

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION GRANT

Bid Number AEG-1

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New York State Department of Labor
Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions
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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Purpose

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) is making up to **\$4.1 million** in funding available under the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant (AEG) Request for Applications (RFA). The purpose of this RFA is to expand Registered Apprenticeship (RA) training by increasing employment opportunities for approximately 800 new apprentices with a focus on underrepresented populations. These new apprentices will enter into trades in high-demand occupations, with a focus on the emerging fields of Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Information Technology, as well as other in-demand occupations. Please note that this solicitation focuses on promoting the **expansion** of RA and as such, RAs in the field of construction are not eligible for funding under this RFA unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice.

B. Background

The United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) announced the availability of \$50.5 million in funds authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 for ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grants. This investment provided funding to support States in their effort to expand and diversify RA to better respond to industry workforce demands. RA is a global, tried, and true workforce development strategy that offers apprentices opportunities to earn a salary while learning the skills that businesses demand in a variety of occupations across industries. RA provides structured On-the-Job training (OJT), Related Instruction (RI), regular documentation of progress, and achievement of a New York State (NYS) certificate of completion. RA is a job-driven strategy, providing a pathway for many to the middle class. For businesses, RA serves as an opportunity to grow their own workforce and meet skill needs for the future.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has recognized that NYS faces a middle-skill labor shortage and that failing to address this “middle-skill gap” will erode NYS’s ability to strengthen middle-class economic justice for its citizens. This causes NYS’s businesses to be less competitive in the global economy due to losses in productivity and forces them to seek skilled workers elsewhere.

Research shows that restoring middle-class security is significantly influenced by the availability of middle-skill jobs because these jobs comprise the largest portion of the labor market, and key growth industries are unable to find sufficiently trained workers to fill middle-skill jobs. For the purposes of this RFA, middle-skill jobs typically require more than a high school education and less than a bachelor’s degree, and are specific to the skills of the occupation rather than an individual’s education attainment.

This AEG RFA uses \$1.2 million from the USDOL/ETA ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant award described above, as well as \$3 million in Title 1 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Statewide Activities funds. NYSDOL proposes to create an unprecedented outreach campaign to market and promote RA as the workforce development tool to train tomorrow’s middle skill workers in high-demand occupations. Priority industries vary by area. A list of these areas and their corresponding economic development plans as well as priority industries can be accessed at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> for Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and <https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/lwda/regional-plans.shtm> for LWDBs.

II. Award Information

A. Funding

NYSDOL is making up to **\$4.1 million** available until **April 30, 2019** to serve approximately 800 new apprentices in RAs. This funding will cover costs associated with training apprentices through RA, such as RI, OJT, books, and tools.

Single award amounts will not exceed \$100,000. Applications that request more than \$100,000 will still be reviewed and scored by NYSDOL. If the application is awardable, NYSDOL will negotiate with the applicant during contract development to reduce project funding and scope to fit within the \$100,000 cap. Applications unable to remain viable with the reduced funding will not proceed to contract execution. Therefore, it is highly recommended that applicants keep the cost and scope of applications within the \$100,000 award cap.

If the applicant reduces the number of individuals to be trained at any time prior to or after an award is issued, the requested level of funding will be proportionately reduced. Reimbursement cannot exceed the average cost per participant included in the application.

Applicants awarded a grant through this RFA may re-apply for up to \$100,000 after expending at least 80% of their original award or after successfully registering 80% of the planned number of apprentices into their RA program as specified in their awarded contract, if sufficient funding and time remain.

This solicitation will be separated into quarterly award periods. Any uncommitted funds remaining at the end of each quarter will be rolled into the next quarterly period. Following each period, the funding availability will be reviewed and updated, and an amended RFA with the revised funding availability will be posted in the NYS Contract Reporter and also posted on NYSDOL's Funding Opportunity webpage, if necessary.

It is important to note that the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant funding will expire on **April 30, 2019** unless alternative funds are identified.

Applications will be reviewed and determinations will be made in the order that they are received. Awards are contingent upon the availability of WIOA and AEG funding. If funding becomes limited for any reason prior to the closing date of this RFA, the program will be suspended with adequate notice in the NYS Contract Reporter and also posted on NYSDOL's Funding Opportunity webpage. Applications received after the suspension date will not be given funding consideration.

B. Use of Funds

AEG funding is intended for the placement of approximately 800 new apprentices into RA's.

NYSDOL will provide awardees with up to \$5,000 for each new apprentice under this RFA; applicants may request funding to support as many apprentices as possible within the \$100,000 maximum award amount.

1. Allowable Costs

- a. Related Instruction (RI)
 - RI for this RFA is defined as instruction in technical subjects related to the trade which will be provided to each apprentice for a minimum of 144 hours per year. RI is designed to provide apprentices with the knowledge of the theoretical subjects related to the apprentices' occupation.
 - RI must be conducted by the RA sponsor's approved RI Provider (as indicated on the RI Availability [Form AT-8](#)) to instruct topics listed in Appendix B of the trade's training outline.
 - RI may be provided in person or via electronic media. Funds will not pay for the cost of any hardware, software, or internet service needed in order to access the instruction.
 - Sponsors are not required to pay wages to apprentices while they are attending RI.
 - For the use of RI funds under this RFA, apprentices cannot contribute to the cost of the RI.
 - The cost of RI shall be reimbursed based on a per apprentice amount, in accordance with standard tuition rates for RI that may be published or in the case of trainers who do not have a published tuition rate, may be calculated using the method described in [Section VI.D.1.b](#).
 - There is no minimum number of apprentices required for RI.
 - All proposed RI expenditures must be reasonable, necessary and clearly related to the purposes and activities of the project as described in the applicant's project narrative. During the contracting process, NYSDOL reserves the right to ask for justification of proposed expenditures and cost per apprentice.
- b. OJT - Training will be provided to the apprentice(s) by journeyworkers, while meeting the required apprentice to journeyworker ratio for each trade, as determined by the Commissioner of Labor and posted on NYSDOL's website at <https://labor.ny.gov/apprenticeship/general/occupations.shtm>. This will be "hands-on" training and supplemented by RI. Refer to Section II.B.3 (below) for OJT wage reimbursement rates allowed by this program.
- c. Textbooks or training materials directly associated with the RI.
 - Only items with a per-unit cost of less than \$1,000 are allowed.
- d. Tools directly associated with OJT.
 - Only items with a per unit cost of less than \$1,000 are allowed.
- e. Group Program Sponsors or their Lead applicant (those applicants who are designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program) who are not the RI training provider or the OJT employer are eligible for reimbursement of indirect costs, if incurred. Refer to the Indirect costs in [Section VI.D.1.b](#) for an explanation of these costs.

2. Restrictions on the Use of Funds

AEG will not pay for any of the following items:

- a. Any RA in the field of construction (O*NET Family Code 47) unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice.
- b. The acquisition, construction, or renovation of buildings or other real estate.
- c. Any item/cost that has also been paid for/contributed to by the apprentice.
- d. The purchase of any equipment or operational software.
- e. Supportive services such as child care, transportation, lodging, and meals for the apprentices (any supportive services provided may be funded through the local Career Centers).
- f. Transportation, lodging, and meal costs for trainers that are not incorporated into the tuition rate.
- g. Advertising.
- h. Entertainment.
- i. Interest costs incurred by provider agencies.
- j. Costs of organized fund raising.
- k. Sales training.
- l. Human resources training.
- m. Conferences and seminars.
- n. Start-up costs, curriculum development, and assessment costs on the part of the contractor.
- o. Registration fees (except those paid to RI providers).
- p. Payment of fees associated with attendance at seminars, conferences, or meetings of professional organizations.
- q. Training required as part of a Federal, State or local government mandate. (Excluding OSHA and other safety training that is directly related to the trade's training outline.)
- r. Purchase of videos or DVDs.
- s. Any other costs deemed inappropriate by NYSDOL, such as training that does not result in a transferable skill, activities that are determined to be business consulting rather than training (e.g. coaching, follow-up, reinforcement, etc.), and any costs that do not meet the intent of the RFA.
- t. Any tool or textbook with a per-unit cost of \$1,000 or more.

If an applicant is unsure about unallowable trainings or costs they should consider asking specific questions before the Questions Deadline identified in [Section V.A.](#) of this RFA and listed in the RFA time table, [Section V.E.](#)

3. OJT Wage Reimbursement Rate

NYSDOL has established an OJT wage reimbursement cap policy for the AEG. The reimbursement level to a business may not exceed 75% of the wage rate of the apprentice for businesses with 100 or fewer employees and 50% of the wage rate of the apprentice for those with more than 100 employees, up to the average hourly wage rate in NYS, which according to the most recent May 2015 Occupational Employment Statistics survey available from NYSDOL's Division of Research and Statistics is \$27.42.

If the hourly wage of the apprentice is less than NYS's average hourly wage rate of \$27.42, the hourly reimbursement rate is calculated by multiplying the hourly wage rate times the reimbursement percentage. For example, the wage reimbursement rate to a business for an apprentice making \$15 per hour would be \$11.25 (75% of \$15) or \$7.50 (50% of \$15) depending upon the business' number of employees.

If the hourly rate of the apprentice equals or exceeds NYS's average hourly wage rate of \$27.42, the hourly reimbursement rate must be calculated using the \$27.42 capped rate. For example, the wage reimbursement cap to a business for an apprentice making \$29 per hour would be \$13.71 (50% of \$27.42).

4. Training Cap Per Apprentice

The cap under this RFA is \$5,000 per apprentice.

If the training and/or associated costs proposed by the applicant exceeds the \$5,000 per apprentice cap set above, the applicant must pay the difference. Note that this is a cap per apprentice, not an average cost of all apprentices identified in the application.

If apprentices attend RI during their work hours, OJT hours cannot be combined with RI hours.

C. Award Minimums

There is no minimum award amount under the AEG program. All awards are subject to funding availability.

D. Contracts

Contracts will be awarded for an initial term of up to 13 months. There is a federal expiration date of April 30, 2019 for AEG funds, therefore applicants must include only those training and service activities that can be reasonably accomplished by that date.

Limited no-cost contract extensions may be approved at NYSDOL's discretion. The length of any contract extension is dependent on the original contract duration; however, the length of the original contract plus the extension cannot exceed a total of 13 months.

Contracts may not end or be extended past April 30, 2019, unless there is an extension of the federal grant or alternative funds are identified. In the absence of any such extensions or funding, all services funded under this grant must be provided by April 30, 2019.

Contracts will be paid on a reimbursable payment basis. An awardee must first pay for incurred expenses and then submit a voucher to NYSDOL for reimbursement. Awardees will be required to provide reports at intervals specified by NYSDOL. In addition, NYSDOL-ETA may conduct an

independent evaluation of the outcomes and benefits of AEG. By accepting an award under this RFA, the applicant agrees to participate in any such evaluation.

E. Contracting Process

In keeping with the Governor's promise to reform NYS's grant contracting process, NYS has established a standardized statewide grant contracting system called the Grants Gateway, which is designed to facilitate prompt contracting.

All applicants are required to register in this system in order to enter into a contract with NYS. All entities must log-in to the Grants Gateway website at <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov> and follow the instructions to complete the registration. The registration form must be signed, notarized and mailed to Gateway Administrators. Plan accordingly to avoid potential delays in applying for upcoming grant opportunities.

Not-for-profit (NFP) organizations must take the additional step of prequalifying by completing a basic profile and storing organizational documents. Both registration and prequalification must be completed by NFP organizations before the application is submitted. Failure to do so will mean that their applications will not be reviewed. NFP organizations will be able to submit their responses online, and, once reviewed and approved by a NYS agency prequalification specialist, the NFP organization will be able to apply for grants, and all information will be stored in a virtual, secured vault. NFP organizations will have to maintain their information current throughout a three-year period. Pre-qualification status must be maintained on an annual basis by providing up-to-date IRS 900, CHAR 500, and audit review documents.

For additional information on registration and prequalification, please log on to the Grants Gateway web-site at <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov> and/or the Grants Reform Website at www.grantsreform.ny.gov.

F. NYSDOL's Responsibilities

NYSDOL will oversee implementation of the contract(s) awarded through this RFA, including regular monitoring of implementation and performance of the contract(s).

G. Contractor Requirements

By submission of an application in response to this solicitation, applicants agree with all of the terms and conditions set forth in the attachments to this RFA.

Applicants must comply with the Combined Terms and Conditions ([Section IX](#), Attachment 13), which will be incorporated into the Master Contract of successful applicants.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Applicant Eligibility

For this RFA, an eligible applicant must be a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, or be an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by

NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment. (see: <https://www.labor.ny.gov/apprenticeship/pending-approval.shtm>). Sponsors include individual employers, groups of employers, or partnerships between an employer(s) and a labor union(s). To apply for a NYS RA program, contact your local NYSDOL Apprenticeship office at the following link: <https://labor.ny.gov/apprenticeship/contactus.shtm>. Please note, awards cannot be made until the applicant has a NYSDOL approved NYS RA program.

Additional requirements for grant applicants include:

1. Must be legal entities able to fulfill all requirements associated with state/federal grant obligations. Group programs which do not meet these requirements must appoint a lead applicant.
2. Must be headquartered in NYS or has at least one site located in NYS at the time of application; and
3. Must be in good standing regarding: Unemployment Insurance; Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN); Public Works; Labor Standards; Safety and Health; NYS Department of State Division of Corporations; Workers Compensation Insurance; and Disability Insurance.

Consultants and other third party entities are not eligible to apply for funds on behalf of other organizations. The use of a grant writer is acceptable, only if the applicant, and not the grant writer, commits to implementing the training/services listed in the application, if a grant is awarded.

NYS Executive Branch Agencies are not eligible to apply for funding.

B. Participant Eligibility

In an effort to establish a pipeline of workers for priority industries, **individuals 18 years of age and older who** meet the minimum eligibility requirements for enrollment into a NYS RA Program are eligible under this RFA. Note, minimum eligibility requirements are determined by sponsors and indicated on the Apprentice Training Recruitment Notification and Minimum Qualifications [Form AT-505](#). Applicants are encouraged to actively recruit women and underrepresented populations, including youth, minorities, and individuals with disabilities.

C. O*NET Codes

The Occupational Information Network (O*NET), found online at <http://www.onetonline.org/>, is an interactive application for exploring and searching occupations and their distinguishing key features. Applicants should utilize O*NET OnLine to identify the O*NET codes of the title/positions/jobs into which new apprentices will be placed. Please note that O*NET codes under the job family Construction (47) are restricted under this AEG RFA unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice. A list of those occupations can be found online: <https://www.onetonline.org/find/family?f=47>

O*NET provides a universal classification of more than 900 occupations with key features required by workers, such as: tasks performed, knowledge, abilities, skills, typical education,

and work experience. O*NET also provides information on wages and employment prospects of each occupation. O*NET is developed under the sponsorship of the USDOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), is available at no cost to the user, and is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation.

IV. Participation Requirements

1. Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Participation

For purposes of this RFA, the Department of Labor hereby establishes an overall goal of 30% for MWBE participation, 15% for New York State-certified minority-owned business enterprises ("MBE") participation and 15% for New York State-certified women-owned business enterprises ("WBE") participation (collectively, "MWBE Contract Goals") based on the current availability of MBEs and WBEs. If the applicant will not use subcontractors or suppliers to fulfill services, or will be unable to meet the MWBE Goals, then it must submit the Application for Waiver of MWBE Participation Goal. Please refer to Attachment 10 ([Section IX](#)) for further information on these requirements.

2. Participation Opportunities For New York State Certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs)

For purposes of this procurement, the Department of Labor conducted a comprehensive search and determined that the Contract does not offer sufficient opportunities to set specific goals for participation by SDVOBs as subcontractors, service providers, and suppliers to Contractor. Nevertheless, the applicant is encouraged to make good faith efforts to promote and assist in the participation of SDVOBs on the Contract for the provision of services and materials. Please refer to Attachment 16 ([Section IX](#)) for further information.

V. Process for Application Submission

A. Questions Concerning this RFA

Applicants may submit questions via electronic mail to WDTD.Onestop@labor.ny.gov. Questions regarding the RFA will be accepted on an ongoing basis until **March 18, 2019**. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. All inquiries should include the following reference in the Subject line: "AEG Question". Answers to all questions will be posted on the NYSDOL website (<https://labor.ny.gov/businessservices/funding.shtm>) on an ongoing basis until **March 20, 2019**.

B. Technical Assistance

Applicants in need of technical assistance regarding this RFA may reach out to Alan Gallagher at NYSDOL at Alan.Gallagher@labor.ny.gov.

C. Application Due Date

Applications and required attachments will be accepted immediately and on an ongoing basis through the Grants Gateway until 4:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on **March 29, 2019**. Grants

Gateway will not accept any applications or unsolicited amendments to applications after the due date and time. No “faxed”, US Postal or “e-mailed” documents will be accepted.

D. Application Submission Instructions and Format

Interested parties must apply online via the Grants Gateway website at <https://grantsreform.ny.gov/>.

Completed applications must be submitted through the Grants Gateway by the designated date and time. In order to submit an application, applicants must be registered and logged in to the Grants Gateway as detailed in [Section II.E](#).

In order for an application to be considered, the applicant must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in [Section III.A](#), complete all required parts, and upload all the documents or information requested in the forthcoming sections in the Grants Gateway system prior to the submission due date.

Required application attachments ([Section IX](#)) are listed below:

1. Budget Worksheet (Attachment 2).
2. Vendor Responsibility – Applicant Questionnaire (Attachment 3).
3. Federal and State Certifications (Attachment 4).
4. Notice to Individual Submitting Applications (Attachment 5).
5. Equal Employment Opportunity Staffing Plan (Attachment 6).
6. Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) Utilization Plan and Requirements (Attachment 7). The MWBE Utilization Plan should list the MWBE subcontractors or suppliers the Contractor intends to use to fulfill the contract should the proposed application be awarded. For further information, refer to [Section IV](#), above.
7. Application for Waiver of MWBE Participation Goal (Attachment 8). If the applicant will not use subcontractors or suppliers to fulfill services, or will be unable to meet the total MWBE goals, then it must submit the Application for Waiver of MWBE Participation Goal instead of the (MWBE) Utilization Plan (Attachment 7). For further information, refer to [Section IV](#), above.
8. Lead Applicant Designation Form (Attachment 9)

E. RFA Timetable

- RFA Release Date – **January 18, 2018**.
- Deadline Date for Questions – Ongoing, no later than **March 18, 2019**.
- Deadline Date for Responses to Questions – Ongoing, no later than **March 20, 2019**

- Application Due Date – Ongoing, no later than 4:00 PM EST on **March 29, 2019**
- Date of Notification of Award – Ongoing as received.
- Latest Possible Contract End Date – **April 30, 2019** (in the absence of any extensions).

VI. Application Requirements

Each application consists of four parts – Minimum Requirements, Program Design, Work Plan, and Budget. The Grants Gateway system will not allow the submission of an application unless all parts are completed.

The evaluation of the application will consist of a review of each part independently.

All proposed expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, and clearly related to the purposes and activities of the project as proposed.

Failure to answer all questions in the application will jeopardize the applicant’s potential for funding. NYSDOL will first make an initial eligibility determination based on minimum requirements criteria for each application received. Applications deemed eligible will be scored based on further review and evaluation. Applications scores will consist of 80% on Technical Merit (60% on Program Design and 20% on Work Plan/Outcome Timetable) and 20% on Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet. Scoring of technical merit will award points based on a “criteria met” or “criteria not met” scale.

A. Minimum Requirements

No points will be awarded for the Minimum Requirements part of the application. Failure to attest to and document that you meet minimum requirements will result in an automatic rejection of the proposal application, and scoring will not proceed. Minimum requirements require the applicant to attest to each of the following:

1. The applicant is not a NYS Executive Branch Agency.
2. The applicant is a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, or is an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment;
3. The applicant is headquartered in NYS or has at least one site located in NYS at the time of application;
4. The applicant is in good standing for UI, WARN, Public Work, Labor Standards, Safety and Health, NYS Department of State Division of Corporations, Workers Compensation, and Disability Insurance;
5. None of the funds to be used under this RFA will be used for the relocation of employment from facilities in other locations which would result in employees losing jobs at the original location;

6. The applicant understands that all NFP bidders, in addition to registering in the Grants Gateway system, must be prequalified in the Grants Gateway system (<https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>) no later than the due date for the submission of applications or the NFP organization's proposal will not be reviewed;
7. The proposal was developed by the applicant and all language therein is presented at the request of the applicant. (The use of a grant writer is acceptable, only if the applicant, and not the grant writer, commits to implementing the training/services listed in the application, if a grant is awarded.);
8. The applicant is responsible for recruiting as defined in their approved RA Program (Forms can be found here: <https://labor.ny.gov/formsdocs/app/apprenticeship-forms-publications.shtm>) and ensuring the participation of eligible participants as defined in the RFA;
9. Tuition charges, books, tools and other fees submitted for reimbursement under this RFA shall not also be charged to apprentices;
10. Any award will be expended on program activities in NYS:
 - a) The applicant must give reasonable assurance that the apprentices to be trained will continue to work in their Registered Apprenticeship Program in NYS upon completion of the training;
 - b) The applicant participating in this proposal is headquartered in NYS or has at least one site located in NYS at the time of application;
 - c) The applicant must give reasonable assurance that at least 75% of OJT will take place in NYS;
 - d) The applicant must provide adequate justification for any RI that takes place outside of NYS; and
 - e) Apprentices need not be NYS residents
11. OJT Apprenticeship training will take place on company time and participants will be compensated at no less than their normal rate of pay while they are attending said training;
12. None of the training providers listed in the proposal, any consultant, or any other third-party has written or contributed wording to the proposal or solicited the applicant, as their customer, to apply for these monies (The use of a grant writer is acceptable, only if the applicant, and not the grant writer, commits to implementing the training/services listed in the application, if a grant is awarded.);
13. The apprentices targeted under this proposal will not be independent contractors or contract employees; and
14. The applicant will comply with NYS labor law and Federal law for the protection of workers.
15. As a condition of receiving funding under this solicitation, the applicant agrees to be in full compliance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations including but not

limited to those identified in this RFA and associated attachments, including any subsequent amendments, as well as the following regulations and cost principals:

- a. 2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principals and Audit Requirements; and
- b. 2 CFR Part 2900 - DOL Exceptions to 2 CFR Part 200

B. Program Design

A total of 60 points are available in scoring the Program Design part of the application.

1. Project Need

Applicants must describe the number of new apprentices who will receive services (RI, OJT, books and/or tools) under this proposed project. Additionally, applicants must provide the number of employees for each participating business. A brief description of the sponsor and the occupations/trades (and their corresponding O*NET codes) in which these new apprentices will be trained must also be included.

Additional points in the scoring of applications will be given to projects proposing to hire apprentices in the priority industries of **Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Information Technology**. Please Note: RAs in the field of construction (O*NET Family Code 47) are not allowable trades/occupations under this AEG RFA unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice.

Applicants must describe the workforce need for these new apprentices and how these hires will improve the regional sector economy in which they are based. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to their REDC for guidance in this regard (See [Section I.B.](#), above).

2. Description of Activities

Applicants must provide, with clarity and specificity the nature of the proposed apprenticeship training. OJT, as well as RI must be described in full. Material related to the proposed apprenticeship opportunity, such as books and tools, must also be described.

Applicants should highlight the available resources, both its own and those in the targeted community, that will be utilized/leveraged to maximize the effectiveness of the program and improve employment outcomes for all parts of the workforce. If applicable, applicants should describe their goals to recruit underrepresented populations.

3. Experience/Past Performance

Applicants must demonstrate their capabilities by providing information which demonstrates their ability to recruit, hire, and successfully train and retain new apprentices.

C. Work Plan/Outcome Timetable

A total of 20 points are available in scoring the work plan/outcome timetable part of the application.

Utilizing the Grants Gateway system, applicants will define the objectives, tasks, and performance measures that will detail the proposed plan to ensure training and service activities as identified in the program design. Applicants can include a total of 50 objectives, tasks and performance measures, including the following:

1. The objectives are realistic and align with activities as proposed in the Program Design;
2. The tasks as described align with the associated objective and upon completion will attain the objective;
3. The performance measures as proposed will measure the associated objective attainment;
4. The performance will evaluate project effectiveness.

D. Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet

A total of 20 points are available in scoring the Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet part of the application.

Requested funding must be directly related to the proposed apprenticeship training program. All proposed expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, and clearly related to the purposes and activities of the services as described in the “Program Specific Questions” section in Grants Gateway under the “Forms” menu.

1. Budget Worksheet

An overall budget for expending the funds and specifics on the costs for each type of training that will be offered (OJT and RI), must be furnished in Attachment 2 ([Section IX](#)), as described below:

- a. Overall Budget: the applicant must provide, for each type of training being proposed, the amount of the grant funds being requested, the amount of matching funds and/or in-kind contributions the applicant is making to the cost of training (please note that applicant match is only required for OJT), and the total amount the training will cost.
- b. Training-Specific Budget
 - **OJT:** the budget must provide the trade/occupation (and corresponding O*NET codes) of those to receive OJT, the number of openings for each trade/occupation, the starting hourly wage of each apprentice, the hours of OJT per week, the number of weeks of OJT, the percentage of the apprentice’s wage rate to be reimbursed, and the total cost to the grant. Please note that the maximum reimbursement rate for OJT under this RFA is 75% of the apprentice’s wage rate, as described in [Section II.B.3](#).
 - If funding for tools directly associated with OJT is being requested, the budget must include sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine how those costs were calculated.
 - **RI:** the budget must demonstrate the reasonableness of the costs associated with the RI by comparing training costs with two other training providers that show the chosen provider’s costs to be lower or comparable

to other training providers. Applicants will need to contact their Apprentice Training Representative (<https://labor.ny.gov/apprenticeship/contactus.shtm>) to find tuition rates of other providers. If less than two other RI providers were contacted, provide a compelling reason why. The training cost comparisons must be among like training courses. Please note that if the selected RI provider is not the lowest cost of the three RI providers, compelling justification for their selection must be provided. Failure to do so may result in a lower award if reasonableness of cost is not provided for all of the proposed RI.

- If funding for textbooks or training materials directly associated with RI is being requested, the budget must include sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine how those costs were calculated.

To calculate the cost as it relates to your RI, applicants must use a published tuition rate, if they have one.

If the applicant does not have a published tuition rate, a non-published tuition rate must be calculated. This non-published tuition rate may include some or all of the following items:

- Staff salaries: Annual salaries of staff which must be directly related to the provision of services as outlined in the applicant's program narrative and in accordance with the provisions of this RFA. This may include the cost of training instructor time if training is being provided by in-house staff;
- Staff Fringe Benefits: Social security, worker's compensation, unemployment insurance, disability insurance and any insurance programs the applicant's organization provides;
- Contracted Services: Institutions, individuals, or organizations external to the contractor which have entered into an agreement with the contractor to provide any services outlined in or associated with the provision of the training and whose services are to be funded as part of this RFA;
- Travel Expenses: Staff travel costs of the provision of the training;
- Space/Utilities: Real estate rental and utilities costs associated with the provision of the training;
- Other Operating Expenses: Other items not included under any other category, such as supplies, postage, printing/photocopying, and telephones;
- Indirect costs: See below.
- **Indirect costs** (available only to group program sponsors or their lead applicants (i.e. those applicants who are designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program) who do not directly provide RI or employ the apprentice for OJT purposes): Indirect costs are defined as costs that are not directly accountable to a particular RFA, contract, program function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Indirect costs may be either fixed or variable and may

include administration, personnel and security costs. Some indirect costs may be overhead. Indirect costs for this funding opportunity may be reimbursed at the approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between the applicant and the Federal government if such a rate exists, and if no rate exists, then 10% of the modified total direct costs.

VII. Application Review and Selection

A. Evaluation of Applications

A complete application (including the budget) must be submitted so that NYSDOL can conduct a full and proper evaluation. Failure to answer all questions in the application will jeopardize the applicant's potential for funding. NYSDOL will first make an initial eligibility determination based on minimum requirements for each application received. Applications deemed eligible will be scored based on further review and evaluation. Application scores will consist of 80% on technical merit (60% on Program Design, 20% on the Work Plan/Outcome Timetable) and 20% on the Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet. Scoring of technical merit will award points based on a "criteria met" or "criteria not met" scale.

NYSDOL reserves the right to make no awards.

NYSDOL will establish both a Technical Review Committee and a Budget Review Committee. Each application will be evaluated and scored separately. Each application will be scored on its individual merit and will not be compared to other applications. Applications must first meet all minimum eligibility requirements. Upon receipt of all required application documents, NYSDOL staff will score the application resulting in a final score. Applications will be reviewed in the order that they are received.

It is important to note that:

1. Ineligible applicants will be disqualified before completing a review;
2. Incomplete applications will be disqualified before completing a review;
3. All applicants that are determined not to be responsive or responsible will be disqualified after completing a review;
4. Applications that fail to meet requirements may be disqualified after completing a review; and
5. NYSDOL reviews will result in a final score.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Criteria has four parts: the Minimum Requirements; Program Design; Work Plan; and the Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet. Each is described below.

1. Minimum Requirements

No points will be awarded for this section of the application. Failure to meet minimum requirements will result in an automatic rejection of the application and scoring will not proceed. Refer to [Section VI.A.](#) for a complete breakdown of minimum requirements.

2. Program Design (up to 60 points as described below)

The application must fully describe, identify and document:

- a. The number of new apprentices to be trained, the occupations/trades in which they will be trained, the O*NET codes for those occupations/trades (refer to [Section III.C.](#), above), the number of employees for each participating business, and a brief description of the sponsor. If this is a pending apprenticeship program, please indicate that here. (5 points)
- b. The connection of the proposed apprenticeship training to the stated vision for apprenticeship expansion in NYS and how it will strengthen the middle class in accordance with the Governor's initiative to reduce or eliminate the aforementioned middle-skill gap. (5 points)
- c. An explanation as to how these new hires will improve the regional sector economies in which they are based. (5 points)
- d. A description as to how the applicant will recruit/encourage underrepresented populations to apply. (5 points)
- e. The available local/state/federal resources that the applicant will tap into, both on its own and in the targeted community in order maximize the effectiveness of the program. (5 points)
- f. A complete description of each of the covered components of the apprenticeship training program for which the applicant is seeking reimbursement. (10 points)
 - OJT – describe the training approach and the delivery of OJT (e.g., Time-Based, Competency-Based or Hybrid).
 - RI – include the delivery method and/or timeframe (e.g., when RI is completed in relation to OJT - simultaneous, sequential, or front-loaded).
 - Books – a list of text/work books is required.
 - Tools – a description of the type and use of tools is required.
- g. A description of outcome material to be provided by end of grant, e.g., Blue Books, RI transcripts, portfolios, and enrollment status. (5 points)
- h. A description of the occupational skills to be acquired. (5 points)
- i. A description of the experience/capabilities which demonstrates the applicant's ability to run a successful apprenticeship program. If this is a new, proposed, or pending apprenticeship program, please address what qualifications the applicant has to successfully implement this new program. (5 points)
- j. The regional priority industries for which apprentices will be trained. Add any specific preferences for priority industries. Reference to public documents containing these regional priorities must be provided (see [Section I.B.](#), above). Extra points will be awarded for apprenticeship programs focusing on Advanced

Manufacturing, Healthcare and Information Technology. Please Note: RAs in the field of construction (O*NET Family Code 47) are not allowable trades/occupations under this AEG RFA unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice. (5 points for regional priority industries or 10 points for priority industries targeted in this RFA);

3. Work Plan (up to 20 points as described below)

Utilizing the Grants Gateway system, applicants will define the objectives, tasks, and performance measures that will detail the proposed plan to ensure training and service activities as identified in the program design. Applicants can include a total of 50 objectives, tasks and performance measures.

The criteria to be reviewed include the following:

- a. The objectives are realistic and align with activities as proposed in the Program Design (5 points);
- b. The tasks as described align with the associated objective and upon completion will attain the objective (5 points);
- c. The performance measures as proposed will measure the associated objective attainment (5 points);
- d. The performance will evaluate project effectiveness (5 points)

4. Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet (up to 20 points as described below)

The budget worksheet will be evaluated in accordance with the following:

- a. Overall Budget (5 points): the applicant will receive full points for this component if the budget provides, for each type of training being proposed, the amount of the grant funds being requested, the amount of matching funds and/or in-kind contributions the applicant is making to the cost of training (please note that applicant match is only required for OJT), and the total amount the training will cost.
- b. Training-Specific Budget (15 points)
 - **OJT:** the applicant will receive full points for this component if all of the following information is clearly provided in the budget: the trade/occupation (and corresponding O*NET codes) of those to receive OJT, the number of openings for each trade/occupation, the starting hourly wage of each apprentice, the hours of OJT per week, the number of weeks of OJT, the percentage of the apprentice's wage rate to be reimbursed, and the total cost to the grant.
 - **RI:** the applicant will receive full points for this component if the budget demonstrates the reasonableness of the costs associated with the RI by comparing training costs with two other training providers that show the chosen provider's costs to be lower or comparable to other training providers, or, if less than two other RI providers were contacted, provide a compelling reason why.

If the application includes both types of training described above, a cost score will be calculated for each type and then pro-rated based upon its percentage of the overall funding request of the application. For example, if an applicant proposes 50% OJT and 50% RI, and provided all the required budget information for the OJT, but did not for the RI, the cost score would be 7.5 points (OJT: 15 points x 50% = 7.5 points + RI: 0 points X 50% = 0 points).

If at any time prior to or after an award is issued the applicant reduces the number of apprentices to be served, the funding will be proportionately reduced. Note that the cost per apprentice calculated in the proposal may not be exceeded in resulting contracts.

During the Budget review process, NYSDOL will not remove any disallowed costs included in the Budget Section. However, during the award process and contract negotiations, if it is determined that ineligible costs were included in the application, those costs will not be included in the final contract.

C. Method of Selection

The method of selection will be based on a point system with the program design portion of the rating criteria worth 60%, the Work Plan/Outcome Timetable worth 20%, and the Cost Proposal/Budget Worksheet worth 20% of the total score. NYSDOL reviews will result in a final score. Applicants who receive a total score of 70 points or more will be contacted by NYSDOL contract staff to begin the contract development process. Applications that fail to attain a total score of 70 points or more will be notified via letter and are eligible to revise their applications and reapply, if sufficient time and funding remain.

NYSDOL may award a contract for any or all parts of an application and may negotiate contract terms and conditions to meet agency program requirements consistent with the AEG RFA.

Costs that are not permitted under the requirements of this RFA will be disallowed.

VIII. Award Administration and Information

A. Award Notices

All applicants will receive a letter informing them of the decision on their application and successful applicants will be contacted by NYSDOL contract development staff.

Applicants who receive an award must be prepared to enter into contract negotiations immediately, and begin project activities upon execution of the contract. NYSDOL reserves the right to rescind the award of any contractor that is unable or unwilling to promptly engage in the contracting process or to begin conducting their project activities immediately following contract execution.

Applicants that receive an award under this program, successfully register at least 80% of the planned number of apprentices into their RA program, or have expended at least 80% of the awarded funds may apply again, if funding and time remain.

B. Payment

Once a contract has been developed and formally executed, funds will be released on a cost reimbursement basis in agreement with the cost per apprentice and hours of training indicated in the contract budget. Awarded grantees must first pay for incurred expenses and then submit a voucher to NYSDOL for reimbursement. Vouchers must be submitted to NYSDOL on the prescribed forms before payment is made. For cost reimbursements to be approved, certain records must be kept and specific documents submitted. The contractor must provide documentation that the service was provided. This documentation will be negotiated as part of the contract development process. NFP entities that have a fully executed contract qualify for an advance of up to 25% of the contract amount. Details will be discussed during contract negotiations.

Please be advised that project activities may not begin until after an award is made. This includes the completion of application reviews, due diligence being confirmed, awardees determined and award letters being issued. The earliest start date for any contract resulting from this RFA is the date of the award letter. Any activity that begins and/or is paid for prior to the date of the award letter will fall outside the contract period and be ineligible for reimbursement.

Electronic Payments – Payment for invoices submitted by the Contractor shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner, in the Commissioner’s sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with ordinary NYS procedures and practices. The contractor shall comply with the NYS Comptroller’s procedures to authorize electronic payments. Authorization forms are available at the NYS Comptrollers website at www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/index.htm, by email at helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov, or by telephone at 855-233-8363. The Contractor acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any invoices submitted under this Contract if it does not comply with the NYS Comptroller’s electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

C. General Requirements

All applications and accompanying documentation will become the property of NYS and will not be returned. The content of each applicant's application will be held in strict confidence during the evaluation process, and no details of the application will be discussed outside of the evaluation process. Successful applications and portions of the RFA deemed applicable by NYSDOL will be made part of the contract. Therefore, an official authorized to commit the entity to a contract must sign the proposal.

D. Buy American Requirements

Applicants should be aware of the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Section 502 which provides that none of the funds made available under Title I or II of WIOA or under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) may be expended by an entity unless the entity agrees that in expending the funds the entity will comply with the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. sections 8301 through 8303). It is the sense of Congress that entities receiving assistance should, in expending the assistance, purchase only American-made equipment and products. See WIOA, Section 502 – Buy American Requirements set forth as Attachment 14 to this RFA.

E. Additional Information

The WIOA funds supporting this initiative are subject to the following Federal Executive Orders:

1. Executive Order 13333 –This contract may be terminated without penalty, if the contractor or any subcontractor (i) engages in severe forms of trafficking in persons or has procured a commercial sex act during the period of time that the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement is in effect, or (ii) uses forced labor in the performance of the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement.” (22 U.S.C. § 7104(g))
2. Executive Order 13513 – Sec. 4. Text Messaging While Driving by Government Contractors, Subcontractors, and Recipients and Sub-recipients. Contractors, subcontractors, and recipients and sub-recipients are encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving a vehicle when performing official Government business or work on behalf of the Government, and to conduct initiatives of the type described in section 3(a) of the Executive Order.
3. Executive Order 12928 – the recipients are strongly encouraged to provide contracting/subgranting opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions such as Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and Universities; and to Small Business Owned and Controlled by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals.
4. Executive Order 13043 – recipients are encouraged to adopt and enforce on-the-job seat belt policies and programs for their employees when operating company-owned, rented, or personally owned vehicles.
5. Executive Order 13166 – recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to programs in accordance with DOL’s Policy Guidance on the Prohibition of National Origin Discrimination as it Affects Persons with Limited English Proficiency Volume 68, Number 103, Page 32289-32305. Meaningful access may entail providing language assistance services, including oral and written translation, where necessary.

F. Reservation Clauses

NYSDOL, in order to serve the best interests of the State, reserves the right to:

1. Make no awards.
2. Postpone or cancel this RFA upon notification to all applicants.
3. Amend the specifications after their release with appropriate notice to all applicants.
4. Remove applications with unreasonable costs from award consideration.
5. Request applicants to present supplemental information clarifying their application, either in writing or in formal presentation. Applicant failing to respond to these requests during the time allotted may be eliminated from funding consideration.

6. Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification to the applicant.
7. Correct any arithmetic errors in any application.
8. Reject any and all applications received in response to this RFA.
9. Award contracts to more than one applicant.
10. Negotiate with selected applicant prior to contract award.
11. Make any payment contingent upon the submission of specific deliverables.
12. Rescind the award of any grantee that is unable or unwilling to promptly engage in the contracting process or to begin conducting their training activities immediately following contract execution. No applicants will have any rights against NYSDOL arising from such action.
13. Require that all offers are held open for a period of 120 days unless otherwise expressly provided for in writing.

IX. Attachments

Attachment Number	Document Title	Required to be completed and submitted via Grants Gateway?
1	Technical Section	No
2	Budget Worksheet	Yes
3	Vendor Responsibility – Applicant Questionnaire	Yes, with original signatures
4	Federal and State Certifications	Yes, with original signatures
5	Notice to Individuals Submitting Applications	Yes, with original signatures
6	Equal Employment Opportunity Staffing Plan	Yes, with original signatures
7	Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises Utilization Plan and Requirements	Yes, with original signatures
8	Application for Waiver of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Participation Goal	Yes, with original signatures
9	Lead Applicant Designation Form	Yes, with original signatures
10	Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise and Equal Employment Opportunity Requirements and Procedures	No
11	General Information for Successful Bidders	No
12 ***	Master Contract	No
13 ***	Combined Terms and Conditions	No
14	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act References	No
15	Grants Gateway Prequalification Requirement	No
16	Participation Opportunities for New York State Certified Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses	No
17	Definitions	No

*** These documents are located in the “Forms” menu on Grants Gateway under “Contract Document Properties.”

Note: 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 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. Additionally, NYSDOL 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.