

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR:** Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (Round 5)

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Initial

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: FOA-ETA-24-23

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 17.261

KEY DATES: *The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is 09/24/2024. We must receive applications no later than **11:59 pm Eastern Time.***

Submit all applications in response to this solicitation through <https://www.grants.gov>. For complete application and submission information, including online application instructions, please refer to Section IV.

On approximately August 2, 2024, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page about the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants FOA will be available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities>. Please check this link frequently for future updates, as additional FAQs may be added. A pre-recorded Prospective Applicant Webinar will also be available at the same link and available for viewing any time after that date. While a review of this Webinar is strongly encouraged to support successful grant applications, it is not mandatory.

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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 \$65,000,000 in grant funds authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 169(c), for the fifth round of the Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC5) Training Grants program.

The purpose of this grant program is to build community colleges’ capacity to meet the skill development needs of employers and equitably support students in obtaining good jobs in in-demand industries. Grantees will enhance sector-based career pathways programs using strategies rooted in evidence and designed to build further evidence on the effectiveness of sector-based career pathways programs in leading to positive employment outcomes. Successful applicants will use the diverse strengths of their SCC Partnership members to accomplish and sustain systems change. The Department anticipates that enhancements funded by this grant program will ultimately benefit a broad range of current and future students at participating institutions, including dislocated workers, employed workers, and new entrants to the workforce. Participants are defined as the students enrolled in a career pathways program that is being enhanced using SCC5 Program Grant funds.

The Department expects applicants to enhance their ability to help students obtain good jobs, with an emphasis on occupations that pay family-sustaining wages and offer career development opportunities, as expressed in the [Good Jobs Principles](#) that the Departments of Labor and Commerce developed jointly in 2022. Applicants for this FOA will advance equity by

identifying and addressing equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market outcomes for specific locally underserved communities. Building on existing or emerging sector-based career pathways programs, which evidence shows support employment outcomes, is foundational to the grant program. In designing projects, applicants will choose from among a set of Strategy Options that are primarily based on evidence from previous career pathways initiatives and describe how they will sustain the built capacity of their programs. These elements are described in the FOA's four core elements:

- Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs
- Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice
- Strategy Options (focused on employer engagement, comprehensive student supports, and academic and training offerings)
- Sustainable Systems Change

The lead applicant of an SCC Partnership must be a community college that is a public institution as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, and at which the associate degree is primarily the highest degree awarded. The lead may apply as a single institution or as a consortium of two or more colleges in a common labor market area (or, in the case of a consortium led by a Tribally Controlled College, within a state). Consortium members may include community colleges and public and private, non-profit four-year institutions, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act. In keeping with [Executive Order 14112](#) and its emphasis on increasing the accessibility, equity, flexibility, and utility of Federal funding and support programs for Tribal Nations, DOL intends to award at least one grant to a Tribally Controlled College if one or more applications of acceptable quality from otherwise eligible Tribally Controlled Colleges are received. In addition, in support of the Administration's Investing in America Agenda (IAA), this FOA will award a priority consideration point for applicants that align their identified career pathway with relevant in-demand infrastructure sectors related to the IAA.

Institutions that were funded in the fourth round of SCC as either leads or consortium members may not apply for SCC5. Institutions that were funded in the first three rounds of SCC as either leads or consortium members may apply as leads or consortium members under this fifth round if they focus on a different industry sector than in prior rounds. Both single institutions and consortium member applicants will engage partners as follows. A required organizational sector convener will collaboratively meet the workforce needs of multiple sector employers within a given labor market area (or, in the case of a consortium led by a Tribally Controlled College, within a state). Three or more SCC5 employer partners will commit to participating in the identified sector initiative and to supporting the project design. Applicants must partner with the public workforce system and are strongly encouraged to collaborate with a worker organization, labor-management partnership, labor union partner representing workers, or an organization representing target populations of students and workers in relevant industry sectors; with one or more community-based organizations that have successfully engaged the underserved community(ies) targeted in the proposal; and with one or more secondary schools, particularly secondary career and technical education programs. Applicants may propose additional optional partners in support of project goals.

All successful applicants will be required to contract with an evaluator to conduct a developmental evaluation and to assist grantees in activities such as documenting outcomes and

instituting a Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process. In addition, the Department intends to conduct a national impact evaluation of the fifth round of the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants program to assess the impact of the grant program's strategies. All successful applicants will be required to participate in the national impact evaluation, if selected for inclusion. Grantees selected for the national impact evaluation will receive, within the first year of the grant, a period of performance extension, as well as additional funding to cover the costs of evaluation-related data collection and additional services during the extension period. Grantees selected will also have access to employment outcomes data, provided through the national evaluator's resources, that might not otherwise be available to them.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. PROGRAM PURPOSE

This announcement solicits applications for the fifth round of Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (or SCC5).

The purpose of this program is to build community colleges' capacity to meet the skill development needs of employers and equitably support students in obtaining good jobs in in-demand industries, based on labor market information, using strategies rooted in evidence and designed to build further evidence on the effectiveness of sector-based career pathways programs in leading to positive employment outcomes. They also will use the diverse strengths of their SCC Partnership members to accomplish and sustain systems change. The Department anticipates that enhancements funded by this grant program will ultimately benefit a broad range of current and future students at participating institutions.

This fifth round of Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants builds on early learnings from the initial rounds of SCC grants. All five rounds of SCC grants build on evidence from the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program, which focused on capacity building at community colleges and large-scale systems change within community college consortia. See Appendix A for resources on those grants and other related initiatives.

To contribute to further evidence building, the Department has designed SCC5 to support a national impact evaluation, as described in Section I.I. Evaluations. For example, SCC5 uses a "core components" concept through which applicants will select from specific Strategy Options when designing enhancements to their sector-based career pathways programs. These options have a foundation in evidence (Peck 2021, Appendix A) and build on promising practices from the first round of SCC grants. The options also emphasize employer engagement and student supports with the intention of enhancing community colleges' capacity to equitably assist students in obtaining good jobs.

To ensure that SCC5 grant projects accomplish the goals of the FOA, the Department will fund applications that address, in their proposals, each of the required SCC5 Core Elements, which, while presented below sequentially, are interrelated and mutually reinforcing:

- Core Element 1: Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs
- Core Element 2: Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice
- Core Element 3: Strategy Options

- Core Element 4: Sustainable Systems Change

1. Core Element 1: Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs

Under this Announcement, applicants must implement a sector strategy that supports one or more career pathways programs, as described below. Due to the level of effort required to implement such a strategy, the Department encourages but does not require applicants to focus on a single industry sector. Examples of industry sectors include, but are not limited to, advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, clean or renewable energy, transportation, and telecommunications or broadband infrastructure; applicants may propose other locally in-demand sectors while taking into account the good jobs emphasis in Core Element 2. Within a sector, applicants must enhance at least one career pathways program (though they may focus on more than one) to ensure that it includes the skills and credentials needed for placement in good jobs while also ensuring that the skills and credentials are provided in an equitable way. For purposes of this FOA, we use the terms “sector” and “sector-based” interchangeably and refer to the career pathways programs that applicants will enhance as “sector-based career pathways programs.”

In developing a project design for a sector-based career pathways program, applicants will need to ask themselves, “Given our local context and labor market demand, which sector initiatives or emerging sector priorities in our local area should we prioritize to best support the enhancement of a career pathways approach? And which career pathways program(s), aligned with the identified sector initiative, offer the best opportunity to train people for good jobs that have strong local demand and strong potential to address equity gaps in employment outcomes?”

Both sector strategies and career pathways programs are recognized as effective in supporting positive employment outcomes for community college students, as highlighted in the studies cited in Appendix A. Emerging evidence also suggests that sector programs can help address racial disparities in employment. A **sector strategy** is a partnership of multiple employers within an industry that brings together organizations such as educational institutions, including K-12 schools, economic development agencies, workforce development systems, labor unions, labor-management partnerships, and community organizations to identify and *collaboratively* meet the workforce needs of that industry within a given labor market. Sector strategies are a key element of a career pathways system, which develops education and training in collaboration with employers to ensure that the end product supports the skills and competencies needed by industry (see resources on sector strategies in Appendix A). While many colleges work with employers through one-on-one relationships, for this FOA, we expect applicants to propose sector strategies that work collaboratively across multiple employers within an identified sector.

A **career pathways program** offers a clear sequence, or pathway, of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies. The career pathways approach combines support services and strong employer connections to help participants advance within an industry sector or occupational cluster. It enables individuals to enter and exit training at various levels, with each step on the pathway designed to help them move to the next level and progress over time to higher skills, recognized credentials, and better jobs with higher pay. See also the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's (WIOA) definition of career pathways identified in [WIOA Section 3\(7\)](#). For the purposes of this FOA, DOL expects that applicants will enhance an existing or emerging career pathways program, rather than developing a new one from the start. An emerging career pathways program

is defined as one that is under development and will enroll students within eight months of the grant start date (i.e., by Fall 2025). We describe Enhancement Strategy Options and define selected terms in Core Element 3 and provide definitions in Appendix C.

A key aim of a sector-based approach is to ensure that workers are placed and succeed in jobs that meet employers' needs. While nonprofit entities have tended to lead the sector programs evaluated to date, community colleges, especially in partnership with the local workforce system, are well positioned to incorporate key features of such programs, such as cultivating deep sector expertise and strengthening their industry partnerships; developing education and training that leads to higher-level credentials for better paying jobs at the outset and that targets occupations and industries offering higher potential for wage growth over time; and connecting to sector partners, such as the required local workforce system partner and labor organization, as well as community-based organizations, to provide comprehensive wrap-around and support services, such as transportation vouchers, childcare assistance, and tuition assistance, and career or college navigation (Strawn et al. 2021, Schaberg 2022, Appendix A).

Accordingly, this FOA will fund projects that seek to improve participants' labor market outcomes by embedding enhanced career pathway programs into emerging or existing sector strategies. Specifically, successful applicants will propose projects that undertake the following activities that support a sector-based career pathways program model:

- **Convene or partner with an emerging or existing sector initiative.** Applicants must serve as the sector partnership convener or partner with a sector partnership convener. (To avoid confusion with the references to the partnership for the grant as a whole, we will refer to these as “sector conveners.”) Sector conveners may be a trade/industry association, the lead applicant or consortium member, a local Workforce Development Board, a Chamber of Commerce, a labor-management partnership, or a similar industry-focused organization involved in developing strong sector initiatives. The Department encourages applicants to focus on a single industry sector. Applicants may propose multiple career pathways programs within one industry sector.
- **Partner with employers in the identified sector strategy.** To ensure that pathways align closely with employer needs and connect participants to good jobs, applicants must partner directly with at least three employers that participate or commit to participating in the identified sector initiative. Grantees should plan to engage additional employers throughout the life of the grant, as part of the sector-based strategy. We encourage applicants to partner with employers that already offer quality jobs or are actively working to increase the job quality of their positions, including those with family-sustaining wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement, among other indicators of good jobs. Moreover, for industry partnerships to play a transformational role in meeting colleges' equitable employment goals, colleges must deepen their engagement—at the strategic level—with employers at all stages of project design and implementation. Specifically, grantees are expected to engage employers by establishing organizational structures that will continue despite turnover among individual faculty members and employer representatives.
- **Partner with one or more public workforce development system partners.** The public workforce development system can also play a critical role in developing innovative and sustainable career pathways programs and systems. Research shows that partnerships with the public workforce development system have the potential to bolster community

colleges' efforts to recruit prospective students (including underserved populations of students), provide persistence and completion supports to students, develop data sharing agreements, and create statewide policies and practices to support adult learners, among other benefits (Eyster et al. 2020, Appendix A). Hence, applicants are required to partner with one or more public workforce development system partners. The Department encourages applicants to consider the state's/region's workforce priorities when developing their program design to support sustainability and alignment.

- **Collaborate with one or more worker-focused organizations.** The Department recognizes the important and central role that worker organizations, labor-management partnerships, and labor unions fill to ensure that career pathways result in good jobs that support worker voice, safety, and benefits. The Department strongly encourages partnership with these organizations to ensure effective career pathways programs that will lead to good jobs. This partnership may occur in conjunction with employer partners or through separate outreach efforts. This partnership also supports workforce needs through a dual-customer approach; these intermediary organizations provide a direct link to many training opportunities, while also providing worker input into local and regional training needs and solutions. Such organizations can also help translate the capacity-building efforts of community colleges into direct training pathways and access to the targeted populations that the project seeks to benefit through the identified equity strategies.
- **Collaborate with community-based organizations.** The Department also strongly encourages applicants to collaborate with community-based organizations that have successfully engaged the underserved population(s) and community(ies) targeted in the proposal to successfully address equity gaps. Organizations with deep local connections and/or a focus on underserved populations can help colleges alleviate some of the barriers to employment that such communities often face by providing--with contextual understanding--a range of services, including proactive and ongoing recruitment and outreach; information related to basic needs; comprehensive, wrap-around supports; and job placement and post-placement support, including career retention, advancement, and reemployment services. In addition, organizations that have long-term relationships with employers and deep knowledge of in-demand sectors can help colleges strengthen their employer engagement strategies.
- **Collaborate with secondary schools.** The Department also strongly encourages applicants to collaborate with secondary schools. In particular, career and technical education programs at the secondary level can create long-lasting, seamless pathways for students exploring careers in the chosen sector in high school who may be interested in pursuing that pathway at the postsecondary level.

See Section III.A.3. Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants Partnership (SCC Partnership) for more information.

2. Core Element 2: Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice

Evidence-based workforce strategies such as career pathways and sector strategies, when appropriately designed and implemented, can increase the quality of jobs that program participants enter and close equity gaps among program participants.

In determining a project design for this Announcement, applicants will need to ask themselves, "Which occupations pay family-sustaining wages in the local community and lead to career progression? What are the critical equity gaps for underserved populations locally that impact employment in those occupations, as well as the education that supports employment opportunities? Why do those gaps exist? What practices, policies, rules, and processes are needed to increase our capacity to support good jobs and equitable employment for our underserved communities? What does the available evidence say about interventions that are likely to be successful at this?"

Good Jobs

Good jobs (or quality jobs) are the foundation of an equitable economy that lifts workers and families and makes businesses more competitive. Good jobs are at the center of the Biden/Harris Administration's workforce priorities – and at the heart of this FOA. Equitable economies place attention on the needs of workers who have faced and continue to face exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination. As many employers recognize, providing good jobs creates a clear competitive advantage when it comes to employee recruitment, retention, and execution of a company's mission. A good job helps workers achieve economic stability and mobility, while prioritizing diversity and worker voice. To this end, the Departments of Labor and Commerce jointly identified in 2022 eight key [Good Jobs Principles](#). Additional resources for workforce system partners, policymakers, and practitioners are the Department of Labor's [Good Jobs Initiative](#) site, [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-22](#), and the Department's [High Road to the Middle Class map tool](#).

For the purposes of this FOA, applicants must specifically focus on training for occupations that pay family-sustaining wages and provide skills and career advancement, as expressed in the seventh and eighth Good Jobs Principles:

- **Pay.** All workers are paid a stable and predictable living wage, as determined by the local area cost of living, before overtime, tips, and commissions. Workers' pay is fair, transparent, and equitable (i.e., workers with similar skills and experience are paid the same wage for the same work). Workers' wages grow commensurate with increased skills and experience.
- **Skills and Career Advancement.** Workers have equitable opportunities and tools to progress to future jobs. Workers have transparent promotion or advancement opportunities. Workers have access to high-quality occupational training, such as on-the-job training (OJT), and continuing education opportunities.

Applicants are not required to address the remaining six [Good Jobs Principles](#) in their application, but the Department strongly encourages doing so to embed job quality in the overall project design.

Applicants will find tools to identify occupations that pay or lead to family-supporting wages in Section I.F. Target Occupations. We encourage applicants to coordinate with local business services teams at American Job Centers or other local, regional, or state business and economic development partners to support the identification of, and partnership with, employers within the identified career pathways program sector that are already offering quality jobs or are actively working to increase the job quality of their positions. Applicants may use their sector partnership to assist employer partners in the following ways: providing technical assistance materials to

support job quality or ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws; establishing peer coaching, counseling, and worksite mentoring programs; creating, expanding, or enhancing Registered Apprenticeships, internships, and other work experiences, including subsidies of apprentice and intern wages; and creating customized training programs, among other efforts that can support skill and career progression and family-sustaining wages.

Equitable Employment Outcomes for Underserved Populations

Pursuant to [Executive Order 14091](#), applicants for this FOA will advance equity by identifying and addressing equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market outcomes for locally underserved communities.

As defined in Executive Order 14091, the term “equity” means the consistent and systematic treatment of all individuals in a fair, just, and impartial manner, including individuals who belong to communities that have often been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander persons and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; women and girls; LGBTQI+ persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; persons who live in United States Territories; persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality; and individuals who belong to multiple such communities. The term “underserved communities” refers to those populations as well as geographic communities that have been systematically denied the opportunity to participate fully in aspects of economic, social and civic life, as defined in [Executive Order 13985](#), and [Executive Order 14020](#).

In the context of this Announcement, an “equity gap” refers to significant and persistent inequity or disparity in the employment opportunities offered to individuals who belong to one or more underserved communities.

The following demographic groups included in Executive Order 14091 are also included in DOL’s Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) and will be used for the purposes of this FOA to track progress toward reducing equity gaps: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Female, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals (using the WIOA definition of low-income identified in [WIOA Section 3\(36\)](#)).

In determining proposed equity gap(s), applicants must choose at least one category from the WIPS list, consistent with local equity gaps, on which to focus. It is the Department's intention to review participant outcomes reported in WIPS, with respect to whether equity gaps are narrowing, for the purposes of providing technical assistance and as part of the national impact evaluation. Applicants may also choose to target additional populations in Executive Order 14901 that are not on the WIPS list, which they will track internally.

The Department encourages applicants to align with efforts that their states and local communities are undertaking as part of the Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA). The CLNA requires recipients to conduct a needs assessment every two years to ensure that their career and technical education programs are meeting the needs of learners, educators, and employers. Stakeholders can use the CLNA process to develop interventions that improve equity. See Appendix B for more information.

Student Voice

Authentic engagement with students is a critical feature that supports both good jobs principles and equity initiatives (Wallerstein 2005, Appendix B). Applicants are required to describe how they will incorporate student feedback loops throughout the grant to support quality career pathways development that meets the needs of students. For example, including student voice in program design can inform the development of, or connection to, supportive services to ensure that they are relevant, accessible, and provided in an equitable way.

Assessing Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Impacts

Successful applicants must institute a data review and analysis process at least annually, with the assistance of the grantee-contracted developmental evaluator, related to the impact of Core Element 2. The Department expects that the grantee will incorporate the input gathered from the required worker and student voice efforts into this annual data review and analysis. This annual process will address two key areas:

1. To determine whether the jobs that participants are being trained for and enter into pay family-sustaining wages and offer skills and career advancement. This data review and analysis will help grantees build the capacity to undertake this type of analysis, understand whether they are training participants for good jobs, and make data-informed project management decisions with respect to training for good jobs.
2. To determine whether successful applicants are reducing their targeted equity gaps. The purpose is to help grantees build the capacity to do this type of analysis, understand whether they are reducing equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market outcomes for locally underserved communities, and make data-informed project management decisions with respect to addressing those equity gaps.

3. Core Element 3: Strategy Options

Building on the foundation of evidence for one or more emerging or developed sector-based career pathways programs as described in Core Element 1, and in support of Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice as described in Core Element 2, applicants must incorporate into their project design evidence-based or promising Strategy Options as described below.

In designing the project, applicants will need to ask themselves, “Which Strategy Options will enable us to achieve positive employment outcomes in good jobs and close or reduce identified equity gaps for local underserved communities?”

To guide applicants in proposing project designs that aim to achieve positive employment outcomes, DOL has identified Strategy Options that evidence shows may influence career pathways program impact. Most of these strategies are drawn from the Career Pathways Descriptive & Analytical Project Meta-Analysis (Peck et al. 2021, Appendix A), with a smaller number added based on evidence or promise in TAACCCT studies (see Appendix A) and emerging promise from the first round of SCC grantees. These Strategy Options fall within three high-level groupings: Employer Engagement, Comprehensive Supports, and Academic and Training Offerings. For the purposes of this FOA, the Department is emphasizing Employer Engagement and Comprehensive Supports. As discussed in Table 1 below, applicants must select at least one strategy within each of Groups A, B, and C to undertake using grant funds. We encourage applicants to select additional strategies from Groups A and B to further the potential impact of the enhanced career pathways program(s), which they may undertake using grant funds

and/or leveraged resources. The strategies selected also must align with the required theory of change (see Section I.C.1) in terms of how the strategy relates to achieving employment outcomes in good jobs and closing or reducing identified equity gaps. Applicants must make a clear connection between the strategies that they choose and the desired outcomes of “good jobs” and “equity gap reduction” in their project narrative (Sections IV.B.3.c.iii. and iv).

Table 1. Strategy Options

GROUP A: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
<p>Strategies A1-A6 are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathway program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of strategies A1-A6 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathway program, and we encourage them to select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership (see Section III.A. Eligible Applicants).</p> <p>A1: Improve current process of obtaining and incorporating ongoing sector-wide employer input on curriculum and program development.</p> <p>A2: Put in place job development staff. <i>May include preemployment services, such as sector orientation, career readiness, and career advancement coaching; and postemployment services, designed to help new workers persist in their jobs and advance in their careers, such as ongoing coaching and reemployment assistance, if needed.</i></p> <p>A3: Establish employer commitments to interview qualified candidates.</p> <p>A4: Establish or strengthen employer-offered, paid, work-based learning opportunities, including internships, Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), co-ops, or others.</p> <p>A5: Serve as Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor or Intermediary for a RAP developed or enhanced under the grant.</p> <p>A6: Provide leveraged employer resources, including instructors, financial aid, mentors, equipment, funding, or other in-kind support.</p>
GROUP B: COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS

Strategies B1-B4 are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathways program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of B1-B4 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program, and we encourage them to select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership.

B1: Provide Navigation/Coaching Services, which may include supportive case management, counseling, career navigation, college navigation, or other one-on-one or group support designed to help students succeed throughout the career pathway.

B2: Provide wrap-around/support services or benefits, which may include stipends, emergency assistance, internet, tutoring assistance, child/dependent care assistance, transportation assistance, healthcare (including mental health services), and tuition or training costs, and advising on public benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, among other services. Applicants are also encouraged to consider innovative ways to provide supportive services such as childcare to students from underserved communities, such as through partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start programs, or arranging slots for participants with another child or dependent care provider.

B3: Collaborate with community-based organization(s) that are meaningfully engaged with the underserved population(s) and community(ies) targeted in the proposal to provide the navigation/coaching services listed in B1 and/or the wrap-around/support services or benefits listed in B2.

B4: Collaborate with a worker organization, labor-management partnership, labor union representing workers, or an organization representing target populations of students and workers in relevant industry sectors, that have successfully engaged the underserved community(ies) targeted in the proposal to ensure that the sector-based career pathways result in good jobs that support worker voice, safety, and benefits.

GROUP C: ACADEMIC AND TRAINING OFFERINGS

Strategies C1-C3 below are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathways program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of C1-C3 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program, and may select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership.

C1: Enhance non-credit to credit articulation. *May include strategies such as designing noncredit certificates to function as on-ramps to degree programs; making noncredit programs credit-worthy using such "bridge tools" as articulation agreements, competency-based education, and prior learning assessments; converting noncredit into credit-based programs through accreditation; and ensuring that credits in the same field are transferable and portable. (See ESG 2020, Appendix A)*

C2: Incorporate paid work-based learning, such as internships, cooperative education experiences, Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), or other approaches, in institution's curriculum or program designs.

C3: Provide hands-on training in-person or virtually, such as through technology-enabled simulations.

Strategies C4-C7 are additional optional enhancements for the required sector-based career pathway program(s). Applicants may include, but are not required to include, any of these strategies. Note that, while strategies C4-C7 are allowable for SCC5, the Department expects grantees to leverage existing college infrastructure and/or other funding sources to cover the costs of these strategies, where feasible.

C4: Provide integrated education and career-focused training programs that offer accelerated and contextualized foundational skills instruction. *Contextualized foundational skills instruction embeds traditional academic content (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics) within technical coursework, e.g., within courses in a selected program(s) of study. This model often occurs in tandem with a co-requisite or concurrent model of instruction, which involves simultaneous enrollment of students in remedial and college-level coursework. Grantees may also wish to consider braiding SCC funds with Adult Education and Family Literacy Act grant funding to support integrated education and training and bridge programs for adult learners.*

C5: Implement competency-based education/assessment. *In this outcomes-oriented approach, colleges assess and certify student mastery of learning outcomes through observational methods, such as task performance, exams, demonstrations, or other direct measures of proficiency. Students earn credentials based on the mastery of specific competencies as demonstrated through performance-based assessments.*

C6: Implement or enhance credit for prior learning/prior learning assessments. *This process involves an evaluation of skills and knowledge acquired from prior coursework or outside the classroom (i.e., the workplace) for the purpose of recognizing mastery against a given set of standards, competencies, or learning outcomes.*

C7: Provide flexible instruction, including online, hybrid, flexible sequencing, courses offered at multiple locations and/or times, modularized curricula, block scheduling, cohort scheduling, and self-paced learning.

4. Core Element 4: Sustainable Systems Change

Applicants must design a strategy that incorporates sustainable systems changes from the start.

“Sustainable systems change alters a sufficient number of key drivers (incentives, rules, etc.) such that the system that once perpetuated a ‘problem’ now instead perpetuates a ‘solution.’ This has implications on the way projects are designed and implemented” (Woltering, L. et al. 2019, Appendix C).

In determining a project design for this Announcement, applicants will need to ask themselves, “How can we ensure that the systems changes we make are institutionalized and sustained over the long term? What does the available evidence say about the strategies that will more likely lead to sustainable systems change that perpetuates solutions?”

Sustainable systems change within the context of this FOA means that changes are made to policies, rules, procedures, and practices that impact sector-based career pathways program(s), to ensure equitable access to good jobs. Specifically, systems change for the purpose of equity seeks to make structural changes to the way a college operates and its culture, rather than focusing efforts on addressing perceived student deficits.

A key lesson from TAACCCT is that “embedding collaboration as a core element of an initiative” can help community colleges implement their systems change and capacity-building efforts (Eyster et al. 2020, p. xiii, Appendix A). Primary stakeholders in this collaboration include industry and employers, the public workforce development system, other institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, labor unions and labor-management partnerships, and the departments and offices internal to community colleges.

All applicants must describe in their Project Narrative and their comprehensive work plan how they will sustain the built capacity and systems change they used to advance equitable employment and educational outcomes during their SCC5 grant. This may include milestones demonstrating new or updated institutional policies or rules, new approaches or practices for employer engagement, elimination of process barriers to student access, new institutionalized ways of supporting students, new methods of instructional design and delivery, and new and continuing funding formulas and streams. Note that accomplishments or innovations that support a broader agenda—in particular, those that align with the strategic priorities of the institution (e.g., Equity Plan, Strategic Plan, etc.), other community college reform efforts, or state or local workforce development system priorities—have a greater likelihood of being sustained.

There is a vast literature on systems theory and what constitutes a system. In general, systems are a collection of interacting, interdependent parts that function as subsystems, networks, and overlapping or nested components (Foster-Fishman & Behrens 2007, Appendix C). In this FOA, we use "systems change" to refer to "an intentional process designed to alter the status quo by shifting and realigning the form and function of a targeted system" (Foster-Fishman et al. 2007, p. 197, Appendix C).

To further support the capacity-building and sustainability aspects of this grant, SCC requires 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 and posted to a public distribution platform. See Section I.H. Open Educational Resources (OER).

B. PROGRAM AUTHORITY

Section 169(c) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes this program. The funds for this grant program are appropriated in Title I of Division D of Pub. L. 118-47, Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, March 23, 2024.

C. RESULTS-DRIVEN PROJECT DESIGN

Applicants must design and implement a work plan to support results-driven outcomes and report findings. A results-driven project design connects its theory of change, strategies, and intended capacity building milestones to a framework that explicitly lays out the logical connections for how the project will support students in equitably obtaining good jobs. This approach gives successful applicants a process to systematically assess their progress and performance and the opportunity to learn from and improve their projects over time based on data that their projects generate over the grant's life.

The applicant's design process must include the following components. Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative indicates whether to provide this required information in the Project Narrative or as a separate attachment.

1. Theory of Change

A theory of change is a graphic illustration of the project's overall vision and the relationships between a project's identified problem (including the need to build capacity for good jobs and reduce equity gaps), capacity needs and community assets, influential factors, assumptions, strategies, and outcomes. A theory of change, in combination with a comprehensive work plan, is an effective tool to assist in project planning, implementation, management, evaluation, and reporting. Evidence supports positive connections between project success and the use of theories of change (Kellogg Foundation, Appendix D).

More information about the Theory of Change can be found in Appendix D, and a sample format in an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. The sample format includes **examples** of outcomes. *Note that these examples are for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must develop outcomes that are specific to their grant.*

After award, grantees will be expected to further refine and develop their theory of change model based on their learnings and supported by their required, contracted evaluator.

2. Project Work Plan, Capacity Building, and Grantee Accountability

Applicants must present a comprehensive project work plan demonstrating a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project that is realistic and measurable. A comprehensive work plan for the purposes of this FOA will include, but not be limited to, high-level, key implementation steps for each of the following project components:

- Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs
- Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice
- Strategy Options
- Participant Tracking
- Developmental Evaluation
- Open Educational Resource Content Development and Posting
- Linked Open Data on Credentials
- Granted-Funded Special Purpose Equipment and/or Altered Space (if needed)

Each of these is explained further elsewhere and listed in the sample work plan in Appendix E. Key implementation steps must address start and due dates, specific responsible entities, and

milestones, including those that are evidence of sustainable systems change achievements (see Core Element 4, Section I.A Program Purpose) for each of the above project component areas.

The Department will review implementation progress on the work plans quarterly for technical assistance purposes, and annually for performance monitoring and compliance purposes.

Significant changes to the project work plan may require a grant amendment. Grantees will report implementation progress on the work plan using the Quarterly Narrative Report. See Section VI.C for information on this DOL reporting requirement.

If needed, DOL will work with the awarded grantees to clarify work plan annual milestones early in the grant process. This may include clarifying which annual milestones will be monitored/measured for grant purposes, and which will be tracked internally by the grantee.

A sample format of the project work plan can be found in Appendix E, and an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. **Examples** of key implementation steps appear in the sample format. *Note that these examples are for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must develop key implementation steps that are specific to their grant.*

3. Participant Tracking and Outcomes

To further define the benefits of SCC5 capacity-building efforts, all applicants must make a clear connection, in the Project Narrative and their Theory of Change, between the strategies they choose and the desired outcomes of “good jobs” and “equity gap reduction” for the local underserved community(ies) they are targeting.

Grantees will report progress toward equitable employment and educational outcomes by tracking participant enrollment, completion, and credential attainment in career pathways program(s) enhanced with grant funding, with accompanying demographic information. DOL will utilize the Department’s Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) to determine employment outcomes for reported participants (see Section VI.C Reporting); further, the Department intends to provide grantees selected for the impact evaluation, via the national impact evaluator, with additional employment outcome data (see Section I.I. Evaluation). While applicants are not required to set participant targets, they must estimate the number of anticipated participants in each career pathways program proposed for grant-funded enhancements and provide a comprehensive plan for participant data collection. Progress toward advancing equitable outcomes will be reviewed for technical assistance, but not monitoring, purposes.

Successful SCC5 applicants must take the following steps to fulfill the Participant Tracking requirement. Technical assistance will be provided to support these steps.

- By Month 9 of the grant, hire or assign a Data Assistant or Coordinator responsible for ensuring accurate data products and consistent participant tracking procedures
- By Month 12 of the grant, develop, pilot and finalize data collection procedures and tools
- By Month 12 of the grant, begin enrolling and tracking participants
- By Month 14 of the grant, begin conducting data quality checks

Informed by the theory of change and guided by the FOA objectives of supporting students in equitably obtaining good jobs, project implementers and their partners should use the comprehensive work plan to track the achievement of annual milestones including those that are evidence of sustainable systems change achievements. In addition, DOL will use participant

tracking to track progress toward equitable outcomes in good jobs. Please note that the applicant's comprehensive work plan, including progress on annual milestones, forms the basis of the Department's assessment of grantee performance.

D. ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

A wide range of activities may assist applicants in their efforts to reduce equity gaps in employment outcomes for good jobs. **Activities must relate directly to grant objectives. That is, for costs associated with an activity to be allowable with grant funds, the grantee must undertake the activity in relation to a grant-enhanced sector-based career pathway program, and the activity must have a clear connection to one or more of the four core elements described in Section I.A.**

In general, activities related to the requirements in the Core Elements are allowable:

- Sector-based career pathways programs, as described in Core Element 1
- Good jobs, and equitable employment outcomes, and student voice, as described in Core Element 2
- Strategy Options for project design, as described in Core Element 3
- Sustainable systems change, as described in Core Element 4

Other allowable activities that support the purposes of the FOA include:

- Data disaggregation, analysis, and application to the project.
- Activities designed to include student voice in shaping project design and outcomes and to encourage student participation in the required developmental and/or national impact evaluation. Also allowable are costs associated with incentivizing student voice in the grant-funded program and participation in the evaluation, including but not limited to stipends, gift cards, and payments for participation in focus groups, the evaluation, or similar activities. Total costs to the grant of all expenditures to incentivize student voice in the grant-funded program and participation in the evaluation cannot exceed 1.5 percent of the total grant award. Grantees using grant funds for stipends, gift cards, or other types of payments to encourage student voice in program design and outcomes and/or student participation in the developmental and/or national evaluation must have policies and procedures in place governing the provision of such payments, and the payments provided under the grant (if any) must comply with applicable federal laws and regulations (see Section VI.B).
- Professional development for faculty and/or staff.
- Activities necessary to support required evaluations (see Section I.I. Evaluation and Section VI.4.a. ETA Evaluation).
- Preparation of learning resources to be shared as open education resources (OER), preparing resources for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and affixing the CC BY 4.0 attribution license to them (see Section IV.E.), and making them publicly available for use and adaptation via a public dissemination platform.
- Purchase or upgrading of 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. Note that all equipment must be used in the classroom (in-person or virtual), clearly tied to the competencies

required for the proposed career pathways program(s), and receive prior approval from the Grant Officer.

- Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements (with prior approval from the Grant Officer), if specific to the project.
- Any grant requirements, such as performance reporting, credential transparency, and other requirements.

Wherever feasible, grantees are required to leverage existing Open Educational Resources (OER) instead of duplicating existing open learning objects as components of their proposed programs. See Section I.H Open Educational Resources for more information.

Per the SCC appropriations language, any grant funds used for apprenticeships shall be used to support only apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act and as referred to in section 3(7)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The Department understands that work involving equitable outcomes in good jobs may require changes during the period of performance. We encourage successful applicants to discuss the allowability of activities that emerge as important to grant outcomes with their Federal Project Officer, who may engage the Program Office and Grant Officer in decisions of allowability.

