

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

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

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY-12-07

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.261

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **[60 days after date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register]**. Applications must be received no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Addresses: Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management, Attention: Steven Rietzke, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 12-07, 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 or the Department), announces the availability of approximately \$6 million from funds made available through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 DOL appropriation for Training and Employment Services for

grants to State Workforce Agencies (SWA) to develop the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). The Department has reserved up to 3 percent of this round's total grant funding (a maximum amount of \$193,890) to provide technical assistance to assist grantees in developing and implementing their WDQIs. For the remainder of this document, reference to the databases being created under the WDQI may be called "workforce longitudinal administrative databases" or "workforce longitudinal databases" interchangeably.

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

This solicitation provides a description of the application submission requirements, outlines the process that eligible entities must use to apply for

funds covered by this solicitation, and details how grantees will be selected.

A separate document is available with additional background information on workforce longitudinal database systems at

<http://www.doleta.gov/performance/workforcedatagrants09.cfm>.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

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

A. Preparing to Apply for this Solicitation:

The following are important considerations for the development of State workforce longitudinal administrative data systems (more details are available in Section V. of this SGA).

1. Determining Capacity

WDQI grant applicants must submit plans to develop or expand and fully implement workforce longitudinal data systems. Applicants must identify their existing stage of development. Expectations for grantees will differ depending on their launch point, which will fall into one of three categories:

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

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

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

2. Collection of Longitudinal Workforce Data

Applicants must explain the scope of the longitudinal data system or data system enhancements which will be funded by this grant. Applicants are asked to describe which programs will be included in the data system. At a minimum, the data systems must include disaggregated individual record data for the following programs: 1) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I, 2) Wagner-Peyser Act, 3) Trade Adjustment Assistance program data, 4) Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record data, 5) UI benefit data including demographic information associated with UI benefit payments, and 6) linkages to existing SLDSs housing K-12 and post secondary data consistent with FERPA. Applicants are also encouraged to include data from other workforce and education programs, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, or Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs.¹ States need to describe any State legislative barriers that impede the linking of data sources and address how such impediments will be overcome. Applicants must determine the source of all planned workforce data used to build their workforce longitudinal databases. This is particularly relevant in the case of the RA program, as DOL is the registration agency and collects and houses the data for many of the State's RA programs.

Applicants must specify the planned data files – data records, elements, and fields – that will be contained in their workforce longitudinal data systems. Applicants must provide a detailed plan for designing,

¹ Reed, Debbie, et. al, (2012). “An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States” – Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Employment and Training Administration. .

developing, storing, and using the data, as well as describe ongoing data-sharing and data storage procedures for both security and data quality purposes.

Applicants must also describe what procedures will be implemented to assure high standards of data quality as well as the protection of PII.

Applicants should consult recommendations released from the National Institute of Standards and Technology on the protection of PII.² WDQI grantees are expected to indicate what steps will be taken to assure rigorous data quality standards are in place.

3. Partnerships Among Agencies Within the State

Applicants must indicate which organizations will participate in the WDQI, along with their authority and willingness to provide regular access to their data and to take an active role. Workforce data may be supplied by organizations within the SWA as well as outside organizations. For example, UI wage records are kept by the State revenue agency in some States. The WIA program is located outside the SWAs in some States. At a minimum, partnerships must be made with State education agencies, but cooperation is also encouraged with other State agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation or Apprenticeship agencies (in applicable States). Applicants should describe potential barriers to data-sharing among partner agencies, along with strategies to overcome such barriers.

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

Applicants should provide information about the firmness of the commitment of the partners in their efforts to assemble data. Commitments can be demonstrated through the submission of draft or finalized memoranda of understanding (MOUs), letters of intent from partners, data-sharing agreements, legally binding agreements with partners, or other supporting materials.

4. Working with a Research Partner

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

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

When working with a State research university or research organization, applicants should investigate additional security measures that may be required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of that university or research organization. The IRB must give approval for the State research institution's involvement in this partnership. Approval must be based on the applicants plan for confidential transfer, storage and usage of data, and protection of PII.

Alternative models will be considered under the WDQI grant programs. It is critical that the following considerations are incorporated into any partnership model:

i. The research partner chosen by the SWA must have demonstrable capacity to assist in the collection and storage of the longitudinal workforce data.

ii. The research partner entity must be able to ensure that the data collected will be stored in accordance with local, State, and Federal confidentiality and PII protective provisions.

iii. The research partner will be responsible for processing data requests, conducting in-depth data analysis, preparing standard reports, responding to requests for additional papers, and reporting on State and local workforce and education issues and trends as requested by external entities, consistent with all applicable Federal and State privacy laws.

5. Confidentiality

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

Applicants must provide a description of personnel and the level of access each employee will have to confidential data. For example, generally employees of State research universities are State employees, are therefore considered agents of the State workforce or education agencies, and are granted access to or restricted from sensitive data and PII based upon State laws. In addition, they are expected to observe rules set by the State university's IRB. It can be assumed, for the purpose of this application, that all proposed employees will be subject to Federal laws governing data-

sharing, transfer of data, and PII confidentiality, including but not limited to the requirements of FERPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99.

6. Data-Sharing Agreements

Grantees must have partnership agreements outlining the storage, use, and ongoing maintenance of their longitudinal database. These data-sharing agreements must address: how data will be exchanged between partners, the purposes for which the data will be used, how and when the data will be disseminated, which entity maintains control of the data, which entity actually owns the data, the intended methods of ensuring confidential collection, use and storage of the data, and which entities inside and outside of the data-sharing agreements will have access to the data. Data-sharing agreements that involve the disclosure of PII from education records also must: (i) designate the entity collecting the data as the authorized representative of the State educational authority to evaluate a federally or State supported education program; (ii) specify: (a) the PII to be disclosed; (b) the purpose for which the PII is disclosed to the authorized representative; and (c) a description of the activity with sufficient specificity to make clear that the work falls within the exception of 34 CFR §99.31(a)(3), including a description of how the PII will be used; (iii) require the authorized representative to destroy the PII when it is no longer needed for the purpose specified; (iv) specify the time period in which the PII must be destroyed; and (v) establish policies and procedures, consistent with FERPA and other Federal and State confidentiality and privacy provisions, to protect PII from further disclosure (except back to the

disclosing entity) and unauthorized use, including limiting use of PII to only authorized representatives with legitimate interests in the audit or evaluation of a Federal or State-supported program. Data-sharing agreements also should contain specific plans for secure data transfer and storage.

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

7. Integration of Efforts with State Education Agencies

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

i. SWAs with longitudinal administrative databases are encouraged to develop new approaches to link these databases with education entities collecting comparable education data as well as with other State agencies.

ii. SWAs proposing to have their State workforce longitudinal data systems operated by a State university must assure that the State university staff will work closely with the State education agency.

It is important to note that many of the statewide educational data systems are also in the process of development. If the State's SLDS only contains K-12 data, applicants would have to connect workforce data to the K-

12 SLDS as well as any relevant postsecondary databases. In States where that data is not stored longitudinally, applicants would have to link to available non-longitudinal education data (for example, individual-level postsecondary education data, consistent with FERPA). If a State's education agency has a partially- or fully-developed SLDS with both K-12 and postsecondary data, it will be the responsibility of the workforce grantee to work with that agency to link the education and workforce data, consistent with FERPA. This is one example of the partnership that is expected between State workforce and education agencies in developing these linked longitudinal data systems.

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

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

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

B. Grant Purpose

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

i. Develop or improve State workforce longitudinal data systems.

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

ii. Enable workforce data to be matched with education data, to

ultimately create longitudinal data systems with individual-level information from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary and into the workforce system to build capacity to evaluate the outcomes of federally or State- supported education programs while protecting PII.

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

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

v. Provide user-friendly information to consumers to help them select the education and training programs that best suit their needs.

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

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

ETA has approximately \$6 million available under this competition and expects to fund approximately six grants. Individual grant amounts will

not exceed \$1.2 million. Any grant application with a proposed value greater than \$1.2 million will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered. In the event additional funds become available, ETA reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this solicitation.

B. Period of Performance

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

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this solicitation are those SWAs within the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands that were not recipients of a Round One or Two WDQI grant (as a result of solicitation SGA/DFA PY 09-10 and solicitation SGA/DFA PY 11-01). States ineligible for this round of funding consist of the following: Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Rhode

Island, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required as a condition for application.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

There are no other eligibility criteria for submitting an application.

D. Eligible Participants

Section III.D. is not applicable for this grant.

E. Other Grant Specifications

1. Transparency

DOL is committed to conducting a transparent grant award process and publicizing information about program outcomes. Posting grant applications on public websites is a means of promoting and sharing innovative ideas. For this grant competition, we will publish the Abstracts required by Section IV.B.Part IIIa and selected information from the SF-424 for all applications on the Department's public website or similar publicly accessible location. Additionally, we will publish a version of the Technical Proposal required by Section IV.B.Part II for all those applications that are awarded grants, on the Department's website or a similar location. No other attachments to the application will be published. The Technical Proposals and Abstracts will not be published until after the grants are announced. In

addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

DOL recognizes that grant applications sometimes contain information that an applicant may consider proprietary or business confidential information, or may contain personally identifiable information (PII). Proprietary or business confidential information is information that is not usually disclosed outside your organization and disclosing this information is likely to cause you substantial competitive harm.

PII is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information.³

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. Applicants should not include any proprietary or confidential business information or PII in this summary. In the event that an applicant submits proprietary or confidential business information or PII, DOL is not liable for the posting of this information contained in the Abstract. The submission of the grant application constitutes a waiver of the applicant's objection to the posting of any proprietary or confidential business information contained in the Abstract. Additionally, the applicant is responsible for obtaining all authorizations from relevant parties for

³ OMB Memorandum 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>.

publishing all PII contained within the Abstract. In the event the Abstract contains proprietary or confidential business information or PII, the applicant is presumed to have obtained all necessary authorizations to provide this information and may be liable for any improper release of this information.

By submission of this grant application, the applicant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States, the U.S. Department of Labor, its officers, employees, and agents against any liability or for any loss or damages arising from this application. By such submission of this grant application, the applicant further acknowledges having the authority to execute this release of liability.

In order to ensure that proprietary or confidential business information or PII is properly protected from disclosure when DOL posts the winning Technical Proposals, applicants whose Technical Proposals will be posted will be asked to submit a second redacted version of their Technical Proposal, with any proprietary, confidential commercial/business and PII redacted. All non-public information about the applicant's and consortium members' staff (if applicable) should be removed as well.

The Department will contact the applicants whose Technical Proposals will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Technical Proposal.

Submission of a redacted version of the Technical Proposal will constitute permission by the applicant for DOL to make the redacted version publicly available. We will also assume that, by submitting the redacted

version of the Technical Proposal, the applicant has obtained the agreement to the applicant's decision about what material to redact of all persons and entities whose proprietary, confidential business information or PII is contained in the Technical Proposal. If an applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Technical Proposal within 45 days of DOL's request, DOL will publish the original Technical Proposal in full, after redacting only PII. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Technical Proposal will remain part of the complete application package, including an applicant's proprietary and confidential business information and any PII.)

Applicants are encouraged to maximize the grant application information that will be publicly disclosed, and to exercise restraint and redact only information that clearly is proprietary, confidential commercial/business information or PII. The redaction of entire pages or sections of the Technical Proposal is not appropriate and will not be allowed, unless the entire portion merits such protection. Should a dispute arise about whether redactions are appropriate, DOL will follow the procedures outlined in the Department's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations (29 CFR Part 70).

Redacted information in grant applications will be protected by DOL from public disclosure in accordance with Federal law, including the Trade Secrets Act (18 U.S.C. § 1905), FOIA, and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a). If DOL receives a FOIA request for your application, the procedures in DOL's FOIA regulations for responding to requests for commercial/business information submitted to the government will be followed, as well as all FOIA

exemptions and procedures. 29 CFR § 70.26. Consequently, it is possible that application of FOIA rules may result in release of information in response to a FOIA request that an applicant redacted in its “redacted copy.”

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This SGA contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

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

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

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance” (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). The SF-424 must clearly identify the applicant and must be signed by an individual with authority to enter into a grant agreement. Upon confirmation of an award, the

individual signing the SF-424 on behalf of the applicant shall be considered the authorized representative of the applicant. As stated in block 21 of the SF-424 form, signature of the authorized representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). The SF-424B is not required to be submitted with the application.

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

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

Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

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

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

- Budget Narrative: The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. It should

also include a description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.

- Note that the entire Federal grant amount requested (not just one year) must be included on the SF-424 and SF-424A and budget narrative. No leveraged resources should be shown on the SF-424 and SF-424A. The amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative must be the same. Please note 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 a budget narrative will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

- Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Instructions for registering with SAM can be found at <https://www.sam.gov>. An awardee must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate and complete. For purposes of this paragraph, the applicant is the entity that meets the eligibility criteria and has the legal authority to apply and to receive

the award. Failure to register with SAM and maintain an active account will result in your application being found non-responsive and not being reviewed.

Part II. The Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal must demonstrate the applicant's capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Solicitation. The guidelines for the content of the Technical Proposal are provided in Section V of this SGA. The Technical Proposal is limited to 20 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. Any materials beyond the specified page limit will not be read. Applicants should number the Technical Proposal beginning with page number 1. Applications that do not include Part II, the Technical Proposal, will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

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

- a) All applicants must submit an abstract of up to two pages summarizing the proposed project, including but not limited to the scope of the project and proposed outcomes. This summary must include the applicant's name, project title, a description of the area to be served, and the funding level requested. The abstract will not count against the page limit for the Technical Proposal. If using grants.gov for submission, this document must be attached

under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled abstract. Please note that applicants will be held to the outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may have a significant impact on future grants with ETA.

- b) All applicants must submit a Project/Performance Site Location(s) form (available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). 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. If using grants.gov for submission, this form must be attached under the required forms section.

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

In addressing the partnerships requirements of Section V.A.3, in addition to the information provided in the Technical Proposal, applicants may provide, as attachments, draft or finalized MOUs, Letters of Intent, or other statements attesting to the formation of data-sharing partnerships. While these additional attachments are not required, they may help the applicant to further substantiate evidence of their intended partnerships. Detailed descriptions/qualifications for proposed staff positions to be included in the development of these workforce longitudinal databases may also be included.

Attachments may not exceed 30 pages, not including the two-page abstract and project/performance site location form described above. Only those attachments listed above as required attachments will be excluded from the page limit. The required attachments must be affixed as separate, clearly identified appendices to the application. Additional materials such as resumé's or general letters of support will not be considered.

Applicants must submit their application in one package because documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to the application for review. The Department will not accept general letters of support submitted by organizations or individuals that are not partners in the proposed project and that do not directly identify the specific commitment or roles of the project partners.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is **[insert date 60 days after date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register]**. 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 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.

Applications submitted on grants.gov must also be successfully submitted (as described below) no later than 4:00:00 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 copy are also required to provide an identical electronic copy of the proposal on compact disc (CD). If discrepancies between the hard copy submission and CD copy are identified, the application on the CD will be considered the official applicant submission for evaluation purposes. Failure to provide identical applications in hardcopy and CD format may have an impact on the overall evaluation.

If an application is physically submitted by both hard copy and through <http://www.grants.gov>, a letter must accompany the hard-copy application stating which application to review. If no letter accompanies the hard copy, we will review the copy submitted through <http://www.grants.gov>.

Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will be considered non-responsive. No exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice will be granted. Further, documents submitted separately from the application, before or after the deadline, will not be accepted as part of the application.

Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Federal Assistance, Attention: Steven Rietzke, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 12-07, 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 4:00:00 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 walk the applicant 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 System for Award Management (SAM).

The next step in the registration process is creating a username and password with Grants.gov to become an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). AORs will need to know the 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 the applicant organization who is the contact listed for SAM – will receive an email to grant the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of their organization. The E-Biz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and approve an 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 an application is submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

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

address errors and receive validation upon resubmission (an additional two business days for each ensuing submission). It is important to note that if sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .rtf, or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent 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 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated will be considered. Applicants take a significant risk by waiting until the last day to submit by Grants.gov.

Any hard copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received before awards are made, it was properly addressed, and it was: (a) sent by U.S. Postal Service mail, postmarked not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application required to be received by the 20th of the month must be postmarked by the 15th of that month); or (b) sent by professional overnight delivery service to the addressee not later than one working day before the date specified for receipt of applications.

“Postmarked” means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service. Therefore, applicants

should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Failure to adhere to these instructions will be a basis for a determination that the application was not filed timely and will not be considered. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt.

D. Intergovernmental Review

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

E. Funding Restrictions

All proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles.

Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles or other conditions contained in the grant.

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

1. Indirect Costs

As specified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common

or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective. An indirect cost rate (ICR) is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether Federally-assisted or not. Organizations must use the ICR supplied by the Federal Cognizant Agency. If an organization requires a new ICR or has a pending ICR, the Grant Officer will award a temporary billing rate for 90 days until a provisional rate can be issued. This rate is based on the fact that an organization has not established an ICR agreement. Within this 90-day period, the organization must submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal to their Federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional ICR.

2. Administrative Costs

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

3. Salary and Bonus Limitations

None of the grant funds may be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct

costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. This limitation does not apply to vendors providing goods and services as defined in OMB Circular A-133 (codified at 29 CFR Parts 96 and 99). See Public Laws 112-74 (Division F, Title I, section 105), 112-10 (Division B, Title I), 111-117 (Division D, Title I, section 107), and Training and Employment Guidance Letter number 5-06 for further clarification:

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

4. Intellectual Property Rights

The Federal Government reserves a paid-up, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use for Federal purposes: i) the copyright in all products developed under the grant, including a subgrant or contract under the grant or subgrant; and ii) any rights of copyright to which the grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership under an award (including but not limited to curricula, training models, technical assistance products, and any related materials). Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. The grantee may not use Federal funds to pay any royalty or license fee for use of a copyrighted work, or the cost of acquiring by purchase a copyright in a work, where the Department has a license or rights of free use in such work. If revenues are generated through selling products developed with grant funds, including intellectual property, these revenues are program income. Program

income is added to the grant and must be expended for allowable grant activities.

If applicable, the following needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds:

“This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.”

5. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

This section is not applicable.

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

This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used for each category to evaluate grant proposals. The evaluation criteria are described below:

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

A. Evaluation Criteria

This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used for each category to evaluate grant proposals. Please refer back to Section I.A of this SGA for more information on the components of the application requirements listed below. Please keep in mind that the Attachments to the Technical Proposal may serve as space to include additional details on components such as the planned or existing MOUs, data-sharing agreements, letters of intent, or job descriptions of key staff positions; however, a brief description of such must be included in the relevant sections below in order for panelists to consider these materials in scoring.

1. Statement of Current Capacity (10 points)

Applicants must submit a Statement of Capacity (for more information, please refer back to Section I.A.1) that clearly outlines the

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

- i. The capacity for maintaining secure data storage, including any partnerships that have been or will be established between the SWA and another entity capable of maintaining secure data storage, such as a research entity (State university or otherwise). Partnerships are demonstrable through MOUs, data-sharing agreements, or other legally binding contracts.

Descriptions of existing agreements or plans to enter into agreements may be submitted as an attachment to the application, subject to the page limitations stated in Section IV.B of this SGA.

- ii. Any planned or established partnerships between the SWA and the State education agency that are demonstrable through planned or existing MOUs, data-sharing agreements, or other legally binding contracts.

Descriptions of these may be submitted as an attachment to the application, subject to the page limitations stated in Section IV.B of this SGA. Applicants with new or partially-developed longitudinal workforce databases must provide a detailed description of the steps they plan to take to develop these partnerships.

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

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

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

attachment to the application, subject to the page limitation stated in Section IV.B of this SGA.

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

2. Plan Outline (15 points)

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

- i. Describe the State's objectives for creating or upgrading and using its workforce longitudinal data system and explain how the State plans to achieve these objectives. The appropriateness of the objectives and plans will be judged relative to the State's current data system capacity. Objectives must include a description of the applicant's plans for implementing the following activities, depending on the State's launch point (each item below notes in parentheses which applicant type(s) it applies to):

- creating or expanding workforce longitudinal databases (all applicants);
- improving the quality of workforce data (all applicants);
- developing or expanding the capacity to match workforce and education data (all applicants);
- using data for analysis that will help policymakers and practitioners understand the performance of workforce and education programs (all applicants);
- creating user-friendly portals to publicize the data in ways that help consumers choose between different education and training programs (applicants with a partially or fully developed workforce longitudinal database).

ii. Describe the status of the statewide longitudinal education data system in their State. Applicants will have to work with the State education agency to determine whether that State has begun to plan for their SLDS, has a partially-developed or fully-implemented SLDS program. The application must include a description of the SLDS plan and which sets of education data are part of the SLDS. If neither of these exist, the applicant must indicate which education data sets (consistent with the requirements of Section V.A.4 in the SGA) they will incorporate into their workforce longitudinal data system until the State education agency is able to generate longitudinal education data to match with.

iii. Explain plans for sustaining these workforce longitudinal databases beyond the three-year grant period, including how their planned or existing MOUs and data-sharing agreements will be renewed with their partners to ensure continued maintenance and analysis of the longitudinal workforce data. Continued Federal funding cannot be guaranteed, so applicants must describe alternative funding sources in this section. Applicants will be scored based on the viability of their sustainability plan.

3. Description of Partnership Strategies (30 points)

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

SWAs without the internal capacity to operate the longitudinal data system will need to partner with an external entity (such as a research university, private, for-profit, or non-profit organization) to develop, maintain, and use the longitudinal database, both operationally and for research purposes.

In all cases, partnerships must be forged to gather relevant workforce and education data. The applicant must clearly describe the existing or proposed partnerships and briefly describe the data that the partner will be

providing for the initiative (for more details, please refer to Section I.A of this SGA).

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

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

i. Partnerships within State Workforce Systems

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

ii. Partnerships with State Education Agencies

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

iii. Partnerships with Research Universities or Other Research Entities

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to establish or further develop a relationship with the research entity (State university or otherwise) or other

entities that will be/are engaged in the development of longitudinal data systems. Partnerships must be established/expanded that will ensure that the collection of longitudinal workforce data adheres to local, State, and Federal confidentiality laws, including but not limited to FERPA. Further, these partnerships must support the ongoing security and confidentiality of these databases for as long as they are in existence. The research university or other entity will be expected to conduct in-depth analysis of this longitudinal data and to produce standard reports and conduct specialized research projects and ongoing analysis.

iv. Partnerships with Additional State Agencies

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

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

Applicants must provide the details of the existing or proposed database design and explain how the design will help achieve the applicant's

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

- i. Personal Identifier

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

receiving workforce development services. Applicants must also describe the capacity of the longitudinal databases to link, consistent with FERPA, to unique identifiers developed by the statewide longitudinal data systems.

ii. Data Quality Measures

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

iii. Scope of the Longitudinal Data

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

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

Applicants must also include a description of the types of analysis and research projects that will be conducted with the workforce longitudinal database to improve program performance and enhance customer choice.

iv. Security Measures

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

v. Planned Reports/Deliverables

Applicants creating a longitudinal database must include in this section of the application their plans to produce reports that provide information about statewide performance of the workforce system. Applicants with partially- or fully-developed workforce longitudinal databases must describe the extensive research and analysis products that will be generated beyond the regular reporting and analysis requirements. All applicants must address how data from each partner will be incorporated into these reports, and how stakeholders can use the reports to improve the workforce system. Applicants must also describe their plan for disseminating reports and materials to the general public. These deliverables are for statewide use and,

though DOL reserves the right to request access to these planned reports, submission of these deliverables to DOL is not required. (Required reports on performance in development of the workforce longitudinal databases to be submitted to DOL are outlined in Section VI.C below.)

5. Staffing Capacity (10 points)

Applicants must describe the proposed or existing staffing structure for this project, including project manager(s) and support staffing needs.

Applicants will be scored on this section based on the thoroughness and realism of their description of the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Up to three additional points may be awarded to applicants based on the extent to which they demonstrate concrete and feasible plans to include additional sources of data in their proposed longitudinal data system, and/or that they have the necessary agreements in place to participate in the voluntary Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) 2 to facilitate the sharing of aggregate UI wage records with non-DOL WIA partner programs. These additional data sources may include Vocational Rehabilitation program information, Adult Education program data, RA program data, TANF records, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps) records, Career

and Technical Education information, and data from other similar programs which may yield workforce-related outcomes.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this Solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the specified time on the closing date. A technical review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this SGA. Up to 103 points may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in Section V.A. Please see Section V.A.6. for additional information about Bonus Points. The ranked scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as geographic balance; the availability of funds; and which proposals are most advantageous to the government. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to his/her attention. The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <http://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

All award notifications will be posted on the ETA Homepage (<http://www.doleta.gov>). Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the grant's execution. Non-selected applicants will be notified by mail or email and may request a written debriefing on the significant weaknesses of their proposal.

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

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Administrative Program Requirements

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

i. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A-122 (Cost Principles),

relocated to 2 CFR Part 230, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements)

ii. Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A–21 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 220, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).

iii. State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments – OMB Circular A–87 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 225, and 29 CFR Part 97 (Administrative Requirements).

iv. Profit Making Commercial Firms – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 CFR part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).

v. All Grant Recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law No. 105-220, 112 Stat. 936 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.) and the applicable provisions of the regulations at 20 CFR 660 et seq. Note that 20 CFR part 667 (General Fiscal and Administrative Rules) includes unsuccessful applicant appeal information.

vi. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (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 (PII)

Applicants submitting proposals in response to this SGA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the Department of Labor and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by

court order. By submitting a proposal, Grantees are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal law and TEGL NO. 39-11 (issued June 28, 2012). All such activity conducted by ETA and/or Grantee/s will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and Federal laws.

By submitting a grant proposal, the applicant agrees to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality by complying with the following provisions that are applicable in governing their handling of confidential information:

1. To ensure that such PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, all PII and other sensitive data transmitted via e-mail or stored on CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. Grantees must not e-mail unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including ETA or contractors.
2. Grantees must take the steps necessary to ensure the privacy of all PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals and to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure. Grantees must maintain such PII in accordance with the ETA standards for information security described in this TEGL and any updates to such standards provided to the grantee by ETA. Grantees who wish to obtain more

information on data security should contact their Federal Project Officer.

3. Grantees shall ensure that any PII used during the performance of their grant has been obtained in conformity with applicable Federal and state laws governing the confidentiality of information.
4. Grantees further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through their ETA grant shall be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed using grantee issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by ETA. Accessing, processing, and storing of ETA grant PII data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations e.g., employee's home, and non-grantee managed IT services, e.g., Yahoo mail, is strictly prohibited unless approved by ETA.
5. Grantee employees and other personnel who will have access to sensitive/confidential/proprietary/private data must be advised of the confidential nature of the information, the safeguards required to protect the information, and that there are civil and criminal sanctions for noncompliance with such safeguards that are contained in Federal and state laws.
6. Grantees must have their policies and procedures in place under which grantee employees and other personnel, before being granted access to PII, acknowledge their understanding of the confidential nature of the

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

7. Grantees must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
8. Access to any PII created by the ETA grant must be restricted to only those employees of the grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the scope of work in the grant agreement.
9. All PII data must be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving such records by computer, remote terminal or any other means. Data may be downloaded to, or maintained on, mobile or portable devices only if the data are encrypted using NIST validated software products based on FIPS 140-2 encryption. In addition, wage data may only be accessed from secure locations.
10. PII data obtained by the grantee through a request from ETA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor except as permitted by the Grant Officer.
11. Grantees must permit ETA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or conducting other investigations to assure that the grantee is complying with the

confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, grantees must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.

12. Grantees must retain data received from ETA only for the period of time required to use it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable Federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, the grantee agrees that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

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

4. Special Program Requirements

i. Evaluation

The Department may require that the program or project participate in an evaluation of overall performance of ETA grants and programs. Therefore,

the Department requires the cooperation of the WDQI grantee with such evaluations as a condition of award. The Department has also reserved up to 3 percent of this round's total grant funding (a maximum amount of \$193,890) to provide a technical assistance contractor to assist grantees in developing and implementing their WDQIs to ensure smooth implementation and execution. Grantees must agree to work with DOL's designated contractor and to provide access to program operating and technical personnel, as specified by the contractor(s) under the direction of DOL, including after the expiration date of the grant.

B. Performance Goals

Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may have a significant impact on future grants with ETA.

C. Reporting

Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements. Quarterly financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and MIS data must be submitted by the grantee electronically. The grantee is required to provide the reports and documents listed below:

1. Quarterly Financial Reports

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired.

Quarterly reports are due 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter.

Grantees must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System and information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities. The last quarterly progress report that grantees submit will serve as the grant's Final Performance Report. This report should provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant activities. It must summarize project activities, employment outcomes and other deliverables, and related results of the project, and should thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches used by the grantee. DOL will provide grantees with formal guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis. Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements.

3. Design Plan: Sixty days after execution of final grant award

grantees must submit a detailed design plan which will expand upon and operationalize the activities proposed in this grant application as outlined in Part V of this SGA. This report must include a timeline which incorporates all project stages, milestones, targets and proposed schedule of deliverables stemming from the analysis of State workforce data for statewide dissemination. The grantee must submit a Cost proposal allotting the

expenditure of this grant over the three year period including, but not limited to, considerations for equipment, personnel, fees and fixed costs.

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

D. 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, Division of Federal Assistance, at (202) 693-3968. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Ferro.Ariam@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA PY 12-07, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number.

This announcement is being made available on the ETA Web site at

<http://www.doleta.gov/grants> and at <http://www.grants.gov>.

VIII. Additional Resources of Interest to Applicants

A. Web-Based Resources

The Department maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. For example, the American Job Centers portal (<http://www.jobcenter.usa.gov>), 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 American JobCenters.

B. Industry Competency Models and Career Clusters

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

Career Clusters and Industry Competency Models both identify foundational and technical competencies, but their efforts are not duplicative. The Career Clusters link to specific career pathways in 16 career cluster areas

and place greater emphasis on elements needed for curriculum performance objectives; measurement criteria; scope and sequence of courses in a program of study; and development of assessments. Information about the 16 career cluster areas can be found by accessing: www.careerclusters.org.

C. Workforce3One Resources

1. ETA encourages applicants to view the information gathered through the conference calls with Federal agency partners, industry stakeholders, educators, and local practitioners. The information on resources identified can be found on Workforce3One.org at:

<http://www.workforce3one.org/view/2001008333909172195/info>.

2. ETA encourages applicants to view the online tutorial, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” available through Workforce3One at:

http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

IX. Other Information

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires January 31, 2013.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the

collection of information. Send comments about the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, to the attention of the Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N1301, Washington, DC 20210. Comments may also be emailed to DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THE COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND IT TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SOLICITATION.

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

Signed _____, in Washington, D.C. by:

Steven Rietzke

Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration