

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR:**

Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: *Initial*

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: *FOA-ETA-20-07*

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: *17.261*

KEY DATES: *The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is [insert date XX days after the date of publication on Grants.gov]. We must receive applications no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time.*

ADDRESSES: *Address mailed applications to:*

***The U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration, Office of Grants Management
Attention: Melissa Abdullah, Grant Officer
Reference FOA-ETA-20-07
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716
Washington, D.C. 20210***

For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to Section IV.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department, or we), announces the availability of approximately \$40 million in grant funds authorized by Sections 169(c) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the **Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program**.

The Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program (referred to as Strengthening Community Colleges or SCC) will build the capacity of community colleges to collaborate with employers and the public workforce development system to meet local and regional labor market demand for a skilled workforce. The purpose of this grant is (1) to increase the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges to address the skill development needs of employers and dislocated and unemployed workers, incumbent workers, and new entrants to the workforce; (2) to offer this spectrum of workers and other individuals accelerated career pathways that enable them to gain skills and transition from unemployment to (re)employment quickly; and (3) to address the new challenges associated with the COVID-19 health crisis that necessitate social distancing practices and expanding online and technology-enabled learning and migrating services to a virtual environment.

The Department of Labor will award grants ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million to community colleges. For the purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), community colleges are institutions of higher education, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act and whose most common degree awarded is an associate degree. A community college, as the lead grantee, will either apply as a single institution or represent a consortium of other institutions of higher education, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, thus extending the reach of the consortium grants well beyond the lead institutions.

Community colleges applying for this funding may propose applications for a single institution that will undertake capacity building at one institution, or for a consortium of colleges that will undertake capacity building and system change within one state, or across one or more community college districts within a state. Consortia must also involve at least one state- or district-level entity. Both single institutions and consortia will work with a required workforce development system partner, and required employer partners. SCC grants will help community colleges and other institutions of higher education (including four-year colleges and universities) build capacity and leverage expertise and resources that result in increased access for individuals to acquire industry-recognized in-demand skills long after exhaustion of these grant funds.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. PROGRAM PURPOSE

With rapid changes and technological advances in an increasingly competitive global economy, America's economic strength depends on the education and skills of its workers. As the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, community colleges are critical partners for the public workforce system for retraining the workforce and building a pipeline of workers in health care, logistics, and other industries that will continue to face shortages following the current health crisis. These investments may also support the advancement of industries of the future, including artificial intelligence (AI), quantum information sciences (QIS), 5G/advanced communications, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing.

This Announcement solicits applications for the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program (referred to as Strengthening Community Colleges or SCC). The purposes of this program are to increase the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges to address the skill development needs of employers and workers, to offer accelerated career pathways to transition from unemployment to (re)employment quickly, and to address challenges associated with the COVID-19 health crisis that necessitates social distancing practices and expanding online and technology-enabled learning and migrating services to a virtual environment. Single institutions and consortia, with a community college as the lead, will work with employers and the public workforce development system to build their capacity to respond to current economic pressures to develop a skilled and educated workforce. Successful applicants will design and align their education and training courses to respond to the labor market needs of their regional and state economies. They will adopt policies and processes to accelerate learning strategies through new and redesigned curricula, update investments in training infrastructure, develop technology-enhanced learning activities, and align and effectively use data systems. The Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program will result in accelerated learning strategies that will enable workers to reskill as quickly as possible with industry-recognized credentials and accelerated pathways to degrees that include credit for prior learning, online and technology-enabled learning strategies.

Successful applicants will actively engage employers through partnerships with industry to enhance career pathways, create and refine curricula development, offer work-based learning opportunities, such as Registered Apprenticeships, and leverage resources. In doing so, applicants are encouraged to build on successful ongoing industry sector strategies. These sector strategies will target one or more specific industries, and work to meet the workforce needs of employers in the sector(s), while supporting dislocated and unemployed workers, incumbent workers, and new entrants to the workforce in attaining the necessary skills and credentials. Successful applicants will develop, expand, or improve education and training programs

informed by real-time labor market information obtained through state and local workforce development boards and feedback from employer partners.¹

Central to these grants is the focus on capacity building for institutions, and—for consortium grantees—on advancing innovation and systems change that occurs both within an institution and for a consortium of community colleges. Both capacity building and systems change build on the lessons learned through the Department’s past investments in community colleges, specifically the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. Some key priorities advanced through TAACCCT that should be leveraged in the current project are (1) the advancement of evidence-based education and training strategies; (2) the alignment of curriculum and credentials with industry demand, particularly through sector-based career pathway development; (3) the development of effective accelerated learning models; (4) the use of technology-related and online training delivery; and (5) the expansion of student supports critical to completing training.

Efforts to ensure that education and training programs expand opportunities for individuals—particularly those with barriers to training and employment—to earn postsecondary credentials that have labor market value require coordinated efforts at the systems level. Such system-level efforts focus on “changing policy, practice, perceptions, funding, and institutions” and, as noted earlier, emphasize collaboration and relationships.² System partners work collaboratively, among other activities, to establish a common vision and shared strategies that can break down “siloes programs with different funding streams, governance, rules, and cultures.”³ Applicants must also focus on a vision and plan where all partners work together to serve one workforce.

The Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants will provide funding to build capacity and to drive systems change that support sustaining the accelerated learning pathways and expanded capacity in technology-enabled learning and online learning. Successful consortia applicants will propose policy alignment across partner institutions to bring institutional changes to scale within a state or community college district(s), such as adopting innovative approaches to accelerate credit accumulation and postsecondary credential attainment; improving and aligning data collection, integration, and use across a state community college system; and transforming in-person college transactions to virtual service delivery. The enhanced career pathway systems will provide new entrants and adult workers a clear and aligned sequence of relevant in-demand industry coursework and stacked and latticed credentials that will enable them to attain or retain employment.

¹ To find points of contact for state and local workforce development boards, refer to <https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/WorkforceDevelopment/find-workforce-development-boards.aspx>.

² Bernstein, Hamutal and Ananda Martin-Caughey. *Changing Workforce Systems: A Framework for Describing and Measuring Systems Change*, p. 5 (Urban Institute, 2017). https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/88301/changing_workforce_systems2_1.pdf.

³ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. *The Evolution and Potential of Career Pathways*, p. 14 (2015). <http://connectingcredentials.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/The-Evolution-and-Potential-of-Career-Pathways.pdf>.

Beyond changing the delivery method to distance and online learning courses for students, there is an urgency for colleges to deploy digital solutions that will support all facets of student-facing operations (including registration, scheduling, retention, and facilitation of internships/job placement). Individual community college grantees and consortia will expand their capacity to reorient the physical delivery of these services to a virtual environment, and will redesign curriculum to incorporate more technology-enabled learning, such as greater use of simulations. This enhanced capacity will allow colleges to deliver high-quality workforce programs utilizing technology to meet the economic needs of their regional or state economies.

Providing prospective students with access to data on program outcomes, and incorporating the use of labor market information into college-wide decision-making regarding program development and course offerings, are critical to building the capacity of community colleges and other institutions of higher education to respond to the needs of employers in a local labor market or economic region. Successful applicants will use local and regional labor market data to make decisions on course offerings and provide data to inform student choice about course participation.⁴

With the focus of SCC grants on building and enhancing community colleges' training capacity to improve the employment and earnings outcomes for students, these are not typical training grants. Therefore applicants are encouraged to propose a wide range of leveraged resources, including for participant-specific costs such as tuition, support services, and on-the-job-training from other sources. Applicants must demonstrate how they are leveraging the resources of educational, workforce, and employer partners.

An important aspect of this grant program will be to document the capacity built at the institutional level and the systems change achieved by consortia grantees, and to share information about grantee successes and lessons learned for all grantees. Thus, all grantees are required to retain (after award) a third-party evaluator to design and execute an implementation evaluation of each funded project, and to participate in a national evaluation if led by the Department. See Section I.A.3. Third-Party Evaluations for more information. The Department believes that successful projects will both leverage existing evidence and develop new evidence on effective workforce education and training strategies to address the needs of employers and workers.

1. SCC Core Elements

To ensure that SCC projects accomplish the goals stated above in Section I.A., the Department will fund applications that address, in their proposals, the SCC Core Elements as follows:

⁴ The contact for the State Labor Market Information (LMI) office for information regarding state and local LMI is located at <https://www.bls.gov/bls/ofolist.htm>. For national LMI, please visit the Bureau of Labor Statistics website at www.bls.gov.

- Single institutions must address Core Elements 1-4.
- Consortium leads must address Core Elements 1-5.

a) **Core Element 1: Evidence-Based Design**

The Department is committed to funding programs that are likely to improve education and employment outcomes for program participants. Successful applicants will develop strategies based on the existing evidence base, and will be committed to using data for the continuous improvement of programs. Grants awarded in the SCC program will support the development of innovative program models that must be evaluated so that, in the future, institutions can replicate and further test practices that are promising and identify and strengthen practices in need of improvement.

Applicants must base their program design on a level of evidence that is appropriate to the project proposed. Applicants that propose to replicate or adapt existing, evidence-based strategies should cite strong/high or moderate evidence of effectiveness from prior research to support the proposed project design. Applicants that propose to develop new, untested strategies should cite preliminary research findings, related research findings, and/or strong theory to support the design of the project. Appendix A provides information on several public clearinghouses that contain reviews of research studies, provide ratings of the quality of the evidence within a subset of those studies, and define the ratings categories (e.g., “strong”) noted above. Applicants may use one or more of these clearinghouses to cite research supporting their program model or identify another clearinghouse or database that rates studies based on the strength of their design. In addition, the Department encourages applicants to incorporate the relevant findings from the cited studies into their results-based project design, as described in Section I.A.2.

b) **Core Element 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement**

Under this FOA, applicants will develop new and/or expand existing, successful industry sector strategies. A sector strategy is a partnership of multiple employers within an industry that brings together educational institutions, economic development agencies, workforce development systems, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a given labor market. Sector partnerships create customized responses to the needs of target industries within their regional economy, and create and incorporate career pathway strategies by aligning education and training programs with industry needs. Like career pathways initiatives, sector strategies are not add-on programs, nor individual training initiatives with a particular company or in a particular sector. Instead, they represent a strategic approach to building employer-driven, regional talent pipelines, addressing skill gaps, and creating meaningful career pathways for a range of workers in important regional industries.⁵

⁵ ETA Sector Strategies Technical Assistance Initiative, “Sector Strategies Implementation Framework,” retrieved from <https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/04/12/13/53/Sector-Strategies-Implementation->

Sector strategies typically incorporate the following key elements:

- target a specific high-growth industry and/or cluster of occupations that may or may not cross industries;
- convene multiple employers from the specific industry sector;
- validate labor market data and projections with employers;
- identify common skills and credentials required by the industry;
- design education and training programs to address skills needs, including the development of sector-based career pathways;
- include workforce intermediaries or industry associations; and
- support workers gaining the skills and competencies necessary for entry into, or advancement in, good jobs.

In addition, the employer-driven nature of sector strategies (as well as career pathways) means that employers are not merely a primary customer of the workforce development system, but rather a partner, a co-leader, and a co-investor in that system. As a full partner, employers are actively involved in the sector initiative on a continual basis, from program inception through implementation, and they take on a variety of roles within the initiative, from advising to strategic implementation, as depicted in the graphic below.⁶



To ensure that the sector partnerships under this FOA play a transformational role, the Department expects that SCC-funded projects will deepen employer engagement at all levels of program design and implementation, focusing in particular on increasing employer involvement at the strategic level. Successful applicants will work with the local and/or state workforce partners to identify one or more industry sector(s) in which they will focus and include the required employer partners, as described in Section III.A.3. SCC Partnerships.

Grantees will ensure that they are actively engaging the required employer partners in implementing the sector strategy within six key areas: (1) providing leadership to the project in setting strategic direction; (2) informing the identification of and mapping the necessary skills and competencies for the program(s); (3) providing work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and Registered Apprenticeship; (4) assisting with curriculum

Framework.

⁶https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/TAACCCT/pdfs/TAACCCT_Fact_Sheet_Employer_Engagement_10.21.2016.pdf. See also Appendix B: Resources on Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement.

development and program design; (5) where appropriate, informing the design of an assessment or validating credentials that will address industry skill needs; and (6) providing resources, such as mentors, the donation of facilities, faculty, equipment, or other contributions to support the proposed project. Projects funded under this grant program will maintain relationships with employers and regional industry representatives throughout the duration of the project with the intention of sustaining them beyond the grant period.

Forging strong relationships with employers throughout the project creates stronger labor market focus and connections for the participants. Employers engaged in the sector strategy should commit to hire, promote, and/or retain qualified program participants completing the training. In addition, the Department is interested in providing rigorous work-based training opportunities for program participants (such as internships, Registered Apprenticeships, and on-the-job training) as a component of any program, as appropriate.

The Department encourages applicants to partner with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in their local and regional area, particularly in industry sectors and occupations with expected skill shortages. This partnership could be helpful in determining the skill needs of industry sectors and occupations so that programs developed are appropriate, or by providing appropriate related instruction to Registered Apprenticeship sponsors.

Note that any grant funds used for apprenticeships may be used only to support apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act, which currently includes Registered Apprenticeships Programs (RAPs).

c) Core Element 3: Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies

Under this FOA, applicants will make enhancements to existing, successful career pathway programs. Central to aligning education and training programming with the needs of employers and the labor market is the strengthening of career pathways that create programs of study and refine curricula to assist a broad spectrum of workers and new entrants to the workforce in acquiring in-demand skills and competencies. Career pathway programs offer a clear sequence, or pathway, of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies, and integrate academic and occupational skills training. A career pathway system is the cohesive combination of partnerships, resources and funding, policies, data, and shared accountability measures that support the development, quality, scaling, and dynamic sustainability of career pathways and programs for youth and adults. To realize the potential of career pathways, stakeholders must work simultaneously and iteratively on both the programmatic and systems levels. Moreover, career pathways are always sector-focused, incorporating the needs and hiring opportunities of employers within the specific industry sector, as discussed in more detail in Core Element 2, above.

While Core Element 5, below, focuses on career pathway development at the *systems* level, Core Element 3 emphasizes making enhancements to an existing career pathway *program*. At both the program and systems levels, the primary aim of career pathways under this FOA is to enable faster credentialing and entrance into the workforce for program participants. Single institution applicants will be reporting participant-level data for a cohort of participants that are enrolled in the enhanced career pathway program.

Accordingly, career pathway programs enhanced through SCC will include several of the following accelerated learning strategies:

- **Competency-based education (CBE) and assessment.** CBE is an outcomes-oriented approach in which student mastery of learning outcomes is assessed and certified through observational methods, such as task performance, exams, demonstrations, or other direct measures of proficiency. Credentials are awarded based on the mastery of specific competencies as demonstrated through performance-based assessments.
- **Credit for prior learning (CPL) and prior learning assessments (PLA).** Often used interchangeably, these terms refer to a process that involves an evaluation of skills and knowledge acquired from prior coursework or outside the classroom (i.e., workplace) for the purpose of recognizing mastery against a given set of standards, competencies, or learning outcomes.
- **Modularized and self-paced curriculum.** A modularized curriculum is structured so that each course—divided into multiple, self-contained units of instruction—builds upon the next, with individuals moving through competency sets, building and attaining new skills as they go. Modules are taught in manageable “chunks” so individuals with varying levels of proficiency can accomplish them. Self-paced learning refers to participants’ completion of coursework at their own pace rather than during set classroom times.
- **Integrated education and career-focused training programs that offer accelerated and contextualized remediation.** Contextualized remediation is instruction that embeds traditional academic content (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics) within technical coursework that is meaningful to students’ daily lives and/or interests. This model often occurs in tandem with co-requisite or concurrent models of instruction, which involve simultaneous enrollment of students in remedial coursework and college-level coursework.
- **Dual enrollment for secondary and postsecondary pathway programs.** Dual enrollment programs allow students to access college classes and achieve college credit before they graduate high school. Such programs can serve as a fast track for students toward a career pathway that aligns with college courses and curriculum.
- **Improved comprehensive and personalized student support services and career guidance.** Support services, often referred to as wraparound supports, are designed to enable an individual’s participation in education and training, and may include child care, transportation, tools, or work clothes. Support staff, often known as navigators, success coaches, or career coaches, often deliver these services, offering academic guidance and advising, academic support, career coaching, job placement, and supplemental services. The Department encourages applicants to coordinate with WIOA partners to leverage the resources needed to address SCC program participant needs.

- **Stacked and latticed credentials.** These credentials can be earned in sequence and build upon previously learned content as individuals progress along a career pathway or up a career ladder. They allow individuals the ability to build a portfolio of credentials as they transition from learning to work or to different and potentially higher-paying jobs. Any credentials developed through this program must be publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, such as through the use of the credential transparency description language specifications.
- **Use of online and distance learning and advanced training technologies for rapid feedback and adaptive learning.** For an elaboration of this strategy, please see the discussion directly below.

Refer to Appendix C for more information and resources on the strategies listed above. This appendix also contains a note about the relationship between career pathways and guided pathways.

Use of Online and Distance Learning and Technology-Enabled Training

Online and technology-enabled (including hybrid, or a blend of online and classroom instruction) learning strategies provide adults an opportunity to balance the competing demands of work and family with acquiring new knowledge and skills at a time, place, and/or pace that are convenient for them. The use of technology to enable rolling and open enrollment processes, modularize content delivery, and accelerate course delivery (among other strategies) can help colleges and universities increase access to postsecondary education and training. In addition, new and emergent technologies, such as interactive simulations, personalized and virtual instruction, educational gaming, and digital tutors, offer colleges the opportunity to improve the quality of online instruction, especially in ways that can accelerate learning, support student success, and connect students with in-demand job opportunities.

In light of the current imperative, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to shift educational instruction to a virtual learning environment, applicants may choose to focus their efforts under this core element to building their capacity to facilitate online conversion and to become fully operational within a context of distance learning. Alternatively, applicants that have the capacity to operate effectively within an online learning environment may choose to redesign instruction within their sector-based pathway programs to incorporate more technology-enabled learning. Within such a strategy, the Department is interested in a combination of technologies and approaches, which might include the following:

- Using educational software and online, diagnostic tools to support remediation, basic skills training, and contextualized learning and to help students succeed in their coursework.
- Delivering personalized and adaptive instruction that builds on student interests and prior knowledge. This approach is important for adult learners who re-enter educational institutions with a wide range of experience and backgrounds. A well-designed system can explore each student's strengths and weaknesses and shape the instructional experience to fill gaps and build on existing strengths.

- Providing interactive tools that improve the ability of educators to predict whether students are at risk of dropping out or failing courses and to help provide early intervention.
- Improving the assessment of student progress and mastery of subjects such as simulation-based performance testing, which is more valuable to students and to future employers.
- Developing educational software that is as effective as a personal tutor. Since many SCC-eligible participants will enter SCC-funded programs with extensive workplace experience, a well-designed system that allows each individual to move through material at a rate tailored to experience will allow students to master the material much more quickly than in a standard course.
- Using software tools to implement virtual student services to support career and academic planning. For example, colleges working closing with the workforce development system may incorporate online career planning assessment tools into their advising process to create individualized career plans for participants.
- Deploying technology intensively to create competency-based, self-paced, skills-based learning, and making interactive resources, such as simulations and videos, widely accessible.
- Providing open access to computer labs that maintain flexible hours of operation to accommodate the schedules of adult students.
- Developing and sharing courses that are available at a reasonable cost, offered during the day, at night, on weekends, and virtually. The use of online course platforms that open courses to students from around a state can increase access to participants living in remote areas, while allowing colleges to scale up their approach to distance learning.
- Expanding professional development opportunities for faculty and adjunct instructors to enable them to become proficient at technology-enabled learning and to create an active and engaging online learning experience for students.
- Increasing investment in campus-wide centers for teaching and learning that support the shift to online learning.

Applicants pursuing this strategy should consider the development of “next generation” assessments for continuous formative assessments as well as capstone, program, and other high-stakes testing. Next generation assessments place students in engaging environments (such as simulators and virtual communities) and test their ability to respond to real world challenges and obstacles. These systems can be designed to move students to new challenges only when they have demonstrated mastery of needed skills, and they can ensure retention by presenting challenges that exercise existing skills as well as demonstrating new ones. The Department encourages applicants to work with employers and industry to develop assessments that can significantly strengthen the reliability of student learning outcome measures that are important to employers. Applicants are also encouraged to leverage existing high quality, industry-based assessments linked to certifications and certificates.

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Before developing any new content, applicants should search existing OER repositories for open learning objects and, where appropriate, leverage these learning objects instead of duplicating existing objects as components of their proposed programs. In cases where no existing OER is appropriate to the specific needs of proposed programs, applicants are encouraged to consider the most efficient and practical means of acquiring content—for example, through college development, licensing or purchasing content, or purchasing existing intellectual property. See Section VIII.D for more information on SkillsCommons.org, the OER site developed for the Department’s TAACCCT grants.

To further support the capacity-building aspect of this grant, SCC represents an investment in developing OER by requiring that all new intellectual property, including all digital content developed using SCC grant funds, be openly licensed for free use, adaptation, and improvement by others. Applicants will build upon and contribute to the body of OER, and continue to create technology-driven innovations in career training and education, by openly licensing all work under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) license. See Section IV.E.4 for more information on the CC BY license.

As part of the requirement to publicly license grant-funded products, grantees must post their products (with the CC BY license affixed) to a public distribution platform. Grantees may post products to publicly-accessible sites, including SkillsCommons.org and other sites, such as those referenced by Creative Commons at <https://creativecommons.org/about/platform/>.

In addition, the Department aims to ensure that individuals, employers, education and training providers, and others have access to the most complete, current, and beneficial information about providers, programs, credentials, and skills necessary to make more informed decisions. Access includes having such information fully operable on the semantic web and able to be used in modern applications, tools, and services to support better understanding of available pathways; and the development of improved navigation and guidance tools to help individuals make better decisions about which pathways are best for them. To this end, the Department requires that information about all credentials (including, but not limited to, badges, certificates, certifications, licenses, and degrees of all levels and types) and competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) developed or delivered through the use of federal funds be made publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, such as through the use of the credential transparency description language specifications.

d) Core Element 4: Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System

An important capacity-building goal for community colleges is to increase their agility and responsiveness to the needs of employers and workers in their regional economies. To achieve this goal, community colleges must work closely with employers, the workforce development system (workforce development boards, American Job Centers, the Adult Education and Literacy Program authorized under title II of WIOA, and other services providers), and other

educational entities, particularly secondary institutions that administer career and technical education. These joint efforts must seek to build capacity and to strengthen systems and structures that organize workforce development along sector-based career pathways, and to create strategies that are more efficient by removing silos and minimizing duplication within and across federal, state, and local programs. A key aim of the provision of coordinated services is to help individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment, overcome those challenges and enter the skilled workforce.

To support this aim, one of the required partners under this FOA is the workforce development system, as described in Section III.A.3. SCC Partnerships. Applicants must secure a commitment from one or more public workforce development system partners and to integrate workforce efforts to build capacity and/or undertake systems change. In addition, applicants are encouraged to collaborate with philanthropic organizations, business-related and other nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and/or labor organizations as needed to achieve their stated goals. The Department expects that applicants will perform outreach to, and gather information on, relevant entities in the state that the project will serve, including entities that can provide data on the characteristics and skill needs of participants. An important objective of this outreach is to identify existing supports and services already available to participants in the local area or region, which are suitable for applicants to leverage. This will help ensure that the project complements and does not duplicate existing programs, and that plans to leverage supports in a strategic way will further increase and ensure participant success in the classroom and the workplace.

Consortium applicants will demonstrate how the strategies that they propose in the SCC project are in alignment with at least one strategy in the WIOA Unified or Combined State Plan and the programs within that plan, such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education, for the state in which the project occurs. Single institution applicants will demonstrate how the strategies they propose in the SCC project are in alignment with the WIOA Local Plan. All applicants must ensure that their project includes partners who either develop the State Plan, develop a Local Plan, or were consulted in the development of the Local or State Plan. The Department also encourages applicants to align and collaborate with other federal and state initiatives designed to address skill shortages and/or improve employment outcomes, particularly programs that may be included in a Combined Plan such as Career and Technical Education.

For example, Perkins V (authorized under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, Public Law 115-224), which took effect in July 2019, affords stakeholders the opportunity to strengthen the connections between secondary and postsecondary career and technical (CTE) programs and align these programs with labor market needs. Among other provisions, the law contains a new requirement for local eligible recipients to conduct a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and to update it at least every two years (See Section 134(c) of Perkins V). The Department encourages applicants under this FOA to demonstrate that they have connected with the relevant stakeholders that are

conducting the local needs assessments to ensure that SCC projects promote coordinated engagement across systems in support of creating stronger workforce pipelines.

Perkins V also includes provisions that encourage states to provide both work-based learning opportunities and dual or concurrent enrollment for students, deeming both strategies to be measures of CTE program quality and instrumental for program success.⁷ The Department expects that applicants will leverage these new provisions to support the development and implementation of work experience and accelerated learning in pathway programs. Moreover, given the shared definition of career pathways in both Perkins V and WIOA, applicants must demonstrate that the strategies that they propose under this FOA seek to align career pathways at the state and local levels with CTE programs of study. For instance, SCC projects should encourage partners from both the education and workforce development systems to leverage each other's employer networks and industry-recognized credentials.⁸ Project partners also should ensure that the project incorporates on-ramps enabling working adults to enter postsecondary CTE programs.

Given the key imperative under this FOA for applicants to engage and leverage the public workforce development system in developing and implementing their SCC projects, the following discussion outlines the potential role of this system in the grant project. As Section III.A.3 indicates, applicants are required to partner with a workforce development system entity. As part of this partnership, applicants will engage and collaborate with state and/or local workforce development boards (WDBs) and American Job Centers (AJCs). They also should work with other workforce development system partners, such as adult education agencies, career and technical education agencies, state workforce education coordinating boards, and other post-secondary education agencies. Services and activities that the public workforce development system currently offers, and which may be considered as leveraged resources, include the following:

- Referring appropriate candidates to SCC programs for education and training;
- Co-enrolling SCC participants into WIOA Title I programs, where appropriate, to cover training costs. The intent of co-enrollment is to meet the training and employment needs of program participants by leveraging the resources and services available through other funding sources. Colleges would coordinate with WDBs and AJCs to negotiate and arrange for participants to receive individual training accounts or pay colleges for cohort or customized training;
- Providing supportive services in a coordinated manner with the community college through Pell, WIOA, or other resources that are participant-focused. Applicants would arrange through memoranda of agreement or understanding for the resources to be provided directly to eligible participants;

⁷See Jobs for the Future. *Leveraging Perkins V to Support College and Career Pathways* (2018). <http://ptopnetwork.jff.org/network/resources/leveraging-perkins-v-support-college-and-career-pathways>.

⁸ See Cielinski, Anna. *Career Pathways in Career and Technical Education* (CLASP, 2019).

- Working with SCC grant programs to ensure that proposed programs of study qualify for inclusion on appropriate eligible training provider lists.⁹

Other customized services and activities to support the implementation of SCC programs that grantees may provide include the following examples:

- Helping facilitate employer engagement in the sector strategy and supporting their involvement in both required and encouraged roles in the SCC partnership;
- Creating and implementing, or leveraging the expertise and employer partners of an existing state or local workforce board to develop, a comprehensive strategy of determining the skills needs of employers and the suitability of individuals for training and the attainment of associated credentials;
- Providing comprehensive counseling and coaching to SCC participants to help improve participant retention and completion of the SCC program. Specific strategies could include intrusive counseling, expanded and extensive mentoring services, and technology-enabled advising;
- Supporting the colleges in establishing common tracking systems with workforce development partners to report outcomes data for all SCC participants as they complete the program and enter the workforce, to improve reporting on SCC programs;
- Connecting SCC participants with employer partners to assist them in recruiting and hiring individuals who complete the SCC program and achieving the grant’s overall employment and retention goals;
- Providing seamless coordination of college and AJC assessment, support, counseling, and other services for SCC participants through career coaches, such as workforce navigators for the SCC program.

Where appropriate, the grantee could provide services on the campuses of its consortium partners in order to leverage campus-based services and provide greater ease of access for participants enrolled in training on campus.

e) Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change (Consortium Applicants only)

Systems change with respect to workforce development refers to “efforts and initiatives that go beyond providing direct services to individual jobseekers and aim to transform how organizations effectively support employers and the workforce.”¹⁰ With the ultimate aim of improving worker and employer outcomes, systems-change goals for improving how the system functions may include increased partner collaboration, active industry engagement, data-driven decision-making, and a local workforce development system marked by improved accessibility and quality, as well as scale and sustainability.¹¹

⁹ For information on topics relating to Eligible Training Providers (ETPs), please visit the ETP Resource Page found at <https://performancereporting.workforcegps.org/resources/2018/09/11/14/58/Eligible-Training-Provider-ETP-Resource-Page>.

¹⁰ Bernstein and Martin-Caughey, op. cit., p. 1. See Appendix D for additional resources on capacity building and systems change.

¹¹ Ibid.

The Department aims for this grant program to catalyze systemic change in workforce development through collaboration and new ways of thinking. In proposing strategies that build college capacity to offer innovative educational programs that meet the needs of participants, applicants must choose one of the following two focus areas around which to design their underlying projects: Accelerated Learning Pathways or Statewide Data Integration and Use. Each focus area is central to the community college system’s capacity to meet local and regional labor market demand for a skilled workforce, the fundamental goal of this FOA. We describe each area in more detail, below.

Under Core Element 5, consortium applicants must choose one of the following options as their focus for systems change under the SCC program.

(i) Accelerated Learning Pathways

Applicants who select this option must undertake career pathways development or enhancement work at the systems level, in addition to the program level. The research to date suggests that most career pathways initiatives operate at the program level, not the systems level. When systems-level activities do occur, they tend to involve the “preliminary steps in defining pathways, building partnerships, as well as identifying sectors and discussing how to engage employers”; by contrast, partners have devoted less attention to aligning policies to support career pathways implementation.¹² Moreover, even when partners succeed in harmonizing policies and procedures across entities, their efforts may not suffice to alter the institutional practices needed to expand opportunities for participants; for that to happen, partners may have to institute additional changes or otherwise modify the ways in which they conduct project activities. In part, this more limited engagement with true systems change may be due to the complex and iterative nature of career pathways development work, with its precept of culture change. That is, to reach their potential, such initiatives must “engage systems and institutions in changing culture and policy to use the career pathways framework as a way of doing business, not a special add-on.”¹³

To meet the promise of accelerated learning pathways, then, applicants choosing this option must view pathways development, not as stand-alone programs or interventions, but instead as a framework for organizing, integrating, and delivering programs and services that connect with employer needs. For guidance developing this framework, applicants should refer to the six key elements of career pathway systems, as defined in DOL’s Career Pathways Toolkit.¹⁴

¹² Sarna, Maureen and Julie Strawn. *Career Pathways Implementation Synthesis*, p. 28 (Abt Associates, 2018). <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/3-Career-Pathways-Implementation-Synthesis.pdf>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The six key elements of career pathways are to (1) build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles; (2) identify industry sectors and engage employers; (3) design education and training programs; (4) identify funding needs and sources; (5) align policies and programs; and (6) measure system change and performance. See https://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/pdf/career_pathways_toolkit.pdf.

Specifically, applicants whose projects fall under this option will propose a plan to engage employers, educators, and the workforce development system in building policies and practices that will support the enhancement or expansion of state, regional, or local career pathway systems, with the goal of significantly increasing the number of individuals that enter into and complete credit-bearing certificate and degree training programs in high-wage, high-demand fields. These efforts must build on and support work already underway through WIOA to create career pathway systems, and the model must be sustainable after exhaustion/expenditure of grant funds.

Applicants could pursue the following strategies:

- Create and expand linkages of SCC to bridge programs within the career pathway to improve alignment of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) systems. The purpose is to help increase critical foundational skills of adult students and improve transition rates into postsecondary education and occupational skills training, including providing increased opportunities for early credit accumulation for adult students. This strategy also must include accelerated and contextualized remediation as a key component of integrated education and training programs.
- Systemically provide more comprehensive and effective student advising and support services to improve adult student retention and completion rates for participants. Specific strategies could include career success coaching, intrusive counseling, comprehensive case management, expanded and extensive mentoring services, technology-enabled advising, etc.
- Adopt innovative practices to accelerate credit accumulation and credential attainment for participants, such as competency-based education (CBE), prior learning assessments (PLA), organizing courses into a limited number of structured industry-recognized certificate and degree pathways, and advanced training technologies for rapid feedback and adaptive learning.
- Identify sources of funding available from partner agencies and related public and private resources, and raise and/or leverage the necessary resources to develop, operate, sustain, and expand career pathways systems, programs, and innovations. Applicants may seek to braid funding from multiple sources or identify alternative funding strategies. Braiding funds permits funding from separate sources to work together. However, each pot of funding retains its individual funding restrictions, requirements, and limitations. Therefore, the separate pots of funding have to be accounted for separately, consistent with each funding source's requirements. Strategies could include working to inform students about the availability of Title IV aid for up to one year of noncredit or remedial coursework if the student is enrolled in an eligible program that leads to a certificate or degree. "Ability to benefit" (ATB) alternatives allow students without a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) to become eligible for Title IV financial aid.¹⁵

¹⁵ Note that the aim under this FOA is to build capacity at a community college or consortium of community colleges. The FOA does not change requirements for student eligibility for Title IV aid to pursue postsecondary education. Students interested in their eligibility for a Federal Pell Grant must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and work directly with their prospective institution. A student without a high school diploma

- Align with WIOA to extend needed supports to broader groups of adult students and to scale innovation and ensure sustainability. One strategy could include aligning non-academic advising to the state’s WIOA plan and working to secure a state plan mandate that adult education programs employ at least one navigator in order to receive funding through WIOA.
- Pursue statewide policy development of prior learning assessment (PLA), while taking steps to integrate PLA at the institutional level to promote student use of this opportunity. Strategies for creating more effective PLA programs may include building advising capacity and credential pathways with automatic opportunities for PLA, collecting and analyzing data on PLA, changing the financial incentives for PLA, and creating consistent PLA policy across the college, system, and state.¹⁶
- Establish connections between efforts to advance career pathways in WIOA and career and technical education (CTE) programs of study in Perkins V—which now share a common definition of career pathways—aligning the two reform efforts to build on-ramps to postsecondary education and training for recent high school graduates and adults. Career pathways and programs of study in the same sector have the potential to leverage each other’s industry networks and share industry-recognized credentials.¹⁷
- Expand articulation agreements throughout a career pathway to encompass bridge programs, career and technical training programs, and work-based training, across consortia members and with the state’s four-year public university system(s), to promote greater student mobility and faster completion of certifications and degrees awarded after completion of SCC programs. Consortium members should also work to establish 2+2 degree partnerships with the state’s four-year public university system(s) to further the credential attainment of participants.
- Incorporate Registered Apprenticeship within the state career pathway system. This strategy could include developing new or enhancing existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs across the state that enables participants to gain both apprenticeship credentials and academic credits. It also could include developing articulation agreements between Registered Apprenticeship Programs and community colleges and four-year university systems statewide, enabling apprentices to acquire academic credits towards associate and bachelor’s degrees, respectively. For more information contact the Department’s Office of Apprenticeship at www.apprenticeship.gov.

(or its equivalent) should consult with their institution’s financial aid office to ensure the student meets the “Ability to Benefit” eligibility requirements. For more information, see <https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/05-09-2016-gen-16-09-subject-changes-title-iv-eligibility-students-without>; [and https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/06-28-2012-gen-12-09-subjecttitle-iv-eligibility-students-without-valid-high](https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/06-28-2012-gen-12-09-subjecttitle-iv-eligibility-students-without-valid-high).

¹⁶ For an analysis of the policy successes and implementation challenges that many TAACCCT grantees faced in developing PLA, see Love, Ivy. *Navigating the Journey: Encouraging Student Progress through Enhanced Support Services in TAACCCT* (New America, 2019).

https://s3.amazonaws.com/newamericadotorg/documents/Navigating_the_Journey_Document-v2.pdf.

¹⁷ Cielinski, Anna, op.cit.

(ii) Statewide Data Integration and Use

Measuring the impact of comprehensive systems change is critical to sustaining the support necessary for carrying out a sector-based career pathways approach to education and training.¹⁸ Yet the research to date suggests that there is a “lack of data to help programs and systems track progress in achieving their goals for career pathway initiatives.”¹⁹ For example, the third-party evaluation of a successful statewide initiative on advancing career pathways development noted that a key challenge involved the project’s “limited internal capacity to analyze and report career pathways student program and completions.”²⁰ To engage partners, obtain funding, and support continuous program improvement, among other benefits, it is necessary for initiatives to increase “the availability of data, especially on outcomes and the return on investment.”²¹

A growing number of initiatives are using data integration to address their state’s education and workforce needs and, more broadly, to shift their data use from a programmatic to a systems level with the aim of guiding student decision-making about programs and careers, while meeting workforce needs. Three statewide initiatives that received supplemental funding under the TAACCCT grant program offer strong examples of different models for improving statewide data integration and use. See Appendix E for information on these projects and for other resources related to data integration and use.

Accordingly, successful applicants who choose this option will propose a plan to improve the integration and use of education and workforce development system data. This could include a plan to integrate data systems that contain both employment and educational outcomes data from multiple institutions through a single, unified data warehouse or data management system; or a plan to create linkages between separate data systems, through a management information system (MIS) that creates record linkages, the use of administrative data research facilities, or another model that the applicant proposes.

Integrated data systems or systems that allow matching of individual records to allow calculation of program outcomes will enable community college staff to access current information on education and employment outcomes of participants’ programs of study, and establish a mechanism for colleges to access information in the future on SCC-funded programs. In addition, statewide integrated data systems could allow staff to better assess the progress of participants completing SCC-funded programs and other programs of study. Finally, integrated data systems could give job seekers and others interested in education and

¹⁸ See Career Pathways Toolkit, Element 6. https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkit.

¹⁹ Sarna, Maureen, op. cit., p. vi.

²⁰ Roberts, Brandon et al. *Advancing Career Pathway Development in Wisconsin Technical Colleges*, p. 25 (Equal Measure, DVP-PRAXIS, and Brandon Roberts + Associates, 2018). <http://www.skillscommons.org/bitstream/handle/taaccct/18247/ACT-WisconsinReport-092618.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.

²¹ Sarna, Maureen, op. cit. p.vi. In addition, making data available by subgroup is an important strategy for closing equity gaps.

training valuable information on programs, including outcome information, and educational institutions.

To create a system that will seamlessly integrate across state agencies, applicants and their consortium members must strive toward establishing a common student data reporting system that covers, at a minimum, consortium member institutions during the grant period of performance. For state consortiums, if statewide reach is not envisioned during the grant period of performance, it must be built into the sustainability plan.

Applicants must describe their ability to ensure that performance and outcomes for all students can be tracked comprehensively and consistently, and that student mobility and transitions among institutions within the state can be captured. This plan must describe institutional actions that will increase both individual student and institutional data collection and tracking, align metrics across institutions, and, as applicable, align student and institutional data tracking systems across institutions within the state public college system. For any plan that includes data systems updates, applicants must include a description of the technical capabilities of current systems and the technical requirements or specifications necessary to adapt and integrate existing systems. Applicants also must indicate whether they are leveraging other funds to assist these efforts or to sustain this work after the grant ends.

Accordingly, applicants choosing this option that currently lack the internal data reporting capacity to undertake the systems change goals described in this section must develop a plan that seeks to expand such capacity. Alternatively, applicants that can demonstrate that they have strong internal data reporting capacity must develop a plan proposing other activities that seek to integrate existing data systems with wider sets of data. Examples of activities that fall within these categories include, but are not limited to, the following:

Internal Data Reporting Capacity

- Develop and adopt standard definitions for a common set of reporting elements for those students enrolled in non-credit and adult education courses that align with those elements collected for students enrolled in credit-bearing courses.
- Integrate data on students in both credit and non-credit courses and programs into institutional and statewide data systems.
- Integrate data on attainment of industry-recognized credentials into the common set of institution-wide reporting elements.
- Adopt standard policies for complying with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) requirements, such as policies for accessing student education records when connected with audit or evaluation of federal or state programs and enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements of those programs, standard practices or agreements for disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) through written agreements, and other PII and records management practices.

Labor Market Information (LMI) and Employment Outcomes

- Partner with state workforce agencies to obtain and understand LMI for state and regional labor markets. Leverage the expertise of the workforce development system to inform faculty and admissions counselors on effective use of LMI and other resources to assist prospective students in selecting programs that will result in training-related employment. Provide current and prospective students with extensive guidance on use of LMI resources to make program choices that lead to training-related employment.
- Partner with state agencies that have undertaken administrative data matching or longitudinal data systems that calculate employment outcomes of education program completers.
- Partner with state unemployment compensation (UC) agencies and state agencies that administer WIOA programs to develop a comprehensive data system that utilizes administrative data from these state systems. Since state laws and regulations on confidentiality and disclosure vary across states, applicants must consult with their state's UC agency to determine the appropriate course of action to gain access to confidential UC data for purposes of measuring employment outcomes. All disclosures of confidential UC information must comply with federal regulations at 20 CFR Part 603.²²
- For those states where sharing of data between state education and workforce agencies is limited, applicants may seek to partner with relevant state agencies to explore participation in the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data sharing agreement. States that are parties to SWIS should explore partnership with the Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA) to expand the types and availability of reports on performance and evaluation of programs. As an alternative, applicants can seek to partner with relevant state agencies on the use of administrative data research facilities as a method of data matching and analysis.

The Departments of Education and Labor fund grant programs that encourage data integration within education and workforce development systems. The Department of Education's Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grant Program has funded the design, development, implementation, and expansion of K-12 and P-20W (early learning through the workforce) longitudinal data systems for educational entities in 47 states. The Department of Labor has funded the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) to support the development or enhancement of longitudinal administrative workforce development system databases that will allow the creation of linkages to the state education data systems. More information about the WDQI initiative can be found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/wdqi/grants>. More information about the SLDS can be found at <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/slids/>.

Applicants that have received federal funding under the WDQI or SLDS, either as a direct recipient or as part of a statewide grant, must provide a brief description of their existing projects and a detailed explanation of how they will use SCC funds to complete activities that are outside the scope of their existing grant, and not to duplicate existing efforts. The activities that applicants will perform with SCC funds should be different from those that could be

²² The Department's TEN No. 7-16 and 20 CFR Part 603 provide an overview of confidentiality requirements.

performed under WDQI if the state had received such a grant. Resources to assist state agencies with a variety of issues related to developing, implementing, and effectively using longitudinal data systems are available from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/resource_type.asp.

2. **Results-Based Design**

Results-based project design connects the needs that a project intends to address, its theory of change, and its proposed evidence-based activities, to a framework that explicitly lays out the logical connections detailing how the project will deliver results. By requiring that applicants follow a results-based process for designing and managing their grant-funded projects, this FOA seeks to equip grantees and their project partners with the evidence needed to validate the project's design, assess performance, and facilitate the opportunity to learn and improve their projects based on the evidence that their projects generate over the life of their grant periods.

Applicants must submit the following information, either in the project narrative or as separate attachments, as indicated in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative. Note that the Department encourages applicants to incorporate into the design process the relevant findings from the studies that they cite, pursuant to Core Element 1: Evidence-Based Design. See Section I.A.1.a). The applicant's design process must include the following components:

- (i) **Gap Analysis:** A gap analysis must clearly articulate the specific service delivery or capacity issues that the proposed project will address, as well as demonstrates the extent of the identified problems, based on evidence and research, as appropriate.
- (ii) **Logic Model:** Based on the needs identified in the gap analysis, applicants will develop a logic model that will enable project implementers and their partners to track progress made toward the completion of the project's objectives, and provide evidence of the link between multiple levels of results, including activities, outputs, outcomes, and, through a national evaluation if DOL implements one, impact.

The logic model must provide a clear explanation of the strategic approach, including a theory of change rooted in evidence, an assessment plan that explains how strategies identified in the theory of change will be assessed, and intended outcomes. The Capacity Building or Systems Change Performance Outcome targets in the application must draw upon the logic model. See Appendix F for more information on developing a logic model. Grantees are expected to work with their third-party evaluators to further refine and develop their logic model after the grants have been awarded, as part of their required implementation evaluation.

- (iii) **Project Work Plan:** Applicants must present a comprehensive project work plan. A sample format can be found in Appendix I. The project work plan must demonstrate a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project. The applicant must also demonstrate the capacity to manage the project and specify the role that employers will play in supporting these activities.

3. Third-Party Evaluation

An important aspect of this demonstration program will be to document the capacity built and system change achieved by grantees—both at the institutional level and, for consortium grantees, at the state or district level—and to share information about grantee successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Thus, applicants are required to procure a third-party evaluator to design and execute an implementation evaluation of each funded project and participate in a national evaluation if one is conducted by DOL. The Department believes that successful projects will develop evidence on effective workforce education and training strategies to address the needs of employers and workers.

Successful applicants must submit, within 30 days of award, a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for an implementation evaluation. Applicants are encouraged to consider utilizing an adaptive, or developmental, approach to their implementation study to obtain benefit from the evaluation throughout the life of the project. The cost of the study should not exceed five percent of the applicant's overall budget, and must be included in the overall grant budget and budget narrative. Grantees are strongly encouraged to procure their required third-party evaluator by the end of month six, if possible under their institution's procurement guidelines.

After procuring a third-party evaluator, grantees must submit a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from their evaluator, which must be revised and submitted as a Final Detailed Evaluation Design, based on feedback provided by the Department. In the evaluation design, grantees must include plans to submit Interim and Final Implementation Reports from their third-party evaluator by the milestones specified below.

Required milestones and deliverables for the third-party evaluation are as follows and they must be included in the required Project Work Plan (Section IV.B.3).

- No later than Month 1: Submit a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for an implementation evaluation.
- No later than Month 6 (or the earliest timing that is feasible under the grantee's institutional procurement guidelines): Procure third-party evaluator for implementation evaluation.

- No later than Month 9: Submit a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from the evaluator, using guidance provided by the Department. .
- No later than Month 12: Submit a Final Detailed Evaluation Design in collaboration with your third-party evaluator.
- Months 6-48: Ensure that your third-party evaluator carries out the evaluation and completes all tasks and deliverables, and provides ongoing input and consultation if the evaluation uses an adaptive model.
- No later than Month 27: Submit the evaluator's Interim Implementation Report to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using suggested format.
- No later than Month 48: Submit the evaluator's Final Implementation Report using the suggested format.

4. Sustainability Plan

To ensure that the capacity built under the SCC program will remain beyond the period of performance, all applicants must address in their project narratives how they intend to sustain innovations or built capacity, as well as systems change for consortia. Sustainability is the effort to maintain the impact and capacity of programs and innovations.²³ This capacity includes strategic accomplishments or innovations such as program designs, policy changes, and partnerships, and may include new approaches to employer engagement, new ways of supporting students, and new methods of instructional design and delivery. The sustainability plan must also demonstrate how the grantee will sustain the capacity built through the engagement and buy-in of state and local partners.

As the process of designing a sustainability plan is iterative, it should begin as early as possible in the grant lifecycle. In addition, accomplishments or innovations that support a broader agenda—in particular, those that align with the strategic priorities of the institution, the state, and other community college reform efforts—have a greater likelihood of being sustained. Hence, the requirement for consortium applicants in Core Element 5—namely, that applicants choose a systems change focus for their underlying project—should assist them in undertaking this crucial, early step in the sustainability planning process. That is, by identifying the specific area of systems change in which their projects will unfold, applicants will jumpstart the process of planning for sustainability and scaling.

5. Allowable Activities for All Applicants

The Department anticipates that the majority of applicants will include four specific types of allowable activities to support their work:

- Hiring and/or training instructors or staff (including the costs of salaries and benefits) to assist in the development and/or delivery of new or adapted curricula, development of online and distance learning, and in the establishment of internships, Registered Apprenticeship, or clinical/cooperative education programs at employer sites;
- Purchasing or upgrading classroom supplies and equipment (with prior approval of the grant officer) and/or educational technologies that will contribute to the instructional purpose in education and training courses supported by the grant;
- Costs associated with implementing changes in the time or scheduling of courses; and
- Costs associated with implementing data integration tools.

Other allowable activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

²³ For more information, see the TAACCCT Sustainability Toolkit.
https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/07/25/13/22/Resource_TAACCCTSustainabilityToolkit.

- Developing learning resources and other openly licensed educational resources, preparing resources for ADA compliance and affixing the CC BY 4.0 attribution license to them, and making them publicly available for use and adaptation via a public dissemination platform;
- Implementing and/or enhancing the information technology infrastructure used to provide education, training, and related activities;
- Developing staff and infrastructure capacity to acquire, organize, and/or analyze program data for continuous improvement and program evaluation;
- Expanding and improving the capacity of student services that directly support the goals of the grant (for example, career guidance programs);
- Minor alterations to adjust an existing space for grant activities (such as a classroom alteration), in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards located at 2 CFR part 200 and DOL specific requirements at 2 CFR part 2900;
- Conducting outreach to potential stakeholders;
- Using subject matter experts from industry, education, state workforce agency, labor market and economic research entities, and other areas to inform and assist in curriculum design, including online course design;
- Establishing or strengthening collaborative partnerships, networks, and organizational structures, including expanding staff resources as necessary to successfully collaborate with partners and to manage the process and plan development, including partnerships for credit transfer and articulation agreements;
- Leveraging and aligning existing federal resources to ensure that efforts can move from planning to implementation to sustainability;
- Developing and implementing working agreements with key systems stakeholders;
- Developing and implementing effective and regular external and internal communications among planning partners;
- Developing, implementing, and/or maintaining a tech-enabled mechanism to collect ongoing feedback from employers and job seekers about the quality of the training program, how well the training program meets the needs of employers and participants, and any necessary updates to the education and program training throughout the project;
- Designing innovative programs that are shaped by a deep understanding of the customer experience for employers and participants in order to improve customer experience and outcomes;
- Adapting existing industry-recognized curricula to support direct education and training provided through the grant;
- Obtaining accreditation for employer- and/or industry-recognized credentials;
- Engaging in other program development activities, such as using subject matter experts from industry, education, and other areas to assist in program design and delivery;

- Accessing real-time labor market information, as it relates to identifying the labor market demand, skills transferability, and job openings; and
- Developing and implementing articulation agreements with colleges, universities, and other education and training partners that allow for recognition of course credits in exchange for the education and/or training provided.

While the following participant-related costs are allowable with this funding source, the Department expects grantees to leverage existing college infrastructure, or WIOA local, state, federal Perkins and Pell Grants, and other sources to cover these participant-related costs:

- Conducting outreach and recruitment of eligible participants;
- Implementing an initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, competencies, integrated participant services, supportive service, and employment needs;
- Providing direct education and training;
- Providing job development, job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, academic and career counseling;
- Providing case management services; and
- Providing supportive services that will allow individuals to participate in and successfully complete the training provided through the grant (see Section IV.E. Funding Restrictions).

Certain capital expenditures, such as equipment or capital improvements related to upgrading the training infrastructure, are allowable with prior written approval from the Grant Officer. A capital improvement is a type of capital expenditure as described in 2 CFR 200.12 and 200.13. However, capital expenditures for improvements to land are not allowable under these grants. Possible allowable capital improvements include, but are not limited to, improvements to buildings or equipment that would materially increase their value or useful life, including the cost to put the asset or improvement in place. For buildings, this could include the cost of upgrading, installing or retrofitting a building's internal systems or utilities, such as electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and communications to accommodate training courses or equipment. This could also include structural improvements or upgrades including the relocation, modification, retrofitting, or enhancement of interior load-bearing walls or interior floors to accommodate training courses or equipment. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements, if specific to the project, are also allowable with prior written approval from the Grant Officer. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements may include activities and associated costs such as relocating, modifying, replacing, or adding items (such as switches and outlets) related to internal environments (temperature, humidity, ventilation, and acoustics), and installation of fixed equipment (including fume hoods and audio/visual equipment).

Award of a grant under this FOA does not constitute prior approval. After grant awards are made, grantees will be required to obtain specific Grant Officer approval before acquiring equipment or proceeding with proposed capital expenditures, renovation, or alteration of facilities. The Grant Officer must determine that all proposed equipment, capital improvements,

and/or alterations and renovation are (1) allocable, necessary, and reasonable; (2) tied to specific grant-related deliverables and outcomes outlined in the grantee's statement of work (SOW) (including capacity-building and/or training outcomes); and (3) consistent with the FOA. In their budget narrative, applicants proposing to spend grant funds on capital improvements and/or alterations and renovations as outlined in the SOW and budget narrative must demonstrate how these expenditures will support the expansion and improvement of the education and training programs that are the focus of their proposed project. Total combined costs to the grant of all capital improvements and other alterations and renovations cannot exceed 15 percent of the total grant award. The total amount of grant funding used for all capital improvements and other alterations and renovations by all Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) consortium members combined cannot exceed 15 percent of grant funding. All grant-funded activities related to capital expenditures and other alterations must be completed no later than 18 months from the start of the period of performance.

Applicants should refer to Section VI.B.1 of the FOA for a list of applicable federal laws and regulations related to cost principles, administrative, and other requirements that apply to this Announcement.

B. PROGRAM AUTHORITY

Section 169(c) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes this program. See also Title I of Division A of Pub. L. 116-94.

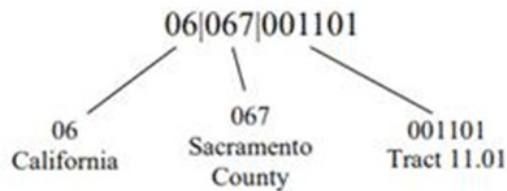
C. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

Applicants must identify the geographic scope of the proposed project. The Department is requiring community colleges to apply for this funding as either a single institution or as the lead of a consortium of colleges that will undertake system change within one state, or across one or more community college districts within a state.

Applicants that demonstrate, in their abstract, that at least one census tract within their physical service area is designated by the Secretary of Treasury as a qualified Opportunity Zone will receive two bonus points toward their overall application score. Applicants will not receive additional points for multiple Opportunity Zones within the proposed physical service area.

For more information on Opportunity Zones, go to <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/opportunity-zones-frequently-asked-questions>.

Please be aware that the IRS list provides the full 11-digit census tract number. Use the example below to identify your census tract number(s):



06 – identifies California,
 067 – identifies Sacramento County within California, and
 001101 – identifies Census Tract 11.01 within Sacramento County.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AWARD TYPE AND AMOUNT

Funding will be provided in the form of a grant.

We expect availability of approximately \$40 million to fund approximately 8-16 grants.

Single institution applicants may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$2 million. Consortium lead applicants may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$5 million. The minimum for both types of applicants is \$1 million. Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. In the event that additional funds become available, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement. Subject to receiving sufficient applications of fundable quality, DOL intends to award at least 75 percent of grant funds to consortia applicants and the remaining 25 percent of grant funds to single institution applicants.

B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is 48 months with an anticipated start date of January 1, 2021. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities. We expect that start-up activities such as hiring appropriate grant program staff and project design activities will begin immediately. Grantees are required to procure their required third-party evaluator by the end of month six, if possible under their institution’s procurement guidelines. Written requests for prior approval to acquire grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or to renovate space (capital expenditures) must be submitted no later than 12 months after the award date of the grant; DOL strongly encourages grantees to submit them within the first 90 days. Grant Officer-approved special purpose equipment and/or renovated space must be acquired, completed, and available for use in support of the project’s statement of work no later than 24 months after the

award date of the grant; DOL strongly encourages grantees to begin to use such investments sooner. We strongly encourage grantees to develop their project work plans and timelines accordingly. Required outputs, including key milestones and deliverables, must be included in an attachment the project narrative; see Appendix I: Suggested Project Work Plan Format.

Grantees must plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance. There will be no period of performance extensions under this FOA.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In keeping with the direction provided by Congress under the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, grants under this program will be awarded to lead applicants that meet one of the following definitions:

- **Single Institution:** A community college that is a public institution of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, and at which the associate's degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college's designation as a community college at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. A single institution lead applicant must partner with one or more workforce development system partners, and employer partners as described below; otherwise the application will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered. Together, the required and optional partners are referred to as a Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grants Partnership. The requirements for required and optional partners are described below in Section III.A.3. SCC Partnership.
- **Consortium Lead:** A lead applicant representing a consortium of Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act. The consortium lead must be a community college that is a public institution of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, and at which the associate's degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college's designation as a community college at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. Consortium members may include community colleges and public and private, non-profit four-year IHEs, as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act. For consortium applicants, the Department is requiring IHEs to apply for this funding as a consortium of colleges that will undertake systems change within one state, or across one or more community college districts within a state system. The IHE consortium must partner with an IHE coordinating entity, one or more workforce development system partners, and employer partners as described below; otherwise the application will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered. Together the required and optional partners are

referred to as a Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grants Partnership. The requirements for required and optional partners are described below in Section III.A.3. SCC Partnership.

Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of a SCC Partnership, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

1. Eligible Lead Applicant

For the purposes of this FOA, the eligible lead applicant must be a community college that is a public institution of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act and whose most common degree awarded is an associate degree.

To be eligible as either a lead applicant or as a member of an SCC partnership, all institutions of higher education must be accredited by the closing date of this FOA and remain so throughout the entity's performance in this grant program by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. A database of institutions that are accredited by bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education can be found at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>. Generally, institutions of higher education are two-year and four-year colleges and universities, including institutions that serve minorities (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, or others designated by the U.S. Department of Education at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html>).

Lead applicants must identify their institution type in Section 9 of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

Please note that all elements of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and 2 CFR Part 2900 (DOL's Supplement to 2 CFR Part 200) apply to any entity that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient, including for-profit organizations. This includes the monitoring and the examination of their records. In addition, the entity may not earn or keep any profit resulting from federal financial assistance.

2. Role of Lead Applicant

In the required Abstract (see Section IV.B.4. Attachments to the Project Narrative), the lead applicant and each required member of the SCC Partnership must be clearly identified.

The lead applicant will serve as the grantee, must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424 Application Form, and will be (1) the point of contact with the Department to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this FOA and any subsequent grant award; (2) the entity with authority to withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS); (3) the entity responsible for submitting to the Department all deliverables under the grant, including all technical and financial reports related to the project, regardless of which partnership member performed the work; (4) the entity that may request or agree to a revision or amendment of the grant agreement or statement of work; (5) the entity that ensures that the programmatic functions are carried out, as well as provides stewardship of all expenditures under the grant; (6) the entity responsible for coordinating with both the grant's required third-party evaluator and with DOL's national evaluator, including participating in a national evaluation and other studies, if required by DOL; and (7) the entity responsible for working with DOL to close out the grant.

3. Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (SCC) Partnership

A **single institution** applicant's SCC Partnership will be comprised of the lead applicant, the required workforce development system partner(s), the required employer partners, and any optional partners, each of which is described below. In forming the partnership, applicants should consider which entities have the best ability to support the requirements described in Core Elements 1-4 in Section I.A.1.

A **consortium** applicant's SCC Partnership will be comprised of the IHE consortium members including the lead applicant, the required IHE coordinating entity, the required workforce development system partner(s), the required employer partners, and any optional partners, each of which is described below. In forming the partnership, applicants should consider which entities have the best ability to support the systems changes described in all the Core Elements in Section I.A.1, and specifically the focus area selected for Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change. Applicants must demonstrate strong engagement of the partnership leaders necessary to achieve the commitments made in the application, as described in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3.

For **both single institution and consortium applicants**, to demonstrate the active involvement of the required partners, applicants must provide signed documentation of commitments from the required partners—such as signed memoranda of understanding, an organizational charter, a partnership agreement, or other types of signed agreements—which demonstrate the engagement of high-level leadership for each entity being proposed as a required partner. Applicants will be scored based on the level and quality of involvement in the project, as described in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

a) Required Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Consortium

The Department is requiring consortia applicants to apply for this funding as a consortium of colleges that will undertake systems change within one state; or if community colleges are district-based, across one or more community college districts within a state. For the purposes of this FOA, a district (or equivalent entity) that includes only one or two community colleges does not, by itself, qualify as a consortium. However, districts that are geographically contiguous may form a consortium that includes a minimum of three community colleges. When a consortium is district-based, all of the colleges in the district(s) must be included. The Department encourages (but does not require) applicants to include all or a majority of IHEs in a state, if feasible based on the project design.

The lead applicant community college serves as one of the consortium members. Public and private, non-profit two-year and four-year institutions of higher education, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, are eligible to participate as members of the consortium. In forming the consortium of IHEs, applicants must consider which IHEs will be best able to support the system changes described in the Core Elements in Section I.A.1, specifically the focus area selected for Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change. Applications will be scored based on the alignment of the IHE consortium members with the systems changes proposed.

b) Required Institution of Higher Education Coordinating Entity

To support sustainability and scaling of the efforts funded by this FOA, consortium applicants must include in their SCC Partnerships at least one state-level or community college district-level entity, referred to in this FOA as the IHE coordinating entity.

The IHE coordinating entity must be a state- or district-level entity that is responsible for regulating, governing, advising, and/or coordinating the institutions of higher education in the IHE consortium. Examples include, but are not limited to, a state governing body for community colleges or for institutions of higher education more broadly; a statewide association of community colleges; or a community college district (or equivalent) entity. The state- or district-level entity will play an important role in supporting the system change and sustainability aspects of the grant and its role in doing so must be consistent with the objectives outlined in the Core Elements of the FOA (Section I.A.1) and the requirements in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

c) Required Workforce Development System Partner(s)

All applicants must include in their SCC Partnership one or more partners from the publicly funded workforce development system. For the purpose of this FOA, the Workforce Development System entities are state and local workforce development boards under Section 121 of WIOA and Native American Program entities eligible for funding under Section 166 of WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3221). These organizations have local expertise in workforce development and may provide leadership in implementing the following types of activities: (1) understanding and analyzing the need for education and training in the local area, including

identifying targeted industries, occupations, sector strategies, hiring needs, and populations to be served, and providing relevant sources of data, including labor market information and other tools or reports; (2) assessing potential participants for the grant program; (3) identifying and referring candidates for education and training in the grant program; (4) providing additional supportive services; (5) connecting and placing participants with employers that have job openings; and (6) collecting, tracking, and reporting participant data to ETA.

In selecting the required workforce development system partner(s), applicants should consider which entity(ies) will be best able to support the Core Elements in Section I.A.1. For consortium applicants, this specifically includes the focus area selected for Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change.

d) Required Employer Partner(s)

All applicants must include in their SCC Partnership an industry/trade association or a consortium of at least three employers. An industry/trade association or employer consortium must be able to demonstrate membership clearly aligned with the geographic area of the IHE consortium. An industry/trade association, also known as an industry trade group, business association, sector association, or industry body, is an organization founded and funded by businesses that operate in a specific industry.

The employer partner(s) will play an important role in supporting grant success with respect to Core Element 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement, as well as the development of career pathways, and their roles and responsibilities in doing so must be outlined in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

e) Optional Partners

While the required partners reflect collaboration between higher education, employers, and the workforce development system, we strongly encourage applicants to collaborate with other partners that can support and advance the work of the SCC Partnership. These include State Apprenticeship Agencies; federally funded programs, such as Adult Education and Perkins; American Job Center operators; economic development agencies; labor-management organizations; community-based organizations that provide social support and/or wrap-around services; and foundations and philanthropic organizations.

B. COST SHARING OR MATCHING

This program does not require cost sharing or matching funds. Including such funds is not one of the application screening criteria and applications that include any form of cost sharing or match will not receive additional consideration during the review process. Instead, the agency considers any resources contributed to the project beyond the funds provided by the agency as leveraged resources. Section IV.B.2 provides more information on leveraged resources.

C. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Application Screening Criteria

You should use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package to ensure that the application has met all of the screening criteria. Note that this checklist is only an aid for applicants and should not be included in the application package. We urge you to use this checklist to ensure that your application contains all required items. If your application does not meet all of the screening criteria, it will not move forward through the merit review process.

Application Requirement	Instructions	Complete?
The deadline submission requirements are met	Section IV.C	
Eligibility	Section III.A	
If submitted through Grants.gov, the components of the application are saved in any of the specified formats and are not corrupt. <i>(We will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.)</i>	Section IV.C.2	
Application for Federal funds request does not exceed the ceiling amount of \$2 million for single institutions or \$5 million for consortium leads, nor is it less than \$1 million for either type of applicant.	Section II.A	
SAM Registration	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424 includes a DUNS Number	Section IV.B.1	
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section IV.B.2	
Budget Narrative	Section IV.B.2	
Project Narrative	Section IV.B.3	

2. Number of Applications Applicants May Submit

We will consider only one application from each organization. If we receive multiple applications from the same organization, we will consider only the most recently received application that met the deadline. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, we will not replace it with an earlier application. Eligible applicants may submit an application as the lead applicant, and also serve as an IHE consortium member in an application or applications in which they do not serve as the lead applicant.

3. Eligible Participants

a) **Participants Eligible to Receive Training**

The intent of this FOA is to fund projects that build capacity to ultimately provide education/training services to low- and medium-skilled and/or low- and medium-income individuals to help them pursue or advance in full-time employment within the grant period of performance.

For the purposes of this FOA, the definition of eligible participants is broad. It includes a spectrum of adult workers—dislocated workers, incumbent workers, and new entrants to the workforce—as well as older youth who are new entrants to the workforce.

You may propose a project that focuses on providing services to participants in any one or more of the following three categories: dislocated workers, new entrants to the workforce, or incumbent workers. Within these categories, you may serve a wide range of individuals, such as individuals receiving unemployment insurance or public assistance, high school dropouts, high school or postsecondary students, individuals enrolled in adult basic and other education programs, individuals with disabilities, veterans, Indian and Native Americans, and individuals with Limited English Proficiency. The three categories of workers are defined as follows:

- i. **New Entrants to the Workforce:** For the purposes of this FOA, we consider “new entrants to the workforce” to refer to those who have never worked before or who have been out of the workforce for a long enough time as though they are entering the workforce for the first time. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, long-term unemployed individuals and formerly incarcerated individuals. Also eligible, consistent with federal and state wage and employment laws, are youth who are enrolled in their junior or senior year of high school/secondary school and who could be employed before or within six months after the end of the grant lifecycle, and youth who have dropped out of school and are seeking their first full-time job.
- ii. **Dislocated workers:** For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to individuals who were terminated or laid-off or have received a notice of termination or lay-off from employment; or were self-employed but are now unemployed, as well as other individuals defined in WIOA Sec. 3(15).
- iii. **Incumbent workers:** For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to individuals who are employed (with any employer) but need training to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations. This includes low-wage and medium-wage workers who need to upgrade their skills to retain employment or advance in their careers, and workers who are currently working part-time.

b) **Veterans’ Priority for Participants**

38 U.S.C. 4215 requires grantees to provide priority of service to 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 are at 20 CFR Part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans' priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service, a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by DOL. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2816. This guidance applies to programs funded under WIOA. For additional information on veteran's priority of service and WIOA, please see TEGL 19-16. TEGL 19-16 is available at https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=3851.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. HOW TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

This FOA, found at www.Grants.gov and https://www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm, contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

B. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications submitted in response to this FOA must consist of four separate and distinct parts:

- [1. SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance";](#)
- [2. Project Budget, composed of the SF-424A and Budget Narrative;](#)
- [3. Project Narrative;](#) and
- [4. Attachments to the Project Narrative.](#)

You must ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application.

1. SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

You must complete the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>).

- In the address field, fill out the nine-digit (plus hyphen) zip code. Nine-digit zip codes can be looked up on the USPS website at <https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action>.
- 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 is considered the Authorized Representative of the applicant. As stated in block 21 of the SF-424 form, the signature of the Authorized Representative on the SF-424 certifies that the organization is in compliance with the Assurances and Certifications form SF-424B (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>). You do not need to submit the SF-424B with the application.

In addition, subject to the provisions of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, the applicant's Authorized Representative's signature in block 21 of the SF-424 form constitutes assurance by the applicant of compliance with the WIOA 188 rules issued by the Department at 29 CFR 38.25, which includes the following language:

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I WIOA, the grant applicant assures that it has the ability to comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the WIOA, which, as interpreted through Departmental regulations, prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I—financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.

The grant applicant also assures, subject to RFRA, that as a recipient of WIOA Title I financial assistance [as defined at 29 CFR 38.4(zz)], it will comply with 29 CFR part 38 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIOA 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. Note that the RFRA applies to all federal law and its implementation. If an applicant 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 this grant solicitation and maintain that hiring practice. If a faith-based organization is awarded a grant, the organization will be provided with more information.

a) **Requirement for DUNS Number**

All applicants for federal grant and funding opportunities must have a 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:

<https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

Grant recipients authorized to make subawards must meet these requirements related to DUNS Numbers:

- Grant recipients must notify potential subawardees that no entity may receive a subaward unless the entity has provided its DUNS number.
- Grant recipients may not make a subaward to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number.

(See Appendix A to 2 CFR Part 25.)

b) **Requirement for Registration with SAM**

Applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application. Find instructions for registering with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov>.

A recipient must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate, and complete. For purposes of this paragraph, the applicant is the entity that meets the eligibility criteria and has the legal authority to apply and to receive the award. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time the Grant Officer is ready to make a federal award, the Grant Officer may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

2. Project Budget

You must complete the SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>). In preparing the Budget Information Form, you must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the budget request, explained in detail below.

a) **Budget Narrative**

The Budget Narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The Budget Narrative should also include a section describing any leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities. Leveraged resources are all resources, both cash and in-kind, in excess of this award. Valuation of leveraged resources follows the same requirements as match. Applicants are encouraged to leverage resources to increase stakeholder investment in the project and broaden the impact of the project itself.

Each category should include the total cost for the period of performance. Use the following guidance for preparing the Budget Narrative.

Personnel: List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed) including the roles and responsibilities. For each position give the annual salary, the percentage of time devoted to the project, and the amount of each position's salary funded by the grant.

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

Travel: For grantee staff only, specify the purpose, number of staff traveling, 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 you expect to purchase that has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit (or if your capitalization level is less than \$5,000, use your capitalization level) and a useful lifetime of more than one year (see 2 CFR 200.33 for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item.

Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies, not "equipment." In general, we do not permit the purchase of equipment during the last funded year of the grant.

Supplies: Identify categories of supplies (e.g., office supplies) in the detailed budget and list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than "equipment" (see 2 CFR 200.94 for the definition of Supplies).

Contractual: Under the Contractual line item, delineate contracts and subawards separately. Contracts are defined according to 2 CFR 200.22 as a legal instrument by which a non-federal entity purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a federal award. A subaward, defined by 2 CFR 200.92, means an award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program.

For each proposed contract and subaward, specify the purpose and activities to be provided, and the estimated cost.

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, with prior approval. We do not consider this as construction and you must show the costs on other appropriate lines such as Contractual. As discussed in Section I.A.5, minor alterations and certain capital expenditures, such as equipment or capital improvements, may be allowable with prior written approval from the Grant Officer.

Other: Provide clear and specific detail, including costs, for each item so that we are able to determine whether the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allocable. List items, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere.

Indirect Costs: If you include an amount for indirect costs (through a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or De Minimis) on the SF-424A budget form, then include one of the following:

a) If you have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), provide an explanation of how the indirect costs are calculated. This explanation should include which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Also, provide a current version of the NICRA.

or

b) If you intend to claim indirect costs using the 10 percent de minimis rate, please confirm that your organization meets the requirements as described in 2 CFR 200.414(f). Clearly state that your organization has never received a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), and your organization is not one described in 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII(D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 below for definition) as their cost allocation base. Provide an explanation of which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Note that there are various items not included in the calculation of Modified Total Direct Costs. See the definitions below to assist you in your calculation.

- **2 CFR 200.68 Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)** means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may be excluded only

when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

The definition of MTDC in 2 CFR 200.68 no longer allows any sub-contracts to be included in the calculation. You will also note that participant support costs are not included in modified total direct cost. Participant support costs are defined below.

- 2 CFR 200.75 Participant Support Cost means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences or training projects.

See Section IV.B.4. and Section IV.E.1 for more information. Additionally, the following link contains information regarding the negotiation of Indirect Cost Rates at DOL:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/centers-offices/business-operations-center/cost-determination>.

Note that the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative must include the entire federal grant amount requested (not just one year).

Do not show leveraged resources on the SF-424 and SF-424A. You should describe leveraged resources in the Budget Narrative.

Applicants should list the same requested federal grant amount on the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative. If minor inconsistencies are found between the budget amounts specified on the SF-424, SF-424A, and the Budget Narrative, ETA will consider the SF-424 the official funding amount requested. However, if the amount specified on the SF-424 would render the application nonresponsive, the Grant Officer will use his or her discretion to determine whether the intended funding request (and match if applicable) is within the responsive range.

3. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must demonstrate your capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Announcement. It provides a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project. It must be succinct, self-explanatory, and well-organized so that reviewers can understand the proposed project.

The Project Narrative is limited to 25 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with Times New Roman 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. You must number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1.

We will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process.

The following instructions provide all of the information needed to complete the Project Narrative. Carefully read and consider each section, and include all required information in your Project Narrative. The agency will evaluate the Project Narrative using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A. You must use the same section headers identified below for each section of the Project Narrative.

Project Narrative for Single Institution Applicants

This Project Narrative applies only to Single Institution applicants. See separate Project Narrative for Consortium Applicants.

a) Statement of Need for Single Institutions (6 points total)

Describe in both quantitative and qualitative terms how the proposal will meet the need to expand and improve the ability of eligible institutions to deliver education and career training programs to populations served in targeted industry sectors; the existing gaps in need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem; and the consequences of not addressing the need. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information whenever possible.

(i) Target Industry and Employer Demand for Single Institutions (3 points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which the discussion of the following factors is clear, logical, well-supported, and an accurate interpretation of labor market data. All data sources must include citations that provide information that enables the identification and verification of data.

You must provide a clear identification of **one or more specific industry sectors** on which the applicant will focus. This includes clearly and convincingly identifying how the selected industry(ies) align with demonstrated employer demand. Applicants must provide a detailed and convincingly supported description of the current and future projected national demand for employment in the selected industry(ies). Applicants must cite the source for the projected demand, such as Bureau of Labor Statistics or other DOL sources, state workforce agency sources, employers, or other written labor market information provided by employers or other knowledgeable parties. Applicants must provide strong evidence (with citations) that identifies the average current wages offered for the selected industry and occupation, based on national, state, or local data. To the extent possible, data should reflect the service area(s) proposed.

(ii) Gap Analysis for Single Institutions (3 points)

Applicants must fully identify gaps in education and training capacity for the targeted industry(ies), and convincingly demonstrate the need to implement changes that develop or expand capacity of the institutions to offer training and educational opportunities that are

aligned with industry demand and priority goals of the IHEs. The information provided in this section of the project narrative must convincingly demonstrate the need for the education and career training programs and capacity-building changes proposed by the applicant. The information must constitute a comprehensive gap analysis that describes the existing and desired status for the education and career training programs, systems, and infrastructure proposed for development or expansion under this grant. The analysis must include a full description of how the lack of capacity impacts the applicant's ability to serve students, and employers in the selected industry(ies) or occupation(s).

b) Expected Outcomes and Outputs for Single Institutions (36 points total)

Enhancing sector-based career pathways offers a unique opportunity for SCC partners to improve strategies for measuring the impact of efforts across programs and institutions. Measuring the effects of a sector-based career pathways initiative will not only support partners' efforts to improve program design, but also will communicate to stakeholders the value of their investments. Hence, this FOA requires all grantees to collect capacity-building outcomes data that flows from the required logic model. In addition, a sustainability plan provides evidence of how applicants intend to sustain grant outcomes beyond the period of performance of the grant.

(i) Logic Model for Single Institutions (4 points)

Applicants must describe their project's design in the form of a logic model and grantees are expected to use the model for designing and managing their project. The logic model must be submitted as an attachment. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this FOA, the logic model must consist of a theory of change and assessment approach (scored here), and outcomes indicators (scored in the following section). Further information about the logic model components are found in Appendix F: Logic Model. The logic model must lay out the logical connections of a project's design, and detail how the project will deliver results using grant-funded and leveraged resources.

To achieve maximum points for this section, applicants must include both of the following and provide a full and clear explanation of the applicant's strategic approach (4 points):

- A theory of change that is clearly based on the applicant's gap analysis and identifies the problem to be solved, community needs and assets, desired results, influential factors, strategies, and assumptions.
- An assessment approach, which starts with the strategies identified in the theory of change and describes the intended audience for the strategies, lists potential questions for the audience in order to validate the strategies, and the purpose for gathering assessment information.

(ii) **Performance Outcomes for Single Institutions (22 points)**

(a) Capacity Building Performance Outcomes (12 points)

Applicants must provide quantitative capacity-building performance outcome targets, as described below, that show baseline and end-of-grant outcomes, using the sample worksheet in Appendix G: Suggested Table for Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes (Single Institutions). The Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes Table must be submitted as an attachment and does not count toward the Project Narrative page limit.

All grantees will capture and report on data that seeks to measure the initiative's key capacity-building outcomes, as aligned with the employer sector(s) and career pathway(s) in your proposal. These outcomes must flow from the assessment approach in the logic model scored above. We expect that grantees will use their evidence-based theory of change and logic model for designing and managing their projects. Accordingly, while the FOA requires single institution applicants to include at least the three outcomes specified below, DOL encourages applicants to include additional outcomes that may be appropriate for the success of their projects. **Applicants must develop outcome targets that are specific to their grant; the examples provided below are for illustrative purposes only.**

A single institution applicant must specify grant-specific targets for each of the three outcomes specified below. The applicant's three capacity-building performance outcomes targets (and the related outputs, milestones, and deliverables in the work plan scored elsewhere) form the basis of the Department's assessment of grantee performance. Progress against the stated outcomes targets, as well as work plan activities and deliverables, will be reviewed quarterly for technical assistance purposes, and annually for monitoring and compliance purposes. Grantees will report outcome data in the Quarterly Narrative Report. See Section VI.C for information on this DOL reporting requirement. It is allowable for the grantee's required third-party evaluator to assist grantees in documenting outcomes. However, the grantee remains fully responsible for the reporting requirement.

To achieve maximum points for the Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes section, applicants must submit the following:

- For each of the three outcome areas below, provide a grant-specific and feasible outcome that meets the description for the outcome area and clearly defines in qualitative and quantitative terms the baseline, or current status, and the desired results of the project's intervention at the end of the grant period of performance. Your project-specific outcomes must be proposed in the required Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes Table (see Appendix G). (8 points)
- Clearly demonstrate in the project narrative how the three proposed outcomes as a whole are aligned with the gap analysis, evidence-based theory of change, assessment approach, and capacity-building performance outcomes targets stated elsewhere. (4 points)

Core Element 1: Evidence-Based Design

- No outcomes are required for this Core Element.

Core Element 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement

- **Outcome Area 2a:** Within the selected sector(s), increase in the breadth and depth of employer engagement and investment in educational and training programs. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Growth from XX to YY in the number of sector employer partners that serve as full strategic partners to the college, taking on a leadership role for multi-employer/multi-college partnerships.*

Core Element 3: Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies

- **Outcome Area 3a:** Design or implementation of new, accelerated instructional techniques or technologies, including the use of advanced online and technology-enabled learning. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: For the ZZ career pathway, increase from XX to YY the number of programs of study with fully developed and implemented hybrid learning methodologies that enable adult workers and others to attain a credential while working.*

Core Element 4: Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System

- **Outcome Area 4a:** Increase in program and policy alignment across systems and/or decrease in duplicative services or service gaps. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Increase by XX percent the number of WIOA-enrolled candidates in education/training programs of study that are being enhanced by SCC.*

(b) Participant Training and Employment Tracking (10 points)

While SCC grants are capacity-building grants, an important aspect of capacity building at community colleges is the ability to collect and report on employment outcomes. Participant performance outcomes can also contribute to proof of concept and contribute to the body of evidence for SCC grants. Thus, individual institution grantees will be required to track eight participant outputs and outcomes for a selected cohort of students throughout their grants. Note that applicants are not required to provide targets for these outputs and outcomes, nor will they be used to monitor grantee performance. Grantees will utilize DOL's Workforce Innovation Performance System (WIPS) to track these outputs and outcomes. DOL will provide additional information after grant award; however, single institution applicants must budget for data collection and reporting and include it in their project work plans.

Definitions for the purposes of the SCC FOA:

- **Program of Study:** A curriculum of multiple courses that leads to one or more industry-recognized credentials.
- **Participant Cohort:** The sub-set of students that SCC grantees will track for the purpose of documenting participant (student) outputs and outcomes. Grantees will not be required to track participants in all grant-enhanced programs of study, but applicants must select and describe at least one program of study that is central to

their proposed project design for which they will track the seven participant outputs and outcomes listed below.

- **Enrolled in a Program of Study:** Applicants must describe in their project narrative, and if selected consistently apply, a definition for “enrollment into a program of study” that aligns with their college’s definition. Applicants are encouraged to carefully consider what documentation or records they will use to determine that a student has enrolled in a program of study that leads to an industry-recognized credential.
- **Incumbent Workers and Non-Incumbent Participants:** When students first enroll in the selected cohort program of study, grantees must determine if the student is an incumbent worker or a non-incumbent participant. (Guidance will be provided post-award.) This determination will inform how participants are tracked for the purposes of employment-related outcomes.
- **Industry-Recognized Credential:** An industry recognized credential refers to credentials described in Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 25-19, “Understanding Postsecondary Credentials in the Public Workforce System.”²⁴

The participant training and employment performance outputs and outcomes that individual institutions must track for its participant cohort are defined as follows:

- **SCC1: Participant Cohort Students Who Begin Education/Training.** Those students who are enrolled in the selected program of study and have begun education/training activities. (output)
- **SCC2: Students Who Complete the Cohort Program of Study.** (output)
- **SCC3: Students Who Complete the Cohort Program of Study and Receive a Credential.** (output)
- **SCC4: Credentials Received by Students Enrolled in the Cohort Program of Study.** SCC4 measures credentials, not students. Credentials may be earned before or after completion. Students may earn multiple credentials. (output)
- **SCC5: Students Who Enter Unsubsidized Employment.** Number of non-incumbent students who enter employment at any time after enrolling in the cohort program of study. Non-incumbent students do not need to complete the cohort program of study to be counted in SCC5. (outcome)
- **SCC6: Students Who Enter Training-Related Employment.** Number of non-incumbent students who enter training-related employment after completion of the cohort program of study. To be included in SCC6, non-incumbent students do need to complete the cohort program of study. (outcome)
- **SCC7: Incumbent Workers That Retain Current Position.** Number of students defined as incumbent workers who complete both the cohort program of study and retain their current position. Incumbent workers can be counted in either SCC7 or SCC8 if they qualify, but not both. (outcome)

²⁴ See https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=5953.

- **SCC8: Incumbent Workers That Advance into New Position.** Number of students defined as incumbent workers who complete both the cohort program of study and advance into a new position. Incumbent workers can be counted in either SCC7 or SCC8 if they qualify, but not both. (outcome)

To receive full points for this section, applicants must fully describe the grant-enhanced program of study they propose to use for participant tracking and why it is central to their proposed project design; provide a complete description of how they will define and document “enrollment into a program of study” for the proposed participant cohort; and comprehensively describe their system for collecting and tracking data for their participant cohort through the life of the grant. (10 points)

(iii) Sustainability Plan for Single Institutions (10 points)

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete description of how the grantee intends to sustain the capacity built through the grant and to build on key grant innovations and after the grant period of performance ends.

Applicants must include a narrative description that clearly identifies key aspects the grantee plans to sustain, and describes for each the current state, the grant-end state that will be achieved during the period of performance, and the planned sustained state beyond the grant end date. Applicants must also describe how the planned sustainability aligns with priorities of required partners, and the contributions those partners will play in sustaining the capacity built during the grant.

c) Project Design for Single Institutions (20 points total)

The applicant must thoroughly describe the proposed education and training strategies, including the research and evidence on which those strategies are based and how the proposed strategies incorporate the Core Elements described in Section I.A.1. Throughout this section, the applicant must demonstrate a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project.

(i) Single Institutions of Higher Education (2 points)

Applicants must convincingly describe the strengths they bring to the project design and how their community college is positioned to support success in achieving project outcomes. (2 points)

(ii) Evidence-based Design for Single Institutions (3 points)

Applicants must conduct a research review to support the proposed program design, clearly describe the evidence on which the proposed education and training strategies are based, and describe how the evidence influenced the design of the program to improve education and employment outcomes.

- Clear description of the extent to which the evidence cited for specific strategies chosen is strong and credible (citing strong/high or moderate evidence of effectiveness for

- existing strategies or preliminary research findings indicating evidence of promise, related research findings, or strong theory for new strategies). (1 point)
- Convincing explanation of the extent to which the evidence will be embedded in the design and delivery of the program, including identifying if the project will replicate existing evidence-based design, development, or delivery strategies or implement innovative or new strategies. (2 points)

(iii) Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement for Single Institutions (4 points)

Applicants must clearly identify how they will implement successful sector strategies. These sector strategies must focus on addressing employers' workforce needs by expanding or improving grantees' education and training programs based on the use of labor market information.

(a) Demonstration of Sector Strategy

Thorough explanation of and a plausible plan for how the sector partnerships with business and industry leaders and the workforce development system will provide an effective pipeline of talent in the target industry sector(s) by aligning the workforce development system and training programs with comprehensive sector-based career pathways. (1 point)

(b) Demonstration of Employer and Industry Engagement

Grantees will ensure that the required employer partner(s) actively engage in designing and implementing the sector strategy. To demonstrate this, applicants must provide the following: (3 points)

- Thorough description of how the grantee will engage with employers in a sector strategy in the state or district that demonstrates a strong understanding of how the project obtains feedback from employers on any content developed and delivered during the life of the project and reflects the sector skill needs across multiple employers;
- Comprehensive description of the roles of the required industry association or of each of the three required employers, and the specific and quantifiable contributions they will provide to support the goals of the project. Grantees will ensure that they are actively engaging the required employer partner(s) in implementing the sector strategy within several key areas: (1) providing leadership to the project in setting strategic direction; (2) informing the identification and mapping the necessary skills and competencies for the program(s); (3) providing work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and apprenticeship; (4) assisting with curriculum development and program design; (5) where appropriate, informing the design of an assessment or validating credentials that will address industry skill needs; and (6) providing resources, such as mentors, the donation of equipment, or other contributions to support the proposed project.
- Clear documentation of the employer partner roles and contributions to the project as described in Section III.A.3.d. that convincingly demonstrates their engagement

with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment.

- Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying an industry association or at least three employer partners will receive zero points for this rating factor.

(iv) Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies for Single Institutions (5 points)

Applicants must identify existing career pathway program(s) that incorporate a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies, and integrate academic and occupational skills training. The proposal must have the following:

- Detailed and compelling explanation of the key strategies the grantee will deploy to enable faster credentialing and entrance into the workforce for program participants. This must include a plausible plan for how the proposed education and career-focused training programs will enable participants to accelerate completion of coursework. (2 points)
- Clear identification of the specific services and career guidance that the program will provide; applicant must also identify the specific barriers to program retention, completion, and employment that the program will address through comprehensive and personalized student services and career guidance. (1 point)
- Thorough description and plausible plan for how the project will support the transferability and articulation of noncredit courses and academic credit across programs and institutions that will create career pathways for workers to further their education. This includes linking with programs such as high school dual enrollment programs, postsecondary career and technical education, pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, and other programs that lead to credit-bearing coursework and employment. (1 point)
- Detailed description of how technology is incorporated into the design of the career pathway program and how technology will be used in the delivery of education and training. Online and technology-enabled strategies should effectively support program participants in developing new skills, and can enable practices such as rolling and open enrollment processes, modularized content delivery, simulated assessments and training, and accelerated course delivery strategies. (1 point)

(v) Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System for Single Institutions (4 points)

Applicants must provide a complete and clear description of their alignment with the workforce strategies identified through the WIOA State Plan, the Perkins Plan, and their Governor's Economic Development plan.

- Clear demonstration that the strategies in the proposed SCC project include targeting one or more of the education and training strategies, goals for skills development credential attainment, and career pathway development included in the WIOA State or Local Plan and the Governor's Economic Development plan; and description of the level of

proposed collaboration between the applicant and the public workforce development system partners to create and implement a comprehensive strategy of responding to the labor market in determining the skills needs of employers and the suitability of individuals for training and the attainment of associated credentials; (2 points) and

- Documentation of the extent to which the applicant engages the workforce development system partners in the proposed capacity-building project and leverages the workforce development system's demonstrated experience in improving employment-related skills and involvement in initiatives to help address workers' barriers to employment. This includes evidence that the local WDB(s) are involved in the development and implementation of the grant project. Applicant must demonstrate WDB engagement in the form of documentation described in Section III.A.3.d. that convincingly demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying at least one workforce development system partner will receive zero points for this rating factor. (2 points)

(vi) Project Work Plan for Single Institutions (2 points)

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete identification of a comprehensive work plan for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic milestones, which must be submitted as an attachment. A sample work plan table can be found in Appendix I: Work Plan Table. Applicants must base the work plan on the Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes described in Section IV.B.3.b)(ii), and thoroughly describe the key milestones and deliverables necessary to accomplishing each outcome. Milestones are key markers of grant progress; these are typically expressed in the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development. Deliverables are typically expressed in the form of a product.

Applicants must also include in the work plan the milestones and deliverables related to the required third-party evaluation that are listed in Section I.A.3.

Single applicants must include participant cohort reporting in their project work plans.

The applicant must also demonstrate the capacity to manage the project by detailing the consortium members responsible for supporting each milestone/deliverable. The Department will use the Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes identified above, as well as the key milestones and deliverables in the work plan, to monitor grants.

To receive full points in this section, applicants must provide the following:

- **Key Milestones and Deliverables:** Thoroughly describe the activities and deliverables necessary to accomplish the required participant and capacity-building outcomes and the required third-party evaluator milestones and deliverables. Milestones and deliverables must be reasonable based on the project design.

- **Responsible Parties and Deadlines:** For each milestone and deliverable, clearly describe the specific responsible entity(ies) by name (e.g., ABC CC, Employer X), and deadlines.

d) Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity for Single Institutions (8 points total)

The applicant must thoroughly describe the proposed organizational, administrative and fiscal, and procurement capacity it will provide in support of grant success.

(i) Capacity of Lead Applicant, Partnership Structure, and Administrative Controls and Systems for Single Institutions (5 points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on providing a detailed description demonstrating the lead applicant’s capacity to effectively manage each component of the program, including project management and communication with partners and staff. The grantee must also demonstrate its capacity to establish effective procurement processes, systems, and procedures, and (if applicable) describe those for any partners who will be providing any services or conducting any activities under the grant. Include within this description the following:

- A detailed organizational chart that identifies the lead applicant, required partners, and any other proposed partners. The chart must describe the structure of the relationships of all partners involved in the project and be submitted as an attachment. The chart must also identify the proposed project’s staffing plan to illustrate that partners have the capacity to support the lead applicant to carry out the proposed project.
- The staffing plan must describe the qualifications and experience of all executive and administrative staff, as well as other personnel, such as board members, advisors, and consultants, to fulfill the needs and requirements of the proposed project. Such qualifications and experience must demonstrate the ability to manage a strategic partnership, including fiscal and administrative management, outreach, and promotion.

(ii) Financial, Data Collection, and Performance Reporting Systems for Single Institutions (3 Points)

Applicants must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements (as discussed in Section VI.C.) and provide individual record-level data that would be made available for evaluation and national reporting purposes, including requesting Social Security Numbers of all participants in the cohort to be tracked. Please refer to Section VI.C. for reporting requirements for projects funded under this grant program.

Applicants must provide a comprehensive description of the existing or planned systems and processes that the lead applicant will use to provide timely and accurate financial data, performance reporting with respect to system change outcomes, and the required participant cohort data. The description must detail how these systems will be used to regularly assess progress towards the identified performance goals and that rigorous performance reporting will be taken into account in staffing and budgeting plans.

e) **Past Performance – Programmatic Capability for Single Institutions (28 points)**

- Full description of the lead applicant’s prior experience in leading similar capacity- building projects that convincingly demonstrates the ability to accomplish multi-pronged complex projects and an explanation of the results of the project(s). (10 points)
- Evidence of prior experience (within the last five years) of the lead applicant or a partner in managing a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements, leading capacity development efforts that were similar in size, scope, and relevant to the proposed project. (12 points)
- Describe in detail any evidence and experience of the lead applicant and partners in sustaining career pathway development, sector partnerships, and capacity-building activities following completion of a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements. (6 points)

f) **Budget and Budget Narrative for Single Institutions (2 points)**

The Budget and Budget Narrative will be used to evaluate this section. Please see Section IV.B.2 for information on the requirements. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

For full points, applicants must provide a detailed explanation of how the budget is reasonable and feasible based on the activities outlined in the Project Narrative, how the proposed expenditures will support the project activities and capacity-building focus, and whether key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve project results. In addition, this explanation must include a detailed description of the leveraged resources the project will generate to support grant activities, the specific activities they will cover, and the way the leveraged resources will support the capacity-building goals of the grant. Single institution applicants must budget for data collection and reporting as well as the required third-party evaluation. (2 points)

g) **Priority Consideration: Opportunity Zones for Single Institutions (2 bonus points)**

To receive priority consideration of two bonus points, applicants must, in their abstract, identify by full 11-digit census tract number that at least one census tract within an applicant’s physical service area is designated as a qualified Opportunity Zone. See Section I.C. Geographic Scope for further explanation. (2 bonus points)

Project Narrative for Consortium Applicants

This Project Narrative applies only to Consortium Applicants. A separate Project Narrative for Single Institutions is above.

a) **Statement of Need for Consortium Applicants (6 points total)**

Describe in both quantitative and qualitative terms how the proposal will meet the need to expand and improve the ability of eligible institutions to deliver education and career training programs to populations served in targeted industry sectors; the existing gaps in need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem; and the consequences of not addressing the need. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information whenever possible.

(i) **Target Industry and Employer Demand for Consortium Applicants (3 points)**

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which the discussion of the following factors is clear, logical, well supported, and an accurate interpretation of labor market data. All data sources must include citations that provide information to enable the identification and verification of data.

You must provide a clear identification of **one or more specific industry sectors** on which the applicant will focus. This includes clearly and convincingly identifying how the selected industry(ies) align with demonstrated employer demand; applicants must provide a detailed and convincingly supported description of the current and future projected national demand for employment in the selected industry(ies). Applicants must cite the source for the projected demand, such as Bureau of Labor Statistics or other DOL sources, state workforce agency sources, employers, or other written labor market information provided by employers or other knowledgeable parties. Applicants must provide strong evidence with citations that identifies the average current wages offered for the selected industry and occupation, based on national, state, or local data. To the extent possible, data should reflect the service area(s) proposed. (3 points)

(ii) **Gap Analysis for Consortium Applicants (3 points)**

Applicants must fully identify gaps in education and training capacity for the targeted industry(ies), and convincingly demonstrate the need to implement system changes that develop or expand capacity of the institutions to offer training and educational opportunities that are aligned with industry demand and priority goals of the IHEs. The information provided in this section of the project narrative must convincingly demonstrate the need for the education and career training programs and system changes proposed by the applicant. The information must constitute a comprehensive gap analysis that describes the existing and desired status for the education and career training programs, systems, and infrastructure proposed for development or expansion under this grant. The gap analysis must include a full description of how the lack of capacity impacts the applicant's ability to serve students and employers in the selected industry(ies) or occupation(s). (3 points)

b) **Expected Outcomes and Outputs for Consortium Applicants (36 points total)**

Enhancing sector-based career pathways offers a unique opportunity for SCC partners to improve strategies for measuring the impact of efforts across systems and programs. Measuring the effects of a sector-based career pathways initiative will not only support

partners' efforts to improve program design, but also will communicate to stakeholders the value of their investments. Hence, this FOA requires all consortium grantees to collect systems change outcomes data that flow from the required logic model. In addition, a sustainability plan provides evidence of how applicants intend to sustain grant outcomes beyond the period of performance of the grant.

(i) Logic Model for Consortium Applicants (4 points)

Applicants must describe their project's design in the form of a logic model and grantees are expected to use the model for designing and managing their project. The logic model must be submitted as an attachment. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this FOA, the logic model must consist of a theory of change and assessment approach (scored here), and outcomes indicators (scored in the following section). Further information about the logic model components are found in Appendix F: Logic Model. The logic model must explicitly lay out the logical connections of a project's design, and detail how the project will deliver results using grant-funded and leveraged resources.

To achieve full points for this section, applicants must include both of the following and provide a full and clear explanation of the applicant's strategic approach: (4 points)

- (a) A theory of change that is clearly based on the applicant's gap analysis and that identifies the problem to be solved, community needs and assets, desired results, influential factors, strategies, and assumptions.
- (b) An assessment approach, which starts with the strategies identified in the theory of change and describes the intended audience for the strategies, lists potential questions for the audience in order to validate the strategies, and the purpose for gathering assessment information.

(ii) Systems Change Performance Outcomes for Consortium Applicants (22 points)

Applicants must provide quantitative system change performance outcome targets, as described below, that show baseline and end-of-grant outcomes, using the sample worksheet in Appendix H: Suggested Table for Systems Change Performance Outcomes (Consortium Applicants). The Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table must be submitted as an attachment and does not count against the page limits for the Project Narrative.

All grantees will capture and report on data that seek to measure the initiative's key capacity building and systems change outcomes, as aligned with the employer sector(s) and career pathway(s) in your proposal. These outcomes must flow from the assessment approach in the logic model scored above. We expect that grantees will use their evidence-based theory of change and logic model for designing and managing their projects. Accordingly, while the FOA requires applicants to include at least the two outcomes specified below for each Core Element, DOL encourages applicants to include additional outcomes that may be appropriate for the success of their projects. **Applicants must develop outcome targets that are specific to their grant project; the examples provided below are for illustrative purposes only.**

A consortium applicant must specify grant-specific targets for each of the eight outcomes specified below. The applicant's eight systems change performance outcomes targets (and the related outputs, milestones, and deliverables in the work plan scored elsewhere) form the basis of the Department's assessment of grantee performance. Progress against the stated outcomes targets, as well as work plan activities and deliverables, will be reviewed quarterly for technical assistance purposes, and annually for monitoring and compliance purposes. Grantees will report outcome data in the Quarterly Narrative Report. See Section VI.C for information on this DOL reporting requirement. It is allowable for the grantee's required third-party evaluator to assist grantees in documenting outcomes. However, the grantee remains fully responsible for the reporting requirement.

For each of Core Elements 2-5 in this FOA, applicants must define two outcomes of successful capacity building and systems change as described below, for a total of eight key outcomes. For Core Element 5, applicants will develop target outcomes only for the option they select.

To achieve full points for the Systems Change Performance Outcomes section, applicants must include the following:

- For each of the eight outcome areas below, provide a grant-specific and feasible outcome that meets the description for the outcome area and clearly defines in qualitative and quantitative terms the baseline, or current status, and the desired results of the project's intervention at the end of the grant period of performance. Your project-specific outcomes must be proposed in the required Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (see Appendix H). (16 points)
- Clearly demonstrate in the project narrative how the eight proposed outcomes as a whole are aligned with the gap analysis, evidence-based theory of change, assessment approach, and system change performance outcomes targets stated elsewhere. (6 points)

Core Element 1: Evidence-Based Design

No outcomes are required for this Core Element.

Core Element 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement

- **Outcome Area 2a:** Within the selected sector(s), increase in the breadth and depth of employer engagement and investment in educational and training programs. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Growth from XX to YY in the number of sector employer partners that serve as full strategic partners to the college, taking on a leadership role for multi-employer/multi-college partnerships.*
- **Outcome Area 2b:** Increase in sector employers that make commitments to better support work-based learning opportunities and/or employment, retention, and advancement of career pathways participants. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Growth from XX to YY in the number of sector employers committing to interview and/or hire program completers.*

Core Element 3: Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies

- **Outcome Area 3a:** Design or implementation of new, accelerated instructional techniques or technologies, including the use of advanced online and technology-enabled learning. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: For the ZZ career pathway, increase from XX to YY the number of programs of study with fully developed and implemented hybrid learning methodologies that enable adult workers and others to attain a credential while working.*
- **Outcome Area 3b:** Measure of restructuring or alignment of educational and training programs based on local or regional labor market data. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Eliminate programs that are not aligned to labor market data (e.g., that do not lead to middle- to high-skilled jobs in high-demand occupations for program completers).*

Core Element 4: Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System

- **Outcome Area 4a:** Increase in program and policy alignment across systems and/or decrease in duplicative services or service gaps. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Increase by XX percent the number of WIOA-enrolled candidates in education/training programs of study that are being enhanced by SCC.*
- **Outcome Area 4b:** Development of new and/or expanded partnerships among key stakeholders that results in streamlined or expanded services for participants. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: New partnerships with adult education programs extend the state's Integrated Education Training (IET) model and other contextualized remediation models from the current XX to YY entry-level certificates.*

Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change

- For Core Element 5, select either 5a and 5b, or 5c and 5d, based on the option you are selecting for this FOA.

Option A: Accelerated Learning Pathways

- **Outcome Area 5a:** Measure of removing significant systemic barriers career pathways participants. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Enhance credit for prior learning programs so that the number of participants in the ZZ career pathway who attain a credential and entry level employment increases from XX to YY.*
- **Outcome Area 5b:** Increase in linkages developed throughout a career pathway to encompass bridge programs, career and technical training programs, and work-based training. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: Create bridge programs between noncredit and credit courses for the YY career pathway such that XX students per year are newly served by the programs during the grant.*

Option B: Statewide Data Integration and Use

- **Outcome Area 5c:** Increased access to available data on stakeholders' activities, outputs, and outcomes. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows:*

Develop and publicly launch a system to collect and disseminate statewide outcomes data on non-credit courses and programs that covers XX percent of the state's student outcomes by ZZ date.

- **Outcome Area 5d:** Evidence of effective data sharing and data management. *For example, a grant-specific outcome could be as follows: By ZZ date, create and launch a system to facilitate real-time exchange of labor market data between local workforce development boards and XX of the state's YY community colleges, for the purpose of better informing student choice.*

(iii) Sustainability Plan for Consortium Applicants (10 points)

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete description of how the grantee intends to sustain the capacity built through the grant and to build on key grant innovations and systems change after the grant period of performance ends. Consortium grantees should place particular emphasis on the system change option selected under Core Element 5.

Applicants must include a narrative description that clearly identifies key aspects the grantee plans to sustain, and describes for each the current state, the grant-end state that will be achieved during the period of performance, and the planned sustained state beyond the grant end date. Applicants must also describe how the planned sustainability aligns with the priorities of required partners, and the contributions those partners will play in sustaining the system change. For consortium grantees the narrative should emphasize Core Element 5.

c) Project Design for Consortium Applicants (20 points total)

The applicant must thoroughly describe the proposed education and training strategies, including the research and evidence on which those strategies are based and how the proposed strategies incorporate the Core Elements described in Section I.A.1. Throughout this section, the applicant must demonstrate a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project.

(i) Institutions of Higher Education Consortium Selection (2 points)

Applicants must convincingly describe how their proposed consortium membership will lead to the systemic changes proposed in their application. This description must also convincingly demonstrate that their proposed IHE consortium members and the corresponding required state or regional coordinating entity (both described in Section III.A.3) are the best choices to support success in project outcomes.

Applicants must also provide documentation of commitment as described in Section III.A.3.b from each member of the IHE consortium that convincingly demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment.

The applicant must also include a state- or district-level coordinating entity(ies) and explain why it chose the entity it proposes and the specific contributions related to coordination,

scaling, and sustainability that the IHE coordination entity(ies) will make with respect to the systems change outcomes that are the focus of the proposal. See Section III.A.3.b for more information on IHE coordinating entities. Applicants must provide documentation of commitment as described in Section III.A.3.b from at least one IHE coordinating entity that convincingly demonstrates its engagement with the aspect of the project for which it is responsible. This documentation must demonstrate the state or district college coordinating entity's commitment to adopt and promote the proposed activities across the state or district. Applicants must include a letter from the required state or district IHE coordinating entity that provides evidence of this commitment.

Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying each IHE consortium member, including the IHEs and the IHE coordinating entity, will receive zero points for this rating factor.

(ii) Evidence-based Design for Consortium Applicants (3 points)

Applicants must conduct a research review to support the proposed program design, clearly describe the evidence on which the proposed education and training strategies are based, and describe how the evidence influenced the design of the program to improve education and employment outcomes.

- Clear description of the extent to which the evidence cited for specific strategies chosen is strong and credible (citing strong/high or moderate evidence of effectiveness for existing strategies or preliminary research findings indicating evidence of promise, related research findings, or strong theory for new strategies). (1 point)
- Convincing explanation of the extent to which the evidence will be embedded in the design and delivery of the program, including identifying whether the project will replicate existing evidence-based design, development, or delivery strategies or implement innovative or new strategies. (2 points)

(iii) Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement for Consortium Applicants (3 points)

Applicants must clearly identify how they will implement successful sector strategies. These sector strategies must focus on addressing employers' workforce needs by expanding or improving grantees' education and training programs based on the use of labor market information. Grantees will ensure that the required employer partner(s) actively engage in designing and implementing the project. To demonstrate employer and industry engagement, applicants must provide the following:

- Thorough explanation and a plausible plan for how the sector partnerships with business and industry leaders and the workforce development system will provide an effective pipeline of talent in the target industry sector(s) by aligning the workforce development system and training programs with comprehensive sector-based career pathways. (1 point)
- Comprehensive description of the roles of the required industry association or of each of the three required employers, and the specific and quantifiable contributions they will provide to support the goals of the project. Grantees will ensure that they are actively

engaging the required employer partner(s) in implementing the sector strategy within several key areas: (1) providing leadership to the project in setting strategic direction; (2) informing the identification and mapping the necessary skills and competencies for the program(s); (3) providing work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and apprenticeship; (4) assisting with curriculum development and program design; (5) where appropriate, informing the design of an assessment or validating credentials that will address industry skill needs; and (6) providing resources, such as mentors, the donation of equipment, or other contributions to support the proposed project. (1 point)

- Clear documentation of employer partners' roles and contributions to the project as described in Section III.A.3.d. that convincingly demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying an industry association or at least three employer partners will receive zero points for this rating factor. (1 point)

(iv) Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies for Consortium Applicants (3 points)

Applicants must identify existing career pathway program(s) that incorporate a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies, and integrate academic and occupational skills training. The proposal must have the following:

- Detailed and compelling explanation of the key strategies the grantee will deploy to enable faster credentialing and entrance into the workforce for program participants. This must include a plausible plan for how the proposed education and career-focused training programs will enable participants to accelerate completion of coursework, including a thorough description of the degree to which the applicant incorporates advanced technology into the program design and delivery in innovative and effective ways, such as interactive simulations, digital tutors, and other promising technology interventions. (1 point)
- Clear identification of the specific services and career guidance that the program will provide; the applicant must also identify the specific barriers to program retention, completion, and employment that the program will address through comprehensive and personalized student services and career guidance. (1 point)
- Thorough description of and plausible plan for how the project will support the transferability and articulation of noncredit courses and academic credit across programs and institutions that will create career pathways for workers to further their education. This includes linking with programs such as high school dual enrollment programs, postsecondary career and technical education, pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and other programs that lead to credit-bearing coursework and employment. The plan must describe the steps and approvals necessary for articulation of all SCC-funded courses offered by all institutions in the consortium to become effective, including the anticipated time these steps will take. (1 point)

(v) Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System for Consortium Applicants (3 points)

Applicants must provide a complete and clear description of their alignment with the workforce strategies identified through the WIOA State Plan, the Perkins Plan, and their Governor’s Economic Development plan, specifically as follows:

- Clear and convincing demonstration that the capacity-building strategies in the proposed SCC project will enable the IHE consortium to address the workforce goals and priorities of the WIOA State Plan for the state targeted through its project, including targeting one or more of the industry sectors or clusters in those plans and aligning education and training strategies for skills development credential attainment, and career pathway development with the WIOA State Plans and the Governor’s Economic Development plan;
- Description of the level of proposed collaboration between the applicant and the public workforce development system partners to create and implement a comprehensive strategy of responding to the labor market in determining the skills needs of employers and the suitability of individuals for training and the attainment of associated credentials; and
- Documentation of the extent to which the applicant engages the workforce development system partners in the proposed systems change and leverages the workforce development system’s demonstrated experience in improving employment-related skills and involvement in initiatives to help address workers’ barriers to employment. This includes evidence that the state WDB or a few WDBs are involved in the development and implementation of the grant project. Applicant must demonstrate WDB engagement in the form of documentation described in Section III.A.3.d. that convincingly demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation identifying at least one workforce development system partner will receive zero points for this rating factor.

(vi) Innovative Systems Change (for Consortium Applicants) (4 points)

As specified in Section I.A.1.d) Core Element 5, applicants must propose to deepen their community college capacity-building efforts by choosing one of the following two program design options:

- **Option A:** Accelerated Learning Pathways
- **Option B:** Statewide Integrated Data and Use

To achieve full points, all applicants, regardless of which option they choose, must address the following factors:

- (a) Complete, detailed description of the option that the applicants will implement, with demonstrated alignment with the required logic model and system change performance outcomes the applicant described elsewhere. Applicants must address the following specific factor related to the selected Option:
- Option A: Convincing demonstration that the applicant is advancing its career pathways systems through a framework for organizing, integrating, and delivering programs and services that connect with employer needs.
 - Option B: Convincing demonstration of the technical feasibility of addressing this option, including the feasibility of enhancing and linking technologies and systems, as appropriate.
- (b) Convincing demonstration that the proposed project will lead to sustained enhancements to college programming across the state and/or district. Applicants will thoroughly describe how all consortium members will implement the proposed activities during the grant period. Applicants will also thoroughly describe how these IHEs will institutionalize these activities into their overall, non-grant funded education and training activities, enabling them to continue providing similar activities with non-grant resources when the grant ends.

(vii) Project Work Plan for Consortium Applicants (2 points)

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete identification of a comprehensive work plan for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic milestones, which must be submitted as an attachment. A sample work plan table can be found in Appendix I: Work Plan Table. Applicants must base the work plan on the Systems Change Performance Outcomes described in Section IV.B.3.b)ii), and thoroughly describe the key milestones and deliverables necessary to accomplishing each outcome. Milestones are key markers of grant progress; these are typically expressed in the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development. Deliverables are typically expressed in the form of a product.

Applicants must also include in the work plan the milestones and deliverables related to the required third-party evaluation, which are listed in Section I.A.3.

In addition, the applicant must demonstrate the capacity to manage the project by detailing the consortium members responsible for supporting each milestone/deliverable. The Department will use the Systems Change Performance Outcomes identified above, as well as the key milestones and deliverables in the work plan, to monitor grants.

To receive full points in this section, applicants must provide the following:

- **Key Milestones and Deliverables:** Thoroughly describe the activities and deliverables necessary to accomplish the eight required outcomes and the required third-party evaluator milestones and deliverables. Milestones and deliverables must be reasonable based on the project design.

- **Responsible Parties and Deadlines:** For each milestone and deliverable, clearly describe the specific responsible entity(ies) by name (e.g., ABC CC, Employer X), and deadlines.

d) Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity for Consortium Applicants (8 points total)

The applicant must thoroughly describe the proposed organizational, administrative and fiscal, and procurement capacity it will provide in support of grant success.

(i) Capacity of Lead Applicant, Partnership Structure, and Administrative Controls and Systems for Consortium Applicants (5 points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the following: Detailed description demonstrating the lead applicant's capacity to effectively manage each component of the program, including project management and communication with partners and staff. The grantee must also demonstrate its capacity to establish effective procurement processes, systems, and procedures, and (if applicable) describe those for any partners who will be providing any services or conducting any activities under the grant. Include within this description the following:

- A detailed organizational chart that identifies the lead applicant, required partners, and any other proposed partners. The chart must describe the structure of the relationships of all partners involved in the project and be submitted as an attachment. The chart must also identify the proposed project's staffing plan to illustrate that partners have the capacity to support the lead applicant to carry out the proposed project.
- The staffing plan must describe the qualifications and experience of all executive and administrative staff, as well as other personnel such as board members, advisors, and consultants, to fulfill the needs and requirements of the proposed project. Such qualifications and experience must demonstrate the ability to manage a strategic partnership, including fiscal and administrative management, outreach, and promotion.

(ii) Financial, Data Collection, and Performance Reporting Systems for Consortium Applicants (3 Points)

Applicants must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements (as discussed in Section VI.C.). Please refer to Section VI.C. for reporting requirements for projects funded under this grant program.

Applicants must provide a comprehensive description of the existing or planned systems and processes that the lead applicant will use to provide timely and accurate financial data, performance reporting with respect to system change outcomes, and the required participant cohort data. The description must detail how these systems will be used to regularly assess progress towards the identified performance goals and that rigorous performance reporting will be taken into account in staffing and budgeting plans.

e) **Past Performance – Programmatic Capability for Consortium Applicants (28 points)**

- Full description of the lead applicant’s prior experience in leading consortia that convincingly demonstrates the ability to accomplish multi-pronged complex projects and an explanation of the results of the project(s). (10 points)
- Evidence of prior experience (within the last five years) of the lead applicant or a partner in managing a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements, leading capacity development and systems change efforts that were similar in size, scope, and relevant to the proposed project. (12 points)
- Describe in detail any evidence and experience of the lead applicant and partners in sustaining sector partnerships, sector work, or other sector-based activities following completion of a federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements related to sector partnerships, sectoral work, or other sector-based activities. This can include identifying a lead applicant’s or partner’s role in sustaining sectoral work following the completion of a TAACCCT grant or other sector strategy-focused grants and projects. (6 points)

f) **Budget and Budget Narrative for Consortium Applicants (2 points)**

The Budget and Budget Narrative will be used to evaluate this section. Please see Section IV.B.2 for information on the requirements. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

For full points, applicants must provide a detailed explanation of how the budget is reasonable and feasible based on the activities outlined in the Project Narrative, how the proposed expenditures will support the project activities and systems change, and whether key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve project results. In addition, this explanation must include a detailed description of the leveraged resources the project will generate to support grant activities, the specific activities they will cover, and the way the leveraged resources will support the capacity-building goals of the grant. Applicants must budget for the required third-party evaluation. (2 points)

g) **Priority Consideration: Opportunity Zones for Consortium Applicants (2 bonus points)**

To receive priority consideration of two bonus points, applicants must identify, in their abstract, by full 11-digit census tract number, that at least one census tract within an applicant’s physical service area is designated as a qualified Opportunity Zone. See Section I.C. Geographic Scope for further explanation. (2 bonus points)

4. Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, you must submit attachments. All attachments must be clearly labeled. We will exclude only those attachments listed below from the page limit. The

Budget and Budget Justification do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

You must not include additional materials such as resumés or general letters of support. You must submit your application in one package because documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to the application for review.

Save all files with descriptive file names of 50 characters or fewer and use only standard characters in file names: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, and underscore (_). File names may not include special characters (e.g. &, -, *, %, /, #), periods (.), blank spaces, or accent marks, and must be unique (e.g., no other attachment may have the same file name). You may use an underscore (example: My_Attached_File.pdf) to separate a file name.

a) **Required Attachments**

(i) **Abstract**

You must submit an up to three-page abstract summarizing the proposed project including, but not limited to, the scope of the project and proposed outcomes. Omission of the abstract will not result in your application being disqualified; the lack of the required information in the abstract, however, may impact scoring. See III.C.1 for a list of items that will result in the disqualification of your application. The abstract must include the following:

- The applicant’s organization name
- The project title
- The funding level requested
- The targeted industry sector(s)
- A description of the state or community college district(s) to be served, or the area served by a single institution
- The full 11-digit census tract number for an opportunity zone(s) to be served, if applicable
- Required and optional partners:
 - For consortiums including the lead applicant, members of the IHE consortium, the IHE coordinating entity, workforce development system partner(s), employer partner(s), and any optional partners
 - For single institutions, the workforce development system partner(s), employer partner(s), and any optional partners
- The option chosen for Core Element 5 (for consortium applicants)
- A brief summarization of the proposed project, describing the capacity that will be built as a result of the grant
- Industry-recognized credential(s) to be awarded
- Performance outcomes
 - For consortiums, the eight required Systems Change Performance Outcomes

- o For single institutions, the three required Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes
- A description of the participant cohort that will be tracked and reported (for single institutions)
- Public Contact information including name/title of individual, institution, address, phone, and email address

b) **Requested Attachments**

We request the following attachments, but their omission will not cause us to disqualify the application. The omission of the attachment will, however, impact scoring unless otherwise noted.

(i) **Documentation of Commitments**

Submit signed and dated documentation of commitment which can include **Letters of Commitment, Memoranda of Understanding, Organizational Charters, Partnership Agreements**, or other types of signed agreements between the applicant and required partner organizations and/or sub-grantees that propose to provide services to support the program model and lead to the identified outcomes. Specifically, documentation of commitments from the following required partners will be used in scoring: each of the IHE consortium members, the IHE coordinating entity, the workforce development system partner, and the employer partner(s). See Section IV.B.3.

When submitting in grants.gov, this documentation of commitment must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Documentation of Commitment.”

(ii) **Logic Model**

Submit the theory of change and the assessment approach required as part of the logic model in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3. See examples in Appendix F: Logic Model.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and specifically labeled “Logic Model.”

(iii) **Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Consortium Applicants only)**

Submit the projected performance outcomes information in a performance outcomes table. For an example, see Appendix H: Systems Change Performance Outcome Table.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Systems Change Performance Outcomes.”

(iv) **Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes Table (Single Institution Applicants only)**

Submit the projected performance outcomes information in a performance outcomes table. For an example, see Appendix G: Capacity-Building Performance Outcome Table.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes.”

(v) Project Work Plan

Submit the Project Work Plan required in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3, including key milestones and deliverables, due dates, responsible parties, and deadlines. See suggested template in Appendix I: Project Work Plan.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Project Work Plan.”

(vi) Organizational Chart

Submit the Organizational Chart as described in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3.d.i.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and specifically labeled “Organizational Chart.”

(vii) Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

If you are requesting indirect costs based on a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by your federal Cognizant Agency, then attach the most recently approved Agreement. (For more information, see Section IV.B.2. and Section IV.E.1.) This attachment does not impact scoring of the application.

When submitting in grants.gov, this document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “NICRA.”

(viii) Financial System Assessment Information

All applicants are requested to submit Funding Opportunity Announcement Financial System Assessment Information. See Section V.B.2 for a sample template and additional instructions. This attachment does not impact the scoring of the application.

C. SUBMISSION DATE, TIME, PROCESS, AND ADDRESS

We must receive your application by **[insert date XX days after the date of publication on Grants.gov]**. You must submit your application either electronically on <https://www.grants.gov> or in hard copy by mail or in hard copy by hand delivery (*including overnight delivery*) **no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to minimize the risk of late receipt. We will not review applications received after 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

1. Hardcopy Submission

All applications submitted in hardcopy by mail or hand delivery (including overnight delivery) must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time. Applicants submitting applications in hard copy by mail or hand delivery must submit a copy-ready version free of bindings, staples, or protruding tabs to ease in the reproduction of the application by DOL. Applicants submitting applications in hard copy must also include in the hard copy submission an identical electronic copy of the application on compact disc (CD) or flash drive. If we identify discrepancies between the hard copy submission and CD/flash drive copy, we will consider the application on the CD/flash drive as the official submission for evaluation purposes. Failure to provide identical applications in hardcopy and CD/flash drive format may have an impact on the overall evaluation.

If an application is submitted both by hard copy and through <https://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 <https://www.grants.gov>.

We will grant no exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice. Further, we will not accept documents submitted separately from the application, before or after the deadline, as part of the application.

Address mailed applications as follows:

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Grants Management
Attention: Melissa Abdullah, Grant Officer
Reference FOA-ETA-20-07
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716
Washington, D.C. 20210

Please note that mail decontamination procedures may delay mail delivery in the Washington D.C. area. We will receive hand-delivered applications at the above address at the **3rd Street Visitor Entrance**. All overnight delivery submissions will be considered to be hand-delivered and must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time.

2. Electronic Submission through Grants.gov

Applicants submitting applications through Grants.gov must ensure successful submission **no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date**. Grants.gov will subsequently validate the application.

The process can be complicated and time-consuming. You are strongly advised to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for time to resolve technical problems. Note that validation does not mean that your application has been accepted as complete or has been accepted for review by the agency. Rather, grants.gov verifies only the submission of certain parts of an application.

a) **How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**

Read through the registration process carefully before registering. These steps may take as long as four weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for timely electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application.

Applicants must follow the online instructions for registration at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. We recommend that you 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.

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 Point of Contact (POC) approval, establishes an Agency Organizational Representative (AOR). When an application is submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the AOR who submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The E-Biz POC must authorize the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of your organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

b) **How to Submit an Application to DOL via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For a complete workspace overview, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

When a registered applicant submits an application with Grants.gov, an electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. Grants.gov will send the applicant AOR an email acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) with the successful transmission of the application, serving as proof of timely submission. The applicant will receive two email messages to provide the status of the application's progress through the system.

- The first email will contain a tracking number and will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov.
- The second email will indicate the application has either been successfully validated or has been rejected due to errors.

Grants.gov will **reject applications if the applicant's registration in SAM is expired. Only applications that have been successfully submitted by the deadline and later successfully validated will be considered.** It is your responsibility 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, enough time should be allotted for submission (24-48 hours) 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 enough time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, DOL will not consider the application.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .rtf or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent DOL from considering the application. We will attempt to open the document, but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.

We strongly advise applicants to use the various tools and documents, including FAQs, which are available on the "Applicant Resources" page at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>.

We encourage new prospective applicants to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through WorkforceGPS at <https://strategies.workforcegps.org/resources/2014/08/11/16/32/applying-for-eta-competitive-grants-a-web-based-toolkit-for-prospective-applicants-438?p=1>.

To receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users, and other time-sensitive updates as information is available, you may subscribe to "Grants.gov Updates" at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>.

If you encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, contact one of the following:

- call 1-800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or
- email support@grants.gov.

The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week but closed on federal holidays. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number.

Late Applications

For applications submitted on Grants.gov, we will consider only applications successfully submitted no later than 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated. You take a significant risk by waiting to the last day to submit through Grants.gov.

We will not consider any hard copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice, unless we receive it 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, you should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Failure to adhere to these instructions will be a basis for a determination that the application was not filed timely and will not be considered. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt.

D. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

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

E. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

All proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the Cost Principles, now found in the Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), codified at 2 CFR Part 200 and at 2 CFR Part 2900 (Uniform Guidance-DOL specific). Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the Cost Principles or other conditions contained in the grant. Applicants, whether successful or not, will not be entitled to reimbursement of pre-award costs.

1. Indirect Costs

As specified in the Uniform Guidance 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 is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether federally-assisted or not. You have two options to claim reimbursement of indirect costs.

Option 1: You may use a NICRA or Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) supplied by the federal Cognizant Agency. If you do not have a NICRA/CAP or have a pending NICRA/CAP, and in either case choose to include estimated indirect costs in your budget, at the time of award the Grant Officer will release funds in the amount of 10 percent of salaries and wages to support indirect costs. Within 90 days of award, you are required to submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal or CAP to your federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional indirect cost rate. (See Section IV.B.4. for more information on NICRA submission requirements.)

Option 2: Any organization that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, with the exceptions noted at 2 CFR 200.414(f) in the Cost Principles, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 for definition), which may be used indefinitely. If you choose this option, this methodology must be used consistently for all federal awards until such time as you choose to negotiate for an indirect cost rate, for which you may apply at any time. (See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for more information on use of the de minimis rate.)

2. Salary and Bonus Limitations

None of the funds appropriated under the heading “Employment and Training” in the appropriation statute(s) may be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. This limitation does not apply to contractors providing goods and services as defined in the Audit Requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance (see 2 CFR 200 Subpart F). Where states are recipients of such funds, states may establish a lower limit for salaries and bonuses of those receiving salaries and bonuses from subrecipients of such funds, taking into account factors including the relative cost of living in the state, the compensation levels for comparable state or local government employees, and the size of the organizations that administer federal programs involved including ETA programs. See Public Law 113-235, Division G, Title I, section 105, and TEGP number 05-06 for further clarification: https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2262.

3. Intellectual Property Rights

Pursuant to 2 CFR 2900.13, to ensure that the federal investment of DOL funds has as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials, the grantee will be required to license to the public all work created with the support of the grant under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) license. Work that must be licensed under

the CC BY 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 CC BY, please visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>.

Instructions for marking your work with CC BY can be found at https://wiki.creativecommons.org/Marking_your_work_with_a_CC_license.

Questions about CC BY as it applies to this specific funding opportunity should be submitted to the ETA Grants Management Specialist specified in Section VII.

Only work that is developed by the recipient in whole or in part with grant funds is required to be licensed under the CC BY 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 CC BY licensing requirement.

The purpose of the CC BY 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, the grantee is expected to respect all applicable federal laws and regulations, including those pertaining to the copyright and accessibility provisions of the Federal Rehabilitation Act.

Separate from the CC BY 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 (i) the copyright in all products developed under the grant, including a subaward or contract under the grant or subaward; and (ii) any rights of copyright to which the recipient, subrecipient, or a contractor purchases ownership under an award (including, but not limited to, curricula, training models, technical assistance products, and any related materials). Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. The grantee may not use federal funds to pay any royalty or license fee for use of a copyrighted work, or the cost of acquiring by purchase a copyright in a work, where the Department has a license or rights of free use in such work. If revenues are generated through selling products developed with grant funds, including intellectual property, DOL treats such revenues as program income. Such program income is added to the grant and must be expended for allowable grant activities.

If applicable, the following standard ETA disclaimer needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds.

“This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it.”

F. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. CRITERIA

We have instituted procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against which your application will be judged. The evaluation criteria are based on the information required in the application as described in Sections IV.B.2. (Project Budget) and IV.B.3. (Project Narrative). Reviewers will award points based on the evaluation criteria described below.

Section IV.B.3 (Project Narrative) of this FOA has several “section headers” (e.g. IV.B.3.a), Statement of Need). Each of these “section headers” of the Project Narrative may include one or more “criterion,” and each “criterion” includes one or more “rating factors,” which provide detailed specifications for the content and quality of the response to that criterion. Each of the rating factors have specific point values assigned. These point values are the number of points possible for the application to earn for the rating factor.

Note that there are two versions of the Project Narrative in Section IV.B.3., one for Single Institutions and one for Consortium Applicants. You should use only the version that applies to your application.

Criterion for Applicants	Points (maximum)
1. Statement of Need (See Section IV.B.3.a. Statement of Need)	6 total
2. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (See Section IV.B.3.b. Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	36 total
3. Project Design (See Section IV.B.3.c. Project Design)	20 total
4. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.B.3.d. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	8 total
5. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.B.3.e. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	28 total
6. Budget and Budget Justification (See Section IV.B.2. Project Budget)	2 total
7. Opportunity Zones – Bonus Points (See Section I.C. Geographic Scope)	2 total
TOTAL	102

Standards for Evaluating the Applicant’s Response to each Requirement

Section IV.B.3, Project Narrative, provides a detailed explanation of the information an application must include (e.g., a comprehensive work plan for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic dates). Reviewers will rate each “rating factor” based on how fully and convincingly the applicant responds. For each “rating factor” under each “criterion,” panelists will determine whether the applicant thoroughly meets, partially meets, or fails to meet the “rating factor,” unless otherwise noted in Section IV.B.3, based on the definitions below:

Standard Rating	Definition	Standard for Calculating Points
Thoroughly Meets	The application thoroughly responds to the rating factor and fully and convincingly satisfies all of the stated specifications.	Full Points
Partially Meets	The application responds incompletely to the rating factor or the application convincingly satisfies some, but not all, of the stated specifications.	Half Points
Fails to Meet	The application does not respond to the rating factor or the application does respond to the rating factor but does not convincingly satisfy any of the stated specifications.	Zero Points

In order to receive the maximum points for each rating factor, applicants must provide a response to the requirement that fully describes the proposed program design and demonstrates the quality of approach, rather than simply re-stating a commitment to perform prescribed activities. In other words, applicants must describe why their proposal is the best strategy and how they will implement it, rather than that the strategy contains elements that conform to the requirements of this FOA.

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Merit Review and Selection Process

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria to determine the merit of applications. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this FOA. Up to 102 points may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses provided. The final scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selection of applications for funding. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to take into consideration other relevant factors when applicable. Such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds, representation among projects for Career Pathway Systems Change and for Statewide Data Use/Integration, and other relevant factors. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to their attention.

The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussion with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussion, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <https://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

2. Risk Review Process

Prior to making an award, ETA will review information available through various sources, including its own records and any OMB-designated repository of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), Dun and Bradstreet, and “Do Not Pay.” Additionally, ETA will comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 180 codified at 2 CFR Part 2998 (Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension). This risk evaluation may incorporate results of the evaluation of the applicant’s eligibility (application screening) or the quality of its application (merit review). If ETA determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. Criteria to be evaluated include the following:

- i. Financial stability;
- ii. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Uniform Grant Guidance;
- iii. History of performance. The applicant’s record in managing awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, if it is a prior recipient of such federal awards, including timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements and, if applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
- iv. Reports and findings from audits performed under Subpart F–Audit Requirements of the Uniform Grant Guidance or the reports and findings of any other available audits and monitoring reports containing findings, issues of non-compliance, or questioned costs;
- v. The applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, and other requirements imposed on recipients.

NOTE: As part of ETA’s Risk Review process, the Grant Officer will determine the following:

- If the applicant had any restriction on spending for any ETA grant due to adverse monitoring findings; or
- If the applicant received a High Risk determination in accordance with TEGL 23-15.

Depending on the severity of the findings and whether the findings were resolved, the Grant Officer may, at their discretion, elect not to fund the applicant for a grant award regardless of the applicant’s score in the competition.

All applicants are requested to submit the following information as an attachment to their application (suggested template below) for ETA to assess the applicant’s Financial System. This information will be taken into account as one component of ETA’s Risk Review Process. Applicants may use the suggested template or answer the questions in a separate attachment. It

is unlikely that an organization will be able to manage a federal grant without the following system/processes in place. Applicants are expected to have these in place before applying for a grant with ETA.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (ETA) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM ASSESSMENT		
SECTION A: PURPOSE		
<p>The financial responsibility of grantees must be such that the grantee can properly discharge the public trust which accompanies the authority to expend public funds. Adequate administrative and financial systems including the accounting systems should meet the following criteria as contained in 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900.</p> <p>(1) Accounting records should provide information needed to adequately identify the receipt of funds under each grant awarded and the expenditure of funds for each grant.</p> <p>(2) Entries in accounting records should refer to subsidiary records and/or documentation which support the entry and which can be readily located.</p> <p>(3) The accounting system should provide accurate and current financial reporting information.</p> <p>(4) The accounting system should be integrated with an adequate system of internal controls to safeguard the funds and assets covered, check the accuracy and reliability of accounting data, promote operational efficiency, and encourage adherence to prescribed management policies.</p>		
SECTION B: GENERAL		
1. Complete the following items:		
a. When was the organization founded/incorporated (<i>month, day, year</i>)	b. Principal officers	Titles
c. Employer Identification Number:		
d. Number of Employees Full Time: Part Time:		
2. Is the organization or institution affiliated with any other organization: Yes No If yes, please provide details as to the nature of the company (for profit, nonprofit, LLC, etc) and if it provides services or products to the organization in relation to this grant.		3. Total Sales/Revenues in most recent accounting period. (<i>12 months</i>) \$
SECTION C: ACCOUNTING SYSTEM		
1. Has any Government Agency rendered an official written opinion concerning the adequacy of the accounting system for the collection, identification, and allocation of costs under Federal contracts/grants? Yes No		
a. If yes, provide name, and address of Agency performing review:	b. Attach a copy of the latest review and any subsequent correspondence, clearance documents, etc.	
	Note: If review occurred within the past three years, omit questions 2-8 of this Section and Section D.	
2. Which of the following best describes the accounting system:	State administered	Internally Developed
		Web-based
3. Does the accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each contract/grant?	Yes	No Not Sure

4. Does the accounting system provide for the recording of expenditures for each grant/contract by the component project and budget cost categories shown in the approved budget?	Yes	No	Not Sure
5. Are time distribution records maintained for an employee when his/her effort can be specifically identified to a particular cost objective?	Yes	No	Not Sure
6. If the organization proposes an overhead rate, does the accounting system provide for the segregation of direct and indirect expenses?	Yes	No	Not Sure
7. Does the organization have an approved indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan?	Yes	No	Not Sure
If so, who approved it (Federal Cognizant Agency or a Pass-through Entity)? What are the effective dates?			
8. Does the accounting/financial system include budgetary controls to preclude incurring obligations in excess of:			
a. Total funds available for a grant?	Yes	No	Not Sure
b. Total funds available for a budget cost category (e.g. Personnel, Travel, etc)?	Yes	No	Not Sure
9. Does the organization or institution have an internal control structure that would provide reasonable assurance that the grant funds, assets, and systems are safeguarded?	Yes	No	Not Sure
SECTION D: FINANCIAL STABILITY			
1. Is there any legal matter or an ongoing financial concern that may impact the organization's ability to manage and administer the grant? Yes No If yes, please explain briefly.			
SECTION E: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS			
1. Did an independent certified public accountant (CPA) ever examine the financial statements? Yes No			
2. If an independent CPA review was performed please attach a copy of their latest report and any management letters issued. Enclosed N / A			
3. If an independent CPA was engaged to perform a review and no report was issued, please provide details and an explanation below:			
SECTION F: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION			
1. Use this space for any additional information (<i>indicate section and item numbers if a continuation</i>)			

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

All award notifications will be posted on the ETA Homepage at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/>. 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 application.

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

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

1. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees will be subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the OMB Uniform Guidance, and the terms and conditions of the award. The grant(s) awarded under this FOA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions.

- i. Non-Profit Organizations, Educational Institutions, For-profit entities and State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments—2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and 2 CFR Part 2900 (DOL's Supplement to 2 CFR Part 200).
- ii. All recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law No. 113-328, 128 Stat. 1425 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. 3101 et. seq.) and the applicable provisions of the regulations at 20 CFR 675 et. seq. Note that 20 CFR part 683 (Administrative Provisions) allows unsuccessful applicants to file administrative appeals.
- iii. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 2 CFR Part 180 (OMB Guidance to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)), and, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200 (Audit Requirements).
- iv. 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.
- v. 29 CFR Part 31—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Labor—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- vi. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

- vii. 29 CFR Part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- viii. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- ix. 29 CFR Part 38 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- x. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.
- xi. The Department of Labor will follow the procedures outlined in the Department’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations (29 CFR Part 70). 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. See generally 5 U.S.C. § 552; 29 CFR Part 70.
- xii. Standard Grant Terms and Conditions of Award—see the following link:
<https://www.doleta.gov/grants/resources.cfm>.

2. Other Legal Requirements

a) Religious Activities

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, applies to all federal law and its implementation. If an applicant 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 this grant solicitation and maintain that hiring practice. If a faith-based organization is awarded a grant, the organization will be provided with more information.

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 2 CFR 200.450 for more information).

c) Transparency Act Requirements

You must ensure that you have 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 the Government Funding Transparency Act of 2008, Pub. Law 110-252, Title VI, Chap. 2, Sec. 6202), as follows.

- Except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under sub-paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, you must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to

comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, should you receive funding.

- Upon award, you 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 <https://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 (e.g., unrelated to any 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.

d) Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Applicants submitting applications in response to this FOA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the Department of Labor and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order. By submitting an application, you are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable federal law and [TEGL 39-11](#) (issued June 28, 2012). All such activity conducted by ETA and/or recipient(s) will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal laws.

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

- i. You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DOL/ETA funded grants is securely transmitted.
- ii. To ensure that such PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, all PII and other sensitive data transmitted via e-mail or stored on CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. You must not e-mail unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including ETA or contractors.
- iii. You must take the steps necessary to ensure the privacy of all PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals and to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure. You must maintain such PII in accordance with the ETA standards for information security described in TEGL NO. 39-11 and any updates to such standards we provide to you. Grantees who wish to obtain more information on data security should contact their Federal Project Officer.

- iv. You must ensure that any PII used during the performance of your grant has been obtained in conformity with applicable federal and state laws governing the confidentiality of information.
- v. You further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through your ETA grant must be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times and the data will be processed using recipient-issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by ETA. Accessing, processing, and storing of ETA grant PII data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations, (e.g., employee's home), and non-recipient managed IT services, (e.g., Yahoo mail), is strictly prohibited unless approved by ETA.
- vi. Your employees and other personnel who will have access to sensitive/confidential/proprietary/private data must be advised of the confidential nature of the information, the safeguards required to protect the information, and that there are civil and criminal sanctions for noncompliance with such safeguards that are contained in federal and state laws.
- vii. You must have policies and procedures in place under which your employees and other personnel, before being granted access to PII, acknowledge their understanding of the confidential nature of the data and the safeguards with which they must comply in their handling of such data, as well as the fact that they may be liable to civil and criminal sanctions for improper disclosure.
- viii. You must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
- ix. Access to any PII created by the ETA grant must be restricted to only those employees of the grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the scope of work in the grant agreement.
- x. All PII data must be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving such records by computer, remote terminal, or any other means. Data may be downloaded to, or maintained on, mobile or portable devices only if the data are encrypted using NIST validated software products based on FIPS 140-2 encryption. In addition, wage data may be accessed only from secure locations.
- xi. PII data obtained by the recipient through a request from ETA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor, except as permitted by the Grant Officer or by court order.
- xii. You must permit ETA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or conducting other investigations to assure that you are complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, you must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.
- xiii. You must retain data received from ETA only for the period of time required to use it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, you agree that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

e) **Record Retention**

You must follow federal guidelines on record retention, which require that you maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of at least three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report. See 2 CFR 200.333-.337 for more specific information, including information about the start of the record retention period for awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, and when the records must be retained for more than three years.

f) **Use of Contracts and Subawards**

You must abide by the following definitions of contract, contractor, subaward, and subrecipient.

Contract: Contract means a legal instrument by which a non-federal entity (defined as a state or local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), non-profit organization, for-profit entity, foreign public entity, or a foreign organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient) purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a federal award. The term as used in this FOA does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-federal entity considers it a contract, when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a federal award or subaward (see definition of Subaward below).

Contractor: Contractor means an entity that receives a contract as defined above in Contract.

Subaward: Subaward means an award provided by a pass-through entity (defined as a non-federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program) to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program. A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract.

Subrecipient: Subrecipient means a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program, but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other federal awards directly from a federal awarding agency.

You must follow the provisions at 2 CFR 200.330-.332 regarding subrecipient monitoring and management. Also see 2 CFR 200.308(c)(6) regarding prior approval requirements for subawards. When awarding subawards, you are required to comply with provisions on government-wide suspension and debarment found at 2 CFR Part 180 and codified at 2 CFR Part 2998.

g) Closeout of Grant Award

Any entity that receives an award under this Announcement must close its grant with ETA at the end of the final year of the grant. Information about this process may be found in ETA's Grant Closeout FAQ located at <https://www.doleta.gov/grants/docs/GCFAQ.pdf>.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

Except as specifically provided in this FOA, our acceptance of an application 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 Uniform Guidance requires that an entity's procurement procedures ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide full and open competition. If an application identifies a specific entity to provide goods or services, the award does not provide the justification or basis to sole-source the procurement (i.e., avoid competition).

4. Special Program Requirements

a) ETA Evaluation

In addition to the requirements for a third-party evaluation found in Section I.A.3, as a condition of grant award, grantees are required to participate in a national evaluation if undertaken by DOL. The evaluation may include an implementation assessment across grantees, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grantees, and a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. Conducting an impact analysis could involve random assignment (which involves random assignment of eligible participants into a treatment group that would receive program services or enhanced program services, or into control group(s) that would receive no program services or program services that are not enhanced). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor on participants, employers, and funding; (2) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, and operational and financial records, and any other relevant documents to calculate program costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services (including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants); and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of DOL.

b) Performance Goals

Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided, and failure to meet those outcomes may result in technical assistance or other intervention by ETA, and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with ETA.

C. REPORTING

You must meet DOL reporting requirements. Specifically, you must submit the reports and documents listed below to DOL electronically.

1. Quarterly Financial Reports

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired. Quarterly reports are due 45 days after the end of each calendar-year quarter. On the final Financial Status Report, you must include any subaward amounts so we can calculate final indirect costs, if applicable. You must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System and information and instructions will be provided to grantees. For other guidance on ETA's financial reporting, reference TEGl 02-16 and our webpage at https://www.doleta.gov/grants/financial_reporting.cfm.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly performance report within 45 days after the end of each calendar-year quarter. The report must include quarterly information on interim indicators and performance goals. The last quarterly progress report will serve as the grant's Final Performance Report. This report must provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant performance. Submission requirements, including guidance with respect to the requirement in this FOA to submit participant data for eight quarters, will be provided to grantees upon award. We will also provide you with guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis.

3. Quarterly Narrative Performance Reports

In addition to the Quarterly Performance Report, the grantee must submit the Joint Quarterly Narrative Performance Report Template (ETA 9179) progress report within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter during which the grant is within the period of performance for the award. The report includes quarterly information regarding accomplishments, including project success stories, upcoming grant activities, and promising approaches and processes, as well as progress toward performance outcomes, including updates on product, curricula, and training development.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information about this FOA, please contact Drew Canger, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at (202) 693-3769. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to canger.steven.a@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-20-07, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.doleta.gov/grants> and at <https://www.grants.gov>.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. WEB-BASED RESOURCES

DOL maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. These include the CareerOneStop portal (<https://www.careeronestop.org>), which provides national and state career information on occupations; the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (<https://online.onetcenter.org>), which provides occupational competency profiles; and America's Service Locator (<https://www.servicelocator.org>), which provides a directory of our nation's American Job Centers (formerly known as One-Stop Career Centers).

B. INDUSTRY COMPETENCY MODELS AND CAREER CLUSTERS

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

C. WORKFORCEGPS RESOURCES

We encourage you to view the information on workforce resources gathered through consultations with federal agency partners, industry stakeholders, educators, and local practitioners, and made available on WorkforceGPS at <https://workforcegps.org>.

We encourage you to view the online tutorial, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” available through WorkforceGPS at <https://strategies.workforcegps.org/resources/2014/08/11/16/32/applying-for-eta-competitive-grants-a-web-based-toolkit-for-prospective-applicants-438?p=1>.

We created Workforce System Strategies to make it easier for the public workforce development system and its partners to identify effective strategies and support improved customer outcomes. The collection highlights strategies informed by a wide range of evidence, such as experimental studies and implementation evaluations, as well as supporting resources, such as toolkits. We encourage you to review these resources by visiting <https://strategies.workforcegps.org>.

We created a technical assistance portal at <https://www.workforcegps.org/resources/browse?id=b8dd0aa1ecfb4b2282d6cd30c7248790> that contains online training and resources for fiscal and administrative issues. Online trainings available include, but are not limited to, Introduction to Grant Applications and Forms, Indirect Costs, Cost Principles, and Accrual Accounting.

D. SKILLSCOMMONS RESOURCES

SkillsCommons (<https://www.skillscommons.org>) offers an online library of curriculum and related training resources to obtain industry-recognized credentials in manufacturing, IT, healthcare, energy, and other industries. The website contains thousands of Open Educational Resources (OER) for job-driven workforce development, which were produced by grantees funded through DOL's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. Community colleges and other training providers across the nation can reuse, revise, redistribute, and reorganize the OER on SkillsCommons for institutional, industry, and individual use.

IX. OMB INFORMATION COLLECTION

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires July 31, 2022.

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, D.C. 20210. Comments may also be emailed to: DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND ONLY COMMENTS ABOUT THE BURDEN CAUSED BY THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED EARLIER IN THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. DOL will use the information collected through this "Funding Opportunity Announcement" to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicants best suited to perform the functions of the grant. This information is required to be considered for this grant.

Signed _____, 2020, in Washington, D.C. by:

XXXXX

Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

APPENDIX A: RESOURCES ON EVIDENCE-BASED DESIGN

As specified in Section I.A.1.a), applicants must base their program design on a level of evidence that is appropriate to the project proposed. Applicants who propose to replicate or adapt existing, evidence-based strategies should cite strong/high or moderate evidence of effectiveness from prior research to support the proposed project design. Applicants who propose to develop new, untested strategies should cite preliminary research findings, related research findings, and/or strong theory to support the design of the project.

The following clearinghouses contain reviews of research studies and provide ratings of the quality of the evidence within a subset of those studies. Applicants may use one or more of these clearinghouses to cite research supporting their program model or identify another clearinghouse or database that rates studies based on the strength of their design. Note that quality ratings reflect confidence that the study's results are caused by the interventions examined; the rating is not a measure of whether the findings are positive.

- **U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR):** <https://clear.dol.gov/>.
CLEAR identifies and summarizes many types of research, including descriptive, implementation, and impact studies. In addition, CLEAR assesses the quality of research that looks at the effectiveness of particular policies and programs. See <https://clear.dol.gov/about>.
 - **Search the database** containing over 1,000 study profiles and synthesis reports: https://clear.dol.gov/study_database.
 - **Community college topic area:** https://clear.dol.gov/topic-area/community-college_
 - CLEAR reviews studies that examine the effectiveness of community college policies and programs that are intended to improve academic persistence, degree/certificate completion, and labor market outcomes of community college students. Each individual study profile includes a summary of the study, findings, and implications.
 - Note: Reviews of new causal studies published between 2015 and 2019 are posted.
 - **Causal evidence review guidelines:**
https://clear.dol.gov/sites/default/files/CLEAR_EvidenceGuidelines_V2.1.pdf.
 - CLEAR conducts a review for each study in the database and provides causal evidence ratings for those studies, or components of studies, that are intended to estimate the causal impact of a particular policy, intervention, program, or approach.
 - CLEAR has three evidence ratings (high, moderate, and low) for causal studies. The rating applies only to the strength of causal evidence, and not the overall quality of the study design, data, or analysis methods; that is, the higher the causal evidence rating, the stronger and more credible the evidence. (NOTE: The rating is not a rating of the intervention studied or a measure of

whether the findings are positive; such information is contained instead in the summary within the study profile.) For more information on these evidence ratings, please see the evidence guidelines for causal studies: <https://clear.dol.gov/reference-documents/causal-evidence-guidelines-version-21>.

- **Implementation study review guidelines:**
https://clear.dol.gov/sites/default/files/CLEAR_Operational%20Implementation%20Study%20Guidelines.pdf .
 - While CLEAR does not rate implementation studies, the guidelines outline technical qualities that should be present in such studies; CLEAR reviews implementation studies according to these guidelines to assess whether the study findings are accurate and appropriate for the design.
- **U.S. Department of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse (WWC):**
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/WhatWeDo> .
WWC reviews the existing research on different *programs, products, practices, and policies* in education. It uses a systematic review process to identify all of the research on an intervention, assesses the quality of each study, and summarizes the findings from the high-quality studies. See <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>.
 - **Evidence tiers:** WWC provides a rating of the quality of the evidence using Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) tiers for strong and moderate evidence of effectiveness. See https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/multimedia/ESSA_508c_Infographic.pdf.
 - **Procedures and Standards Handbooks:** <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks> .
 - Note that Version 4.1 of the Handbooks contain the most up-to-date standards used by the WWC for reviewing studies.
 - **Review of Individual Studies:** Use this search page to find *individual studies* that have been reviewed by the WWC and categorized into ESSA evidence tiers: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies#/OnlyStudiesWithPositiveEffects:false,SetNumber:1>.
 - This search page also contains video guides on how to use the database and find information on studies reviewed by WWC.
 - **Studies of distance learning:** The WWC is compiling research about distance learning programs and practices. See <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DistanceLearningStudy>.
 - Rapid review: <https://ies.ed.gov/blogs/ncee/post/seeking-your-help-in-learning-more-about-what-works-in-distance-education-a-rapid-evidence-synthesis>.
- **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services’ Pathways to Work Evidence Clearinghouse (Pathways Clearinghouse):**
<https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/>

The Pathways Clearinghouse identifies interventions that aim to improve employment outcomes, reduce employment challenges, and support self-sufficiency for low-income populations, especially Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other public program recipients. The Pathways Clearinghouse systematically evaluates and summarizes the evidence of their effectiveness, and includes 161 interventions and 216 studies to date.

- **Study Search:** Find individual studies that have been reviewed by the Pathways Clearinghouse. <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/studies>.
 - **Find Interventions that Work:** Identify, explore, and compare the effectiveness of interventions using a variety of filters to identify different features of interventions. <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/find-interventions>.
 - **Ratings:** The Pathways Clearinghouse assigns a variety of ratings to characterize *findings, studies, and interventions*. For example, study quality ratings (high, moderate, low) assess the strength of a study's design. For more information on the ratings, see the **Protocol**, which details the methods and standards used to conduct Pathways Clearinghouse reviews. <https://pathwaystowork.acf.hhs.gov/publications>.
 - **OPRE's Employment Strategies for Low-Income Adults Review (ESER):** The Pathways Clearinghouse builds on the work of ESER by including newer and wider reaching research and assessing the effectiveness of the interventions reviewed. See <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/employment-and-training-evidence-review>.
- **USDOL Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) - Completed Reports:**
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/completedstudies>
A source for completed studies that have advanced understanding of the U.S. labor market and its role in the global economy.
 - New studies related to the Trade Adjustment Act Community Colleges and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant programs are expected to be released in June 2020.
 - **USDOL Office of Policy Development and Research, Division of Research and Evaluation (DRE):**
<https://www.doleta.gov/research/>
In collaboration with USDOL's Chief Evaluation Office, DRE is committed to supporting high-quality independent evaluations and institutionalizing an evidence-based culture at the Department. DRE provides the following research- and evaluation-related resources, among others:
 - **Research Publication Database:** A searchable database containing over 400 labor-related publications. See <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/search.cfm?CFID=65134601&CFTOKEN=21336891>.
 - **Evaluation and Research Hub (Eval Hub):** A community point of access to support workforce development professionals in their efforts to use evaluations to improve workforce system services and strategies and to choose evaluations and research to help inform program policies and evidence-based practices. See <https://evalhub.workforcegps.org/>.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES ON SECTOR STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Sector Strategy Implementation Framework

ETA Sector Strategies Technical Assistance Initiative, 2016

<https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/04/12/13/53/Sector-Strategies-Implementation-Framework>.

Nine Year Gains: Project QUEST's Continuing Impact

Anne Roder and Mark Elliott

Economic Mobility Corporation, 2019

https://economicmobilitycorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NineYearGains_web.pdf.

The Employer Perspectives Study: Insights on How to Build and Maintain Strong Employer-College Partnerships. Round 4 TAACCCT Evaluation

Molly Scott, Lauren Eyster, Yipeng Su, David Blount, Alex Trutko, Adrienne Smith, and Karen Gardiner

Abt Associates, Urban Institute, Capital Research Corporation, and The George Washington University, 2018

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Employer-Perspectives-Study-Report-Round-Final.pdf>.

Long-Term Effects of a Sectoral Advancement Strategy: Costs, Benefits, and Impacts from the WorkAdvance Demonstration

Kelsey Schaberg and David H. Greenberg

MDRC, 2020

https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/WorkAdvance_5-Year_Report-Final.pdf.

Bridging the Opportunity Divide for Low-Income Youth: Implementation and Early Impacts of the Year Up Program

David Fein and Jill Hamadyk

Abt Associates Inc., 2018

<https://www.yearup.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Year-Up-PACE-Full-Report-2018.pdf>.

Promoting the Adoption of Sector Strategies by Workforce Development Boards Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Heath Prince, Chris King, and Sarah Oldmixon

Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources at the University of Texas at Austin, 2017

https://raymarshallcenter.org/files/2017/05/Sector_Strategy_Final_Report_March_2017.pdf.
The Goals and Dimensions of Employer Engagement in Workforce Development Programs.
Shayne Spaulding and Ananda Martin-Caughey
Urban Institute, 2015

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/76286/2000552-the-goals-and-dimensions-of-employer-engagement-in-workforce-development-programs_1.pdf.

A Resource Guide to Engaging Employers

Randall Wilson

Jobs for the Future, 2015

<https://jfforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/A-Resource-Guide-to-Employer-Engagement-011315.pdf>.

What Works In Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence

U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/jdt.pdf>.

State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policymakers

Lindsey Woolsey, Garrett Groves, Larry Good, and Eric Seleznow

The Woolsey Group, National Governors Association, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, National Skills Coalition, 2013

http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2_013/1301NGASSSReport.pdf.

APPENDIX C: RESOURCES ON CAREER PATHWAYS

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Increasing Community College Graduation Rates with a Proven Model: Three-Year Results from the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) Ohio Demonstration

Cynthia Miller, Camielle Headlam, Michelle S. Manno, and Dan Cullinan

MDRC, 2020

https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/ASAP_OH_3yr_Impact_Report_1.pdf.

Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 1.0) Impact Study: Three-Year Impacts Report

Laura R. Peck, Daniel Litwok, Douglas Walton, Eleanor Harvill, and Alan Werner

Abt Associates, 2019

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/hpog_three_year_impacts_nov_2019.pdf.

Estimating the Impact of Nation's Largest Single Investment in Community Colleges: Lessons and Limitations of a Meta-Analysis of TAACCCT Evaluations

Grant Blume, Debra Bragg, Elizabeth Mega, and Ivy Love

New America, 2019

<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/estimating-impact-taacct/>.

Washington State's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) Program in Three Colleges: Implementation and Early Impact Report (Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE))

Karin Martinson, Sung-Woo Cho, Karen Gardiner, and Asaph Glosser

Abt Associates and MEF Associates, 2018

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/i_best_implementation_and_early_impact_report_508.pdf.

Career Pathways Design Study Findings in Brief

Julie Strawn and Deena Schwartz

Abt Associates, 2018

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/1-Career-Pathways-Design-Study-Findings-in-Brief.pdf>.

Career Pathways Research and Evaluation Synthesis - Career Pathways Design Study

Deena Schwartz, Julie Strawn, and Maureen Sarna

Abt Associates, 2018

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/2-Career-Pathways-Research-and-Evaluation-Synthesis.pdf>.

Career Pathways Implementation Synthesis - Career Pathways Design Study

Maureen Sarna Julie Strawn

Abt Associates, 2018

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/3-Career-Pathways-Implementation-Synthesis.pdf>.

Final Report: National Implementation Evaluation of the First Round Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 1.0)

Alan Werner, Deena Schwartz, Robin Koralek, Pamela Loprest and Nathan Sick,
Abt Associates and Urban Institute, 2018

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/final_nie_final_report_1_11_18_clean_v2_b508.pdf.

Accelerating Pathways to Careers for Adult Learners

JFF for U.S. Department of Labor, 2018

https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2018/11/09/20/13/Resource_Accelerated_Pathways_Adult_Learners.

What Works for Adult Learners: Lessons from rigorous career pathway evaluation studies for policy, practice, and future research

Debra D. Bragg with Barbara Endel, Nate Anderson, Lisa Soricone, and Erica Acevedo
What Works for Adult Learners National Panel, 2017

https://www.allies4innovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/AECF-Findings-Brief_120717FINAL.pdf.

Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development

Manhattan Strategy Group for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2016

https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkit.

Doubling Graduation Rates: Three-Year Effects of CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) for Developmental Education Students

Susan Scrivener, Michael J. Weiss, Alyssa Ratledge, Timothy Rudd, Colleen Sommo, and Hannah Fresques

MDRC, 2015

https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/doubling_graduation_rates_fr.pdf.

Integrated and Contextualized Remediation

New Evidence on Integrated Career Pathways: Final Impact Report for Accelerating Opportunity

Theresa Anderson, Daniel Kuehn, Lauren Eyster, Burt Barnow, and Robert I. Lerman
Urban Institute, 2017
https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/91436/ao_final_impacts.pdf.

Acceleration Strategies Series: Underprepared Learners Practice Brief
JFF for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2016
https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/05/02/13/02/Resource_Acceleration_Strategies_Series.

Competency-Based Education

Next-Generation CBE: Designing Competency-Based Education for Underprepared College Learners (Series)
Jobs for the Future
<https://www.jff.org/resources/next-generation-cbe-designing-competency-based-education-underprepared-college-learners/>.

Outcomes of Competency-Based Education in Community Colleges: Summative Findings from the Evaluation of a TAACCCT Grant
Ann E. Person, Jaime Thomas, Julie Bruch with Alexander Johann, and Nikhail Maestas
Mathematica Policy Research, 2016
https://www.taacccteval.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Sinclair-Community-College_Final-Eval-Report.pdf.

Modularized Curriculum and Developmental Education

A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Modularized, Computer-Assisted, Self-Paced Approach to Developmental Math
Michael J. Weiss and Camielle Headlam
MDRC, 2018
<https://www.mdrc.org/publication/randomized-controlled-trial-modularized-computer-assisted-self-paced-approach>.

Improved Student Services and Counseling

Providing Public Workforce Services to Job Seekers: 30-month Impact Findings on the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs
Kenneth Fortson, Dana Rotz, Paul Berkander, Annalisa Mastri, Peter Schochet, Linda Rosenberg, Sheena McConnell, and Ronald D'Amico
Mathematica Policy Research, 2017
https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2018-04_1-WIA-30mo-main-rpt.pdf.

Navigating the Journey: Encouraging Student Progress through Enhanced Support Services in TAACCCT

Ivy Love

New America, 2019

<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/navigating-the-journey/>.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)/Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

Connecting Adults to College with Credit for Prior Learning

Iris Palmer and Sophie Nguyen

New America, 2019

[https://d1y8sb8igg2f8e.cloudfront.net/documents/](https://d1y8sb8igg2f8e.cloudfront.net/documents/Connecting_Adults_to_College_with_Credit_for_Prior_Learning_2019-10-03_144605.pdf)

[Connecting_Adults_to_College_with_Credit_for_Prior_Learning_2019-10-03_144605.pdf](https://d1y8sb8igg2f8e.cloudfront.net/documents/Connecting_Adults_to_College_with_Credit_for_Prior_Learning_2019-10-03_144605.pdf).

Acceleration Strategies Series: Prior Learning Assessment Practice Brief

JFF for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2016

[https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/05/02/13/02/](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/05/02/13/02/Resource_Acceleration_Strategies_Series)

[Resource_Acceleration_Strategies_Series](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/05/02/13/02/Resource_Acceleration_Strategies_Series).

Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success: A 48-Institution Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes

Rebecca Klein-Collins

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 2010

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED524753.pdf>.

Guided Pathways

Redesigning Your College Through Guided Pathways Lessons on Managing Whole-College Reform From the AACC Pathways Project

Davis Jenkins, Hana Lahr, Amy E. Brown, and Amy Mazzariello

Community College Research Center, 2019

<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/redesigning-your-college-guided-pathways.pdf>.

What We Are Learning About Guided Pathways

Davis Jenkins, Hana Lahr, John Fink, and Elizabeth Ganga

Community College Research Center, 2018

<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/what-we-are-learning-guided-pathways.html>.

Better Together: Career and Guided Pathways

Judy Mortrude

CLASP, 2018

<https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/09/2018careerandguidedpathways.pdf>.

Pathways to Align Career and Educational Choices for Adult Learners

Andrew Ippolito

Achieving the Dream, 2018

<https://www.achievingthedream.org/resource/17338/pathways-to-align-career-and-educational-choices-for-adult-learners>.

A note about the relationship between career and guided pathways

There is sometimes confusion in the field regarding whether and, if so, how the guided pathways and career pathways movements align, but it is important to stress that the approaches are “complementary, not duplicative” (Mortrude, p. 2). Based in part on the common view of guided pathways as an intra-institutional redesign effort and of career pathways as a workforce development strategy, the two reform movements often unfold along different tracks, with the former occurring in academic departments and student services and the latter in the college’s workforce or adult education areas. Yet, the two strategies possess many similarities, including a “shared focus on integrated education and training—linked with a sector strategy as well as support services for target populations” (ibid., p.6). Indeed, “from the student’s perspective, there is no true distinction between a ‘career pathway’ and a ‘guided pathway’” (Ippolito, p. 2).

APPENDIX D: RESOURCES ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Lessons from MDRC’s Postsecondary Research: Toward Better College Completion Rates (Issue Brief)

MDRC, 2020

https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/2020_PSE_Lessons_Learned_final.pdf.

From Programs to System Change Series

JFF for U.S. Department of Labor, 2019

[https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/03/02/19/41/](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/03/02/19/41/Resource_From_Programs_to_System_Change_Series)

[Resource_From_Programs_to_System_Change_Series](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/03/02/19/41/Resource_From_Programs_to_System_Change_Series).

Changing Workforce Systems—A Framework for Describing and Measuring Systems Change

Hamutal Bernstein and Ananda Martin-Caughey

Urban Institute, 2017

<https://www.urban.org/research/publication/changing-workforce-systems>.

Systems Change under the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) Program

Hamutal Bernstein, Lauren Eyster, Jennifer Yahner, Stephanie Owen, and Pamela Loprest
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016

https://www.abtassociates.com/sites/default/files/migrated_files/aa1d7ffd-4c9b-44a6-bbe0-65ab15f7631a.pdf.

Federal Investments in Job Training at Community Colleges

Lauren Eyster, Christin Durham, and Theresa Anderson

Urban Institute, 2016

[https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/86241/](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/86241/federal_investments_in_job_training_at_community_colleges_2.pdf)

[federal_investments_in_job_training_at_community_colleges_2.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/86241/federal_investments_in_job_training_at_community_colleges_2.pdf).

TAACCCT Sustainability Toolkit

JFF for U.S. Department of Labor, 2016

[https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/07/25/13/22/](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/07/25/13/22/Resource_TAACCCTSustainabilityToolkit)

[Resource_TAACCCTSustainabilityToolkit](https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/07/25/13/22/Resource_TAACCCTSustainabilityToolkit).

Systems Change in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions

Lisa Soricone

National Fund for Workforce Solutions, 2015

<https://jfforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Systems-Change-in-the-National-Fund-120415.pdf>.

APPENDIX E: RESOURCES ON STATEWIDE DATA INTEGRATION AND USE

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Workforce Connect, http://www.itsc.org/Pages/WF_Connect.aspx, is a “software suite that helps states implement WIOA by connecting partners and providing a seamless experience for job seekers. By acting as the “common front door” for workforce agencies’ programs and systems—including UI, employment services and workforce/training--states can transform how they deliver services under WIOA. Workforce Connect was designed by ITSC and three pilot states—New York, Mississippi, and Oregon—through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. The end result is a customizable software suite available to all states that enhances the overall user experience while providing agencies with the necessary information.” Subsequent phases of WorkforceConnect available for state use include My Reemployment Plan, an interactive online tool for job seekers focused on enhanced job search, and a WIOA Common Case File that can support the introduction of integrated case management across employment, education, and human services programs.

Training Provider Outcomes Toolkit (TPOT), <http://documentation.dataatwork.org/tpot/>, is a “collection of tools for securely collecting, connecting, analyzing, aggregating, and publishing data on wage and employment outcomes for education and training participants.”

New York University (NYU) Administrative Data Research Facility (ADRF), <https://cusp.nyu.edu/coleridge-initiative/>, “provides a secure platform to host confidential micro-data. The ADRF is designed to promote collaboration, facilitate documentation, and provide information about use to data stewards.”

Credential Engine, <https://credentialengine.org/>, is a nonprofit that seeks to “create credential transparency, reveal the credential marketplace, increase credential literacy, and empower everyone to make more informed decisions about credentials and their value.” Credential Engine “provides a suite of web-based services that creates for the first time a centralized Credential Registry to house up-to-date information about all credentials, a common description language to enable credential comparability, and a platform to support customized applications to search and retrieve information about credentials.”

DXtera Institute, <http://dxtera.org/>, is a “nonprofit educational organization focused on promoting student success and increasing college completion.” The organization’s “integration framework is a software solution designed to facilitate secure, extensible and scalable real-time information exchange between academic and student support services and applications. The

framework is designed to allow educational institutions, government entities, and private organizations to deliver more direct and real-time information to their students, communities, and customers through next generation user applications.”

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Postsecondary Success,

<https://postsecondary.gatesfoundation.org/areas-of-focus/our-policy-advocacy/data-information/data-information-resources/>, provides links to higher education data and information resources.

National Skill Coalition, Smart Data for a Skilled Workforce,

<https://nationalskillscoalition.org/national-initiatives/workforce-data-quality-campaign>, provides links to resources on smart data polices, systems, and tools.

How Three State Use Data to Improve Student Job Outcomes and Meet Employer Needs

Josh Copus and Susan Chan Shifflett

Jobs for the Future, 2019

<https://collegeconnection.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/03/12/15/13/>

[Resource_Data_to_Improve_Student_Job_Outcomes_and_Employer_Needs.](#)

APPENDIX F: PROJECT DESIGN, MONITORING, AND ASSESSMENT PLAN – LOGIC MODEL

LOGIC MODEL

A Logic Model is intended to explicitly lay out the logical connections of a project’s design, detailing how the project will deliver results using grant-funded and leveraged resources, as available. The sections below provide information about the two parts of the required Logic Model for this FOA, described in Section IV.B.3.b)(i). The Department does not intend for this information to represent an exhaustive list of what could be included.

The two parts of the Logic Model are the following:

- o Theory of Change
- o Assessment Approach

For a detailed explanation and examples of developing and using logic models for results-based project design and management, see *Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development Element Six: Measure System Change and Performance* https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/-/media/Communities/careerpathways/Files/7_Element_6_100516.ashx.

Grantees may find and use other resources as well.

Part 1: Theory of Change

A theory of change identifies the problem to be solved (based on the applicant’s gap analysis), the strategies to employ, the outcomes in the context of outside factors, the community in which the system or program is operating, and the assumptions that inform the implementation strategies. It can form the basis of assessing whether your model is accomplishing the anticipated outcomes or whether the components of the model need to be changed.

The theory of change is often represented graphically (see Template 2: Program Theory of Change on page 12 of the Career Pathways Toolkit for an example of a graphical theory of change). Your theory of change must include the following information:

- **Problem or Issue:** The problem the program(s) is attempting to solve or the issue(s) the program will address. The problem or issue must align with the gap analysis. See Section I.A.2 of the FOA.
- **Community Needs/Assets:** A brief summary of the needs and/or assets of the community that led to the design of a program or system to address the problem.

- **Desired Results (Outcomes):** Desired results, or vision of the future, are key because they describe what the project will achieve. Outcomes used in the logic model must be the same as the required three capacity-building performance outcomes for single applicants or the eight systems change performance outcomes for consortium applicants described in Section IV.B.3.b(ii) and documented in the outcomes worksheet (see Appendix G: Suggested Table for Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes or Appendix H: Suggested Table for Systems Change Performance Outcomes). Note that for the purposes of this FOA, DOL will be assessing performance based on the eight grantee-established outcomes. However, we encourage applicants to also identify short-term outcomes and long-term impacts, which may be shared as part of your logic model or further developed and used as part of the required third-party evaluation.
- **Influential Factors:** The factors that may influence change in the community.
- **Strategies:** Evidenced-based or “promising practices” that have helped communities achieve the intended results. As stated in Section I.A.1.a) Evidence-Based Strategies, all applicants will base their program design on evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed education and training strategies. Appendices A-D include resources that may be helpful in determining evidence-based strategies.
- **Assumptions:** The assumptions behind how and why the change strategies are applicable in the community.

Part 2: Assessment Approach

The assessment approach focuses on how the strategies identified in the theory of change will be assessed to determine whether they create the change described in the systems change performance outcomes. Identifying the following may lead to the identification of necessary program and/or system corrections.

- **Strategies:** The strategies identified in your Theory of Change.
- **Audience:** The intended audience for the strategies.
- **Questions:** Potential questions for the intended audience in order to validate the strategies.
- **Purpose:** How will the information gathered be used?

APPENDIX G: SUGGESTED TABLE FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES (SINGLE INSTITUTIONS)

This suggested table is for single institution applicants only. Note that only the outcomes required for single institutions are included here.

This FOA requires applicants to develop a theory of change and assessment approach as part of their logic model (see Section I.A.2 and Appendix F: Logic Model). A key aspect of this process is developing project outcomes. As described in Sections IV.B.3 and IV.B.4, respectively, single institution applicants must develop outcomes in three areas and submit a table (as an attachment) indicating specific project outcomes in each area. The table below is a sample format that applicants may use to present their outcomes. The Department expects that these three outcomes will flow from the assessment approach that applicants undertake, as outlined in their logic model.

Note that the term “baseline” in the table below refers to the existing education and career training programs and infrastructure in each area that the applicant proposes to develop or enhance, which the required gap analysis should reveal. The baseline can be quantitative (including “zero”) or a qualitative description of the current state. The term “target” describes, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, the desired results of the project’s intervention at the end of the grant period of performance.

The table below is a suggested format. Note that there are no required outcomes related to Core Element 1: Evidence-Based Design.

CORE ELEMENT #2: SECTOR STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT		
Outcome Area 2a: Increase in the level and depth of employer engagement and investment in educational and training programs		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 2a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #3: ENHANCED CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS AND ACCELERATED LEARNING STRATEGIES		
Outcome Area 3a: Design or implementation of new, accelerated instructional techniques or technologies, including the use of advanced online and technology-enabled learning		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 3a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #4: STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM		

Outcome Area 4a: Increase in program and policy alignment across systems and/or decrease in duplicative services or service gaps		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 4a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		

APPENDIX H: SUGGESTED TABLE FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES (CONSORTIUM APPLICANTS)

This suggested table is for Consortium applicants only.

This FOA requires applicants to develop a theory of change and assessment approach as part of their logic model (see Section I.A.2 and Appendix F: Logic Model). A key aspect of this process is developing project outcomes. As described in Sections IV.B.3 and IV.B.4, respectively, applicants must develop outcomes in eight areas and submit a table (as an attachment) indicating specific project outcomes in each area. The table below is a sample format that applicants may use to present their outcomes. As a reminder, applicants must list two target outcomes of successful capacity building/systems change for each Core Element, as described in Section IV. B.3.b)(ii). Regarding Core Element 5, consortium applicants need only include the target outcomes for the option that they select. The Department expects that these eight outcomes will flow from the assessment approach that applicants undertake, as outlined in their logic model.

Note that the term “baseline” in the table below refers to the existing education and career training programs and infrastructure in each area that the applicant proposes to develop or enhance, which the required gap analysis should reveal. The baseline can be quantitative (including “zero”) or a qualitative description of the current state. The term “target” describes, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, the desired results of the project’s intervention at the end of the grant period of performance.

The table below is a suggested format. There are no required outcomes for Core Element 1.

CORE ELEMENT #2: SECTOR STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT		
Outcome Area 2a: Increase in the level and depth of employer engagement and investment in educational and training programs		
Outcome Area 2b: Percent of employers that change policies to better support work-based learning opportunities and/or employment, retention, and advancement of career pathways participants		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 2a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
<i>Outcome 2b: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #3: ENHANCED CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS AND ACCELERATED LEARNING STRATEGIES		
Outcome Area 3a: Design or implementation of new, accelerated instructional techniques or technologies, including the use of advanced online and technology-enabled learning		

Outcome Area 3b: Measure of restructuring or alignment of educational and training programs based on local or regional labor market data		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 3a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
<i>Outcome 3b: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #4: STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM		
Outcome Area 4a: Increase in program and policy alignment across systems and/or decrease in duplicative services or service gaps		
Outcome Area 4b: Development of new and/or expanded partnerships among key system actors that results in streamlined or expanded services for participants		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 4a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
<i>Outcome 4b: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #5: INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS CHANGE		
Option A: Accelerated Learning Pathways		
Outcome Area 5a: Measure of removing significant systemic barriers career pathways participants		
Outcome Area 5b: Increase in linkages developed throughout a career pathway to encompass bridge programs, career and technical training programs, and work-based training		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 5a: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
<i>Outcome 5b: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
CORE ELEMENT #4: INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS CHANGE		
Option B: Statewide Data Integration and Use		
Outcome Area 5c: Increased access to available data on stakeholders' activities, outputs, and outcomes		
Outcome Area 5d: Evidence of effective data sharing and data management		
YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES	BASELINE(S)	TARGET(S)
<i>Outcome 5c: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		
<i>Outcome 5c: Insert your outcome from logic model</i>		

APPENDIX I: SUGGESTED PROJECT WORK PLAN FORMAT

Consortium applicants must use the eight (8) project outcomes associated with Core Elements 2-5 and listed in their Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (see Appendix H) as the basis of their project work plan. **Single institutions** must use the three (3) project outcomes listed in their Capacity-Building Performance Outcomes Table (see Appendix G). Specifically, single institutions must include outcomes for Outcome Areas 2a, 3a, and 4a (and may delete sections for outcomes that do not apply).

Both consortium and single institution applicants must include the required Third-Party Evaluation milestones in Section I.A.3. **Single institutions** must include milestones related to developing and implementing a tracking system for their Participant Cohort. The project work plan below is a suggested format; it is likely that applicants will include additional milestones and deliverables specific to their project design.

Working from these requirements, all applicants must develop project outputs associated with each outcome and include them in the work plan. While outcomes are the measurable results of the project, outputs are the direct products or deliverables of project activities. Applicants also may describe their outputs in terms of milestones, or key markers of grant progress, which typically take the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development, or as deliverables, which typically take the form of products.

For planning purposes, all applicants should identify key outputs (or deliverables and/or milestones) and the timeframe for achieving them. Applicants should also indicate the name of each SCC partner engaged in the output or deliverable, and designate which organization has the lead responsibility for producing the output.

Finally, the acronym SMART is a common acronym used to test whether an output is sound. Applicants should ensure that the outputs used in their work plans follow the SMART framework described here. Specifically, SMART outputs are as follows:

- **Specific:** Specifically and qualitatively describe the output (e.g., partnerships with local manufacturing-sector, small businesses).
- **Measureable:** Where possible, quantitatively describe the output in the “measure” column below (e.g. 10 new partnerships with manufacturing-sector small businesses).
- **Achievable:** Check that based on the award amount requested, resources available to be leveraged, and capacity of your organization and partners, you can realistically expect to achieve the output within the scope written in the work plan.
- **Relevant:** Check that achieving the output logically leads to and supports achieving the outcome with which it is associated.
- **Time-bound:** Include a timeframe for completing the output (e.g. “month 6” or “year 1”).

PROJECT WORK PLAN FOR [INSERT YOUR PROJECT TITLE/NAME]			
CORE ELEMENT #2: SECTOR STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT			
Outcome Area 2a: Increase in the level and depth of employer engagement and investment in educational and training programs			
<i>Outcome 2a: Insert your grant-specific project outcome from the applicable performance outcomes table (Appendix G or H), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 1</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			
Outcome Area 2b: Percent of employers that change policies to better support work-based learning opportunities and/or employment, retention, and advancement of career pathways participants			
<i>Outcome 2b: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 2</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

CORE ELEMENT #3: ENHANCED CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS AND ACCELERATED LEARNING STRATEGIES			
Outcome Area 3a: Design or implementation of new, accelerated instructional techniques or technologies, including the use of advanced online and technology-enabled learning			
<i>Outcome 3a: Insert your project outcome from the applicable performance outcomes table (Appendix G or H), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE

			PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 3</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			
Outcome Area 3b: Measure of restructuring or alignment of educational and training programs based on local or regional labor market data			
Outcome 3b: <i>Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 4</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

CORE ELEMENT #4: STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM			
Outcome Area 4a: Increase in program and policy alignment across systems and/or decrease in duplicative services or service gaps			
Outcome 4a: <i>Insert your project outcome from the applicable performance outcomes table (Appendix G or H), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 5</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			
Outcome Area 4b: Development of new and/or expanded partnerships among key system actors that results in streamlined or expanded services for participants			

Outcome 4b: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 6</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

CORE ELEMENT #5: INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS CHANGE Option A: Accelerated Learning Pathways

Outcome Area 5a: Measure of removing significant systemic barriers career pathways participants

Outcome 5a: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description

OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 7a</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

Outcome Area 5b: Increase in linkages developed throughout a career pathway to encompass bridge programs, career and technical training programs, and work-based training

Outcome 5b: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description

OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 8a</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

CORE ELEMENT #5: INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS CHANGE			
Option B: Statewide Data Integration and Use			
Outcome Area 5c: Increased access to available data on stakeholders' activities, outputs, and outcomes			
<i>Outcome 5c: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 7b</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			
Outcome Area 5d: Evidence of effective data sharing and data management			
<i>Outcome 5d: Insert your outcome from the Systems Change Performance Outcomes Table (Appendix I), including description</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for Outcome 8b</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

THIRD-PARTY EVALUATION			
See Section I.A.3. Third-Party Evaluation.			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
Submit a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for an implementation evaluation.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due date no later than Month 1</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Procure third-party evaluator for implementation evaluation.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due date no later than Month 6, or the earliest timing feasible under institutional procurement guidelines</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Submit a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from the evaluator, using guidance provided by the Department.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due date no later than Month 9</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Submit a Final Detailed Evaluation Design in collaboration with third-party evaluator.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due date no later than Month 12</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Ensure that third-party evaluator carries out the evaluation and completes all tasks and deliverables, and provides ongoing input and consultation if the evaluation uses an adaptive model.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates that reflect interim milestones during months 6-48</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Submit evaluator's Interim Implementation Report to FPO and Program Office using suggested format.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Submit due date no later than Month 27</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
Submit evaluator's Final Implementation Report using suggested format.	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due date no later than Month 48</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>

PARTICIPANT COHORT TRACKING (For single institutions only)			
See Section IV.B.3.b.ii.(b) Participant Training and Employment Tracking			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for participant tracking</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

OTHER OUTCOMES			
<i>[Add other outcomes as relevant to your project design.]</i>			
OUTPUTS	MEASURE(S)	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES
<i>Insert outputs (milestones and/or deliverables), including description, for participant tracking</i>	<i>Insert the measures you will use to demonstrate achievement of the milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert due dates for achieving milestones/deliverables</i>	<i>Insert responsible lead and any supporting entity(ies) responsible for achieving the milestones/deliverables</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>			

APPENDIX J: SUGGESTED ABSTRACT FORMAT

The template below is a suggested format. Applicants may tailor this template as needed to fit their proposed application. **Items marked * are for consortium applicants only** and do not apply to single institution applicants. **The item marked ** is for single institution applicants only** and does not apply to consortia. The abstract may be up to three pages.

OVERVIEW

Lead Applicant Organization Name:
Project Title/Name:
Total Funding Requested:
Industry Sector(s):
Geographic Area Served: <i>Add State or District(s) Served, or Area Served by Single Institution</i>
Census Tract Number(s) in service area designated as a qualified Opportunity Zone, if applicable:

SCC PARTNERSHIP

Required Partners	
*INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION (IHE) CONSORTIUM PARTNERS	
<i>Insert names of IHE Consortium Partners</i>	<i>Insert type of entity</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>	
*IHE COORDINATING ENTITY	
<i>Insert name of IHE Coordinating Entity:</i>	<i>Insert type of entity</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>	
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM PARTNER(S)	
<i>Insert name(s) of Workforce Development System Partner(s):</i>	<i>Insert type of organization</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>	
EMPLOYER PARTNER(S)	
<i>Insert name(s) of Employer Partner(s):</i>	<i>Insert industry sector</i>

<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>	
Optional Partner(s)	
<i>Insert name(s) of Optional Partner(s):</i>	<i>Insert type of organization</i>
<i>[add additional lines as needed]</i>	

PROJECT INFORMATION

*Option Chosen for Core Element 5:	
Summary of Program Activities: <i>Include a description of the capacity that will be built as a result of the grant.</i>	
Industry-Recognized Credential(s) to be Awarded:	
SYSTEMS CHANGE OR CAPACITY BUILDING PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES (<i>Insert yours from Outcomes Table</i>)	
Core Element 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement	
Outcome 2a: <i>Insert yours</i>	*Outcome 2b: <i>Insert yours</i>
Core Element 3: Enhanced Career Pathway Programs and Accelerated Learning Strategies	
Outcome 3a: <i>Insert yours</i>	*Outcome 3b: <i>Insert yours</i>
Core Element 4: Strategic Alignment with the Workforce Development System	
Outcome 4a: <i>Insert yours</i>	*Outcome 4b: <i>Insert yours</i>
*Core Element 5: Innovative Systems Change	
*Outcome 5a or 5b: <i>Insert yours</i>	*Outcome 5ca or 5d: <i>Insert yours</i>
**Cohort Program of Study to be used for Participant Tracking:	

PUBLIC CONTACT INFORMATION

Point of Contact Name and Title: Institution: Address: Phone Number: Email Address:
