

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR: Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (Round 6)

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Initial

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: FOA-ETA-26-40

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 17.280

Submit all applications in response to this announcement through <https://www.grants.gov>.

FUNDING DETAIL:

Expected Total Available Funding	\$65,000,000
Expected Number of Awards	6–10
Funding Range Per Award	\$6,500,000–\$10,800,000

Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. The Department reserves the right to apply funding from the FY 2026 appropriation, up to an additional \$65,000,000, to this FOA, should the Department receive sufficient qualifying applications. In the event that sufficient applications are received, we reserve the right to use these funds to select more grantees from the applications submitted in response to this Announcement.

KEY DATES:

Application Deadline	05/20/2026. We must receive applications no later than 11:59 pm Eastern Time .
Expected Period of Performance Start Date	09/01/2026
Period of Performance Length	48

On approximately March 4, 2026, a pre-recorded Prospective Applicant Webcast will be available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities> and available for viewing any time after that date. While review of this Webcast is strongly encouraged to support successful grant applications, it is not mandatory.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL, or the Department, or we), announce the availability of grant funds for Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (Round 6).

Round 6 of the Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC or SCC6) grants will fund community colleges, with a singular focus on building program and system capacity for implementing and scaling access to short-term training opportunities through Workforce Pell Grants—i.e., promoting industry-driven strategies, worker mobility, and integration with the larger state workforce system (e.g., Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners) for statewide impact. This sixth round of funding builds on the lessons learned from earlier SCC rounds, as well as the legacy of the four rounds of Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grants. SCC6 aims to prioritize funding for statewide community college systems, or consortia of multiple community colleges, to support states to build capacity for the state-level workforce and education data sharing and data systems integration activities necessary to demonstrate effective outcomes for programs seeking eligibility for the newly authorized Workforce Pell Grants.

SCC6 also presents an opportunity for community colleges to continue their strong engagement with industry, supporting coordination and alignment with employers to develop and/or enhance existing high-quality, short-term programs for the newly authorized Workforce Pell Grants. These programs must be portable and stackable along a career pathway, articulating into credit, while also meeting the hiring requirements of employers in in-demand industries.

Eligible participants for SCC6 represent the broad population of community college students at distinct and varied points in their education and workforce pathways, including new entrants to the workforce, dislocated workers who have lost employment, and those currently working but seeking additional skills.

For further information or technical questions about this FOA, please contact Sarah Medley, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at SCC6_FOA-ETA-26-40@dol.gov and specifically reference FOA-ETA-26-40. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants> and at <https://www.grants.gov>.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible Applicants

1. The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

The Department will award grants under this program to lead applicants that are community colleges as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act, and at which the associate degree is primarily the highest degree awarded, as shown by the college's designation at <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>. The Department is requiring community colleges to apply for this funding as a consortium of institutions of higher education. Thus, a community college must apply as a lead of a consortium of institutions. Consortium members may include community colleges and public and private, non-profit four-year institutions, as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act.

An institution consortium must include, at a minimum, the consortium lead and a majority of community colleges located in the state (defined as 50 percent or greater), but the Department strongly encourages applications that encompass a statewide system of community colleges, where feasible, to support the priorities of SCC6 related to statewide impact. The institutional consortium must form an SCC Partnership as described below in Section III.H. Required Partnerships. Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of an SCC Partnership, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

NOTE: The Department will not fund more than one successful application per state. See Section VI.C. Review and Selection Process for further information.

To be eligible as either a lead applicant or as a consortium member, all institutions must, by the closing date of this FOA and throughout the entity's performance in this grant program, be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. A database of institutions that are accredited by bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education can be found at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>. Note that the Department will check the accreditation status of lead applicants and consortium members as part of the screening process. Applications that do not meet this requirement will not move forward through the merit review process or be considered for an award.

An entity cannot serve as more than one type of required partner in the SCC grants for the purpose of meeting FOA requirements. For example, a lead or consortium member institution cannot also serve as the required workforce development system partner.

Please note that all elements of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and 2 CFR Part 2900 (DOL's Supplement to 2 CFR Part 200), including the monitoring and examination of records, apply to any entity that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient, including for-profit

organizations. In addition, the entity may not earn or keep any profit resulting from federal financial assistance.

2. Number of Applications Applicants May Submit

We will consider only one application from each applicant applying on behalf of a consortium as the lead institution. If an applicant 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, we will not replace it with an earlier application.

3. State Leadership Letters of Support

To be eligible for consideration, each application must include a letter of support from any one official listed in “Group A” and one letter from any one official in “Group B.” The letters should speak to the commitment to state-level coordination activities to support data integration and data sharing priorities described in Section III.B.3.b.

Group A:

- The Governor
- Executive Director/Chief/Chair, Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
- State Workforce Board Chair
- State Workforce or Labor Agency Head/Chief

Group B:

- Chief State Education Office/SHEEO
- Chief State School Officer
- State CTE Director

B. Cost Sharing

This program does not require cost sharing (including matching) funds. Applicants that include such funds will not receive additional consideration during the review process. Instead, the agency considers any resources contributed to the project beyond the funds provided by the agency as leveraged resources. Section [IV.B](#) provides more information on leveraged resources.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section II.B Cost Sharing.

C. Period of Performance

The performance period on the front page of this FOA includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

The performance period is 48 months with an anticipated start date of September 1, 2026, and includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

We expect that start-up activities, such as hiring appropriate grant program staff and project design activities, will begin immediately after grant award. Grantees are required to procure a third-party developmental evaluator, as described in Section III.G.7. below, by the end of month

six, if such a timeline is possible under required federal, institutional, and any other relevant procurement guidelines.

Written requests for prior approval to acquire grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or to alter space must be submitted no later than 12 months after the award date of the grant; DOL strongly encourages grantees to submit such requests within the first 90 days. Grant Officer-approved special purpose equipment and/or altered space must be acquired, completed, and available for use in support of the project's statement of work no later than 24 months after the award date of the grant; DOL strongly encourages grantees to begin to use such investments sooner. Grantees are expected to start enrolling participants in high-quality, short-term programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility by at least month 12, with consideration of academic calendars, though sooner is preferred. We strongly encourage grantees to develop their project work plans and timelines accordingly.

Grantees must plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance. DOL does not anticipate period of performance extensions under this FOA.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose

This sixth round of SCC intends to promote statewide capacity building efforts to develop and/or expand high-quality, short-term programs that will seek eligibility for the newly authorized Workforce Pell Grants. Section 83002 of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Public Law 119-21) authorizes Workforce Pell Grants to provide access to federal financial aid for students enrolled in high-quality, short-term workforce programs that are defined as at least 150 clock hours of instruction and less than 600 clock hours (or the equivalent in credit hours) and at least 8 weeks, but less than 15 weeks, in duration, that have demonstrated success in job placement and completion rates for students.

SCC6 will focus on the design and delivery of education and training programs that meet employers' hiring requirements and have strong employment outcomes. The intent is to fund programs that will be positioned, in relatively short order, to meet the eligibility requirements for Workforce Pell Grants. These efforts may include both the development of brand-new programs, in consultation with employers, that are designed to meet Workforce Pell eligibility requirements and fill critical workforce skill gaps, as well as efforts to enhance existing programs, such as stacking multiple shorter complementary trainings into a program that both meets the clock hours and duration requirements for Workforce Pell, as well as the desired competency and skill needs of employers.

This round of funding will continue to support capacity-building efforts that strengthen the connection between community colleges and industry to ensure that employers are playing a central role in defining in-demand skills, validating curricula and credential or certification programs, and developing clear pathways via the new Workforce Pell programs into high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand job opportunities in collaboration with the community college grantees.

Improved integration between education and state workforce systems is also a key component of this round of funding. Such integration will ensure the effective development and expansion of the newly created programs and support the expected statewide coordination that is necessary for successful implementation of Workforce Pell Grants. Workforce Pell Grants' program eligibility

requires program providers to coordinate with Governors to report accurate data on employment and program completion outcomes. Additionally, [Executive Order 14278: Preparing Americans for High-Paying Skilled Trade Jobs of the Future](#) and [America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age](#) prioritize data integration and streamlining the tracking of education-to-employment outcomes through improved federal coordination and opportunities to reduce duplication and better align data. Requiring SCC6 grantees to undertake collaborative state-level data system integration with workforce partners will enhance data collection and data sharing necessary for Workforce Pell Grants eligibility determinations and address barriers to the consistent inclusion of community college programs of study on State Eligible Training Provider Lists.

Note that the Department is most interested in prioritizing funding for applicants that can demonstrate strong efforts toward developing an integrated state-level data system but that have not yet accomplished the necessary data sharing to facilitate such integration. See Section IV.C.1.ii. Education and Workforce Data Sharing and Systems Integration.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

To ensure that SCC6 grant projects accomplish the goals of the FOA, the Department will fund applications that address, in their proposals, how the project will expand statewide capacity of Workforce Pell-eligible programs through each of the required SCC6 Core Elements:

- Core Element 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value
- Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs
- Core Element 3: Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options

1. Core Element 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value

To ensure that the projects funded by the Department support industry engagement and provide value to employers, applicants must demonstrate existing strategic partnerships that can be leveraged and further developed to support the significant capacity-building efforts required under this FOA. Successful applicants will identify one or more industry sector(s) on which they will focus. They will also identify initial employer partners, as described in Section III.H. Required Partnerships. These employer partners may be new partners that are being brought into the project to support this effort, or they may be existing partners that have been engaged in some or all of the key areas below.

In addition, applicants will demonstrate that the industry sector(s) are in demand, both through their employer partners' commitment and engagement and by inclusion of Labor Market Information (LMI) data that demonstrates the industry sector(s) and occupations have projected significant job growth and/or a significant impact on the regional, state, or national economy. The Department has particular interest in supporting high-growth and emerging industries critical to American competitiveness and reindustrialization that can offer students and workers short-term training pathways directly into employment. These industries include, but are not limited to, in-demand skilled trades including shipbuilding occupations, occupations essential to the buildout of AI infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, nuclear energy, domestic mineral production, and information technology, including AI.

Applicants will also actively engage their employer partners, including through industry or sector partnerships, to support the development of high-quality programs that will meet the hiring

requirements of employers in the focus industry sector(s) for Workforce Pell Grants eligibility to ensure that they are aligning with the needs of industry. Employers will support program development through four key areas: (1) providing leadership to and setting strategic direction for the project; (2) informing the identification and mapping of the necessary skills, competencies, and employer-valued credentials for the program(s); (3) assisting with curriculum development and program design, which may include cross-walking and matching course competencies to industry-recognized, skills-based job descriptions used by employers; and (4) donating resources, such as facilities, equipment, staff time, or other contributions to support the proposed project. Projects funded under this grant program will maintain relationships with employers and regional industry representatives throughout the duration of the project with the intention of sustaining them beyond the grant period.

Community colleges must be able to demonstrate that they understand how to engage employers and industry representatives and to provide the training outcomes that employers require in order to meet the job placement and earnings requirements for Workforce Pell Grants. This includes describing the ways in which they have collaborated with industry to encourage investment in prior initiatives. Forging strong, or deepening existing, relationships with employers through the SCC6 grant enhances labor market focus and connects participants to high-paying work opportunities after program completion. Employers engaged in the partnership strategy should, if feasible, commit to hiring opportunities for qualified program participants completing the training. Successful applicants may use grant funds to work on developing partnerships, adapting curriculum, and implementing the data sharing necessary to align their program offerings with the needs of industry.

2. Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs

A career pathways program offers a clear sequence, or pathway, of education coursework and/or training credentials/certifications aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies. It enables individuals to enter and exit training at various levels, with each step on the pathway designed to help them move to the next level and progress over time to higher skills, recognized credentials, and jobs with higher pay. *See also* WIOA's definition of career pathways identified in WIOA Section 3(7). Career pathways programs are recognized as effective in supporting positive employment outcomes for community college students.

Workforce Pell Grants support worker mobility by providing high-quality, short-term training that meets the hiring requirements of employers while also leading to portable, stackable credentials that articulate to credit, allowing workers to continue to advance their skills along their chosen career pathway. While the focus of SCC6 is to increase the availability of programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility, these programs can be the starting point of a broader career pathways strategy that encompasses additional education and training programs, designed to meet workers' current skills and experiences, as well as to prepare them for the next destination point on their career path. Additionally, community colleges offer longer-term certifications and degrees for which programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility can be foundational stacking certificates, degrees, and/or college credits.

One example of how these programs can fit into a career pathways strategy is as a component of Registered Apprenticeship. Programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility may serve as the related instruction (RI) component of a Registered Apprenticeship program, where feasible, to further

reduce the cost of related instruction and expand access to the proven model of Registered Apprenticeship.

Successful applicants under this FOA will demonstrate how their capacity-building efforts through this funding opportunity will support worker mobility and ensure programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility lead to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable across more than one employer, and articulate to credit, including by:

- Identifying the proposed Workforce Pell-eligible programs that will be developed within each identified industry sector of focus.
- Describing the career pathway stacking opportunities that may be built from the developed Workforce Pell-eligible programs (which may include additional credentials or licensures, Registered Apprenticeship programs, associate and bachelor's degrees, as well as Integrated Education and Training programs, the Ability to Benefit provision, and competency-based articulation agreements and credit for prior learning equivalencies, among others).
- Identifying how the project will support institutions of higher education on developing or enhancing written agreements to ensure the award of academic credit towards a certificate or degree program upon a student's successful completion of the Workforce Pell-eligible program and enrollment in the certificate or degree program.

3. Core Element 3: Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options

Community colleges' capacity to access, analyze, and report students' educational and employment outcomes data supports their ability to provide programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility that meet the hiring requirements of employers, and the skills and competencies required by industry. The Department believes that strong connections between community colleges and the public workforce development system ensure quality training and career pathways and hold both education and workforce systems accountable for the use of taxpayer dollars.

Under this FOA, successful applicants will strengthen their collaboration with WIOA and other workforce system partners to accelerate career pathways programs through the development and expansion of programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility that will create statewide impact. This statewide impact will be felt through the expanded training options available through Workforce Pell Grants and the more rapid skills gains realized by workers in support of the state's most critical industries. This impact will also be demonstrated through the pursuit of two specific goals of this funding opportunity, as follows:

a. Statewide Data Integration and Use

Data transparency is a valuable goal that state education and workforce systems strive toward, providing job seekers and other interested parties necessary information on the outcomes and impact of education and training programs broadly. For Workforce Pell Grants, this goal is a material requirement, as eligibility for the Grants necessitates quality outcomes data on completion and employment of those in the programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility. Yet, collection and reporting efforts can be hampered by inconsistent, incomplete data with long time lags and insufficient context to meaningfully understand or use the information provided. To address these challenges and support improved data transparency, applicants must collaborate with their state workforce development systems to identify strategies that better integrate and use

education and workforce development system administrative data, both for Workforce Pell Grant eligibility requirements and broader beneficial statewide impacts that will result. These strategies may include:

1. integrating data systems that contain both employment and educational outcomes data from multiple institutions through a single, unified data warehouse or data management system;
2. creating linkages between separate data systems through a management information system (MIS) that creates record linkages, the use of administrative data research facilities, or another model that the applicant proposes;
3. additional methods to address data integration and/or secure data sharing at the state level between education and workforce data; or
4. develop talent marketplaces composed of credential registries (e.g., publishing education and training programs in structured, open, linked, and interoperable data formats), skills-based job description generators, comprehensive learner employment records (CLR) or learning and employment records (LER) that connect students, employers, and education providers through a common currency of skills.

Integrated data systems or system linkages that allow state matching of individual records to allow calculation of program outcomes will enable community college staff to access current information on education and employment outcomes of participants in grant-funded programs of study and to establish a mechanism for colleges to access future information on SCC-funded programs and on broader career pathways program outcomes. This system integration or linkage will be critical to ensure that college student data can be securely received by states, matched to existing outcome information, and returned accurately to the education entity for performance accountability purposes.

In addition, statewide integrated data systems could allow staff to better assess participants' progress in completing SCC-funded programs and other programs of study. Most importantly, increasing visibility regarding the employment outcomes of training programs informs jobseekers' choices about effective training and education, and inclusion on state ETPLs increases individuals' access to the high-quality training community colleges have to offer.

Examples of activities that fall within these categories include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Internal Data Reporting Capacity
 - Develop and adopt standard definitions for a common set of reporting elements for those students enrolled in non-credit and adult education courses that align with those elements collected for students enrolled in credit-bearing courses.
 - Integrate data on students in both credit and non-credit courses and programs into institutional and statewide data systems.
 - Integrate data on attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials into the common set of institution-wide reporting elements.
 - Develop machine-readable articulations between credit, non-credit, and employer programs based on competencies.
 - Adopt standard policies for complying with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232(g); 34 CFR Part 99) requirements, such

as policies for accessing student education records when connected with audit or evaluation of federal or state programs and enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements of those programs, standard practices or agreements for disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) through written agreements, and other PII and records management practices. See [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 7-16: Data Matching to Facilitate WIOA Performance Reporting](#) for information on the circumstances under which educational institutions may lawfully submit PII from education records to state unemployment compensation or workforce agencies for wage record matching).

- Labor Market Information and Employment Outcomes
 - Partner with state workforce agencies to obtain and understand LMI for state and regional labor markets. Leverage the expertise of the workforce development system to inform faculty and admissions counselors on effective use of LMI and other resources to assist prospective students in selecting programs leading to training-related employment. Provide current and prospective students with extensive guidance on use of LMI resources to make program choices that lead to training-related employment.
 - Partner with state agencies that have undertaken administrative data matching or longitudinal data systems that calculate employment outcomes of education program completers. In particular, participate in statewide feedback discussions on how best to enhance unemployment insurance wage records to support or deepen program-to-occupational linkages, cross-walking education and training programs to competency-based, industry-recognized qualification frameworks and data sharing.
 - Partner with state unemployment compensation (UC) agencies and state agencies that administer WIOA programs to develop a comprehensive data system that uses administrative data from these state systems. (Note: Since state laws and regulations on confidentiality and disclosure vary across states, applicants must consult with their state’s UC agency to determine the appropriate course of action to gain access to confidential UC data for purposes of measuring employment outcomes. All disclosures of confidential UC information must comply with federal regulations at 20 CFR 603.22.) Per TEGL 7-16 (noted above), educational institutions may disclose PII directly to the state UC agency provided certain agreements are in place (see page 40 of “Joint Guidance on Data Matching to Facilitate WIOA Performance Reporting and Evaluation” Attachment).
 - For those states where sharing of data between state education and workforce agencies is limited, applicants may seek to partner with their state’s [Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency \(PACIA\)](#) to explore participation in the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data sharing agreement. These partnerships can expand the types and availability of reports on performance and evaluation of programs. As an alternative, applicants can seek to partner with relevant state agencies on the use of administrative data research facilities as a method of data matching and analysis.

