FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)
State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Round 3 (SAEF3)
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
FOA-ETA-25-31

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1) What organizations can apply for these grants?
The term "State" means any of the 50 States of the United States, District of Columbia, or any Territory or possession of the United States, as defined under 29 CFR 29.2 "State". For the purposes of this FOA, the eligible 54 U.S. States and territories include all 50 States of the United States, District of Columbia, and territories and whose Active Apprentices exceeds 100 apprentices, i.e., Guam, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa. Only States with more than 100 active registered apprentices (as of FY 24 data) are eligible to apply for both the Base and Competitive funds. Territories that have fewer than 100 active registered apprentices, i.e. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and The U.S. Virgin Islands may only apply for the base funding of up to $75,000 and are not eligible to apply for competitive funding. To view the Office of Apprenticeship's FY 2024 Data and Statistics, please visit https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics.

States (the Governor's, or other chief elected official's, Office) must identify the State agency that will be the grant recipient (e.g., State Workforce Agency eligible for funding under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), State Educational Agency, or an SAA). Only this entity will have responsibility for administering the project and will serve as the grant's fiscal agent. For States with federally recognized SAAs, the SAA must be included as a partner if the State agency applicant is not the SAA, and the partnership must be documented in the application through a letter of commitment from the Head of the SAA. Each State is limited to one Base Formula Funding application and one Competitive Funding application (if not previously awarded Competitive Funding under SAEF1 or SAEF2) for consideration under this opportunity.

A letter from the Governor (or other chief elected official) must be included in both the Base Formula Funding application and the Competitive Funding application to designate the Agency authorized to submit the State's application(s). This letter must also demonstrate the State's commitment to this grant effort.

A State awarded Competitive Funding under SAEF1 or SAEF2 is not eligible to apply for Competitive Funding under this announcement.

AWARD INFORMATION

2) When are applications due?
The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is March 27, 2025. You must submit your application electronically on 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).

3) How should I proceed if I already submitted an application prior to publication of the Amendment to the FOA?

The closing date for this funding opportunity announcement (FOA) has been extended until March 27, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. Applicants wishing to submit an application during the open period may do so; however, in accordance with Section III.C.2 of this FOA, "We will consider only one Base Formula Funding application and one Competitive Funding application from each organization. If we receive multiple applications of either the Base Formula Funding or Competitive Funding from the same organization, we will only consider the most recently received application that met the deadline."

4) Which funding options can applicants apply for under the SAEF3 FOA?

In this round, the Department plans to distribute funds strategically to support the expansion of the National Apprenticeship System. This funding opportunity supports state-identified innovation, employer engagement in the creation and expansion of apprenticeships (including through sector strategies), and workforce system alignment by assisting new and emerging industries to establish Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), thereby contributing to a long-term workforce development strategy that promotes prosperity and long-term sustainability.

Of the $85 million available, $50 million will be allocated as Base Formula Funding to states and territories, as defined under 29 CFR 29.2.

Approximately $35 million will be awarded through Competitive Funding. Up to 10 competitive grants will be issued, with individual grants ranging from $1 million to $5 million each. Applicants may choose to apply for only Base Formula Funding or both Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding.

All applicants responding to this FOA are required, at minimum, to submit an application for the Base Formula Funding, and may choose to submit a separate and additional application for Competitive Funding.

5) What is the amount of grant funding an applicant may apply for?

For SAEF3 funding, we expect availability of approximately $85 million to award to States, as defined under 29 CFR 29.2, with Base Formula Funding described in Appendix B and up to 10 additional grants through the competitive portion of this announcement described above. You may apply for: (1) an amount up to the Base Funding amount specified in Appendix B, or (2) the Base Funding amount specified in Appendix B plus a separate application for a ceiling amount of up to $5 million for the competitive portion. Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. If additional funds become available, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement. The Department reserves the right to change this amount depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted.

6) What information should be provided by applicants for the Base Formula Funding option?

In addition to the applicable required documents listed under III.C.1 Application Screening Criteria, all applicants must provide in their Base Formula Funding application, a project narrative in response to Appendix A, with no minimum page limit:

1. A description of the activities you intend to implement;
2. A description of your efforts in the industries and occupations you intend to reach;
3. Your success benchmarks and measures from SAEF1 and/or SAEF2, if applicable, and the status of those benchmarks and measures;

4. The specific population(s) of participants you intend to impact, as described in Section III.C.3; and
5. The names of the organizations with whom you will form partnerships.

Your project narrative should detail your plan to expand Registered Apprenticeship, pre- apprenticeships leading to RAP enrollment, and/or developing strategies to align or incorporate Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and activities carried out through the public workforce system under WIOA with RAPs, in your State. Please ensure that your Abstract and Project Narrative clearly address the guidelines and required activities in this section. The Department reserves the right to change the Base Formula Funding amount depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted. The Base Formula Funding has a Period of Performance (POP) of three years. Subject to available funds, the Department is committed to awarding annual Base Formula Funding (to be incrementally funded over the next three years, based on a formula). Continuation of funding to grantees is subject to the discretion of DOL and contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee's project, and adequate stewardship of federal funds.

The applicant must explain how they will expend any remaining SAEF1 and/or SAEF2 grant program funds, if applicable, and SAEF3 to meet their project goals.

7) How do applicants indicate they are applying for the Base Formula Funding or the Base and Competitive Funding options?
States may choose to apply for the Base Formula funding only. States that wish to only apply for the Base Formula Funding should refer to Appendices A and B for additional information on the Project Narrative requirements, allowable activities, and the Base Formula Funding amounts. For Base Formula Funding applicants, if the applicant received a SAEF1 and/or SAEF2 grant and is applying for SAEF3 grant funding, the applicant must show how they have expended SAEF1 and SAEF2 grant funding up to the SAEF3 application deadline. The applicant must also demonstrate how they will expend the combined remaining SAEF1 and SAEF2, if applicable, and SAEF3 funding to meet their project goals.

Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative is only applicable to applicants wishing to apply for the Competitive Funding. States must submit separate applications (SF-424, SF-424A, Abstract, Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, and any other relevant application materials) for the Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding, if applicable.

Applicants must submit an abstract for the Base Formula Funding option and, if applicable, a separate abstract for the Competitive Funding option. Applicants must complete and submit the appropriate abstract(s) and required attachments for their application. Please make note of the Funding option in each abstract before completing.

8) What if a State only wants the Base Formula Funding? Is this allowable?
Yes, it is allowable for a State applicant to apply only for the Base Formula Funding option. Applicants may choose to apply for only the Base Formula Funding, as described in Appendix A. Base Formula Funding amounts are specified in Appendix B.

9) Can a State applying for the Base Formula Funding request a lower amount than what is published in Appendix B?
Yes, applicants may apply for an amount up to the Base Funding amount published in Appendix B to expend during the 36-month POP.

10) What if a State only wants the Competitive Funding? Is that allowable?
No, it is not allowable for a State applicant to apply only for the Competitive Funding option. To receive Competitive Funding, applicants must submit separate applications for both Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding. All applicants responding to this SAEF3 FOA are required, at minimum, to apply for the Base Formula Funding and may choose to submit a separate and additional application for Competitive Funding.

11) Under Base Formula Funding, are grantees required to use grant funds to provide services to participants?
No, while States that receive Base Formula Funding may use these funds to provide grant-funded services to participants, it is not a requirement. Further, States that receive Base Formula Funding are not required to provide outcome goals for the number of participants to be served (receive grant-funded services). However, if States do provide grant-funded services to participants, they would report on these outcomes as part of their quarterly reporting requirements.

12) Under Competitive Funding, are grantees required to use grant funds to provide services to participants?
In addition to the expanded work plan, applicants for the Competitive Funding option must plan a project that involves a minimum of two activities. If applicants select required activities that serves participants, then applicants must set targets for Participant and Apprentice Outcomes and Expanding Registered Apprenticeship Program Outputs for the Competitive Funding option. Please see Section IV.B.3.b Expected Outcomes and Outputs and Appendix D Suggested Performance Outcomes and Outputs Table. If applicants select activities that do not directly result in Participant Outcomes or Program Outputs, they must propose targets related to their proposed activities.

13) Is there an expectation for a certain number of apprentices enrolled relative to the amount of funding requested?
There is no minimum enrollment requirement. Instead, applicants should draw on their own experiences and calculation of costs to propose to serve the maximum feasible number of participants.

ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

14) What is the geographic scope applicants can propose?
Applicants must serve a statewide geographic scope. The geographic scope is the physical service area in which awarded applicants will serve participants.

15) Under Competitive Funding, what are required grant activities?
Applicants applying for the Competitive Funding option must expand upon the work plan for the Base Formula Funding option. Applicants must serve a statewide geographic scope. The geographic scope is the physical service area in which awarded applicants will serve participants. The expanded work plan must:

1. Contain pertinent data to show and consider shortages and/or saturation in occupations. DOL wants to ensure States receive appropriate funding and resources to build up and expand their Registered Apprenticeship ecosystem.
2. Describe how pipelines to opportunities across industries will be built and how the State intends to reach new and emerging industries and occupational sectors, and how States will build buy-in

from stakeholders.

3. Include a detailed description of activities the applicant plans to initiate, charting out quarterly milestones for the 36-month POP. When an applicant applies for, and receives, subsequent rounds of funding in later years, subject to the availability of funding, they will update and/or make changes in their Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, and SF424A.

In addition to the expanded work plan described above, applicants for the Competitive Funding option must select a minimum of two activities from the list below. These activities support 1) State innovation, 2) employer engagement and sector strategies, and 3) workforce system alignment.

1. Provide a range of training services that support individuals enrolled in a RAP, that may include Related Instruction reimbursement; OJL reimbursement; development of curricula and standards for apprenticeship; online and technology-based learning; accelerated and competency-based training that integrates academic and occupational skills training; and apprenticeship training costs and other supportive services. (See Section IV.E. Funding Restrictions for more information).

2. Provide incentive funding to employers to support new or expand existing RAPs in targeted industries.

3. Plan and implement a Pay-for-Performance (PFP) model, a payment model that provides financial incentives for meeting certain performance measures and outcomes. For more information, see Section IV.E. Funding Restrictions, "Use of Funds for Pay-for- Performance (PFP) Models."

4. Establish statewide intermediaries or industry hubs to facilitate the adoption and expansion of RAPs, including but not limited to developing new occupations, providing TA, and adding employers.

5. Expand RAP opportunities for youth (between the ages of 16 and 24). This may include: (a) providing direct funding for a range of pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to enrollment in a RAP, and (b) coordination with relevant stakeholders and partners (i.e., state and local education and workforce agencies, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), community colleges, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs etc.) to establish new and expand existing partnerships that commit to develop RAPs and/or pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to RAP enrollment.

6. Assist industries in creating RAPs for entry level occupations that are critical to the nation and develop strong career pathways or incumbent worker strategies that encourage employees to stay and grow through upskilling and credential attainment.

7. Promote innovation within RAPs to assist individuals with disabilities, such as increasing awareness and use of assistive technology and other new and emerging technology, as appropriate.

8. Strategizing and implementing employer engagement methodologies to increase RAP adoption for in-demand industries and occupations within the State; conducting internal assessments as the basis of continuous improvement (i.e., improving time frame for registering new programs); reviewing registration policies and processes (as applicable) to identify and implement reforms to cut red tape and reduce barriers for employers and industries; and committing to data sharing and governance requirements to comply with the law and ensure a strong and modernized Registered Apprenticeship system.

9. For States that are not currently federally recognized SAAs, develop the required elements for recognition and basic requirement as described in 29 C.F.R. 29.13 that would allow a State to become a federally recognized SAA.

10. Enhance integration with the state's workforce system under WIOA to support the recruitment of participants and employers into the apprenticeship system, improve policies to effectively utilize WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts (20 C.F.R. 686.700) and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) (20 C.F.R. 686.300) to reduce the costs of RAP participation for employers and apprentices, and improve awareness of the career and supportive services that are available through the workforce system to support apprentice retention and program completion.

MISC.

16) Who can I contact for further questions about the SAEF3 FOA?
For further information about this FOA, please contact Cynthia Thurlow, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at SAEF3_FOA-ETA-25-31@dol.gov. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to SAEF3_FOA-ETA-25-31@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-25-31, 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.

17) Will my performance data be posted for the general public?
Please note that grantee performance data may be represented in the Registered Apprenticeship Grant Performance Dashboard or related dashboards. The dashboard aggregates data reported by grantees in their quarterly performance reports (QPR) from the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS).

18) What are the reporting requirements for SAEF3 grantees?
A. 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 No. 20-19 and our webpage at:
https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/management/reporting.

B. 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.

C. 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.

19) Is the State-led performance measure new and if so, is it required for base applications, competitive applications, or both?

A new State-led performance measure was added through the Amendment published March 5, 2025. This measure is required for competitive applications. Applicants should refer to the Amendment under Section IV.B.3.b Expected Outputs and Outcomes and Appendix D Suggested Performance Outcomes and Outputs Table.

20) Are grantees required to participate in a DOL-funded evaluation?

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). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor on participants, employers, and funding; (2) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, and operational and financial records, and any other relevant documents to calculate program costs and benefits; and (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services, including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of DOL.