

**State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Summary Information**

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	John Barr (john.w.barr@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	2
Funding Opportunity Title	Future Energy Jobs Act Multi-Cultural Jobs Program
CSFA Number	420-30-2875
CSFA Popular Name	FEJA Multi-Cultural Jobs Program
Anticipated Number of Awards	2
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$1,000,000
Award Range	\$500000 - \$500000
Source of Funding	State
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	Yes
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	03/09/2023
Application Date Range	03/09/2023 - 04/23/2023 : 5:00PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2875-2485.html
Technical Assistance Session	Offered : Yes Mandatory : No Date : 03/15/2023 : 10:00AM Registration link : https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwtcOusqz0rHNzi4N7msn_KvPPXGwL45f1Z

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

Future Energy Jobs Act: Multi-Cultural Jobs Program NOFO ID: 2875-2485

For your application to be considered, your entity must be pre-qualified. For more information on pre-qualification, please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/granteeresources.html>.

A. Program Description

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) sets forth the requirements for the Future Energy Jobs Act Multi-Cultural Jobs Program authorized under 220 ILCS 5/16-108.12(a)(3). The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (“Illinois Department of Commerce,” “Commerce,” or “the Department”) is the entity issuing this NOFO. Among the goals of the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) and Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) is to stimulate job growth in the clean energy economy with investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy. The goal of this NOFO is to provide training for clean energy-related occupations for diverse low-income, or economically disadvantaged populations (see the “Target Population” set forth, below).

Through this NOFO, the Department will fund two proposals offered by community-based, diversity-focused organizations that strive to provide participants with related opportunities within the clean energy sector. Specifically, this NOFO will fund: (1) a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing the educational and leadership capacity of minority youth through the operation of schools, youth leadership clubs and youth development centers, and (2) a not-for-profit organization that has a proven record of successfully implementing utility industry training programs, with expertise in creating programs that strengthen the economics of communities, including technical training workshops and economic development through community and financial partners. The Department will prioritize geographic diversity across Economic Development Regions (EDRs) and proximity to a Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Site (see 20 ILCS 730/5-20). In particular, applications received from organizations located in or near the following areas that have been designated as locations for Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Sites will be prioritized as long as they meet all other eligibility and scoring criteria – Alton/E. St. Louis, Carbondale, Champaign/Danville, Decatur, Peoria, and Rockford.

In 2017, the Illinois Commerce Commission approved ComEd’s first award of \$4 million under the FEJA Multi-Cultural Jobs Program [see Illinois Commerce Commission order 17-0332]. The administration of the programs authorized under the FEJA was assigned to the Illinois Department of Commerce in 2022 through CEJA [see Public Act 102-662].

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Commerce will seek innovative service delivery proposals for programs from diversity-focused community organizations that successfully deliver job training to women, people of color, persons with a record, former foster care recipients, and other jobseekers with specific barriers to employment. Selected grantees will recruit, train, and place participants in clean energy related occupations throughout the State of Illinois.

The Multi-Cultural Jobs Program provides an opportunity to provide innovative, employer-driven training approaches that combine education and occupational training with work-based learning to individuals in need of self-sustaining employment. It is the goal and objective of the Multi-Cultural Jobs Training program to implement job training programs that:

- Assist in the development of a workforce with the requisite knowledge, skills, training, experience, and competence to work in the clean energy sector.

- Identify partnership opportunities within training programs to maximize the societal benefits of the funds provided pursuant to Section 16-108.12(a)(3) of the Public Utilities Act.

DEFINITIONS

“Career Pathways” is defined as a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved.
- Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the National Apprenticeship Act, 29 USC § 50.
- Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving their education and career goals.
- Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
- Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual.
- Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential.
- Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Note that the State of Illinois will follow the definitions established by the Career Pathways Dictionary for this NOFO (https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/CP_Dictionary_11-13-18_FINAL.PDF).

“Civil Rights and Human Service Organization”: An organization that provides human services and operates programs and initiatives focused on meeting the public policy outlined in the Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILC 5/1-102).

“Displaced Energy Worker”: An energy worker who has lost employment or is expected to lose employment within the next 5 years, due to the reduced operation or closure of a fossil fuel power plant, nuclear power plant, or coal mine.

“Diversity”: The psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among all individuals, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning style.

“Educational Institution”: A publicly or privately operated university, college, community college, junior college, business or vocational school, or other educational institution offering degrees and instruction beyond the secondary school level; or a publicly or privately-operated elementary school or secondary school.

“English Language Learner / Individual with Low Levels of Literacy”: An individual with limited ability to read, write, speak, or comprehend the English language, and whose native language is a language other than English, or who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language; is unable to read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual’s family, or in society; or perceives himself or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.

“Environmental Justice Community”: Communities where residents have historically been subject to disproportionate pollution burdens, including pollution from the energy sector, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency pursuant to the Illinois Power Agency Act. For more information, see: <https://www.illinoissfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/>.

“Human Services”: Services provided in one or more core program areas of the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) – mental health, rehabilitation services, substance use prevention and recovery, family and community services, developmental disabilities, early childhood and any additional core program

areas DHS creates. A human services organization is not required to be a current or former recipient of grant funds from DHS.

“Graduates of or individuals currently enrolled in the foster care system”: Any person currently in the foster care system; has aged out of the foster care system; has attained age 18 and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption; or is in an out-of-home placement.