The Department funds grant programs that encourage data integration within education and workforce development systems. The Department has funded the Workforce Data Quality

Initiative (WDQI) to support the development or enhancement of longitudinal administrative workforce development system databases that will allow the creation of linkages to the state education data systems. For more information, see the [WDQI initiative](#).

b. Inclusion on State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

WIOA Title I offers career services and training to reskill and upskill Americans with a variety of work histories and experiences. Managed by states and operated in local areas, WIOA training is often funded through an individual training account (ITA) that is used to purchase training from a State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL should be composed of training programs that provide the necessary skills and credentials for high-demand and growing jobs. DOL wants to ensure that these programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility are leveraging the public workforce system through inclusion on state ETPLs, as these programs must provide data about their job placement rates using administrative data sources, which are more easily available at the state level, underscoring the importance of gaining access to the ETPL. Community colleges can assist with this effort by specifying competencies from their training programs that are matched to the hiring requirements of employers of regional and statewide in-demand occupations. Aligning ETPL programs of study and community colleges' programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility can ensure that the occupational training available to workers in the state is high-quality and responsive to the state's labor market.

Thus, all applicants will build the institutional capacity needed to submit, within the grant period of performance, all programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility to state workforce agencies for inclusion on ETPLs, along with the data that states require (such as data on program students) to calculate employment outcomes. Specifically, successful applicants will actively engage their local and state workforce board partners to introduce innovations around and reduce barriers to participating on the ETPL. To improve the uptake and effectiveness of community college ETPL engagement, applicants will address challenges related to (among other things) accurately identifying data cohorts, reporting timelines, data elements, and data formats under WIOA; and submitting accurate and timely performance data and cost information for both initial eligibility and continued eligibility. See Appendix B for more information on the ETPL process and requirements.

C. Expected Performance Outcomes

1. Performance Outcomes and Grantee Accountability

To ensure program accountability, document the effectiveness of the statewide impacts undertaken, and track the required student outcomes for Workforce Pell eligibility, grantees will track and report two sets of data: capacity-building indicators and performance outcomes.

a. Capacity-Building Indicators

To quantify the benefits of SCC6 statewide capacity-building efforts, grantees will track the following:

- Total number of programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility developed using grant funds
- Total number of new recognized postsecondary credentials or certifications created using grant funds
- Total number of programs added to the ETPL

- Progress toward the development of the applicant’s selected method to address data integration and/or data sharing at the state level between education and workforce data, which may include an integrated data system, system linkage(s), or another proposed output that makes sense in the context of the applicant’s data landscape

Grantees will report these indicators in the required Joint Quarterly Narrative Performance Report (see Section VIII.B. Reporting).

b. Performance Outcomes

Grantees will report employment and educational outcomes by tracking aggregated student enrollment, completion, credential attainment, and job placement from relevant programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility.

The following indicators will be used to report Workforce Pell Eligibility progress for all awarded grants:

- Student Enrollment in Program(s) Seeking Workforce Pell Eligibility
- Student Completion Rate of Program(s) Seeking Workforce Pell Eligibility
- Job Placement Rate of Students in Program(s) Seeking Workforce Pell Eligibility (Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit (WIOA))
- Credential Attainment (WIOA)

Applicants are not required to provide targets for these outcomes. After award, additional guidance will be provided to grantees regarding the options for collecting and reporting performance outcomes, which will require grantees to track and report individuals via the use of the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) and upload into the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), with the WIOA indicators generated by DOL using the [Common Reporting Information System \(CRIS\)](#) where grantees do not have sufficient data sharing or integration with their state systems to support the necessary collection and reporting. See Section VIII.B. Reporting of the [2026 Application Guide](#) for more information. See also Section IV.C.2.ii. Participant Tracking Plan.

The Department may also use CRIS to collect additional WIOA outcomes data (such as Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit) to support ETPL data quality; this will not be used for the purposes of making eligibility determinations for Workforce Pell Grants.

For the purposes of this FOA, there is a distinction between all students enrolled in programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility, who must be tracked in order to capture the necessary performance outcomes required for Workforce Pell eligibility, and SCC6 program participants, who may also be enrolled in programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility but who are further served by the grant program through additional program services funded by the grant (see III.D.a. Participant-Related Costs) and therefore may have additional reporting requirements. Grantees are responsible for tracking these participants in more detail, including data on enrollments, program services and activities, as well as the performance outcomes listed above.

2. Project Work Plan

Applicants must present a comprehensive project work plan demonstrating a cohesive, well-designed approach to implementing the project that is realistic and measurable. Applicants must also demonstrate the capacity to manage the project and specify the role that employers will play

in supporting these activities. A Suggested Project Workplan can be found in Appendix C, and an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents.

D. Funding Type

Funding will be provided in the form of a Grant. Throughout this FOA, all references to grants are applicable to cooperative agreements.

We expect availability of approximately \$65,000,000 to fund approximately 6–10 grants. Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. The Department reserves the right to apply funding from the FY 2026 appropriation, up to an additional \$65,000,000, to this FOA, should the Department receive sufficient qualifying applications. In the event that sufficient applications are received, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement. Applicants may apply for awards ranging from \$6,500,000 to \$10,800,000.

Allowable Activities

A wide range of activities may assist applicants in their efforts to create and enhance career pathways that include quality curricula and credentialing. Activities must relate directly to grant objectives. That is, for costs associated with an activity to be allowable with grant funds, the grantee must undertake the activity in relation to a grant-enhanced career pathway program, and the activity must have a clear connection to one or more of the three core elements described in Section III.B.

In general, activities related to the requirements in the core elements are allowable:

- Industry-driven strategies with demonstrated employer value, as described in Core Element 1
- Worker mobility through career pathways programs, as described in Core Element 2
- Workforce system integration to expand training options, as described in Core Element 3

Other allowable activities that support the purposes of the FOA include:

- Data disaggregation, analysis, and application to the project.
- Professional development for faculty and/or staff.
- Activities necessary to support required evaluation(s) (see Section III.G.4. Grantee-Contracted Third-Party Evaluation and Section VIII.A.5.a. DOL Evaluation).
- Preparing learning resources to be shared as open education resources (OER), affixing the open license to them (see Section III.G.3.), and making them publicly available for use and adaptation via a public distribution platform.
- Purchasing or upgrading classroom supplies and equipment and/or educational technologies that will contribute to the instructional purpose in education and training courses supported by the grant. Note that all equipment must be used in the classroom (in-person or virtual), clearly tied to the competencies required for the proposed career pathways program(s) and must not be purchased without prior approval from the Grant Officer.

- Activities necessary to align program offerings with the requirements of Workforce Pell. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements (with prior approval from the Grant Officer), if specific to the project.
- Any additional grant requirements, such as performance reporting, credential transparency, and other requirements.

a. Participant-Related Costs

While the following costs are allowable with grant funds, the Department expects grantees to leverage existing college infrastructure, WIOA funding, Federal Perkins and Pell Grants, including Workforce Pell Grants, and other available sources to cover such participant-related costs, where feasible:

- Conducting outreach and recruitment of eligible participants.
- Implementing an initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, competencies, integrated participant services, supportive service, and employment needs.
- Providing job development, job search and placement assistance and, where appropriate, academic and career counseling.
- Providing case management services.
- Providing supportive services that will allow individuals to participate in and successfully complete the training provided through the grant, such as access to childcare, transportation, housing, counseling, work tools, and work clothes.

For this round of funding, costs for participant tuition and fees are not allowable with grant funds.

Wherever feasible, grantees are required to leverage existing open educational resources (OER) instead of duplicating existing open learning objects as components of their proposed programs. See Section III.G.3 Open Educational Resources for more information.

Per the SCC appropriations language, any grant funds used for apprenticeships shall be used to support only apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act and as referred to in section 3(7)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Applicants should refer to Section VIII.A. of the FOA for a list of applicable federal laws and regulations related to cost principles, administrative, and other requirements that apply to this Announcement.

b. Equipment and Minor Alterations

Expenditures for equipment and minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements, if specific to the project, are allowable with prior written approval from the Grant Officer. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements may include activities and associated costs such as relocating, modifying, replacing, or adding items (such as switches and outlets) related to internal environments (temperature, humidity, ventilation, and acoustics), and installation of fixed equipment (including fume hoods and audio/visual equipment).

The award of a grant under this FOA does not constitute prior approval of equipment or minor alterations. After grant awards are made, grantees will be required to obtain specific Grant Officer approval before acquiring equipment or proceeding with proposed alteration of facilities.

The Grant Officer must determine that all proposed equipment and/or alterations are (1) allocable, necessary, and reasonable; (2) tied to specific grant-related deliverables and outcomes outlined in the grantee's statement of work (SOW) (including capacity-building and/or training outcomes); and (3) consistent with the FOA. In their budget narrative, applicants proposing to spend grant funds on alterations as outlined in the SOW and budget narrative must demonstrate how these expenditures will support the expansion and improvement of the education and training programs that are the focus of their proposed project.

Total costs to the grant of all equipment purchased cannot exceed 20 percent of the total grant award. Equipment purchased with grant funds must be installed and ready to use no later than 24 months from the start of the period of performance. Total costs to the grant of all alterations cannot exceed 15 percent of the total grant award. All grant-funded activities related to alterations must be completed no later than 24 months from the start of the period of performance.

E. Eligible Participants

Participants eligible to receive services provided through this program represent three primary categories that are named in the appropriation: new entrants to the workforce or who have been out of the workforce for a long enough time as though they are entering the workforce for the first time, dislocated workers, and employed workers. We note that the categories are broad enough to encompass participants who would be eligible for Workforce Pell.

For the purposes of this FOA, these categories are defined as follows:

Dislocated Workers: People who were terminated or laid off from employment; have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; or were self-employed but are now unemployed.

Employed Workers: For the purposes of this FOA, this term refers to individuals who are employed but need training to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or attain employment in higher-wage occupations. This includes low-wage and medium-wage workers who need to upgrade their skills to advance in their careers, and workers who are currently working part-time.

New Entrants to the Workforce: People who have never worked before. This category also includes people who have been out of the workforce for a long enough time to make it as if they are entering the workforce for the first time. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, long-term unemployed or ex-offenders. Youth who are enrolled in their junior or senior year of high school and who could be employed no later than six months after the end of the grant lifecycle, and youth who have dropped out of school and are seeking their first full-time job are also eligible, consistent with Federal and state wage and employment laws.

These broad categories of eligible participants include within them low-income individuals, ex-offenders, and individuals with disabilities, among others.

For a complete understanding of application definitions, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section III.G Definitions.

Veterans' Priority for Participants

[38 U.S.C. 4215](#) requires DOL grantees to provide priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section III.E Veterans' Priority for Participants.

F. Program Authority

Section 169(c) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes this program. The funds for this grant program are appropriated in Titles I and IX of Pub. L. 119-4, Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, March 15, 2025.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.G Definitions.

G. Funding Restrictions, Policies and Limitations

All proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with federal guidelines.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section III.H Funding Restrictions, Policies and Limitations.

1. Target Sectors and Occupations

When selecting the career pathway(s) to be built or enhanced with grant funding, applicants must focus on those critical occupations that provide short-term, Workforce Pell-eligible training to workers in in-demand industries, such as—but not limited to—AI infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, nuclear energy, domestic mineral production, information technology including AI, and shipbuilding.

Applicants must demonstrate that the industry sectors that they select align with the skills and needs of their proposed labor market area(s) by providing labor market information as described in Section IV.C. Project Narrative.

2. Recognized Postsecondary Credentials

All programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility built and/or enhanced with grant funding must lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. A recognized postsecondary credential is a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree. For further information, see [TEGL 25-19](#), Understanding Postsecondary Credentials in the Public Workforce System.

3. Open Educational Resources (OER)

Before developing any new content, applicants should search existing OER repositories for open learning objects and, where appropriate, leverage these learning objects instead of duplicating existing objects as components of their proposed programs. In cases where no existing OER is appropriate to the specific needs of proposed programs, applicants are encouraged to consider the most efficient and practical means of acquiring content—for example, through college

development, licensing or purchasing content, or purchasing existing intellectual property. See Section IX. Resources for more information on SkillsCommons, the OER site developed for the Department's TAACCCT grants.

To further support the capacity-building aspect of this grant, SCC represents an investment in developing OER by requiring that all new intellectual property, including all digital content developed using SCC grant funds, be openly licensed for free use, adaptation, and improvement by others. Applicants will build upon and contribute to the body of OER and continue to create technology-driven innovations in career training and education, by openly licensing all work created with the support of the grant. See Section VIII.A.4. for more information on open licensing.

As part of the requirement to publicly license grant-funded products, grantees must post their products (with the open license affixed) to a public distribution platform. Grantees may post products to sites such as a state OER repository, SkillsCommons, or other public distribution platforms.

4. Grantee-Contracted Third-Party Evaluation

An important aspect of this demonstration program is to document the capacity built by grantees. Thus, applicants are required to procure a third-party evaluator to design and execute a developmental evaluation of each funded project and participate in a national evaluation if one is conducted by DOL. The Department believes that successful projects will develop evidence on effective workforce education and training strategies to address the needs of employers and workers.

The cost of the study must not exceed five percent of the applicant's overall budget and must be included in the overall grant budget and budget narrative. All applicants must submit a Third-Party Evaluation Procurement Plan as an attachment to their Project Narrative, which covers the specific steps that they will undertake to procure an evaluator for the required third-party evaluation, demonstrating how those steps meet the following procurement requirements:

- Consistency with federal procurement law at 2 CFR 200.320, as well as any applicable college, state, or other procurement regulations. Note that, because the budget limit for the evaluator is no more than five percent of the total grant, the total may be under the Simplified Acquisition Threshold of \$250,000. Such purchases are referred to as "Small Purchases," with specific rules found at 2 CFR 200.320(a)(2).
- Consistency with institution, state, or other relevant entities' procurement requirements. Note that, if the institution, state, or other relevant entity has more restrictive rules for the type of procurement planned, the procurement must meet both those requirements and federal requirements.

Required implementation steps for the grantee-contracted developmental evaluation are as follows, and they must be included in the required Project Work Plan. Deviations from this timeline are possible but require prior ETA approval (see Section IV.C.2.iii.).

- No later than Month 6 (or the earliest timing that is feasible under the grantee's institutional procurement guidelines): Procure third-party evaluator for a developmental evaluation.

- No later than Month 9: Submit a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from the evaluator, using guidance provided by the Department.
- No later than Month 12: Submit a Final Detailed Evaluation Design in collaboration with the grantee-contracted evaluator.
- Throughout: Ensure that the grantee-contracted evaluator carries out the evaluation, completes all tasks and deliverables, and provides ongoing input and consultation.
- No later than Month 27: Submit the evaluator’s Interim Developmental Evaluation Report to the grantee’s Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using the suggested format or similar layout, provided after grant award.

No later than Month 48: Submit the evaluator’s Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.

5. Evaluation and Data-Related Costs

Labor and other costs related to data and evaluation are allowable, as defined in 2 CFR Part 200.455. Data and evaluation activities may include staff participating in interviews, focus groups, and surveys; staff working to execute data sharing agreements; staff preparing datasets required for an evaluation; staff participating in evaluation meetings; and other costs related to DOL’s evaluations and data-related activities.

6. Salary and Bonus Limitations

By law, no “Employment and Training Administration” appropriated funds may be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary may change yearly and is located on the [OPM.gov website](http://OPM.gov). This limitation does not apply to contractors (vendors) providing goods and services as defined in 2 CFR 200.331. Where states are recipients of such funds, states may establish a lower limit for salaries and bonuses paid by subrecipients. To establish these limits, states may consider the relative cost of living in the state, the salary levels for comparable state or local government employees, and the size of the organizations that administer Federal programs involved, including ETA programs. See the [Program Authority](#) found in TEGL 10-24 for additional information.

H. Required Partnerships

Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of an SCC Partnership, which will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

Role of Lead Applicant

In the required abstract, applicants must clearly identify the lead applicant and each required member of the SCC Partnership. The lead applicant will serve as the grantee, must be the organization specified in Section 8 of the SF-424 Application Form, and will be:

- the point of contact with the Department to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this FOA and any subsequent grant award;
- the entity with authority to withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS);

- the entity responsible for submitting to the Department all deliverables under the grant, including all technical and financial reports related to the project, regardless of which partnership member performed the work;
- the entity that may request or agree to a revision or amendment of the grant agreement or statement of work;
- the entity that ensures that the programmatic functions are carried out, as well as provides stewardship of all expenditures under the grant;
- the entity responsible for coordinating with both the grant's required third-party evaluator and with DOL's national evaluator, including participating in a national evaluation and other studies, if required by DOL; and
- the entity responsible for working with DOL to close out the grant.

SCC Partnership

An applicant's SCC Partnership will comprise the institution consortium members including the lead applicant; the required workforce development system partner(s); the required employer partners; and any optional partners, each of which is described below.

a. Required Institution Consortium

The Department is requiring applicants to apply for this funding as a consortium of colleges, comprised of no less than a majority of the community colleges within the state. Each applicant consortium is required to explain how they have identified the majority of community colleges and assured they were meeting the requirement. See Section IV.C.3.i. for more information.

b. Required Institution Coordinating Entity

Applicants must include in their SCC Partnerships at least one state-level or community college district-level entity, referred to in this FOA as the institution coordinating entity. The institution coordinating entity must be a state- or district-level entity that is responsible for regulating, governing, advising, and/or coordinating the institutions of higher education in the institution consortium. Examples include, but are not limited to, a state governing body for community colleges or for institutions of higher education more broadly; a statewide association of community colleges; or a community college district (or equivalent) entity. The state- or district-level entity will play an important role in supporting the statewide or large-scale impacts of the grant and its role in doing so must be consistent with the objectives outlined in the Core Elements of the FOA (Section III.B.) and the requirements in Section IV.C. Project Narrative.

c. Required Employer Partner(s)

Applicants must include in their SCC Partnership at least three employers for each proposed industry sector as an initial industry-driven partnership. The employer partnership will play an important role in supporting grant success with respect to Core Element 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value and Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs, and its roles and responsibilities in doing so must be outlined in Section IV.C. Project Narrative. As part of the industry-driven strategy, it is expected that additional employers may be engaged by grantees at various points throughout the life of the grant.

d. Required Workforce Development System Partner(s)

Applicants must include in their SCC Partnership one or more partners from the publicly funded workforce development system within the selected labor market area(s). For the purposes of this FOA, these workforce development system partnerships must be formed with state workforce agencies, or state or local boards as defined in Section 3 of WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3102) or Native American entities eligible for funding under Section 166 of WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3221). These organizations have state or local expertise in workforce development and will provide leadership in improving the uptake and effectiveness of community college ETPL engagement, among other activities.

In selecting the required workforce development system partner(s), applicants should consider which entity(ies) will be best able to support the Core Elements in Section III.B.

e. Other Optional Partners

The Department encourages applicants to collaborate with other partners that can support and advance the work of the SCC Partnership.

IV. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

Applications submitted in response to this FOA 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.

You must make sure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and sub-parts of the application. You must submit your application in one package. Documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to your application for review.

A. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

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

For a complete understanding 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.

For a complete understanding 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

You must include a Project Narrative with your application. The Project Narrative shows that the applicant can implement the grant project explained in this Announcement. Applicants must describe how they will meet the requirements listed below. Applicants must show that their planned activities will meet the project goals. As appropriate, applicants should see Section [IX](#).

Resources, E. DOL’s Clearinghouse for Evaluation and Research (CLEAR) and DOL’s Chief Evaluation Office as well as F. Data and Other Evidence Resources for starting places to find research that could provide evidence of a sound approach.

The Project Narrative is limited to 25 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11-inch pages with Times New Roman 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. It must include the section headers listed below. The agency will evaluate the Project Narrative using the evaluation criteria identified in Section [V.L.B.](#) We will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit (except for attachments listed in Section [IV.D](#) that impact the scoring of the application).

1. Statement of Need (Up to 14 Points)

i. Labor Market Area, Industry Sector(s), and Occupational Employer Demand (Up to 8 Points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the extent to which the discussion of the following factors is clear, logical, well-supported, and an accurate interpretation of data provided. All data sources must include citations that provide information that enables the identification and verification of data. To receive a full 8 points for this section, the applicant must:

- Define the labor market area(s) proposed for their grant. The term “labor market area” means an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment within a reasonable distance or can readily change employment without changing their place of residence. Within the consortium, the labor market area may constitute the entire state or there may be multiple labor markets that are the focus of the grant, depending on the size of the state and the industry sector(s) of focus.
- Clearly describe the industry sector(s) within which the Workforce Pell-eligible program(s) will be developed.
- List the occupations that will be the target occupations for employment after completion of the proposed Workforce Pell-eligible program(s).
- Provide a detailed and convincingly supported description of the current and future projected regional demand for employment in the targeted occupation(s). Applicants must cite the source for the projected demand, such as Bureau of Labor Statistics or other DOL sources, state workforce agency sources, employers, or other written labor market information provided by employers or other knowledgeable parties. To the extent possible, all data provided should reflect the geographic scope proposed. DOL encourages the use of a table format within the Project Narrative to present information on proposed occupations and projected regional demand.

ii. Education and Workforce Data Sharing and Systems Integration (Up to 6 Points)

Scoring under this criterion will be based on the clarity and specificity with which the applicant describes the current state of data sharing and data integration activities within their state, the feasibility of the proposed strategies to affect positive change, and the description of how the anticipated outcomes will support efforts to successfully create programs that are determined eligible for Workforce Pell Grants and for inclusion on the state’s Eligible Training Provider List. As noted in Section III.A. Purpose, the Department is most interested

in prioritizing funding for applicants that can demonstrate strong efforts toward developing an integrated state-level data system but that have not yet accomplished the necessary data sharing to facilitate such integration. To receive a full 6 points for this section, the applicant must:

- Describe the current state of data sharing and data integration activities between education and workforce systems within the state. Specifically, the description should include relationships between key staff of workforce and education agencies that support data collection, analysis, and reporting; efforts to date to address required data tracking and sharing needs; barriers to improvement (i.e. legal, financial, technological, policy-related, etc.); and a description of positive progress that has been made in the past decade, if any. The description should emphasize how and why these efforts have not yet led to the necessary data sharing and integration agreements needed to fully meet the requirements in this FOA.
- Propose a set of strategies, plans, or processes that must be accomplished to improve data sharing and integration of students' education and workforce outcomes. Such proposals should consider key state leadership positions or offices that should be involved, technology platforms or data resources that need to be accessed or connected, legal agreements that will be necessary to support the data sharing, and technology expertise that may be necessary to map reporting elements for effective data integration.
- Summarize the impacts that improved access to data have created, particularly as it relates to Workforce Pell Grants. The applicant should clearly identify how the efforts described in response to the previous bullet have the potential to help the applicant's state to develop programs to align with Workforce Pell requirements through access to more, and better, data about both participants they serve and the high-quality short-term programs they design and deliver.

2. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (Up to 26 Points)

i. Capacity-Building Indicators (Up to 20 Points)

a. Workforce Pell-Eligible Programs Developed or Enhanced (10 Points)

To receive the full 10 points, the applicant must provide a complete and compelling response to the following:

- A detailed description of how the applicant will use data (and what data sources) in collaboration with employers' input and guidance to determine the programs to develop and/or enhance with the goal of qualifying for Workforce Pell eligibility.

b. Programs Added to the State ETPL (6 Points)

To receive the full 6 points, the applicant must provide the following:

- A description of the work that has been done to align ETPL and Workforce Pell-relevant data collection, including how the applicant is or will be making changes to obtain additional data on all students for the ETPL programs for which they anticipate seeking Workforce Pell eligibility.

c. Statewide Data Integration and Use (4 points)

To receive the full 4 points, the applicant must provide the following:

- A detailed description of the method that the grantee will undertake to address data integration and/or data sharing at the state level between education and workforce data. This may include the development of an integrated data system, system linkage(s), or another method that makes sense in the context of the applicant's data landscape.

Note that this section of the Project Narrative will be used to score applications on anticipated broad program impact. After grant award, DOL will use the performance outcome measures identified in Section III.C. Expected Performance Outcomes to assess the progress of successful applicants toward achieving the goals of this initiative. During the project planning phase, grantees will receive information about additional projections they must provide, as applicable.

ii. **Participant Tracking Plan (Up to 2 Points)**

The applicant must provide estimates of the total number of students that will be enrolled during the 48-month period of performance in each proposed program seeking Workforce Pell eligibility and must break out the estimates by college and program. Applicants do not need to set participant targets for performance purposes, but successful applicants will be expected to track and report on all participants (see Section VIII.B. Reporting).

Grantees will utilize DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) to track participant-level data. DOL will provide additional information after grant award; however, applicants must plan for participant tracking and budget for data collection and reporting as part of their project work plans. Program-specific performance output measures are defined in the 2026 Application Guide, Section VIII.B Reporting.

To receive a full 2 points for this section, the applicant must:

- Describe how they will define and document enrollment into the proposed program(s) seeking Workforce Pell eligibility for the purposes of participant tracking.
- Describe the system for collecting and tracking data on participants enrolled in the identified program(s) seeking Workforce Pell eligibility during the grant period of performance.

iii. **Project Work Plan and Annual Milestones (Up to 4 Points)**

Scoring under this criterion is based on a clear and complete identification of a comprehensive work plan that is realistic and measurable. The work plan must be submitted as an attachment. Appendix C contains definitions and instructions for completing the work plan.

To receive a full 4 points for this section, the applicant must provide high-level implementation steps specific to the required and optional activities, milestones, entities responsible, start dates and milestone due dates for each of the following project components, using the definitions in Appendix C:

- Core Element 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value;
- Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs;
- Core Element 3: Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options;
- The required developmental evaluation (Section III.G.4);

- Open educational resource content development and posting (Section III.G.3 and Section VIII.A.6);
- Linked Open Data on Credentials (Section VIII.A.7); and
- If needed, grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or altered space (Section I.D.).

Note that these required project components are included in the sample work plan template.

3. Project Design (Up to 44 Points)

i. Institutions of Higher Education Selection (Up to 4 Points)

To receive full points:

- Applicants must identify the Institution Coordinating Entity for their consortium and the specific role and commitments that the entity will undertake or provide, including staff time, resources, physical space, etc.
- Applicants that do not apply as a statewide community college system must describe how they have defined a majority of community colleges within their state, convincingly demonstrate that their proposed institution consortium members (described in Section III.A.5) meet the required majority threshold for community colleges in the state, and describe how the colleges are organized relative to the labor market area(s) described in response to the Statement of Need (Section IV.C.1).
- Applicants must provide the minimum two letters of support from the allowable State Officials (one each from Group A and Group B) that demonstrate commitment to state-level coordination activities to support data integration and data sharing priorities.
- Applicants must also provide documentation of commitment, as described in Section IV.D.2.b., from each member of the institution consortium, which convincingly demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible, and attests that they will remain accredited through the life of the grant. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachments. Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from each institution consortium member included in the application will receive zero points for this rating factor.

ii. Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value (Up to 12 Points)

To receive full points, the applicant must provide the following:

- A clear description of how applicants have engaged employers and industry representatives to support the creation and expansion of programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility that are industry-driven, specifically in implementing four key areas: (1) providing leadership to and setting strategic direction for the project; (2) informing the identification and mapping of the necessary skills, competencies, and employer-valued credentials for the program(s); (3) assisting with curriculum development and program design; and (4) donating resources, which may include funding or in-kind support such as staff time, equipment, donation of proprietary software, and other efforts to ensure the applicant (and its consortia members, if relevant) is able to meaningfully support the skill development needs required and valued by industry.
- A thorough description of how the applicant will leverage existing strategic partnerships or build and strengthen such capacity through the employer partners engaged with the

SCC6 grant, to support the programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility and ensure they meet the hiring requirements of employers and skills needs of industry.

iii. **Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs (Up to 6 points)**

In response to Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs in Section III.B.2, applicants must identify the career pathways program(s) relevant to the programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility that have been or will be developed, demonstrating the portability and stack-ability of the recognized postsecondary credentials these programs lead to, and how they articulate to credit while mapping to and aligning with broader career pathways programs.

To receive full points, the applicant must, for the proposed programs that will seek Workforce Pell eligibility:

- Describe the alignment of the proposed programs to the industry sector(s) of focus and detail how the specific programs proposed are in demand or projected to experience near-term growth within that industry.
- Describe the career pathway stacking opportunities that may be built from the developed programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility.
- Describe how the credentials to be awarded are designed to provide flexible entry/exit points (on-/off-ramps) that enable participants to build the skills needed to secure better employment opportunities.
- Detail how the project will support the articulation of credit for Workforce Pell programs to ensure the award of academic credit towards a certificate or degree program upon a student's successful completion of the Workforce Pell-eligible program and enrollment into the certificate or degree program.
- Describe how the programs that will seek Workforce Pell eligibility will result in labor market value for participants, e.g. opportunities for career growth or higher wages.

iv. **Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options (Up to 12 Points)**

To receive full points for this section, the applicant must provide, consistent with Section III.B.3:

- A clear description of the level of proposed collaboration between the applicant and the public workforce development system partner(s) to undertake one of the following data integration strategies:
 1. Integrate data systems that contain both employment and educational outcomes data from multiple institutions through a single, unified data warehouse or data management system; or
 2. Create linkages between separate data systems through a management information system (MIS) that creates record linkages, the use of administrative data research facilities, or another model that the applicant proposes; or
 3. Undertake additional methods to address data integration and/or data sharing at the state level between education and workforce data
- The description of the commitment to state-level coordination activities to support data integration and data sharing priorities provided in the State Official's Letter of Support

and the extent to which that commitment meaningfully supports the data integration strategy proposed.

- Documentation of the extent to which the applicant engages required and optional workforce development system partners in the proposed capacity-building project and leverages the workforce development system's demonstrated experience in improving employment-related skills and involvement in initiatives to help address workers' barriers to employment. This includes evidence that the required state and/or local workforce development boards (or tribal entities eligible under WIOA Section 166) are involved in the development and implementation of the grant project. Applicants must demonstrate workforce development board or tribal entity engagement in the form of documentation described in Section IV.D.2.b. that convincingly demonstrates engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. Applicants must provide these in the documentation of commitment attachment.
- A clear description of the level of proposed collaboration between the applicant and the public workforce development system partner(s) to increase the institutional capacity to add, within the grant period of performance, all programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility developed with SCC grant funds to the state Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Such capacity may include working with local and state workforce board partners to address challenges related to, among other things, accurately identifying data cohorts, reporting timelines, data elements, and data formats under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and submitting accurate and timely performance data and cost information for both initial eligibility and continued eligibility.

Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment identifying at least one eligible workforce development system partner will receive zero points for this rating factor.

v. Demonstration of Employer Engagement (Up to 8 Points)

As stated in Section III.H. Required Partnerships, applicants must partner initially with at least three employers for each industry sector proposed. To receive full points for this section, the applicant must:

- Provide a comprehensive description of the roles of each committed employer partner and the contributions each will provide to support the goals of the project. Applicants must clearly describe how they will actively and continuously engage employer partners in the planned project and how they will maintain relationships with those partners throughout the life of the grant.
- Demonstrate that they are actively engaging employer partners in implementing the industry-led career pathways strategy within the following key areas:
 - Informing the identification of, and mapping, the necessary skills and competencies for the program(s).
 - Assisting with curriculum development and program design.
 - Informing the design of an assessment, verifying hiring requirements, or validating credentials that will address industry skill needs.
- Provide clear documentation of the currently committed employer partner roles and contributions to the project, as described in Section IV.D.2.b., that convincingly

demonstrates their engagement with the aspect of the project for which they are responsible. These must be provided in the documentation of commitment attachment.

Applicants that fail to provide documentation of commitment from at least three employer partners (for each proposed industry sector) will receive zero points for this rating factor.

vi. **Required Third-Party Evaluation Procurement Plan (Up to 2 Points)**

To receive a full 2 points for this section, the applicant must:

- Submit a third-party evaluation procurement plan as an attachment that describes the applicant's intent to procure a developmental evaluation and provides specific examples of how staff, faculty, and students will participate in evaluation activities. (Note that the detailed third-party evaluation plan should not be included with the application; winning applicants will be informed of such requirements after grants are announced. This section refers only to the plan to procure the third-party evaluator.)
- Describe in the plan the specific steps that the applicant will take to procure an evaluator for the developmental evaluation, demonstrating how those steps meet procurement requirements in this Announcement (see Section III.G.4. Required Third-Party Evaluation).
- Include the evaluation procurement in the required budget narrative and budget.
- Include the required third-party evaluation milestones described in Section III.G.4. in the project work plan.

4. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (Up to 6 Points)

To receive full points for this section, the applicant must:

- Demonstrate that the required qualifications of the lead applicant's day-to-day project manager will fully support project success. For full points, the time commitment of the project manager must be 80-100 percent, and this must also be reflected in the project budget.
- Provide an organizational chart that identifies the lead applicant, required partners, and any other proposed partners. The chart must describe the structure of the relationships of all partners involved in the project. The chart must also identify the proposed project's staffing plan to illustrate that partners have the capacity to support the lead applicant to carry out the proposed project. Applicants must submit the chart as an attachment. If no organizational chart is attached, this rating factor will receive zero points.
- Describe a convincingly effective process and staffing plan for data tracking that includes all consortium colleges, if applicable, and describe in detail how the lead applicant will use a data-driven decision-making process to communicate expectations to partners and institutional leaders, share progress against the work plan, and adjust strategies. For full points, the applicant must include the "who, when, what, and how" of the process and demonstrate a sound approach.
- Describe the applicant's fiscal and administrative controls in place to manage federal funds and demonstrate that the controls are adequate to ensure accountability and timely fiscal reporting, and to protect against incurring unallowed costs with grant funds.

5. Past Performance Programmatic Capability (Up to 6 Points)

To receive full points, the applicant must:

- Convincingly demonstrate past experience that supports the ability to effectively manage a consortium project that requires buy-in from state leadership and coordination across a large number of discrete organizations to accomplish the goals of the project.
- Describe strong and relevant prior experience (within the last five years) of the lead applicant in managing multimillion dollar federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements.

Demonstrate that the lead applicant and partners have sustained career pathways program development, strategic employer and industry partnerships, and/or capacity-building activities following completion of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements.

6. Budget and Budget Narrative (Up to 4 Points)

The Budget and Budget Narrative will be used to evaluate this section. Please see Section IV.B.2 for information on the requirements. The Budget and Budget Narrative do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative. For a full 4 points, the applicant must:

- Demonstrate that the proposed expenditures will address all project requirements, including participant tracking and the required developmental evaluation, and that key personnel, including the project manager and data tracking personnel, have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve expected project results.
- Provide a detailed description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The budget narrative should also include a complete description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.
- Align the totals on the SF-424A and the Budget Narrative.

D. Attachments to the Project Narrative

In addition to the Project Narrative, the application also includes required and requested attachments as explained below (see Section [VI.A](#) on which required attachments must be submitted in order for the application to be reviewed). 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.

We encourage applicants 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

You must submit an up-to three-page abstract summarizing the proposed project. If you do not submit the abstract, your application will still be reviewed, but it may impact your score. See Section VI.A for a list of items that will result in the disqualification of your application. 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:

- Lead applicant organization name
- Project title/name
- Total funding requested
- Industry sector(s)
- Estimated number of participants
- Estimated number of recognized postsecondary credentials created
- Estimated number of new programs developed that are seeking Workforce Pell eligibility
- Estimated number of existing programs enhanced to meet eligibility requirements for Workforce Pell
- Estimated number of programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility added to Eligible Training Provider List
- Institution consortium members
- Institution coordinating entity
- Employer partners
- Workforce development system partner(s)
- Optional partner(s) (if provided)
- Occupations targeted
- Career pathways program(s) to be created or enhanced
- Recognized postsecondary credentials(s) to be awarded
- Subrecipient activities
- Public contact information (point of contact name and title, institution, address, phone number, and email address)

A suggested format for the abstract is in Appendix E: Suggested Abstract Format.

b. State Official Letters of Support

Submit signed and dated Letters of Support from one of the selected officials from each of Group A and Group B. See Section II.A.3. State Official Letters of Support. The letters must have the written or electronic signature of the authorized individual and be dated no earlier than three months prior to the closing date of this FOA.

These letters must be uploaded as attachments to the application package and labeled “State Official Letter of Support Group A” and “State Official Letter of Support Group B” respectively.

These attachments do not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include both attachments will affect review of the application.

2. Requested Attachments

We request the following attachments. If you do not submit the attachments, your application will still be reviewed, but it will impact your score, unless otherwise noted.

a. Letters of Commitment or MOUs

Submit signed and dated Letters of Commitment or Memoranda of Understanding between the applicant and partner organizations and/or sub-grantees that propose to provide services to support or evaluate the program model and lead to the identified outcomes. See Section [III.I](#). Required Partnerships. The letter must have written or electronic signature of the authorized individual and dated no earlier than six months prior to the closing date of this FOA.

These letters must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “Letters of Commitment.”

b. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

If you are requesting indirect costs based on a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by your federal Cognizant Agency, then attach the most recently approved Agreement. (For more information, see Section [III.H](#). This attachment does not impact scoring of the application.

This document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled “NICRA.”

c. Financial System Risk Assessment Information

All applicants are requested to submit Funding Opportunity Announcement Financial System Risk Assessment Information. See Section [VI.D](#) for additional instructions. This attachment does not impact the scoring of the application.

d. Organizational Chart

Submit the Organizational Chart as described in the Project Narrative, Section IV.C.4.

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Organizational Chart.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

e. Project Work Plan

Submit the Project Work Plan as required in the Project Narrative, Section IV.C.2.iii, including key milestones and deliverables, due dates, responsible parties, and deadlines. See the suggested template in Appendix E: Suggested Project Work Plan Format.

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Project Work Plan.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

f. Third-Party Evaluation Procurement Plan

Submit the Procurement Plan as required in the Project Narrative, Section IV.C.3.vii, including information on how key stakeholders will participate and procurement steps.

Applicants must upload this document as an attachment to the application package and specifically label it “Third-Party Evaluation Procurement Plan.”

This attachment does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. Failure to include the attachment may affect scoring.

V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

This FOA, found at www.Grants.gov and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities> contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

B. 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.

C. Submission Instructions

Applicants must electronically submit their application through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on 05/20/2026. We will not review applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by hardcopy (mail or hand delivery), e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section V.C Submission Instructions.

D. Intergovernmental Review

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

E. Other Submission Requirements

If you encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, call 1-800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or email support@grants.gov.

VI. 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?
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Submission requirements are met	Section V.C	
Eligibility criteria are met	Section II.A	
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 V.C	
SAM Registration	Section V.B	
SF-424 includes a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and line 18a. does not exceed the ceiling amount of \$10,800,000	Section V.B	
SF-424A, Budget Information Form	Section IV.B	
Budget Narrative	Section IV.B	
Project Narrative	Section IV.C	
State Official Letters of Support	Section II.A	

B. Review Criteria

Criterion	Points (Maximum)
1. Statement of Need (See Section IV.C.1 . Statement of Need)	14 total
2. Expected Outcomes and Outputs (See Section IV.C.2 Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	26 total
3. Project Design (See Section IV.C.3 Project Design)	44 total
4. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.C.4 Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	6 total
5. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.C.5 Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	6 total
6. Budget and Budget Narrative	4 total

(See Section IV.C.6 Budget and Budget Narrative)	
TOTAL	100

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VI.B Review Criteria.

C. Review and Selection Process

Merit Review and Selection Process

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications based on the selection criteria. As outlined in section [VI.B](#) above, the selection criteria are based on the policy goals, and priorities explained in this FOA.

Up to 100 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, availability of funds, 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 to the process described in Executive Order 14332, Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking.

D. Risk Review

Risk Review Process

Before making an award, ETA will consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). For ETA to assess the applicant's Financial System, all applicants need to submit the Financial Risk Assessment explained in the application guide (Section VI.D) at the link below.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VI.D Risk Review.

VII. AWARD NOTICES

A. Award Document

A Federal Notice of Award document, signed by the Grant Officer, is the official document that obligates funds. If selected, this document will be provided electronically.

B. Award Timing and Notification to Applicants

All award notifications will be posted on the ETA Homepage at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/>. Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly

before the grant's execution. Non-selected applicants will be notified by email and may request a written debriefing on the significant weaknesses of their application.

Selection of an organization as a recipient does not mean that their grant application is approved as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, we may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiations and decline to fund the application. We reserve the right not to fund any application related to this FOA.

VIII. POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees will be subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the OMB Uniform Guidance, and the terms and conditions of the award.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

2. Religious Activities

Guidance from DOL on the effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on recipients of DOL financial assistance is found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/grants/religious-freedom-restoration-act/guidance>.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

3. Other Legal Requirements

For a complete understanding of the application requirements on Lobbying or Fundraising with Federal Funds; Transparency Act; Safeguarding Data Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII); Record Retention; Use of Contracts and Subawards; and Grant Closeout, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

4. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

Except as specifically provided in this FOA, our acceptance of an application and an award of federal funds to sponsor any program(s) does not provide a waiver of any grant requirements and/or procedures. For example, the OMB Uniform Guidance requires that an entity's procurement procedures ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide full and open competition. If an application identifies a specific entity to provide goods or services, the award does not provide the justification or basis to sole source the procurement (i.e., avoid competition).

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

a. DOL Disclaimer

If applicable, a standard ETA disclaimer needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

b. Intellectual Property Rights and Open Licensing

All work created using grant funds must be in a format that is readily accessible and available for open licensing to the public. This is required by 2 CFR 2900.13, and 2 CFR 200.315(d) to ensure DOL funds have as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation and the development of new learning materials.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

c. Credential Transparency

DOL requires that grantees make publicly available information about recognized postsecondary credentials using linked open data formats that support full transparency and interoperability. This ensures individuals, employers, educators, and training providers have access to the most complete, current and beneficial information about providers, programs credentials, and competencies supported by federal funds.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

5. Special Program Requirements

a. DOL Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, as per 2 CFR Part 200.301, grantees are required to participate in an evaluation, if undertaken by DOL.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.A Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

b. Performance Goals

Applicants will be held to outcomes provided in their application. Failure to meet outcomes may result in technical assistance, intervention by ETA, or may have a significant impact on future grants with ETA.

B. Reporting

You must meet DOL reporting requirements for quarterly financial and performance reports.

For a complete understanding of this application requirement, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section VIII.B Reporting.

IX. RESOURCES

For additional information on A. Web-Based Resources; B. Industry Competency Models and Career Clusters; C. WorkforceGPS; D. SkillsCommons; E. DOL’s Clearinghouse for Evaluation and Research (CLEAR); and F. Data and Other Evidence Research Resources, see the [2026 Application Guide](#), Section IX External Resources.

X. OMB INFORMATION COLLECTION

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires June 30, 2028.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 50 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Send comments about the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, to the attention of the Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N1301, Washington, D.C. 20210. Comments may also be emailed to: DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND ONLY COMMENTS ABOUT THE BURDEN CAUSED BY THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED EARLIER IN THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. DOL will use the information collected through this “Funding Opportunity Announcement” to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicants best suited to perform the functions of the grant. This information is required to be considered for this grant.

Signed 02/17/2026 in Washington, D.C. by:

Brinda Ruggles
Grant Officer, Employment and Training Administration

APPENDIX A: RESOURCES ON EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND CAREER PATHWAYS

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Employer Engagement

[What the Evidence Says About Employer Engagement Strategies](#)

Patterson, M. & Carson, M. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[Nine Year Gains: Project QUEST’s Continuing Impact](#)

Roder, A. & Elliott, M. Economic Mobility Corporation, 2019

[The Employer Perspectives Study: Insights on How to Build and Maintain Strong Employer-College Partnerships](#) (TAACCCT National Evaluation)

Scott, M., et al. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2018

[Implementing the WorkAdvance Model: Lessons for Practitioners](#)

Kazis, R. and Molina. F. MDRC, 2016

Career Pathways

[New Insights on Career Pathways: Evidence from a Meta-Analysis](#)

Strawn, J. et al. Brief prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, 2021

[From Learning to Earning: Eight-Year Findings from the ASAP Ohio Demonstration](#)

Hill, C. et al., MDRC, 2025

[Introduction to Stackable Credentials](#)

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, 2021

[Large Scale Change: Lessons Learned from TAACCCT](#) (Note: Paywall)

Van Noy, M., et al. (Eds.) Volume 2021, Issue 193: New Directions for Community Colleges, 2021

[Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development](#)

U.S. Department of Labor, 2016

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES ON WIOA STATE ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDER LIST (ETPL)

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

Eligibility Policy and Procedures

[TEGL 08-19:](#)

This Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) provides guidance and describes requirements relating to the eligibility provisions for the WIOA State List of Eligible Training Providers.

[TEGL 08-19, Change 1:](#)

This guidance clarifies that Registered Apprenticeship Programs are eligible training providers, including clarification on National Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

[TEGL 07-16](#)

This TEGL provides joint guidance with the Department of Education on exchanging confidential UC information with educational and training providers to meet the performance accountability requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

[Joint Guidance on Data Matching to Facilitate WIOA Performance Reporting and Evaluation](#)
(Attachment to TEGL 07-16)

[Webinar – ETP Webinar Series Part 1: Eligibility and TEGL 08-19 \(2020\):](#)

This webinar discusses common challenges and solutions that states may face when developing and maintaining a list of eligible training providers. It also provides an overview of TEGL 08-19.

[ETP Quick Reference Guide:](#)

High-level overview of some of the key requirements that WIOA applies to states with respect to the ETP list.

[ETP Policy Checklist Tool:](#)

Checklist that states may use to ensure that their ETP eligibility policies have all of the components required by WIOA.

[Leveraging the ETP List in Alabama:](#)

This webcast provides information on how states can use eligible training provider lists to reduce or mitigate benefit cliffs.

[Sample ETPL Reciprocity Agreement:](#)

This resource provides a sample reciprocity agreement that states may reference when developing their own agreements to allow customers with individual training accounts to access providers/training opportunities in other states. NOTE: This link will open to an automatic download; depending on the browser, it may require selecting the download icon to see the file.

APPENDIX C: SUGGESTED PROJECT WORK PLAN FORMAT

A comprehensive work plan for the purposes of this FOA will include but not be limited to high-level implementation steps specific to the following project components: Core Element 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value, Core Element 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs, and Core Element 3: Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options. In addition, project components related to Participant Tracking, Developmental Evaluation, Open Educational Resource Content Development and Posting, Linked Open Data on Credentials, and, if needed, Grant Funded Special Purpose Equipment and/or Altered Space have been pre-populated in the work plan items below with the Implementation Activities and Milestones, as required by the FOA. (Each of these is explained further elsewhere.). Please complete the remainder of the project work plan (the areas in italics) by entering Responsible Entity(ies), Start Dates and Milestone Due Dates (e.g., Year 2, Q3 or Month 34) for each of the Implementation Steps and Milestones where applicable.

Note that successful applicants may add details to the work plan after award for internal use, but the Department encourages applicants to only include high-level implementation steps specific to the required activities, milestones, responsible entities, start dates and milestone due dates, using the definitions provided below. The Department will review implementation progress on the work plans, as reported in Quarterly Narrative Reports, for technical assistance purposes, and annually for performance monitoring and compliance purposes. Significant changes to the project work plan may require a grant amendment. DOL may request clarifications, as well as annualized milestones, after grant award.

Note the following definitions and instructions:

- High-Level Implementation Activities: The key processes, services, and activities to direct the course of change. These are the interventions that, when implemented, create a result (milestones).
- Milestones: Milestones are realistic and measurable markers of grant progress including those that serve as evidence of sustainable statewide impact; these are typically expressed in the form of an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development.
- Entity(ies) Responsible: List actual entity, (e.g., Acme Community College or Healthcare Conglomerate Ltd.), or specific role (e.g., IT Program Dean or Grant Project Director) – not general categories such as college or employer.

- Start Date: When an implementation step will be started. Show as Month 4, Y1, Q12, etc. rather than using calendar dates for the purposes of the proposal.
- Milestone Due Date(s): When the milestone will be reached. Show as Month 4, Y1, Q12, etc.

Suggested Format for Project Work Plan

A sample format of the Project Work Plan can be found here in Appendix C, and an Excel version is available on the grants.gov FOA page, under Related Documents. Instructions appear in italics and should either be removed or replaced with project-specific content.

SCC6 PROJECT WORK PLAN

LEAD APPLICANT: APPLICANT TYPE:	PROJECT TITLE:
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CORE ELEMENT 1: Industry-Driven Strategies with Demonstrated Employer Value

Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this Core Element	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				

CORE ELEMENT 2: Worker Mobility through Career Pathways Programs

[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this Core Element	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				

CORE ELEMENT 3: Workforce System Integration to Expand Training Options

[Insert applicant’s implementation steps for this Core Element.	[Insert milestone(s).]	[Insert responsible entity(ies).]	[Insert start date.]	[Insert milestone due date(s).]
[Add additional lines as needed.]				

PARTICIPANT TRACKING: See Section IV.C.2.ii. Participant Tracking Plan. Note: Grantees are expected to start enrolling participants in programs seeking Workforce Pell eligibility by at least month 12, with consideration of academic calendars, though sooner is preferred.

Provide accurate data products and consistent participant data collection	Data Assistant hired or assigned	[Insert applicant’s responsible entity(ies) here and below as needed.]	[Insert start date here and below as needed.]	[No later than Month 9]
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Pilot data collection system tools	Data collection tools ready for implementation		[No later than Month 9]	[No later than Month 12]
Intake Participant tracking (at time of Participant enrollment as defined by the project)	Intake data collection completed for each enrollment cycle during the grant period of performance		[No later than Month 12]	[No later than Month 12 and each enrollment cycle thereafter]
Quarterly data quality check	Data finalized for quarterly performance reporting		[No later than the quarter following first participant enrollment cycle]	[No later than Month 14]

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION: See Section III.G.4 Third-Party Evaluation. Note: Due Dates for some Third-Party Developmental Evaluation Milestones are set by the FOA				
Develop a detailed procurement work plan to procure a third-party evaluator for a developmental evaluation.	Detailed procurement work plan submission.	[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies)here and below as needed.]	[Insert start date here and below as needed.]	[No later than Month 1]
Procure third-party evaluator for a developmental evaluation.	Procured third-party evaluator			[No later than Month 6]
Develop a Draft Detailed Evaluation Design from the evaluator, using guidance provided by the Department.	Draft Detailed Evaluation Design Submission			[No later than Month 9]
Finalize Detailed Evaluation Design in collaboration with developmental evaluator.	Final Detailed Evaluation Submission			[No later than Month 12]
Prepare the evaluator's Interim Developmental Evaluation Report to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using the	Interim Developmental Evaluation Report Submission to the grantee's Federal			[No later than Month 27]

suggested format or similar layout, provided after grant award.	Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office			
Prepare the evaluator's Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.	Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.			[No later than Month 48]

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND POSTING:
 See Section III.G.3. OER. Note: Due Dates for some OER Content Development and Posting Milestones are set by the FOA

Select and/or develop high value materials for licensing and public posting as OER with a specific focus on curriculum and supporting materials that would allow another individual to successfully use the curriculum.	List of selected and/or developed materials being developed with grant funds submission to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office	[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies)here and below as needed.]	[Insert start date here and below as needed.]	[No later than Month 24]
Create a plan (OER Plan) that details the process that will be used to mark materials as openly licensed and prepare materials for public posting as open educational resources ready for use by others, including the repository you will use for this purpose.	OER Plan submission to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office			[No later than Month 24]
Implement OER Plan	Posted OER material in publicly accessible online location and submission of posting date and location to the grantee's Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office		[By at least Month 24]	[No later than Month 36]

LINKED OPEN DATA ON CREDENTIALS (Credential Transparency): Section VIII.A.7
 Credential Transparency. Note: Due Dates for some Credential Transparency Milestones are set by the FOA.

Determine credentials to be developed, enhanced, or	Linked Open Data on Credentials plan	[Insert applicant's responsible	[Insert start date	[No later
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delivered through grant funding (including but not limited to diplomas, badges, certificates, certifications, apprenticeships, licenses, and degrees of all levels and types)	submission that details the process that will be used to fulfill the credential transparency requirement	entity(ies)here and below as needed.]	here and below as needed.]	than Month 24]
Implement Linked Open Data on Credentials Plan including finalized credential transparency description language specifications complete and in-line with DOL requirements	Linked Open Data on Credentials requirement completed including finalized credential transparency description language specifications complete and in-line with DOL requirements			[By at least Month 36]

GRANT-FUNDED SPECIAL PURPOSE EQUIPMENT AND / OR MINOR SPACE ALTERATIONS (OPTIONAL): Section III.B.4. Allowable Activities				
Complete written request for prior approval to acquire grant-funded special purpose equipment and/or to alter space (optional)	Written submission to grantee's FPO requesting approval	[Insert applicant's responsible entity(ies)here and below as needed.]	[Insert start date here and below as needed.]	[Ideally within first 90 days, but no later than Month 12]
Complete special purpose grant-funded equipment or space alterations	Begin using special purpose grant-funded equipment or space alterations for grant purposes			[No later than Month 24, preferably sooner]

APPENDIX D: RESOURCES ON EVALUATION

The Department encourages applicants to review the following resources, as relevant, when developing their proposals.

[DOL's Chief Evaluation Office Resources](#)

- [Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research](#) (CLEAR) is a central source of research and information on labor-related topics for practitioners, policymakers, researchers, the media and the general public. CLEAR identifies and summarizes many types of research, including descriptive, implementation, and impact studies.
 - CLEAR's [community college topic area](#) compiles studies examining the effectiveness of community college policies and programs that aim to improve academic persistence, degree/certificate completion, and labor market outcomes of community college students. Each individual study profile includes a summary of the study, findings, and implications.

- [Design Your Study](#) offers checklists, guidelines, and standards that include important elements for a variety of study designs, such as randomized control trials (RCTs), random discontinuity design (RDD), and propensity score matching (PSM).

[Evaluation and Research Hub](#) (EvalHub)

DOL's Eval Hub is a community point of access to support workforce development professionals in their efforts to choose and use evaluations to improve workforce system services and strategies.

[Evaluation Toolkit: Key Elements for State Workforce Agencies](#)

Coffey Consulting and Safal Partners for the US Department of Labor, 2020

[A Developmental Evaluation Primer](#)

Gamble, J., J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, 2008

[DE 201: A Practitioner’s Guide to Developmental Evaluation](#)

Dozois, E., et al. J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, 2010

APPENDIX E: SUGGESTED ABSTRACT FORMAT

The abstract is a required document. Omission of the abstract will not result in your application being disqualified; the lack of the required information in the abstract, however, may impact scoring. The template below is a suggested format. Applicants may tailor this template as needed to fit their application. The submitted abstract may be up to three pages and is provided as an attachment that does not count toward the page limit for the Project Narrative. DOL will share publicly the abstracts and theories of change of successful applicants.

A Word version of this suggested format can be found on the grants.gov page for this FOA, under Related Documents.

Lead Applicant Organization Name:

[List name of lead applicant]

OVERVIEW

Project Title/Name:

Total Funding Requested:

Industry Sector(s):

Estimated Number of Participants:

Estimated Number of Recognized Postsecondary Credentials Created:

Estimated Number of New Programs Developed That Are Seeking Workforce Pell Eligibility:

Estimated Number of Existing Programs Enhanced to Meet Eligibility Requirements for Workforce Pell:

Estimated Number of Programs Added to Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL):

PROJECT PURPOSE

SCC Partnership Institution Consortium Members:

[List name(s) of institution consortium partner(s)]

Institution Coordinating Entity:

[List name of institution coordinating entity]

Employer Partners: (At least three employer partners per sector)

[List names of employer partners; indicate each employer partner's industry sector]

Workforce Development System Partner(s):

[List name(s) of workforce development system partner(s); indicate entity type]

Optional Partner(s): (If provided)

[List name(s) of entity(ies); indicate entity type]

PROJECT INFORMATION

Occupations Targeted:

Recognized Postsecondary Credentials(s) to Be Awarded:

[For each credential, state whether it will be offered initially as credit or non-credit]

Subrecipient Activities (If applicable):

[Describe activities that subrecipient(s) will undertake]

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

[Describe what will be different at the end of the grant compared to the current state]

PUBLIC CONTACT INFORMATION

Point of Contact Name and Title:

Institution:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address: