

Application Requirements: Project Narrative

To apply for SAEF4 grant funds, states must submit a project narrative or the Statement of Work (SOW). The SOW must address parts A and B, described below, for the Department to consider it fully responsive. Applicants must also describe any activities described in part C, if applicable to the SOW.

A. States must describe how they plan to meet the commitment to several requirements that support the statewide expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs:

- 1. Set Statewide Expansion Goals.** States are required to establish a statewide expansion goal for the total number of active apprentices, by industry sector and occupation, as measured through the [“Apprentices by State” dashboard](#) on [apprenticeship.gov](#), to achieve by the end of the grant’s Period of Performance (POP). Post-award, the Department will work closely with states to refine and adjust their expansion goal, as needed, to ensure it is clearly defined and tied to reportable metrics so they are in position to successfully meet their goal. The expansion goal must reflect all apprentices registered in the state. **Note:** States should not base the goal on the number of apprentices who directly receive services or enroll in programs supported by the grant funds.

States are also encouraged to set other ambitious goals for apprentice growth, and the Department will measure states’ efforts to meet these goals as part of this program’s performance reporting requirements. The Department will not penalize states that fail to meet their statewide expansion goal or other additional goals if states demonstrate efforts and progress toward meeting them throughout the award’s POP.

- 2. Support Employers and Registered Apprentices in Targeted Industry(ies).** States must specify a percentage of SAEF4 funding, determined by the state, that will be reserved to directly support Registered Apprenticeship programs within a targeted industry(ies) identified by the state. States must describe how funding reserved for the specific industry(ies) will be spent, which may include, but is not limited to, developing new and expanding existing programs in the targeted industry(ies),¹ support for employers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in the targeted industry(ies) (e.g., incentive payments), alignment of Career Technical Education (CTE) programs of study with pre-apprenticeships within the targeted industry(ies), and support for apprentices (e.g., costs associated with supportive services, Related Training Instruction (RTI), and On-the-Job Learning (OJL)) enrolled in Registered Apprenticeship programs within these targeted industries. Applicants must specify their targeted industry(ies) and may propose an industry(ies) other than those listed in this TEGL and its attachments. Applicants are encouraged to leverage existing partnerships, instead of identifying new partnerships, to support their grant program. Please refer to Attachment II

¹ An expanded Registered Apprenticeship program can only be counted once during the grant’s period of performance, regardless of method. Any apprentice who does not directly receive a direct, grant-funded services but is enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program that is developed or expanded using grant funds are reportable individuals for this grant.

Section C “Other allowable activities” for more details.

- 3. Leveraged Resources Requirement.** States and territories must describe their commitment of at least 50 percent leveraged resources based on formula allocation.

This requirement is designed to maximize the impact of the SAEF4 grant program and ensures that states and territories demonstrate a tangible, sustained financial commitment to Registered Apprenticeship beyond Federal funds, supporting longer-term sustainability, scale, and continued program activities within the state.

States and territories must commit leveraged resources and funds in an amount that is at least 50 percent of the formula allocation to support costs allowable under the TEGL. (See Attachment VII Formula Allocation and Methodology).

States and territories must describe their strategy and demonstrate how they will achieve the 50 percent leveraged funds requirement. In addition, applicants must describe how leveraged funds will be used to support Registered Apprenticeship expansion. Applicants may have up to 90 days to solidify their strategy of meeting the leveraged funds requirement. States and territories have the entire POP to meet this requirement.

The information provided in this section must also be reflected in the Budget Narrative to indicate how matching funds will be allocated. Leveraged funds must be described in the Budget Narrative as described in Attachment IV. Section IV. B. For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the 2026 Application Guide, Section II. B Cost Sharing.

About Leveraged Resources, Approaches for Meeting Leveraged Resources, and Potential Funding Sources

Leveraged resources are all resources, including cash and in-kind, in excess of the award and associated cost sharing, if applicable, (e.g., in-kind contributions that support administrative staff not funded by the grant). Leveraged funds may also include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and other costs that help carry out the grant program.

Leveraged resources may be met through local, state, federal, public and private funds including but not limited to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Governor’s Reserve Funds, State-funded tax credits or grants, or other means as appropriate to support the Administration’s investments in the SAEF program. Grantees may consider the following sources of leveraged funds:

- **WIOA Governor’s Reserve Funds.** States and territories are encouraged to exercise their flexibility to commit funds from the WIOA Governor’s Reserve to achieve the Administration’s priority of exceeding 1 million apprentices and to further advance

the Governor’s priority workforce development programs that directly support the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship.

- State-Funded Tax Credits or Grants.** States that offer tax credits or operate grants funded solely through state funds that support Registered Apprenticeship programs or Registered Apprentices may use funds dedicated to these programs during the grant POP to meet the leveraged funds requirement. For tax credits or grants, the amount that may be counted is the actual amount drawn down, expended, or otherwise realized by recipients during the POP — not the statutory authorization, appropriation limit, or budget cap. For tax credits, this means the value of credits actually used during the POP, and for grants it means awards paid during the POP. To fully satisfy the leveraged-funds requirement, the actual amount provided through the tax credit or funded grant program, must be equal to at least 50 percent of the base funding amount allocated in the formula to fully meet the leveraged funds requirement for this grant application. Funds for these tax credits or grants may be used to partially meet the leveraged funds requirement if the remainder of the requirement is met through other means. Funding under the tax credit or grant program must exclusively be for the purpose of expanding Registered Apprenticeship and cannot be available to other workforce programs. Funding must be available to all Registered Apprenticeship programs registered for Federal purposes operating within the State.² States with programs that currently do not meet these requirements can work with their state legislature to revise their tax credit or grant program during the POP and may apply funds dedicated to the program towards the leveraged funds requirement once the tax credit or grant program meets these requirements.
- Other Sources of Leveraged Resources.** The leveraged funding requirement may be met through a variety of other means such as philanthropic and private sector investments. For example, federal leveraged funds could also include funding from Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) CTE State Leadership Activities funding, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), or other relevant programs, as permissible under the specific program. General funds to pay Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) who work on Registered Apprenticeship programs, providing paid tuition for apprentices through the State’s community college system, or sponsor/employer outreach activities, as appropriate may also be used to meet the leveraged funding requirements.

4. Program Approval Time (For States with Recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies)

² In SAA states, some Registered Apprenticeship programs may be recognized by OA for federal purposes in a State but have not received recognition for State purposes from the SAA. For example, programs utilizing National Program Standard (NPS) operating in a SAA state may only be registered with OA and not the SAA. Such Registered Apprenticeship programs must be eligible to receive funds under the tax credit or state-funded grant to receive funding.

Only).

The Department is committed to the timely consideration of standards for apprenticeship and program registrations across the National Apprenticeship System, with the goal of improving customer and stakeholder experiences in quality and consistency of Registered Apprenticeship program registration.

To engage State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) states in promoting transparency and accountability, SAA states are required to publish on a public-facing website their Registered Apprenticeship program approval performance metrics (e.g., average time to approve program standards upon a sponsor’s final submission of signed program standards) by the end of the first year of the grant. SAA states are further required to update this information on an annual basis. OA will provide technical assistance and support to grantees on fulfilling this requirement.

SAA states are also required to streamline and reduce timelines to apprenticeship program approval while safeguarding the quality and integrity of Registered Apprenticeship programs and standards. SAA states may leverage Office of Apprenticeship’s (OA) [Standards Builder](#) and [Apprenticeship Occupation Request \(AOR\) tool](#) or other in-house tools to streamline and reduce timelines for program approval. SAA states may use funds to hire additional staff, including Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATRs), to assist with program registration and reduce approval timelines. To align with systemwide improvements to the program registration process, SAA states are required to establish a commitment to make program registration decisions within 30 days, similar to OA’s commitment announced through [Bulletin 2026-35](#), “Announcement of Office of Apprenticeship 30-day Commitment to Apprenticeship Program Registration Determinations and new virtual “Shot Clock” website.”

B. Project Design.

Applicants are encouraged to describe their project design using a brief, high-level description of the activities that will be implemented by the grant. In addition to describing how the state will meet the requirements mentioned above in part A, grant funds may be used for a wide range of services and activities to broadly develop or expand Registered Apprenticeships within the state.³

C. Other allowable activities. In addition to the requirements mentioned above in part A that support the statewide expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs, states may also conduct the following allowable activities:

- **Proposed accelerated SAEF3 activities.** States have the option to identify activities

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contained in their SAEF3 workplan that they plan to amplify under SAEF4. If states decide to expand on activities permitted under SAEF3, they must clearly identify these activities in their project design and explain how they will rapidly accelerate these activities under SAEF4.

- **Strategies to align or incorporate CTE programs with Registered Apprenticeship in your State to drive statewide expansion of Registered Apprenticeship.** States can use SAEF4 funds to modify CTE programs and their curriculums to serve as pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to Registered Apprenticeship enrollment. To achieve this goal, states may develop partnerships between CTE program providers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to encourage CTE completers to enroll in Registered Apprenticeship programs. States can also work with employers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to align CTE curricula with the specific skills and competencies required for Registered Apprenticeship programs in high-demand sectors. Additionally, states can use SAEF4 funds to create pathways that allow students enrolled in CTE programs to receive advanced standing when those students enter into Registered Apprenticeship programs, facilitating a smoother transition from education to skilled employment. States can also build the capacity of regional intermediaries that will enhance access to effective pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Furthermore, States should prioritize stakeholder collaboration to identify local workforce needs and ensure that CTE offerings are responsive and relevant to the recruitment needs of local Registered Apprenticeship programs. States should also prioritize data integration and sharing, in addition to scaling the adoption of learning and employment records, or LERs in Registered Apprenticeship programs for skill validation of Registered Apprentices and/or the acquisition of accelerated credit toward a degreed Registered Apprenticeship. By strategically utilizing SAEF4 funds in these ways, states can create CTE strategies that drive expansion of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities and that provide learners with seamless pathways from the classroom to high-demand jobs while delivering a reliable talent pipeline for employers and supporting regional economic growth.
- **Incentive funding.** Applicants may use grant funds to provide “incentive” funds to sponsors, employers, joint labor management organizations, or industry associations (or other partners included in a multi-employer partnership) to directly fund new or expand existing Registered Apprenticeship programs in any targeted industry(ies), in which they are serving. These incentive funds are intended to incentivize employers and other stakeholders to develop and expand Registered Apprenticeship programs. Incentive funds may also be used to enroll and support apprentices. Applicants are encouraged to review the Department’s recently released [Pay-for-Performance Incentive Payments Program](#) Funding Opportunity Announcement, which is a \$145 million investment using this incentive payments program model. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to become familiar with the Department’s [American Manufacturing Apprenticeship Incentive Fund](#).

- Incentive Funding must be reasonable in accordance with 2 CFR 200.404 and align with the goals of this TEGL. Applicants must have written policies and procedures in place governing the awarding of incentive funds, and the incentives provided under this TEGL must comply with these organizational policies. Policies and procedures should include detailed processes for identification of recipients, distribution, and management of the incentive funds to ensure employer commitments are met, and risk mitigation. Further, grantees shall also provide, in quarterly narrative reports to the Department, all recipients of incentive funding, status of activities related to the use of incentive funding, and itemized costs related to the use of incentive funding.
- **State Capacity and Staffing.** States may also use grant funds to improve their capacity to expand the National Apprenticeship System, including but not limited to hiring additional staff (including ATRs and Registered Apprenticeship navigators) and streamlining registration or related workforce systems. States are highly encouraged to use their SAEF4 grant funds for the appropriate levels of staffing that are needed to effectively manage each round of their SAEF grants.
- **Supportive Services.** States are encouraged to develop clear policies and procedures to use existing supportive services from WIOA programs or other funding sources to support apprentices from enrollment through completion of Registered Apprenticeship programs. However, if no other funds are available, states may allocate funds for supportive services to assist individuals benefiting from this grant program, grant recipients may use up to 15 percent of grant funds to provide supportive services to individuals who are participating in education and training activities provided through the grant. **Please note:** Specific allocation amounts must also be reflected in the budget narrative. Supportive services can include various forms of assistance, such as scholarships that can be used to offset related instruction (RI) costs, transportation, or other supportive services necessary to participate in and complete the apprenticeship. For example, supportive services include childcare, community service linkages, necessary work tools and clothing, transportation, housing, internet access, mental health counseling, disability accommodations, legal help, educational testing, financial counseling, and emergency cash assistance. These services can also extend to mentoring, support groups, and peer networking to encourage participation.