“Leadership Training / Development”: Training that provides youth participants with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills, such as decision making, problem solving, and negotiating. The training typically encourages participants to develop strong peer group ties that support their mutual pursuit of skills and values.

“Low Educational Attainment”: Individuals with limited education attainment and basic skills deficient, where the individual has English, reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job.

“Low Income Household”: Persons and families whose gross income does not exceed 80% of area median income, adjusted for family size and revised every 5 years. See the income eligibility lookup tool here: <https://www.illinoisfa.com/income-eligibility-lookup-tool/>.

“Minority”: Has the same definition as “minority person” in the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act (30 ILCS 575/2(A)(1)).

“Not-for-Profit Organization / Non-Profit Organization”: An organization that meets the requirements outlined in the General Not for Profit Corporation Act of 1986 (805 ILCS 105/) and is registered as a not-for-profit corporation and is in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State.

“Persons with a (criminal) record”: Any person who has been convicted of a crime in this State or of an offense in any other jurisdiction, not including an offense or attempted offense that would subject a person to registration under the Sex Offender Registration Act; has a record of an arrest or an arrest that did not result in conviction for any crime in this State or of an offense in any other jurisdiction; or has a juvenile delinquency adjudication.

“Pre-Apprenticeship”: A program that has a documented partnership with an employer and is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship or Apprenticeship, which includes all the following:

- Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region, and designed to prepare participants to meet the minimum entry-level requirements of the apprenticeship.
- Access to educational and career counseling, and other supportive services as needed by participants.
- Hands-on meaningful learning activities connected to education and training activities, such as Career Exploration and Career Development Experiences, and that reinforce foundational professional skills, including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework.
- Upon successful completion of the program, participants are encouraged to apply for a Registered Apprenticeship.

“Registered Apprenticeship”: An apprenticeship registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) meeting the standards defined by USDOL, which includes the five required components: business involvement, structured on-the-job training, related classroom and workplace instruction, rewards for skills gains, and an industry-recognized credential at the successful completion of training.

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"Underrepresented individuals": Individuals, groups and communities that have experienced disparities or disadvantages in employment.

"Youth Apprenticeship": A program for youth (ages 16 to 24) currently enrolled in secondary education or pursuing a high school equivalency, including those with disabilities, that include, at minimum, the following:

- 450 hours of paid on-the-job training under the supervision of a mentor;
 - At least 2 semesters of related instruction that ideally counts towards a high school and/or postsecondary credential, but minimally leading to an Industry Credential;
 - Ongoing and a final assessment measuring success in mastering skill standards;
 - Career exploration where participants learn about several positions within the employer and field; and
 - Wraparound supports (e.g. case management and counseling) and holistic upskilling (e.g. technical skills and soft skills).
- Upon successful completion of the program, participants are encouraged to apply for one or more of the following: entry-level employment, admission to a Registered Apprenticeship, admission to other articulated postsecondary education options (including 2- and 4-year programs) or *entry into a pre-apprenticeship program to be developed in partnership with a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program.*

Eligible Applicants

In accordance with subsection (a)(3) of Section 16-108.12 of the Public Utilities Act (220 ILCS 5/16-108.12(a)(3)), the Multi-Cultural Jobs Program will fund one grant for each of the following diversity-focused community organizations that successfully deliver job training. Applicants must choose between one of the two categories listed below, even if the applicant's organization may fall into more than one category. (Categories A, B, D, and F were previously awarded).

1. **CATEGORY C:** Not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing the educational and leadership capacity of minority youth through the operation of schools, youth leadership clubs, and youth development centers.
2. **CATEGORY E:** Not-for-profit organization that has a proven record of successfully implementing utility industry training programs, with expertise in creating programs that strengthen the economics of communities, including technical training workshops and economic development through community and financial partners.

Only entities that meet the requirements of CATEGORY C or CATEGORY E above and properly operate in accordance with Federal, State, and local law, in the state of Illinois, may submit a proposal for consideration.

Target Population

To align with the CEJA priority of ensuring equitable statewide access to quality training, jobs, and economic opportunities across the clean energy sector, applicants should prioritize serving:

- Individuals who face barriers to employment, such as low educational attainment, low levels of literacy, and English language learners
- Persons with a (criminal) record
- Graduates of, or individuals currently enrolled in, the foster care system
- Individuals from Environmental Justice Communities
- Displaced Energy Workers

Target Industry

For this NOFO, the Department is seeking projects that support individuals to be trained and employed in occupations related to the clean energy sector.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan

Governor Pritzker, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board and stateworkforce partners are committed to increasing equity in the workforce. A fundamental goal of this NOFO is to increase opportunities for

minorities and targeted populations underrepresented in energy or energy-related occupations in Illinois. Projects funded under this NOFO must include strategies to address equity, including changes in recruitment practices, intentional and inclusive marketing (including using images of women and people of color), addressing discrimination within programs and at workplaces, and offering support that boosts retention and completion, such as childcare, transportation, and career counseling. Applicants must address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the proposal application and articulate why and how this can be cost-efficient and effective for both the employer and the community. A DEI plan (Attachment IV) that demonstrates how the program will integrate DEI strategies into the program design must be included with this application.

