

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

Notice of Availability of Funds and Solicitation for Grant Applications for Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grants Program

AGENCY: Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Notice of Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA)

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA/DFA PY 10-03

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 17.282

KEY DATES: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is April 21, 2011. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 4 p.m. Eastern Time. A pre-recorded webinar will be on-line (<http://www.workforce3one.org>) and accessible for viewing on January 24, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time, and will be available for viewing anytime after that date. While a review of this webinar is encouraged it is not mandatory that applicants view this recording. Applicants are also encouraged to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through Workforce3One at: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL or the Department) announces the availability of up to \$500 million in grant funds to be awarded under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grants program (TAACCCT). These funds are available to eligible institutions of higher education to serve workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for workers program in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The TAACCCT provides community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers program, and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. The targeted population of this program is workers who have lost their jobs or are threatened with job loss as a result of foreign trade. The Department intends to fund multi-year grants to eligible institutions for either developing innovative programs or replicating evidence-based strategies. As a result of this Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA), the Department is helping to ensure that our nation's institutions of higher education are able to help the targeted population succeed in acquiring the skills, degrees, and credentials needed for high-wage, high-skill employment while also meeting the needs of employers for skilled workers.

In accordance with requirements of the TAACCCT, the Department intends to award at least 0.5 percent of the total amount of available funds to eligible institutions in each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The eligible applicants for this SGA are institutions of higher education and consortia of two or more of those eligible institutions. The Department intends to fund grants ranging from \$2.5 million to \$5 million for individual applicants and from \$2.5 million to \$20 million for consortium applicants. Grants may exceed the award amount ceiling on two conditions only:

- Individual or consortium applicants propose to replicate, at multiple sites and/or with the targeted and other populations, strategies that have been shown by prior research to have strong or moderate evidence of positive impacts on education and/or employment outcomes. See Attachment F for more information on the Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework; or
- Individual or consortium applicants propose to develop and implement online and technology-enabled courses and learning projects that will be taken to scale beyond the community level to reach significant numbers of diverse students over a large geographic area.

ADDRESSES: Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Federal Assistance, Attention: Donna Kelly, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 10-03, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-4716, Washington, DC 20210. For complete “Application and Submission Information,” please refer to Section IV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This solicitation consists of nine (9) sections:

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- A. Overview of the Grant Program
- B. Funding Priorities
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- B. Content and Form of Application Submission
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Section VI describes award administration information.

- A. Award Notices
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Section VIII provides additional resources of interest to applicants.

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Section IX provides other information.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Overview of the Grant Program

In an increasingly competitive world economy, America's economic strength depends upon the education and skills of its workers. In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are projected to grow twice as fast as those requiring no college experience. The nation needs workers with the education and skills to succeed in growing, high-wage occupations, and community colleges serve as significant and rapidly growing contributors to the nation's higher education system, enrolling more than 11.8 million students. Community colleges work with business, labor, and government in their communities to create tailored education and training programs to meet employers' needs and give students the skills required to obtain good jobs, earn family-sustaining wages, and advance along a career pathway.

The college graduation goals set by President Barack Obama and the need to increase the number of workers who attain degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials are addressed by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Reconciliation Act), Public Law No. 111-152, 19 USC 2372 – 2372a, which appropriated \$2 billion for Fiscal Years (FY) 2011 – 2014 (\$500 million annually) for the TAACCCT. The TAACCCT provides eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in 2 years or less, and that result in skills, degrees, and credentials that prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations, and are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program, chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 USC 2271 et seq.). The Department expects that successful applicants will propose projects that expand and improve their ability to deliver education and training programs and achieve improved education and employment outcomes, rather than simply offering their existing courses to more workers and other students. The Department is implementing this program in partnership with the Department of Education.

The TAACCCT is one of several new Federal grant programs in which grantor agencies fund projects that seek to use evidence to design program strategies.¹ These initiatives fund the development of innovative programs or replication of evidence-based strategies and award grants to eligible institutions that are committed to using data to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies in order to improve their programming. The Department is committed to funding programs that are likely to improve education and employment outcomes for program participants while providing grantees the flexibility to identify and integrate effective strategies in their education and training programs and adjust or improve weaker strategies. The Department believes community colleges are an ideal place to apply this new approach, because they have been leaders in seeking out strategies that get results. Community colleges have innovated in many ways, crossing traditional boundaries to collaborate with employers, the public workforce system, Registered Apprenticeship programs, and other service organizations; and have continuously adapted their programs to respond to local economic needs and produce better outcomes for their students.

As the research on community college practices is currently limited, the Department anticipates that grants awarded in the TAACCCT program will chiefly support the development of innovative program models that can be evaluated. For all funded projects, the TAACCCT will support institutions that are committed to using data to continuously assess the effectiveness of their strategies in order to improve their programming, and structuring programs to facilitate evaluation that can build evidence about effective practices. One outcome of the initiative will be to

¹ For the purposes of this solicitation, the standards of evidence are described as follows: (1) strong - the evidence includes a study or multiple studies whose designs can support strong causal conclusions and studies which demonstrate the strategy to be effective with multiple populations and/ or in multiple sites; (2) moderate - evidence from a study or studies that include multiple sites and/ or populations that support weaker causal conclusions or that support strong causal conclusions that are not yet generalizable; and (3) preliminary - conclusions are based on research findings or reasonable hypotheses, including related research or theories of change in education, training, and other sectors. See Attachment F for more information on standards of evidence.

build knowledge about effective practices so that, in the future, institutions can replicate practices that are effective and identify and strengthen practices in need of improvement.

DOL is also interested in supporting consortia of two or more eligible institutions that will work together to take a broad view across an entire community, region, State, industry sector or cluster of related industries, and leverage their collective experience to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs. This may include developing and sharing courses that are affordable, offered during the day, at night, on weekends and virtually, and provide more workers with academic and industry-recognized credentials and meet the needs of more employers for skilled workers in the communities represented by the consortium. The Department encourages consortia to share resources in order to provide more cost-effective education and training programs.

Furthermore, the Department is interested in accessible online learning strategies that can effectively serve the targeted population. Online learning strategies can allow adults who are struggling to balance the competing demands of work and family to acquire new skills at a time, place and pace that are convenient for them. For example, these strategies can improve access to quality education for targeted workers and other students in underserved areas and have the potential to help workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program (the “targeted students” or “targeted population”) learn more in less time than they would with traditional classroom instruction alone. Interactive software can tailor instruction and tutoring to individual students, while simulations and multimedia software offer experiential learning. With the creation of new online, open-source courses that can ultimately be shared and distributed nationwide, community colleges and other eligible institutions across the country can offer more classes without building more classrooms. New online courses can create new routes for workers and other students to gain knowledge, skills and credentials, and earn academic credit based upon achievement rather than class hours, all while providing continuous feedback to students and instructors.

Finally, the Department will ensure that deliverables resulting from projects developed with these funds are available publicly, and that the aggregate data used to analyze the impact of the programs are available to the public. This means that curricula, course materials, teacher guides, and other products developed with grant funds will be considered grant deliverables and provided to the Department before completion of the grant period of performance with the appropriate licenses. Applicants should note this grant program has specific intellectual property and licensing requirements, which are defined in Section IV.E.4. Applicants should also note that before submitting grant deliverables to the Department, grantees will be required to submit the deliverables for independent review by subject matter experts, as described in Section III.G.5.

B. Funding Priorities

The grants awarded under this Solicitation will help eligible institutions expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, and are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program. The Department is committed to funding applications that use data and evidence to demonstrate that strategies are likely to produce significant positive change and advance learning, allowing grantees to identify and integrate promising and proven strategies into their education and training programs. This program is designed to ensure that all eventual grant winners will contribute to strengthening the evidence base that exists on the impact of education and career training programs.

All successful applicants will be required to allow broad access for others to use and enhance project products and offerings, including permitting for-profit derivative uses of the courses and associated learning materials. See Section IV.E.4 for more information on Intellectual Property Rights.

All successful applicants that propose online and technology-enabled learning projects will develop materials in compliance with SCORM, as referenced in Section I.B.4 of this SGA. These

courses and materials will be made available to the Department for free public use and distribution, including the ability to re-use course modules, via an online repository for learning materials to be established by the Federal Government. All grant products will be provided to the Department with meta-data (as described in Section III.G.4) in an open format mutually agreed-upon by the grantee and the Department.

Each proposed strategy should include an ongoing evaluation to ensure continuous improvement and data-based decision making.

The overarching goals of this SGA are to increase attainment of degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials and better prepare the targeted population, and other beneficiaries, for high-wage, high-skill employment. This SGA contains four priorities and corresponding strategies toward achievement of these goals:

1. Accelerate Progress for Low-Skilled and Other Workers;
2. Improve Retention and Achievement Rates to Reduce Time to Completion;
3. Build Programs That Meet Industry Needs, Including Developing Career Pathways; and
4. Strengthen Online and Technology-Enabled Learning.

The first three priorities are education and workforce development approaches and the last priority, strengthening online learning, is a delivery mechanism that may be used in any of the priorities outlined above and should be integrated into projects as appropriate to support their implementation. In order to be considered for funding under this Solicitation, applicants must focus on one or more of these four priorities and must propose a set of evidence-based strategies designed to address the needs of the targeted population.

The following discussion provides a set of strategies that correspond to each priority, and includes selected study citations that demonstrate the type of evidence that applicants should consider when developing their program designs. The Department recognizes there is limited research in the field of higher education and workforce development, so many of these strategies are only supported by preliminary evidence, or moderate evidence that shows mixed results. Please note the lists of strategies associated with each of the four priority areas are not all-inclusive and applicants may identify other strategies as appropriate as long as these strategies align with the priority areas and are either evidence-based or supported by research findings or reasonable hypotheses. Please note, applicants may implement multiple strategies across different programs, course offerings, or curricula. Please refer to Appendix D for an Annotated Bibliography that contains more information on the research references in this section.

1. Accelerate Progress for Low-Skilled and Other Workers: DOL is interested in applications that increase success rates for students with basic skills deficiencies by redesigning developmental education, mitigating the need for developmental courses, and/or improving student services that improve retention (please note the limitations on the use of funds for supportive services established in Section IV.E.6 of this SGA). For the purpose of this solicitation, retention (or persistence) means the percentage of degree and credential-seeking students who entered the program in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year in the same program. Strategies for Priority 1 include, but are not limited to:

- Developing and implementing contextualized learning that combines basic skills with specific career knowledge. For example, several community colleges in Washington State use a model which simultaneously teaches basic skills and career-specific technical skills in the same class. An evaluation found students using this model had better rates of completion and persistence than a comparison group (Jenkins 2009).
- Improving student services, such as career counseling, tutoring, and job placement services. An ongoing random-assignment demonstration project is showing that enhanced student services (more frequent and/or intensive counseling) result in increased persistence in the short-term, although there was no significant impact in the latter part of the three-year follow-up period (Scrivener 2009).

- Improving developmental education to better meet the needs of those students in the targeted population and other students with basic skills deficiencies, which will include pre-assessment upon entry to the program to identify basic skills levels for appropriate placement and post-assessment upon course completion to measure progress toward basic skills attainment. For example, most community colleges and adult education programs use assessment and placement tests prior to enrolling students in developmental education and career technical programs. There is little evidence that demonstrates a causal link between specific developmental education strategies and improved student outcomes (Bailey 2008). However, a few qualitative or correlational studies suggest a benefit from redesigning courses for underprepared students. For example, a quasi-experimental study that examined the outcomes of redesigned math courses at a university to allow underprepared students to take for-credit math without a non-credit developmental course prerequisite, demonstrated similar pass rates as regular courses that taught comparable material (Lucas 2007).
- Enhancing relationships with community-based organizations and/or other appropriate entities that serve or represent segments of the diverse targeted population (men, women, racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, veterans, etc.) to conduct outreach about training opportunities and meet the needs of diverse workers while they are in training through appropriate supportive services such as mentoring, childcare, and transportation assistance.

2. Improve Retention and Achievement Rates and/or Reduce Time to Completion: DOL is interested in applications that strengthen education and training courses, and use innovative techniques in course sequencing, scheduling, and delivery to reduce barriers to enrollment, increase success rates, and reduce the time it takes to obtain degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials. For applicants that currently have disparities in retention or graduation rates by race/ethnicity, gender, or disability, strategies should include plans to address those disparities as part of the grant activities. Strategies for Priority 2 include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing self-paced learning strategies, block scheduling, and/or modular curriculum to reduce the time it takes to obtain degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials. For example, a 2009 report evaluating a university model that includes enhanced student supportive services and block scheduling used comparison group matching methodology to show that the intervention is two and a half times more likely to graduate a student in 2 years (Linderman 2009).
- Developing an articulation process or agreement that grants academic credit for participants' coursework (credit and non-credit), prior work experience, internships, and/or Registered Apprenticeships, and enabling transfer of credits to four-year institutions to encourage participants to advance to more education and training.
- Implementing curricular and instructional innovations, such as "learning communities." A learning community requires students to take blocks of classes with the same group of peers to help students navigate through the college experience. The most rigorous evaluations of learning communities are mixed and the Department is interested in more information in these areas. A randomized study of the 2-year effects of a freshman learning community program at a community college in Brooklyn, New York, found short-term positive impacts on the number of credits earned, but mixed results on persistence (Scrivener 2008). However, a newer randomized study at a learning communities program at a community college in Florida found no impacts on student outcomes (Weiss 2010). A less rigorous 1997 comparison group study of learning communities at a Seattle community college found increased probability of quarter-to-quarter persistence (Tinto 1997).
- Restructuring course scheduling at convenient times and locations to support attainment of degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials by the targeted population.

3. Build Programs That Meet Industry Needs, Including Developing Career Pathways: DOL is interested in applications that expand and improve education and training programs to ensure relevance to area workforce needs, offer credit for both academic and occupational training, integrate industry-driven competencies, and result in degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials that are portable, stackable, and support placement into employment in a career pathway and/or further education. Strategies for Priority 3 include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing earn and learn education models, such as on-the-job training, clinical or cooperative education, paid internships, and/or Registered Apprenticeships that offer opportunities for both academic and occupational certificates and credentials. A study of all workforce development programs in Washington State estimated their longer-term net impact by using non-experimental statistical methods to compare exiters from Registered Apprenticeship programs to exiters from the State's labor exchange program. The study estimated that 9 to 12 quarters after exit, apprenticeship participants earned roughly \$2,000 more per quarter than the comparison group. This was greater than the estimated net impact for community college programs (Hollenbeck 2006).

- Developing partnerships with employers that may include validation of curricula, use of equipment and facilities, and/or agreements to hire students following successful program completion. A recent report showed significant employment and earnings gains in a randomized evaluation of three sector-based training programs that included strong relationships with employers (Maguire 2010).

- Developing entrepreneurship training, including mentoring and peer-to-peer training, which may be appropriate and effective in serving the needs of the targeted population. This training should include, at a minimum, programs that focus on developing a business plan, and may also include content focused on market research, marketing, pricing, financing, cash flow, accounting, hiring, permits and licenses, and legal issues. A recent ETA random-assignment demonstration project looked at an entrepreneurship program with classroom training and business counseling and found that program group members started their first business sooner and their businesses had greater longevity than control group businesses (Benus 2009).

4. Strengthen Online and Technology-Enabled Learning: Both individual eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions may apply to develop and implement fully-accessible online and technology-enabled learning courses and projects within the funding ranges described in Section II.A of this SGA. DOL is particularly interested in applications from consortia of eligible institutions, as described in Section III.B of this SGA, to develop and implement online and technology-enabled courses and learning projects. A consortium project will leverage expertise and resources from its members, in both the development and implementation of online learning materials, to ensure widespread use and encourage continuous improvement of the courses and learning materials created by these projects. DOL expects that online and technology-enabled learning courses and projects will prepare workers for job opportunities in the consortium members' community. DOL also encourages applicants to focus on education and training that can be taken to scale beyond a community level to reach significant numbers of diverse students over a larger geographic area.

Online and technology-enabled learning projects will support accelerated learning in a flexible manner that allows students to master concepts or course content more successfully and/or in a shorter period of time than possible with existing methods or the time previously required in cases where similar courses have been offered. The online learning projects developed under this program must contribute to the attainment of degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials that will better prepare the targeted population for high-wage, high-skill employment. The project proposals must provide evidence to support the design of the online learning projects and procedures for comparing the outcomes of the online project with comparable classroom instruction.

Applicants under this priority should propose projects that include technology-based solutions to effectively teach content to students, enable students to teach themselves, learn from other students, or to engage in hands-on learning, through methods such as interactive simulations, personalized instruction, and elements of game design, including strategies for asynchronous and real-time collaboration among learners as well as between learners and instructors. Online learning materials developed for these projects may include a mix of courses, including remedial or basic courses, developmental courses, foundational courses, gateway courses for career areas (from basic to advanced), and courses that lead to portable and/or stackable degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials.

All online and technology-enabled courses developed under this SGA must be compliant with the latest version of SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model), as of this writing, version 2004 (3.0). All online and technology-enabled courses must permit free public use and distribution, including the ability to re-use course modules, via an online repository for learning materials to be established by the Federal Government. All grant products will be provided to the Department with meta-data as described in Section III.G.4 of this SGA. To learn about SCORM, download the standard, and test completed training products, please visit <http://www.adlnet.gov/Technologies/scorm/default.aspx>.

All online and technology-enabled courses developed under this SGA must incorporate the principles of universal design in order to ensure that they are readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in full compliance with the Americans with Disability Act and Sections 504 and 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

In addition, technology-based consortium projects are strongly encouraged to leverage expertise from content experts in the development of online learning materials. In the implementation and adoption of these materials, technology-based consortium projects may also leverage broad networks of education and training institutions to ensure widespread use and encourage continuous improvement of the courses and learning materials created by these projects. Applicants should refer to Section III.D for more information on Leveraged Expertise.

Strategies for Priority 4 include, but are not limited to:

- Incorporating competency-based assessments, as appropriate, to allow students to demonstrate mastery of content and skills, as well as contribute to attainment of certificates or degrees, based on performance on such assessments rather than on course credits or hours.
- Offering academic credit to students on the same basis as other equivalent onsite courses offered by the grant recipients (in the case of full courses).
- Providing continuous feedback to the learner and instructor in order to automatically identify and remediate individual student learning deficits, whenever feasible, to help the student master course content and enable an instructor to determine whether a student needs additional assistance or instruction.
- Incorporating mechanisms to provide feedback to course designers and instructors so that courses may be improved as students attend them.
- Offering multiple delivery points to educational programs so participants are able to learn from a worksite, a Web site, or a classroom.
- Making improvements to the infrastructure necessary for hosting online programs that enable public use.

C. Allowable Activities

Applicants may only propose activities that directly impact the provision of education and training. Within the framework of priorities and strategies in this SGA, a broad range of activities are allowable and applicants must propose budgets commensurate with their proposed project design.

The Department anticipates that the majority of applicants will include two specific types of allowable activities to support their work: a) hiring and/or training additional instructors or staff (including the costs of salaries and benefits) to assist in the development and/or delivery of new

curricula, and establishing internship, Registered Apprenticeship, or clinical/cooperative education programs at employer sites; and b) purchasing or upgrading classroom supplies and equipment that will serve an integral instructional purpose in education and training courses supported by the grant or cover costs associated with implementing changes in the time or scheduling of courses.

Other allowable activities may include, but are not limited to, leasing space that is used for education and training and related activities, altering facilities that are used for education and training and related activities (which could include ensuring that the facilities comply with federal architectural accessibility obligations that require facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities), implementing and/or enhancing the information technology infrastructure used to provide education and training and related activities, organizing and/or analyzing program data for program evaluation, and other costs of program development such as using subject matter experts from industry, education, state workforce agency labor market and economic research entities, and other areas to inform and assist in curriculum design. Applicants should note that specific Grant Officer approval will be required for the alteration of facilities after grant awards are made. Applicants should refer to Section VI of the SGA for a list of relevant Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars related to cost principles, administrative and other requirements that apply to this Solicitation.

Unallowable activities include the use of grant funds to pay the costs of tuition, wages of participants (including the wages of students participating in co-operative education programs, Registered Apprenticeship, or internships), stipends for wage replacement of participants, the purchase of real property, and construction. Applicants should ensure they do not propose these activities, as they may duplicate services, benefits, or stipends provided to workers eligible for assistance under the TAA, Unemployment Insurance, or Workforce Investment Act programs.

Applicants may not use grant funds to supplant other funding sources they are currently using to fund existing activities. As with all costs charged to the grant, the costs of equipment must meet the standards in the applicable Federal cost principles found in Part VI of this SGA, including that the costs are reasonable and necessary to achieve grant outcomes and have prior approval from the Grant Officer after a grant is received.

D. Sustainability

Congress has provided the TAACCCT with four years of funding. Because permanent funding is not anticipated, applicants are strongly encouraged to ensure that effective innovations developed under this program are sustained after the grant period ends. As indicated in Section V.A.3.i, applicants must describe how they will use data to determine which strategies and activities were effective and explain how they would integrate effective practices into core programs to enact broader institutional improvements. This sustainability planning may require securing funding or future funding commitments from non-Federal sources. Given limited availability of funding, applicants may look to develop low-cost strategies for integrating effective practices funded under the grant into their general operations. For example, an institution could propose that instructors funded to form a discrete learning community in a part of that institution during the three year period of performance would, if the proposal was achieving results, work with other instructors once the grant has ended to integrate learning community practices more widely across the institution. Where possible, applicants should encourage other institutions to adopt successful strategies developed with these funds.

E. Targeted Population

The intent of this SGA is to fund projects that expand and improve the ability of eligible institutions to provide education and training programs that are suitable for the diverse population of workers eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program. Workers certified as eligible for trade adjustment assistance are eligible to apply for income support payments, the health coverage tax credit, and training and other services provided by the States with Federal TAA funds. While the Solicitation supports education and training programs suited to this targeted population, the

Department expects that once the programs are implemented, they would also benefit a wide range of individuals.

F. Required Community Outreach for Needs Assessment and Project Planning

The proposed project must meet the education and training needs of the targeted population and effectively prepare them for job opportunities in the “community” or “communities” identified by the applicant. For purposes of the TAACCCT, a “community” is a “city, county, or other political subdivision of a State or a consortium of political subdivisions of a State,” as defined under Section 271(2) of the Trade Act (19 USC 2371(2)). The applicant must demonstrate that it performed outreach to, and gathered information on, relevant entities in the communities to be served by the project, including the characteristics and skill needs of workers receiving TAA assistance in the community. In addition, the outreach will help ensure that the project complements and does not duplicate existing programs in the community. As evidence of this outreach process, the applicant must include the documentation listed in Section IV.B Part III, which describes the required data on the need for education and training within its community. The needs-assessment information gathered through the community outreach will factor heavily into the applicant’s Statement of Need (see Section V.A.1), and will form the basis for developing the project work plan.

In collecting the information described above, applicants must reach out to and use data from the following organizations, to the extent appropriate to the program being proposed:

- Employers and industry associations, including small- and medium-sized firms, and if applicable, representing emerging industries;
- Local, county, and/or State government agencies, including the State workforce agency that administers the TAA for Workers program;
- Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) established under Section 117 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2832);
- Labor organizations, including State and local labor federations and labor-management initiatives, representing workers in the community;
- Local educational agencies, and other relevant educational entities, such as career and technical education and adult education programs serving the community;

In addition to the required organizations listed above, applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to and use data from the following organizations:

- Community-based organizations that may provide supportive services and play a role in outreach to ensure the diversity of the targeted population;
- Sponsors of Registered Apprenticeship programs;
- State workforce agency labor market information and/or economic research entities;
- Economic development agencies;
- Small business development organizations; and,
- Existing federally- or state-funded consortia, such as regional cluster² consortia, that are organized by related sector or regional focus and that may inform the applicant’s activities.

² Regional clusters are geographic concentrations of firms and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology, and infrastructure. The strengths and relationships within these interconnected firms – as well as with supporting organizations in the region – create a multiplier effect that increases efficiency and innovation, and ultimately enhances conditions for businesses to prosper. A cluster will encompass local universities, government research centers, and other research and development resources, which serve as catalysts of innovation and drivers of regional economic growth. A successful cluster will leverage the region’s unique competitive strengths and find ways to nurture networks for entrepreneurship, business financing, business-to-business sales, education, and workforce development. Clusters include an array of strategic partners, such as (but not limited to) state and local government, labor organizations, venture capitalists, private banks, workforce investment boards, community organizations, and community colleges and other institutions of higher education.

Applicants must involve at least one employer in the implementation of the project, as described in Section III.E of this SGA. DOL also strongly encourages applicants to involve other stakeholder organizations listed above in the implementation of the project.

II. Award Information

A. Award Amount

Under this SGA, DOL intends to award up to \$500 million in grant funds to eligible institutions as described in Section III. These awards will fund the development of innovative programs or replication of evidence-based strategies, and will support eligible institutions that are committed to using data to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies in order to improve their programming. DOL intends to make awards to eligible institutions ranging from \$2.5 million to \$5 million for individual applicants, and awards of \$2.5 million to \$20 million for a consortium of eligible institutions as described in Section III.B. DOL does not expect to fund any project for less than \$2.5 million but will consider applications below that amount with proper justification. In the event additional funds become available, ETA reserves the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this solicitation.

Grants may exceed the award amount ceiling on two conditions only:

- Individual or consortium applicants propose to replicate, at multiple sites and/or with the targeted and other populations, strategies that have been shown by prior research to have strong or moderate evidence of positive impacts on education and/or employment outcomes. See Attachment F for more information on the Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework; or
- Individual or consortium applicants propose to develop and implement online and technology-enabled courses and learning projects that will be taken to scale beyond the community level to reach significant numbers of diverse students over a large geographic area.

See Section V.B of this SGA for more information on the additional requirements for applicants who wish to exceed the funding caps. All applicants wishing to exceed the funding caps must have a well-justified budget. Under these two conditions, individual applicants may request an additional \$2 million, while consortium applicants may request an additional level of funding that is commensurate with the project's scope, specific activity costs, and the likely importance and magnitude of its impact on student outcomes.

Section 279(b) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 USC 2372a(b)), specifies that not less than 0.5 percent of the amount appropriated for these grant awards, or \$2.5 million, will support eligible institutions in each State. In the case of an award to a consortium, the proportion of funding allocated to each member in the Budget Narrative (as described in Section III.B and IV.B. Part I of this SGA) will be used to attribute the funding amount to the state in which the consortium member institution resides.

In order to ensure that at least one eligible institution from each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (see Section 247(8) of the Trade Act of 1974, 19 USC 2319(8)) receives an award, the Grant Officer will first select fundable applications that represent as many States as possible. If the Grant Officer finds that a State is not represented by a fundable application, a determination will be made whether any non-fundable applications can be made fundable by placing conditions on the grant. If the Grant Officer determines that no applications can be made fundable by placing conditions on the grant, or if there are no applications received from eligible institutions within a given State, DOL will make contact with the State agency responsible for the State college system to identify, and work with, an eligible institution to submit a proposal.

B. Period of Performance

The period of performance for these grant awards will be 36 months from the effective date of the grant. However, applicants may propose a period of grant performance that is less than 36 months if it is reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline, deliverables, and proposed award amount. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities, program development and enhancement, pre- and post-program services, and grant close-out

activities. A timeline clearly detailing the required grant activities, progress measures, outcomes, and their expected completion dates must be included in the grant application. Applicants should note that DOL may elect to exercise its option to award no-cost extensions to grants for an additional period, based on the success of the program and other relevant factors, if the grantee applies and provides a significant justification for an extension.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Institutions

Eligible institutions are institutions of higher education as defined in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002) which offer programs that can be completed in not more than 2 years. These "institutions of higher education" include public, proprietary, or other nonprofit educational institutions. Applicants must identify their institution type in Section 9 of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. Eligible institutions must 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/>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to check this Web site, as the Department will reference this database in determining an applicant's accreditation to ensure eligibility. Generally, institutions of higher education include 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic Serving Institutions, among others.

B. Consortium Applicants

Institutions of higher education may submit a proposal on behalf of a consortium of eligible institutions. For the purpose of this solicitation, a consortium is comprised of two or more individual eligible institutions, as defined in Section III.A of this SGA, that do not constitute a single legal entity, but who join together to apply for an award under this solicitation. While consortium applicants must meet the education and training needs of workers impacted by foreign trade in at least one community served by the consortium, consortium applicants must report education and training outcomes as described in Section V.A.3 for all program participants. In addition, the Department strongly encourages consortium applicants to propose projects that focus on regional, national, or industry-wide education and training needs, and membership may cross geographic boundaries as necessary to the project design. Consortium applicants are also encouraged to leverage expertise from content experts, as well as broad networks of education and training institutions, as described in Section III.D of this SGA. Consortium applicants may submit proposals for quality projects at any funding level that is demonstrated to be reasonable and appropriate to the scope and complexity of the proposed project.

A consortium applicant must clearly indicate in the required abstract that the application is a consortium proposal and identify each consortium member. Consortium applicants must also provide in their Technical Proposal a complete description of each consortium member's role in the design, development, and implementation of the project in each community. Consortium applicants must also identify in the application a lead institution in the consortium that will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant. This grantee institution must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424 Application Form.

For the purposes of this Solicitation, the grantee institution specified on the SF-424 Application Form will be: 1) the point of contact with DOL to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this SGA and any subsequent grant award; 2) the entity with authority to withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS); 3) responsible for submitting to DOL all deliverables under the grant, including all technical and financial reports related to the project, regardless of which consortium member performed the work; 4) the entity that may request or agree to a revision or amendment of the grant agreement or statement of work; 5) the entity with overall responsibility for carrying out the programmatic functions of the grant, as well as for the stewardship of all

expenditures under the grant; and 6) the entity responsible for working with DOL to close out the grant.

An applicant applying as a consortium must provide as an attachment to its technical proposal a consortium agreement, which could take many forms including but not limited to a letter, agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding, but which must be signed by each consortium member and: 1) reflect an appropriate agreement among two or more eligible institutions as defined in Section III.A, referred to as consortium members, to work together on the grant; 2) declare the intent of each consortium member to carry out the goals and activities contained in the project work plan included in Section V.A.2.ii of the SGA, for which each consortium member will be responsible; and 3) specify the amount of funds and deliverables for which each member will be responsible; 4) designate one member of the consortium as the lead institution that will serve as the grantee for DOL; and 5) reflect a commitment of all consortium members to provide the lead institution all information needed to meet the reporting requirements of the grant. As a grantee, the lead institution is required to serve as both the programmatic and fiscal agent responsible for the grant, and is ultimately responsible for all deliverables as well as performance and financial reports.

If any entity identified in the application as a consortium member drops out of the consortium before or upon award of the grant, the grantee institution must provide, within 60 days of award, an explanation as to why that entity will not be participating in the project. The Department reserves the right to re-evaluate a consortium award in light of any such change in the consortium membership and may terminate the award if deemed appropriate. Please note, if a consortium member drops out, the funds and activities committed to in the application and consortium agreement may not be shifted automatically to another consortium member or to a new institution; the grantee must conduct a competition to award the remaining funds.

A consortium application that does not meet the applicant eligibility requirements of the Solicitation will be deemed non-responsive to the SGA and will not be reviewed.

C. Additional Eligibility Information

Eligible institutions may submit only one application in response to this SGA, either as a single eligible institution or as the lead institution in a consortium. Applicants that submit more than one application, either as a single eligible institution or as the lead institution in a consortium, will be found non-responsive and none of their applications will be considered for funding. However, eligible institutions may submit an application as a single eligible institution, and also as a member of a consortium in one or more consortium applications in which they do not serve as the lead institution.

Due to the expanded scope and potentially larger funding ranges for consortium applicants, the Department plans for technical review panels to evaluate applications from single eligible institutions separately from consortium applications. All applications will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria established in Section V.A of this SGA. For more information on the grant Review and Selection Process, please see Section V.B.

D. Leveraged Expertise

Eligible institutions are strongly encouraged to leverage the knowledge and resources of organizations, public and private, that have expertise and experience in successfully developing, implementing, and evaluating projects in the identified priority areas, and are encouraged to leverage the expertise of content experts such as cognitive scientists, human-computer interaction experts, information technologists, program evaluation experts, and others as appropriate to the development and implementation of the project. In addition, eligible institutions are strongly encouraged to engage in outreach and coordinate with broad networks of education and training institutions (which could include entrepreneurship support programs at small business organizations or other colleges and universities) in the implementation and adoption of materials to ensure widespread use and encourage continuous improvement of the courses and learning

materials created by these projects. Applicants are also encouraged to leverage other resources to sustain and expand strategies funded through this solicitation.

The eligible institutions may propose to procure from these organizations goods or services that are ancillary or supportive of the applicant's project work plan. Please refer to procurement information in Section VI.B.3 for more information. However, these activities may only be implemented through a contract, not through a sub-grant, and follow all procurement requirements. Please see Section IV.E.7 of the SGA for more information on the difference between a contract and a sub-grant.

E. Involvement of Employers and the Public Workforce System

Eligible institutions must include or consult with the following organizations in their application:

1. Required Employer Involvement

Eligible institutions must involve at least one employer in the project that is actively engaged in the project in one or more of the following ways: defining the program strategy and goals, identifying necessary skills and competencies, providing resources to support education/training (such as equipment, instructors, funding, internships, or other work-based learning activities), providing assistance with program design, and where appropriate, hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs. While only one employer is required, the Department encourages applicants to collaborate with multiple employers within a sector, ensuring that program graduates will be prepared with the skills needed in the applicant's region.

2. Public Workforce System Consultation

Eligible institutions must consult the public workforce system (e.g., Local Workforce Investment Boards, One Stop Career Centers, or State agencies that administer the TAA for Workers program) in the project, and the Department encourages applicants to actively engage the system in one or more of the following ways: identifying, assessing, and referring candidates for training; connecting workers with employers; and providing support services for qualified individuals, where appropriate.

All applications will be evaluated on the inclusion of an employer and consultation with the public workforce system in Section V.A.2.iii of this SGA, and must also provide a signed letter of commitment from an employer(s) as described in Section IV.B.Part III.b. Applicants that fail to provide the required letter of commitment from the employer(s) will be found non-responsive and their application will not be reviewed.

F. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required as a condition for application, but leveraging other resources is strongly encouraged.

G. Other Grant Specifications

1. Veterans Priority

The Jobs for Veterans Act (Pub. L. 107-288) requires 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 can be found at 20 CFR part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for training or 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 admitting him or her into the training program or providing 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

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 http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2816.

2. Grant Recipient Training

Grant recipients are required to participate in all ETA training activities related to orientation, financial management and reporting, performance reporting, product dissemination, and other technical assistance training as appropriate during the life of the grant. These trainings may occur via conference calls, through virtual events such as webinars, and in-person meetings. Applicants should budget to attend two in-person training events in Washington, D.C. during the life of the grant.

3. Transparency

The Department is committed to conducting a transparent grant award process and publicizing information about program outcomes. Applicants are advised their application and information related to its review and evaluation (whether or not the application is successful) may be made publicly available, either fully or partially. In addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

4. Required Data Tags

Applicants must identify specific words or phrases – also known as “keywords” or “tags” that summarize their proposed grant activities. The keywords/tags identified must accurately reflect substantial components of the proposed project and be provided in the applicant’s Abstract. Individual applicants may specify up to 15 keywords/tags. Consortia applicants may specify up to 30 keywords/tags. Applicants should use standard keyword/tag terms provided in Appendix E of this SGA, to the greatest extent possible. In the event none of the words or phrases in Appendix E is sufficiently precise, applicants may substitute other keywords/tags of their own choosing that are 28 characters or less per word with a maximum of three words per tag and will most efficiently enable machine indexing and searching of grant activities.

5. Third-Party Review of Grant Deliverables

Successful applicants will be required to identify third-party subject matter experts to conduct reviews of the deliverables produced through the grant. Applicants should allot funds in their budget for the independent review of their deliverables by subject matter experts. Subject matter experts are individuals with demonstrated experience in developing and/or implementing similar deliverables. These experts could include applicants’ peers, such as representatives from neighboring education and training providers. The applicant must provide ETA with the results of the review and the qualifications of the reviewer(s) at the time the deliverable is provided to ETA.

6. Required Disclaimer for Grant Deliverables

The grantee must include the following language on all Work developed in whole or in part with grant funds, including its incorporation in the License: “This workforce solution was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership.”

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This SGA contains all of the information and Web addresses for forms needed to apply for

grant funding.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Proposals submitted in response to this SGA must consist of three separate and distinct parts: (I) a cost proposal; (II) a technical proposal; and (III) attachments to the technical proposal. Applications that do not contain all three parts or that fail to adhere to the instructions in this section will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application. Grants may exceed the amount of \$20 million for consortia under the two specific conditions provided in Section II.A. Applicants must provide supplementary materials required in Section V.B.1 of the SGA to be considered for funds above the award amount ceiling.

Part I. The Cost Proposal. The Cost Proposal must include the following items:

- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (available at http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/forms_repository_information.jsp). The SF-424 must clearly identify the grant 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 shall be considered the authorized representative of the applicant. All applicants for Federal grant and funding opportunities are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) number, and must supply their D-U-N-S® Number on the SF-424. The D-U-N-S® Number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. If you do not have a D-U-N-S® Number, you can get one for free through the Dun & Bradstreet® (D&B) Web site: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/Glossary?fLink=glossary&footerflag=y&storeId=10001&indicator=7>.
- The SF-424A Budget Information Form (available at http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/forms_repository_information.jsp). In preparing the Budget Information Form, the applicant must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the budget request, explained in detail below.
 - Budget Narrative: The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The entire Federal grant amount requested (not just one year) must be included on the SF-424, SF-424A, and the budget narrative. The amount listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and the budget narrative must be the same. Please note, the funding amount included on the SF-424 will be considered the official funding amount requested if any inconsistencies are found. Applications that fail to provide an SF-424, SF-424A, a D-U-N-S® Number, and a budget narrative will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.
 - Regardless of the method of application submission, all applicants must register with the Federal Central Contractor Registry (CCR) before submitting an application. Step-by-step instructions for registering with CCR can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step2.jsp. An awardee must maintain an active CCR 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 CCR database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update on an annual basis from the date of initial registration or subsequent updates its information in the CCR 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. Failure to register with the CCR before application submission will result in your application being found non-responsive and not being reviewed.

Part II. The Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal must demonstrate the applicant's capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this Solicitation. The guidelines for the content of the Technical Proposal are provided in Section V of this SGA. The

Technical Proposal from individual eligible institutions is limited to 30 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. For applications from consortia of eligible institutions, the Technical Proposal is limited to 35 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. Any materials beyond these specified page limits will not be read. Applicants should number the Technical Proposal beginning with page number 1. Applications that do not include Part II, the Technical Proposal, will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

Part III. Attachments to the Technical Proposal. In addition to the Technical Proposal, the applicant must submit the following required attachments:

- a) The applicant must provide an Abstract, not to exceed three pages, which will serve as a summary of the grant and will be shared publicly, and which includes the following sections: 1) applicant name and a clear designation that the applicant is applying as an individual applicant or a consortium applicant; 2) applicant city/state; 3) areas served by grant; 4) project name; 5) funding level requested; 6) identification of the priorities and strategies addressed through the project (as identified in Section I.B); 7) description of the proposed project; 8) targeted industry and/or occupations and related credentials; 9) populations to be served, including identification of trade-impacted community to be served; 10) the required employer partner(s); 11) other stakeholder organizations from the community outreach and project planning activity that remain involved in the implementation of the project, as described in Section I.F of the SGA; 12) projected numbers for each of the seven outcome measures listed in Section VI.C.2; 13) public contact information for the grant which may be an email or Web site; and, 14) the keywords/tags that summarize the proposed grant activities as required in Section III.G.4 and Appendix E. Applicants that fail to provide this required information in the Abstract will be found non-responsive and not be considered for funding.
- b) All applicants must submit one letter of commitment that includes signatures from the employer partner(s) as required in Section III.E.1 of the SGA, and describes their role and responsibility in the project. This letter must also describe the outreach and consultation efforts with the public workforce system as discussed in Section III.E.2. In the case of consortia, the applicant must also provide an additional single letter of commitment that includes signatures from each consortium member and describes the role and responsibilities as well as the amount of grant funding budgeted for each eligible institution within the project. Electronic signatures are permissible in the letter(s) of commitment.
- c) Applicants must include the following documentation as evidence of completion of the community outreach process described in Section I.F, not to exceed five pages: 1) a list of organizations in the community that the applicant reached out to; and 2) a complete inventory of existing education and training offered for each proposed industry sector in the community and suitable for TAA eligible individuals, including highlights of best practices and evidence-based training that may support or inform the design of the proposed project.
- d) As applicable, applicants should include documentation of an Affirmative Determination by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (<http://www.eda.gov/Contacts/Contacts.xml>) with the attachments to the technical proposal described in Section IV.B. Part III of this SGA.

Applications that do not include the required attachments will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

These additional materials (three-page abstract, commitment letter(s), and five-page community outreach documentation) do not count against the page limit for the Technical Proposal, but may not exceed 15 pages. Any additional materials beyond the 15-page limit will not be read. Only the attachments listed above as required attachments will be excluded from the Technical Proposal page limits established in Part II of this section. The required attachments must be affixed as separate, clearly identified appendices to the application. Additional materials such as resumes or general letters of support or commitment will not be considered in the evaluation review process.

Applicants should not send letters of commitment or any of the other required attachments separately to ETA, because letters received separately will be tracked through a different system and will not be attached to the application for review. ETA will not accept general letters of support. Support letters of this nature will not be considered in the evaluation review process.

C. Submission Date, Times, Process and Addresses

The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is April 21, 2011. Applications must be received at the address below no later than 4 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications may be submitted electronically on Grants.gov or in hardcopy by mail or hand delivery. Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX) will not be accepted.

Applicants submitting proposals in hard-copy must submit an original signed application (including the SF-424) and one "copy-ready" version free of bindings, staples or protruding tabs to ease in the reproduction of the proposal by DOL. Applicants submitting proposals in hard copy are also required to provide an identical electronic copy of the proposal on compact disc (CD). If discrepancies between the hard copy submission and CD copy are identified, the application on the CD will be considered the official applicant submission for evaluation purposes. Failure to provide identical applications in hardcopy and CD format may have an impact on the overall evaluation.

If an application is submitted by both hard-copy and through <http://www.grants.gov>, a letter must accompany the hard-copy application stating why two applications were submitted and the differences between the two submissions. If no letter of explanation accompanies the hard-copy, the copy submitted through <http://www.grants.gov> will be considered the official submission in response to this SGA. Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will be considered non-responsive. No exceptions to the mailing and delivery requirements set forth in this notice will be granted. Further, documents submitted separately from the application, before or after the deadline, will not be accepted as part of the application.

Mailed applications must be addressed to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Federal Assistance, Attention: Donna Kelly, Grant Officer, Reference SGA/DFA PY 10-03, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4716, Washington, DC 20210. Applicants are advised that mail delivery in the Washington area may be delayed due to mail decontamination procedures. Hand-delivered proposals will be received at the above address at the 3rd and C Street, N.W. entrance. Proposals received at any other entrance will not be accepted. All overnight mail will be considered to be hand-delivered and must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time.

Applications that are submitted through Grants.gov must be successfully submitted at <http://www.grants.gov> no later than 4 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then subsequently validated by Grants.gov. The submission and validation process is described in more detail below. The process can be complicated and time-consuming. Applicants are strongly advised to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for time to resolve technical problems if necessary.

The Department strongly recommends that before the applicant begins to write the proposal, applicants should immediately initiate and complete the "Get Registered" registration steps at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. Applicants should read through the

registration process carefully before registering. These steps may take as much as four weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application. The site also contains registration checklists to help you walk through the process. The Department strongly recommends that applicants download the "Organization Registration Checklist" at http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf and 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.

To register with Grants.gov, applicants applying electronically must have a D-U-N-S® Number and must register with the CCR. Step-by-step instructions for registering with CCR can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step2.jsp. All applicants must register with CCR in order to apply online. Failure to register with the CCR will result in your application being rejected by Grants.gov during the submission process.

The next step in the registration process is creating a username and password with Grants.gov to become an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). AORs will need to know the D-U-N-S® Number of the organization for which they will be submitting applications to complete this process. To read more detailed instructions for creating a profile on Grants.gov visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step3.jsp.

After creating a profile on Grants.gov, the E-Biz point of Contact (E-Biz POC) - a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for CCR – will receive an email to grant the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of their organization. The E-Biz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and approve an applicant as the AOR, thereby giving him or her permission to submit applications. To learn more about AOR Authorization visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step5.jsp , or to track AOR status visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step6.jsp.

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 POC approval, establishes an AOR. When you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

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. Within two business days of application submission, Grants.gov will send the applicant two email messages to provide the status of application progress through the system. The first email, sent almost immediately, 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. Only applications that have been successfully submitted by the deadline and subsequently successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant 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, sufficient time should be allotted for submission (two business days) and, if applicable, subsequent 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 sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered.

To ensure consideration, the components of the application must be saved as .doc, .xls or .pdf files. If submitted in any other format, the applicant bears the risk that compatibility or other issues will prevent the Department from considering the application. ETA will attempt to open the

document but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening. In such cases, the non-conforming application will not be considered for funding.

We strongly advise applicants to use the various tools and documents, including Frequently Asked Questions, which are available on the “Applicant Resources” page at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp>.

ETA encourages new prospective applicants to view the online tutorial, “Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants,” available through Workforce3One at: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.

To receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users and other time sensitive updates as information is available, applicants may subscribe to “Grants.gov Updates” at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp.

If applicants encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, call 1-800-518-4726 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or email “support@grants.gov”. The Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is closed on federal holidays.

For applications submitted on Grants.gov, only applications that have been successfully submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date and then successfully validated will be considered. Applicants take a significant risk by waiting to the last day to submit by Grants.gov.

Any hard-copy application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received before awards are made, it was properly addressed, and it was: a) sent by U.S. Postal Service mail, postmarked not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application required to be received by the 20th of the month must be postmarked by the 15th of that month); or b) sent by professional overnight delivery service to the addressee not later than one working day before the date specified for receipt of applications. “Postmarked” means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service. Therefore, applicants should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Failure to adhere to these instructions will be a basis for a determination that the application was not filed timely and will not be considered. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt.

D. Intergovernmental Review

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

E. Funding Restrictions

All proposed costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles. Disallowed costs are those charges to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles or other conditions contained in the grant.

Applicants, whether successful or not, will not be entitled to reimbursement of pre-award costs.

1. Indirect Costs

As specified in OMB Circular Cost Principles, indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective. An indirect cost rate (ICR) is required when an organization operates under more than

one grant or other activity, whether Federally-assisted or not. Organizations must use the ICR supplied by the Federal Cognizant agency. If an organization requires a new ICR or has a pending ICR, the Grant Officer will award a temporary billing rate for 90 days until a provisional rate can be issued. This rate is based on the fact that an organization has not established an ICR agreement. Within this 90 day period, the organization must submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal to their Federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional ICR.

2. Administrative Costs

Under this SGA, an entity that receives a grant to carry out a project or program may not use more than 10 percent of the amount of the grant to pay administrative costs associated with the program or project. Administrative costs could be direct or indirect costs, and are defined at 20 CFR 667.220. Administrative costs do not need to be identified separately from program costs on the SF-424A Budget Information Form. However, they must be tracked through the grantee's accounting system. To claim any administrative costs that are also indirect costs, the applicant must obtain an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement from its Federal Cognizant agency, as specified above.

3. Salary and Bonus Limitations

Under Public Law 109-234, none of the funds appropriated in Public Law 109-149 or prior Acts under the heading "Employment and Training Administration" that are available for expenditure on or after June 15, 2006, may be used by a recipient or sub-recipient 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, except as provided for under Section 101 of Public Law 109-149. Public Laws 111-8 and 111-117 contain the same limitations with respect to funds appropriated under each of these Laws. This limitation also applies to grants funded under this SGA. The salary and bonus limitation does not apply to vendors providing goods and services as defined in OMB Circular A-133 (codified at 29 CFR Parts 96 and 99). See TEGL number 5-06 for further clarification: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2262.

4. Intellectual Property Rights

In order to further the goal of career training and education and encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials, as a condition of the receipt of a Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant ("Grant"), the Grantee will be required to license to the public (not including the Federal Government) all work created with the support of the grant ("Work") under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License ("License"). 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 more information on this License, please visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>.

Separate from the Creative Commons license to the public, the 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 products developed through a subcontract under the grant; and ii) any rights of copyright to which the grantee, 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.

5. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages

Organizations that receive grants through this SGA may not use grant funds to pay for the

wages of participants. Further, the provision of stipends to training participants for the purposes of wage replacement is not an allowable cost under this SGA.

6. Use of Funds for Supportive Services

Grantees may not use grant funds to provide supportive services to individuals who are served through these grants. Supportive services include services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training activities funded through this grant. However, grant funds may be used to expand and improve the capacity of student services (for example, career guidance programs) through activities such as hiring and/or training staff, developing or procuring online systems, or renovating space.

7. Prohibition on Use of Funds for Sub-grants

Grantees do not have authority under this program to award sub-grants; sub-grantees carry out one or more major programmatic functions to directly meet the project's goals. However, grantees do have the authority to award subcontracts under this program. A grantee enters into a subcontract to procure goods and/or services that are ancillary or supportive to the grantee's operation of the project. The determination of whether a grantee has entered into a subcontract relationship or a sub-grantee relationship with another organization is determined primarily with reference to the general purpose, programmatic functions, and responsibilities that the grantee gives to the other organization along with grant funds. These three elements should be closely examined, together with the usual characteristics (terms and performance standards, scope of work, etc.). As a reference tool in determining whether an agreement is a sub-grant or a subcontract, see Attachment A. The table in Attachment A is for reference only and does not create any legally binding obligation. Each applicant, including consortium applicants, should determine the necessity and/or appropriate role for subcontracts within their project workplan.

In the case of a consortium, the lead institution must determine the appropriate funding vehicle to be used for its consortium members, as described in Section III.B of this SGA. Due to the unique relationship of a consortium, this may be some other binding agreement to provide for the distribution of grant funds among member institutions, as well as subcontracts.

Subcontracts must be awarded in accordance with 29 CFR 95.40-48 and are subject to audit, in accordance with the requirements of 29 CFR 95.26 (d). Grantees are responsible for ensuring that all subcontractors are eligible for participation in Federal assistance programs and all procurement requirements at 29 CFR 95.40-48 are met.

F. Other Submission Requirements

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

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used to evaluate the grant proposals. Applications for grants under this solicitation will be accepted after the publication of this announcement and until the specified time on the closing date. A technical review panel will carefully evaluate all applications against the evaluation criteria in this section.

These criteria and point values are:

Criterion	Points
1. Statement of Need	30
2. Work Plan and Project Management	45
3. Measurement / Evaluation of Progress and Outcomes	25
TOTAL	100

1. Statement of Need (30 points)

Applicants must demonstrate a clear and compelling need to expand and improve the ability of eligible institutions to deliver education and career training programs for the targeted population in the community served by the project (please note that in order to receive full points for this section, consortium applicants must fully demonstrate this need in at least one community served by the proposed project). In this section, applicants will demonstrate the need for the proposed project by using data and observations collected through the community outreach process described in Section I.F of the SGA, as well as data collected from the applicant's own internal management information systems. Applicants must fully describe: i) the targeted population in each community who need training and their skill gaps related to the jobs in demand; ii) evidence of the need for training in the industries and occupations on which the project will focus; and iii) gaps in the existing education and career training opportunities in each community. Points in this section will be awarded based on the extent to which applicants address the following factors.

i. Impact of Foreign Trade in Community(ies) to be Served (5 points)

In accordance with requirements of the TAACCCT, the Department will give priority to an eligible institution that serves a community the Secretary of Commerce has determined is eligible to apply for assistance under the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Communities Program (Sec. 273 of Trade Act). Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants demonstrate that at least one community served by the proposed project is impacted by the threat to, or loss of, jobs resulting from foreign trade.

In demonstrating this, applicants must either:

- Provide evidence that the Department of Commerce has made an Affirmative Determination that a community or communities to be served by the project is impacted by trade. Applicants should include documentation of an Affirmative Determination by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (<http://www.eda.gov/Contacts/Contacts.xml>) with the attachments to the technical proposal described in Section IV.B. Part III of this SGA; or
- Identify one or more TAA Certification determinations (providing the TAA for Workers (TAW) Number, company name, and decision date) in at least one community to be served by the project, made on or after January 1, 2007. The applicant must also provide a narrative that describes the threat to, or the loss of, jobs associated with the identified Certification(s). TAA for Workers petition determinations may be accessed and searched electronically at: http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa/taa_search_form.cfm.

Applicants that do not provide either of these items will not receive points against this criteria.

ii. Targeted Population in Community(ies) to be Served (5 points)

Applicants must demonstrate the education and training needs of the targeted population in each community to be served by the project. Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants provide evidence of a strong understanding of:

- The industry and/or occupations in which the targeted population is or was employed;
- The current level of skills and educational attainment of the targeted population;
- The education and training required to attain the knowledge, competencies, and degrees/certificates required of workers identified in Section V.A.1.iii; and
- The additional barriers members of the target population may face in seeking employment.

iii. Targeted Industries and Occupations (10 points)

Applicants must fully describe current and future projected employment opportunities within each community and the educational and career training skills required for workers to meet the

employment demand. Applicants must identify the targeted industry(ies) and occupation(s) on which the project will focus. For each industry or occupation, applicants must provide data that was collected through the community outreach described in Section I.F. Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants demonstrate strong evidence of:

- A clear understanding of the current and future projected demand for employment, as demonstrated by relevant labor market information and job projection data (from DOL, State workforce agencies, employers, and other relevant sources), and commitments from employers to hire workers who successfully complete the program, where available;
- A clear understanding of the knowledge, competencies, and degrees/certificates required of workers in the targeted industries or occupations; and
- The demand for trained workers by employers in the targeted industries.

iv. Gaps in Existing Educational and Career Training Programs (10 points)

Applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the gaps in existing education and career training programs in each community, based on data collected through the community outreach process described in Section I.F, as well as relevant data from the applicant institution's own management information systems or other internal data sources. The data provided in this section will serve as evidence of the need for the education and career training programs proposed by the applicant.

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants provide quantitative and qualitative data to: 1) identify and fully describe current gaps in, and/or opportunities to improve, existing educational and career training programs in each community; and, 2) fully describe how the identified gaps or opportunities impact the applicant's ability to effectively serve individuals seeking education or career training, particularly the targeted population. Information provided in this section may include, but is not limited to, evidence of:

- Limitations in the number of students successfully served by the institution and inability of the applicant to meet demonstrated demand for education and training in the community;
- Limitations in faculty expertise and facility infrastructure that serve as barriers to providing effective education and training programs in the community;
- Limitation in the content and quality of available courses that negatively impacts the ability of eligible institutions to meet the needs of the targeted population and employers;
- The identification of factors that contribute to program attrition, particularly among low-skilled students, and the need to address those factors to improve retention and completion rates; and
- If applicable, the need for specialized equipment, including a description of why the equipment is needed and why any currently available equipment is not sufficient to provide effective training in the targeted industries and occupations.

2. Work Plan and Project Management (45 points)

The applicant must provide a complete and clear explanation of the proposed education and training strategies (including the evidence on which those strategies are based), the proposed project work plan, and the capacity of the applicant (and if applicable, consortium members) to manage the project. The applicant must provide a comprehensive work plan for the education and training program(s) on which its strategies will focus, including: (a) a detailed table that accounts for each specific strategy that will be implemented to expand and improve education and training programs; and (b) an explanation of the applicant's capacity and plan to effectively manage and sustain the proposed investment. Points for this criterion will be awarded for the following factors:

i. Evidence-Based Design and Overview of Proposed Strategy (15 points)

The applicant must clearly describe the evidence on which the proposed education and training strategies are based, and how the evidence indicates that the proposed strategies will lead to improved education and employment outcomes. Applicants must provide an overview of the

project priorities and proposed education and training strategies and present the strongest evidence available for their particular program design or strategy and also discuss any existing evidence that is mixed or negative. All applicants, regardless of whether they present strong, moderate, or preliminary evidence, may get the maximum points for this section.

Applicants must also fully explain how the programs expanded and improved through the grant will meet the needs of the targeted population, as described in the Statement of Need. Please note, applicants may implement multiple strategies across different programs, course offerings, or curricula.

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants:

- Clearly indicate if the project will replicate evidence-based strategies or implement innovative or new strategies supported by related research findings or reasonable hypotheses. Applicants proposing to replicate evidence-based strategies should cite strong or moderate evidence from prior research to support the proposed program design. Strong or moderate evidence should demonstrate the strategy has had a statistically significant, substantial, and important impact on education and/or employment outcomes. However, the Department recognizes that there are few, if any, program designs or strategies in the field of higher education and workforce development that have strong evidence, and few strategies supported by moderate evidence. If no strong or moderate evidence exists or an applicant is proposing a new strategy, the applicant should present research findings or reasonable hypotheses that the program or strategy would lead to improved education and employment outcomes, citing related research, theories, or logic models from education, training or other sectors. For example, a community college applicant may propose a hypothesis that implementing a new type of math curriculum could increase retention. While there is no strong or moderate evidence available on the effectiveness of this strategy in a community college setting, the applicant cites related research on high school students that has found that this type of math curriculum seems to improve student learning and engagement. Applicants must include evidence citations as footnotes in response to this evaluation criterion along with Web links to the location of the cited study or report. See Attachment F for a more detailed description of the standards of evidence for strong, moderate, and preliminary;

- Clearly identify the priorities to be addressed by the proposed project (selected from the four funding priorities defined in Section I.B of the SGA);

- Clearly explain how the proposed project will meet the needs of both the targeted population and employers in each community as described in Sections V.A.1.ii and V.A.1.iii, incorporating how the proposed education and training programs will provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for employment in the targeted industries and occupations. As appropriate, applicants should also explain any regional, national, or industry-wide education and training impacts from their proposed project;

- Identify the degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized credentials that will result from the education and training programs implemented by the project;

- Clearly explain how the proposed project will directly address the gaps in the current education and training offerings in each community, as described in Section V.A.1.iv; and

- For applicants implementing online and technology-enabled strategies, clearly describe the technical feasibility of the design, technologies, and delivery methods for these strategies and discuss the potential re-use and repurposing of courses and materials to be developed through the program.

ii. Project Work Plan (15 points)

The applicant must present a comprehensive project work plan that follows the format described in this section and aligns to the proposed strategy description provided in response to Section V.A.2.i of this SGA. Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which applicants: 1) present coherent priorities, strategies, and deliverables that demonstrate the applicant's complete understanding of all responsibilities and costs required to implement each

phase of the project within the timeframe of the grant; 2) include feasible and reasonable timeframes for accomplishing all procurement and other necessary grant start-up strategies immediately following the anticipated grant start date of July 1, 2011; and 3) explain how the costs in the proposed project work plan align with the proposed budget, specifically the budget narrative, and are justified as adequate, cost-effective, and reasonable for the resources requested.

Points will be awarded based on how well the strategies meet the needs described in Section V.A.1, not on the number of strategies proposed. Applicants must present this work plan in a comprehensive table (see Attachment B), that is included within the technical proposal (not the attachments to the technical proposal) and formatted to include each of the following categories:

- **Priorities:** The applicant must identify the specific priorities to be addressed by the proposed project (selected from the four funding priorities defined in Section I.B of this SGA);
- **Strategies:** The applicant must identify the specific strategies that will be funded through the grant to operationalize each priority of the project. Each strategy must be aligned to a specific project priority, and include an explanation of how the strategy supports the expansion and improvement of education and training programs;
- **Implementer(s):** For each strategy, applications must include the name of the eligible institution or consortium member(s) that will be responsible for implementing the strategy and any proposed subcontractor(s), if known, who may assist the applicant in implementing the strategy;
- **Costs:** Applicants must provide the sub-total budget dollar amount associated with the strategy that aligns to the cost represented in the budget narrative, and a per-student cost estimate related to each strategy as well as the overall program;
- **Time:** The applicant must include the anticipated start date and end date for each strategy to be funded, as well as projected completion dates for key strategy milestones (including signing of subcontracts and expeditious procurement of equipment) and project deliverables for each year of the proposed period of performance; and
- **Deliverables:** The applicant must account for the specific project deliverables that will result from each funded strategy, such as the course materials, articulation agreements, and online learning modules. These project deliverables must be provided to ETA and can be distributed to the public (see Section IV.E.4).

iii. Project Management (10 points)

The applicant must fully describe its capacity (and if applicable, the capacity of its consortium members) to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed investment. Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the proposed project: 1) will be led by a competent full-time project manager who is hired in the early stages of the project; 2) has a management structure that enables efficient and effective communication between project staff and organizations; 3) uses systems and processes that enable timely and accurate financial and performance reporting and allow for expedient procurement procedures that comply with Federal, State (if applicable), and other relevant laws and requirements; and 4) includes well-defined roles for employers (including sectoral collaboration), consortium members (if applicable), and subcontractors.

In addressing this criterion, applicants should provide:

- The professional qualifications that the applicant will require of the full-time project manager, a demonstration that these qualifications are sufficient to ensure proper management, and a reasonable timeframe for hiring the project manager, if one is not already identified;
- A description of the expertise and/or resources that will be used in the development and implementation of the project, including content experts such as cognitive scientists, human-computer interaction experts, information technologists, and others as appropriate;
- An organizational chart that identifies all relevant leadership, program, administrative, and advisory positions (including, if applicable, positions within consortium members' organizations) and demonstrates that the project will be implemented through a comprehensive

management structure that allows for efficient and effective communication between all levels of the project;

- A description of the applicant's procurement processes and procedures that demonstrates that the applicant (and if applicable, its consortium members) is equipped to meet Federal, State (if applicable), and other relevant procurement requirements;
- A description of the role for employers and the public workforce system in the design, development, and implementation of the project. This description should also include plans for employer and public workforce system involvement, as well as efforts to work with multiple employers in a sector, throughout the life of the grant;
- A description of the applicant's financial and reporting systems;
- A description of the applicant's ability to secure resources and work with a third party to rigorously evaluate the program if the project is not selected to participate in a DOL-led evaluation, or if an additional evaluation is appropriate; and
- For consortium applicants, a complete description of each consortium member's role in the design, development, and eventual implementation of the project in each community.

iv. Sustainability (5 Points)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to ensure that effective innovations developed under this program are sustained after the grant period ends. Applicants must describe:

- Plans for securing funding or commitments for future funding (pending successful project outcomes) from non-Federal sources;
- Options for developing low-cost strategies for integrating effective practices, funded under the grant, into their general operations. For example, an institution could propose that instructors funded to form a discrete learning community in a part of that institution during the three year period of performance would, if the proposal was achieving results, work with other instructors once the grant has ended to integrate learning community practices more widely across the institution.

3. Measurement of Progress and Outcomes (25 Points)

The Department expects that grantees will set performance targets and will collect data on participant characteristics, progress measures, and performance outcomes in order to continuously monitor and improve program performance. Applicants must demonstrate they have systems and processes in place to capture data related to short-term progress measures and longer-term outcome measures, or a strong plan to develop and implement such systems or bridge gaps in existing systems. Applicants will be evaluated on their identification of progress measures that will track progress toward successful implementation of the unique combination of strategies proposed by the applicant and determine whether the individuals they are serving are attaining their educational and employment goals. Applicants must also describe how they will track and report longer-term outcome measures for program participants, as well as for a comparison cohort of participants in another program that is not funded by the TAACCCT. The Department intends to use the progress and outcome measures described in this section as performance goals for the grants and to support future research into the effectiveness of strategies pursued by the grantees. All applicants should note the race/ethnicity and gender nondiscrimination requirements cited in Section VI.B.1 of this SGA. Points for this criterion will be awarded for the following factors:

i. Progress and Implementation Measures (10 points)

The applicant must describe a coherent and effective plan for evaluating program data on a quarterly basis and using conclusions drawn from the data to continuously improve grant-funded programs and ensure programs are on track toward meeting performance goals. Applicants should provide a description of the current data systems and processes that are available at the institution(s), including the metrics currently captured, and how these systems and processes will be used to monitor progress.

This plan must include at least two progress measures for each strategy (as identified in the Project Work Plan) and two implementation measures that are designed to track progress toward successful implementation of each strategy. While the applicant may choose what metrics it will use, the following are provided as examples (further discussion of example progress metrics can be found at www.subnet.nga.org/ci/1001/).

Sample progress measures include, but are not limited to:

- The number and percentage of students who place into and enroll in remedial math, English, or both;
- The number and percentage of students who complete a remedial education course in math, English or both, and complete a college-level course in the same subject;
- The number and percentage of students who complete entry college-level math and English courses within the first two consecutive academic years;
- The number and percentage of entering students who enroll consecutively from fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall;
- The percentage of credit hours completed out of those attempted during an academic year; and
- The annual ratio of certificates and degrees awarded per 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) students.

Sample implementation measures include, but are not limited to:

- Expansion and improvement in the capacity of support programs such as career counseling, tutoring, and job placement services;
- Establishment of credit for prior learning assessments;
- Creation of new articulation agreements;
- Number of employers that reviewed and validated new curriculum; and
- Establishment of cooperative education or internship agreements.

Applications will be rated on the following: 1) the strength of the plan to continuously evaluate and improve program performance, which may include a description of prior experience in making decisions to improve specific programs based on evidence produced by research, rigorous evaluations, and/or program outcome data; 2) the evidence presented that the applicant has data systems and processes available to establish project baselines and monitor progress, or a strong plan to develop and implement such systems or bridge gaps in existing systems, including a timeline for bridging the gap; and 3) the extent to which the two measures identified for each strategy clearly measure progress toward successful implementation of each strategy, and align to one or more of the project priorities identified in Section I.B of this SGA.

ii. Outcome Measures (15 points)

The applicant must describe how it will track and report longer-term outcome measures for program participants toward their identified goals, as well as for a comparison cohort of participants in another program that is not funded by the TAACCCT. The Department encourages applicants to discuss identification of an appropriate comparison cohort during the required community outreach, and leverage evaluation experts to assist in identifying this group if necessary. Applicants should include a discussion of why their comparison cohort is appropriate for helping determine program impact on participant outcomes.

For both program participants and the comparison cohort, successful applicants will be required to report data for the following seven outcome measures on an annual basis (or every fourth quarterly report): entered employment rate, employment retention rate, average earnings, attainment of credits toward degree(s), attainment of industry-recognized certificates (less than one year), attainment of industry-recognized certificates (more than one year), and graduation number and rate for degree programs. This requirement is also discussed in Section VI.C.2 of this SGA.

Applicants proposing strategies to accelerate progress for low-skilled adults under Priority 1, must also report data on basic skills attainment of program participants.

In order to establish a baseline for these seven outcome measures, and demonstrate current capacity to evaluate programs, applicants must provide data on the seven outcome measures and aggregate demographic information for a current group of enrolled (or recently enrolled) students who have similar characteristics to the targeted population. Where there are gaps in available data, the applicant must explain how the available data systems and processes will be improved to address those gaps. The applicant will be scored based on the ability to provide such data and/or a reasonable plan to bridge gaps in existing data systems and processes, including a timeline for bridging the gap.

Applicants must describe their existing or planned approach to tracking and reporting employment, retention, and earnings outcomes using administrative records. This may include working with the State Directory of New Hires, the State Labor Market Information units (that house the Local Employment Dynamic survey data), the State Workforce Agency that is responsible for tracking and reporting outcomes on TAA for Workers program participants using the Trade Act Participant Record

(http://www.doleta.gov/Performance/pfdocs/12050392_TAPR_Revision_Track_Changes_Draft_TE_GL_Change_112909.pdf), or other federally-supported administrative record data. This may also include working with the State Workforce Agency to access employment data available in unemployment wage records. For example, if the applicant does not have an existing relationship with its State's agency responsible for collecting wage record information to verify employment, it should describe the process that it will use to obtain employment outcome information, which may include establishing data sharing agreement(s) to access administrative records containing this information.

ETA is working to develop data matching processes that could assist grantees with tracking long-term employment outcomes that would be of interest to schools as well as prospective students. These processes would have strong privacy protections to ensure that personally identifiable student information is not disclosed. We will provide more information as these processes are developed, and may require grantees to participate by submitting data. ETA expects that grantees will still rely on access to State agency data to report the required outcome measures on employment and earnings which are explained in Section VI.C.

Applicants must provide numerical outcome projections for each of the seven outcome measures that reflect the program's expected impact on participants, which will show the organization's capacity to provide these outcomes. For applicants that do not have outcome data available at this time, the narrative should clearly reflect that a plan is in place to obtain it as part of the grant activities.

Applicants should refer to Attachment C for a sample of the format for providing baseline data and projections for outcome measures. Applicants must provide this data as part of the technical proposal and not in the attachments to the technical proposal. In addition, applicants should refer to Section VI.C.2 for a description of the quarterly and annual reporting requirements for the grants, including definitions of the annual outcome measures.

Applications will be rated on the following: 1) strong evidence of an effective plan to track and report outcome measures for program participants, as well as an appropriate comparison cohort of participants; 2) strong evidence that the applicant has data systems and processes available to establish project baselines for the seven outcome measures, or a strong plan to develop and implement such systems or bridge gaps in existing systems, including a timeline for bridging the gap; and 3) strong evidence of an existing or planned approach to tracking and reporting employment, retention, and earnings outcomes.

B. Evaluation of Supplementary Materials for Applications Requesting Funds Above Award Amount Ceiling

As specified in Section II.A, grants may exceed the award amount ceiling on two conditions only (see Section II.A of this SGA for more information):

- Individual or consortium applicants propose to replicate, at multiple sites and/or with the targeted and other populations, strategies that have been shown by prior research to have strong or moderate evidence of positive impacts on education and/or employment outcomes. See Attachment F for more information on the Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework; or
- Individual or consortium applicants propose to develop and implement online and technology-enabled courses and learning projects that will be taken to scale beyond the community level to reach significant numbers of diverse students over a large geographic area.

Applicants must provide supplementary materials as required in Section V.B.3 of the SGA to be considered for funds above the award amount ceiling.

A technical review panel will evaluate all applications as described in Section V.A. Applications with funding requests that exceed the award amount ceiling under one of the two conditions described above will be subject to an additional review by an expert review panel consisting of a mix of experts in education and training research as well as online and technology-enabled learning. The expert review panel will validate the strength of the evidence cited by applicants under condition one, or verify the technical feasibility of the design, technologies, and delivery methods for online and technology-enabled strategies proposed by applicants under condition two. For both conditions, the expert panel will examine the additional funding request to ensure it is appropriate and reasonable for the project design. The findings of the expert review panel will inform the Grant Officer's determination to approve or deny the request for funding beyond the award amount ceiling.

The expert review panel will consider the following factors in evaluating the supplementary information provided by these applicants:

1. Content and Form of Supplementary Application Materials

Applicants must provide the supplementary materials described in this section to be eligible to exceed the award amount ceiling of \$5 million for individual applicants and \$20 million for consortium applicants. These supplementary materials consist of three separate and distinct parts: (I) budget narrative; (II) factors for consideration; and (III) attachments to the supplementary materials. All supplementary materials must be provided in an electronic format on a CD. The CD containing this information must be labeled and submitted as an additional CD; separate and apart from the CD required with the original proposal. Applications that fail to adhere to the instructions in this section will not be eligible to exceed the award amount ceiling and will only be eligible for funding at their base-level funding request.

Part I. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative must provide a description of the additional costs associated with funding the proposal in excess of the award amount ceiling, under one of the two conditions described in Section V.B.2 and 3. All costs included in the supplementary budget narrative must be reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline and deliverables.

Part II. Factors for Consideration

The factors for consideration must demonstrate the applicant's capability to implement the grant project in accordance with one of the two conditions described in Section V.B.2 and 3. The factors for consideration are limited to 5 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. Any materials beyond this specified page limit will not be read.

Part III. Attachments to the Supplementary Materials

Applicants proposing to replicate, at multiple sites or with multiple populations, strategies that have been shown by prior research to have strong or moderate evidence of a positive impact on education and/or employment outcomes must provide copies of the specific evidence (e.g.,

research and studies) cited in their proposal. Applicants that cite copyrighted work must follow appropriate laws for use of such materials.

2. Factors for Consideration of Applicants Citing Strong or Moderate Evidence

The expert review panel will consider the following factors:

- Identification of strong or moderate evidence. For the purposes of this solicitation, strong evidence includes a study or multiple studies whose designs can support strong causal conclusions and studies which demonstrate the strategy to be effective with multiple populations and/ or in multiple sites. For the purposes of this solicitation, moderate evidence is evidence from a study or studies that include multiple sites and/ or populations that support weaker causal conclusions or that support strong causal conclusions that are not yet generalizable. See Attachment F for more information on the Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework;
- How the additional funding will enable the applicant to replicate evidence-based strategies at multiple sites and with multiple populations;
- The improvement in outcome measures (as described in Section V.A.3.ii) that will result from the additional funding.

3. Factors for Consideration of Consortium Applicants Proposing Online and Technology-Enabled Projects

The expert review panel will consider the following factors:

- The technical feasibility of the design, technologies, and delivery methods for the proposed online and technology-enabled strategies;
- How the additional funding will enable the applicant to take the project to scale beyond a community level to reach significant numbers of diverse students over a large geographic area;
- How the additional funding will enable the widespread re-use and repurposing of courses and materials developed through the program; and
- The improvement in outcome measures (as described in Section V.A.3.ii) that will result from the additional funding.

C. Review and Selection Process

Up to 100 points may be awarded to an application, depending on the quality of the responses to the required information described in Section V.A. The ranked scores will serve as a primary basis for selection of applications for funding, along with the requirement that not less than 0.5 percent of the amount appropriated for these grant awards, or \$2.5 million, will support eligible institutions in each State. Other factors that may be considered include: balance across the four priorities and strategies identified in Section I.B, the availability of funds, and which proposals are most advantageous to the government. In addition, the Grant Officer will consider findings from the expert review panel's evaluation of supplementary materials for applications requesting funds above the award amount ceiling. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to his/her attention. The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <http://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

All award notifications will be posted on the ETA Homepage (<http://www.doleta.gov>). Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the grant's execution and non-selected applicants will be notified by mail. All applicants will be given the opportunity to request written feedback based on the results of the technical panel review.

Selection of an organization as a grantee does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, ETA 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 negotiation and decline to fund the application. DOL reserves the right to not fund any application related to this SGA.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees will be subject to all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and the applicable OMB Circulars. The grant(s) awarded under this SGA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions:

- i. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A–122 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 230, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements)
- ii. Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A–21 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 220, and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- iii. State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments – OMB Circular A–87 (Cost Principles), relocated to 2 CFR Part 225, and 29 CFR Part 97 (Administrative Requirements).
- iv. Profit Making Commercial Firms – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 CFR part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 CFR Part 95 (Administrative Requirements).
- v. 20 CFR Part 667.220 – Administrative Costs.
- vi. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 CFR 95.13 and Part 98 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 CFR Part 96 (Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 CFR Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations).
- vii. 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.
- viii. 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.
- ix. 29 CFR Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- x. 29 CFR Part 33—Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Labor.
- xi. 29 CFR Part 35— Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.
- xii. 29 CFR Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- xiii. 29 CFR Part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- xiv. 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training.

2. Other Legal Requirements:

i. Religious Activities

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. Section 2000bb, applies to all Federal law and its implementation. If your 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 Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and maintain that hiring practice even though Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act contains a general ban

on religious discrimination in employment. If you are awarded a grant, you will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

ii. 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 OMB Circular A-122).

iii. Transparency Act Requirements

Applicants must ensure that it has 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 section 6202 of Pub. Law 110-252) (Transparency Act), as follows:

- All applicants, except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under subparagraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, should they receive funding.

- Upon award, applicants 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 the following website: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-22705.pdf>

Exceptions to Transparency Act requirements:

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

- Federal awards to individuals who apply for or receive Federal awards as natural persons (i.e., unrelated to any business or non-profit organization he or she may own or operate in his or her name);
- Federal awards to entities that had a gross income, from all sources, of less than \$300,000 in the entities' previous tax year; and
- Federal awards, if the required reporting would disclose classified information.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

Except as specifically provided in this SGA, DOL/ETA's acceptance of a proposal 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 Circulars require that an entity's procurement procedures must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide open and free competition. If a proposal identifies a specific entity to provide services, the DOL's award does not provide the justification or basis to sole source the procurement, i.e., avoid competition, unless the activity is regarded as the primary work of an official consortium member identified in the application.

4. Evaluation Requirement

The Department is interested in determining if the activities supported through this grant program impact workers' future labor force outcomes and may require the cooperation of the grantee in an evaluation of overall performance of ETA grants as a condition of award. The Department is committed to evaluating program results to assess whether programs meet this goal and which models are most effective, providing a basis for future program improvements and funding decisions. By accepting grant funds, grantees must agree to participate in such an evaluation should they be selected to participate. The Department intends to select some portion of grantees to participate in a rigorous evaluation, and these grantees may be required to use a random-assignment lottery in enrolling project participants. Depending on the evaluation design, grantees must be prepared to share records on participants, employers, funding, and outcomes,

and to provide access to program operating personnel and participants, as specified by the evaluator (s) under the direction of ETA, including after the expiration date of the grant. The Department will make available publicly the results of the program evaluation and supporting aggregate data. See Section V.A.4 for information on the bonus evaluation discussion criterion.

Such an evaluation is separate and apart from the grantees' responsibility to conduct their own ongoing review and evaluation of the actions taken to improve and expand the program that is being implemented.

C. Reporting

Grantees must submit quarterly financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and management information system data electronically. The grantee is required to provide the reports and documents listed below:

1. Quarterly Financial Reports

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired. Quarterly reports are due 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. Grantees must use DOL's Online Electronic Reporting System; information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

2. Quarterly and Annual Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report within 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. The report will include quarterly information about grant activities as measured by the quarterly progress measures and as additional reporting requirements are approved. Every fourth quarterly report will also include progress against the outcome measures discussed in Section V.A.3.ii. This "annual" report will include data for program participants, as well as a comparison cohort of participants, for the following seven outcome measures: entered employment rate, employment retention rate, average earnings, attainment of credits toward degree(s), attainment of certificate(s) (less than one year), attainment of certificate(s) (more than one year), and graduation rate for degree programs. The definitions for these measures are as follows:

- Entered Employment Rate: Of those individuals who were not employed at the time of program participation, the percentage who are employed in the first quarter after they exit.
- Employment Retention Rate: Of those who are employed in their first quarter after exit, the percentage employed in both the second and third quarters after they exit.
- Average Six-Month Earnings: Of those who are employed in their first, second and third quarters after exit, the average gross earnings from the second and third quarters after exit.
- Credit Attainment: The annual number and percentage of students completing credit hours within their first year in the program.
- Attainment of certificate (less than one year): The number and percentage of individuals who complete a certificate in less than one year, with percentage defined as the number of students that complete in less than one year divided by all program entrants at the beginning of the time period. Completers are students who receive certificates in less than one year. Program entrants are those attending instruction as of the normal census date for establishing official enrollment.
- Attainment of certificate (more than one year): The number and percentage of individuals who complete a certificate in more than one year, with percentage defined as the number of students that complete in more than one year divided by all program entrants at the beginning of the time period.
- Attainment of degree: The number and percentage of all individuals who complete a degree, with percentage defined as all completers within 150 percent of the program's normal completion time divided by all program entrants at the beginning of the time period (minus allowable exclusions).

For all outcome measures, students may be removed from a cohort for reporting purposes if they left the institution for one of the following reasons: death or total and permanent disability; service in the armed forces (including those called to active duty); service with a foreign aid program of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or service on official church missions.

The last quarterly progress report that grantees submit will serve as the grant's Final Performance Report. This report should provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant's 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 used by the grantee. DOL will provide grantees with formal guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis. Grantees must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements.

3. Record Retention

Applicants must be prepared to follow Federal guidelines on record retention, which require grantees to maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of not less than three years from the time of submission of the final grant financial report.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information regarding this SGA, please contact Melissa Abdullah, Grants Management Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance, at (202) 693-3346. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Abdullah.Melissa@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA PY 10-03, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number. This announcement is being made available on the ETA Web site at <http://www.doleta.gov/grants> and at <http://www.grants.gov>.

VIII. Additional Resources of Interest to Applicants

A. Web-Based Resources

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

B. Industry Competency Models and Career Clusters

ETA supports an Industry Competency Model Initiative to promote an understanding of the skill sets and competencies that are essential to an educated and skilled workforce. A competency model is a collection of competencies that, taken together, define successful performance in a particular work setting. Competency models serve as a starting point for the design and implementation of workforce and talent development programs. To learn about the industry-validated models visit the Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC) at <http://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.

Career Clusters and Industry Competency Models both identify foundational and technical competencies, but their efforts are not duplicative. The Career Clusters link to specific career pathways in sixteen career cluster areas and place greater emphasis on elements needed for curriculum performance objectives; measurement criteria; scope and sequence of courses in a program of study; and development of assessments. Information about the sixteen career cluster areas can be found by accessing: www.careerclusters.org.

C. Annotated Bibliography

This SGA includes several references that are provided within an annotated bibliography that provides examples of education and training strategies and results that may be of interest to grant applicants. These references are provided for informational purposes only and the Department does not endorse or favor the programs or approaches that are included in this bibliography. This complete document can be found in Attachment D of this SGA.

IX. Other Information

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires November 30, 2012.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding 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, DC 20210. Comments may also be emailed to DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THE COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND IT TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SOLICITATION.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant, and applicants are required to respond to obtain or retain the benefit. The information collected through this SGA will be used by the Department of Labor to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicant best suited to perform the functions of the grant. Submission of this information is required in order for the applicant to be considered for award of this grant. Unless otherwise specifically noted in this announcement, information submitted in the application is not considered to be confidential, and may be posted on DOL's Web site.

Signed January 20, 2011, in Washington, D.C. by:
Donna Kelly
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

Attachment A: Definitions and Usual Characteristics of Sub-grants vs. Subcontracts

DEFINITIONS	Sub-grants	Subcontracts
*General Purpose	An agreement that provides for the transfer of money or property to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation through the grant, as authorized under statute.	Legal contract in which the purpose is to provide supplies and/or services.
* Focus	Carries out one or more major programmatic functions in support of the goals of the grant.	Does not support the goals of the grant directly; instead the subcontractor provides supplies and/or services that are ancillary or supportive to the operation of the grant.
* Recipient Responsibility	Has responsibility for programmatic decision making, adherence to applicable Federal program compliance requirements, and is able to determine which participants are eligible to receive Federal financial assistance.	Provides supplies and/or services for use by the prime grantee that are supportive to the operation of the grant. Subcontractor is subject to procurement regulations, but not programmatic compliance requirements and does not have decision-making authority pertaining to the grant.
USUAL CHARACTERISTICS	Sub-grants	Subcontracts
Terms and Performance Standards	Less rigorous to their terms and conditions than contracts. Performance is measured against whether the objectives of the Federal grant are met.	More rigorous to their terms and conditions. Performance is measured against the delivery of goods and services. The terms will define the deliverables and indicate when they are due.
Monitoring	Less regulated. If the task is not accomplished, there may be fewer legal and financial ramifications.	More heavily regulated and more likely to carry substantial legal or financial risk.
Scope of work	Scope of work, deliverables, and delivery schedule are more flexible and easier to amend when changes are necessary.	Scope of work may be less flexible and more difficult to amend. Firm delivery schedule with deliverables subject to rigorous inspection.
Payment Schedule	Fund usually drawn down by recipient or paid in lump sum. Payments are based on budgeted amounts rather than the unit cost of services.	Payment is usually made by invoice only after goods are delivered and services rendered. Advances are made under specific, limited circumstances. Payment is related to goods delivered or services rendered.

*The distinction between sub-grants vs. subcontracts should be made primarily based on these three definitions. Even if an agreement has some or many of the “usual characteristics” of a sub-grant, project managers and auditors should closely examine its purpose, focus, and recipient responsibilities (using the definitions provided above) before determining whether it meets the definition of a sub-grant or subcontract.

Attachment B: Sample Project Work Plan

Project Work Plan							
Priority 1:							
Activities		Implementer(s)	Costs		Time		Deliverables
Strategy 1.1:			Strategy Total:	\$	Start Date:		
			Equipment:	\$	End Date:		
			Year 1:	\$	Milestones:		
			Year 2:	\$			
			Year 3:	\$			
Strategy 1.2:			Strategy Total:	\$	Start Date:		
			Equipment:	\$	End Date:		
			Year 1:	\$	Milestones:		
			Year 2:	\$			
			Year 3:	\$			

Attachment C: Sample Annual Outcome Measures Table

Annual Outcome Measures		
Measure	Target for TAACCCT Program	Comparison Cohort – Most Recent Data (Baseline)
Demographics Age Gender Ethnicity Race Disability Status Veteran Status Degree-seeking Status (full or part-time) OTHER (insert note re: other comparisons that the applicant will use)		
Entered Employment Rate (numerator and denominator)		
Employment Retention Rate (numerator and denominator)		
Average Earnings (numerator and denominator)		
Credit Attainment Rate (# credits/# students) Annual number and percentage of students completing credit hours within their first year in the program.		
Attainment of Industry- Recognized Certificate (less than one year) (numerator and denominator) Annual number of, and percentage of certificates awarded.		
Attainment of Industry- Recognized Certificate (more than one year) (numerator and denominator) Annual number of, and percentage of certificates awarded.		
Attainment of Degree (numerator and denominator) Number and percentage of students who attain a degree, within the program timeline (two years or less).		

Attachment D: Annotated Bibliography

Ausburn, Lunna. “Course design elements most valued by adult learners in blended online education environments: an American perspective.” Educational Media International, Volume 41, Issue 4, pages 327-337. 2004.

This research describes course design elements most valued by adult learners in blended learning environments that combine face-to-face contact with Web-based learning. It identifies the online course features and the instructional design goals selected as most important by a sample of 67 adults and compares the group rankings with those of various sub-groups based on gender, pre-course technology and self-direction skills and experiences, and preferred learning strategies as measured by Assessing the Learning Strategies of Adults (ATLAS). The results of the study support the principles of adult learning, indicating that adults value course designs containing options, personalization, self-direction, variety, and a learning community.

Baider, Allegra, Vickie Choitz, Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, Marcie W.M. Foster, Linda Harris, Elizabeth Lower-Basch, Neil Ridley, Julie Strawn. “Funding Career Pathways and Career Pathway Bridges: A Federal Policy Toolkit for States.” Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). May 2010.

This policy toolkit lays out several core components of career pathway programs based on 7 states who are participating in a career pathway initiative: Multiple entry points; Innovations in program content and delivery, (e.g., flexible scheduling, contextualization, integration of bridge programs); Sequence of education and training leading to credentials with value in the labor market; Support services (provided by community organizations, community colleges, and/or other organizations); and Strong role for employers in pathway development, worksite training, and contribution of resources.

Bailey, Thomas. “Challenge and Opportunity: Rethinking the Role and Function of Developmental Education in Community College.” Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. November 2008.

Research finds that developmental education as it is now practiced is not very effective in overcoming academic weaknesses, partly because the majority of students referred to developmental education do not finish. This report recommends implementing a comprehensive approach to assessment, supporting more rigorous “tracking” research, and streamlining developmental programs and accelerating students' progress toward engagement in college-level work. “The existing approaches to assessment for developmental placement should be reconsidered and perhaps replaced with an approach that tries explicitly to determine what a student will need to succeed in college generally rather than one that aims to identify a somewhat narrow set of skills a student possesses at a given point.”

Benus, Jacob. “Growing America Through Entrepreneurship: Final Evaluation of Project GATE.” IMPAQ International, LLC. December 2009.

Recognizing the untapped potential of Americans to start their own businesses and become self-employed, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration, teamed with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to create a demonstration project—Project GATE (Growing America Through Entrepreneurship)—designed to help people create, sustain or expand their own business. This report examines the effectiveness of Project GATE in creating businesses and improving participants' well-being during a 60-month observation period. An earlier report analyzed program impacts during an 18-month observation period.

Cal-PASS Initiative Web site

Cal-PASS is a simple and very practical approach that helps educators understand student performance, including transitions; improve instruction; and increase student success. Cal-PASS is an

initiative that collects, analyzes and shares student data in order to track performance and improve success from elementary school through university. Through the Cal-PASS project, elementary, middle, high schools, colleges and universities can learn the answers to questions such as: 1) How do my students do when they leave here? 2) Were they well prepared? Are adjustments in curriculum necessary to improve their preparation? And 3) How many got degrees? What did they get degrees in? How long did it take?

Center for Working Families. “An Integrated Approach to Fostering Family Economic Success: How Three Model Sites are Implementing the Center for Working Families Approach.”

This report found clients who received the “bundled” services were three to four times more likely to achieve a major economic outcome (earning a vocational certification was the most common outcome) than clients receiving only one type of service. Clients who received high-intensity bundled services (i.e., more intensive support services) were five times more likely to achieve a major economic outcome than clients who received non-bundled assistance. The results also suggest that the CWF approach can produce good results within different kinds of service-providing organizations and can be useful in serving different kinds of populations – ranging from community college students and people leaving welfare to residents of low-income communities.

Central Texas Student Futures Project. “Education and Work after High School: Recent Findings from the Central Texas Student Futures Project.” February 16, 2010.

The Central Texas Student Futures project is providing a new comprehensive, longitudinal study of high school graduates. This project combines surveys of high school seniors with administrative records to produce a new stream of data that benchmarks regional educational and workforce outcomes. One purpose of the Student Futures Project is to provide ISDs, postsecondary institutions, and employers with comprehensive, longitudinal research on what high school students are doing after graduation, why they are making these decisions, and how a variety of educational, personal and financial factors are related to their success in higher education and the workforce.

Chisman, Forrest. “Background and Supporting Evidence for Adult Education for Work.” National Center on Education and the Economy, Workforce Development Strategies Group. October 2009.

This paper provides specific steps the adult education system can take to develop and implement career pathways systems of learning that move low-skilled adults through work-oriented adult education programs and onto postsecondary programs. First, it briefly reviews how the basic skills problem in this country affects our economy and explains why the present response of the adult education system is inadequate to meet that problem. Second, it presents an overall vision of how a more comprehensive career pathways learning system that meets our nation’s education and skill needs could be constructed, and the role that an Adult Education for Work system should play in that broader system. And third, it details specific measures that adult education programs can take (through the identification of quality elements) to make that vision a reality, focusing on seven areas: program design, curriculum and instruction, assessment and credentialing, high-quality teaching, support and follow-up services to encourage access and retention, connections to the business community, and monitoring and accountability systems.

Data Quality Campaign. “Maximizing the Power of Education Data while Ensuring Compliance with Federal Student Privacy Laws: A Guide for State Policy Makers.” March 2007.

The DQC issue brief identifies areas that already are resolved and proposes approaches to issues for which there may not be clear answers at the current time, but for which our legal experts believe there are viable strategies for states to pursue. Additionally, this issue brief aims to provide states with suggested actions to think about in relation to both federal and state policies and regulations. Policymakers, educators and researchers need statewide longitudinal data systems capable of

providing timely, valid and relevant data. Access to these data: 1) gives teachers (as well as parents and students) the information they need to tailor instruction to help each student improve; 2) gives administrators resources and information to effectively and efficiently manage; and 3) enables policymakers to evaluate which policy initiatives show the best evidence of increasing student achievement.

Emerging Workforce Committee, Governor’s Workforce Investment Board. “Maryland’s Emerging Workforce: Opportunities for Youth Success.” September 2009.

This report is a list of policy recommendations from the Maryland Governor’s Workforce Investment Board and its Emerging Workforce Committee. Among the recommendations, the state should continue to develop the Longitudinal Data System, similar to the State of Florida’s, that allows organizations and agencies serving young people to exchange valuable information and track individuals through programs and services, using a unique student identifier. This will help in the alignment, integration and coordination of all youth services and address the need to build/increase capacity for providers through a variety of avenues.

Eyster, Lauren, Alexandra Stanczyk, Demetra Smith Nightingale, Karin Martinson and John Trutko. “Characteristics of the Community-Based Job Training Grant (CBJTG) Program.” The Urban Institute Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population. June 2009.

The evaluation reports that “less than half the grantees (Community-Based Rounds 1-3) were planning to use the funds for collaborating with partners or developing certifications”. In addition, Technical colleges are more likely than the average grantee to develop a new training program or expand an existing one and create certifications but are less likely to engage in partnerships and develop a new curriculum. Other types of grantees, including four-year educational institutions and public workforce investment system organizations, are more likely than average to collaborate with partners but are less likely to develop a new training program, certifications, or curriculum.

Grubb, W.Norton and Norena Badway. “Linking School-Based and Work-Based Learning: The Implications of LaGuardia’s Co-op Seminars for School-to-Work Programs.” National Center for Research in Vocational Education and University of California at Berkeley. March 1998.

This monograph describes the mandatory cooperative education program at LaGuardia Community College in New York City, and the series of seminars that integrate school-based and work-based learning. This series of studies examines the history, practice, and quality of cooperative education (CE) in two-year colleges in regions where career education is firmly ingrained and widespread. One study describes a mandatory cooperative education program and its series of seminars that integrate school-based and work-based learning to actively explore careers; to master skills and competencies common to all jobs; and to explore social, ethical, political, and moral themes associated with working. The second study found that benefits of CE cited by students, employers, and schools were allowing employers to screen and “grow their own” employees, giving students direct knowledge about the workplace and applications of school-based learning in the workplace; and strengthening schools’ links to employers. A key finding is that work-based components must become central to educational purposes of institutions so that it becomes as unthinkable to give them up, even in times of scarce resources.

Headrick, Nancy. “Innovating Practices in CTE Teacher Preparation: A Case Study from Missouri.” 2003.

This case study examines teacher preparation to ensure program content and instructors keep current on industry content and techniques necessary to provide high quality instruction. Referenced research indicates a strong positive connection exists between a teacher’s preparation in their subject matter and their performance and impact in the classroom. In addition, many school programs are reviewed by advisory committees comprised of business and industry leaders to get feedback on the kinds of skills

being used in industry. The study concludes that is particularly necessary for CTE teachers to have a knowledge base in industry skills, pedagogy, and academics to be prepared in the classroom and benefit student learning.

Hollenbeck, Kevin and Wei-Jang Huang. “Net Impact and Benefit-Cost Estimates of the Workforce Development System in Washington State.” W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. September 2006.

This study estimates the net impacts and private and social benefits and costs of 11 workforce development programs administered in Washington State. Six of the programs serve job-ready adults: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I-B Adult programs, WIA Title I-B Dislocated Worker programs, Community and Technical College Job Preparatory Training, Community and Technical College Worker Retraining, Private Career Schools, and Apprenticeships. The net impact analyses were conducted using a non-experimental methodology. A variety of estimation techniques was used to calculate net impacts including block matching, comparison of means, regression-adjusted comparison of means, and difference-indifference comparison of means. We estimated short-term net impacts that examined outcomes for individuals who exited from the education or training programs (or from the Labor Exchange) in the fiscal year 2003/2004 and longer-term impacts for individuals who exited in the fiscal year 2001/2002.

Howell, Scott, Peter Williams and Nathan Lindsay. “Thirty-two Trends Affecting Distance Education: An Informed Foundation for Strategic Planning.” Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, Volume 6, III. Fall 2003.

This article provides decision makers with 32 trends that affect distance learning and thus enable them to plan accordingly. The trends are organized into categories as they pertain to students and enrollment, faculty members, academics, technology, the economy, and distance learning. All the trends were identified during an extensive review of current literature in the field including the changing role of faculty. In response to these trends, distance learning may rise to meet student needs and overcome funding challenges that traditional institutions cannot. Distance education administrators must resolve concerns with faculty and university administrators to ensure adequate support, as well as to develop the needed course management systems and teaching strategies. Technological advances and increased fluency will continue to open opportunities for distance education. Although higher education institutions are changing to favor distance education, the complexities of major transformations will require patience.

Institute for a Competitive Workforce and the National Career Pathways Network. “Thriving in Challenging Times: Connecting Education to Economic Development through Career Pathways.” October 2009.

This report highlights the growing importance of business engagement in education and successful models that create relevant, challenging learning environments with the potential to significantly increase American employers' access to high-quality employees. The report notes four key conditions needed for the success of career pathway models, including the agreement among employers, college administrators, and accreditation groups within a region on curriculum that matches their career ladders. The report provides multiple case studies that demonstrate an involvement on the part of employers and community organizations with a commitment to collaboration between secondary and postsecondary educators.

Jenkins, Davis, Matthew Zeidenberg and Gregory Kienzl. “Building Bridges to Postsecondary Training for Low-Skill Adults: Outcomes of Washington State’s I-BEST Program.” Community College Research Center (CCRC) Brief. May 2009.

The CCRC study compared the educational outcomes over a two-year tracking period of I-BEST students with those of other basic skills students. The study found that students participating in I-BEST

achieved better educational outcomes than did other basic skills students, including those who enrolled in at least one non-I-BEST workforce course. I-BEST students were more likely than others to: Continue into credit-bearing coursework; Earn credits that count toward a college credential; Earn occupational certificates; and Make point gains on basic skills tests. On all the outcomes examined, I-BEST students did moderately or substantially better than non-I-BEST basic skills students in general.

Jenkins, Davis and Christopher Spence. “The Career Pathways How-To Guide.” Workforce Strategy Center. October 2006.

This "how-to" guide describes a number of characteristics of successful career pathways programs, including clear linkages between remedial, academic and occupational programs within educational institutions; easy articulation of credits across institutions; "Wrap-around" supportive services; and "Bridge" programs.

Klein-Collins, Rebecca. “Building Blocks for Building Skills: An Inventory of Adult Learning Models and Innovations.” Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL). 2006.

CAEL’s Building Blocks’ research, developed during WIRED, identifies the need for regional partnerships to focus on the merits of delivering accelerated and online learning programs, including “bridge” efforts to create logical sequences of content leading to articulated career ladders. Emphasis was placed on the assessment of prior learning leading to career readiness credentials, on-the-job learning (apprenticeships) and, transitional jobs. The overarching goal was to engage employers in developing regional economic development strategies focused on sectoral approaches. Emphasis also was placed on data sharing through formative and summative evaluations.

Klein-Collins, Rebecca. Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL). “Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success: A 48- Institution Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes.” March 2010.

This is a report that looks at Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and Adult Student Outcomes. The Summary of Findings is as follows: The data from 62,475 students at the 48 postsecondary institutions in our study show that PLA students had better academic outcomes, particularly in terms of graduation rates and persistence, than other adult students. Many PLA students also shortened the time required to earn a degree, depending on the number of PLA credits earned.

Linderman, Donna. “Early Outcomes Report for City University of New York (CUNY) Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP).” The City University of New York (CUNY) and NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. November 2009.

The ASAP program is designed to help students earn their Associate’s degree as quickly as possible, with a target of 50 percent of students graduating within three years. In fall 2007 ASAP began with a pilot cohort of 1,132 students who were deemed fully skills proficient in reading, writing, and math. Having just completed its second year ASAP is well on its way to realizing its ambitious goals of graduating at least 50 percent of its original 2007 cohort within three years. As of August 2009, a total of 341 ASAP students from the original cohort have graduated with an Associate’s degree, representing a 30.1 percent 2-year graduation rate. A comparison group of similar students from fall 2006 had a 2-year graduation rate of 11.4 percent. An additional 325 students are currently on track to graduate by September 2010, which would result in 3-year graduation rate of nearly 60 percent. Fall 2006 comparison group students had a 3-year graduation rate of 24 percent.

Lucas, Marva and Nancy McCormick. “Redesigning Mathematics Curriculum for Underprepared Students.” The Journal of Effective Teaching. September 2007.

Middle Tennessee State University published a report to examine the results of the pilot year of its redesign initiative for two mathematics general education courses. The courses, which counted for credit, were designed to accommodate the needs of underprepared students. These new courses

replaced a course sequence that required underprepared students to take non-credit developmental courses before enrolling in general education. The new courses included enhanced use of technology and smaller class sizes. Hypothesis testing using z-test statistics showed that there was no significant difference between the pass rate in the newly designed courses and the (non-credit) developmental courses used in previous years, suggesting that underprepared students could learn more material in the same amount of time. Also, there was no statistically significant difference between the pass rate of underprepared students in the specially designed courses and students in the standard general education course that taught similar material.

Maguire, Sheila, Joshua Freely, Carol Clymer, Maureen Conway and Deena Schwartz. “Tuning In to Local Labor Markets: Findings From the Sectoral Employment Impact Study.” Private/Public Ventures. July 2010.

This study found that participants in sector-focused education and training programs were more likely to work, earned significantly higher wages, and were more likely to work in jobs with benefits than control group members. The study also found that successful sector-focused programs require strong organizational capacity and adaptability among the involved workforce organizations; strong links to local employers that result in an understanding of the targeted occupations and connections to jobs; job readiness and basic skills training linked to occupational training; recruitment screening and intake processes that result in a good match between the applicant, the program, and the target occupation; and individualized supportive services to encourage training completion and success in the workplace.

Matus-Grossman, Lisa and Susan Tinsley Gooden. “Opening Doors to Earning Credentials: Impressions of Community College Access and Retention from Low-Wage Workers.” Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). November 2001.

This paper presents impressions from Opening Doors to Earning Credentials, a qualitative study that examines access and retention issues for low-wage working parents. The researchers were able to make a series of recommendations based on the feedback they received from students to better serve their needs given their financial and time constraints. Findings include: 1) Students are very interested in short-term certification programs and believe they could reduce work hours for a long period of time due to lost wages. Intensive, short-term education or training options may be more attractive for them. These demonstrations could include certification programs with employers or trade associations that use flexible modularized classes, the integration of basic academic and technical skills, and the opportunity to earn credit toward an AA degree, or beyond. These training programs could be offered along with support services that could be delivered through community-based organizations. 2) Students support distance learning that allows working parents more flexibility in when they attend classes and reduce transportation barriers.

National Fund for Workforce Solutions. “The Principles of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and Their Implications for Public Policy.” November 2009.

The National Fund for Workforce Solutions is an approach to workforce development designed to meet the needs of 21st-century workers, employers, and regional economies. It is built upon a set of principles that are grounded in over a decade of innovation, research, and evaluation. This policy brief summarizes these principles and their policy implications in order to inform efforts to reform the U.S. workforce development system. The recommendations include Building Public-Private Regional Funding Collaboratives; Organizing Workforce Partnerships Around Dual Customer Sector Strategies; Building and Promoting Career Pathways; and Facilitating Results-Orientated Coordination Across Workforce Programs and Systems.

National Governors Association Chair’s Initiative. “Complete to Compete.”

Comparable, reliable metrics are essential for states under current fiscal constraints. Information on the progress toward, and degree completion of, all students in higher education allows state leaders to gauge whether policies are successful and helps inform future funding decisions. NGA convened a Work Group on Common College Completion Metrics to make recommendations on the common higher education measures that states should collect and report publicly.

Neuhauser, Charlotte. “Learning Style and Effectiveness of Online and Face-to-Face Instruction.” American Journal of Distance Education, Volume 16, Issue 2, pages 99-113. June 2002.

In this study the investigator compared two sections of the same course—one section was online and asynchronous; the other was face-to-face—by examining gender, age, learning preferences and styles, media familiarity, effectiveness of tasks, course effectiveness, test grades, and final grades. The two sections were taught by the same instructor and used the same instructional materials. The results revealed no significant differences in test scores, assignments, participation grades, and final grades, although the online group’s averages were slightly higher. Ninety-six percent of the online students found the course to be either as effective or more effective to their learning than their typical face-to-face course.

Perin, Dolores. “Curriculum and Pedagogy To Integrate Occupational and Academic Instruction in the Community College: Implications for Faculty Development.” CCRC Brief Number 8. March 2000.

This document describes a case study of seven community colleges that used curriculum and pedagogy to integrate academic and occupational education. Integration is accomplished by linking or clustering courses, infusing academic instruction into occupational education or vice versa, or adding components such as authentic assessment, career exploration, and work-based learning to traditional career-related education. An unanticipated finding was that only a small number of community colleges (at least in the four states targeted) actually offered courses that integrated academic and occupational curriculum. Benefits of integrated instruction included: (1) increased student motivation; (2) a greater sense of mutual support and community through linked courses; (3) interactions with different faculty offset the problem of increased faculty workload; (4) faculty improved their teaching skills and their awareness of other disciplines; and (5) integrated instruction may stimulate an updating of curriculum and help local employers to form relationships with the college. Obstacles included: (1) faculty resistance to change, or to academic-occupational integration in particular; (2) increased faculty workload; (3) a perception that integrated instruction reduced educational quality; (4) conflict in the standards or perceptions of faculty members in linked-course models; (5) questionable transferability of integrated courses.

Phipps, Ronald and Jamie Merisotis. “Quality on the Line: Benchmarks for Success in Internet-Based Distance Education.” Institute for higher Education Policy. April 2000.

This study identifies 24 benchmarks considered essential to ensuring excellence in Internet-based distance learning, as used by the following six institutions which are leaders in distance education: Brevard Community College (Florida); Regents College (New York); University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; University of Maryland University College; Utah State University; and Weber State University (Utah). The benchmarks are divided into seven categories: (1) institutional support; (2) course development; (3) teaching/learning; (4) course structure; (5) student support; (6) faculty support; and (7) evaluation and assessment. The study seeks to ascertain the degree to which the benchmarks are actually incorporated in the policies and practices of the institutions, and how important the benchmarks are to faculty, administrators, and students. The report concludes that, for the most part, the benchmarks are considered important and that the institutions strive to incorporate them into their policies, practices, and procedures.

Prosio, Tony. “From Hidden Costs to High Returns: Unlocking the Potential of the Lower-Wage Workforce.” Insight Center for Community Economic Development. Summer 2010.

This business brief summarizes groundbreaking research, which found that these pioneering companies are benefiting financially by investing efforts and resources in employee development for their lower-wage workers and rewarding their growth with significant earnings increases. These forward-thinking employers see workforce development as key to maintaining a competitive edge. They view their lower-wage workers as a valuable asset: a means of continually improving quality and a potential talent pool for higher level positions.

Pusser, Brian and John Levin. “Re-imagining Community Colleges in the 21st Century: A Student-Centered Approach to Higher Education.” The Center for American Progress. December 2009.

Community colleges’ multiple missions make it difficult to comprehend the institutions in their totality, and they also challenge the institutions’ overall effectiveness. A review of the research on these institutions suggests that few synergies have emerged between colleges’ key domains of developmental education, vocational training, and transfer for baccalaureate attainment. Several researchers recommend that community colleges act as pivotal institutions in a career ladder linking secondary, postsecondary, and regional job training programs into a single, progressive, coherent, and sequential system with no redundant or competing parts. This is meant to maximize the effectiveness of community college vocational and occupational education. They stress the importance of institutional connections to local employers and regional job markets, and the need to integrate the academic and occupational curricula into programs in order to provide students with the broad set of skills and knowledge needed in the world of work.

Rezin, Andrew A., and N.L. McCaslin. “Comparing the Impact of Traditional and Cooperative Apprenticeship Programs on Graduates’ Industry Success.” 2002.

This study compared the outcomes of cooperative apprenticeship program graduates with those of traditional programs to identify if learning gains from these programs justified expansion of the models. Although nearly 95% of all graduates sampled were employed full-time, graduates from cooperative apprenticeship programs outperformed traditional program graduates in several areas, including higher minimum and maximum salaries, and reported current employment in jobs directly related to their program compared to traditional program graduates. The study concludes that cooperative apprenticeship programs provided improved outcomes and supports education / industry partnership efforts as a method to improve educational outcomes.

Scrivener, Susan and Michael J. Weiss. “More Guidance, Better Results? Three Year Effects of an Enhanced Student Services Program at Two Community Colleges.” MDRC’s Opening Doors Project. August 2009.

As part of MDRC’s multisite Opening Doors demonstration, Lorain County Community College and Owens Community College in Ohio ran a program that provided enhanced student services and a modest stipend to low-income students. This study’s findings include the following: the program improved academic outcomes during the second semester that students were in the study; and after students in the Opening Doors program received their two semesters of enhanced counseling services, the program continued to have a positive effect on registration rates in the semester that followed. The program did not, however, meaningfully affect academic outcomes in subsequent semesters.

Scrivener, Susan Dan Bloom, Allen LeBlanc, Christina Paxson, Cecilia Elena Rouse, and Colleen Sommo. “A Good Start: Two_year Effects of a Freshman Community Learning Program at Kingsborough Community College.” MDRC’s Opening Doors Project. March 2008.

As part of MDRC’s multisite Opening Doors demonstration, Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, New York — a large, urban college with a diverse student population that includes many immigrants — operated a learning community program. The program placed freshmen in groups of up

to 25 who took three classes together during their first semester. Using a rigorous research design, MDRC assigned 1,534 freshmen, at random, either to a program group that was eligible for the learning community or to a control group that received the college's standard courses and services. Analyses in this report show that the program improved some educational outcomes for students while they were in the program, but the impact did not persist. Initially the program did not change the rate at which students reenrolled. In the last semester of the report's two-year follow-up period, however, slightly more program group members than control group members attended college.

Shifting Gears Project. The Joyce Foundation.

Compilation of policy papers on data collection by the Shifting Gears project funded by the Joyce Foundation, dating from 2003 - 2010. An overview of the project: States seeking to increase the number of young adults and workers obtaining valuable postsecondary credentials can help achieve that goal by collecting data on student success. States can use the data to identify student achievement gaps and leaks in the educational pipeline, improve education and training programs, identify transition issues, and evaluate the effectiveness of state education and workforce development strategies as a whole.

Tinto, Vincent. "Classrooms as Communities: Exploring the Educational Character of Student Persistence." *The Journal of Higher Education*. November 1997.

This study examined the experiences of students enrolled for one year in the Coordinated Studies Program (CSP) at Seattle Central Community College. CSP required students to enroll together in a series of courses that crossed disciplines but dealt with the same theme, and the program emphasized cooperative learning activities. The study had both a qualitative component and a quantitative analysis that compared survey results and institutional outcomes between a sample of CSP students and students sampled from comparison classes at the college. Descriptive statistics showed that CSP students had significantly higher rates of persistence, and a multivariate analysis that controlled for student attributes and behaviors found that participation in CSP was an independent predictor of persistence into the second year of college. The qualitative case study suggested that CSP helped persistence by creating supportive peer groups, bridging the academic-social divide, and giving students a voice in the learning process.

Vernez, Georges, Cathy Krop, Mirka Vuollo and Janet S. Hansen. "Toward a K-20 Student Unit Record Data System for California." Research funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted by RAND Education. January 2008.

To take steps that will achieve the goal of improving student progression and quality, states need accurate information on student enrollment and retention, the effectiveness of programs, and factors that may affect how students move through the education system. To this end, they are developing robust data systems that are commonly termed "student unit record" (SUR) systems because they contain individual electronic records of each student enrolled in an educational institution. SUR data systems permit the tracking of an individual student's progress over time—from entry in kindergarten to exit from college and eventually into the labor market as well—to answer questions that are at the core of educational effectiveness. Currently, 18 states can match student individual records from K-12 and postsecondary education systems.

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. "Building Pathways to Success for Low-Skill Adult Students: Lessons for Community College Policy and Practice from a Longitudinal Student Tracking Study (The "Tipping Point" Research)." April 2005.

This study of students in the Washington State Community and Technical College system finds evidence that attending college for at least one year and earning a credential provides a substantial boost in earnings for adults with a high school diploma or less who enter higher education through a community college. These findings are consistent with studies that have used nationally representative samples of community college students. Short-term training and adult basic skills education by itself may help

individuals get into the labor market, but usually does not help them advance beyond low-paying jobs. Only individuals who took basic skills courses concurrently with vocational training enjoyed a significant benefit in average rates of employment and quarterly earnings.

Weiss, Michael, Mary Visher, and Heather Washington, with Jed Teres and Emily Schneider.
“Learning Communities for Students In Developmental Reading: An Impact Study at Hillsborough Community College.” MDRC’s Opening Doors Project. June 2010.

This report presents results from a rigorous random assignment study of a basic learning community program at Hillsborough Community College in Tampa Bay, Florida. Hillsborough’s learning communities co-enrolled groups of around 20 students into a developmental reading course and a “college success” course. Three cohorts of students (fall 2007, spring 2008, and fall 2008) participated in the study, for a total of 1,071. The findings show that overall (for the full study sample), Hillsborough’s learning communities program did not have a meaningful impact on students’ academic success. Corresponding to the maturation of the learning communities program, evidence suggests that the program had positive impacts on some educational outcomes for the third (fall 2008) cohort of students.

Attachment E: Standard Keywords/Tags

- Accelerate Progress
- Accelerated Learning
- Achievement Rates
- Assessment Technology
- Basic Skills
- Blended Learning
- Block scheduling
- Career Pathways
- Certificate Attainment
- Civic and Community Engagement
- Cognitive Tutors
- Competency-based Training
- Contextualized Learning
- Degree Attainment
- Developmental Education
- Digital Materials
- Dual Degrees
- Earn and Learn
- Employer Partnership
- Enhanced Course Articulation
- Enhanced Student Services
- Game Design
- Industry-Driven Competencies
- Industry-Recognized Credentials
- Job Placement
- Learning Communities
- Mentoring
- Mobile Devices
- Modular Curriculum
- On-the-Job training
- Online Community of Practice
- Online Teaching/Learning
- Open Educational Resources
- Paid Internships
- Retention
- Personalized Instruction
- Real-time Online Interactions
- Registered Apprenticeships
- Retention Strategies
- SCORM
- Self-paced Learning
- Simulations
- Skill Assessments
- Stackable Credentials
- Technology Enabled Learning
- Virtual Environments
- Web-based Training

Note: In the event none of the above are a sufficiently precise descriptor applicants should include alternate keyword/tags of their own choosing, not to exceed three words per tag and 28 characters for each keyword/tag.

Attachment F: Evidence-Based Conceptual Framework

Strength of Evidence	Strong	Moderate	Preliminary
<p>Prior Research Studies Supporting Effectiveness or Efficacy of the Proposed Practice, Strategy, or Program*</p>	<p>(1) More than one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study or well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (2) one large, well-designed and well-implemented randomized controlled, multisite trial</p>	<p>(1) At least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study, with small sample sizes or other conditions of implementation or analysis that limit generalizability; (2) at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study that does not demonstrate equivalence between the intervention and comparison groups at program entry but that has no other major flaws related to internal validity; or (3) correlational research with strong statistical controls for selection bias and for discerning the influence of internal factors</p>	<p>(1) Evidence that the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or one similar to it, has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, and yielded promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted; and (2) a rationale for the proposed practice, strategy, or program that is based on research findings or reasonable hypotheses, including related research or theories in education and other sectors</p>
<p>Internal Validity (i.e Strength of Causal Conclusions) and External Validity (Generalizability)</p>	<p>High internal validity and high external validity</p>	<p>High internal validity and moderate external validity; or, Moderate internal validity and high external validity</p>	<p>Theory and reported practice suggest the potential for efficacy for at least some participants and settings</p>
<p>*Related Research Definitions on Following Page</p>			

Attachment F Continued: Related Research Definitions

- Well-designed and well-implemented means, with respect to an experimental or quasi-experimental study, that the study meets the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards, with or without reservations (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1> and in particular the description of “Reasons for Not Meeting Standards” at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/Doc.aspx?docId=19&tocId=4#reasons>).
- Experimental study means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, individuals or sites to participate in a project being evaluated (treatment group) or not to participate in the project (control group). The effect of the project is the average difference in outcomes between the treatment and control groups.
- Quasi-experimental study means an evaluation design that attempts to approximate an experimental design and can support causal conclusions (i.e., minimizes threats to internal validity, such as selection bias, or allows them to be modeled). Well-designed quasi-experimental studies include carefully matched comparison group designs, interrupted time series designs, or regression discontinuity designs (see definitions below).
- Carefully matched comparison group design means a type of quasi-experimental study that attempts to approximate an experimental study. More specifically, it is a design in which project participants are matched with non-participants based on key characteristics that are thought to be related to the outcome. These characteristics include, but are not limited to: 1) prior test scores and other measures of academic achievement (preferably, the same measures that the study will use to evaluate outcomes for the two groups); 2) demographic characteristics, such as age, disability, gender, English proficiency, ethnicity, poverty level, parents’ educational attainment, and single- or two-parent family background; 3) the time period in which the two groups are studied (e.g., the two groups are children entering kindergarten in the same year as opposed to sequential years); and 4) methods used to collect outcome data.
- Interrupted time series design means a type of quasi-experimental study in which the outcome of interest is measured multiple times before and after the treatment for program participants only. If the program had an impact, the outcomes after treatment will have a different slope or level from those before treatment. That is, the series should show an “interruption” of the prior situation at the time when the program was implemented. Adding a comparison group time series substantially increases the reliability of the findings.
- Regression discontinuity design study means, in part, a quasi-experimental study design that closely approximates an experimental study. In a regression discontinuity design, participants are assigned to a treatment or comparison group based on a numerical rating or score of a variable unrelated to the treatment such as the rating of an application for funding. Another example would be assignment of eligible students, teachers, classrooms, or schools above a certain score (“cut score”) to the treatment group and assignment of those below the score to the comparison group.

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