Applicants should refer to Section VI.B. 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.

Equipment and Minor Alterations

Expenditures for equipment and minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements, if specific to the project, are 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 of equipment or minor alterations. After grant awards are made, grantees will be required to obtain specific Grant Officer approval before acquiring equipment or proceeding with proposed alteration of facilities. The Grant Officer must determine that all proposed equipment and/or alterations 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 alterations 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.

ETA does not expect to see equipment purchases over 20 percent of the total grant award but, with a compelling rationale and significant justification, it may be permissible to purchase equipment at a cost of up to 30 percent of the total grant award. This will be determined during the period of performance and with the approval of the Grant Officer. Equipment purchased with grant funds must be installed and ready to use no later than 24 months from the start of the period of performance. Total costs to the grant of all alterations cannot exceed 15 percent of the

total grant award. All grant-funded activities related to alterations must be completed no later than 24 months from the start of the period of performance.

E. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

For the purposes of the FOA, grant-funded services will take place within the labor market area(s) in which the proposed institution(s) are located, consistent with institutional policies. The term “labor market area” means an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment within a reasonable distance or can readily change employment without changing their place of residence. See the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ [Frequently Asked Question #6](#), “What are labor market areas (LMAs)?” A labor market area may be within a state or across two or more contiguous states that share a common economic region. For a consortium led by a Tribally Controlled College, the definition of labor market area is expanded to include colleges within a state, whether or not the colleges are in an economically integrated geographic area.

F. TARGET OCCUPATIONS

When selecting the sector-based career pathway(s) to be built or enhanced with grant funding, applicants must focus on those occupations that provide training to workers in in-demand industries, such as—but not limited to—advanced manufacturing, information technology, health care, clean or renewable energy, transportation, and telecommunications or broadband infrastructure, among others. Priority consideration is given to applicants who identify and connect the career pathway sector and occupations for training with the Investing in America Agenda (see Section IV.B.3.g.). Applicants also may consider how the development of and/or connection to entrepreneurial training to strengthen small business growth may support the chosen career pathways, in these and other industries, provided that the entrepreneurial training is aligned with grant goals and local economic needs.

To identify occupations that are or lead to good jobs (such as those that offer living wages and opportunities for advancement), applicants may use a variety of tools. For instance, they may use the Department’s [Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions \(CTOT\) Dashboard](#) to help identify good job pathways in their area. The CTOT dashboard is an interactive tool that allows users to explore data on how workers in mid-level occupations move through jobs and occupational clusters. It identifies potential “launchpad” occupations, which are occupations “from which entrants go on to experience higher-than-average wage growth” (Schwartz2022: ix, Appendix A). Another example of a tool applicants also may use is the [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#), which estimates the cost of living in a “community or region based on typical expenses. The tool helps individuals, communities, and employers determine a local wage rate that allows residents to meet minimum standards of living.”

Within these priorities, applicants must demonstrate that the industry sectors that they select align with the skills and needs of their proposed labor market area by providing labor market information as described in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

G. INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

All career pathways enhanced with grant funding must lead to industry-recognized credentials. As stated in ETA’s [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) No. 25-19](#), an industry-recognized credential is either 1) developed and offered by, or endorsed by, a nationally or regionally recognized industry association or organization representing a sizable portion of the industry

sector; or 2) a credential that is sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment, which may include credentials from vendors of certain products. See [Attachment 1](#) of TEN No. 25-19, page I-3 for additional information.

Please note that any information about credentials developed through this program must be publicly accessible using linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability, such as through the use of the credential transparency description language specifications. See Section IV.E.

H. 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](#), 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 sites such as a state OER repository, [SkillsCommons.org](#) or other sites such as those referenced by [Creative Commons](#).

I. EVALUATIONS

An important aspect of this grant program will be to document the capacity built and the systems change achieved by grantees, and to share information about grantee successes and lessons learned with all grantees, as well as other interested colleges. There are two aspects to evaluations related to this Announcement: a developmental evaluation required of all grantees, and the requirement to participate in a national impact evaluation, if selected to do so. We also offer all applicants (not just those awarded grants) the opportunity to engage with evaluation learnings and peer sharing from SCC grants. Each of these aspects is explained further below.

1. Required Developmental Evaluation (All Applicants)

The Department is requiring that each grantee use a developmental evaluator to support them in documenting outcomes, providing real-time feedback to inform the development of the intervention, and identifying potential adaptations to the intervention to address systemic barriers and dynamic environments. This includes supporting the grantee in instituting a Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process, which must occur at least once annually (as described in Section I.A. under Core Element 2). The grantee's developmental

evaluator will also complement the grantee's communication with the national evaluator, for those grantees selected for the national evaluation. Key aspects of a developmental evaluation are as follows:

- **Purpose:** Supports data collection to provide real-time feedback for the planned intervention(s), allowing for potential adaptations to the intervention, and guiding refinement of evaluation questions.
- **Roles and relationships:** Evaluator is positioned as a collaborator and gathers data to provide feedback and support course correction as part of an ongoing process of continuous improvement, adaptation, and intentional change.
- **Examples of developmental evaluation questions:** In what ways is the initiative evolving/developing with the changing levels/quality of stakeholders' involvement? What are the stakeholders learning from the ongoing iterations to the initiative? In what ways is design thinking or another framework influencing the initiative?
- **Measurement:** Grantee and evaluation develop evaluation measures and tracking mechanisms quickly as outcomes emerge; measures can change during the evaluation as the process unfolds.

Post-award, DOL will provide grantees with a description of key components the grantee-contracted developmental evaluations must include. Grantees will be responsible to create a statement of work to recruit and select an evaluator with the needed competencies and expertise to carry out the grantee-contracted developmental evaluation. Key components of the developmental evaluation will include but are not limited to: a description of the program's theory of change, clearly defined research objectives and research questions, an appropriate research design, data measures, data sources, data collection plans, and analytic methods.

The cost of the study must not exceed five percent of the applicant's overall budget and must be included in the overall grant budget and budget narrative. Applicants should ensure that their budget is sufficient to meet the requirements for the required developmental evaluator, including the annual Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process. Applicants must ensure that their procurement plan for the developmental evaluation meets the following requirements:

- Consistency with Federal procurement law at 2 CFR 200.320, as well as any applicable college, state, or other procurement regulations. Note that, because the budget limit for the evaluator is no more than five percent of the total grant, the total may be under the Simplified Acquisition Threshold of \$250,000. Such purchases are referred to as "Small Purchases," with specific rules found at 2 CFR 200.320(a)(2).
- Consistency with institution, state, or other relevant entities' procurement requirements. Note that, if the institution, state, or other relevant entity has more restrictive rules for the type of procurement planned, the procurement must meet both those requirements and federal requirements.

Grantees must procure their required grantee-contracted developmental evaluator by the end of month six, if such a timeline is possible under required federal, institutional, and any other relevant procurement guidelines. After procuring a third-party developmental evaluator, grantees must submit a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from their evaluator, which must be revised and submitted to DOL as a Final Detailed Evaluation Design, based on feedback provided by the

Department. DOL will review the submissions to ensure that the designs are feasible. In the evaluation design, grantees must include plans to submit Interim and Final Reports from their grantee-contracted developmental evaluator by the milestones specified below.

Required implementation steps for the grantee-contracted developmental evaluation are as follows, and they must be included in the required Project Work Plan. Deviations from this timeline are possible but require prior ETA approval (see Section IV.B.3.b.iv.).

- No later than Month 1: Submit a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for a development 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 a developmental 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 the grantee-contracted evaluator.
- Throughout: Ensure that the grantee-contracted evaluator carries out the evaluation, completes all tasks and deliverables, and provides ongoing input and consultation.
- No later than Month 27: Submit the evaluator’s Interim Developmental Evaluation Report to the grantee’s Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using the suggested format or similar layout, provided after grant award.
- No later than Month 48: Submit the evaluator’s Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.

2. Required Participation in DOL Evaluation

The Department intends to conduct a national impact evaluation for SCC5 grantees to determine the effectiveness of the programs funded under this FOA for various outcomes of interest. All grantees must participate in the national evaluation, if selected for inclusion.

Grantees selected to participate will receive additional funding and a period of performance extension, as described in Sections II.A. Award Type and Amount and Section II.B. Period of Performance. Grantees selected will also have access to employment outcomes data for some or all of their project participants that might not otherwise be available to them. The Department will conduct a feasibility study (research done before an impact evaluation) immediately after grants are awarded under this FOA to determine the best evaluation design option and which grantees’ projects best support the evaluation research questions. See Section VI.B.4. Special Program Requirements for more information.

3. Opportunity to Engage with SCC Program Evaluations and Learnings

The Department realizes that writing a proposal in response to an Announcement requires considerable effort, and that doing so is itself a capacity- building undertaking. To build on that effort, and to share the knowledge gained from this grant with applicants who do not win awards, learnings will be available to all interested parties on the [College Connections](#) site on [WorkforceGPS](#). In addition, we have established a “Community College Capacity-Building Learning Cohort” that receives invitations to selected SCC-related technical assistance activities.

All applicants will receive information from DOL about how to access this opportunity after we make awards under this Announcement.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AWARD TYPE AND AMOUNT

Funding will be provided in the form of a grant.

We expect availability of approximately \$65,000,000 to fund approximately 13-17 grants, including supplemental grant modifications to support grantees participating in the national evaluation. 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.

Applicants may apply for up to \$5,750,000 for initial consortia grants and \$1,750,000 for initial single institution grants. The minimum for both types of applicants is \$1,500,000. Subject to receiving sufficient applications of fundable quality, DOL intends to award approximately 70-80 percent of grant funds to consortium applicants and the remaining grant funds to single institution applicants. Per [Executive Order 14112](#) and its emphasis on increasing the accessibility, equity, flexibility, and utility of Federal funding and support programs for Tribal Nations, DOL intends to award at least one grant to a Tribally Controlled College if one or more applications of acceptable quality from otherwise eligible Tribally Controlled Colleges are received. See Section III.A.2 Tribally Controlled College Applicants for more information. DOL anticipates that the funding as described in this FOA will yield approximately 7-8 consortia grants and 6-9 single institution grants.

Approximately \$55,000,000 will be awarded in grants under the competition described in this FOA. After those initial awards the Department will conduct a national impact evaluation feasibility study. Grantees who are selected for the national impact evaluation will receive additional funding to cover data-related tasks associated with the national evaluation, as well as additional services during a short period of performance extension (see Section II.B Period of Performance). The Department anticipates awarding approximately \$10,000,000 in total additional funding to selected grantees for this purpose, for total awards of \$65,000,000. This amount will be allocated as a percentage of initial grant funding. The Department reserves the right to use less than \$10,000,000 for this purpose and to use the funds for additional grants instead. Implementation of the additional funds and period of performance extension for grantees selected for the impact evaluation will come in the form of a grant amendment executed no later than September 30, 2025.

B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is 48 months with an anticipated start date of 02/01/2025. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

After award, grantees selected for the national impact evaluation will receive a period of performance extension from the estimated end date of January 31, 2028, to June 30, 2029, to allow grantees to serve and track participants through the end of the Spring 2029 semester. Additional funds will also be provided to grantees receiving the period of performance extension

(see Section II.A. Award Type and Amount). Implementation of the period of performance extension and additional funds for grantees selected for the national impact evaluation will come in the form of a grant amendment executed no later than September 30, 2025.

We expect that start-up activities, such as hiring appropriate grant program staff and project design activities, will begin immediately after grant award. Grantees are required to procure their required third-party developmental evaluator by the end of month six, if such a timeline is possible under required federal, institutional, and any other relevant procurement guidelines.

Written requests for prior approval to acquire grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or to alter space must be submitted no later than 12 months after the award date of the grant; DOL strongly encourages grantees to submit such requests within the first 90 days. Grant Officer-approved special purpose equipment and/or altered 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. Grantees are expected to start enrolling participants in grant-enhanced programs of study by at least month 12, with consideration of academic calendars, though sooner is preferred. We strongly encourage grantees to develop their project work plans and timelines accordingly.

Milestones, including those demonstrating sustainable systems change achievements related to each Strategy Option, must be included in an attachment to the Project Narrative. See Appendix E: Suggested Project Work Plan Format and note that an Excel version of this format is available on the grants.gov page for this FOA, under Related Documents.

Grantees must plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance. DOL does not anticipate period of performance extensions under this FOA for grantees that are not selected for the national impact evaluation.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1. Applicant Types and Requirements

In keeping with the direction provided by Congress under the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024, the Department will award grants under this program to lead applicants that meet one of the following definitions:

Single Institution: A community college that is a public institution as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, and at which the associate degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college's designation at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. A single institution lead applicant must form a Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants Partnership (or SCC Partnership) as described below in Section III.A.3. Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (SCC) Partnership.

Institution Consortium: A lead applicant representing a consortium of institutions, 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 degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college's designation at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. Consortium members may include community colleges and public and private, non-profit four-year institutions, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act. Grants will be awarded to

the lead applicant of the institution consortium, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

An institution consortium must include at least the consortium lead and one other institution, but the Department anticipates that more than two colleges will be required to accomplish the goals of the consortium, depending on the labor market area and project design. As with single institution applicants, the institution consortium must form an SCC Partnership as described below in Section III.A.3. SCC Partnership.

For consortium applicants, the Department is requiring institutions to apply for this funding as a consortium of colleges that will undertake systems change as a ***labor market-focused consortium*** (see Section I.E. Geographic Scope). The consortium must address equity gaps and respond to the workforce needs of one or more industry sectors within the consortium's regional labor market. Labor market-focused consortia must describe their economic region and define how they will coordinate with and between partners to support sustainable systems change at the regional level, as well as how the project will leverage state, interstate, or regional resources in the achievement of program outcomes and outputs.

An entity cannot serve as more than one type of required partner in the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants for the purpose of meeting FOA requirements. For example, a lead or consortium member institution cannot also serve as the required workforce development system partner. The lead institution or a consortium member may, however, serve as the required sector convener if it meets the requirements described in Section III.A.3.b. Required Sector Convener.

2. Tribally Controlled College Applicants

In keeping with [Executive Order 14112](#) (Sec. 5(a)(ii)), DOL intends to award at least one grant to a Tribally Controlled College if one or more applications of acceptable quality are received from Tribally Controlled Colleges that are otherwise eligible under Section III.A.1 above. For the purposes of SCC5 grants, eligibility as a Tribally Controlled College is determined by designation as a public, two-year institution with a Specialized Mission of “Tribal College” (as of the date the Funding Opportunity opens) in the U.S. Department of Education’s College Navigator at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. Specialized Mission information is found under “More Search Options.”

To be considered for the Tribally Controlled College funding priority, Tribally Controlled College applicants must start block 15 of the SF-424 form, “descriptive title of application project,” with the words “Tribally Controlled College” and explicitly state in the application that they are applying for “Tribally Controlled College SCC5 funds.” Tribally Controlled College applicants may be considered as either a single institution or the lead for a consortium.

3. Eligible Lead Applicant and Consortium Members

For both single and consortium applicants, grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of an SCC Partnership, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

As stated previously, 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 degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college’s designation

at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/> . Lead applicants must identify their institution type (as indicated on the NCES website) in Section 9 of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

NOTE: Institutions that were funded in the fourth round of SCC as either leads or consortium members may not apply for SCC5. Applications for SCC5 that include leads or consortium members funded in SCC4 will be considered nonresponsive.

However, institutions that were funded in the first three rounds of SCC (but not SCC4) as either leads or consortium members may apply as leads (or consortium members) under this fifth round if the SCC5 grant project focuses on a different industry sector (or sectors) than in prior rounds. Specifically, lead applicants and proposed consortium members for SCC5 who are also either leads or consortium members for SCC1, SCC2, or SCC3 grants must demonstrate that they are proposing a different industry sector for SCC5 than for any of their previous SCC grants; if not they will receive zero points for their Project Narrative where it describes their Labor Market Area, Sector(s), and Occupational Employer Demand in their Statement of Need (see Section IV.B.3.a.i.). For example, assume that College X is a member of a Round 1 SCC consortium grant that targeted two industry sectors in its proposal (Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare). If an SCC5 lead applicant of a consortium proposes to include College X as a consortium member, the SCC5 applicant must demonstrate that it is proposing a different industry sector for SCC5 (i.e., neither Advanced Manufacturing nor Healthcare). Note that this restriction applies both to the SCC5 lead applicant and to all its proposed SCC5 consortium members; that is, in this example neither the SCC5 lead nor any members of the proposed SCC5 consortium may target Advanced Manufacturing or Healthcare in their proposed project design. In addition, note that this restriction would apply to any sub-sectors and/or career pathways within the industry for which College X previously received funding. For example, assume that College X received SCC1 funding to enhance an allied health career pathways program. In this example, the SCC5 lead applicant may not include College X in its application and propose to enhance a nursing career pathways program as its project design (for any or all of its proposed SCC5 consortium members) because both career pathways are in the same industry. See Section IV.B.3.a.i. for a list of industries proposed in SCC rounds 1-3. Failure to demonstrate compliance will affect scoring. See Section IV.B.3.a.i. for more information.

Applicants may reference this [list of SCC1, SCC2, and SCC3 grantees](#) showing the industries for which they received funding. For the purposes of this Announcement, every institution included in a consortium is considered to be funded for any industry referenced in the abstract submitted in the grantee's initial proposal.

To be eligible as either a lead applicant or as a member of an SCC Partnership, all institutions must, by the closing date of this FOA and throughout the entity's performance in this grant program, be accredited 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/>.

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), including the monitoring and examination of records, apply to any entity that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient, including for-profit

organizations. In addition, the entity may not earn or keep any profit resulting from federal financial assistance.

4. Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (SCC) Partnership

A **single institution applicant's SCC Partnership** will comprise the lead applicant; the required workforce development system partner(s); the required employer partners; and any optional partners, each of which is described below. One of the partners in the partnership must be identified as the sector convener (who may or may not be the lead applicant). 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. Applicants must demonstrate strong engagement of the partnership leaders necessary to achieve the commitments made in the application, as described in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative. Applicants must list all partners in the abstract.

A **consortium applicant's SCC Partnership will comprise** the institution consortium members including the lead applicant; the required workforce development system partner(s); the required employer partners; and any optional partners, each of which is described below. One of the partners in the partnership must be identified as the sector convener (who may or may not be the lead applicant). In forming the partnership, applicants should consider which entities have the best ability to support the systems changes described in Core Elements 1-4 in Section I.A. Applicants must demonstrate strong engagement of the partnership leaders necessary to achieve the commitments made in the application, as described in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative. Applicants must list all partners in the abstract.

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, a partnership agreement, or another type of signed agreement—which demonstrate the engagement of high-level leadership for each entity being proposed as a required partner. Additionally, active involvement and the depth of partnerships may be indicated through budgeted grant funding allocations and leveraged resources and funding from partners. The Department encourages applicants to include leveraged resources and/or funding commitments in commitment documentation. Applicants will be scored based on the quality of partner involvement in the project, as described in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative. Failure to demonstrate the inclusion of required partners will affect scoring.

a. Institution Consortium (Required for Consortia)

The Department is requiring consortium applicants to apply for this funding as a consortium of colleges (see III.A.1 for definition). In forming the consortium of institutions, applicants must consider which institutions will be best able to support the systems changes described in Section I.A. Applications will be scored based on the alignment of the institution consortium members with the program design. The Institution consortium will undertake systems change within a labor market area (see Section I.E. Geographic Scope) that is consistent with the proposed sector-based career pathways programs. Applicants must describe the labor market area in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

b. Required Sector Convener (All Applicants)

Given the level of effort required to implement a sector strategy, we encourage grantees to focus on a single industry sector. All applicants must identify and include in their SCC Partnership a sector convener, for **each** sector proposed, that has a direct relationship to their proposed career pathways program(s).

A sector convener is defined as an organization that identifies and brings together multiple employers in the sector to identify common workforce needs and implement solutions to meet those needs together as a sector partnership. (The convener serves as the sector partnership convener but to avoid confusion with the references to the partnership for the grant, we refer to these as “sector conveners” throughout the FOA.) Sector conveners may be a trade/industry association, the lead applicant or an institutional consortium member, a local Workforce Board, a local Chamber of Commerce, labor-management partnership, or a similar employer-focused organization. The applicant may work with an existing sector convener that is already leading a sector strategy that includes multiple employers within the proposed labor market area; or it may propose a sector convener that demonstrates a strong existing connection to multiple employers within the labor market area, is committed to developing and leading a sector strategy during the grant, and is well-positioned to continue such leadership beyond the period of performance. The convener must have the relevant experience and expertise to effectively convene, manage, and support the sector-based career pathways program efforts.

c. Required Employer Partner(s) (All Applicants)

All applicants must include in their SCC Partnership employer partners that relate directly to their proposed sector-based career pathways programs(s). For **each** sector proposed, applicants must propose partnerships with at least three employers that are already part of the proposed established sector or that commit to be part of an emerging industry sector effort. In either case, we expect grantees to work with employer partners that act as a cohesive group representative of a locally or regionally in-demand sector, as opposed to acting as individual employers. If career pathways in information technology (IT) occupations are proposed, employer partners can include any employer with high demand for IT occupations, as long as they are part of the sector initiative. Grantees should plan to engage additional employers throughout the life of the grant, as part of the sector-based strategy. The employer partnership will play an important role in supporting grant success with respect to the development of career pathways, and its roles and responsibilities in doing so must be outlined in Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative.

d. Required Workforce Development System Partner(s) (All Applicants)

All applicants must include in their SCC Partnership one or more partners from the publicly funded workforce development system within the selected labor market area. For the purposes of this FOA, the workforce development system entities are state workforce agencies, or state or local workforce development boards under Section 121 of WIOA, or Native American entities eligible for funding under Section 166 of WIOA (29 U.S.C.3221). These organizations have state or local expertise in workforce development and may provide leadership in implementing some or all of the following types of activities, or oversee the organizations, such as American Job Centers, that implement them:

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. Serving as the required convener of the sector strategy, as described in Section III.A.3.b. Required Sector Convener.
3. Assessing potential participants for the grant program.
4. Identifying and referring candidates for education and training in the grant program.
5. Providing additional supportive services, including follow-up services after entry into employment.
6. Connecting participants with employers that have job openings.
7. 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.

e. Worker Organization, Labor-Management Partnership, or Labor Union Partner(s) (All Applicants)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include in their SCC Partnership a worker-focused entity such as a worker organization, labor-management partnership, labor union representing workers, or an organization representing target populations of students and workers in relevant industry sectors. Applicants will be evaluated on this criterion. The goal in partnering with a worker-focused organization is to demonstrate active steps to incorporate the views and needs of workers from the targeted industry sector(s) in the project. Worker organization options include:

- A union representing employees of a partner employer. If such a union is not available, another option could be a union that serves workers in the applicant's targeted occupation(s) but that is not in the local area and/or is not working with a partner employer but which can serve as an active consultant on workers' views and needs in the targeted occupation(s) throughout the grant. To aid in identifying related unions that focus on the identified industry sectors within (or outside of) the target service area(s), applicants can use the Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards' (OLMS) [Union Search Tool](#), by which you can search on union type, city, state, zip code, and other criteria to identify labor unions for outreach and partnership.
- A labor-management partnership. As defined by the Department, labor-management partnerships allow employers of all sizes to work constructively with the unions that represent their employees to tackle important workplace issues that fall within and sometimes extend the framework of traditional collective bargaining. The Department provides information on, and examples of, effective labor-management partnerships and helpful resources at <https://www.dol.gov/general/workcenter/labor-management-partnerships>.
- A worker-focused advocacy organization, such as worker associations, coalitions, alliances, guilds, or another similar worker advocacy group. Such organizations may set occupational standards or practices, advocate on behalf of their members, or work to develop or change specific policies such as the local minimum wage rate, day worker protections, stable work schedules, and other work-focused issues.

- A student-focused group that advocates for students studying to work in the targeted industry sector(s) and that provides exposure and access to industry culture and awareness, as well as attributes of job quality.

Whichever approach the grantee takes to incorporate the views and needs of workers in the project, the Department expects that the grantee will pursue that approach throughout the grant and incorporate the input gathered into the annual data review and analysis that it conducts to assess good jobs and equitable employment impacts, as described in Section I.A.2. Core Element 2.

These entities may engage in grant activities such as identifying necessary skills and competencies; providing related skills-based training in collaboration with the required education/training provider; working with employer and education partners to develop new or modify existing curricula; advising on recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies within an employer or industry; communicating with current and potential workers within the sector; acting as mentors and on-the-job trainers to new workers; and providing supportive services.

f. Community-Based Organizations (All Applicants)

Given that the SCC program aims to increase the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges to close equity gaps and to meet the skill development needs of employers in in-demand industries, we strongly encourage applicants to partner with organizations that have successfully engaged underserved populations and communities. Applicants will be evaluated on this criterion. Such collaboration may take multiple forms and support a variety of goals. As one example, applicants may benefit from partnering with community-based organizations that are already engaged with the population(s) with which the college will work to close equity gaps, recruit participants, and provide social supports and/or wrap-around services.

g. Secondary Schools (All Applicants)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include in their SCC Partnership one or more secondary schools. In particular, applicants are encouraged to partner with career and technical education (CTE) programs at the secondary level, which can create long-lasting, seamless pathways for students exploring careers in the chosen sector in high school who may be interested in pursuing that pathway at the postsecondary level. A dual enrollment strategy is one way (though not the only way) that an applicant may propose to partner with secondary schools. However, as noted in Section III.C.3.a.(1) below, for the purposes of the evaluation, it is expected that dual enrollment participants for grant services have a declared intent to enroll in the full career pathways program that is the focus of the SCC5 grant in order to be an eligible participant.

h. Other Optional Partners (All Applicants)

The Department also encourages applicants to collaborate with other partners that can support and advance the work of the SCC Partnership.

Consortium applicants are encouraged to include in their SCC Partnerships at least one state-level or community college district-level entity if this will support proposed goals. 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.

See Funding Opportunity Announcement Section III.A

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.

We encourage applicants to leverage available public and private financial and in-kind resources to ensure that resources are sufficient to meet the grant goals and to establish connections and resource sharing that will be sustained beyond the grant program. Applicants must count and document as leveraged resources any cash or in-kind commitments.

Leveraged resources can come from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, educational institutions, businesses, industry associations, labor organizations, community-based organizations, and/or federal, state, and local government programs.

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 - Applicant Types and Requirements	Section III.A.1	
Eligibility - Tribally Controlled College Application	Section III.A.2	
Eligibility - Lead Applicant and Consortium Members were not funded in the fourth round of SCC	Section III.A.3	
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 federal funds request does not exceed the ceiling amount of \$\$5,750,000 for consortium applicants and \$1,750,000 for single institutions, nor is it less than \$1,500,000 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 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)	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 lead applicant. If we receive multiple applications from the same lead applicant, 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.

3. Eligible Participants

a. Participants Eligible to Receive Training

For the purposes of tracking participants under this FOA, “participants” are defined as the students enrolled in career pathways programs that are being enhanced using SCC5 Program Grant funds. The definition of eligible participants is broad. Consistent with the funding source, eligible participants include new entrants to the workforce and those seeking their first job, dislocated workers who have lost employment, and those currently working but seeking additional skills.

The three categories of workers are defined as follows:

1. **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 justice-impacted individuals, high school graduates, and youth who have dropped out of school and are seeking their first full-time job. Given this program’s emphasis on employment outcomes, the applicant’s proposal should focus on those individuals in the target population(s) who intend to enroll in the entire career pathways program. While it is permissible for high school students enrolled in a dual enrollment program to enroll in individual courses within the applicant’s grant-enhanced career pathways program, only those students with a declared intent to enroll in the full career pathways program may be the focus of—and counted as a participant in—the proposed project. See Section VI.C. Reporting.
2. **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).
3. **Employed workers:** For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to individuals who are employed but need training to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or attain employment in occupations that qualify as good jobs. This includes low-wage and medium-wage workers who need to upgrade their skills to advance in their careers, and workers who are currently working part-time. The first three rounds of SCC funding included as eligible participants those incumbent workers who receive training offered by their current employer in partnership with the grantee. For the purposes of this FOA, however, incumbent workers by this definition are not eligible for grant-funded participation. This limitation results from the need to focus on a participant pool where students have similar motivations to obtain training, for the purposes of the national impact evaluation.

b. Targeted Population(s)

Within the three broad categories of workers above, applicants will seek to reduce equity gaps by selecting career pathways program strategies that are specifically designed to support one or more locally underserved communities as described in the following definition of an equity gap: An equity gap is a significant and persistent inequity or disparity in the employment opportunities offered to individuals who belong to one of the underserved communities described in Executive Order 14091 and for whom demographic categories exist in DOL’s Workforce Integrated Performance Systems (WIPS), namely: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Female, individuals

with disabilities, and low-income individuals (using the WIOA definition of low-income identified in [WIOA Section 3\(36\)](#)).

DOL anticipates that SCC5's focus on building the capacity to train for equitable employment in good jobs will also benefit all students even if not specifically targeted, including the broad range of communities listed in Executive Order 14091, veterans and military spouses, and other individuals.

Note that, under this FOA, grantees or their designated institutional grant partners must establish and document the eligibility of all participants.

c. 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://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-10-09>.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. HOW TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

This FOA, found at www.Grants.gov and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities> 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/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>).

- 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 organization’s legal name on the SF-424 should match its name registered in the System for Award Management at www.sam.gov. If unsure of the legal name of your organization, visit www.sam.gov to confirm.
- The organization’s Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identification (UEI) Number should match its information in www.sam.gov. If unsure of the EIN or UEI of your organization, visit www.sam.gov to confirm.
- 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/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>). You do not need to submit the SF-424B with the application.

Budget totals for the SF-424 must not exceed \$5,750,000 for consortium institutions and \$1,750,000 for single institutions and must not be less than \$1,500,000 for either type of applicant. If awardees are selected for additional funding per Section II.A. Award Type and Amounts, this will be handled as an amendment. No reference to additional funding should be included in grantees' budgets.

In addition, 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 and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38, which 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 or status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, 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, 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.

a. Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier

All applicants for federal grant funding must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and must supply their UEI on the SF-424. The UEI is a 12-character (alpha-numeric) code that uniquely identifies all entities. Any entity registering to do business with the government is required to have one. UEIs are issued by SAM.gov and are a part of an entity's record in the Entity Information section of SAM.gov. If you do not have a UEI, you can get one for free at <https://sam.gov>.

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

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

(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 grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family). 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 estimated cost for the period of performance. Use the following guidance for preparing the Budget Narrative.

Personnel: List all staff positions by title (including individuals hired by an employment contract) 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 estimated 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 Part 200.1 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 the cost of supplies (e.g., general office supplies, desk/chairs, laptops/printers, other specialty items) in the detailed budget per category. Except for general office supplies, list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than "equipment" (see 2 CFR Part 200.1 for the definition of Supplies).

Contractual: Under the Contractual line item, delineate contracts and subawards separately. Contracts are defined according to 2 CFR Part 200.1 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 Part 200.1 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. We do not consider this as construction and you must show the costs on other appropriate lines such as Contractual.

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 Part 200.414(f). Clearly state that your organization does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, and is not one described in 2 CFR Part 200, Appendix VII(D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (defined by DOL below) 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.

- **Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) Definition:** To avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, DOL defines MTDC as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and subcontracts 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 or subcontract in excess of \$25,000.
 - You will also note that participant support costs are not included in modified total direct costs. Participant support costs are defined below.
 - 2 CFR Part 200.1 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/office-of-the-senior-procurement-executive/cost-price-determination-division>.

Indirect-type costs (such as top management salaries, financial oversight, human resources, payroll, personnel, auditing costs, accounting and legal, etc. used for the general oversight and administration of the organization) **must not be classified as direct costs**; these types of costs are recovered as part of charging the de minimis or NICRA rate. 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.

A chart summarizing points by section and subsection is in Section V.A. Criteria.

NOTE: Full points will not be given for simply repeating the requirements stated below or elsewhere in the Announcement. For example, if the applicant is asked, “Describe in detail how the lead applicant will use a data-driven decision-making process to communicate expectations,” they will not receive full points (and may receive zero points) for simply saying, “We will use a data-driven decision-making process to communicate expectations.” To receive full points, the applicant must describe, in their own words, *how* they will meet the stated requirement, and convincingly demonstrate that they are using a sound approach.

DOL encourages using a table format where useful. Tables must be legible but are not required to be 12-point font.

Responsive proposals will fully integrate the four core elements described in Section I.A. Program Purpose, which are: 1) Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs; 2) Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice; 3) Strategy Options; and 4) Sustainable Systems Change.

a. Statement of Need (Up to 10 Points)

i. Labor Market Area, Sector(s), and Occupational Employer Demand (4 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 data provided. All data sources must include citations that provide information that enables the identification and verification of data. To receive a full 4 points for this section, applicants must:

- Define the **labor market area** proposed for their grant. The term “labor market area” means an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment within a reasonable distance or can readily change employment without changing their place of residence. A labor market area may be within a state or across two or more contiguous states that share a common economic region. For a consortium led by a Tribally Controlled College, the definition of labor market area is expanded to include colleges within a state, whether or not the colleges are in an economically integrated geographic area.
- Clearly describe the industry sector(s) within which career pathways program(s) will be enhanced. The Department encourages but does not require applicants to select one industry sector. Note that this FOA will award one priority consideration point to applicants that align their identified career pathway aligns with relevant in-demand infrastructure sectors related to the Investing in America Agenda (IAA). See Section IV.B.3.g., below.
- List the proposed occupations within the project’s sector-based career pathways program(s).
- Provide a detailed and convincingly supported description of the current and future **projected regional demand** for employment in the targeted occupation(s). 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. To the extent possible, all data provided should reflect the geographic scope proposed. DOL encourages the use of a table format within the Project Narrative to present information on proposed occupations and projected regional demand.