Program Partners

All applicants must include a written agreement with the project partners, which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner and lists their funding contribution. Applicants who enter into a partnership agreement with training providers should include details regarding the training program, including the length, location, class size, cost, and other important information. Examples of partnerships could include:

- an employer who will train and hire participants, partnering with a community-based organization to recruit and identify participants;
- a workforce development training provider partnering with a community-based organization serving individuals in foster care and foster care alumni; or
- an educational institution partnering with energy industry employers.

These are merely examples, and partnerships should reflect the ability to accomplish all program objectives, including the ability to recruit from the targeted populations, provide quality training, and place trainees in jobs. Proposals capable of leveraging other funds to meet all program objectives are encouraged.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Projects funded under this NOFO will provide equitable access to quality training, jobs, and economic opportunities in the career pathway energy sector. Additionally, services should be provided across the spectrum, from outreach to retention in employment. They should be offered fluidly to allow program participants the latitude and flexibility to participate and succeed in establishing a family-sustaining career. Program services that should be included in the application are defined below.

- **Outreach and Recruitment**

Applicants must include an outreach and recruitment strategy for how they will enroll participants. The application should demonstrate that the strategy is tailored to the target populations identified under Program Requirements.

Outreach and recruitment through established and expanded partners, employer/industry organizations, social service agencies, and others includes:

- Disseminating program information to and establishing a referral process with partners;
- Distributing fliers in public places like beauty and barber shops, churches, apartment complexes, community centers, daycare centers, Illinois Department of Human Services local offices, bus stops, shelters, food banks, Salvation Army, YMCAs, etc.;
- Utilizing social media; and
- Holding or participating in events where the target populations reside, such as environmental justice communities.

- **Employer Engagement**

Employers should have a leadership role in developing and supporting energy career pathway programs that integrate work-based learning opportunities through experience. Competitive projects will demonstrate business commitment and demonstrate the strategies used to engage area employers.

- **Career Planning**

Career planning is a customer-centered approach in the delivery of services to prepare and coordinate comprehensive career (employment) plans for participants that ensure access to workforce activities and supportive services during program participation.

Successful career planning is a collaborative and ongoing process, rather than a one-time activity. The process is individualized to the job seeker and prepares them for obtaining employment that leads to self-sufficiency and places them on a path for lifelong learning. Effective career planning includes assessment, career readiness activities, preparation and training, along with appropriate job matching and placement ending with one (1) year of follow-up. Providing supportive services is essential to the success of the jobseeker.

Key components of career planning include: building rapport, effectively communicating, identifying appropriate services, convening key service providers, connecting participants with services, creating a strong employment plan, motivating and encouraging, following up after an appointment(s), monitoring services, and follow-up after job placement to ensure success. Additionally, keeping accurate, timely, and descriptive records of career planning efforts through appropriate case management is essential.

- **Comprehensive Assessment**

A thorough assessment is the foundation for understanding the participant's employment goals, existing skills, career readiness and determining all barriers to employment that may exist. It is not a one-time activity. Nor is it a one-size-fits-all approach. Assessments help participants determine existing skills, identify those that require additional training, develop an employment plan, and connect them to services through appropriate referrals.

At a minimum, the assessment process must be appropriate for the participant and address the areas below to inform the employment plan. Areas the applicant will need to assess include:

- Employment goals;
- Interest and skills inventory;
- Essential employability skills;
- Basic Skills deficiency;
- Digital and financial literacy assessment;
- Barriers to employment;
- Suitability for the desired training program;
- Review of training options that align with interest and skills inventory;
- Determination of referrals.

Additionally, assessments must evaluate and identify the suitability of the participant in developing employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the needed combination of services to address barriers. Suitability includes working with the participant on:

- Aligning career goals to interests, skills, and abilities;
- Reviewing occupational profiles and employment outlooks for the selected occupation. This not only includes wage information and training needed, but also includes what employees do in the job;
- Exploring the career services that are needed to achieve the participants' employment goals;
- Researching the training services that are needed to achieve the participants' employment goal, that include, but are not limited to:
 - Assessing the participant's preferred training delivery method (traditional classroom, virtual, hands-on);
 - Assessing the cost and length of the training program;

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- Considering work-based-learning opportunities including, but not limited to, Registered Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Job, and/or work experience; and
- Finding the supportive services needed to achieve the participants' employment goals

The information obtained from the comprehensive assessment is used to develop the Individual Employment Plan.

- **Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

Like the assessment, the Career Plan (Individual Employment Plan (IEP)) is a living document that identifies employment and education goals as part of a career pathway, objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to reach the goals. The IEP is the basic instrument for the grantee to document the appropriateness of the decisions made about the combination of services for the participant, including referrals to other programs for specified activities.

It will be developed collaboratively with the participant to mutually establish goals. The IEP must be developed after an objective assessment and reflect the expressed interests and needs of the participant.

At a minimum, the IEP must identify and document:

- Goals and Objectives:
 - Short-term (training or employment) goal(s);
 - Long-term (employment) goal(s) that:
 - clearly documents the career pathway to attain the career objectives; and
 - includes a review of the demand occupations list.
 - Intermediate objectives that will be required to meet the goals listed, and required training components (remedial, pre-requisites, skills, work-based training etc.)
 - Justification as to why the short-term and long-term goals are appropriate for the participant and must be:
 - Based on assessment information, an interview with the participant, and skills obtained from previous employment;
 - An explanation of the skills gap that the IEP is designed to overcome. "Skills gap" is the significant gap between the skills required by the employer, and the current capabilities of the applicant; and
 - Include barriers to employment and/or participant needs, if applicable.
 - The appropriate sequence and mix of services to address the unique strengths, challenges, and needs of the participant to obtain the training or employment goal(s);
 - Identification of barriers and/or needs that may prevent the participant from obtaining employment or participating in training. The IEP must document the services that are provided to address the participant's barriers, including but not limited to: Career Services, Supportive Services, Needs-Related Payments, and referrals to partner agencies for additional assistance, such as childcare, counseling, or other applicable programs.
 - A method for tracking progress and identifying next steps including, but not limited to, follow-up on open goals, objectives, and services.
- **Training**

Training services are critical to the success of many individuals in their employment. Programs must lead to industry-recognized or post-secondary credentials and align with the customer's

choice for a career pathway. Specifically, the training identified must be consistent with the comprehensive assessment and IEP.

Providing career pathways through education and work-based learning helps accelerate an individual's career advancement. Training should include a balance of job readiness, or soft-skills training, and technical, hands-on training. Applicants should consider including in their program design the following types of training:

- **Occupational skills training, training for nontraditional employment** – Prepares participants for careers traditionally non-academic and directly related to a specific trade, occupation or vocational skills, leading to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels.
- **Skill upgrading and retraining** – Training is provided to help improve the skills and/or retrain the participants. Courses that provide an occupational changing type of instruction to prepare the person(s) for entrance into a new occupation through instruction in new and different skills demanded by technological changes. Training will result in the workers' acquisition of transferable skills or an industry-recognized certification or credential.
- **Entrepreneurial training** – Prepares entrepreneurs to either start a small business or expand an existing business, usually through the development of a business plan.
- **Job readiness training** -- Includes job seeking and interviewing skills, understanding employer expectations, and enhancing a customer's capacity to move toward self-sufficiency.
- **Adult education and literacy activities** - Includes activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with services provided in any of the services listed above or as part of work-based learning.
- **Work-Based Learning / Work-Based Training**
Work-based learning provides more opportunities for workers to earn income while gaining critical job skills. The following work-based learning services are allowed under this grant:
 - **Pre-apprenticeship** is a program designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program, which includes:
 - Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region;
 - Access to educational and career counseling, and other supportive services and/or barrier reduction funding;
 - Hands-on, learning activities connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options and understanding how skills acquired through coursework can be applied to a future career;
 - Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and
 - A partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship into a registered apprenticeship program.
 - **Apprenticeship** is an employer-driven, "earn while you learn" model that combines on-the-job training (OJT) with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards. Workers benefit from apprenticeships by receiving a skills-based education that prepares them for good-paying jobs. Apprenticeship programs help employers recruit, build, and retain a highly skilled workforce. Funds may be used to pay for the technical training and on-the-job training cost of workers, as well as to provide supportive services to participants that help them succeed in apprenticeship programs.
 - **Work experiences or internships** are planned, structured learning experiences that

take place in a workplace for a limited period. Work experiences or internships may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate, and consistent with other laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 201). Work experiences or internships may be within the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. For youth, work experiences may also include:

- **Transitional jobs** are time-limited, wage-paid work experiences that are subsidized up to 100 percent. These jobs can be in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors. Transitional jobs provide individuals with work experience and the opportunity to develop important workplace skills within the context of an employee-employer relationship, in which the program provider generally acts as the employer, and with the opportunity to develop important workplace skills.
 - **On the Job Training (OJT)** provides up to a 75% reimbursement to employers toward the wages paid to the OJT trainee. The reimbursement helps compensate for the costs associated with skills upgrade training for newly hired employees and the lost production of current employees providing the training (including management staff). OJT training can help employers expand their businesses and require additional staff trained with specialized skills.
 - **Customized Training** is designed to meet the specific requirements of an employer or group of employers, with the commitment that the business or businesses employ an individual(s) upon successful completion of the training.
 - **Incumbent Worker Training (IW)** for employers with 250 or less employees. Employee trainees must meet the definitions of under-employed or have received notices of termination or lay-off. IW is designed to meet the needs of an employer or group of employers to retain a skilled workforce or prevent layoffs. The training helps employees obtain the skills necessary to retain employment, such as increasing the skill levels of employees so they can be promoted within the company and create backfill opportunities for new or less-skilled employees. Incumbent Worker training can be used to either: Help avert potential layoffs of employees; or help an individual who is working part-time but desires full-time employment, who is working in employment not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational and/or skill achievement, who is an employed low-income individual, or who is employed but their current earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous job's earnings from their previous employment.
- **Supportive Services**
Supportive Services provide participants with key assistance beyond career and training services necessary to achieve success. They must be reasonable and needed for an individual to participate in activities offered through the Multi-Cultural Jobs Program. Applicants must provide their Supportive Service policy if they intend to provide these services through this grant. Examples of supportive services include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Linkages to community services;
 - Assistance with transportation;
 - Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
 - Assistance with housing;
 - Assistance with educational testing;
 - Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
 - Legal services, including background checks;
 - Referrals to health care and services, such as immunizations, vision, and dental care;
 - Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including eyeglasses, protective eye gear and other essential safety equipment;
 - Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
 - Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and

certifications.

- **Placement**

Local efforts will be utilized for placement services. This includes:

- Working with Illinois Department of Employment Security;
- Outreach and networking with local employers on their anticipated employment needs;
- Engaging businesses in hiring and recruiting events, and collaborating with workforce partners, including training providers and Chambers of Commerce, to identify employment opportunities, training needs and gaps in services;
- Using the Virtual Job Fair (VJF) site in Illinois workNet connects workers with employers. Job fairs can be set up by employers, grantees, Chambers of Commerce, legislators, etc., to provide job seekers with information on how to prepare for a VJF and what to expect when attending the event, and is a chance to speak with potential employers.

- **Follow-Up**

Follow-up services after training completion are encouraged, as appropriate, for adult and youth participants in workforce activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment. Follow-up services must meet the needs of the participant and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Supportive services;
- Mentoring;
- Financial literacy education;
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services;
- Providing individuals with information about additional educational or employment opportunities;
- Counseling individuals about the workplace;
- Contacting individuals or employers to verify employment;
- Contacting individuals or employers to help secure better paying jobs, additional career planning, and counseling for the individual;
- Assisting individuals and employers in resolving work-related problems;
- Connecting individuals to peer support groups; and
- Providing individuals with referrals to other community resources.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Specific project outcomes, goals, and deliverables must be included in the proposal. Agreed upon deliverables and outcomes will be tracked utilizing project management tools developed by the Department. Grant applications must include the projected outcomes that are consistent with the program design and definitions. Applicants must provide information regarding projected outcomes as part of the required attachments. Program Outcomes may include:

- Number of individuals enrolled in program
- Number of individuals completing program
- Number of individuals obtaining industry-linked credential(s), certification or license
- Number of individuals placed in post-secondary education
- Number of individuals placed and number completing a Pre-Apprenticeship,
- Number of individuals placed and number completing a Registered Apprenticeship, or
- Number of individuals placed and number completing on-the-job trainings
- Number of individuals placed and number completing a paid work experience or internship
- Number of individuals placed in unsubsidized employment
- Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months

Award Term: The grant term/performance period is determined on a project-specific basis. It is anticipated that this grant will be awarded for 12 months with one 12-month renewal option.

B. Funding Information

This grant program uses funds authorized under the Illinois Future Energy Jobs Act, as outlined at 220 ILCS 5/16-108.12 and 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c)(1)(O).

Program Funding: The Department anticipates awarding two \$500,000 grants for the categories described in Section A above. Applicants may only submit one application and are required to select only one category.

Allowable Costs: Allowable costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable based on activities described in the *Program Activities* section of this NOFO administered by an eligible applicant.

Administrative Cost: It is expected that administrative costs, both direct and indirect, will represent a small portion (generally around 10%) of the program budget. Program budgets and narratives will detail how all proposed expenditures are directly necessary for program implementation.

Grant Award and Payment Terms: Successful applicants will be invited to negotiate a grant with the Department. The executed grant agreement will specify conditions for payment and a payment schedule. In general, grantee(s) will receive reimbursement payments and may be subject to proration, dependent upon the grantee meeting performance targets. Each grant will have enrollment and outcome goals specific to the types of projects funded. Penalties for missing performance targets may be applied at the Department's discretion.

Renewals: The Department may authorize the renewal of projects awarded under this NOFO, including additional funding based on the activities, outcomes, and performance of the grant, as well as the availability of funds under this program.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative must include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the uniform budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line, and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need, as defined in Section E.1.

Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number;
- Has a valid UEI number;
- Has a current SAM.gov registration¹;
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List;

¹ Per federal government memorandum M-20-21, which the State of Illinois applies to both federal and State-funded grants, temporary flexibility will be permitted for the requirement that SAM.gov registration must be completed and active at the time of application. At the time of the award, the requirement continues to apply.

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- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable;
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list; and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list.

Marking SAM.gov registrations as “public” will allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of federal information. Making the SAM.gov registration “private” will not prevent the review, but will slow down the review process.

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g. not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

This funding opportunity is available to not-for profits that meet the requirements outlined in this NOFO.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Matching funds are not required. However, projects that include matching funds will be given priority consideration (more points) as part of the merit review process. Successful applicant(s) will be required to report the matching and/or leveraged funds from partners over the life of the project. There is no minimum requirement, but applications will be reviewed in part based on their ability to leverage additional funding sources, which should be clearly described in the budget proposal.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding may have an indirect cost rate negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the

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organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year, depending on the grantee's audit type requirements.

c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees who elect to waive indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to "Waive Indirect Costs" into the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system.

State Universities may request an indirect cost rate of 10% due to the State of Illinois' continuous funding of a portion of facility and administrative costs.

4. Other, if applicable.

Application Limit: Applicants may only submit (1) one application or one category when responding to this NOFO.

Program Eligibility Criteria: All applicants must follow the program design and approaches outlined in Part A of this NOFO.

Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information: Applications are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could reasonably be considered proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the application. The Illinois Department of Commerce will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

Applicant Rights: Submission of an application confers no right to an award or subsequent grant agreement. The Department of Commerce is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application, or to pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant beginning date. Applicants may use the appeal process as stated in the Merit-Based Review Policy available in the Resource Library at www.grants.illinois.gov.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the "Grant Application Link" field of this announcement, or by contacting:

Monica Pruitt, Grant Manager
LaMonica.Pruitt@illinois.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

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A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items and must be submitted in the order listed. Unless otherwise stated, missing documents will impact the final score.

Uniform Grant Application (signed): Complete the State of Illinois Standard Grant Application Form in the fillable PDF format (print, sign and scan the signature page with submission). This is used as the “cover” of the grant application. *Submission of the Uniform Grant Application does not impact the final score.*

Executive Summary: Applicants must complete Attachment I (see required attachment forms) as the executive summary to summarize the key components of the proposal, so that readers can quickly become acquainted with the project without having to read the entire proposal.

Project Narrative: (20-page limit) Applicants must submit a project narrative that answers all the questions as outlined in this NOFO. The project narrative must include enough information for the Department to understand the scope of the project. Required components of the Project Narrative are outlined below:

Applicant Organization Capacity (3 pages):

The applicant must select the NOFO category as described in Section A of this NOFO. The applicant must be an Eligible Entity as defined in this NOFO and provide evidence of their capacity to partner with employers in the clean energy industry and serve the target population. This includes identifying the expertise of staff and subcontracted personnel to demonstrate their ability to implement the program. Additionally, describe any projects recently completed or underway that required skills and experience ~~sim~~ to those required for this proposed project, including a brief summary of the project and outcomes.

Documentation of Need and Opportunity (2 pages):

FEJA requires the Multi-Cultural Jobs Program to provide underrepresented individuals with opportunities in the clean energy sector. The application must include a description of the data used to identify the underrepresented populations to be served, the occupations targeted for training, and information regarding the environmental justice community that will be served (if any). The application must also address the following:

- What specific equity-focused strategies are in place or will be developed that will advance practices and project approaches, including recruitment, partnerships, and training models, to ensure more opportunities for underrepresented individuals?
- Describe how the grantee will reach diverse populations, and strategies for recruitment and inclusion of diverse and targeted populations.
- Describe your connection and experience serving the population (program participants) targeted in this proposal.
- What are the marketing and recruitment plans for potential participants?
- Identify outreach partner organizations that will help in marketing and recruitment.
- Provide any additional contextual details that will strengthen the reviewers' understanding of the identified issues/problems, needs and expansion opportunities.

Project Plan and Considerations (6 – 12 pages):

The program plan section of the application template includes the operational components and details the implementation of the program services outlined in this NOFO. Additionally, the applicant must compile the training program summary(s), which provides details related to the categorical training to be offered, as well as coordination with project partners. This should address detailed information about:

1. Service delivery approach
2. Training approach
 - Training providers(s) that will provide the *Related Technical Instruction* for this project,

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including but not limited to:

- Where will the training take place?
- Who will provide the training?
- What is the duration of the training?
- Identify any course credit(s) and/or credential(s) that will be received at the completion of training. (Note any credentials nationally recognized and portable.)
- Provide detailed information about the work-based learning activities (work experience, on-the-job training) that will be provided for this project, including but not limited to:
 - The program plans to provide practical, hands-on experience;
 - Describe how the participant's occupational skills will be tracked and evaluated; and
 - Provide a detailed outline of the training program and schedule of work processes.

Budget Narrative/Cost Effectiveness/Return on Investment (3 pages):

Applicants must provide a budget narrative that includes an analysis of the cost efficiency in relation to planned outcomes. The budget narrative must include the following:

- Provide a detailed narrative of each line item's costs including justification for the reasonableness of the proposed cost. Include information on in-kind contributions supporting the program. This will correlate with the narrative in the budget template.
- Describe any leveraged and matching funds from partners and participating businesses. (Programs that include matching funds will receive additional consideration.)
- Discuss how this project will benefit the energy sector and target population and community.

Outcomes Summary: Applicants must complete Attachment II (see required attachment forms) that outlines the projected outcomes for the project.

Uniform Grant Budget Template: The State of Illinois has developed a uniform budget template (Excel spreadsheet) that must be submitted with the grant application. The completed template should include information on how each cost in the budget is calculated along with a narrative justification of each cost. The entire budget template, with all worksheets included, must be submitted with the application. The Certification page must be signed and dated by the Executive Director (or equivalent) and the Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent) of the applicant organization.

Project Implementation Plan: Applicants must complete Attachment III (see required attachment forms) as the project implementation plan that includes major project activities, milestones for progress, and timelines for completion of the activities.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan: Applicants must provide a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) plan in Attachment IV (see required attachment forms) that includes a commitment to adopt, expand, and promote the proposed diversity, equity, and inclusion activities.

Resumes of Program Staff: Grant applications must include the resumes of key program staff that demonstrate capacity to complete the work outlined in the application.

Partnership Agreements: Attach Partnership Agreements (as opposed to Letters of Support) with all key partners detailing entity information and contact information, responsibilities, functions, and integration.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form: Award applicants and recipients of awards from the State of Illinois must disclose in writing to the awarding State agency any actual or potential conflict of

interest that could affect the State award for which the Grantee has applied or has received. See 30 ILCS 708/35; 44 Ill. Admin. Code 7000.40(b)(3); 2 CFR 200.112. A conflict of interest exists if an organization's officers, directors, agents, employees and/or their spouses or immediate family members use their position(s) for a purpose that is, or gives the appearance of, being motivated by a desire for a personal gain, financial or nonfinancial, whether direct or indirect, for themselves or others, particularly those with whom they have a family business or other close associations. *Submission of the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form does not impact the final score.*

Mandatory Disclosure Form: Award applicants and recipients of awards from the State of Illinois (collectively referred to herein as "Grantee") must disclose, in a timely manner and in writing to the State awarding agency, all violations of State or federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the award. See 30 ILCS 708/40; 44 Ill. Admin. Code 7000.40(b)(4); 2 CFR 200.113. *Submission of the Mandatory Disclosure Form does not impact the final score.*

- End of Content Form and Application Submission Section -

3. System for Award Management (SAM) and Unique Entity ID (UEI).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab. Please note, making SAM.gov registrations "public" will expedite the GATA Grantee Portal pre-qualification process.
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in its application, which matches the UEI number used in both the applicant entity's SAM registration and GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

4. Submission Dates and Times.

The application due date is **5:00PM (Central Time) April 23, 2023**. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0f1a104092fa41e496d9c092fc4f3c10>. The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

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

6. Funding Restrictions.

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards: All applicants must be in compliance, or agree to comply, with the Uniform Administrative Requirements located at 2 CFR Part 200 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200>).

Pre-award and Application Costs: Pre-award costs are incurred at the applicant's own risk and will not be funded if an award is not made. Pre-award costs for services in anticipation of an award may be allowable, where necessary, for the efficient and timely performance of the program, and are subject to 2 CFR 200.458. To be accepted, proof of services must meet the guidelines and requirements outlined within this NOFO and GATA (See 30 ILCS 708/125 (<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3559>)). Costs associated with the development of a proposal are not allowed.

7. Other Submission Requirements.

Application Format Requirements: All applicants must meet the following submission requirements: Applications must be formatted to an 8 1/2 x 11-inch page size, using an 11-point type and at 100% magnification. Tables may be used to present information with a 10-point type. The program narrative must be typed single-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. The entire application, including appendices, must be sequentially page-numbered (hand-written page numbers are acceptable). Items included in the attachments are NOT included in the page limitations.

Additional Application Information: The Illinois Department of Commerce Office of Employment and Training reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to evaluate applications. The DCEO Grant Managers may contact the applicants to request information on a quick turnaround (generally 48 hours) to resolve technical questions including technical or administrative clarification, missing or incomplete components, and technical transmission errors.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be scored on a 100-point scale. The Department will consider the general criteria categories of Capacity, Quality, Need and Cost Effectiveness, and the specific sub-categories listed below each general criteria category when evaluating the applications. However, the Department will prioritize geographic diversity across economic development regions and proximity to a Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Site (see 20 ILCS 730/5-20). In particular, applications received from organizations located in or near the following areas that have been designated as locations for Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Sites will be prioritized even if they have a lower overall score, as long as they meet all other eligibility and scoring criteria – Alton/E. St. Louis, Carbondale, Champaign/Danville, Decatur, Peoria, and Rockford.

Should more than one applicant, from either the same or a different Hub Site location, receive the same overall merit review score within either applicant Category C or E, the applicant with the

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highest Quality of Project Plan score within the applicant Category will be selected. If there are no qualified applicant proposals from any of the Hub Site locations for either Category C or E or both, and more than one applicant receives the same overall merit review score within the same applicant Category, the applicant with the highest Quality of Project Plan score within the Category will be selected.

Scoring Guidelines		
Exceeds Standards 8-10 Points	Meets Standards 4-7 Points	Below Standards 0-3 Points
Exceeded expectations/requirements for this section	Met expectations/requirements for this section	Did not meet expectations/requirements for this section

Applicant Capacity (20%) – 20 Total Points Possible

- The applicant’s description of their experience operating training and career pathways programs
- The applicant’s capacity to successfully complete the project tasks and achieve the projected activities and outcomes within the proposed grant period
- The related experience of contractors and/or partners
- The qualifications of the applicant’s staff to be assigned to the project

Documentation of Need and Opportunity (30%) – 30 Total Points Possible

- The quality of plans to address equity in program design, recruitment, supports and completion and how it relates to increasing the number of underrepresented individuals enrolling in and successfully completing training programs that lead to clean energy occupations
- The project’s ability to train and place underrepresented individuals and targeted populations, including the quality of the participant recruitment activities
- Potential impact and quality of any additional contextual details regarding the identified issues/problems, needs and expansion opportunities in the in state.

Quality of Project Plan (40%) – 40 Total Points Possible

- The quality of the applicant’s training approach and whether it addresses the employer partner needs
- The quality of the project’s *Related Technical Instruction*
- The quality of the project’s *Work-Based Learning Activities*
- The quality and quantity of the project outcomes
 - Number of individuals enrolled in program
 - Number of individuals completing program
 - Number of individuals obtaining industry-linked credential(s), certification or license
 - Number of individuals placed in post-secondary education
 - Number of individuals placed and number completing a Pre-Apprenticeship,
 - Number of individuals placed and number completing a Registered Apprenticeship,
 - Number of individuals placed and number completing on-the-job trainings
 - Number of individuals placed and number completing a paid work experience or internship
 - Number of individuals placed in unsubsidized employment
 - Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months
- The quality of the project activities identified in the project implementation plan.

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- The project's ability to serve underrepresented individuals and targeted populations to ensure equal access to services as outlined in the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Plan including the quality of the
 - Using customer satisfaction to inform service delivery
 - Recruitment Activities
 - Marketing Plan for reaching underserved communities
 - Providing culturally relevant opportunities for jobseekers.

Budget Narrative/Cost Effectiveness/Return on Investment (10%) – 10 Total Points Possible

- The quality of the applicant's high-level budget narrative, including an analysis of the cost efficiency in relationship to planned outcomes
- The reasonableness of cost based on the estimated number of the program participants and length of the program
- The amount of matching and leveraged resources

Matching funds are not required; however, projects that include them will score higher in the Budget/Cost Effectiveness/Return on Investment component of the merit review process using the following guidelines:

- \$25,000 - \$99,999 - add 1 additional point
- \$100,000 - \$249,999 - add 2 additional points
- \$250,000 or more - add 3 additional points

The successful applicant will be required to report the matching and/or leveraged funds from partners over the life of the project. There is no minimum requirement, but applications will be reviewed in part based upon their ability to leverage additional funding sources, which should be clearly described in the budget proposal.

2. Review and Selection Process.

Review and Selection Process: A team of professionals will complete the *merit review* of the applications and develop a funding recommendation for each category. The decision to award the grants and the funding levels will be determined by the applicant with the highest merit review score in each category using the criteria outlined above (NOFO Section E.1) and the applicant's compliance with the requirements of this NOFO. The Department will prioritize geographic diversity across economic development regions and proximity to a Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Site. In particular, applications received from organizations located in or near the following areas that have been designated as locations for Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program Hub Sites will be prioritized for funding even if they have a lower overall score, as long as they meet all other eligibility and scoring criteria – Alton/E. St. Louis, Carbondale, Champaign/Danville, Decatur, Peoria, and Rockford.

Should more than one applicant, from either the same or a different Hub Site location, receive the same overall merit review score within either applicant Category C or E, the applicant with the highest Quality of Project Plan score within the applicant Category will be selected. If there are no qualified applicant proposals from any of the Hub Site locations for either Category C or E or both, and more than one applicant receives the same overall merit review score within the same applicant Category, the applicant with the highest Quality of Project Plan score within the Category will be selected.

Based on the review, applicants may be selected to enter into negotiations with the Department for a grant. The purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budgetary and scope of work provisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made. The Department of Commerce reserves the right to request additional information from applicants for evaluation purposes. At its sole discretion, the Department reserves the right to reject all applications, reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement and award in part or total.

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/MeritAppReview.aspx>.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

The Department anticipates sending Notices of State Award (NOSA) by June 30, 2023, but reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

Subrecipients and Subcontractors: Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

Grant Uniform Requirements: The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Procurement: Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

3. Reporting.

Program Participant Reporting

Grantees will be required to report “participant level” information for every customer, business and organization that is served under this grant using all forms, documents or systems prescribed by the Grantor. Note that the Department’s grant manger will work with grantees to determine the proper classification and reporting of the services that are provided under this grant.

The Department requires the applicants to report on elements including targeted communities, target population characteristics, services, matching funds, and outcomes. Attachment II outlines

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the data elements that are representative of the information that will be expected to be collected by grantees. Note that this list may be revised before grants are awarded.

Project Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements. These reports include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Periodic Performance Report.
- Periodic Financial Report.
- Participant Reports using the Illinois workNet™, or other reporting processes as directed by the Illinois Department of Commerce.
- Consolidated year-end financial reporting and success stories.
- A final narrative assessment of project outcomes that identifies promising practices and lessons learned to inform future workforce program implementation efforts.
- Other reporting deemed necessary by the Illinois Department of Commerce.

Success Story Submission

Grantees are required to submit written testimonials for program participant successes to show how programs are making a difference in people's lives. It is above and beyond a list of events or activities, and describes a positive significant and noteworthy change to the participant. The Department will provide the grantee with additional instructions regarding the submission of success stories.

Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

Monitoring

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

Audit

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act shall apply (See 30 ILCS 708/65(c)).

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Grant Help Desk
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Email: **CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov**

H. Other Information, if applicable

Resources: Below are items that applicants should familiarize themselves with to understand the application's requirements:

- Grant Accountability and Transparency Act
<https://www.illinois.gov/sites/gata/Pages/default.aspx>

Additional Assessments: Applicants will be requested to complete a programmatic risk assessment to consider grant-specific risks. This assessment will be administered towards the end of the application process by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Program staff will then determine whether any risk-based conditions from the programmatic risk assessment and the internal controls questionnaire (completed as part of the State of Illinois GATA registration) shall be incorporated into a grant agreement.

Technical Assistance (T.A.): Once a grant is established, participation in T.A. is required and will be provided throughout the grant period (in the form of webinars, regional meetings, and direct support). The T.A. schedule will be available and regularly updated on the program webpage. Successful applicants must agree to receive consultation technical assistance from authorized representatives of the Department. The applicant and collaborating partners may have required site visits, training, and in-person interviews.

NOFO Website: The Department has posted the NOFO forms and instructions at illinoisworknet.com/fejmulitculturaljobsnofo2023.

NOFO Information Session: The Department will coordinate a webinar to review the requirements of this NOFO and answer questions that will be also posted in the FAQ section of this web page. Attendance is not required but is encouraged.