

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Disability Employment Policy

Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Cooperative

Agreements for *Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and*
Young Adults with Disabilities Demonstration Project

Announcement Type: Solicitation for Cooperative Agreements Applications
(SCA)

Funding Opportunity Number: SCA 14-03

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 17.720

Key Dates: The closing date for receipt of applications under this
announcement is 45 days after date of publication on Grants.gov.
Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Addresses: Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of
Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management,
Office of Procurement Services, Attention: Cassandra Mitchell, Grant
Officer, Reference SCA 14-03, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S-4307,

**ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)**

Washington, DC 20210. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to section IV.

Summary: The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL or Department), Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) announces the availability of approximately \$2,083,300 to fund two cooperative agreements to conduct pilot projects. Under this initiative, funding will be awarded through a competitive process to two eligible institutions to research, develop, test, and, in coordination with DOL, evaluate innovative systems models for providing inclusive integrated education and career development services to youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities. Eligible participants will be between the ages of 14 and 24. This award will be for a 60-month period of performance and will fund the first 12-month budget period. ODEP, in its discretion, may make available continuation awards for additional 12 month budget periods through the end of the period of performance. To be considered for an award, an applicant for the grant must: 1) Be an eligible institution of higher education, as defined by section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, that provide(s) education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, and 2) Be a recipient of funding through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

The primary intent of the TAACCCT grants is to build and expand the capacity of community colleges to meet the educational and career retraining needs of workers who have lost their jobs or are threatened with job loss as a result of foreign trade eligible for services under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA), and other workers seeking skilled training for jobs in demand. The current Pathways to Careers grant initiative is not limited to workers who have lost their jobs or who are threatened with job loss as a result of foreign trade. However, DOL is seeking to leverage and build upon the TAACCCT program grantees' recent experiences in developing infrastructure, including curriculum, needed to expand and improve education and career development training programs. Grantees will conduct pilot projects to develop and test new inclusive education and career training strategies to help ensure that youth and young adults with disabilities acquire the skills, degrees, and credentials needed for high wage, high skill employment.

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

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

1. ODEP Mission, Goals, and Priorities

ODEP provides national leadership by developing and influencing disability-related employment policies and practices that can be used by employers, service delivery organizations, and people with disabilities to improve employment opportunities.

ODEP is guided by DOL's FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Plans, which identify the Agency's outcomes, outputs and key milestones. ODEP's strategic plan requires it to promote the adoption and implementation of ODEP-identified disability employment-related policies and practices by the public workforce system, government agencies, and employers. The strategic plan not only sets forth a road map for prioritization of the formulation and dissemination of innovative employment policies and practices to service delivery systems, employers, and people with disabilities, but also measures agency performance, as required by the Government Performance and Results Act. The following output measures are used by ODEP to gauge its progress in meeting its annual goals: 1) the number of policy-related outputs; 2) the number of formal agreements; 3) the number of effective practices; 4) the number of collaborative relationships; 5) the number of continuing collaborative relationships; 6) the number of technical assistance events; 7) number of

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

entities receiving technical assistance; 8) the number of outreach events;
9) the number of outreach event attendees; and 10) the number of
outreach hours.

Moreover, ODEP established four priority areas to frame its efforts and
reflect the Department's strategic goal of promoting fair and high quality
work environments.

- Priority Area 1: Improve access to training, education, transition services, and integrated and competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, youth, and ethnic, cultural, and socio-economically disadvantaged groups;
- Priority Area 2: Improve accessibility and availability of employment supports, accommodations, and universal design and workplace flexibility approaches, including those that can be used to recruit, hire, retain or return workers who become ill or injured on the job or who acquire a disability later in life;
- Priority Area 3: Foster high expectations and positive perceptions of the value of employing people with disabilities; and
- Priority Area 4: Ensure the availability and use of disability data and statistics regarding the employment characteristics of people with disabilities.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

The Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project will primarily support ODEP's Priority Area 1 of improving access to training, education, transition services, and integrated and competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, youth, and ethnic, cultural, and socio-economically disadvantaged groups by working to identify and enhance the policies and services that improve the number of youth and young adults with disabilities who enroll in community colleges and persist in completion of a degree or credential.

The Demonstration's work will also touch upon Priority Area 2 given that improving accessibility, ensuring access to accommodations, and universal design in service delivery will be integral to the success of any models implemented .

Finally, the Demonstration's work will touch Priority Area 3. As youth and young adults participate in employer-sponsored work-based learning experiences and exit community colleges and enter employment, high expectations and positive perceptions of the value of employing people with disabilities will increase.

2. Need for Initiative

In an increasingly competitive world economy, America's economic strength depends upon the education and skills of its workers. In the

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are projected to grow twice as fast as those requiring no college experience. To meet this need, President Barack Obama set two national goals: by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, and community colleges will produce an additional five million graduates.

As the largest part of the nation's higher education system, community colleges enroll more than six million students and are growing rapidly. They feature affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations. Community colleges work with businesses, industry and government to create tailored training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs.

The college graduation goals set by President Obama and the need to increase the number of workers who attain degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials are, in part, addressed by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Reconciliation Act), Public Law No. 111-152, 19 USC 2372 – 2372a, which appropriated \$2 billion for Fiscal Years (FY) 2011 – 2014 (\$500 million annually) for the TAACCCT grant program. The TAACCCT program provides grants to eligible institutions to expand and improve their ability to deliver

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for TAA-eligible workers, and prepare participants in grant-funded programs for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations.

The Pathways to Career Demonstration Project provides further support for the President's goal by providing funding to TAACCCT program grantees' to conduct pilot projects to develop and test new inclusive undergraduate education and career training models that can be replicated nationally to help youth and young adults with disabilities acquire the skills, degrees, and credentials they need for high wage, high skill employment.

B. Description and Purpose

1. Purpose of SCA

America's community colleges are an important resource for increasing the educational attainment and enhancing the skill sets of America's youth and young adults, particularly those with disabilities. The overarching goal of this solicitation is to increase the capacity of community colleges and other eligible institutions to provide inclusive integrated education and career development, and training services to youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities. Further, the

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Pathways to Careers demonstration project will address the disproportionately negative employment-related outcomes of youth and young adults with disabilities by designing program models that 1) increase credential and job attainment, 2) increase job placement, and 3) decrease the wage earning differential between students with and without disabilities, and between students with different types of disabilities.

The Pathways to Careers demonstration project will build on the implementation experiences of DOL's Employment and Training Administration's TAACCCT program. It will do so by awarding cooperative agreements to TAACCCT grantees that have received prior funding to develop new or replicate existing education and career training programs. Further, findings from the Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project will increase capacity within the community college system by building an evidence base of policies and practices that are most effective in helping youth and young adults with disabilities to thrive in community college settings. The Department expects the demonstration project to build evidence about program models so that in the future institutions can replicate practices that are effective, and identify and strengthen practices in need of improvement. Additionally, to further the goal of career training and education and to encourage innovation in the development of new curricula, applicants must publicly license all curricula and training materials created or developed with the support of the grant under a

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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This grant period of performance takes into account an anticipated start-up period of approximately six months as well as all necessary implementation and program development and enhancement activities, pre- and post-program services, and grant close-out activities. Grantees will be expected to research, develop, implement, and evaluate innovative models of providing comprehensive coordinated, integrated inclusive education and career training service delivery (described below) to youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, between the ages of 14 and 24. It is expected that the piloted models will incorporate a variety of industry-recognized credentials, including certificates, certifications, diplomas and degrees and will provide program participants with the skills needed to attain integrated employment at competitive wages.

America's community colleges are an important resource for increasing the educational attainment and enhancing the skill sets of America's youth and young adults, particularly those with disabilities. According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the number of students attending the nation's 1,200 community colleges rose from approximately 5.5 million in 2000 to 8 million in 2010. Further,

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

community college enrollment of students with disabilities is growing faster than at 4-year institutions. Newman et al found that between 1990 and 2005, community college enrollment of students with disabilities increased nearly 19% with only a 9% increase at 4-year institutions.¹ Students with disabilities, who enroll at community colleges, have higher completion rates than those at 4-year institutions when compared with their peers without disabilities.² However, there is vast room for improvement. Data from the National Center for Educational Statistics indicate that in 2007 the completion rate for people with disabilities was 16 percent. National studies and reports have shown that, compared to their peers without disabilities, students with disabilities are less likely to receive a regular high school diploma; drop out twice as often; and enroll in and complete postsecondary education programs at half the rate. Up to 2 years after leaving high school, about 4 in 10 youth with disabilities are employed as compared to 6 in 10 same-age, out-of-school youth in the general population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000; National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 [NLTS-2], 2005).

¹ Newman, L., Wagner, M., Cameto, R., Knokey, A. M., & Shaver, *Comparisons across time of the outcomes of youth with disabilities up to 4 years after high school: A report of findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) and the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)* (NCSE 2010-3008). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved from

http://www.nlts2.org/reports/2010_09/nlts2_report_2010_09_complete.pdf

² Oertle, Kathleen Marie and Bragg, Debra. "Transitioning Students with Disabilities: Community College Policies and Practices." *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. Published online 10 March 2014. Accessed from

<http://dps.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/03/10/1044207314526435>

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

The available data and research indicates that community colleges hold potential for closing this gap. In its report of findings from the Opening Doors Demonstration launched in 2003, MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor, provided some of the first rigorous evidence demonstrating that a range of interventions can improve educational outcomes for community college students.³ Since then, a number of public and philanthropic investments have been made to build community colleges' capacity to: improve instruction, use evidence-based decision-making, forge deeper partnerships with employers and communities, and develop new performance metrics and measures to monitor student progress towards improved educational outcomes.⁴ As investments in these reforms continue, there are promising opportunities for community colleges to lead the way in promoting improved educational and employment outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities. To do so, however, community colleges must adopt practices that increase the enrollment, credential attainment⁵ and completion rate for people with disabilities, and

³ Scrivener, Susan and Coghlan, Erin "Opening Doors to Students Success: A Synthesis of Findings from an Evaluation at Six Community Colleges." MDRC Paper. March 2011. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2019762> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2019762>

⁴ Rutschow, Elizabeth Z., Richburg-Hayes, Lashawn, Brock, Thomas, Orr, Genevieve, Cerna, Oscar, Cullinan, Dan, Kerrigan, Monica Reid, Jenkins, Davis, Gooden, Susan, Martin Kasey "Turning the Tide: Five Years of Achieving the Dream in Community Colleges" MDRC Paper. January 2011. Available at http://www.achievingthedream.org/sites/default/files/resources/Turning_the_Tide.pdf.

⁵ Credential includes a certificate, license, diploma or degree, and stacked or latticed credentials.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

collaborate with businesses and other partners across the workforce development community to better facilitate their transition from school to work.

Projects are expected to create models, policies, best practices, and strategies that will not only be applicable to their local institutions, but which will also be scalable and replicable on a national level. This will require that partnerships capture and use data to assess and manage their program performance, and to participate in the Department’s independent evaluation, which may include rigorous testing of different strategies or approaches possibly including random assignment if appropriate. Further, it is expected that projects will design approaches that work to shift practice and policy “across the institution” (i.e., that transform the entire institution of higher education’s approach for providing services as opposed to a single division), enlisting support from and engagement of administrators, deans, department chairs, faculty, student services, and other divisions that have a role in ensuring students’ success.⁶ It is also expected that grantees will leverage their partnerships and relationships with national affiliates, association members, or business organizations, and a variety of other entities including the public workforce system as described below to achieve this goal. Grantees are also expected to use

⁶ American Association of Community Colleges. (April 2012) Reclaiming the American Dream: A Report from the 21st Century Commission on the Future of American’s Community Colleges. Washington, DC. Available from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/21stCenturyReport>.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

resources available through ODEP Technical Assistance centers and reciprocate through an exchange of information.

2. Required Services

Successful grantees will be required to plan, implement, and evaluate outcomes of their demonstration programs. The required services and activities are as follows:

a. Program Planning. Grantees are expected to undertake a comprehensive planning process of up to six months, in which the design of the program model will be finalized and start-up staffing completed. Activities in this stage will include:

- Refining and finalizing the proposed service delivery model that will be used by conducting research on strategies that promote persistence of youth, including youth and young adults with disabilities in the attainment of a credential and employment (this may include research related to youth from low-income backgrounds; youth who have been incarcerated, youth from ethnic and minority populations, and other

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

populations that have a disproportionately high rate of disability);⁷⁸⁹

- Using the evidence-based framework, the *Guideposts for Success*, to assess existing resources and practices and to develop the program model; and
- Actively engaging at least one employer partner to assist in the following:
 - Identifying the skills and competencies for the program;
 - Assisting with the curriculum and program design;
 - Providing resources to support education/training; and
 - Committing to hire, promote and/or retain qualified program participants.

While partnering with only one employer for each targeted industry in each site location is required, the Department strongly encourages applicants to collaborate with multiple

⁷ According to the American Community Survey in 2008, the disability rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives was 18.8 percent. Among Blacks or African Americans, the disability rate was 14.3 percent. Among persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, the disability rate was 8.4 percent. Among White Americans, the disability rate was 10.2 percent. Among Asian Americans, the disability rate was 4.6 percent.

⁸ Fremstad, Shawn. (2009) "Half in Ten Why Taking Disability into Account is Essential to Reducing Income Poverty and Expanding Economic Inclusion. CEPR. Washington, DC.

⁹ Gagnon, J. C., & Richards, C. (2008). *Making the right turn: A guide about improving transition outcomes of youth involved in the juvenile corrections system*. Washington, DC. National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, Institute for Educational Leadership.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

employers and/or other organizations representing an industry sector, including labor management organizations, and organizations representing existing industry sector partnerships, economic development clusters, or regional innovation clusters, to ensure that program participants obtain the skills needed in the applicant's community.

Grantees are also required to:

- Actively engage the following additional stakeholders as required partners in the planning and implementation process:
 - Public Workforce System, including local workforce investment boards, American Job Centers (formerly known as One-Stop Career Centers), or workforce system partners as defined under section 121(b)(1) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Examples of suggested partners include career and technical education agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other post-secondary education agencies. This engagement could include the workforce partner identifying, assessing, and referring appropriate candidates for education

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- and training; helping applicants access and use labor market information in developing training programs and course offerings; connecting with employers; providing supportive services to participants, where appropriate; and tracking program participants as they enter the workforce. Applicants must provide evidence that at least one workforce system(s) partner is committed to being involved with the project;
- o Intermediary organizations that can serve as conveners, brokers, and technical assistance providers;
 - o Philanthropic organizations, business-related and other non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, or labor organizations that are deemed necessary by the grantee in aiding community colleges to support workers as they improve employment-related skills. Grantees should leverage the work of these organizations in areas, including but not limited to:

community outreach, recruitment and screening of program participants, career counseling, wrap-around support services, and employer

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

engagement. These types of organizations may also have critical relationships with employers and industry. Applicants are encouraged to work with non-profit and philanthropic organizations that have deep knowledge of particular industry sectors. In addition to responding to the needs of employers and improving their competitiveness, these organizations may also be adept at working with employers to foster job opportunities inclusive of qualified workers with disabilities;

- o Disability-Serving Organizations that have demonstrated experience providing employment services and supports to people with disabilities, including youth and young adults with disabilities, in the grantee's target community;
- o State and local level agency (ies) that serve individuals with disabilities; including but not limited to the following: Intellectual /Developmental Disability services agencies, county/state mental health system agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and county/state Medicaid agencies.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- o One or more local education agency(ies) (LEAs) to facilitate the development of a blended secondary, postsecondary, and career training initiative (e.g., an initiative that includes co-enrollment of participants in secondary and post-secondary schools or that provides credit towards post-secondary degrees while attending secondary school), and, to work with all project partners to create 9-14 career pathways (i.e., an articulated strategy designed to raise students' college and career aspirations, readiness, and success by offering well-designed services and supports, including planning for learning beyond high school, as the individual progresses from the ninth grade through attainment of a two-year post-secondary degree or credential).
- In addition, during the planning phase, the grantee will be expected to collaborate with ODEP and its technical assistance centers to identify how the project will contribute to ODEP's performance metrics under its operating plan;
- Finally, during the planning phase, the grantee will collaborate with ODEP and the DOL Chief Evaluation

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Office to consider appropriate rigorous tests of promising strategies without withholding necessary services or supports to students. For example, randomly assigning students to use one electronic labor market or career planning tool versus another to test the relative effectiveness; or providing individual career counseling versus group counseling on career planning; or varying the mix of online and in-class instruction. The intent is to build evidence about strategies included in the models grantees develop. The Department's evaluator will be responsible for any such tests and the designs will be developed during the planning phase in a participatory manner by the grantee and the Department's evaluator.

b. Program Implementation. Grantees will implement inclusive integrated and comprehensive service delivery strategies consistent with the *Guideposts for Success* to increase the number of youth and young adults with disabilities that enter community colleges and complete career and technical programs that provide an industry-recognized degree or credential. Grantees are expected to enroll and deliver services to approximately 200-250 participants in two cohorts

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

or cycles (100-125 students per cohort or cycle) with the second cohort or cycle commencing approximately 12 months after the start of the first. Such service delivery strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Dual enrollment programs (joint enrollment in high school and community college);
- Employment-training tailored to the local economy;
- Use of Employment Networks and other cross-systems partnerships;
- Universal design and assistive technology;
- Stacked and latticed credential programs;
- Credit recovery and acceleration strategies; including contextualized learning, compressed training, awarding credit for prior learning), and hybrid learning approaches (combination online and classroom-based course designs); and
- Early and middle college programs to offer students that have traditionally been underrepresented in postsecondary education the opportunity to earn college credit at the same time as they earn a high school diploma.¹⁰

¹⁰ Early and Middle College Programs differ from dual enrollment programs because the mission of these schools is to serve those youth who are typically labeled “at-risk” and “underserved” thereby increasing the number of first generation of, low income, English language learners and student of color who attain two years of college credit.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Program Implementation must also include:

- Career exploration, planning, and management activities (including career advisement) to enhance youth and young adults with disabilities' knowledge of future employment goals and opportunities;
- Assessment, including non-traditional methods such as portfolio review and individual and group discovery;
- Personal development activities designed to develop the essential non-technical skills, abilities, and traits such as workforce readiness and soft skills (communication, enthusiasm and attitude, teamwork, networking, problem-solving and critical thinking, and professionalism);
- Employer-based, on-the-job training;
- Work-based learning experiences that provide participants with hands-on opportunities to acquire work skills;
- Classroom and/or employment-related workplace supports and accommodations;
- Comprehensive wrap-around services and extensive support services to assist youth with disabilities in completing their education and training, attaining

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

industry-recognized credentials, and finding or
advancing in employment;

- Monitoring the collection of data on the progress and outcomes of participants as they move towards program completion and employment;
- Changes in policy and practice “across the institution,” and among its partners needed to support grant-related goals and outcomes; and
- Pathways to community college for out-of-school youth.

c. Program Evaluation. The Department is interested in determining if the activities supported through this grant program impact future labor force outcomes of youth and young adults with disabilities. The Department is therefore committed to evaluating program results to assess whether programs meet this goal and which models are most effective, providing a basis for future program improvements and funding decisions.

The Department expects that grantees will set performance targets and will collect data on participant characteristics,

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

progress measures (e.g., enrollment rate, attendance rates, yearly program retention rate, number of students who are deemed “work ready” following work readiness activities), and performance outcomes in order to continuously monitor and improve program performance. ODEP uses the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) system to collect program and initiative data. ODEP will provide grantees access to ETO to capture data related to short-term progress measures and longer-term outcome measures. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to utilize data collection systems or present a strong plan to implement protocols to implement such systems or bridge gaps in existing systems.

The Department will also conduct a national evaluation of the Pathways to Career projects to inform workforce development policy and advance DOL’s mission to help the nation’s employers and workers. The evaluation will be funded by DOL and conducted by a third-party independent contractor. After grants are awarded, grantees will receive detailed information about the national evaluation, which will include three components: 1) analysis of participant characteristics and short-term and long term outcomes, including after the end of the grant period; 2) implementation analysis in all grantee sites;

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

and 3) outcome or impact analysis, which may use a non-experimental design or an experimental design that requires random assignment to test promising approaches.

Data on students and their outcomes are needed for both quarterly performance reports to DOL by grantees and for the national evaluation of short and long-term outcomes, including after the grant period ends. For example, the national evaluator will continue to track employment and post-secondary outcomes for students in grantee schools to determine long-term outcomes. Grantees are therefore required to collaborate on the collection of necessary data, to facilitate parental/student consent for participants who are minors, and to participate in data collection consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Privacy Act, and other applicable laws.

3. Other Requirements

a. Accessible Deliverables. All deliverables produced by the grantee must be accessible. See definition in Section I.C of the SCA and the Eligibility Information in SCA Section III.G.2. Universal Access and Design.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

b. Prior Approval. Input and approval of ODEP will be obtained prior to:

- Making changes to design and graphics of the website and published materials;
- Publishing the content of materials, including on the website, in publications, in training materials including webcasts, and other media;
- Creating and utilizing communications vehicles and tools for outreach;
- Attending and participating in outreach and training or other presentation events;
- Participating in interviews and other media contacts; and
- Making changes to key personnel.

c. Staffing. All proposed staff for the project (with the exception of support staff such as administrative assistants) must have demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Developing and providing training, technical assistance, and guidance related to:
 - o Academic preparation and school-based training;

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- o Self-exploration, career exploration, (including facilitating work-based learning experiences) and career planning (including providing career counseling and advising activities) and management;
- o Workforce development;
- o Youth Development and leadership;
- o Fostering connections between youth and support services and or agencies such as those that provide mental and physical health services, tutoring, financial planning, transportation, etc.;
- o Family engagement;
- o The Workforce Investment Act; Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related legislation impacting the transition of youth with disabilities into post-secondary education and employment; and
- o Professional development, (i.e., the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to carry out professional duties. Examples of knowledge areas related to this initiative may be familiarity with youth development theory, the workforce

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

development system. Examples of skills associated with this initiative may be the ability to train staff on issues related to universal access or the ability to communicate with youth with various physical, sensor, psychiatric, and cognitive disabilities.);

- Developing, maintaining, and managing content for an accessible website;
- Creating training and education and outreach materials;
- Conducting strategic outreach and communications including the use of social media for education and outreach;
- Delivering in-person, telephone, and web-based training to a variety of audiences;
- Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships across complex institutions such as community colleges;
- Collecting and analyzing data;
- Conducting program evaluation and assessments; and
- Leading broad-scale systems change within complex academic institutions such as community colleges.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

The project director must devote at least 90 percent of his or her time to this cooperative agreement.

C. Definitions

1. Assistive Technology refers to a device (i.e., item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired off the shelf, modified or customized) that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology may also refer to any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive device.

2. Blending and Braiding Funds refers to strategies for using resources in more coordinated and flexible ways. Blending involves strategies that combine or unify separate funding sources. Braiding involves using separate funding sources together to support more seamless or unified services.

3. Career Exploration refers to the process of learning about the skills, qualities and educational requirements needed to be successful in various careers.

4. Career Planning and Management refers to activities related to job-seeking and identifying learning opportunities that develop the

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

individual's potential for success in employment. Once a career goal has been identified, these activities support students by helping them:

- a) acquire the job search skills needed to secure employment;
- b) think about how they will continue to develop career readiness skills (both generalizable, i.e. soft, and career-specific skill); and;
- c) develop the traits, work habits, and behaviors associated with a lifelong commitment to seeking new opportunities for gaining skills and experiences that maximize their employability.

5. Community College refers to an institution of higher education as defined by section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which provide(s) education and career training programs that can be completed in 2 years or less.

6. Credential refers to a certificate, license, diploma, or degree, and stacked or latticed credentials.

7. Dual Enrollment refers to a program in which a student may be jointly enrolled in high school and community college.

8. Guideposts for Success refer to a set of key educational and career development interventions, identified by ODEP in collaboration with the National Collaborative on Workforce Disability for Youth. That can

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

make a positive difference in the lives of all youth, including youth with disabilities. The five *Guidepost* areas include: school-based experiences, career preparation and work-based experiences, youth development and leadership, connecting activities and family involvement. For more information see <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.

9. Significant Disability refers to an individual with a disability

a) who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; b) whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and c) who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

10. Soft Skills refers to the skills, traits, work habits and attitudes that all workers across all occupations must have in order to obtain, maintain, and progress in employment. Examples of soft skills may include teamwork, communication, enthusiasm and attitude, networking, problem solving and critical thinking, and professionalism.

11. Stacked and Latticed Credentials refer to credentials that may be earned in sequence and build on previously learned content, or “stacked,” through a program, or those that may be attained via a side-to-side process or “latticed.” As students progress through a degree plan, earning certificates along the way, they may get to a point where they want to add or shift to another related field of study. For example, a student may be pursuing an associate’s degree in nursing, but during the process decides to add an occupational therapy certificate as a related field of study.

12. Universal Design refers to the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

13. Work-based learning experiences refer to a supervised program sponsored by an education or training organization that links

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

knowledge gained at the work site with a planned program study.

Experiences range in intensity, structure, scope and include activities as site visits, job shadowing, paid and unpaid internships, structured on-the-job training, and more formal work status as an apprentice or employee.

14. Youth and young adults with disabilities refer to individuals with disabilities who are ages 14 through 24.

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

ODEP has \$2,083,300 available under this competition and expects to fund two cooperative agreements. This award will be for a 60-month period of performance and will fund the first 12-month budget period. Any grant application with a proposed value greater than \$1,041,650 per 12-month budget period will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered. The Department reserves the right to adjust the distribution of funding. In the event that additional funds become available, the Department reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this solicitation.

B. Type of Grant

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

To achieve the goals of this effort, the Department intends to award a cooperative agreement to the successful applicants. Because of the Federal requirements in a cooperative agreement, close cooperation and coordination between ODEP and the grantees is required. DOL will have substantial involvement in the administration of the agreement and input and approval must be obtained in many instances. Participation in monthly conference calls with ODEP will be required during the performance period. It is expected that the grantees will avail themselves of ODEP's expertise and that of its Technical Assistance (TA) centers. ODEP and its TA Centers will provide grantees with assistance during the planning and implementation phases to develop programs that effectively meets the needs of youth and young adults with disabilities. DOL will also have substantial involvement in the administration of the agreement. This involvement will consist of:

- Approval of any sub-contracts related to the cooperative agreement awarded by the grantee after the cooperative agreement award;
- Participation in site visits to project areas;
- Providing advice and consultation to project areas;
- Providing grantees with technical and programmatic support, including training in DOL monitoring and evaluation systems, and standard procedures regarding DOL management of cooperative agreements;
- Reviewing at reasonable times, all documents related to the grant pertaining to the project, including status and technical progress

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

reports, and financial reports. ODEP will provide the format for the reports;

- Oversight and approval of all deliverables, including but not limited to fact sheets, training materials, press releases and publicity-related materials regarding the project;
- Oversight and approval of all content for online resources developed through project activities including clearing topics for material production and final document production; and
- Reviewing project evaluation design, and participating with the Department's independent evaluator.

C. Period of Performance

This award will be for a 60-month period of performance and will fund the first 12-month budget period. This funded period includes an up to six-month planning period; followed by a program implementation period. Applicants are required to describe what activities they expect to be undertaking during the planning and implementation period in order to ensure that they are able to begin active program services on schedule. Grantees must fully expend grant funds during the period of performance. Therefore, applicants must carefully consider their ability to spend the level of funding requested during the allotted time while ensuring full transparency and accountability for all expenditures.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

D. Continuation Awards

ODEP, in its discretion, may make available continuation awards for 4 additional 12 month budget periods through the end of the period of performance. Prior to awarding continuation awards, ODEP will review: (1) grantee progress to determine if approved application targets and projected outcomes are being met; (2) grantee spending to determine if funds have been expended in a manner consistent with the approved application and budget; and (3) grantee compliance with application assurances and award provisions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible institutions are institutions of higher education as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), which offer programs that can be completed in not more than two years. They include public, proprietary, or other nonprofit educational institutions. Generally, such institutions include two-year and four-year colleges and universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions. Educational institutions in the U.S. territories are eligible if they offer programs that can be completed in not more than two years and are accredited by an agency or association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Eligible applicants must also be 1) recipients of grant awards under the TAACCCT

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

program and 2) in good standing with the TAACCCT program. If not, the applicant will be deemed ineligible and the application will not be reviewed.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing, matching funds, and cost participation are not required under this SCA. However, the leveraging of public and private resources to foster inclusive service delivery and achieve project sustainability is highly encouraged and may affect an applicant's score. See section V A.3.h.

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

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

Applications from entities that are not institutions of higher education as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), currently

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

funded through the TAACCCT program are not eligible for this program and will not be considered.

D. Application Screening Criteria

Eligible institutions may submit only one application in response to this SCA as the lead applicant. Applicants that submit more than one application as the lead applicant will be found non-responsive and none of their applications will be reviewed. However, eligible institutions may submit an application as a lead applicant, and also serve as a partner in applications in which they are not designated the lead applicant.

In addition, applications that contain any of the following deficiencies will be found non-responsive and will not be reviewed. The deficiencies are:

- Failure to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in Section IV.E.;
- Applications that exceed the budget ceiling amount of \$1,041,650 million per 12-month performance period referenced in Section II.A;
- Failure to include: SF-424 including D-U-N-S® (DUNS) Number, a project budget including a SF-424A and budget narrative, a project narrative, and attachments to the project narrative referenced in Section IV.A.; and

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- Applications where the Project Director will devote less than 90 percent of his or her time to the project.

E. Eligible Participants

An individual may participate in the project funded through this cooperative agreement if such individual is an individual with a disability between the ages of 14 through 24 on the date of enrollment. Although the comprehensive coordinated service delivery strategies developed with grant funding must be integrated and inclusive, funding for the training provided to youth without disabilities is not an allowable expense under this grant. Grantees are urged to leverage other sources of funding, including WIA Youth and Adult Formula Funds, for these expenses.

F. Veterans Priority for Participants

The Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) requires grantees to provide priority of service for veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL. The regulations implementing this priority of service can be found at 20 CFR part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

priority of service, a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. The Employment and Training Administration's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by DOL. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2816.

G. 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 on the Department's public website, or similar publicly accessible location, the Abstracts required by Section IV.B. and SF-424 for all applications received. Additionally, we will publish a version of the Project Narrative required by Section IV.B. Part III, for all those applications that are awarded grants, on the Department's website or a similar location. Except for the Abstract, none of the attachments to the Project Narrative described in Section IV.D. will be published. The Project Narratives and abstracts

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

will not be published until after the grants are awarded. In addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

DOL recognizes that grant applications sometimes contain information that an applicant may consider proprietary or business confidential information, or may contain personally identifiable information. Proprietary or 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.

Personally identifiable information 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.¹¹

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. Applicants should not include any proprietary or confidential business information or personally identifiable information in this

¹¹ 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>.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

summary. In the event that an applicant submits proprietary or confidential business information or personally identifiable information, 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 publishing all personally identifiable information contained within the abstract. In the event the abstract contains proprietary or confidential business or personally identifiable information, 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 personally identifiable information is properly protected from disclosure when DOL posts the winning Project Narratives, applicants whose Project

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Narratives will be posted will be asked to submit a second redacted version of their Project Narrative, with any proprietary or confidential business information and personally identifiable information 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 Project Narratives will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Project Narrative.

Submission of a redacted version of the Project Narrative 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 Project Narrative, 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 personally identifiable information is contained in the Project Narrative. If an applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Project Narrative within two weeks from the date of receipt of directions regarding submission of a redacted version of the Project Narrative, DOL will publish the original Project Narrative in full, after redacting only personally identifiable information. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Project Narrative will remain part of the complete application package, including

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

an applicant's proprietary and confidential business information and any personally identifiable information.)

Applicants are encouraged to maximize the grant application information that will be publicly disclosed, and to exercise restraint and redact only information that clearly is proprietary, confidential commercial/business information, or capable of identifying a person. The redaction of entire pages or sections of the Project Narrative 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."

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

2. Universal Access and Design

The grantee must demonstrate a solid knowledge of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) Level AA. The grantee is responsible for ensuring that all information computer technologies (ICT) deliverables meet or exceed accessibility and universal design requirements under Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 Level AA. The grantee must have the ability and experience in determining 508 compliance of ICT including design specification, testing and verification, and remediation as required.

The grantee will be responsible for acquiring the necessary tools to perform 508 and accessibility testing in multiple computing environments with a comprehensive selection of assistive technologies and must be able to present these findings to ODEP Federal Managers. The grantee shall be prepared to present a Government Product Availability Template (GPAT) for each ICT deliverable upon request to support the accessibility level of the various ICT deliverables. These findings must be presented in an accessible electronic format.

All ICT deliverables produced by the grantee must be accessible and meet the criteria outlined in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

amended, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) Level AA. ICT deliverables include but are not limited to: collaborative workspaces and tools, documents and materials, PDFs, forms, online tools, websites and mobile applications, webcasts, webinars, multimedia, social media, any training and related training materials, PowerPoint and other presentations and presentation materials, Word and electronic document formats, reports, etc. Print materials must be made available in an alternate accessible format when requested.

3. Security

The grantee shall implement the necessary security controls and configuration management for data collection of personally identifiable information (PII). This support shall be in accordance with Department-wide guidelines, policies, procedures and templates that will be in compliance with National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) guidance and will satisfy the requirements of the E-Government Act of 2002 including Title III, Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), the Clinger-Cohen Act, Office of Management Budget (OMB) guidance, Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD) 7, 8, and 12, and the DOL Cyber Security Program Plan (CSPP). The grantee will respond to security data calls requested by ODEP's Information Security Officer (ISO).

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

IV. Application and Submission Information

Proposals submitted in response to this SCA must consist of four separate and distinct parts: (A) the SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance;” (B) Project Budget; (C) Project Narrative; and (D) Attachments to the Project Narrative. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application. Additional submission information is provided below in Section IV. E through O.

A. SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”

Applicants must complete the 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 required to be submitted with the application.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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, 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.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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 (DUNS) number, and must supply their DUNS Number on the SF-424. The DUNS Number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. If you do not have a DUNS Number, you can get one for free through the D&B website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>. As authorized under 2 CFR 25, grant recipients authorized to make subawards must be aware of the following requirements related to DUNS Numbers:

1. Grantees must notify potential sub-grantees that no entity may receive a sub-award from you unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.
2. Grantees may not make a sub-award to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Instructions for registering with SAM can be found at <https://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 updates 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.

B. Project Budget

Applicants must complete 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.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Use the following guidance for preparing the budget narrative:

Personnel – List all staff positions by title. Give the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person’s time devoted to the project, the amount of each person’s salary funded by the grant and the total personnel cost for the period of performance.

Fringe Benefits – Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement, etc.

Travel – Specify the purpose, mileage, per diem, estimated number of in-state and out-of-state trips and other costs for each type of travel.

Equipment – Identify each item of equipment to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful lifetime of more than one year. List the quantity and unit cost per item. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies.

Supplies – Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment.” The detailed budget should identify categories of supplies (e.g. office supplies). List the quantity and unit cost per item.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Contractual – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. If applicable, identify any sub-recipient agreements, including purpose and estimated costs. See Section IV.A. for additional information.

Construction – Construction costs are not allowed and this line must be left as zero. Minor alterations to adjust an existing space for grant activities (such as a classroom alteration) may be allowable. DOL does not consider this as construction and the costs must be shown on other appropriate lines such as Contractual.

Other – List each item in sufficient detail for DOL to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable. List any item, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere here.

Indirect Charges – If indirect charges are included in the budget, include the approved indirect cost rate with a copy of the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, a description of the base used to calculate indirect costs and total cost of the base, and the total indirect charges requested. See Section IV.H. for more information.

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

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

the SF-424, SF-424A and budget narrative must be the same. Please note, the funding amount included on the SF-424 will be considered the official funding amount requested if any inconsistencies are found.

C. The Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must demonstrate the applicant's capability to plan, implement, and evaluate the pilot project in accordance with the provisions of this Solicitation. The successful applicant will describe their comprehensive plan for providing the services and accomplishing the goals discussed in sections I.A. (Background) and I.B. (Description and Purpose) of the SCA. Additional guidance on what should be addressed in the Project Narrative is contained in Section V of the SCA.

The Project Narrative is limited to no more 25 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with standard 1-inch margins, and must be presented on single-sided, numbered pages using 12 point text. Any materials beyond the specified page limit will not be read. Applicants should number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1. Any Appendices, including letters of cooperation and resumes are not included in this 25-page limit. Applications that do not include Part II, the Project Narrative, will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Project Narrative. Applicants should carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in their Project Narrative. The Project Narrative will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A. Applicants should use the same section headers identified below for each section, and include all required information in their Project Narrative. The Project Narrative will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A.

Applicants should use the following section headers for the Narrative, which correlate with the outline provided in Section V:

- Significance of Proposed Project;
- Project Design;
- Organizational Capacity and Quality of Key Personnel; and
- Management and Outcomes.

Successful applicants will describe in the Project Narrative their innovative and comprehensive plan for accomplishing the demonstration activities described in Part (I) (A), Background and Part I (B) Description and Purpose.

1. Significance of Proposed Project

Applicants must describe how the proposal will meet the need to expand and improve the capacity of eligible institutions to deliver inclusive integrated education and career training programs to youth and young

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, who enter their programs in the community/communities to be served.

Applicants must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the previous work done by ODEP and its partners on youth and transition, including the *Guideposts for Success*, and research on effective career exploration, management and planning activities, and related policies and practices.

Applicants must demonstrate their knowledge of existing evidence and understanding of the relevant research on challenges, issues, and promising strategies related to youth and young adults with disabilities 1) transitioning from secondary school into post-secondary institutions such as community colleges; 2) persisting in the attainment of a credential and/or degree and employment; and 3) the related policies and practices that support these aforementioned outcomes. (e.g., this should include research related to youth from low-income backgrounds; youth who have been incarcerated, youth from ethnic and minority populations, and other populations that have a disproportionately high rate of disability).

Applicants must describe the overall strategic approach to be implemented and demonstrate how this approach addresses service delivery gaps and the unique needs and challenges experienced by the target population for the project.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Applicants must describe how the demonstration activities and outcomes will be used to build the overall capacity of the community college to provide and expand inclusive integrated academic and career services to youth and young adults with disabilities. This includes describing the commitment and role that various divisions within the community college will play including divisions responsible for career development services, disability support services, school governance, and instruction and curriculum.

Applicants must describe how information and findings from the demonstration will be disseminated to project stakeholders within the community college; within the broader community in which it resides; and to other community colleges, which may benefit from implementing similar models.

Applicants must describe how the proposed demonstration will leverage the investments in education and career development activities made through the TAAACT program.

Applicants must describe how the proposed demonstration will leverage and build upon existing promising practices and strategies, such as those

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

funded by philanthropic organizations, designed to promote successful student outcomes.

2. Project Design (Program Planning, Implementation, and Follow-Up Services)

Applicants must identify and describe the various components of the proposed project, how these components are integrated with each other, and how youth will progress through the program.

a. Program Planning

Applicants must thoroughly describe the planning process that will be undertaken to finalize the design of the model. This includes a description of how grantees will engage in a strategic assessment of their needs and gaps using the evidence-based framework, the *Guideposts for Success*, as a basis for designing service delivery and providing program activities.

Applicants must describe how they will convene and work with project partners to solidify relationships for the successful delivery of services including: a) internal stakeholders within the educational institutions including divisions responsible for career development services, disability support services,

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

instruction and curriculum, and school governance; b) external stakeholders including employer partners; workforce system partners, a disability serving organization and other identified collaborators.

They must also describe their plan for hiring any additional core program staff, for securing space needed to conduct grant activities, and for initiating recruitment and outreach efforts for enrollment of participants.

Applicants must describe how they will work with employers and/or industry associations (including national industry associations) to identify clusters of courses and related credentials that can be recognized as credentials valuable to employers, including employers across a state or region, or credentials that are nationally portable.

Applicants must also describe their plan to develop a series of interconnected stacked and latticed credentials.

In addition, applicants must describe how eligible youth will be recruited and selected as program participants, including methods for outreach, referral, and selection that involve

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

appeal to a wide variety of partners and diverse population of youth to ensure full enrollment.

Finally, applicants must document their willingness to work with ODEP and its technical assistance center to identify how the proposed project will contribute to ODEP's performance measures under its operating plan.

b. Program Implementation

Applicants must describe the academic strategies that will be offered to program participants. This includes a description of the curricula that will be offered, an attestation to their accessibility, and evidence that this instruction will result in attainment of an industry-recognized credential and employment. The types of educational interventions and/or support that will be provided and how they will be integrated with career and occupational development should be described, and must include at a minimum the following: reading and math remediation; credit retrieval/compilation of credits; tutoring; high school diploma or other State-recognized educational credential attainment; GED instruction and attainment; language instruction for those with limited English proficiency; etc. The applicant must describe how these

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

educational interventions will be integrated into career and occupational development, including nontraditional jobs for women.

Applicants must also describe how they plan to incorporate innovative and effective applications of technology into the design of the program and how technology will be used in the delivery of education and training.

Applicants must also describe the work readiness and career exploration, management, and planning (including career advising and counseling) activities that will be offered to youth, and how employer partners will be engaged to provide such opportunities.

Applicants must describe how they will use labor market information data to develop training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials in demand industries and occupations located in their state or local area, and how such training will be integrated into existing career development efforts such as career counseling and other related services

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

provided through the workforce system's American Job Centers.

Applicants must also describe where and how participants will be provided with apprenticeships, paid internships, on-the-job training or other paid or non-paid work-based learning experiences through partnerships with employers and the role employers will play in providing these opportunities.

Applicants must describe how assessment will be conducted, including through the use of non-traditional methods such as portfolio review and individual and group discovery.

Applicants must describe how they plan to engage and collaborate with the public workforce system in the development and delivery of programs, and provide evidence that workforce system partner(s) are committed to be involved in the project.

Applicants must describe plans to collaborate with philanthropic organizations, business-related and other non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, labor organizations, and disability-serving organizations that have

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

demonstrated experience providing employment services and supports to people with disabilities, and state and local level agency (ies) that serve individuals with disabilities.

Applicants must describe how they will ensure that program participants have access to wrap-around services and extensive support services they may need to assist them in completing their education and training, attaining industry-recognized credentials, and finding or advancing in employment.

Applicants must describe their plans to collaborate with one or more local education agency(ies) (LEAs) to facilitate the development of a blended secondary, postsecondary, and career training initiative and to work with all project partners to create 9 to 14 career pathways.

Applicants must describe any additional strategies and activities that will be used to address program participants' barriers to attaining successful educational and employment outcomes.

Applicants must describe the strategy for ongoing communication between and with the project partners and how

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

the collaborators will be actively engaged in the development and continuous improvement of the program model. The roles of key partners must be verified through a signed letter of commitment by each partner including resources committed, if appropriate. Letters of commitment will not count against the 25-page limit of the Project Narrative.

The applicant must also describe where any core components of the program models will be sub-awarded to other providers and, if so, how the sub-award will be managed.

c. Post-Program Placement and Follow-Up Services

Applicants must describe any post-program transition services they will offer to prepare graduates for employment placements and/or educational placements at 4-year degree institutions, including the use of career assessments and the need for ongoing supportive post-program services. They must also describe any role that program partners, such as employers and workforce system partners, will play in ensuring that participants attain and sustain employment and competitive wages.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Applicants must describe how they will continue to track data on the outcomes of program participants for up to 24 months with cohort 1 and up to 12 months for cohort 2.

3. Organizational Capacity & Quality of Key Personnel

Applicants must provide a staffing plan that reflects how the program will be staffed during the full period of performance. This includes a staffing strategy during the planning phase, active program services, and the follow-up phase and how staff retention will be addressed over the 60-months of the project period. The staffing plan should clearly identify the lead organization, the linkages between the lead and each partner organization, and all relevant leadership, program, administrative and advisory positions within each partner organization. Applicants are encouraged to include diverse personnel, including individuals with disabilities, in key positions. Minimum qualifications should be commensurate with the role identified in the application. In addition, the applicant must specify in the application, the percentages of time to be dedicated by each person on the project. For each staff person named in the application, please provide documentation of all the internal and external time commitments. In instances where a staff person is committed on a Federally supported project, please provide the project name, Federal office, program title, the project Federal award number, and the amount of committed time by each project year, This information (e.g., Staff: Jane Doe; Project Director; Project Name: Succeeding in the General

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Curriculum; Federal Office: Office of Special Education Programs; Program

Title: Field Initiated Research; Award number: H324C980624; Time

commitments: Year 3-40 percent) can be provided as an appendix to the application. In general, ODEP will not reduce the time commitments on currently funded grants from the time proposed in the original application.

Therefore, we will not consider funding any application where key staff are bid above a time commitment level that staff have available to bid. Further, the time commitments stated in a newly submitted application will not be negotiated down to permit the applicant to receive a new grant.

Applicants must explain why the proposed organizational structure for implementing the project activities is suitable to carry out the project, including how it will help promote the leveraging of networks and available resources in support of project goals and the sustainability of the project after grant funding ends.

The level of knowledge and experience of the lead and partnership organizations in conducting projects with similar components should be described. All proposed staff for the project (with the exception of support staff such as administrative assistants) must have demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- a.** Developing and providing training, technical assistance, and guidance related to:

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- Academic preparation and school-based training;
- Self-exploration, career exploration, (including facilitating work-based learning experiences) and career planning and management;
- Youth development and leadership;
- Workforce development;
- Fostering connections between youth and support services and or agencies such as those that provide mental and physical health services, tutoring, financial planning, transportation, etc.;
- Family engagement;
- The Workforce Investment Act; Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related legislation impacting the transition of youth with disabilities into post-secondary education and employment; and
- Professional development.

b. Developing, maintaining, and managing content for an accessible website;

c. Creating training and education and outreach materials;

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- d.** Conducting strategic outreach and communications; including the use of social media for education and outreach;

- e.** Delivering in-person, telephone, and web-based training to a variety of audiences;

- f.** Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships across complex institutions such as community colleges;

- g.** Collecting and analyzing data;

- h.** Conducting program evaluation and assessments; and

- i.** Leading broad-scale systems change within complex academic institutions such as community colleges.

The lead and partner organizations must have extensive prior experience and success in conducting projects with similar components including developing, implementing, and evaluating new strategies and producing replicable models.

Key project personnel, including any proposed consultants and subcontractors, must have extensive knowledge and prior experience in providing education and career training related to: a) the transition into the workforce of youth and

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

young adults, including those with disabilities, b) the design, delivery, and evaluation of the similar project activities and c) fostering institutional change.

The project director must have extensive experience in conducting multi-site projects, including providing oversight, coordination and technical assistance, and must be committed to devoting at least 90 percent of his or her time to this cooperative agreement.

4. Management and Outcomes

The Department expects that applicants for grants under this SCA will use evidence in the design of program strategies, such as evaluation studies indicating successful outcomes for similar programs. Evidence-based designs are essential to direct limited Federal resources toward strategies that have demonstrated positive education, training, and employment outcomes for participants. The Department recognizes that rigorous evidence is not available for many education and training strategies or methodologies especially for the targeted population. If no rigorous evidence exists or an applicant is proposing a new or innovative strategy, the applicant must make as strong a case as possible using related research, theories, or strong logic that the proposed strategy would produce positive impacts. This section must include:

- a.** A detailed 60 month management plan for project goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes;

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- b.** A detailed 60 month timeline for project activities, including critical activities to be conducted within the six-month planning period, the implementation phase, and the post-program services phase, as well as activities leading to production and submission of the final report;

- c.** A detailed outline for the analysis of program activities that references the connection between grant activities and ODEP's outputs and outcomes and the applicant's commitment to working with ODEP on all evaluation activities; and

- d.** A description of procedures and approaches that will be used to provide ongoing communication, collaboration with, and input from ODEP's Project Officer on all cooperative agreement-related activities.

D. Attachments to the Project Narrative.

In addition to the Project Narrative, the applicant must submit the following attachments:

- 1) Abstract:** An up to three-page abstract summarizing the proposed project, including but not limited to the scope of the project, the activities that will be delivered and proposed outcomes. The abstract

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

should also include information regarding the partners that will be engaged in planning, implementation, and post-program activities.

2) Documentation of Employer Commitment: All applicants must submit documentation of employer(s) commitment that includes signatures from the employers as required in Section IV.C 2.b., and describes their roles and responsibilities in the project.

3) Documentation of Other Key Partner's Commitment: All applicants must submit documentation of commitment from all key partners that includes signatures as required in Section V, and describes their roles and responsibilities in the project.

a) Logic Model: Applicants should also provide a logic model that details the project's grant activities, outputs and outcomes.

b) Organizational Chart: All applicants must provide an organizational chart that identifies all relevant leadership, program, administrative, and advisory positions for the project.

c) Resumes for Key Personnel: Key personnel include: Project Director, Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Research Analyst, and any other individual playing a substantial role in the project.

Applications that do not include the required attachments will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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

E. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is 45 days after date of publication on Grants.gov. 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 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Applications submitted on grants.gov must also be successfully submitted (as described below) no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (fax) will not be accepted.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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,
Office of Procurement Services, Attention: Cassandra Mitchell, Grant

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Officer, Reference SCA 14-03, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S-4307, 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 5:00.00 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

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

checklists to help you walk through the process. The Department strongly recommends that applicants download the “Organization Registration Checklist” at

http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf

and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last minute searches for required information and save time.

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

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 Authorized Organizational (AOR). When you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

When a registered applicant submits an application with Grants.gov, an electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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

The components of the application must be saved in an accessible (508 compliant) format as either .doc, .xls or .pdf files. Documents received in a format other than .doc, .xls or .pdf will not be read. If submitted in any other format or are inaccessible (not 508 compliant), applicants assume the risk that

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

compatibility or other issues will prevent our ability to consider the application. ODEP will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening. In such cases, the non-conforming application will not be considered for funding.

We strongly advise applicants to use the various tools and documents, including FAQs, which are available on the “Applicant Resources” page at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp>.

To receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users and other time sensitive updates as information is available, applicants may subscribe to “Grants.gov Updates” at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp.

If applicants encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, call 1-800-518-4726 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or email “support@grants.gov”. The Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 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 5:00.00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated will be

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

considered. Applicants take a significant risk by waiting to the last day to submit by Grants.gov.

Any hard copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received before awards are made, it was properly addressed, and it was: (a) sent by U.S. Postal Service mail, postmarked not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application required to be received by the 20th of the month must be postmarked by the 15th of that month); or (b) sent by professional overnight delivery service to the addressee not later than one working day before the date specified for receipt of applications. “Postmarked” means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service. Therefore, applicants should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Failure to adhere to these instructions will be a basis for a determination that the application was not filed timely and will not be considered. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

F. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372,

“Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

G. Funding Restrictions

All proposal costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles. Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles or other conditions contained in the grant.

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

H. Indirect Costs

As specified in OMB Circular Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective. An indirect cost rate (ICR) is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether Federally-assisted or not. Organizations must use the ICR supplied by the Federal Cognizant Agency. If an organization requires a new ICR or has a pending ICR, the Grant Officer will award a temporary billing

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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.

I. Administrative Costs

Under this SCA, 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.

J. Intellectual Property Rights

To ensure that the Federal investment of these funds has as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials, as a condition of the receipt of an ODEP grant, the grantee will be required to license to the public all work (except for computer software source code, discussed below) created with the support of the grant under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 (CCBY) license. Work that must be licensed under

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

the CCBY includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to pre-existing, grantee-owned content using grant funds. This license allows subsequent users to copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the copyrighted work and requires such users to attribute the work in the manner specified by the grantee. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work. For general information on CCBY, please visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>. Questions about CCBY as it applies to specific ODEP grant applications should be submitted to DOL to the Grants Officer above. Only work that is developed by the grantee with the Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project grant funds is required to be licensed under the CCBY license. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to, or purchased by the grantee from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CCBY license requirement.

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

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Further, the Department requires that all computer software source code developed or created with ODEP Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project funds will be released under an intellectual property license that allows others to use and build upon them. Specifically, the grantee will release all new source code developed or created with ODEP grant funds under an open license acceptable to either the Free Software Foundation and/or the Open Source Initiative.

Separate from the CCBY license to the public, 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: the copyright in all products developed under the grant, including a 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.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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 Office of Disability Employment Policy. 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.”

K. Travel

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

L. Acknowledgement of DOL Funding

In all circumstances, the following shall be displayed on printed materials prepared by the grantee under the cooperative agreement: “Preparation of this item was funded by the United States Department of Labor under Cooperative Agreement No. 14-03.”

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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

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

- The percentage of the total costs of the program or project, which will be financed with Federal money.
- The dollar amount of Federal financial assistance for the project or program; and
- The percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources.

M. Use of DOL and ODEP Logo

In consultation with DOL/ODEP, the grantee must acknowledge DOL's role as described. The DOL and/or ODEP logo may be applied to DOL-funded material prepared for world-wide distribution, including posters, videos, pamphlets, research documents, national survey results, impact evaluations, best practice reports, and other publications of global interest. The grantee

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

must consult with DOL on whether the logo may be used on any such items prior to final draft or final preparation for distribution. In no event shall the DOL and/or ODEP logo be placed on any item until DOL has given the grantee written permission to use the logo on the item.

N. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

Organizations that receive grants through this SCA may not use grant funds to pay for the wages of participants. Further, the provision of stipends to training enrollees for the purposes of wage replacement is not an allowable cost under this SCA.

O. Other Submission Requirements

Withdrawal of Applications: Applications may be withdrawn by written notice to the Grant Officer at any time before an award is made.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

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

Criterion	Points
1. Significance of Proposed Project	20

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

2.	Project Design	35
3.	Organizational Capacity & Quality of Key Personnel	20
4.	Management and Outcomes	25
TOTAL		100

1. Significance of Proposed Project (20 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed demonstration, reviewers will consider and award points based on the following factors:

- a. The extent to which the proposed project appears likely to meet the need to expand and improve the capacity of eligible institutions to deliver inclusive integrated education and career training programs to youth and young adults with disabilities who enter their programs in the community/communities to be served.
- b. The comprehensiveness of the gap analyses of existing education and career training programs, and infrastructure that will be conducted consistent with the *Guideposts for Success* and the extent to which the applicant’s strategic approach to addressing problems identified appears likely to result in

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

sustainable improvements in education and career training
service delivery for the target population in each community to
be served;

c. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a
thorough understanding of the previous work done by ODEP
and its partners on youth and transition, including the
Guideposts for Success, and research on effective career
exploration, management and planning activities, and related
policies and practices;

d. The extent to which applicants demonstrate their knowledge
of existing evidence and understanding of the relevant research
on challenges, issues, and promising strategies related to youth
and young adults with disabilities i) transitioning from
secondary school into post-secondary institutions such as
community colleges; ii) persisting in the attainment of a
credential and/or degree and employment; and iii) the related
policies and practices that support these aforementioned
outcomes. (e.g., this should include research related to youth
from low-income backgrounds; youth who have been
incarcerated, youth from ethnic and minority populations, and
other populations that have a disproportionately high rate of
disability);

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- e.** The extent to which the proposed project includes comprehensive strategies for using project activities and findings to promote institutional change or improvement;
- f.** The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build capacity of community colleges to provide, improve, or expand services that address the career development and employment needs of youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities;
- g.** The extent to which the proposed project includes the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build upon, or are alternatives, to existing strategies, including those that have been developed through performance within the TAACCCT program;
- h.** The extent to which the proposed project includes strategies for replicating promising practices for use in other settings; and
- i.** The extent to which the proposed project includes strategies for disseminating information and promising practices: within

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

the community college; within the broader community; and iii)
to other community colleges.

2. Project Design (35 points)

A key strategic assumption of this demonstration is that community colleges and other eligible institutions, in strong partnership with engaged employers, are poised to play a vital role in increasing the number of youth and young adults with disabilities who successfully attain a credential and enter the workforce. A second assumption is these outcomes can best be realized through the commitment and engagement of a cross division team within the educational institution (e.g., with representation from divisions of career services, disability support services, faculty and instruction; school governance, etc.). With the support of school leadership, it is the Department's expectation that this team will collaborate to provide an inclusive, integrated model of academic and career development supports designed to meet the needs of youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities. These assumptions about the role of employer engagement and school-wide commitment to institutional change are a major strategic underpinning of this demonstration.

Applicants must demonstrate a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project. Applicants will be evaluated on the likely

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

effectiveness of the project design as determined by the specific information, research, and analysis presented in support of the following factors:

- a.** The extent to which the proposed project describes effective strategies for sustained employer engagement throughout the project that will drive the programming;
- b.** The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates the participation of key institutional partners including representation from divisions of career services, disability support services, faculty and instruction; school governance, and other personnel responsible for student achievement;
- c.** The extent to which the proposed project includes plans and strategies for facilitating dialogue between the project partners;
- d.** The extent to which the applicant describes detailed plans for program participants' immersion in an array of work-based learning opportunities, which includes a combination of internship opportunities, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, job shadowing opportunities, service learning, and to a variety of career development activities; and

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

e. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates how additional employment and training service providers as well as experts and other knowledge resources will be used to support grant activities.

3. Organizational Capacity and Quality of Key Personnel (20 points)

When evaluating the capacity of the organization and the quality of the key personnel, reviewers will consider and award points based on the following factors:

a. The strength and sufficiency of the personnel proposed for each phase of the project;

b. The extent to which the staffing plan clearly identifies the lead organization, the linkages between the lead and each partner organization, and relevant leadership, program, administrative and advisory positions within each partner organization;

c. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that lead and partner organizations have had extensive prior experience and success in conducting projects with similar components including developing, implementing, and evaluating new strategies and producing replicable models;

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

d. The extent to which the proposed staff for the project (with the exception of support staff such as administrative assistants) have demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Developing and providing training, technical assistance, and guidance related to:
 - o Academic preparation and school-based training;
 - o Self-exploration, career exploration, (including facilitating work-based learning experiences) and career planning and management;
 - o Youth development and leadership;
 - o Workforce development;
 - o Fostering connections between youth and support services and or agencies such as those that provide mental health and physical health services, tutoring, financial planning, transportation, etc.;
 - o Family engagement;
 - o The Workforce Investment Act; American with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related legislation impacting the transition of

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

youth with disabilities into post-secondary
education and employment; and

- o Professional development;
 - Developing, maintaining, and managing content for an accessible website;
 - Creating training and education and outreach materials;
 - Conducting strategic outreach and communications including the use of social media for education and outreach;
 - Delivering in-person, telephone, and web-based training to a variety of audiences;
 - Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships across complex institutions such as community colleges;
 - Collecting and analyzing data;
 - Conducting program evaluation and assessments; and
 - Leading broad-scale systems change within complex academic institutions such as community colleges.
- e. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that key personnel, including proposed consultants and subcontractors, have extensive knowledge and experience providing education and career programming related to: 1) the transition of youth and young adults, including those with disabilities, into the

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

workforce, 2) the design, delivery, and evaluation of similar project activities and 3) fostering institutional change;

f. The extent to which proposed staff and partners include diverse personnel, including individuals with disabilities, in key positions;

g. The extent to which the proposed organizational structure for implementing the project activities is suitable to carry out the project. (The structure and staffing of the organization align with the project's requirements, vision, and goals and are designed to assure responsible general management of the project and provide organizational infrastructure that promotes the leveraging of existing resources (e.g., including use of strategies for blending and braiding funds) and networks in support of project goals and the sustaining of project activities after grant funding ends).

4. Management and Outcomes (25 points)

The purpose of the Management and Outcomes criteria is to determine whether the applicant has developed an adequate management plan to effectively carry out the objectives and scope of the proposed project on time and within budget, to describe the predicted outcomes resulting from

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

activities funded under this SCA, and to identify the methods that will be used by the grantee to determine success. Applicants should provide a detailed management plan, which identifies the critical activities, time frames, and responsibilities for effectively implementing the project, including the process for assuring successful implementation of cooperative agreement objectives. In addition, applicants should outline the strategy for documenting and reporting the activities undertaken during the life of the cooperative agreement.

In evaluating the management and outcomes criteria, reviewers will consider and award points based on the following factors:

a. The extent to which the management plan for project implementation appears likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. This should include:

- clearly defined staff responsibilities;
- time allocation to project activities;
- timelines;
- milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
- project deliverables; and
- information on adequacy of other resources necessary for project implementation.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- b. The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project;
- c. The extent to which the applicant provides evidence that the proposed strategies will lead to improved education and employment outcomes. In addressing this factor, the applicant must clearly identify the evidence on which the proposed education and training strategies are based, and explain how the evidence indicates that the proposed strategies will lead to improved education and employment outcomes. Wherever possible, applicants should propose strategies that have been proven to have sizeable positive impacts by well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental studies. For example, an applicant might cite a random-assignment (i.e., experimental) or comparison group study demonstrating that the proposed strategy has led to positive education and employment outcomes. However, the Department recognizes that rigorous evidence is not available for many education and training strategies or methodologies. If no rigorous evidence exists or an applicant is proposing a new innovative strategy, the applicant should present a reasonable series of hypotheses leading to positive education and employment outcomes, citing

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

related research, theories, or logic to provide evidence that the proposed strategy would produce positive impacts;

d. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed objectives of the project;

e. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support and sustain the proposed project activities over the projected life of the cooperative agreement;

f. The extent to which the management plan appears likely to result in sustainable activities beyond the period of direct Federal investment;

g. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project;

h. The extent to which the methods used by the grantees to analyze their success will inform ODEP's annual performance goals and measures and ODEP's long-term strategic goals; and

i. The extent to which the proposed mechanisms demonstrate adequate strategies for ensuring high-quality products and services relating to the scope of work for the proposed project.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications for grants under this Solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the closing date. A technical review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this SCA. Up to 100 points may be awarded to an application, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in section V. A. The ranked scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding, in conjunction with other factors such as urban, rural, and geographic balance; the availability of funds; and which proposals are most advantageous to the government. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to his/her attention. The Government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <http://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

All award notifications will be posted on the ODEP Homepage

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

(<http://www.dol.gov/odep>). 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, ODEP 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 SCA.

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 SCA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions:

- a.** Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A-122 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 230, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements)

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

- b.** Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A–21 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 220, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- c.** 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).
- d.** Profit Making Commercial Firms – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 CFR part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- e.** All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 CFR Part 96 (Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 CFR Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations).
- f.** 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.
- g.** 29 CFR Part 31—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

Programs of the Department of Labor—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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

i. 29 CFR Part 33—Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Labor;

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

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

l. 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:

a. Religious Activities

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. Section 2000bb, applies to all Federal

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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.

b. 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).

c. Transparency Act Requirements

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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; and
- 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:

- Federal awards to individuals who apply for or receive Federal awards as natural persons (i.e., unrelated to any

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

business or non-profit organization he or she may own or operate in his or her name);

- Federal awards to entities that had a gross income, from all sources, of less than \$300,000 in the entities' previous tax year; and
- Federal awards, if the required reporting would disclose classified information.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

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

4. Special Program Requirements for Evaluation

DOL may require that the program or project participate in an evaluation of overall performance of ODEP grants and require the cooperation of the

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

grantee as a condition of award. The evaluation design will be developed using a participatory process involving the national evaluator and the grantee. The intent is to build the evidence about strategies and approaches that work for students with disabilities. The most credible design of the impact of a strategy involves randomly assigning individuals to one group or another. In some cases, there are more applicants than the program can serve, in which case enrolled can be done by a lottery, randomly. In other cases, it may be more informative to test different types of strategies, again, using a lottery process. For example, one group of students might be assigned to use one job readiness curriculum, the other group would use a different curriculum, then the progress all students make and their outcomes will be compared. The results will provide evidence about which curriculum produces better outcomes within the program model the grantee operates. The design of the tests and evaluation will be made with the grantee during the planning period.

In addition to the possible strategy tests, the national evaluator will conduct a short and long term outcome analysis and an implementation analysis. The grantee must fully participate in any evaluation activities, and must designate an evaluation liaison to collaborate with the national evaluator to schedule conference calls, site visits, data transfers, and data collection.

All grantees must cooperate with the independent evaluation to be conducted by the Department's Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) and ODEP. CEO and

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

ODEP will arrange for, fund, and conduct this independent evaluation of the outcomes, impacts, and accomplishments of each funded project. Grantees must agree to make available records on all parts of project activity, including participant employment and wage data, available data on specific models being evaluated, and to provide access to personnel, as specified by the evaluator(s), under the direction of the Department. This evaluation is separate from the performance assessment, quarterly reporting, and program descriptive assessments required of the grantee.

C. Reporting

Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements. Quarterly financial reports and quarterly progress reports, in addition to a final project report must be submitted by the grantee electronically. The grantee is required to provide the reports and documents listed below:

1. Quarterly Financial Reports

A Standard Form 425; Federal Financial Form (FFR) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired. Quarterly reports are due 30 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.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report within 30 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities. Quarterly progress reports are estimated to take ten hours to complete.

3. Final Project Report

The final report will include an assessment of project performance and outcomes achieved. The final report is estimated to take 20 hours to complete. This report will be submitted in hard copy and on electronically using a format and following instructions, which will be provided by ODEP. Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements.

4. 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

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

For further information about this SCA, please contact Cassandra Mitchell, Grants Officer, at (202) 693-4570. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to mitchell.cassandra@dol.gov and must specifically reference SCA 14-03 and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This announcement is being made available on the ODEP Web site at <http://www.dol.gov/odep> and at <http://www.grants.gov>.

VIII. Other Information

OMB Information Collection No. 1225-0086

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires January 31, 2016.

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.

ODEP SOLICITATION FOR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS
Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Youth Adults with
Disabilities Demonstration Project (SCA 14-03)

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 Cooperative Agreements” 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 **XXXXXX**, in Washington, D.C. by:

Cassandra R. Mitchell

Grant Officer

Billing Code: 4510-FN-P