

# Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program NOFO ID: 0513-2645

For information about grants please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/granteeresources.html>.

## A. Program Description

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department” or “DCEO”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to eligible entities under the Illinois Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program (JTED) 20 ILCS 605/605-415 (JTED Act) and the rules adopted in support of the JTED Act, 56 Ill. Admin. Code Part 2660 (JTED Rules). This is the second NOFO to be released for the JTED Program. The objective of this NOFO is to address the economic impacts experienced by employers and individuals who are either under-employed, unemployed, or facing one or more barriers to employment by providing career pathway opportunities and support services needed for successful re-entry or advancement into the labor force. This NOFO prioritizes providing services to immigrants, migrants and refugees, justice-involved individuals, and rural residents.

Additionally, the NOFO offers flexible funding through Barrier Reduction services, which will support accumulated emergency costs for basic needs. It is anticipated that through this NOFO, up to 1,000 individuals from the target populations may be served. If feasible, the Department anticipates providing funding for services through this NOFO in as many Economic Development Regions (EDRs) as possible, proportional to their population.

### Program Description

The Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program (JTED) was established in 1997 to respond to workforce shortages due to a strong job market and a lack of skilled workers to fill available positions. The legislation found that “despite the large number of unemployed job seekers, many employers are having difficulty matching the skills they require with the skills of workers; a similar problem exists in industries where overall employment may not be expanding, but there is an acute need for skilled workers in particular occupations. The State of Illinois should foster local economic development by linking the job training of unemployed, disadvantaged citizens with the workforce needs of local businesses and industry. Employers often need assistance in developing training resources that will provide work opportunities for individuals that are under-represented and or have barriers to participating in the workforce.” Additionally, JTED focused on long-term unemployed individuals needing assistance to access the workforce to gain work experience and skills required to obtain family-sustaining employment.

In 2021, the Illinois General Assembly updated JTED to address the current economic environment due to the impact of COVID-19. A JTED NOFO was released (November 2021) that addressed the pandemic's impact on the labor force and businesses. Forty-four grantees were selected through the merit review process. Grantees' programs address the needs of impacted sectors for a skilled workforce and individuals' needs for training or retraining to access a career pathway to sustainable employment.

The Department is releasing the second JTED NOFO to address the continued impact the pandemic created on demand for skilled employees and the capacity for individuals to access family-sustaining employment and the ability to advance in a career pathway. This NOFO also prioritizes providing services to immigrants and refugees, justice-involved individuals, and rural residents, along with other eligibility requirements outlined in the NOFO.

### Program Priorities

The Department requests applications that demonstrate proven approaches to offering career services, training, and placement of eligible individuals in employment or continued education. Applications will be accepted for projects that serve adults or youth. Two applications must be submitted if the applicant wishes to help both groups. Additionally, DCEO has identified priorities, including services targeted to immigrants and refugees, justice-involved individuals, and rural residents. Participant eligibility and strategies to serve the identified priorities are outlined below.

JTED program regulations require that services be provided to the “target population,” defined as unemployed, under-employed, or under-represented individuals, including youth with one or more barriers to employment. The “target populations” is further defined in the NOFO under the *Program Definitions*. Eligibility also requires that the individual has a low to moderate income, is an Illinois resident, and is eligible to work in Illinois at the completion of the program.

### ***Initiatives that support immigrants, migrant, and refugee populations to access “good jobs.”***

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey, there are more than 1.8 million immigrants in Illinois, including nearly 950,000 naturalized citizens. The Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force released a report in April 2023 (<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/gov/Documents/il-immigrant-task-force-2023.pdf>) that highlights how immigrants play a key role in the Illinois labor force. Immigrants, migrants and refugees may need help accessing resources, which can hinder their ability to find jobs and receive training. Applicants can develop successful programs that provide opportunities for these individuals through a holistic approach incorporating career services and components that address the community recommendations of the task force report. The US Department of Labor recently issued guidance that defines the characteristics of a good job, explains why job quality is important, and outlines how workforce partners should integrate good job strategies (see: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-07-22>)

### ***Initiatives that support Rural Residents***

Rural areas that lose population face a number of problems. One is a shrinking workforce, making it more difficult for businesses to find workers who match their needs. Those who migrate out of rural areas often do so for job opportunities, while the remaining population may do so because of limited options. Applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships with economic development agencies, local government programs, broadband initiatives, industry associations and local employers. The program design should assist rural areas in creating and improving access to jobs to enhance workforce development. Increasing access to workforce opportunities, training and education, and barrier reduction assistance in rural communities can ensure areas have a skilled workforce to support economic prosperity.

### ***Initiatives that increase access to workforce resources for Returning Residents***

According to the Illinois Department of Corrections, there are more than 17,500 persons on parole in Illinois. Individuals formerly incarcerated face significant challenges in finding gainful employment. To address the employment challenge for justice-involved individuals, JTED applicants can propose

employment and training offerings in coordination with correctional facilities and for justice-involved individuals who have returned to their community. Quality applications will demonstrate active relationships with second-chance employers, a process to work with parole officers if applicable, and collaboration with organizations with expertise in legal services, counseling, housing services, etc. Barrier reduction funding could be essential to alleviate obstacles such as obtaining a license, housing support, and counseling to re-integrate into society. Program services should support current state and local efforts so that all incarcerated individuals can access various resources to prepare them for successful re-entry.

### Program Definitions

This NOFO will use the definitions established in the JTED program statute, effective June 16, 2021, and the JTED Rules. Many of the JTED program definitions are contained within this NOFO supplement. Any terms not defined within this NOFO supplement may be found in Appendix A of this NOFO.

1. Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities are organizations that are eligible to apply for a grant award for this NOFO and are defined as employers, private nonprofit organizations (which may include a faith-based organization), federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) administrative entities, Community Action Agencies, industry associations, and public or private educational institutions that have demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in administering workforce development programs [20 ILCS 605/605-415(b)]. Local governments that are not WIOA administrative entities are not eligible to apply.

2. Eligible Training Providers

Eligible training providers consist of a public or private college or university, an industry association, a registered apprenticeship program, or a community-based organization that is approved to provide training services by the appropriate accrediting body [20 ILCS 605/605-415(b)]. Applicants must provide detailed information about the training providers, including who, what, when, where, and duration of training (see Program Narrative section).

3. Targeted Industries, Occupations, and Growth Sectors

Industries and occupations that will be targeted for training programs must be struggling with identifying skilled workers in the aftermath of the pandemic or must be occupations in growth sectors as specified in the Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) local/region workforce plan, see [https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans\\_MOUs\\_Dashboard.aspx](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx). The governor's 5-year economic plan identifies the state's strongest career clusters that should be considered for this NOFO, including:

- Manufacturing,
- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (Energy),
- Information Technology,
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics,
- Architecture and Construction,
- Health Science,
- Hospitality and Tourism.

Proposals that plan to provide services to small businesses with 250 or fewer employees, regardless of industry, are encouraged to apply if the occupations are in demand.

4. Target Population

The JTED program regulations require that services be provided to the “target population,” defined as unemployed, under-employed, or under-represented individuals, including youth who have one or more barriers to employment that are identified as risk factors. Additionally, DCEO has included priority populations in this NOFO to receive services. The following definitions apply to the “target population” and “priority population”:

- **“Immigrant”** means any person lawfully in the United States who is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or person admitted under a nonimmigrant category as defined by the United States Immigration and Nationality Act Section 101(a)(15), 8 U.S.C 1101(a)(15).
- **“Low-income individual”** means an individual who receives, or in the past 12 months has received, or is a member of a family household that is receiving or in the past 12 months has received, assistance through:
  - Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP);
  - Childcare Subsidies through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program;
  - Medicaid;
  - National Housing Trust Fund (HTF), for affordable housing programs only;
  - Home Investment Partnerships Program, for affordable housing programs only;
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
  - Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast (SBP) programs;
  - Medicare Part D Low-income Subsidies;
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
  - Head Start and/or Early Head Start;
  - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC);
  - Section 8 Vouchers;
  - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); or
  - Pell Grants; or
  - (i) Has income that is at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) for the size of their household based on the most recently published poverty guidelines by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); OR (ii) has income at or below 40 percent of the Area Median Income for its county and size of household based on data published most recently by the Department of House and Urban Development (HUD).
- **“Migrant”** means a person who leaves his/her country of origin to seek temporary or permanent residence in another country.
- **“Moderate-income individuals”** means individuals whose income is: (i) at or below 300 percent of the FPG of the size of their household based on the most recently published poverty guidelines by HHS; or (ii) at or below 40 percent of the Area Median Income for its county and size of household based on data published most recently by HUD.

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- **"Negative economic or public health impacts"** means harm that households or populations have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as permitted by the American Rescue Plan Act and the related regulations and guidance issued by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. "Negative economic or public health impacts" include, but are not limited to, households or populations that:
  - Have experienced unemployment or increased food or housing insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - Are **low-income individuals or moderate-income individuals** who experienced negative impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - Are living within either a qualified census tract or a disproportionately impacted area; or
  - Are receiving services or other assistance pursuant to this NOFO within either a qualified census tract or a disproportionately impacted area.
  
- **"Refugee"** means a status granted to an individual, prior to departure for and arrival in the United States, who has been determined by competent authority to be fleeing persecution or have a well-founded fear of persecution in their own country because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.
  
- **"Returning Resident"** means an individual who has recently been released from a federal, state or local correctional facility.
  
- **"Unemployed individual"** means an individual who is without a job and who wants and is available for work. The determination of whether an individual is without a job, for purposes of this definition, shall be made in accordance with the criteria used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor or as required by the relevant funding source and set forth in the NOFO. "Unemployed individual" may include:
  - an individual who meets the definition of "unemployed individual" set forth above and resides in or receives services in a qualified census tract; or
  - an individual who:
    - Is without a job;
    - Wants and is available to work, including someone who has looked for work sometime in the past 12 months and
    - Is in need of job training and other assistance to address the negative economic or public health impacts experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic or
    - An individual who is currently employed but received a notice of termination or lay-off from the current employment and will no longer be employed within ninety days.
  
- **"Under-employed individual"** is defined as an individual who is employed and needs job training and other assistance to address the **negative economic or public health impacts experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic** due to the individual's occupation or level of training. "Under-employed individual" includes workers who receive notices of termination or lay-off notices because of negative economic or public health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **"Under-represented individuals with a barrier to employment"** or **"Under-represented individuals"** means individuals who reside in or receive services in a qualified census tract, disproportionately impacted area or who have experienced negative economic or public health impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals who are long-term unemployed, meaning those "who have been unemployed for at least twelve (12) of the last twenty-six (26) weeks" are also included as under-represented.

5. Targeted Communities (Qualified Census Tracts, Disproportionately Impacted Areas and Rural Residents)

The JTED Program recognizes the disproportional impact of the pandemic-related recession on economically disadvantaged communities as defined by HUD's Qualified Census Tracts. Competitive applications will prioritize services within or to individuals that reside in identified "qualified census tracts," "disproportionately impacted areas," or rural residents.

- **"Qualified Census Tract"** means a census tract, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, having 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or having a poverty rate of 25 percent or more.
- **"Disproportionately impacted area"** means those ZIP Codes most severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, to be determined based on positive COVID-19 case per capita rates and that meet at least one of the following poverty-related criteria relative to other ZIP Codes within that region:
  - Share of the population consisting of children aged 6 to 17 in households with income less than 125% of the federal poverty level (FPL);
  - Share of the population consisting of adults over age 64 in households with income less than 200% FPL;
  - Share of the population in households with income less than 150% FPL; or
  - Share of the population consisting of children ages five (5) and under in households with income less than 185% FPL.

This link provides a map of the Qualified Census Tracts and Disproportionately Impacted Areas WIOA QCT-DIA Map (<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/qctdiamap>).

- **"Rural Resident"** means an individual who resides in a county that is classified as a nonmetropolitan county by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum classification scheme. Please see <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes/>

### Program Models

JTED funds will support training programs serving eligible adults or youth. Applicants may apply to administer an adult program, a youth program, or both adult and youth programs. If the applicant plans to apply for both adult and youth, a separate application and budget needs to be completed for each program model (adult and youth). If the applicant is approved for both program models, they will receive two separate grant awards and will be responsible for budgeting and tracking performance measures separately for each award. This NOFO does not include an option to apply for only Barrier Reduction funding. It is strongly encouraged to build Barrier Reduction services into the training program module. Additionally, applicants must use data to support why the target and priority population was selected and how it serves the employers' and industry sectors' needs. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to

administer components described in the NOFO through JTED funding and leveraged/braided resources, if utilized, to integrate services.

***JTED Category 1 - Adult Focus***

Applications in Category 1 will address providing services to unemployed, under-employed or under-represented adults who need the training to access employment or skill upgrades to advance in their employment. Adults must be 18 years or older, reside in Illinois and are eligible to work in Illinois at the completion of the program (definitions for these participants are above and in Appendix A). All applicants must demonstrate partnerships with employers and educational entities to create local or regional strategies. The types of supportive services that will be provided to adults that will support their success must be described in the application.

Additionally, applicants should consider incorporating Barrier Reduction funding into the training strategy to support participant completion of training and retention in employment. The list of allowable services is under "Program Services" of this NOFO.

When describing training services for **unemployed** adults, applications must include sector-specific occupational training combined with related work-based learning opportunities in a targeted industry described above; any stackable certifications or credentials for participants; and how essential employability skills, including digital and financial literacy and career readiness services, will be incorporated into the program design.

For applicants proposing to serve **under-employed** individuals, the application must include training strategies for skill upgrades or new skills. Additionally, applicants can propose serving incumbent workers through partnerships with local employers that need to upskill their workforce to address labor shortages. Partnerships for incumbent worker projects require that the employer identify the specific skillsets needed for entry-level positions or those needed to advance participants' careers. Proposals must include an overview of the existing curricula or address how a customized training approach will support the employer's productivity and increase the skill competencies of current employees or new hires. Elements of the training strategy should consider short-term credentials for entry positions and long-term training in a career pathway facilitating advancement with the employer or within the industry sector.

***JTED Category 2 - Youth Focus***

In Category 2 applications, the program design must involve educators and should include business leaders to develop a mix of academic, employability (including digital skills and digital financial literacy), and technical skills through contextualized instruction. Additionally, the model must have a robust supportive services element that may include Barrier Reduction Funding. This funding will equip youths with the necessary tools to complete the program successfully and thrive in their future academic pursuits or the workforce.

Training must include one or a combination of the following industry-recognized credentials: a license recognized by the State or Federal government or an associate or baccalaureate degree with multiple entries and exit points or entry into a Registered Apprenticeship Program. Employers are included in leadership roles to guide the development of career pathways and opportunities to experience the workplace through related paid or unpaid work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, or apprenticeships.

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These training programs will create opportunities for youth to obtain marketable in-demand skills and prepare them for jobs. Partnerships in this category must support and commit to leveraging resources to educate, train, support, and identify youth employment.

**Eligible Youth Participants** include unemployed, under-employed and at-risk in-school and out-of-school youth ages 16-24 who reside in Illinois and are eligible to work in Illinois at the completion of the training program. Definitions for “at risk” factors are available at: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/JTED2023.aspx>

### Program Requirements

The projects selected for funding through this NOFO will aim to alleviate the economic impacts faced by both employers and individuals who are unemployed, under-employed or facing challenges in finding employment. These projects will provide employment and training services that follow the Illinois Career Pathways framework (<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IL-Career-Pathways-Dictionary.PDF>) in the target industries identified in the NOFO. Strategies must be flexible enough to allow participants to succeed in establishing a family-sustaining career. Services described in the application must infuse equity into the entire spectrum of employment, from outreach to retention, as outlined below:

#### **1. Equity-Focused Program Culture**

Applicants must demonstrate how the program will increase participants' access, enrollment, completion, and retention. The application must outline how it will address industry barriers for target populations in hiring, advancement, retention, and earning through program models, partnerships, recruitment, and barrier-reducing services. Competitive applications will explain how the program develops digital skills aligned with the targeted industry/industries, including digital literacy, confidence, competence, use, and advanced skills. Finally, applicants must outline strategies for fostering a shared identity in the program and a welcoming, inclusive environment. The focus on equity should be evident in all aspects of program design and partnerships, including successful transition and retention.

#### **2. Outreach and Recruitment**

Applicants must provide details about their recruitment and outreach strategies to attract adults or youth to their programs when applying for this opportunity. Additionally, they need to explain how their process will ensure fairness and inclusivity towards eligible participants. The outreach plan must align with data analysis that demonstrates the population to be served. It should also consider cultural relevance and identify occupational disparities to help applicants make informed decisions about their participation. Efforts must include:

- Comprehensive details for outreach and recruitment strategies to connect with individuals in the targeted and priority population through culturally relevant multiple medium.
- Coordinated outreach and recruitment events with education, workforce, employer/industry organizations, and social service agencies to reach the targeted and priority population.
- Methods of establishing relationships and engage individuals in the targeted and priority population, and how culturally relevant content will be utilized to inform individuals on the opportunities available including:
  - Educating potential participants about occupations in the target industries and ensuring the opportunity aligns with their career interests.
  - Educating potential participants about digital literacy and digital skills training to facilitate accessing the careers of interest.



### **3. Employer Engagement**

Businesses best suited to ensure that content for programs meets their needs for a skilled workforce. Therefore, employers should have a leadership role in developing and supporting career pathway programs that integrate work-based learning opportunities. Competitive projects will provide evidence of this business commitment and will include strategies that demonstrate how employers engaged in this process. Examples of these strategies include:

- Surveying the business community to understand and establish a plan to address employer workforce needs, including digital skills to access and perform onsite and remote work;
- Work with economic development agencies to expand business service activity;
- Utilize business services teams to meet with individual employers to learn more about employer hiring and training challenges;
- Leverage connections with Local Workforce Innovation Boards, industry associations, chambers of commerce or other networks to identify employers in need of a skilled workforce;
- Conduct industry-specific events to create an intentional focus on an industry and a specific worker group;
- Invite employers to present at local workshops to interview interested participants; and
- Work with employers to place program participants in work-based learning opportunities including internships, on-the-job training and/or apprenticeships.

### **4. 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 and continuing for one (1) year after job placement. 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 and conducting follow-up is essential to the success of the jobseeker.

Key components 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.

#### **1. Comprehensive Assessment**

A thorough assessment is the foundation for understanding the participant's employment goals, existing skills, and 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 prepare participants to 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 for include:

- Employment goals;
- Interest and skills inventory;
- Essential employability skills, including digital confidence, competence and use and digital financial literacy skills assessment;
- Basic Skills deficiency;
- 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 when developing the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the needed combination of services to address barriers. Suitability includes working with the participant on the following:

- 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 on the job, the digital tools employees need to access, and the digital skills employees need to perform the job and participate in the benefits of employment;
- 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 includes, but are not limited to:
  - Assessing the participant's preferred training delivery method (traditional classroom, virtual or remote, real-time immersive technology (virtual, extended or augmented reality), or direct hands-on);
  - Assessing the cost and the length of the training program;
- Considering work-based-learning opportunities including, but not limited to, Registered Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, and/or work experience; and
- Finding the supportive services that are needed to achieve the participants' employment goals.

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

## **2. Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

Like the assessment, the 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 is to be developed collaboratively with the participant to establish goals mutually. 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 document the career pathway to attain the career objectives and include 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.);
  - Provide a 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;
- Include 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;
- 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);
- Information on the eligible training programs and training providers that are available on the State of Illinois Eligible Training Provider List. The IEP must document how the participant made an informed choice in selecting a training program;
- 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, internet connectivity and affordability services, and referrals to partner agencies for additional assistance such as childcare, counseling, or other applicable programs;
- The direct link to one or more of the performance indicators; and
- A method for tracking progress and identifying next steps, including, but not limited to, follow-up on open goals, objectives, and services.

## 5. **Training**

Training services are critical to the employment success of many individuals. Programs must lead to measurable skill gains and 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 assists in accelerating an individual's career advancement. The following services are types of training applicants can consider including in their program design.

### a. **Occupational skills training, training for nontraditional employment**

Prepares participants for careers that are 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.

b. **Skill upgrading and retraining**

Training is provided to assist with upgrading the skills and/or retraining the participants. Courses that provide an occupational changing type of instruction to prepare individuals 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.

c. **Entrepreneurial training**

Prepares entrepreneurs to either start a small business or expand an existing business, usually through the development of a business plan to operate a location-based or virtual business and may include advanced digital skills training to operate a digitally powered business identified in the business plan.

d. **Job readiness training**

Includes job seeking and interviewing skills, understanding employer expectations, and enhancing a customer's capacity to move toward self-sufficiency.

e. **Adult education and literacy activities**,

Includes activities of English language acquisition, acquisition of basic digital literacy skills through digital confidence, competency and use, 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.

6. **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:

a. **Pre-apprenticeship**

A pre-apprenticeship program is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program. The key components of a pre-apprenticeship include:

- Training and curriculum that directly aligns with a registered apprenticeship program;
- Access to digital skills acquisition, including basic digital literacy, digital confidence, competency, and use;
- Access to financial digital literacy and knowledge acquisition;
- 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 assist in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship into a registered apprenticeship program

**b. Apprenticeship**

An apprenticeship is an employer-driven, “earn while you learn” model that combines on-the-job training 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. JTED funds may be used to pay for the technical training and on-the-job training costs of workers. JTED funds may also be used to provide supportive services and Barrier Reduction funds to participants that help them succeed in apprenticeship programs.

**c. Work experiences or internships**

Work experience and 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. 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:

- Pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Summer employment and other employment activities available throughout the school year;
- Internships and job shadowing; and
- On-the-job Training.

**d. Transitional jobs (allowable under Category 1)**

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 non-profit sectors. Transitional jobs provide individuals with work experience and an opportunity to develop important workplace skills, including digital skills, within the context of an employee-employer relationship, in which the program provider generally acts as the employer, and with an opportunity to develop important workplace skills.

**e. On-the-Job Training**

On-the-job Training (OJT) provides reimbursements to employers to help compensate for the costs associated with skills upgrade training, including digital literacy, competency and use skills, for newly hired employees and the lost production of current employees providing the training (including management staff). OJT training can assist employers who are looking to expand their businesses and who need additional staff trained with specialized skills. OJT employers may receive up to 75% reimbursement of the wage rate of OJT trainees to help defray personnel training costs.

**f. Customized Training**

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.

**g. Incumbent Worker (IW) Training (allowable under Category 1)**

Incumbent Worker Training provides services to employers with 250 or fewer 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 avert layoffs. Incumbent Worker training can be used to either:

- Help avert potential layoffs of employees; or
- Obtain the skills necessary to retain employment, such as increasing the skill levels, including digital skills, of employees so they can be promoted within the company and create backfill opportunities for new or less-skilled employees.

**7. Supportive Services**

Supportive Services (Defined in Appendix A) provide participants with key assistance beyond career and training services necessary to achieve success. 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 digital equity resources such as low or reduced-cost internet connectivity programs, devices, and digital solutions to facilitate remote work, at-home learning, or communications with employers or employability service providers;
- Referrals to the Illinois Comptroller for financial digital literacy training and banking enrollment and services;
- 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 such items as 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.

**8. Barrier Reduction Funds**

Barrier reduction funding is devoted to increasing family stability and job retention by covering accumulated emergency costs for basic needs, such as housing-related expenses (rent, utilities, internet connectivity, etc.), transportation, childcare, digital technology needs, education needs, mental health services, substance abuse services, income support, and work-related supplies that are not typically covered by programmatic supportive services [20 ILCS 605/605-415(b)]. Eligible entities must provide their Barrier Reduction Funding policy if they intend to provide these services through this grant. At a minimum, all applicants for Barrier Reduction Funding will be required to:

- Describe the exact types of barrier reduction funding services to be provided (e.g., housing, transportation, childcare, internet connectivity, digital device, etc.);
- Demonstrate that the applicant has established policies for resource and service coordination with appropriate provider organizations;

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- Demonstrate there is a need to use Barrier Reduction Funding to assist program participants in a manner related to the Job Training and Economic Development Grant, including a reason why these services are unavailable through other social service programs;
- Distinguish between when support services will be used compared to Barrier Reduction Funding and why Barrier Reduction Funding is the better option;
- Describe the population of individuals to be served, the region of the State to be served, the types of assistance to be provided to program participants and the estimated total amounts and the amounts to be provided per participant;
- Describe the anticipated outcomes by using the Barrier Reduction Funding to assist program participants;
- Establish criteria, if offering emergency cash assistance, for determining the need and amount of cash being provided (Emergency cash assistance will need prior approval by DCEO) and referral to the Illinois Comptroller for a digital banking enrollment or solution; and
- Demonstrate that the applicant has policies and procedures to account for the grant funds and prevent fraud or misuse of barrier reduction funds.
- **See Appendix B for more details on allowable Barrier Reduction funding.**

### 9. Placement

The placement of program participants in jobs is one of the primary goals of the JTED Program. Successful applicants will utilize several job placement services, including:

- 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 site in Illinois workNet to connect workers with employers. The Virtual Job Fair (VJF) is a part of the new GET HIRED initiative that Governor Pritzker announced on 5/14/20. Job fairs can be set up by employers, grantees, Chambers of Commerce, legislators, etc., provide job seekers 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.

### 10. Follow-Up

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

- Supportive services and/or Barrier Reduction 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, including digital literacy, digital confidence, competency, and use training;
- 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.

**11. Program Assessment**

Applicants must provide information about how their program models will be assessed and how this information will be used to enhance program delivery. Program assessment may include surveys of program graduates regarding overall satisfaction with the training activities delivered and appropriateness to the targeted job opportunities, surveys of employers concerning the comprehensiveness of coverage of required job skills, etc. The assessment plan should indicate how the results of the assessment activities will be used to improve the training program continuously.

**12. Program Partners / Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

All applicants must have a current written agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all the program partners that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner and lists their funding contribution. Applicants who enter an MOU with Eligible Training Providers should include details regarding the training program, including the length, location, class size, cost, and other important information. MOUs must be developed and signed within the NOFO application timeframe. MOUs established prior to the NOFO release date may be rejected, and the application may not be reviewed. Please review the sample MOUs available as a resource at <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/JTED2023.aspx>

**13. Leveraged Funding**

Round 1 of JTED supported Barrier Reduction ONLY programs. This NOFO does not include this option. However, it is encouraged for applicants to utilize other funding streams to maximize service capacity. A complementary training program can cover the cost of components like Training and/or Work-Based Learning/Work-Based Training and JTED can be utilized for other components like Barrier Reduction, but the ENTIRE application must be completed that describes the training program and indicates how leveraged funds will be utilized. Tracking of services provided by the complementary grant will be required.

**Performance Goals and Measures**

Program goals and outcomes must be included in the proposal for each JTED Category and training program under consideration. Agreed-upon goals and outcomes will be tracked utilizing project management tools in the *Illinois workNet.com* workforce portal. Competitive applications will clearly articulate how the activities funded under each applicable Category in this NOFO support the negotiated goals and result in positive outcomes. Note: the grant funds should not supplant or replace the applicant's current operations.

Under this NOFO, an evaluation will be conducted to determine the impact of barrier reduction funding and the best methods for measuring results. Through Illinois workNet's case management system, assessments of barriers will be conducted and reported, and alignment and delivery of services will be reviewed and compared to outcomes. The intent of the evaluation is to set standards and baseline results for future programs utilizing barrier reduction funds.



1. **Performance Goals**

Grantees will be required to report performance data on the following activities and outcomes:

- Number of individuals enrolled in the program
- Number of individuals completing the program
- Number of individuals obtaining credential(s)
- Number of individuals that achieve a measurable skill gain
- Number of individuals placed in post-secondary education
- Number of individuals placed in unsubsidized employment
- Number of individuals retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months
- Number of individuals experiencing a wage/benefit increase

Additionally, the JTED program will keep track of grant activities and outcomes utilizing the Illinois workNet system. These metrics will inform the Department of the efficiency and effectiveness of employment and training services provided under this NOFO. The activity and outcome metrics include (but are not limited to the following):

- Number of businesses engaged
- Number of individuals **placed** and number **acquiring** an Industry-Linked Credential, Certification, or License
- Number of individuals **placed** and number **completing** a Pre-Apprenticeship, USDOL Registered Apprenticeship, or other Apprenticeship Programs (see <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/ApprenticeshipIL/Pages/default.aspx>)
- Number of individuals **placed** and number **completing** OJT
- Number of individuals **placed** and number **completing** a paid work experience or internship
- Number of individuals **continuing** a Pre-Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, or other Apprenticeship Program at case closure
- Number of individuals achieving digital competency
- Number of individuals employed in the sector
- Number of individuals promoted in the sector

2. **Performance Standards**

Acceptable performance for a competitive application is set at 75% of the planned performance goals.

