 5) The replicability of the model that will result from the proposed project, and its effective use in other settings;
 - 6) The extent to which the promising practices of the proposed project will be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies;
 - 7) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project; and
 - 8) The extent to which the proposed project builds upon prior work done by ODEP and its partners around youth in transition, including the *Guideposts for Success* and related policies and practices.

(b) Project Design (35 points)

One of the initiative's key strategic assumptions that this demonstration tests is that the impetus for targeted businesses to assess their hiring practices and increase opportunities for people with disabilities will come from their business peers as represented by business associations and institutions based in target population communities, such as churches and civic associations and leaders of these institutions. This assumption about the power of business peer relationships and revealed community/customer preferences to leverage change is one of core concepts and a major strategic underpinning of this demonstration.

The proposal should describe in detail the strategic approach the applicant proposes to use to involve targeted business associations, community organizations/ leaders, and other community-based resources in communicating with, and helping to lead, targeted businesses through the process of change envisioned by this solicitation. The discussion of strategy should include the applicant's plan for 1) engaging the key participants (e.g., targeted businesses associations and community institutions/leaders) in understanding the value to the community of addressing the issue, and 2) how the consortium partners will facilitate the dialogue between an association of targeted businesses, community organization and targeted business owners to increase the employment of people with disabilities. The discussion of strategy should also indicate how employment and training service providers as well as experts and other knowledge resources will be used to leverage engagement of the community and an association of targeted businesses and community -- and a positive business response -- as part of applicant's strategic approach.

In evaluating the quality of the proposed project design, the Department will consider the following factors:

- 1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project (as described in Part I, 2.) are clearly specified and measurable;
- 2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement and measurement of project objectives;
- 3) The extent to which the proposed project will effectively contribute to increased knowledge and understanding by building upon current theory, research, and effective practices;
- 4) The extent to which the proposed project encourages involvement of individuals with disabilities, community-based organizations, disability organizations and target population community members, youth-serving organizations, employers, industry, relevant experts, organizations and groups;
- 5) The extent to which the proposed project includes individuals with disabilities and individuals from the target population in leadership roles;
- 6) The extent to which increased education and awareness are included the project's design for relevant stakeholders and systems personnel;

- 7) The extent to which the project will incorporate use of funds and expertise leveraged across several systems;
- 8) The extent to which the proposed project includes detailed ongoing long-term development programming, mentoring and training to address job retention and career development;
- 9) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services as well as to the needs of employers;
- 10) The extent to which the management plan for project implementation is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget;
- 11) The adequacy of the documentation submitted in support of the proposed project to demonstrate the commitment of each entity or individual included in project implementation, including any national partners to aid in national policy development and dissemination;
- 12) The extent to which the proposed project team will work with ODEP in its various technical assistance efforts in order to freely share with others what is learned about increasing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in targeted businesses and target population communities, and actively utilize the programs sponsored by the ODEP;

- 13) The extent to which the proposed project leverages other public and private resources to create a collaborative network that is integrated into the community, fosters inclusive service delivery and is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the cooperative agreement period. Including appropriate letters of support included in the appendices is encouraged; and
- 14) The extent to which the proposed evaluation design and implementation is rigorous and provides valid and reliable information on the project's models, customer satisfaction, and contributions to ODEP's performance outcomes; and commitment to work with ODEP in all evaluation activities.

(c) Organizational Capacity and Quality of Key Personnel (20 points)

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates organizational capacity and quality of key personnel to implement the proposed project, including:

- 1) Demonstrated experience with similar projects that plan, develop, implement, and evaluate new strategies and produce replicable models;
- 2) Demonstrated experience of fiscal agent in managing projects of this complexity;
- 3) Qualifications and experience of the applicant's key personnel;
- 4) Inclusion of diverse personnel, including individuals with disabilities, in key positions;
- 5) Commitment to developing and sustaining work across key stakeholders;

- 6) Experience and commitment of any proposed consultants or subcontractors;
- 7) Existing collaborations or networks with national employment, business or disability systems and organizations;
- 8) Appropriateness of the organization's structure to carry out the project. (The structure and staffing of the organization align with the project's requirements, vision, and goals and are designed to assure responsible general management of the project); and
- 9) Letters of Commitment. Applicants can include letters of support if they provide specific commitments. Such letters can increase an applicant's score by demonstrating the type of additional resources or support that will enable the applicant to meet the commitments the applicant makes in the text of the proposal. Form letters will not be considered.

(d) Management and Outcomes (25 points)

The purpose of the Management and Outcomes criteria is to determine whether the applicant has developed an adequate management plan to effectively carry out the objectives and scope of the proposed project on time and within budget, to describe the predicted outcomes resulting from activities funded under this SGA, and to identify the “methods of evaluation” that will be used by the grantee to determine success. Applicants should provide a detailed management plan, which identifies the critical activities, time frames, and responsibilities for effectively implementing the project, including the evaluation process for assuring successful implementation of cooperative agreement

objectives. In addition, applicants should outline the strategy for documenting and reporting the activities undertaken during the life of the cooperative agreement.

In evaluating the management and outcomes criteria, the DOL considers the factors below to be of particular importance. The DOL will assess the extent to which:

- 1) The management plan for project implementation appears likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. This should include clearly defined staff responsibilities, time allocation to project activities, time lines, milestones for accomplishing project tasks, project deliverables and information on adequacy of other resources necessary for project implementation;
- 2) Performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project;
- 3) Methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, context, and outcomes of the proposed project;
- 4) The evaluation will provide information to other projects about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings;
- 5) The methods of evaluation include the objective use of performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data;
- 6) The methods of evaluation measure in both quantitative and qualitative terms, project results and satisfaction of customers, both people with disabilities and employers;

- 7) The time commitments of the principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed objectives of the project;
- 8) The budget is adequate to support and sustain the proposed project activities over the projected life of the cooperative agreement;
- 9) The management plan appears likely to result in sustainable activities beyond the period of direct Federal investment;
- 10) The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project;
- 11) The methods of evaluation provide measures that will inform ODEP's annual performance goals and measures and ODEP's long-term strategic goals; and
- 12) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services relating to the scope of work for the proposed project.

2. Review and Selection Process

Proposals that are timely and responsive to the requirements of this SGA will be rated against the criteria listed above by a panel comprised of representatives from DOL, other peers and members of the public. The ranked scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as urban, rural, and geographic balance; the availability of funds; and which proposals are most advantageous to the Government. The panel results are advisory in nature and not

binding on the Grant Officer, and the Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to his/her attention. The Department may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicants.

Should a cooperative agreement be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF- 424, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant (including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <http://www.grants.gov>).

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The anticipated date of announcement and award is *****?*****, 2010.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

All award notifications will be posted on the ODEP homepage at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>. Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the cooperative agreement's execution. The notice of award signed by the Grants Officer will serve as the authorizing document. Applicants not selected for award will be notified by mail.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements – Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees, including faith-based organizations, will be subject to all applicable Federal laws (including provisions of appropriation laws), regulations, and the applicable OMB

Circulars. The cooperative agreement(s) awarded under this SGA must comply with all provisions of this solicitation and will be subject to the following statutory and administrative standards and provisions, as applicable to the particular grantee:

- 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 667.220, administrative costs;
- Non-Profit Organizations—OMB Circular A-122 (cost principles) and 29 CFR part 95 (administrative requirements);
- Educational Institutions—OMB Circular A-21 (cost principles) and 29 CFR part 95 (administrative requirements);
- State, local and Indian Tribal—OMB Circular A-87 (cost principles) and 29 CFR part 97 (administrative requirements);
- All entities must comply with 29 CFR parts 93 and 98 and, where applicable, 29 CFR parts 96 and 99;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 29 CFR part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance;

- 29 CFR part 33—Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Labor;
- 29 CFR part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Program or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor;
- 29 CFR part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Program or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance;
- 29 CFR part 37—Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA);
- 29 CFR part 1926, Safety and Health Regulations for Construction of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA); and
- 29 CFR part 570, Child Labor Regulations, Orders and Statements of Interpretation of the Employment Standard Administration’s Child Labor Provisions.

Note: Except as specifically provided in this Notice, DOL/ODEP’s acceptance of proposal and award of Federal funds to sponsor any program(s) do not provide a waiver of any cooperative agreement requirements and/or procedures. For example, 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/ODEP 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.

3. Travel

Any travel undertaken in performance of this cooperative agreement shall be subject to and in strict accordance with Federal travel regulations.

4. Acknowledgement of DOL Funding

Printed Materials:

In all circumstances, the following shall be displayed on printed materials prepared by the grantee under the cooperative agreement: “Preparation of this item was funded by the United States Department of Labor under Cooperative agreement No. ****?****.”

All printed materials must also include the following notice: “This document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.”

Public reference to cooperative agreement: When issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other documents describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with Federal money, all grantees receiving Federal funds must clearly state:

1. The percentage of the total costs of the program or project, which will be financed with Federal money;
2. The dollar amount of Federal financial assistance for the project or program; and

3. The percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources.

Use of DOL and ODEP Logo: In consultation with DOL/ODEP, the grantee must acknowledge DOL's role as described. The DOL and/or ODEP logo may be applied to DOL-funded material prepared for world-wide distribution, including posters, videos, pamphlets, research documents, national survey results, impact evaluations, best practice reports, and other publications of global interest. The grantee must consult with DOL on whether the logo may be used on any such items prior to final draft or final preparation for distribution. In no event shall the DOL and/or ODEP logo be placed on any item until DOL has given the grantee written permission to use the logo on the item.

5. Intellectual Property

Federal Government reserves a paid-up, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use for Federal purposes: (i) The copyright in all products developed under the cooperative agreement, including a subgrant or contract under the cooperative agreement or subgrant; and (ii) any right to copyright to which the grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership under an award (including but not limited to curricula, training models, technical assistance products and any related materials). Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. Federal funds may not be used to pay any royalty or licensing fee associated with such copyrighted material, although they may be used to pay costs for obtaining a copy which is limited to the developer/seller costs of copying and shipping.

If revenues are generated through selling products developed with cooperative agreement funds, including intellectual property, these revenues are program income. Program income is added to the cooperative agreement and must be expended for allowable cooperative agreement activities.

6. Approval of Key Personnel and Subcontractors

The recipient shall notify the Grant Officer at least 14 calendar days in advance if any key personnel are to be removed or diverted from the cooperative agreement, shall supply written justification as part of this notice as to why these persons are to be removed or diverted, shall provide the names(s) of the proposed substitute or replacement, and shall include information on each new individual's qualifications such as education and work experience.

Part VII. Monitoring and Reporting

1. Monitoring

The Add Us In cooperative agreements will be subject to performance measures based upon project focus. ODEP is responsible for ensuring effective implementation of this cooperative agreement, in accordance with the provisions of this announcement and the terms of the cooperative agreement award document.

Applicants should assume that ODEP staff, or their designees, will conduct on-site project reviews periodically. Reviews will focus on timely project implementation, performance in meeting the cooperative agreement's objectives, tasks and responsibilities,

expenditures of cooperative agreement funds on allowable activities, administration of project activities and integration and coordination with other resources, businesses or organizations locally and nationally. ODEP will conduct periodic independent evaluations of all projects. Projects may be subject to other additional reviews, at the discretion of the ODEP.

2. Reporting

Grantees will be required to submit quarterly financial and narrative progress reports, beginning 90 days from the award, as prescribed by OMB Circular A-110, codified at 2 CFR part 215 and 29 CFR part 95. In addition, all grantees will be expected to provide information on individuals with disabilities securing employment in targeted-owned businesses, or in targeted communities (including information on employers, types of jobs, wages, and benefits) and other areas addressed through the linkages and networks facilitated by project activities including developing replicable models.

Grantees will be required to submit periodic financial and participation reports.

Specifically the following reports will be required:

- A. Quarterly reports: The quarterly report is estimated to take ten hours to complete. The form for the Quarterly Report will be provided by the ODEP. The ODEP will work with the grantee to help refine the requirements of the report, which will, among other things, include measures of ongoing analysis for continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. The form will be submitted within 30 days of the close of the quarter.

- B. Standard Form 269; Financial Status Report Form (FSR) will be completed on a quarterly basis, using the on-line electronic reporting system unless ODEP provides different instructions.
- C. Final Project Report: The final report will include an assessment of project performance and outcomes achieved. The final report is estimated to take 20 hours to complete. This report will be submitted in hard copy and on electronic disk using a format and following instructions, which will be provided by ODEP.
- D. A draft of the final report is due to ODEP 45 days before the end of the period of performance of the cooperative agreement. The final report is due to ODEP and the DOL Grants Office ten days before the end of the period of performance of the cooperative agreement.

All grantees must agree to cooperate with an independent evaluation to be conducted by ODEP. ODEP will arrange for and conduct this independent evaluation of the outcomes, impacts, and accomplishments of each funded project. Grantees must agree to make available records on all parts of project activity, including participant employment and wage data, available data on specific models being evaluated, and to provide access to personnel, as specified by the evaluator(s), under the direction of ODEP. This evaluation is separate from the ongoing evaluation for continuous improvement required of the grantee for project implementation.

VIII. Agency Contacts

Any questions regarding this SGA should be directed to Cassandra Mitchell, email

address: mitchell.cassandra@dol.gov, tel: 202-693-4570 (note that this is not a toll-free number). To obtain further information about the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor, visit the DOL Web site of the Office of Disability Employment Policy at <http://www.dol.gov/odep>.

IX. Additional Information

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

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, to the attention of Darrin A. King, Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N-1310, Washington, D.C. 20210. Comments may also be emailed to DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THE COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND IT TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SOLICITATION.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. The information collected through this SGA will be used by the Department 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. Unless otherwise specifically noted in this announcement, information submitted in the respondent's application is not considered to be confidential, and will be available to the public. Applications filed in response to this SGA may be posted on the Department's Web site.

Signed at Washington, D.C., this day of (insert date).

Grant Officer