NOTE: As described in Section III.A.3 Eligible Lead Applicants, lead applicants and consortium members who are either leads or consortium members for SCC4 may not apply for SCC5. Lead applicants and consortium members that are also either leads or consortium members for SCC1, SCC2, or SCC3 grants must demonstrate that they are proposing a different industry sector for SCC5 than for any previous grant, or they will receive zero points for this section. The purpose is not to direct industry choice but rather to prevent duplication of participant services for purposes of the national impact evaluation. Information to demonstrate this can be provided in the abstract (see Appendix G). Specifically, if any institution applying

for SCC5 as a lead or consortium member received grant funding in SCC1, SCC2, or SCC3 for one of the following nine industries, they must demonstrate that they are proposing a different industry for their SCC5 application:

- advanced manufacturing (includes automation, robotics, and other sub-sectors)
- clean or renewable energy
- construction (including shipbuilding/repair and other sub-sectors)
- education
- healthcare (includes allied health, emergency services, nursing, and other sub-sectors)
- information technology (includes cybersecurity and other sub-sectors)
- public sector
- supply chain and logistics (includes transportation, distribution, logistics, distribution-materials management, and other sub-sectors)
- telecommunications or broadband infrastructure

Note: This list represents industries proposed for the first three rounds of SCC. SCC5 applicants can propose industries on this list as long as they are not the same industries for which they previously received funding. SCC5 applicants may also propose industries not on this list. Please review the examples described in Section III.A.3 regarding eligibility based on industries for SCC Rounds 1, 2, or 3 grantees and consortium members to ensure the choice of an eligible industry for SCC5.

ii. Equity Gap Analysis (6 Points)

To receive full points for this section, applicants must, in response to Core Element 2: Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice in Section I.A. Program Purpose:

- Clearly name, in one sentence, the inequity they propose to address. In doing so, focus on changes the college(s) need to make, rather than assuming that students must change in order for them to be successful. The following are examples only; applicants must describe their own equity gaps (2 points):
 - Our data tells us that we need to better support successful completion and employment for Black/African American students in our IT career pathways program.
 - For our Advanced Manufacturing career pathways program, we need to remove systemic access barriers to academic success, completion, and employment for Hispanic men, so they achieve at the same levels as other students.
 - Our Healthcare program of study needs to remove barriers and support success in completion and employment for students with disabilities.
- Clearly identify the underserved student community at the center of the equity gap that the proposal intends to close and explain why the community was chosen. An equity gap is a significant and persistent inequity or disparity in the enrollment or completion outcomes, or in the employment opportunities offered to individuals who belong to one of the underserved communities described in Executive Order 14091 and for whom demographic categories exist in DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance Systems (WIPS), namely: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Female, individuals with disabilities,

and low-income individuals (using the WIOA definition of low-income identified in [WIOA Section 3\(36\)](#)). In determining proposed equity gap(s) to focus on, applicants must identify at least one equity gap specific to their local community(ies) from the WIPS list – but not simply target all the populations listed. Applicants may also choose to target additional populations in Executive Order 14901 that are not on the WIPS list, that they will track internally. (2 points)

- Provide data from their institution or community that clearly supports the equity gap choice, for each underserved population selected. (2 points)

b. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (Up to 28 Points)

i. Theory of Change (6 points)

For full points in this section, applicants must provide a theory of change which comprehensively and logically depicts the project’s overall vision by clearly showing the relationships between:

- The project’s identified problem or issue (including the need to build capacity for good jobs and to reduce equity gaps),
- Community assets/needs,
- Influential factors,
- Assumptions,
- Core element strategies and selected Strategy Options, and
- The anticipated employment and educational outcomes.

Applicants must submit the theory of change as an attachment, which does not count against the page limits for the Project Narrative. Information about the Theory of Change is found in Appendix D and a sample format in Excel is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. The sample format includes **examples** of outcomes. *Note that these examples are for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must develop outcomes that are specific to their grant.* Applicants that fail to include a theory of change will receive zero points for this section.

ii. Strategy Options Chart (4 Points)

Applicants must propose specific selected Strategy Options from Table 1 (Section I.A. Core Element 3: Strategy Options), in support of their project design, as follows:

- Group A1-6: At least one is required, but applicants are encouraged to propose more; all are allowable with grant funds but leveraged funds may also be used
- Group B1-4: At least one is required, but applicants are encouraged to propose more; all are allowable with grant funds but leveraged funds may also be used
- Group C1-3: Applicants must choose at least one, to be undertaken using grant funds
- Group C4-C7: Optional; if proposed, use leveraged funds where feasible

Applicants must include the funding source(s) for each proposed Strategy Option. For the full 4 points, applicants must include the minimum of at least one strategy option from each group with the funding source identified.

Note that the rationale for selecting Strategy Options will be covered under Project Design.

DOL suggests that applicants use a table format for this section of the Project Narrative, as demonstrated in Table 2 below. Note that the examples in Table 2 are for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must list the specific Strategy Options proposed for their grant.

Table 2: Example of Proposed Strategy Options

No. from Table 1	Proposed Strategy Options	Funding Source
A1	Improve current process of obtaining and incorporating ongoing sector-wide employer input on curriculum and program development	Grant Funds
A4	Establish or strengthen employer-offered paid work-based learning opportunities, including internships, Registered Apprenticeships, co-ops, or other	Grant Funds, Leveraged Funds
A6	Provide leveraged employer resources, including instructors, financial aid, mentors, equipment, funding, or other in-kind support	Leveraged Funds
B2	Provide support services or benefits for services that may include stipends, emergency assistance, internet, tutoring assistance, child/dependent care assistance, transportation assistance, healthcare including mental health services, tuition or training costs.	Grant Funds, Leveraged Funds
B3	Partner with a community-based organization (CBO) that is meaningfully engaged with the underserved population(s) and community(ies) targeted in the proposal to provide the wrap-around/support services or benefits listed in B2.	Grant Funds
C2	Incorporate (paid) work-based learning in institution's curriculum or program design	Grant Funds
C5	Implement competency-based education/assessment	Leveraged Funds

iii. Career Pathways Program(s) Participant Estimate and Tracking Plan (4 Points)

Applicants must provide estimates of the **total** number of students (not just those targeted demographically for equity gap reductions) that will be enrolled during the 48-month period of performance in each proposed career pathways program. Consortium applicants must break out the estimates by college and program. Applicants do not need to set participant targets for performance purposes, but successful applicants will be expected to track and report on all participants (see Section VI.C. Performance Reporting). Secondary school students dually enrolled in courses enhanced by grant funds must not be counted in the estimate of total participants, nor tracked as participants for the purposes of this FOA, unless they have a declared intent to enroll in the full career pathways program, as opposed to only taking individual courses. Incumbent workers who receive training offered by their current employer in partnership with the applicant are not eligible participants. (See Section III.C.3. Eligible Participants.) See the example table below. While applicants must provide an estimate for the total number of participants across the 48-month period of performance in their application, the Department may request yearly breakdowns after award. For the full four points, applicants must do each of the following:

- Describe how they will define and document “enrollment into a career pathways program” for the purposes of participant tracking.
- Describe an effective system for collecting and tracking data for the identified career pathways program(s) during the grant period of performance.
- Describe whether they will screen participants for enrollment into the proposed grant-funded career pathways program.
- Identify the career pathways program(s) they propose to enhance and track for this project, and provide a good faith estimate for the total number of participants across the 48-month period of performance, broken out by career pathways program and (for consortium applicants) by college. The participant estimate must include ALL students enrolled in grant-enhanced career pathways programs at any point in the grant’s period of performance, not just those targeted for reductions in equity gaps. This estimate is not a target and will be used for the purposes of technical assistance but not for monitoring performance outcomes. This information must be included in the Project Narrative; we encourage use of a table format for the participant estimate (see sample in Table 3 below).

An example of a participant estimate follows. Note that this example is for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must develop a participant estimate that is specific to their grant.

Table 3: Sample Chart for Total Participant Estimate

College	Career Pathway Program(s)	Estimated Total Number of Participants During the Grant Period of Performance
Name of College 1	Advanced Manufacturing	86
	Information Technology	248
Name of College 2	Advanced Manufacturing	122
	Information Technology	225
Name of College 3	Information Technology	214
Name of College 4	Advanced Manufacturing	144
Total participants across all colleges for grant Period of Performance		1,039

iv. Sustainable Systems Change (6 points)

In response to Core Element 4 Sustainable Systems Change in Section I.A. Program Purpose, scoring under this criterion is based on a clear, complete, and convincing description of which

capacity and equity achievements built through the grant will be sustained after the grant period of performance ends, and how that will occur.

Definitions:

- **Existing States** are descriptions of the status of strategy implementation prior to the beginning of the grant.
- **End States** are descriptions of the status of strategy implementation and institutionalization at the end of the grant period of performance.
- **Planned Sustained States** are descriptions of the status of strategy implementation beyond the grant end date.

To receive a full 6 points for this section, applicants must:

- Provide a detailed narrative description that clearly identifies key aspects of the proposed project that the grantee plans to sustain. Applicants must describe, for each aspect, the existing state, end state, and planned sustained state using the definitions above. These must be identified in annual milestones that indicate sustainable systems change achievements in the Project Work Plan. Examples of sustainable systems change include but are not limited to removal of structural barriers, institutional policy and/or rule changes, procedure and/or practice alignment with sector partners or public workforce system, enhancement of services that are incorporated into ongoing practice, and establishment of a new partner relationship.
- Describe how the institutions will institutionalize sustained activities, innovations, or systems changes into their overall, non-grant-funded education and training activities, enabling them to continue program enhancements with non-grant resources when the grant ends.
- Define how the planned sustainable systems change aligns with the priorities of required partners and the contributions those partners will play in sustaining the systems change.
- Denote annual milestones that indicate sustainable systems change achievements in the Project Work Plan.

v. Project Work Plan and Annual Milestones (8 Points)

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete identification of a comprehensive work plan that is realistic and measurable. The work plan must be submitted as an attachment. A sample work plan template can be found in Appendix E: Suggested Project Work Plan Format and an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents.

Note that successful applicants may wish to create a separate, living work plan after award with additional details for internal use; however, for the purposes of their application, the Department encourages applicants to include only those Strategic Actions that are listed in the FOA as required or optional and to keep the Implementation Steps at a high level. As stated in Section I.C. Results Driven Design, the Department will review implementation progress on the work plans, as reported in Quarterly Narrative Reports, for technical assistance purposes, and annually for performance monitoring and compliance purposes. Significant changes to the project work plan may require a grant amendment. DOL may request clarifications, as well as annualized milestones, after grant award.

Definitions and instructions:

- **Strategic Actions:** An evidenced-based or data-informed course of action to achieve a particular purpose. For Core Element 3, the Strategic Actions are the Strategy Options selected from Table 1 (Section I.A. Program Purpose). For the purposes of the proposal,

do not add additional strategic actions besides those addressing the grant requirements listed.

- **Implementation Steps:** The key processes, services, and activities to direct the course of change. These are the interventions that, when implemented, create a result (milestones). For proposals, applicants should propose several high-level implementation steps and milestones for each of the strategic actions included in the suggested project work plan format, as appropriate to the applicant’s proposal.
- **Milestones:** Milestones are realistic and measurable markers of grant progress including those that serve as evidence of sustainable systems change (e.g., removal of structural barriers, establishment of a new partner relationship, institutional policy and/or rule changes, procedure and/or practice alignment with sector partners or public workforce system); these are typically expressed in the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development.
- **Entity(ies) Responsible:** List actual entity, (e.g., Acme Community College or Healthcare Conglomerate Ltd.), or specific role (e.g., IT Program Dean or Grant Project Director) – not general categories such as college or employer.
- **Start Date:** When an implementation step will be started. Show as Month4, Y1, Q12, etc., rather than using calendar dates for the purposes of the proposal.
- **Milestone Due Date(s):** When the milestone will be reached. Show as Month4, Y1, Q12, etc.

To receive a full 8 points in this section, for each of the following project components, applicants must provide high-level implementation steps specific to the required and optional strategies, milestones, entities responsible, start dates and milestone due dates, using the definitions above:

- Core Element 1: Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs;
- Core Element 2: Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice;
- Core Element 3: Strategy Options, which the applicant identified in the Project Narrative in Section IV.B.3.b.ii.;
- Implementation of the Career Pathways Program(s) Participant Estimate and Tracking Plan (see Section IV.B.3.b.iii.);
- The required Developmental Evaluation (Section I.I.);
- Open Educational Resource Content Development and Posting (Section I.H. and Section IV.E.);
- Linked Open Data on Credentials (Section IV.E.); and
- If needed, Grant Funded Special Purpose Equipment and/or Altered Space (Section I.D.).

Note that these required project components are included in the sample work plan template.

Core Element 4: Sustainable Systems Change is not included as a separate project component but must be addressed by denoting specific milestones throughout the project work plan as sustainable systems change evidence. The work plan must cover the entire 48-month period of performance.

c. Project Design (Up to 44 Points)

The project design details how and why the applicant proposes to implement its proposed project, including descriptions of how the members of the SCC Partnership will contribute to project outcomes.

i. Institutions of Higher Education Selection (4 points)

To receive a full 4 points:

Single institution applicants must convincingly describe the strengths that they bring to the project design, and how their community college is positioned to support success in achieving project outcomes, particularly in achieving equitable employment outcomes for occupations with family-sustaining wages in sector-based career pathways. Single applicants must also describe how they will leverage state, interstate, or regional resources in the achievement of program outcomes and outputs and share what they learn from this opportunity with other community colleges.

Consortium applicants must convincingly demonstrate that their proposed institution consortium members (described in Section III.A.3) are the best choices to support success in achieving project outcomes. Applications will be scored based on the alignment of the institution consortium members with the sector-based career pathways(s) chosen and the Strategy Options proposed. Consortium applicants must also describe how they will coordinate with and between partners to support sustainable systems change within the labor market area and how the program will leverage state, interstate, or regional resources in the achievement of program outcomes and outputs and share what they learn from this opportunity with other community colleges.

Consortium applicants must also provide documentation of commitment, as described in Section V.B.4, from each member of the institution consortium, which 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. Consortium applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from each institution consortium member included in the application will receive zero points for this rating factor.

ii. Career Pathways Programs (8 Points)

In the Career Pathways Program(s) Participant Estimate and Tracking Plan section of the project narrative, applicants are required to list the career pathways program(s) they will enhance using grant funds and the Strategy Options they will use to do so. For a full 8 points in this section, applicants must:

- Provide a thorough and detailed justification for how and why the Strategy Options the applicant identified in Section IV.B.3.b.ii will align with the selected career pathways programs to address the workforce needs of the identified sector(s) through credentialing and other skills gains demonstrations, direct entry in employment for participants, and earnings gains, if applicable.
- Demonstrate how the Strategy Options selected will enhance the career pathways program(s) proposed, by clearly describing current state and end state for the career pathways program(s) – before and after the Strategy Options are implemented.

iii. Demonstration of Sector Convener and Employer Engagement (6 Points)

As stated in Section III.A.3.b Required Sector Convener, the SCC5 Partnership requires the identification of a sector convener that brings together multiple employers in the sector to identify common workforce needs and implement solutions to meet those needs together as a sector partnership. As stated in Section III.A.3.c. Required Employer Partners, the SCC

Partnership also requires at least three employer partners that are involved (or will be involved) in the identified sector initiative.

In the Labor Market Area, Sectors, and Occupational Employer Demand section of the Statement of Need (Section IV.B.3.a.i), applicants described their proposed sectors and targeted occupations. For full points in this section, applicants must, for **each** sector proposed:

- Convincingly describe how the proposed sector convener is actively engaged with the proposed sector, has strong existing connections to multiple employers within the proposed labor market area, is committed to leading a sector strategy during the grant, and is well-positioned to continue such leadership beyond the period of performance. An industry sector convener may be a trade/industry association, the lead applicant or an institutional consortium member, a local Workforce Board, a local Chamber of Commerce, a labor-management partnership, or a similar employer-focused organization. Roles and commitments must be included in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from the identified partner to fulfill the sector convener role for the identified sector will receive zero points for this rating factor. (2 points)
- Demonstrate that the three (or more) proposed employer partners are actively engaged in sector activities or are committed to doing so as part of the grant. Clearly document the employer partner roles and contributions to the project, which includes 1) specifying in which of the applicant-proposed Strategy Options each employer will engage and 2) describing the employers' commitments to providing good jobs and actively working to address equity gaps. Roles and commitments must be included in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from at least three employer partners within the identified sector strategy (for each proposed sector) will receive zero points for this rating factor. (4 points)

iv. Demonstration of Workforce Development System Engagement (4 points)

To receive a full 4 points for this section, the applicant must provide, consistent with Section III.A.3.d.:

- A clear description of the required workforce development system partner(s), why they were selected, and what they will contribute to the sector-based career pathways design. Applicants must demonstrate workforce development board or tribal entity engagement in the form of documentation described in Section IV.B.4.b that convincingly demonstrates engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. Applicants must provide these in the documentation of commitment attachment.
- Documentation that the required state and/or local workforce development boards (or tribal entities eligible under WIOA Section 166) are involved in the development and implementation of the grant project. Applicants are strongly encouraged to demonstrate active involvement and the depth of partnerships through budgeted grant funding allocations and leveraged resources.

Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment identifying at least one qualifying workforce development system partner will receive zero points for this rating factor.

v. Demonstration of Worker Organization, Labor-Management Organization, or Labor Union Engagement, Community-Based Organization Engagement, and Secondary School Engagement (4 points)

To receive full points for this section, the applicant must, consistent with Sections III.A.3.e., III.A.3.f., and III.A.3.g.:

- (For 2 points) Provide a clear description of the role of the worker organization, labor-management partnership, labor union partner representing workers, and/or organization representing target populations of students and workers in the relevant industry sectors, as defined in Section III.A.3.e. The description must include a convincing explanation of how this partner(s) will support the applicant in incorporating the views and needs of **workers** from the targeted industry sector(s) in the program design, project implementation, and training activities that support the applicant's proposed project and other allowable activities and services specified in Section I.D. Roles and commitments must be included in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from one of these eligible partner types for each sector proposed will receive zero points for this rating factor.
- (For 2 points) Regarding community-based organization partner(s) and secondary school partner(s), the applicant must provide the following information. Roles and commitments for partners must be included in the documentation of commitment attachment. Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from these partner types will not receive full points for this rating factor.
 - Provide a clear description of the role of one or more community-based organizations that are already successfully engaged with the population(s) with which the college will work to close equity gaps (as described in Section III.A.3.f) and a convincing explanation of how this partner will support efforts to engage worker voice, including through the development of the program design, project implementation, and training activities that support the applicant's proposed project and other allowable activities and services specified in Section I.D.
 - Provide a clear description of the role of one or more secondary schools, particularly career and technical education (CTE) programs at the secondary level (as described in Section III.A.3.g.), and a convincing explanation of how this partner will support the creation of long-lasting, seamless pathways for students exploring careers in the chosen sector in high school who may be interested in pursuing that pathway at the postsecondary level.

vi. Student Voice (2 Points)

To receive full points, applicants must:

- Convincingly describe the ways in which the institution, project, and career pathways program(s) will gain an understanding of the lived experience of their targeted underserved student communities within their institutional context and how they will incorporate authentic engagement with students into feedback loops/continuous improvement efforts to remove systemic institutional barriers throughout the grant.

vii. Advancing Good Jobs (8 Points)

For the purposes of this FOA, applicants must specifically focus on training for occupations that pay family-sustaining wages and support skills and career advancement, as expressed in the seventh and eighth Good Jobs Principles, as follows:

- **Pay.** All workers are paid a stable and predictable living wage, as determined by the local area cost of living, before overtime, tips, and commissions. Workers' pay is fair, transparent, and equitable (i.e., workers with similar skills and experience are paid the same wage for the same work). Workers' wages grow commensurate with increased skills and experience.
- **Skills and Career Advancement.** Workers have equitable opportunities and tools to progress to future jobs. Workers have transparent promotion or advancement opportunities. Workers have access to high-quality occupational training, such as on-the-job training (OJT) and continuing education opportunities.

To receive full points in these subsections, applicants must:

- Identify the average prevailing wages offered for the selected occupations, based on national, state, or local data. To the extent possible, data should reflect the labor market area proposed. DOL encourages the use of a table format within the Project Narrative to present information on prevailing wages; this information may be in the same table as the other occupational data in the Project Narrative Statement of Need. (2 points)
- Clearly describe how the occupations proposed will enable the applicant to train for quality jobs that meet the expectations to provide family-sustaining wages and support skills and career advancement. This can include clearly demonstrating that specific occupations within the career pathways program offer these aspects of good jobs using tool(s) such as the Department's Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard, and/or the MIT Living Wage Calculator (as described in Section I.F. Target Occupations), or other similar and locally appropriate tools. (2 points)
- Clearly describe how the lead applicant will identify employer partners that offer job opportunities within the proposed career pathways program sector that will provide family-sustaining wages and support skills and career advancement. This may include documentation from the employer of these features (such as through the Memoranda of Understanding), as well as from worker feedback portals (such as Glassdoor or Indeed), or through alternative demonstrations of quality. (2 points)
- Describe how they will conduct a data review and analysis process at least annually, with the assistance of the grantee-contracted developmental evaluator, to determine whether the jobs that participants are being trained for and placed into pay family-sustaining wages and offer skills and career advancement, and how they will use the analysis to make data-informed project management decisions with respect to training for good jobs. (2 points)

viii. Advancing Equitable Employment Outcomes (8 points)

Scoring under this subsection will be based on the extent to which the discussion of the following factors is clear, logical, and a well-supported explanation. To receive full points for this section, applicants must:

- Clearly describe the key structural or systemic barriers that the project will need to eliminate to implement the selected Strategy Options efficiently and effectively. In doing

so, focus on changes the college(s) need to make, rather than assume that students must change in order for them to be successful. The strategies identified may be used to create equity-related impacts at multiple levels, including the interpersonal, program, institutional, and systems levels. (2 points)

- Provide a thorough and detailed justification for how and why the Strategy Options they propose will focus on training for good jobs and significantly narrow or close the equity gap(s) identified in the Statement of Need. If a community-based partner is proposed, describe how the organization is already engaged with underserved communities they are targeting; this may include providing deeper understanding of institutional barriers, recruiting participants, and providing social supports and/or wrap-around services. (2 points)
- Align the description in this section with the theory of change. (2 points)
- Describe how they will conduct a data review and analysis process at least annually, with the assistance of the grantee-contracted developmental evaluator, to determine whether they are reducing equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market outcomes for locally underrepresented communities, and how they will use the analysis to make data-informed project management decisions with respect to addressing those equity gaps. (2 points)

d. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (up to 8 Points)

To receive full points for this section, applicants must:

- Demonstrate that the required qualifications of the lead applicant's day-to-day project manager will fully support project success. For full points, the time commitment of the project manager must be 80-100 percent, and this must also be reflected in the project budget. (2 points)
- Provide an 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. 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. Applicants must submit the chart as an attachment. If no organizational chart is attached, this subsection will receive zero points. (2 points)
- Describe a convincingly effective process and staffing plan for data tracking that includes all consortium colleges, if applicable, and describe in detail how the lead applicant will use a data-driven decision-making process to communicate expectations to partners and institutional leaders, share progress against the work plan, and adjust strategies. For full points, the applicant must include the "who, when, what, and how" of the process and demonstrate a sound approach. (2 points)
- Describe the applicant's fiscal and administrative controls in place to manage federal funds and demonstrate that the controls are adequate to ensure accountability and timely fiscal reporting, and to protect against incurring unallowed costs with grant funds. (2 points)

e. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (Up to 6 Points)

To receive full points the applicant must:

- Convincingly demonstrate the ability to accomplish multipronged complex sector-based career pathways projects and an explanation of the results of the project(s). This must include a compelling description of the lead applicant’s prior experience in effectively partnering with a sector convener, or of serving in that role. If the lead applicant in a consortium does not have the experience described, the applicant must describe the experience of an institution consortium partner that does, and how the applicant will leverage that experience to support project success.
- Describe strong and relevant prior experience (within the last five years) of the lead applicant in managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements.
- Demonstrate that the lead applicant and partners have sustained career pathways program development, sector partnerships, and/or capacity-building activities following completion of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements.

f. Budget and Budget Narrative (Up to 4 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 a full 4 points, the applicant must:

- Demonstrate that the proposed expenditures will address all project requirements, including participant tracking and the required developmental evaluation, and that key personnel, including the project manager and data tracking personnel, have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve expected project results.
- Provide a detailed description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The budget narrative should also include a complete description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.
- Align the totals on the SF-424A and the Budget Narrative.

g. Priority Consideration Point - Investing in America

To receive 1 additional bonus point, applicants must either:

- a. describe how the proposed career pathway aligns with relevant in-demand infrastructure sectors related to the Administration’s Investing in America Agenda (IAA). These IAA sectors include construction, information technology infrastructure and broadband development, engineering, and advanced manufacturing that supports clean energy-related efforts, including electric vehicle battery manufacturing and maintenance, solar and wind energy development and maintenance, and advanced manufacturing tied to semiconductors and nanotechnology.

OR

- a. Grantees proposing a sector not listed above must demonstrate that their proposed sector is directly related to at least one specific IAA project (**identified by IAA Project Name**) in their service area(s) which is tied to recent investments shown on invest.gov. To assist with identifying relevant investments located in the applicant’s service area(s) where specific sector training is needed, applicants can reference the map of public infrastructure investments on invest.gov, which can be filtered by state and public infrastructure projects. Alternatively, users may download the map data file of the underlying dataset and open it with a spreadsheet application such as Microsoft Excel.

Invest.gov is a central listing of projects related to the following IAA investments:

- American Rescue Plan,
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,
- CHIPS and Science Act, and/or
- Inflation Reduction Act.

4. Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, you must submit attachments. You must clearly label all attachments. We will exclude only those attachments listed below from the page limit. The Budget and Budget Narrative 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

(1) 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. Should you be selected for an award, the information provided in your abstract may be published to a public facing website as a summary of your project. The abstract must include the following:

- Lead applicant's organization name
- Project title/name and purpose
- Total funding requested
- Type of applicant (single or consortium)
- Tribally Controlled College designation (if applicable)
- Labor market area, industry sector(s), and occupations within career pathways program(s)
- Total estimated number of participants
- All required partners, including institution consortium partners (for consortia only), workforce development system partners, sector convener, and employer partners and their industry sector. (You must list the partnership requirement the entity is meeting.)
- If included, all strongly encouraged partners including worker organizations, labor management organizations, labor unions representing workers, or organizations representing target populations of students and workers in the relevant industry sectors;

community-based organizations; secondary schools; and any other partners that are part of the Partnership. (You must list the role the entities have.)

- Key equity gap(s) to be addressed
- Occupation(s) targeted for good jobs
- Career pathways program(s) to be enhanced
- Strategy Options proposed
- Industry-recognized credentials to be awarded (for each state whether it will initially be offered as credit or non-credit)
- Summary of program activities (description of what will be different at the end of the grant compared to current state)
- Subrecipient activities, if applicable
- Prior SCC industry sector experience (if any proposed lead or consortium institution is involved in an SCC1, SCC2, SCC3, or SCC4 grant, provide the following about each: institution name, grant number, status as lead or consortium member, industry sector(s))
- Public contact information (name, title, institution, address, phone, email)

A suggested format for the abstract is in Appendix G: Suggested Abstract Format, as well as in a Word document in the grants.gov page for the FOA under “Related Documents.”

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.

(1) Letters of Commitment or MOUs

Submit signed and dated Letters of Commitment or Memoranda of Understanding between the applicant and partner organizations and/or sub-grantees that propose to provide services to support the program model and lead to the identified outcomes. See Section IV.B.3.c.vi. and Section IV.B.3.c.vii.

These letters must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Letters of Commitment.” Failure to include these will affect scoring.

(2) 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.

This document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “NICRA.”

(3) Financial System Risk Assessment Information

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

(4) Theory of Change

Submit the Theory of Change as required in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3.b.i. and Appendix D: Theory of Change. See a suggested format in Excel, found under Related Documents on grants.gov. DOL will share publicly the abstracts and theories of change of successful applicants.

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Theory of Change.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

(5) Project Work Plan

Submit the Project Work Plan as required in the Project Narrative, Section IV.B.3.b.v., including activities; start dates and deadlines; descriptive annual milestones, including those that are evidence of sustainable systems change achievements; and work plan components. See the suggested template in Appendix F: Suggested Project Work Plan Format.

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Project Work Plan.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

(6) Organizational Chart

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

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Organizational Chart.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

C. SUBMISSION DATE, TIME, PROCESS AND ADDRESS

Due Date for Applications:

September 24, 2024

You must submit your application electronically on <https://www.grants.gov> **no later than 11:59 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 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by hard-copy, e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

1. Hardcopy Submission

No applications submitted in hardcopy by mail or hand delivery (including overnight delivery) will be accepted for this funding opportunity.

2. Electronic Submission through Grants.gov

Applicants submitting applications must ensure successful submission **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date**. Grants.gov will subsequently validate the application.

The process can be complicated and time-consuming. We strongly advise you 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/applicants/applicant-registration>. 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/applicants/workspace-overview>. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

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/applicants/applicant-faqs>.

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://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2022/05/10/15/23/How-to-Apply-for-a-Grant>.

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/connect/manage-subscriptions/>.

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

We will consider only applications successfully submitted through Grants.gov no later than 11:59 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.**

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.

Indirect Costs

As specified in the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that are 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 Modified Total Direct Costs (see DOL's definition below) 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 does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, with the exceptions noted at 2 CFR Part 200.414(f) in the Cost Principles, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (see DOL's definition below), which may be used indefinitely. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. (See 2 CFR Part 200.414(f) for more information on use of the de minimis rate.)

Modified Total Direct Cost definition: To avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, DOL defines MTDC as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits,

materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and subcontracts 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 or subcontract in excess of \$25,000.

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 Part 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 TEGL number 05-06 for further clarification: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-05-06>.

Intellectual Property Rights

Pursuant to 2 CFR Part 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.”

Successful SCC5 applicants must take the following steps to fulfill the Open Educational Resources (CC BY) requirement. Technical assistance will be provided to support these steps.

- By Month 24 of the grant, submit a list of the materials being developed with grant funds, with a focus on curriculum and supporting materials that would allow another individual to successfully use the curriculum. Submit a plan that details the process that will be used to mark materials as CC BY, prepare materials for public posting as open educational resources ready for use by others, and post the materials. Include in the plan a description of the repository you will use for this purpose.
- By Month 36 of the grant, implement the plan.

Credential Transparency

The Department wishes to ensure that individuals, employers, educators, and training providers have access to the most complete, current, and beneficial information about providers, programs credentials, and competencies delivered with federal funds. Thus, we require that information about the industry-recognized credentials listed below be made publicly accessible through the use of linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability. This includes all industry-recognized credentials that are awarded using grant funds under this Announcement, where such credentials were previously developed by a grant lead or partner or will be developed using grant funds. Credentials include, but are not limited to, diplomas, badges, certificates,

certifications, Registered Apprenticeships, licenses, and degrees of all levels and types. Formats may include, but are not limited to, the use of credential transparency description language specifications. ETA will provide specific guidance and technical assistance on how to meet this requirement, including data elements to include in the published open data. Grantees must submit an implementation plan and complete implementation of the plan before the period of performance ends, as specified in the technical assistance provided.

Successful SCC5 applicants must take the following steps to fulfill this requirement. Technical assistance will be provided to support these steps.

- By Month 24 of the grant, submit a plan that details the process that will be used to fulfill the credential transparency requirement.
- By Month 36 of the grant, implement the plan.

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.

Criterion	Points (maximum)
a. Statement of Need Labor Market Area, Sector(s), and Occupational Employer Demand (4 points) Equity Gap Analysis (6 points) (See Section IV.B.3.a. Statement of Need)	10 total
b. Expected Outputs and Outcomes Theory of Change (6 points) Strategy Options (4 points)	28 total

Criterion	Points (maximum)
Career Pathways Program(s) Participant Estimate and Tracking Plan (4 points) Sustainable Systems Change (6 points) Project Work Plan and Annual Milestones (8 points) (See Section IV.B.3.b. Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	
c. Project Design Institutions of Higher Education Selection (4 points) Career Pathways Programs (8 points) Demonstration of Industry Sector and Employer Engagement (6 points) Demonstration of Workforce Development System Engagement (4 points) Demonstration of Worker Organization, Labor-Management Partnership, or Labor Union Engagement; Community-Based Organization Engagement; and Secondary School Engagement (4 points) Student Voice (2 points) Advancing Good Jobs (8 points) Advancing Equitable Employment Outcomes (8 points) (See Section IV.B.3.c. Project Design)	44 total
d. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.B.3.e. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	8 total
e. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.B.3.f. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	6 total
f. Budget and Budget Justification (See Section IV.B.2. Project Budget and Section IV.B.3.f. Budget and Budget Narrative)	4 total
g. Priority Consideration – Investing in America (See Section IV.B.3.g. Priority Consideration – Investing in America)	1 total
TOTAL	101

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 100 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, considerations related to the national evaluation, our intention to select at least one eligible Tribally Controlled College, 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 (FAPIS), and Sam.gov. 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 RISK ASSESSMENT	
	SECTION A: PURPOSE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
(ETA)
**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK
ASSESSMENT**

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.

- (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.
- (2) Entries in accounting records should refer to subsidiary records and/or documentation which support the entry and which can be readily located.
- (3) The accounting system should provide accurate and current financial reporting information.
- (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.

SECTION B: GENERAL

1. Applicant Legal Name (as it appears in SAM.gov):

a. When was the organization founded/incorporated (<i>month, day, year</i>):	b. Principal Officers Names, Title, Email Address President/Chair Board of Directors: Chief Executive Officer: Chief Financial Officer: Accounting/Budget Officer:
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. (*12 months*)
\$

SECTION C: ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

NOTE: Provide a detailed response (on a separate page on your organization's letterhead and signed/dated by a Principal Officer) for any items 2-9 of Section C that have "No" or

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (ETA) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK ASSESSMENT			
<i>“Not Sure” answer(s), providing enough information to clearly reflect the expertise of the organization in these areas.</i>			
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.	
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	N o
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	N o
5. Are time distribution records maintained for an employee when his/her effort can be specifically identified to a particular cost objective?		Yes	N o
6. If the organization proposes an overhead rate, does the accounting system provide for the segregation of direct and indirect expenses?		Yes	N o
7. Does the organization have an approved indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan? If so, who approved it (Federal Cognizant Agency or a Pass-through Entity)? What are the effective dates?		Yes	N o
8. Does the accounting/financial system include budgetary controls to preclude incurring obligations in excess of:		Yes	N o
a. Total funds available for a grant?		Yes	N o
b. Total funds available for a budget cost category (e.g. Personnel, Travel, etc)?		Yes	N o
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	N o
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.			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
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**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT: FINANCIAL SYSTEM RISK
ASSESSMENT**

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: PAYMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
ACCOUNT**

1. ETA uses the Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System (PMS). If your organization has an ETA PMS account, provide the PMS EIN and the PMS account (e.g., 89X7X) where grant funding should be placed if selected for award.

**SECTION G: ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION**

1. Use this space for any additional information (*indicate section and item numbers if a continuation*)

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 Part 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.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/resources>.

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. As stated in 29 CFR 2.32(a), religious organizations are eligible on the same basis as any other organization, to seek DOL support or participate in DOL programs for which they are otherwise eligible. Guidance from DOL is found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/grants/religious-freedom-restoration-act/guidance>.

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 Part 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://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2021-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2021-title2-vol1-part170-appA.pdf>.

The following types of awards are not subject to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act.

1. Federal awards to individuals who apply for or receive federal awards as natural persons (e.g., unrelated to any business or non-profit organization he or she may own or operate in his or her name);

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

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: You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DOL/ETA funded grants is securely transmitted.

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.

- vi. 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.
- vii. You must not extract information from data supplied by ETA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.
- viii. 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.
- ix. 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.
- x. 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.
- xi. 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.
- xii. 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 Part 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 Part 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 Part 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.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/grants/pdfs/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

For SCC5 grantees, the Department will review implementation progress on the work plans submitted in Quarterly Narrative Reports for technical assistance purposes, and annually for

monitoring and compliance purposes. Participant estimates are not targets and will be used for the purposes of technical assistance but not monitoring performance outcomes.

As a condition of grant award, grantees are required to participate in an 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). Alternatively, conducting an impact analysis could require matching program participants with similar individuals in non-grant funded programs for comparison purposes. The type of analysis conducted will be determined by a feasibility study, which is research done before an impact evaluation to determine the best evaluation design option and which grantees' projects best support the evaluation research questions. As a part of the national evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to do the following if needed for the evaluation: (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 a random assignment impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services, including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants; (4) help evaluators get access to data for comparison groups; (5) collect data elements to aid the evaluation; and (6) 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 by the 15th day of the second month after 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 20-19 and our webpage at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/management/reporting>.

2. Quarterly Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly performance report by the 15th day of the second month after 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 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.

The quarterly performance report (QPR) is a quantitative report of all participants served through the grant program. Successful applicants will use the Quarterly Performance Report Form (ETA-9173) of the DOL-only Performance Accountability, Information, and Reporting System (OMB Control No. 1205-0521) to report participant-level data. The QPR is a quarterly aggregate of individual participant records that the grantee has collected and uploaded as a data file into the WIPS. The data file will include data elements related to participant outputs and demographic information for each participant.

The following program-specific performance measures (PM) will be reported in the QPR, along with demographic information:

PM1: Participants Who Begin Education/Training. Those students who are enrolled in grant-enhanced program(s) of study and have begun education/training activities. Participants are reported as unique, unduplicated individuals.

PM2: Participants Who Complete the Program of Study.

PM3: Participants Who Complete the Program of Study and Receive a Credential.

PM4: Credentials Received by Participants Enrolled in the Program(s) of Study. For this measure, SCC5 measures credentials, not students. Credentials may be earned before or after completion. Participants may earn multiple credentials.

Definitions for the purposes of this Announcement are as follows:

- **Grant-Enhanced Career Pathways Program(s):** A curriculum of multiple courses that leads to one or more industry-recognized credentials, which the grantee has enhanced using grant funds. The applicant must describe the grant-enhanced career pathways program(s) in the Project Narrative (or in a subsequent grant amendment).
- **Participant:** Students enrolled in an SCC5 grant-enhanced career pathways program. See Section III.A. Eligible Participants for further information.
- **Enrollment in Training:** The enrollment date in a training program is considered the first day that a participant attends the training (either virtually or in person) for the purposes of reporting. See Training and Employment Notice [\(TEN\) 19-22](#), Reporting Training in the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL).
- **Industry-Recognized Credential:** A credential described in Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 25-19, "Understanding Postsecondary Credentials in the Public Workforce System." See also Section I.G.
- **Final Report:** 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 activities. It must summarize project activities, employment outcomes and other deliverables, and related results of the project, and must thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches that the grantee used.

Grantees must provide an estimate for the total number of participants across the 48-month period of performance in their application and the Department may request yearly breakdowns after award.

While grantees will be expected to report on all project participants, after award, grantees may request a waiver allowing them not to report on certain groups of participants. Waiver determination will consider the benefit of tracking participants compared to the effort and cost required to do so, and the benefit to the Department's anticipated national evaluation. The Department reserves the right to disallow waiver requests.

DOL will provide additional information on performance reporting after grant award; however, applicants must plan for participant tracking, data collection, and reporting as part of their project work plans and include these costs in their budget.

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 by the 15th day of the second month after 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.

Grantees must include quarterly updates on their comprehensive project work plan annual milestones including sustainable systems change achievements in their Joint Quarterly Narrative Performance Report and by uploading an updated comprehensive project work plan as an attachment to the quarterly narrative report. We will provide additional information about this requirement after grant award.

4. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Primary Indicators of Performance

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system. See DOL's [WIOA Performance Indicators and Measures](#) web page for more information. ETA discretionary grant programs are also collecting these performance measures in an effort to align performance outcomes system-wide. [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 14-18](#), Aligning Performance Accountability Reporting, Definitions, and Policies Across Workforce Employment and Training Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), aligns and streamlines performance indicators and requirements across 15 DOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) programs to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) performance indicators, while also rescinding and eliminating outdated performance guidance for these programs, in addition to clarifying existing ETA performance accountability policies that changed due to WIOA. The following WIOA primary indicators of performance are applicable to SCC5 grants:

1. Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit;
2. Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit;

3. Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit;
4. Effectiveness in Serving Employers (Retention with the Same Employer 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit);
5. Credential Attainment; and
6. Measurable Skill Gains.

The Department acknowledges that successful SCC5 grant applicants may not have access to unemployment insurance wage records in order to track and report exit-based outcomes on employment rates, median earnings, and the effectiveness in serving employer measures. ETA and the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC) have a Memorandum of Understanding that enables ETA's national program grantees access to aggregate wage information through the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) to calculate performance measure outcomes. This arrangement is facilitated through the [Common Reporting Information System \(CRIS\)](#), managed by the State of Kansas. Therefore, the Department matches wage records on behalf of grantees in order to capture these specific exit-based outcomes for participants of the SCC5 program for the following indicators only:

1. Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit;
2. Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit;
3. Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit; and
4. Effectiveness in Serving Employers – Retention with Same Employer 2nd and 4th Quarters after Exit.

The WIOA Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains measures are calculated using participant-level performance data collected and reported during the grant period of performance by successful grant applicants.

Social Security Numbers: For the purposes of performance reporting, grantees are required to collect participant-level data to ETA, including Social Security Numbers (SSNs), on all individuals that receive grant-funded services. SSNs allow ETA to match employment data from CRIS. Thus, the collection of participant SSNs lessens the burden on grantees in tracking exit-based employment measures, while permitting consistent and reliable outcome information on the program's longer-term impacts. The DOL-Only Performance Accountability, Information, and Reporting System / WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) (OMB Control No. 1205-0521) is the current OMB-approved reporting requirements that will apply to these grants. Please note: while grantees are required to ask participants for their SSN, a participant cannot be denied services if they choose to not disclose this information.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information about this FOA, please contact Sarah Medley, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at SCC5_FOA-ETA-24-23@dol.gov. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to SCC5_FOA-ETA-24-23@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-24-23, and along with question(s), include a contact name, and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/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 Service Locator function within the CareerOneStop webpage which provides a directory of the nation's American Job Centers, also known as one-stop centers, (<https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/service-locator.aspx>); and the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online (<https://online.onetcenter.org>), which provides occupational competency profiles.

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://www.workforcegps.org>.

We encourage you to view the online tutorials, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” and “Grants Application 101: Budgetary Forms - SF-424, 424A, 424B, and Budget Narrative” available through WorkforceGPS at <https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2022/05/10/15/23/How-to-Apply-for-a-Grant>.

We created Workforce System Strategies to make it easier for the public workforce 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://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/> 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, 2025.

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 50 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 July 18, 2024 in Washington, D.C. by:
Brinda Ruggles
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

APPENDIX A: RESOURCES ON SECTOR STRATEGIES, EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT, AND CAREER PATHWAYS

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

Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement

[Notice of Request for Information \(RFI\) on Sector Strategies To Meet Critical Workforce Needs Across Industries](#) (2023)

[Employment and Earnings Effects of the WorkAdvance Demonstration After Seven Years](#)
Kanengiser, H. & Schaberg, K. MDRC 2022

[Sectoral Training at Community Colleges: A Model for Postsecondary Career and Technical Education](#)
Tessler, B. and Lewy, E. MDRC, 2022

[Industry-Focused Training Has the Power to Reduce Inequities in Employment](#)
Jones, D. MDRC, 2022

[What the Evidence Says About Employer Engagement Strategies](#)
Patterson, M. & Carson, M. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[Meeting the Needs of Job Seekers and Employers: A Synthesis of Findings on Sector Strategies](#)
Schaberg, K. MDRC, 2020

[Work-Based learning Can Advance Equity and Opportunity for America's Young People](#)
Ross, M. et al. Brookings Institution, 2020

[Nine Year Gains: Project QUEST's Continuing Impact](#)
Roder, A. & Elliott, M. Economic Mobility Corporation, 2019

[Escalating Gains: The Elements of Project QUEST's Success](#)
Roder, A. & Elliott, M. Economic Mobility Corporation, 2018

[The Employer Perspectives Study: Insights on How to Build and Maintain Strong Employer-College Partnerships](#) (TAACCCT National Evaluation)
Scott, M., et al. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2018

[Implementing the WorkAdvance Model: Lessons for Practitioners](#)
Kazis, R. and Molina. F. MDRC, 2016

[Sector Strategy Implementation Framework](#)
ETA Sector Strategies Technical Assistance Initiative, 2016

Career Pathways

[A Meta-Analysis of 46 Career Pathways Impact Evaluations](#)
Peck, L. et al. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[Tools You Can Use: DOL's New Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions Dashboard](#)
(Webinar, 2022)

[Building Better Pathways: An Analysis of Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions](#)

Schwartz, D. et al. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[New Insights on Career Pathways: Evidence from a Meta-Analysis](#)

Strawn, J. et al. Brief prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions Dashboard](#) (Interactive)

Dashboard prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor

[Designing and Delivering Career Pathways at Community Colleges: A Practice Guide for Educators](#)

Cotner, H., et al. Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2021

[Introduction to Stackable Credentials](#)

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, 2021

[Large Scale Change: Lessons Learned from TAACCCT](#) (Note: Paywall)

Van Noy, M., et al. (Eds.). Volume 2021, Issue 193: New Directions for Community Colleges, 2021

[Comprehensive Approaches to Increasing Student Completion in Higher Education: A Survey of the Landscape](#)

Dawson, R. et al. National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper No. 28046, 2021

[Systems Change in Community Colleges: Lessons from a Synthesis of the Round 3 TAACCCT Third-Party Evaluation Findings](#)

Eyster, L., et al. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2020

[Moving Up: Lessons from TAACCCT on Career Pathway Progression](#)

Bragg, D. New America, 2020

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

Miller, C., et al. MDRC, 2020

[A More Unified Community College: Strategies and Resources to Align Non-Credit and Credit Programs](#)

Education Strategy Group (ESG), 2020

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

Blume, G., et al. New America, 2019

[Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development](#)

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

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES ON GAP ANALYSIS AND ADDRESSING ISSUES OF EQUITY

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

Equity Gap Analysis

[Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment](#)

The Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA), which states and communities must conduct every two years, provides an opportunity for applicants under Perkins to ensure that career and technical education programs are meeting the needs of learners, educators, and employers. The CLNA also aims to facilitate a data-informed, continuous improvement process for community colleges using an equity lens. For more information on using the CLNA to inform development of interventions to improve equity, see the Office of Community College Research and Leadership's [CLNA](#) page, which presents an equity-centered CLNA tool and other related equity and racial equity-centered resources.

[Unpacking Program Enrollments and Completions with Equity in Mind](#)

Fink, J. & Jenkins, J. Community College Research Center, 2020

This guide presents examples and instructions for data analysis that colleges can conduct to better understand student enrollments and completions in particular programs. The guide includes a Data Tool that may facilitate analysis of college data with an equity lens.

[Pathways to Results](#)

Office of Community College Research and Leadership, 2014

Pathways to Results (PTR) empowers organizations to continuously enhance pathways and programs of study by addressing inequities in student outcomes

[Community College Research Initiatives \(CCRI\)](#)

The CCRI group at the University of Washington conducts research on equitable college access, progression and transfer, degree completion, and employment in living-wage careers for underserved students and diverse learner populations throughout the United States. The group's [Coaching for Change](#) practice area offers resources on designing and implementing equity-minded coaching programs.

Equity in the Workforce

[Racial and Ethnic Equity Gaps in Postsecondary Career and Technical Education:](#)

[Considerations for Online Learning](#)

Anderson, T., et al. Urban Institute, 2021

[Strategies for Improving Postsecondary Credential Attainment Among Black, Hispanic, and Native American Adults](#)

Brock, T., & Slater, D. (Eds.) Community College Research Center, 2021

[JFF's Vision for an Equitable Economic Recovery](#)

Afranie, A., et al. JFF, 2021

[Voices from the Field: How Community Colleges Are Advancing Equity in Career and Technical Education](#)

Dalporto, H., & Tessler, B. MDRC, 2020

[The Unequal Race for Good Jobs](#)

Carnevale, A., et al. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2019

[Framing the Opportunity: Eight State Policy Recommendations that Support Postsecondary Credential Completion for Underserved Populations](#)

McDonnell, R., & Collins, M. Jobs for the Future, 2017

[Community-Based Participatory Research for Health: Advancing Social and Health Equity](#) (3rd Ed.) (Note: Paywall)
Wallerstein, N. et al. Jossey-Bass, 2017

APPENDIX C: RESOURCES ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS CHANGE

"Programmatic interventions help people beat the odds. Systemic interventions can help change their odds."

Karen Pittman

CEO of the Forum on Youth Investment

Applying systems change principles will help to ensure that the capacity built under the SCC5 project will sustain beyond the period of performance and that the project will continue to achieve advancements in equity. Systems change efforts fall into two categories of change. First-order change refers to enhancements or improvements to an existing mode of practice, and second-order change involves a paradigm shift in how a problem is perceived.

Capacity Building

For the purposes of this FOA, capacity building is defined as the process through which individuals, groups of people, and organizations obtain, strengthen, and scale the capabilities they need in order to set and advance goals toward chosen outcomes. Capacity is the means to plan and achieve organizational goals, and capacity building describes the ways to those means so that stakeholders can lead sustained and scaled improvements over time. Capacity building may focus on infrastructure, operational functions, and/or individual capabilities within organizations and systems, so that organizations can generate positive change in opportunities and outcomes on behalf of wage earners.

Systems Change

Per research cited below (Bernstein & Matin-Caughey 2017), the following may be seen as “key principles” of systems change:

- Systems change focuses on changing policy, practice, perceptions, funding, and institutions
- Collaboration and relationships are central components of systems change
- Systems change initiatives are complex and multilevel
- The desired effects are sustained and institutionalized

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

[Transformational Change in Community Colleges: Becoming an Equity-Centered Institution](#)

(Note: Chapter One available for free online reading)

McPhail, C. J. & Beatty, K. Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2021

[Systems Change & Deep Equity: Pathways Toward Sustainable Impact, Beyond “Eureka!,” Unawareness & Unwitting Harm](#)

Petty, S., & Leach, M. Change Elemental, 2020

[From Programs to System Change Series under the TAACCCT program](#)

Jobs for the Future for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2019

[Scaling – From “Reaching Many” to Sustainable Systems Change at Scale: A Critical Shift in Mindset](#)

Woltering, L. et al. Agricultural Systems, Vol. 176, 2019

[Changing Workforce Systems: A Framework for Describing and Measuring Systems Change](#)
H., & Martin-Caughey, A. Urban Institute, 2017

[Systems Change under the Health Profession Opportunity Grants \(HPOG\) Program](#)

Bernstein, H., et al. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, 2016

[Systems Change in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#)

Soricone, L. National Fund for Workforce Solutions, 2015

[Putting the System Back into Systems Change: A Framework for Understanding and Changing Organizational and Community Systems](#)

Foster-Fishman, P.G. et al. American Journal of Community Psychology, 39(3-4), 197-215: 2007

[Systems Change Reborn: Rethinking our Theories, Methods, and Efforts in Human Services Reform and Community-Based Change](#) (Note: Paywall)

Foster-Fishman, P.G. & Behrens, T.R. American Journal of Community Psychology, 39(3), 191-196: 2007

APPENDIX D: RESOURCES ON THEORY OF CHANGE

A theory of change is a graphic illustration that clearly lays out the project’s overall vision and the relationships between a project’s identified problem (including the need to build capacity for good jobs and reduce equity gaps), capacity needs and community assets, influential factors, assumptions, strategies, and outcomes. A theory of change, in combination with a comprehensive work plan, is an effective tool to assist in project planning, implementation, management, evaluation, and reporting. Evidence supports positive connections between project success and the use of theories of change (Kellogg Foundation, 2004).

The sections below provide information about the required theory of change for this FOA, described in Section I.A.3.(b). The Department does not intend for this information to represent an exhaustive list of what the applicant could include. The theory of change must include the following:

Theory of Change that identifies: Step 1: the problem or issue (from the equity gap analysis and industry sector information); Step 2: capacity needs / community assets; Step 3: desired outcomes; Step 4: influential factors; Step 5: strategies; and Step 6: assumptions. Applicants must include the theory of change as an attachment to the Project Narrative, and label it “Theory of Change.” Note that DOL intends to share publicly the abstracts of successful applicants, along with their theory of change.

A sample format of the Theory of Change, in an Excel version, can be found on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. Examples of outcomes include the following, but applicants must propose outcomes specific to their program design:

* Partnerships with employers modeling Good Jobs principles (the asterisk at the beginning of this line marks this achievement as a sustainable systems change outcome)

- Employer demonstration of co-investment (\$\$ and/or work) in career pathways programs
- Career pathways program participants hired by Good Jobs employers
- Reduced equity gaps in completion and credential attainment for underserved communities identified in gap analysis
- Increased equitable employment outcomes for underserved communities within the grant enhanced career pathways program

For a detailed explanation and examples of developing and using logic models, including a theory of change (NOTE: for the purposes of this FOA, only the theory of change is required) see:

[Element Six: Measure System Change and Performance of the Career Pathways Toolkit](#)

In particular, the following template, containing examples, may be helpful: Template 2: Systems Theory of Change (sample), see pages 14-15.

[Learning to Love Your Logic Model \(Webinar Recording\)](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services

[W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide](#)

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004

[CDC Evaluation Documents, Workbooks and Tools](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Program Performance and Evaluation Office

[Logic Model Tip Sheet](#)

Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation

APPENDIX E: SUGGESTED PROJECT WORK PLAN FORMAT

A comprehensive work plan for the purposes of this FOA will include, but not be limited to high-level, implementation steps specific to the applicant’s required and optional Strategic Actions for each of the following project components: Core Element 1: Sector-Based Career Pathways Program; Core Element 2: Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice; Core Element 3: Strategy Options; Developmental Evaluation; Participant Tracking; Open Educational Resource Content Development and Posting; Linked Open Data on Credentials; and if needed, Grant Funded Special Purpose Equipment and/or Altered Space. (Each of these is explained further elsewhere.)

Core Element 4: Sustainable Systems Change is not included as a separate project component but must be addressed by denoting specific milestones throughout the project work plan as sustainable systems change evidence. Implementation Steps must address start dates, Milestone due dates, responsible entities, and milestones including those that are evidence of sustainable systems change achievements for each of the above project component areas.

Note that successful applicants may add details to the work plan after award for internal use, but the Department encourages applicants to only include Strategic Actions that are listed in the FOA as required or optional and to keep the Implementation Steps at a high level for the purposes of their application (e.g., include several high-level steps and milestones for each of the strategic actions included in the suggested project work plan format, as appropriate to the applicant’s proposal). As stated in Section I.C. Results-Driven Project Design, the Department will review implementation progress on the work plans, as reported in Quarterly Narrative

Reports, for technical assistance purposes, and annually for performance monitoring and compliance purposes. Significant changes to the project work plan may require a grant amendment. DOL may request clarifications, as well as annualized milestones, after grant award.

Note the following definitions and instructions:

- **Strategic Actions:** An evidenced-based or data-informed course of action to achieve a particular purpose. For Core Element 3, the Strategic Actions are the Strategy Options selected from Table 1 (Section I.A. Program Purpose). For the purpose of the proposal, do not add additional strategic actions besides those addressing the grant requirements listed; any additional actions or steps desired for internal tracking can be added after award.
- **Implementation Steps:** The key processes, services, and activities to direct the course of change. These are the interventions that, when implemented, create a result (milestones).
- **Milestones:** Milestones are realistic and measurable markers of grant progress including those that serve as evidence of sustainable systems change (e.g., removal of structural barriers, establishment of a new partner relationship, institutional policy and/or rule changes, procedure and/or practice alignment with sector partners or public workforce system); these are typically expressed in the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development.
- **Entity(ies) Responsible:** List actual entity, (e.g., Acme Community College or Healthcare Conglomerate Ltd.), or specific role (e.g., IT Program Dean or Grant Project Director) – not general categories such as college or employer.
- **Start Date:** When an implementation step will be started. Show as Month 4, Y1, Q12, etc. rather than using calendar dates for the purposes of the proposal.
- **Milestone Due Date(s):** When the milestone will be reached. Show as Month 4, Y1, Q12, etc.

Example Completed Project Work Plan Strategy *Note that this example is for illustrative purposes only. Applicants must develop or select Strategic Actions and Implementation Steps that are specific to their grant.*

EXAMPLE: CORE ELEMENT 3: See Section I.A.3. Strategy Options				
GROUP A: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT				
Strategy Option <u>A3</u>: Put in place job development staff.				
STRATEGIC ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	MILESTONE(S)	ENTITY(IES) RESPONSIBLE	START DATE	MILESTONE DUE DATE(S)
Institutionalize job development services including post-employment follow up for all IT career	Job Developer hire date *Employer ongoing financial support of	IT Program Dean and Grant Project Director	Month 0	Month 4 *Month 40

pathways program participants	job development functions at the college.			
Develop procedure for participant orientation for job placement aligned with employer partner high demand areas.	*Series of three, one-hour non-credit, orientation workshops launched through the college's online learning platform as Open Educational Resource	Job Developer, IT non-credit Faculty member, and IT Excellence HR Representative (Employer Partner)	Month 4	*Month 9
Institute job developer and participant touch points process throughout participant life-cycle (Early, mid, end, placement, and follow-up)	Touch point print or digital job aides in use Job placements of participant program completers	Job Developer, IT Program Dean and College Career Services Coordinators	Month 4 Month 9, coincides with 1 st program completion date	Month 6 Month 9, 24, 36, & 48
Establish iterative job development impact, feedback, and evaluation process	Impact and Employer/Participant survey report	Job Developer and IT Program Dean	Month 9	Month 12, 24, 36, & 48

Suggested Format for Project Work Plan

A sample format of the Project Work Plan can be found here in Appendix E, and an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. Instructions appear in *italics* and should either be removed or replaced with project-specific content.

SCC5 PROJECT WORK PLAN

LEAD APPLICANT: APPLICANT TYPE:	PROJECT TITLE:
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CORE ELEMENT 1: See Section I.A.1. Sector-Based Career Pathways Programs				
Strategic Action 1.1 (Required): <i>[Insert applicant's project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants must convene or partner with an emerging or existing sector-based initiative.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant's implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>

<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategic Action 1.2 (Required): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants must partner directly with at least three employers that participate or commit to participating in the identified sector initiative. Grantees should plan to engage additional employers throughout the life of the grant, as part of the sector-based strategy.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategic Action 1.3 (Required): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are required to partner with one or more public workforce development system partners.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategic Action 1.4 (Strongly Encouraged): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with one or more worker organizations, labor-management partnerships, labor unions representing workers, or organizations representing target populations of students and workers in relevant industry sectors, to ensure that career pathways result in good jobs that support worker voice, safety, and benefits.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategic Action 1.5 (Strongly Encouraged): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with community-based organizations that have successfully engaged the underserved population(s) and community(ies) targeted in the proposal, to support pathways for inclusion of worker voice and to successfully address equity gaps.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>

[Add additional lines as needed.]				
Strategic Action 1.6 (Strongly Encouraged): [Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with secondary schools, in particular, career and technical education programs at the secondary level that can create long-lasting, seamless pathways for students exploring careers in the chosen sector in high school who may be interested in pursuing that pathway at the postsecondary level.]				
[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				

CORE ELEMENT 2: See Section I.A.1. Good Jobs, Equitable Employment Outcomes, and Student Voice				
Strategic Action 2.1 (Required): [Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are required to institute a Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process at least annually, with the assistance of the grantee-contracted Developmental Evaluator.]				
[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				
Strategic Action 2.2 (Required): [Insert applicant’s project-specific strategic action to fulfill this grant requirement: Applicants are required to incorporate student feedback loops throughout the grant to support quality career pathways development that meets the needs of students (Authentic student engagement and student voice).]				
[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				

CORE ELEMENT 3: See Section I.A.3. Strategy Options
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GROUP A: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT				
Strategy Option <u>A</u> (Required): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategy option for category A to fulfill this grant requirement: Strategies A1-A6 are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathway program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of strategies A1-A6 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathway program, and we encourage them to select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership (see Section III.A. Eligible Applicants).]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategy Option <u>A</u> (Optional): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategy option for category A: Applicants may select more than one of the Group A Strategy Options (A1-A6) to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership, using grant funds or leveraged resources.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				

CORE ELEMENT 3 Cont’d: See Section I.A.3. Strategy Options				
GROUP B: COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS				
Strategy Option <u>B</u> (Required): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategy option for category B to fulfill this grant requirement: Strategies B1-B4 are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathways program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of B1-B4 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program, and we encourage them to may select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategy Option <u>B</u> (Optional): <i>[Insert applicant’s project-specific strategy option for category B: Applicants may select more than one of the Group B Strategy Options (B1-B4) to</i>				

<i>incorporate into their sector-based career pathway program to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership, using grant funds or leveraged resources.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant's implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				

CORE ELEMENT 3 Cont'd: See Section I.A.3. Strategy Options				
GROUP C: ACADEMIC AND TRAINING OFFERINGS				
Strategy Option C__ (Required): <i>[Insert applicant's project-specific strategy option for category C to fulfill this grant requirement: Strategies C1-C3 below are allowable enhancements for the required sector-based career pathways program(s) using grant funds or leveraged resources. Applicants must select at least one of C1-C3 to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program, and may select more than one, to be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant's implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategy Option C__ (Optional): <i>[Insert applicant's project-specific strategy option for category C: Applicants may select more than one of the Group C Strategy Options (C1-C3) to incorporate into their sector-based career pathways program be undertaken by one or more members of the SCC Partnership.]</i>				
<i>[Insert applicant's implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				
Strategy Option C__ (Optional with Leveraged Funds where feasible): <i>[Insert applicant's project-specific strategy option for category C (C4-C7): Strategies C4-C7 are additional optional enhancements for the required sector-based career pathway program(s). Applicants may include, but are not required to include, any of these strategies. Note that, while strategies C4-C7 are allowable for SCC5, the Department expects grantees to leverage existing college infrastructure and/or other funding sources to cover the costs of these strategies, where feasible.]</i>				

<i>[Insert applicant's implementation steps for this strategic action.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone(s).]</i>	<i>[Insert responsible entity(ies).]</i>	<i>[Insert start date.]</i>	<i>[Insert milestone due date(s).]</i>
<i>[Add additional lines as needed.]</i>				

Core Element 4: Sustainable Systems Change is not included as a separate project component but must be addressed by denoting specific milestones throughout the project work plan as sustainable systems change evidence. Implementation Steps must address start dates, Milestone due dates, responsible entities, and milestones including those that are evidence of sustainable systems change achievements for each of the above project component areas.

This FOA requires specific Implementation Steps and Milestones related to Participant Tracking, Developmental Evaluation, Open Education Resources Content Development and Posting, Linked Open Data Credentials, and the optional Grant Funded Special Purpose Equipment and / or Minor Space Alterations. These project components have been pre-populated in the work plan items below with the Implementation Steps and Milestones as required by the FOA. Please complete the remainder of the project work plan (the areas in italics) by entering Responsible Entity(ies), Start Dates and Milestone Due Dates (e.g., Year 2, Q3 or Month 34) for each of the Implementation Steps and Milestones where applicable.

PARTICIPANT TRACKING: See Section I.C.3. Participant Tracking and Outcomes				
<i>Note: Grantees are expected to start enrolling participants in grant-enhanced programs of study by at least month 12, with consideration of academic calendars, though sooner is preferred.</i>				
Provide accurate data products and consistent participant data collection	Data Assistant hired or assigned	<i>[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Insert start date here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 9]</i>
Pilot data collection system tools	Data collection tools ready for implementation		<i>[No later than Month 9]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 12]</i>
Intake Participant tracking (at time of Participant enrollment as defined by the project)	Intake data collection completed for each enrollment cycle during the grant period of performance		<i>[No later than Month 12]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 12 and each enrollment cycle thereafter]</i>

Quarterly data quality check	Data finalized for quarterly performance reporting		<i>[No later than the quarter following first participant enrollment cycle]</i>	[No later than Month 14]
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DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION: See Section I.I. Third Party Evaluation <i>Note: Due Dates for some Third-Party Developmental Evaluation Milestones are set by the FOA</i>				
Develop a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for a developmental evaluation.	Detailed procurement work plan submission.	<i>[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Insert start date here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 1]</i>
Procure third-party evaluator for a developmental evaluation.	Procured third-party evaluator			<i>[No later than Month 6]</i>
Develop a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from the evaluator, using guidance provided by the Department.	Draft Detailed Evaluation Design Submission			<i>[No later than Month 9]</i>
Finalize Detailed Evaluation Design in collaboration with developmental evaluator.	Final Detailed Evaluation Submission			<i>[No later than Month 12]</i>
Prepare the evaluator's Interim Developmental Evaluation Report to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using the suggested format or similar layout, provided after grant award.	Interim Developmental Evaluation Report Submission to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office			<i>[No later than Month 27]</i>
Prepare the evaluator's Final Developmental Evaluation	Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested			<i>[No later than</i>

Report using the suggested format or similar layout.	format or similar layout.			Month 48]
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OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND POSTING: See Section IV.E. Intellectual Property Rights <i>Note: Due Dates for some OER Content Development and Posting Milestones are set by the FOA</i>				
Select and/or develop high value materials for CC BY Licensing and public posting as open educational resources with a specific focus on curriculum and supporting materials that would allow another individual to successfully use the curriculum.	List of selected and/or developed materials being developed with grant funds submission to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office	<i>[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Insert start date here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 24]</i>
Create a plan (OER Plan) that details the process that will be used to mark materials as CC BY and prepare materials for public posting as open educational resources ready for use by others, including the repository you will use for this purpose.	OER Plan submission to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office			<i>[No later than Month 24]</i>
Implement OER Plan	Posted OER material in publicly accessible online location and submission of posting date and location to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office		<i>[By at least Month 24]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 36]</i>

LINKED OPEN DATA ON CREDENTIALS (Credential Transparency): Section IV.E. Intellectual Property Rights *Note: Due Dates for some Credential Transparency Milestones are set by the FOA*

Determine credentials to be developed, enhanced, or delivered through grant funding (including but not limited to diplomas, badges, certificates, certifications, apprenticeships, licenses, and degrees of all levels and types)	Linked Open Data on Credentials plan submission that details the process that will be used to fulfill the credential transparency requirement	<i>[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Insert start date here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[No later than Month 24]</i>
Implement Linked Open Data on Credentials Plan including finalized credential transparency description language specifications complete and in-line with DOL requirements	Linked Open Data on Credentials requirement completed including finalized credential transparency description language specifications complete and in-line with DOL requirements			<i>[By at least Month 36]</i>

GRANT-FUNDED SPECIAL PURPOSE EQUIPMENT AND / OR MINOR SPACE ALTERATIONS (OPTIONAL): Section II.B. Period of Performance

Complete written request for prior approval to acquire grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or to alter space (optional)	Written submission to grantee's FPO requesting approval	<i>[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Insert start date here and below as needed.]</i>	<i>[Ideally within first 90 days, but no later than Month 12]</i>
Complete special purpose grant-funded equipment or space alterations	Begin using special purpose grant-funded equipment or space alterations for grant purposes			<i>[No later than Month 24, preferably sooner]</i>

APPENDIX F: RESOURCES ON EVALUATION

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

[DOL's Chief Evaluation Office Resources](#)

- [Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research](#) (CLEAR) is a central source of research and information on labor-related topics for practitioners, policymakers, researchers, the media and the general public. CLEAR identifies and summarizes many types of research, including descriptive, implementation, and impact studies.
 - CLEAR's [community college topic area](#) compiles studies examining the effectiveness of community college policies and programs that aim 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.
- [Design Your Study](#) offers checklists, guidelines, and standards that include important elements for a variety of study designs, such as randomized control trials (RCTs), random discontinuity design (RDD), and propensity score matching (PSM).

[Evaluation and Research Hub](#) (EvalHub)

DOL's Eval Hub is a community point of access to support workforce development professionals in their efforts to choose and use evaluations to improve workforce system services and strategies.

[Evaluation Toolkit:Key Elements for State WorkforceAgencies](#)

Coffey Consulting and Safal Partners for the US Department of Labor, 2020

[Three Principles Ground the Equitable Evaluation Framework](#)

Equitable Evaluation Initiative, 2019

[A Developmental Evaluation Primer](#)

Gamble, J., J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, 2008

[DE 201: A Practitioner's Guide to Developmental Evaluation](#)

Dozois, E., et al. J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, 2010

[Manager's Guide to Evaluation: Describe the Theory of Change \(Better Evaluation\)](#)

APPENDIX G: SUGGESTED ABSTRACT FORMAT

The abstract is a required document. 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. The template below is a suggested format. Applicants may tailor this template as needed to fit their application. The submitted abstract may be up to three pages and is provided as an attachment that does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. DOL will share publicly the abstracts and theories of change of successful applicants.

A Word version of this suggested format can be found on the grants.gov page for this FOA, under Related Documents.

Lead Applicant Organization Name

[List name of lead applicant]

Overview

Project Title/Name:

Award Amount:

Total Funding Requested:

Type of Applicant: (Indicate single or consortium)

Tribally Controlled College Applicant: (Indicate yes/no)

Industry Sector(s):

Geographic Area Served/Labor Market Area:

Total Estimated Number of Participants:

Project Purpose:

SCC Partnership

Institution Consortium Partners (Required for consortium applicants only)

[List name(s) of institution consortium partner(s)]

Sector Convener (Required for all applicants)

[List name(s) of sector convener(s); indicate entity type]

Employer Partners (At least three employer partners, per sector, who are part of the sector initiative, are required for all applicants)

[List names of employer partners; indicate each employer partner's industry sector]

Workforce Development System Partner(s) (Required for all applicants)

[List name(s) of workforce development system partner(s); indicate entity type]

Worker Organization(s), Labor-Management Partnership(s), or Labor Union(s) (If provided)

[List name(s) of entity[ies]; indicate entity type]

Community-Based Organization(s) (If provided)

[List name(s) of entity(ies); indicate entity type]

Secondary School(s) (If provided)

[List name(s) of entity(ies); indicate entity type]

Other Optional Partner(s) (If Provided)

[List name(s) of entity(ies); indicate entity type]

Project Information

Key Equity Gap(s) to be Addressed:

Occupations Targeted for Good Jobs:

Career Pathways Program(s) to be Enhanced:

Strategy Options Proposed:

[List by number from Table 1, e.g., A1, B1, C1]

Industry-Recognized Credentials(s) to be Awarded:

[For each credential, state whether it will be offered initially as credit or non-credit]

Subrecipient Activities (If applicable):

[Describe activities that subrecipient(s) will undertake]

Past SCC Experience: Are any proposed institutions part of an SCC1, SCC2, SCC3, or SCC4 grant?

[If yes, provide the following for each institution: name, grant number, status as lead or consortium member, and industry sector]

Summary of Program Activities

[Describe what will be different at the end of the grant compared to the current state]

Public Contact Information

Point of Contact Name and Title:

Institution:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address: