

Application Requirements, Review Process, and Award Notices

I. Application Submission Requirements

A. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

All applicants for Federal grant funding must have a Unique Entity Identifier and be registered in the System for Award Management. For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section V.B. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management.

B. Submission Instructions

Applicants must electronically submit their application through [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 17, 2026. ETA will not review applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. ETA will not accept applications sent by hardcopy (mail or hand delivery), e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX). For a complete statement of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section V.C. Submission Instructions.

C. Intergovernmental Review

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

II. Application Content and Format

ETA will consider only one application from each state or territory. If an organization submits multiple applications, only the most recently received application that meets the deadline will be considered. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, ETA will not replace it with an earlier application.

Applications submitted in response to this solicitation must consist of four separate and distinct parts:

- A. SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance;”
- B. Project Budget, composed of the SF-424A and Budget Narrative;
- C. Project Narrative; and
- D. Attachments to the Project Narrative.

The applicant must make sure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application. The applicant must submit the application in one package.

Documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to the application for review.

A. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

You must complete the SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance.”

For a complete description of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section IV.A SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

B. Project Budget, Composed of the SF-424A and Budget Narrative

You must complete the SF-424A Budget Information Form and a Budget Narrative. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative. **Applications that do not include a Budget and Budget Narrative will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.** The Budget and Budget Narrative provided with the grant application are not the final budget (please see **Attachment III. Project Planning Phase Requirements**) but are used to indicate an initial understanding of and alignment with the project design and funding requirements outlined in this funding opportunity.

For a complete description of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section IV.B Project Budget, composed of the SF-424A and Budget Narrative.

C. Project Narrative

To demonstrate your ability to implement this grant, you must include a Project Narrative with your application that is responsive to the requests for information in Sections C1a, C1b, and C2 as described below. The narrative must be no more than eight (8) pages and meet the following formatting requirements:

- double-spaced
- single-sided
- page size of 8.5 x 11-inches
- 1-inch page margins
- Times New Roman 12-point font
- includes the section headers listed in this announcement for each section

The Project Narrative shows that you can operate and manage a grant project that will meet the program goals and requirements explained in this funding opportunity. Note that after grant award, successful applicants will expand on their application Project Narratives to finalize a Statement of Work (SOW) in collaboration with the Department. **Attachment III. Project Planning Phase Requirements** describes the program design components that grantees will be required to conceptualize and build into their training fund models after award, as well as the process for finalizing the SOW.

The agency will evaluate application Project Narratives using the evaluation criteria listed for each Project Narrative section below. The Department will not read or consider any information or material beyond the specific page limit of eight (8) pages when

evaluating the Project Narrative.

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND AND MANAGEMENT (Up to 38 Points):

a. Statement of Need (Up to 24 Points)

Applicants must identify the targeted industry(ies) on which the project will focus and fully describe the current and future projected employment opportunities within the state. Applicants are required to include at least one of the priority industries outlined in **Attachment I. Program Description - Section I. Program Goals and Objectives**.

- The Department is seeking applications that will increase training opportunities in the target industries of skilled trades including occupations essential to the buildout of AI infrastructure, shipbuilding, advanced manufacturing, nuclear energy, domestic mineral production, aerospace, and information technology including AI. Applicants are required to specify and include at least one of the priority industries outlined in **Attachment I. Program Description - Section I. Program Goals and Objectives** in their grant projects but may also propose industries beyond those listed. Applicants must cite evidence that the industry sector(s) they are targeting are high-growth or emerging according to one or more of the following factors: 1) projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy; 2) are being transformed by technology and innovation requiring new skill sets for workers; 3) represent new and emerging businesses that are projected to grow; or 4) have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations. **(up to 10 points)**
- The applicant must identify the service area for the grant program (e.g., statewide, targeted local workforce areas, specific counties). The applicant must identify how the targeted industry(ies) and proposed employer partners support a skilled domestic workforce within that service area. The description should include specific details of the employer partners' workforce challenges and role in addressing these needs. **(up to 8 points)**
- Describe how the industry(ies) align with key priorities and goals within the state's workforce strategies, including those in the WIOA State Plan as relevant. **(up to 6 points)**

NOTE: Applicants who identify shipbuilding as a target industry must identify what portion of the requested grant award amount is intended to support training in this industry, at a minimum; funding breakouts for other industries are optional.

b. Implementation, Oversight and Management Plan (Up to 14 Points)

Applicants must provide the following information for this criterion:

- the strategy for implementing and managing the Training Fund grant (e.g., procurement through a subrecipient, partnering with an educational institution or other training provider, and/or collaboration with existing industry partnership(s)); **(up to 6 points)** and
- the performance management strategy to ensure transparency, accountability, and accuracy for complete data on necessary performance outcomes from employers for participant reporting and training (see **Attachment IV. Performance Reporting Requirements**). **(up to 8 points)**

SECTION 2 – STRATEGY AND INNOVATION (Up to 30 Points):

Applicants must describe their approaches to three components of their project design, as explained further below: Employer Outreach and Engagement; Employer Participation; and Employer-Driven Training Approach. Applicants must also demonstrate evidence of past innovation in meeting the training needs of employers.

a. Employer Outreach and Engagement (Up to 6 Points)

Applicants must describe the planned approach to identify and recruit employers within the target industry(ies) that are seeking to build upskilling pathways to fill critical vacancies strategies. This may include, but is not limited to, engaging intermediaries, local workforce development boards, or other partner organizations to support these strategies, leveraging existing employer partnerships, and using an existing pipeline of employers to build new project-focused partnerships.

b. Employer Participation (Up to 6 Points)

Applicants must propose eligibility criteria for employers to participate in the grant and receive reimbursement for employee training costs. At a minimum, the eligibility criteria identified in the Project Narrative must meet the criteria listed in **Attachment I. Section II.B. Eligible Employers**. Applicants may propose additional eligibility criteria to ensure the program addresses critical industry workforce needs of the state. Along with the criteria proposed, applicants must include a description of anticipated strategies and existing processes they plan to use to assess employer eligibility, as well as a description of how the criteria for employer participation will be designed to minimize paperwork and administrative burden for participating employers.

c. Employer-Driven Training Approach (Up to 10 Points)

Applicants must describe the steps they will take to ensure that their approach for collaborating with employers results in training models that are responsive to employer needs and will lead to successful employment outcomes for the participant. The description must include a proposed approach for ensuring the use of training models that will support the critical competencies that are responsive to employer needs and target industry skill demands. Applicants should also describe how they may encourage employers to use innovative and/or accelerated models for effective training, where appropriate (e.g., virtual platforms, artificial intelligence resources, and competency-based assessments).

d. Past Demonstration of Innovation in Workforce Training (Up to 8 Points)

To demonstrate programmatic capacity for successfully implementing a project that meets the goals of this grant initiative, applicants must provide information about one (1) applicant-led workforce training program, grant, or cooperative agreement developed in partnership with employers to address a specific workforce challenge using WIOA Governor’s Reserve, State-appropriated funds, or other sources within the past five (5) years. Applicants do not need to have tested the model described in this grant initiative or a similar model to get full points for this criterion.

Applicants should describe the workforce challenge that was addressed; the critical elements of the model that supported success, including what elements were innovative in their application, scale, collaboration, or some other element; and the description of the outcomes and/or workforce changes delivered as a result of the project.

Applicants that do not demonstrate development of a workforce training program, grant, or cooperative agreement with employers that meets the above criteria within the past five years or who do not provide applicable information will receive zero points for this section.

Panelists will determine whether the applicant thoroughly meets, partially meets, or fails to meet each numbered evaluation element of **Section 1 – Background and Management** and **Section 2 – Strategy and Innovation** based on the definitions below:

Standard Rating	Definition	Standard for Calculating Points
Thoroughly Meets	The application thoroughly responds to the evaluation element and fully and	Full Points

	convincingly satisfies all of the stated specifications.	
Partially Meets	The application responds incompletely to the evaluation element or the application convincingly satisfies some, but not all, of the stated specifications.	Half Points
Fails to Meet	The application does not respond to the evaluation element or the application does respond to the evaluation element but does not convincingly satisfy any of the stated specifications.	Zero Points

D. Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, the application also includes required attachments as explained below. These attachments must be clearly labeled and do not count toward the Project Narrative page limit. Any other attachments included beyond those listed below will not be reviewed in the scoring of the application.

Applicants are encouraged to name the files using the document names listed below. Do not include special characters (e.g. &, -, *, %, /, #). However, underscores (for example: My_Attached_File.pdf) to separate a file name are acceptable.

1. Required Attachments

a. Abstract

Applicants must submit a 1-2 page abstract summarizing the proposed project. An abstract template is available in **Attachment VI**. If you do not submit the abstract, your application will still be reviewed, but it may impact your score. If you are selected for an award, the information provided in your abstract may be published to a public facing website as a summary of your project. The abstract must include the following:

- applicant organization name
- applicant location (state)
- service area (the local/regional service area if other than statewide)
- the project title
- the project purpose and key activities
- a description of the key industry(ies) targeted
- the funding level requested
- subrecipient names and roles, if applicable
- public contact information

b. Budget and Budget Narrative

Submit a Budget and Budget Narrative as described in Section II.B above.

III. Application Review Information

A. Responsiveness Review

Application Screening Criteria

Use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package to ensure your application meets all of the screening criteria and contains all required items.

Applicants should not include the checklist in the application package. Applications that do not meet all the requirements in the table below will not move forward through the merit review process or be considered for an award.

Application Requirement	Instructions	Complete?
Submission requirements are met	Section I.B (Attachment II)	
Eligibility criteria are met	Section II.A (Attachment I)	
Components of the application are saved in one of the specified formats and are not corrupt. <i>(We will attempt to open the document but will not take any additional measures in the event of problems with opening.)</i>	Section I.B (Attachment II)	
SAM Registration	Section I.A (Attachment II)	
SF-424 includes a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and line 18a. is between \$3,000,000 and \$8,000,000	Section I.A (Attachment II)	
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section II.B (Attachment II)	
Budget Narrative	Section II.B (Attachment II)	
Project Narrative	Section II.C (Attachment II)	

B. Merit Review

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications based on the selection criteria. As outlined in Section II above, the selection criteria are based on the policy goals, and priorities explained in this funding opportunity.

Up to 68 points may be awarded to an applicant, depending on the quality of the responses provided. The final scores (which may include the mathematical normalization of review panels) will serve as the primary basis for selecting applications for funding. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer can make selections based solely on the final scores or take into consideration other relevant factors when applicable. Such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds, proposed industry sectors, and other relevant factors. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to their attention.

The government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussion with the applicant. If a grant is awarded without discussion, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on <https://www.grants.gov>, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

Prior to issuance, and annually thereafter, awards will be subject to review in accordance with the process described in Executive Order 14332, "Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking."

IV. Other Review Criteria, Selection Process and Award Information

For a complete understanding of all other application review information, award notices, and post-award requirements and administration, please see the [2026 Application Guide](#).