## **B. Funding Information**

This grant program is utilizing State of Illinois General Revenue Funds appropriated by the General Assembly in the State Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$13,000,000 to \$15,000,000. Awards will range from \$250,000 to \$750,000. The Department expects to make approximately 30 awards for through this NOFO.

Anticipated start date for awards is May 1, 2024. The period of performance is expected to be May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2026.

### **Allowable Costs**

Grant expenditures must comply with the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), the JTED statute (20 ILCS 605/605-415), and related rules (56 Ill. Admin. Code Part 2660) and must be reasonable and necessary

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to support one of the allowable grant activities set forth in 56 Ill. Admin. Code 2660.40. Specific allowable grant costs are listed below, and specific budget line items are identified in the uniform budget template:

- Expenses to design training curricula and related materials;
- Expenses to provide industry-linked skill training and work-based learning to individuals in the target population (e.g., instructor costs and curriculum materials, including digital devices required for digital literacy training);
- Expenses for the ongoing evaluation and refinement of the curricula and related materials;
- Expenses for the design and implementation of a needs assessment to determine specific skill shortages being experienced by one or more local industries;
- Expenses for the design and implementation of a needs assessment to determine the education and training needs of the target population relative to the skill needs of local industries;
- Expenses for the design of curricula and related materials for training programs designed for individuals in the target population to prepare them to meet identified skill labor shortages;
- Expenses for the delivery of industry-linked training and work-based learning to unemployed persons and placement of program completers into jobs in the target industries;
- Expenses for ongoing coordination of the Eligible Training Provider partners;
- Program participant wages;
- Expenses for career planning activities that provide one-on-one staff assistance and career counseling as defined under “Program Services”;
- Expenses incurred to meet grant administration requirements; and
- Any other costs determined to be reasonable and necessary to carry out the grant program activities as permitted and approved by the Department.

### **Grant Award and Payment Terms**

Successful applicants will be invited to negotiate a grant with the Department (or two grants if approved for both program models). The executed grant agreement(s) will specify conditions for payment and a payment schedule. In general, grantees will receive payments on a reimbursement basis 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.

### **Grant Extensions**

The Department may authorize the extension 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 the Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program.

### **Funding Requirements**

*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 Parts 25, 170, 183 and 200.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the 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.

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 that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxpayer-identification-numbers-tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number>);
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<https://sam.gov>), SAM.gov registrations must be marked as “public” to allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information;
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>);
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at <https://sam.gov>);
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable ([https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business\\_services/corp.html](https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/corp.html));
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>).

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:

Eligible applicants include:

Applicants must have demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in administering workforce development programs [20 ILCS 605/605-415(b)] and must meet the requirements outlined in this NOFO. Entities that are eligible to apply for the JTED NOFO consist of:

- Employers;
- Private nonprofit organizations (which may include a faith-based organization);
- Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) administrative entities;
- Community Action Agencies;
- Industry associations; and
- Public or private educational institutions

Local governments that are not WIOA administrative entities are not eligible to apply.

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 or leveraged funds from multiple funding sources will be given priority consideration. Consideration will also be given to projects that include plans that address ongoing sustainability beyond the grant period.

## **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 that was 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 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 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 that elect to waive payments for 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.

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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.

**Administrative Costs:** It is expected that administrative costs, both direct and indirect, will represent a small portion of the program budget. Program budgets and narratives will detail how all proposed expenditures are directly necessary for program implementation and will distinguish between direct/indirect administrative and direct/indirect program costs.

#### 4. Other, if applicable.

**Program Eligibility Criteria:** All grant applicants must follow the program design and approaches outlined in this NOFO. Eligible program participants must meet criteria established in the NOFO under the applicable Categories.

**Additional Program Requirements:** All applicants must be complying, or agree to comply, with all applicable federal and state laws and related regulations to be considered for an award, including, but not limited to:

- Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program, 20 ILCS 605/605-415 and related rules at 56 Ill. Admin. Code 2660.
- Protection of Personally Identifiable Information (see Identity Protection Act (5 ILCS 179/1) and the Personal Information Protection Act (815 ILCS 530/1).
- Uniform Administrative Requirements found at 2 CFR 200.

**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 be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the application. The Department 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 to a subsequent grant agreement. The Department 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 utilize the appeal process as stated in the Merit-Based Review Policy available in the Resource Library at [www.grants.illinois.gov](http://www.grants.illinois.gov).

Applicants may submit a maximum of two applications (one for an adult program and one for a youth program) for this opportunity.

## 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 the Program Manager:

Tammy Stone  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

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Springfield, IL  
Tele: 217-986-6030  
Email: [Tammy.Stone@illinois.gov](mailto:Tammy.Stone@illinois.gov)

### 2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format. The signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Mandatory Disclosures

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the **submission a JTED Program Application**. The Program Application is a guided application and must be completed entirely:

- JTED Program Application
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Partnership Agreements (if applicable)

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

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](http://www.SAM.gov) and/or utilize this instructional link: [How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab](#). SAM.gov registrations must be "public."
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in the 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.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by 5 p.m. CST on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

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Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e29ac568b42e4fa4a9a64bea2e82bcd9>

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.**

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

**6. Funding Restrictions.**

This opportunity does allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. Other restrictions can be found in Sections B. and C.3. 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 allocable, where necessary for the efficient and timely performance of the program and are subject to 2 CFR 200.458 and, where permitted, in the final executed grant agreement. To be accepted, proof of services must meet the guidelines and requirements outlined within this NOFO and the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) [See 30 ILCS 708/125 (<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/documents/003007080K125.htm>)]. Costs associated with the development of a proposal are not allowed.

**7. Other Submission Requirements.**

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

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 160-point scale. The threshold for not recommending funding is set by the Department. The Department shall consider the following criteria when evaluating the application submittal: Capacity, Need, Program Plan, and Budget. The sections list the evaluating criteria and description on what will be evaluated for each section. The application correlates with the criteria.

<p><b>SECTION 1: CAPACITY</b>  The applicant must be an Eligible Entity as defined in this NOFO. An objective of this JTED Funding Opportunity is to address the economic impacts experienced by businesses and individuals most impacted by the COVID-19</p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE POINTS</b>  <b>40</b></p>
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<p>pandemic. Therefore, the applicant must provide evidence of their capacity to partner with employers in the targeted industries and serve the targeted populations (under-employed, unemployed, under-represented, and youth). Additionally, this includes identifying the expertise of staff and subcontracted personnel to demonstrate their ability to implement the program. Examples of current or completed projects similar in scope for these individuals should be provided. Finally, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to run successful training programs that include relationships with key stakeholders. Stakeholders include eligible training providers, social service agencies, and community-based organizations that will influence the training and wraparound services for a holistic service approach.</p>	
<p>The applicant provides high-level information about the lead applicant organization's size, structure, and history. Specify whether the organization is a start-up or is more established. Describe any other organizations that will be partners, subcontractors, or subrecipients for the project. Describe the applicant's process for developing the staffing capacity to successfully administer the program proposed in this application.</p>	5
<p>The applicant's capacity to provide services outlined in the NOFO and successfully complete the project tasks within the proposed grant period.</p>	5
<p>The applicant's experience in working with businesses in the target industries.</p>	5
<p>The applicant-related experience in working with the target/priority population.</p>	5
<p>The applicant's related experience in working with eligible training providers and/or partners.</p>	5
<p>The key staff and instructors, including subcontractor personnel, to be assigned to the project demonstrate the applicant's capacity to administer this project. (Aligns with Staffing Plan Chart)</p>	5
<p>The applicant's previous performance in administering similar grants and projects (Review the Grant History Chart).</p>	5
<p>The applicant provides information demonstrating the applicant team's experience with and ability to use an equity lens. There is evidence that equity is embedded in all aspects of program design and partnerships, including successful transition and retention. An equity lens is a process that analyzes the impact of policies and practices on marginalized communities to inform and ensure equitable outcomes.</p>	5
<p><b>SECTION 2: NEED</b>          Applications must identify the area and populations served. This should include the qualified census tract(s) and/or disproportionately impacted area(s) where the project will operate or serve individuals. Training programs developed must be informed by local labor market information (LMI). Include the analysis of data that determined the needs of employers and individuals served under this program. Include the specific needs of the industry(s) and related occupations and the impact the training will have on meeting those needs. Include information on how the data is utilized to develop sector-based career pathways and how other resources support this approach. Based on the results of this analysis, identify the specific needs of businesses and the needs of individuals, including barriers to employment.</p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE POINTS</b> <b>25</b></p>



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Applicant has prioritized services in the Qualified Census Tract (QCT), Disproportionately Impacted Area (DIA) or rural communities where customers will be recruited from and/or the project will operate and the specific locations where the training will be offered. (For underemployed customers this could include the employer worksite.) WIOA QCT-DIA Map - <a href="https://www.illinoisworknet.com/qctdiamap">https://www.illinoisworknet.com/qctdiamap</a>	5
Applicant's focus on identifying appropriate services in target industries and occupations as informed by labor market analysis, regional workforce data, Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) local/region workforce plan, and employer needs information.	5
Applicant's description of the need for quality training in sector(s) and career pathway(s) and analysis of resources that can be leveraged through local and regional partners.	5
The potential impact the program will have on stabilizing employers in the target industries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.	5
Applicant's identification of the needs of the target population including barriers to employment and how participation in the project will result in family-sustaining careers.	5
<p><b>SECTION 3: PROGRAM PLAN</b></p> <p>Applicants can include one or more categories in the program design. The program plan section of the application template includes overall operational components. Additionally, the applicant must compile the training program summary(s) which provides details related to the categorical training to be offered. In the application template, applicants will provide a high-level program summary. The summary needs to be comprehensive but concise and should be written so the public can understand the program's intent. Applicants must include the role of local businesses, the local workforce system, and other key stakeholders in developing and delivering services, including job placement, retention, and follow-up services. Additionally, the application must include a list of the training providers, the credentialing body, and information on the training materials used and how they relate to the targeted industry sector and employers. The Department may request training materials during the evaluation process. In this section, applicants indicate what targeted populations will be served and describe the customer flow from outreach to employment or post-secondary education. If customer flow varies between targeted populations, show each process.</p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE POINTS</b> <b>70</b></p>
Applicant demonstrates a focus on equity in all aspects of program design and partnerships, including successful transition and retention in a welcoming, inclusive environment.	5
The applicant has a comprehensive plan for outreach and recruitment strategies to connect with individuals in the targeted and priority population through multiple mediums and connections with partner organizations.	5
The applicant's recruitment plan provides details on how they will establish relationships and engage individuals in the targeted and priority population, which includes culturally relevant mediums.	5
The outreach and recruitment plan outlines how the applicant will educate the individuals in the targeted and priority population on the opportunities available,	5

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including career(s) offered through their program and the type of services available, including digital literacy.	
The applicant plans to work with employers in the target industries and approach to meet the employers' needs for skilled employees.	5
The level of participation of local employers or industry associations in the development of training and implementation, including the hiring of program completers.	5
The applicant's process to serve the target/priority populations is based on the participants' skill levels.	5
The level of participation of partners, including training providers, the local workforce system, social service agencies, community-based providers, etc., to work together and design programs that collaborate on service delivery to maximize benefits to individuals in the local target population.	5
The applicant provided details of the quality of the training providers that will result in participants earning credentials, licenses, or certifications that align with the participant's career pathways, facilitating employment opportunities, continuation in post-secondary education or advancement with the employer or within the industry sector.	5
A plan to deliver support services and barrier reduction services, including intake, needs assessment, distribution of funds and services, and referrals. Applicants must explain how they will provide services and funds promptly and efficiently to address immediate and longer-term needs.	5
The plan demonstrates the capacity for the applicant to place individuals in unsubsidized employment (Adult/Youth); under-employed individuals will experience an increase in earnings (Adult) or post-secondary education (Youth)	5
Coordinating activities with local and regional workforce, education and economic development entities. This includes the referral of program participants into partner programs based on the individual employment plan of each participant.	5
The applicant describes how it will assess the program and how this information will be used to enhance program delivery. Program assessment may include surveys of program graduates regarding overall satisfaction with the training activities delivered and appropriateness to the targeted job opportunities, surveys of employers concerning the comprehensiveness of coverage of required job skills, etc. The assessment plan should indicate how the results of the assessment activities will be used to improve the training program continuously.	5
The applicant has demonstrated that the organization has a quality and feasibility Program Implementation Timeline and Training Program Summary(s). The Program Implementation Timeline includes realistic activities, timelines and includes responsible staff to complete the tasks. A Training Program Summary(s) has been completed for each training program (i.e. healthcare/manufacturing). It includes clarity in the program description and reasonable performance goals. Training program information aligns the training with the occupation and includes detailed information on the services provided like education and work-based learning and identifies if funds will be utilized from complementary programs. Associated credentials are relevant to the training and occupations.	5
<b>SECTION 4: BUDGET NARRATIVE/COST EFFECTIVENESS</b>	

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Applicants must provide a high-level budget narrative, including an analysis of the cost efficiency in relationship to planned outcomes. Provide a detailed narrative of each line-item cost. 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.) Describe how this project will be sustained beyond the grant funding period. Discuss how this project will benefit the target industries and target population and community.	<b>POSSIBLE POINTS 25</b>
The applicant provides a high-level budget narrative of the JTED program, including justification of the main budget expense items and an analysis of the cost efficiency related to planned outcomes and proposed activities.	5
The quality of the detailed information for each line item. (Review the Excel budget and narrative for each line item.)	5
The amount of leveraged resources and plans to combine public and private funding.	5
The applicant provides information regarding any subcontracts or partner agreements that will be funded under this grant. This includes a brief description of the services and the amount and the location of the services.	5
The applicant describes any programs, services, and partnerships that will be leveraged to improve the program's cost-effectiveness, return on investment, and long-term sustainability. The applicant describes any leveraged/matching funds from workforce partners, participating businesses, and others.	5

**2. Review and Selection Process.**

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated, and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded based on the evaluation committee's *merit review* of the applications and the development of a funding recommendation. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined based on the applicant's response and compliance with the requirements of this NOFO. The Merit Review Team and DCEO may consider the geographic distribution of awards throughout the state in making final funding decisions. Selected applications will enter into negotiations with the Department for a grant. The purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budget and scope of work revisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made.

The Department 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, award in part or total, and waive minor defects and non-compliance.

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://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappreview.html>.

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

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a merit based review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.

The Department 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.**

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

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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)).

### **Project Reporting.**

Grantees will be required to document the participant enrollments and the services that are provided to every participant served under this grant and related outcomes within ten (10) days of providing the service in the Illinois workNet.com portal.

#### **a. Project Reporting:**

Grantees 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 limited to, the following:

- Participant-level information, including services, outcomes, and demographics, available through the Illinois workNet™ or other reporting processes as directed by the Illinois Department of Commerce.
- Periodic Performance Report.
- Periodic Financial Report.
- 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.
- Evaluation of all projects is required.

#### **b. Success Story Submission in Illinois workNet:**

Grantees are required to submit written testimonials for program participant successes published on Illinois workNet 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. It should show how participating in the program is making Illinois a better place to live – for individuals, families, organizations, businesses, and communities. For more information and examples, please see: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/UpdatesHelp/Pages/SuccessStories.aspx>

## **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**

Submission of an application confers no right to an award or a subsequent grant agreement. The Illinois Department of Commerce is not obligated to award any grants under this program, pay any costs incurred by the applicant to prepare and submit an application, or pay any grant-related expenses incurred before the start date to grant. All decisions of the Illinois Department of Commerce are final.

### **Resources:**

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

- State of Illinois Unified Workforce Plan <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/wioastateplan>
- WIOA Regional/Local Plans by Economic Development Region  
[https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans\\_MOUs\\_Dashboard.aspx](https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning/Pages/Plans_MOUs_Dashboard.aspx)

### **Technical Assistance:**

Before applying for funding, several Technical Assistance (T.A.) sessions will be available on various topics, including Grant Writing, Business Engagement, Career Pathways, Equity, and other topics. All applicants are encouraged to attend the sessions. The information for T.A. sessions will be posted at: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/JTED2023.aspx>

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 JTED site:

<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/JTED2023.aspx>.

Successful applicants must agree to receive consultation technical assistance from authorized representatives of the Department. The grantees and collaborating partners will have required site visits, training, and in-person interviews. Successful applicants must attend webinars and training as scheduled and provided by the Department or a subcontractor of the Department and must budget accordingly.

**JTED Program Development and Capacity Building:** This is the second NOFO that will be released for the Job Training and Economic Development Program. The Department welcomes written feedback regarding the effectiveness of the program design and the requirements outlined in this NOFO. Please address all feedback to:

**JTED Program Grant Manager**

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**Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity**  
**Email: [ceo.wd.policyandgrants@illinois.gov](mailto:ceo.wd.policyandgrants@illinois.gov)**