

**Funding Opportunity Announcement
Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC):
A Grant Initiative for the Appalachian and Delta Regions
Supplemental Justification**

Supplemental Supporting Statement A: Justification

This request seeks OMB approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act for the unique information collection requirements in the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC): A Grant Initiative for the Appalachian and Delta Regions.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) announce the availability of up to \$29.2 million that was appropriated under Title I, Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Pub. L. 115-141) to award funds to carry out dislocated worker demonstration projects authorized under section 169(c) of WIOA for the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) Initiative grants for the Appalachian and Delta Regions.

This grant program design supports alignment of workforce development with existing strategies and plans for economic development and diversification in rural communities in the following areas hard hit by economic transition and recovering slowly:

- The Appalachian region, as defined in 40 U.S.C. 14102(a)(1), and
- The Lower Mississippi Delta (Delta) region, as defined in 7 U.S.C. 2009aa(2).

The WORC Initiative enables impacted communities to develop local and regional workforce development solutions aligned with existing economic development strategies and community partnerships to promote new, sustainable job opportunities and long-term economic vitality.

These grants will enable eligible applicants within the Appalachian and Delta regions to expand the impact of existing workforce development initiatives. These demonstration grant projects will provide valuable career, training, and support services to eligible individuals in counties and parishes and/or areas currently underserved by other resources. These grants support workforce development activities that prepare dislocated workers, new entrants to the workforce, and incumbent workers for good jobs in high-demand occupations aligned with a regional or community economic development strategy.

These projects will demonstrate how the assistance and expertise provided to the grantees by ARC and DRA will expand the capacity and effectiveness of grantees in administering federal funds to provide workforce services in these communities. To this end, ARC and DRA will provide technical assistance to prospective applicants in their respective regions, as well as provide assistance and support to grantees across the life of the initiative. Applicants may apply for an amount ranging from \$150,000 up to \$2.5 million.

Applications will include the following information collections: 1) Form SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance,” separately cleared under OMB control number 4040-0004, 2) Project Budget, 3) Project Narrative, and 4) Attachments to the Project Narrative.

Electronic availability:

This grant solicitation will be available on the www.grants.gov Website. Based on past DOL experience, the Department anticipates 85 percent of responses will be submitted electronically and 15 percent of responses will be submitted through a hardcopy.

Small Entities:

This information collection will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Assurances of confidentiality:

These grant solicitations do not offer applicants assurances of confidentiality.

Special circumstances:

This solicitation implicates no special circumstances.

Burden:

The DOL expects to receive approximately 250 applications from an equal number of respondents. The 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 needed data, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

250 applications x 20 hours = 5000 hours

The DOL has increased the average hourly earnings in the professional and business services industry to \$33.01 per hour to monetize this burden. See *The Employment Situation—March 2019*, DOL, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empisit.pdf> at page 33.

5000 hours x \$33.01 = \$165,050

The DOL associates no other burden costs with this information collection. In addition to the application, each grantee will be required to submit quarterly financial and performance reports to the ETA. Those information collection requirements will be cleared under a separate control number.

Total burden: 250 respondents, 250 responses, 5000 hours, \$0 other cost burden.

Supplemental Supporting Statement B: Statistical Methods

This information collection does not employ statistical methods.