

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)
Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Technical Assistance (TA) Centers of Excellence
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
FOA-ETA-21-06

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1) What organizations can apply for these cooperative agreements?

Eligible lead applicants vary by RA TA Center. The following national organizations or organizations with national reach are eligible to apply under each of the four RA TA Centers of Excellence:

- ***Diversity and Inclusion Center (FOA pg. 16):*** eligible applicants are defined as national organizations or organizations with a national reach that are non-profit, education, economic, and/or workforce development agencies/associations, and state and government entities that are one of the following:
 - Workforce Intermediaries
 - Community-Based Organizations
 - Diversity and Inclusion Non-profits, Organizations, and Associations
 - Public and Professional Associations
 - Professional or Trade Unions
 - Consortia
- ***Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment Center (FOA pg. 18):*** eligible applicants are defined as national organizations or organizations with a national reach that are for-profit, non-profit, education, economic, and/or workforce development agencies/associations, and state and government entities that are one of the following:
 - Workforce Associations
 - Community-Based Organizations
 - Public & Professional Associations
 - Professional Consulting Organizations
 - Consortia
- ***Apprenticeship Occupations and Standards Center (FOA pg. 20):*** eligible applicants are defined as national organizations or organizations with a national reach that are for-profit, non-profit, education, economic, and/or workforce development agencies/associations, and state and government entities that are one of the following:
 - Private/Public Partnerships
 - Industry-recognized Associations of Credentialing
 - Institutional Accrediting Agencies
 - Post-Secondary Education Associations
 - Institutional Accreditation Organizations
 - Higher Education Consultants
 - Workforce Development Agencies and Associations
 - Curriculum Development Agencies
 - Competency-based Curriculum Design Organizations
 - Research-focused Institutions

- Government Entities
- Consortia
- ***Data and Performance and Best Practices Center (FOA pg. 22):*** eligible applicants are defined as national organizations or organizations with national reach that are for-profit, non-profit, education, economic, and/or workforce development agencies/associations, and state and government entities that are one of the following:
 - Data Analytics Providers
 - Business Consulting Services
 - Labor Market Information (LMI) and State Data Centers
 - Consortia

Refer to Section III.A, Eligible Applicants, of the FOA for complete details on requirements for eligible applicants.

2) Are labor organizations eligible to apply as lead applicants?

Yes, labor organizations are eligible to apply as lead applicants, as appropriate.

Labor organizations (identified under community-based organizations as union related organizations), which include professional or trade unions, are eligible lead applicants for the Diversity and Inclusion Center. Labor organizations (identified under community-based organizations as union related organizations) are eligible lead applicants for the Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment Center. Labor organizations, in cases where they are providing Competency-based Curriculum Design, are eligible lead applicants for the Apprenticeship Occupations and Standards Center. Further, for each Center, eligible lead applicants can apply on behalf of a consortium of organizations that is led by an eligible entity whose principal function(s) is consistent with the capabilities associated with either one or more of the above-listed organizations.

Labor organizations are not eligible lead applicants for the Data and Performance and Best Practices Center.

3) Are labor organizations eligible to be partners under this FOA?

Yes. Eligible lead applicants are encouraged to partner with a broad range of organizations, including labor organizations, as appropriate. For example, the Diversity and Inclusion Center identifies minority trade or professional organizations or associations as optional partners. Labor organizations may be included as other required or optional partner types identified in the FOA, including but not limited to other organizations with experience in On-the-Job-Learning (OJL), Work-based learning, and/or apprenticeship, and apprenticeship program sponsors.

Further, eligible lead applicants can apply on behalf of a consortium of organizations that is led by an eligible entity whose principal function(s) is consistent with the capabilities associated with either one or more of the above-listed organizations.

4) Can consortium applicants apply?

Yes. The Department encourages consortia applications, as indicated on page 15 of the FOA, with the lead applicant serving as one of the consortium members. Public and private, non-profit organizations including institutions of higher education (as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act) are eligible to participate as members of the consortium. The purpose of the RA TA Centers of Excellence is

to provide technical assistance on a national scale to the registered apprenticeship system. As a result, applications that showcase strong partnerships that address each key outcome as indicated in Section IV.B.3.b (ii) are highly encouraged.

5) Can applicants apply for more than one RA TA Center of Excellence?

Yes, but only as separate applications for each RA TA Center.

Only one application will be considered from each organization per RA TA Center of Excellence. Applicants may apply for additional Centers of Excellence, but must provide a separate application. Applications including multiple Centers within the same application package will be found non-responsive and will not receive further consideration. If multiple applications are received from the same organization for the same Center of Excellence, only the most recently received application that met the deadline for that Center will be considered. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, it will not be replaced with an earlier application.

AWARD INFORMATION

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

We expect availability of approximately \$31 million to fund approximately four cooperative agreements. You may apply for a ceiling amount of:

- Diversity and Inclusion Center: up to \$13 million;
- Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment Center: up to \$7 million;
- Apprenticeship Occupations and Standards Center: up to \$7 million; and
- Data and Performance and Best Practices Center: up to \$4 million.

7) How will funds be awarded?

Funding will be provided in the form of a cooperative agreement. As these funds will be awarded under cooperative agreements, the Department's Office of Apprenticeship (OA) will have substantial involvement in program activities. OA involvement will include:

- Serving as primary point of contact and federal project officer (FPO) on the project;
- Coordinating with the OA and with SAA offices;
- Using the Department's IT systems where appropriate to facilitate coordination and proper communication (customer relationship management tools); and
- Collaborating substantially and programmatically on the project strategy, inclusive of the sustainability strategy, and its implementation.

8) When are applications due?

The deadline for submissions is **April 29, 2021 at 4:00:00 p.m. Eastern Time**. Applicants should begin the process early enough to allow adequate time for complete application submission to grants.gov prior to the deadline. Any application submitted that includes the requisite SF-424, SF-424A, and a project narrative will be considered for funding, subject to conditions upon award at the Grant Officer's discretion.

9) Where do we apply?

You must submit your application electronically on <https://www.grants.gov>. Applications sent by hardcopy, e-mail, telegram, facsimile (fax), or other means will not be accepted.

10) How long is the cooperative agreement period of performance?

The period of performance is 48 months with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2021. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES**11) What is the scope/service area for the RA TA Centers of Excellence?**

The RA TA Centers of Excellence will focus on providing technical assistance on a national scale, working to support and expand the registered apprenticeship system. The Centers will primarily engage key registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers through a virtual platform/online presence.

12) What types of technical assistance (TA) may be provided with these grant funds?

Each designated Center will conduct the following general technical assistance, at a minimum:

- Develop comprehensive TA strategies to key registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers on a national scale, that directly engender: increases in underrepresented populations being served in RAPs; increases in the number of RAPs developed and expanded; finding new partners in a local area and leveraging resources for apprentices; and accurately reporting data across the OA system;
- Develop and/or use the Department's platforms to create an online community to support key stakeholders and customers during the life of the project, and which can be sustained by the Department after the project ends;
- Coordinate across all RA TA Centers of Excellence to serve key registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers;
- Coordinate with the Department, OA, SAAs, and DOL-funded investments that support Registered Apprenticeship expansion to leverage, align, and build on existing apprenticeship efforts already in place to maximize the use of resources and minimize the duplication of efforts. Centers must ensure they directly engage with OA and SAAs, where appropriate, to support these efforts;
- Provide coaching and facilitate peer-to-peer learning for relevant key registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers;
- Develop best practices, success stories, toolkits, and written resources to provide assistance to key registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers;
- Conduct outreach, marketing, and partnership building on a national scale to expand RAPs;
- Directly or indirectly support the expansion of national RAP models;
- Directly or indirectly support registered apprenticeship stakeholders and customers in their diversity and inclusion efforts by actively working to support EEO efforts and the recruitment of underrepresented populations within RAPs; and
- Support RAP development and/or the recruitment of new national partners, including employers and education stakeholders and customers. (See Section IV.E.3)

In addition to the general TA each RA TA Center must provide, there are additional TA activities for each RA TA Center, detailed in the FOA. Refer to Section I.D Program Goals and Allowable Activities for a complete list of TA activities for each RA TA Center.

MISC.

13) Who can I contact for further questions about the RA TA Centers FOA?

For further information about this FOA, please contact Daniela Petchik, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at (202) 693-3439. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to petchik.daniela.m@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-21-06. Along with question(s), please include a contact name and phone number.