

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**  
**Apprenticeship Building America (ABA)**  
**Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)**

FOA-ETA-22-06

*Updated March 28, 2022*

*New question #16 added*

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

**1) What organizations can apply for these grants?**

Eligible lead applicants vary by grant category. The following organizations are eligible to apply under each grant category:

- **Category 1: State Apprenticeship System Building and Modernization:**

- States are eligible to apply for grants in Category 1. The term “state” means any of the 50 states of the United States, District of Columbia, or any Territory or possession of the United States. For the purposes of this FOA, territories or possessions of the United States are defined as: Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. Only state agencies may submit an application for this category, and only one application may be submitted by a state in response to this category.

States must identify the state agency that will be the grant recipient (e.g., state workforce agency eligible for funding under Title I of WIOA, state educational agency, or SAA). This entity must have the capacity to administer the grant, will have sole responsibility for administering the project, and will serve as the grant’s fiscal agent

- **Category 2: Expansion of RAP Opportunities for Youth:**

- Cities;
- Municipalities;
- Tribal Nations;
- Workforce Development System Entities, Agencies, and Associations - Organizations involved in administering the workforce development system established under WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3151), which are limited to State Workforce Development Boards, Local Workforce Development Boards, and Indian and Native American entities (as outlined in Section 166 of WIOA) (29 U.S.C. 3221);
- Community-based Organizations - Organizations that are representative of a community or significant segments of a community and which provide education, career technical education or rehabilitation, job training, or internship services and programs and includes neighborhood groups and organizations, community action agencies, community development corporations, union related organizations, and employer-related organizations;
- Industry groups and associations;

- Labor unions and Joint labor-management partnerships;
- Workforce and apprenticeship intermediaries;
- Educational institutions (e.g., alternative, private or traditional high schools; community colleges; CTE; HSIs; MSIs; HBCUs; school districts);
- Consortia: A consortium of organizations that is led by an eligible entity whose principal function(s) is consistent with the capabilities associated with either one or more of the above-listed organizations. A consortium is a group made up of two or more organizations, companies, or governments that work together to achieve a common objective.
- **Category 3: Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships:**
  - Cities;
  - Municipalities;
  - Workforce Development System Entities - Organizations involved in administering the workforce development system established under WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3151), which are limited to State Workforce Development Boards, Local Workforce Development Boards, and Indian and Native American entities (as outlined in Section 166 of WIOA) (29 U.S.C. 3221).
  - Educational institutions (e.g., community colleges, HBCUs, institutions of higher education, MSIs, school districts);
  - Industry groups and associations;
  - Labor unions and Joint labor-management partnerships;
  - Workforce and apprenticeship intermediaries;
  - Organizations functioning as business-related entities/workforce intermediaries for the expressed purpose of serving the needs of businesses, individual businesses, or consortia of businesses;
  - Community-based organizations - Organizations that are representative of a community or significant segments of a community and which provides education, career technical education or rehabilitation, job training, or internship services and programs and includes neighborhood groups and organizations, community action agencies, community development corporations, union-related organizations, and employer-related organizations;
  - Consortia: A consortium of organizations that is led by an eligible entity whose principal function(s) is consistent with the capabilities associated with either one or more of the above-listed organizations. A consortium is a group made up of two or more organizations, companies, or governments that work together to achieve a common objective.
- **Category 4: Registered Apprenticeship Hubs:**
  - Cities;
  - Workforce Development System Entities - Organizations involved in administering the workforce development system established under WIOA (29 U.S.C. 3151), which are limited to State Workforce Development Boards, Local Workforce Development Boards, and Indian and Native American entities (as outlined in Section 166 of WIOA) (29 U.S.C. 3221);

- Educational institutions (e.g., community colleges, institutions of higher education, HBCUs, HSIs, MSIs, school districts);
- Industry groups and associations;
- Labor unions and Joint labor-management partnerships;
- Workforce and apprenticeship intermediaries: Organizations functioning as business-related entities/workforce intermediaries for the express purpose of serving the needs of businesses, individual businesses, or consortia of businesses;
- Community-based organizations: Organizations that are representative of a community or significant segments of a community and which provides education, career technical education or rehabilitation, job training, or internship services and programs and includes neighborhood groups and organizations, community action agencies, community development corporations, union-related organizations, and employer-related organizations; and
- Consortia: A consortium of organizations that is led by an eligible entity whose principal function(s) is consistent with the capabilities associated with either one or more of the above-listed organizations. A consortium is a group made up of two or more organizations, companies, or governments that work together to achieve a common objective.

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

Yes. Labor unions and joint labor-management partnerships are eligible lead applicants for grant categories: Category 2: Expansion of RAP opportunities for youth; Category 3: Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships; and Category 4: Registered Apprenticeship Hubs.

Labor organizations are not eligible lead applicants for Category 1: State Apprenticeship System Building and Modernization.

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

Yes. Eligible lead applicants are encouraged to partner with a broad range of organizations. As appropriate, the Department encourages applicants to partner with labor organizations (labor unions or joint-labor management partnerships).

**AWARD INFORMATION**

**4) What grant category can applicants apply for under the ABA FOA?**

The ABA grant program will fund grants in four categories. Applicants have the opportunity to apply for funding across four grant categories: (1) State Apprenticeship System Building and Modernization; (2) Expansion of RAP Opportunities for Youth; (3) Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-Apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships; and (4) Registered Apprenticeship Hubs.

- **Category 1: State Apprenticeship System Building and Modernization:** Grantees will coordinate RAP expansion and system building efforts at a state level across a wide array of industry sectors with employers, labor organizations, educational institutions, industry groups, joint labor-management partnerships, workforce and apprenticeship intermediaries, community-based organizations, and other non-profit and public sector partners. Grantees will develop strategies to improve coordination efforts around system alignment, data quality and use, program expansion into target industries, and goals and strategies to ensure equity in RAPs, and also facilitate other data sharing, system change, and governance requirements to comply with the law and ensure a strong and modernized Registered Apprenticeship system.
- **Category 2: Expansion of RAP Opportunities for Youth:** Grantees will establish and expand partnerships that commit to expanding RAPs and/or pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to RAP enrollment for youth through coordination with industry, workforce intermediaries, labor organizations, K-12 districts, community colleges, youth-serving and community-based organizations, and other stakeholders.
- **Category 3: Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships:** Grantees will establish and develop equity-centered public-private partnerships with pre-apprenticeships leading to RAP enrollment that aim to increase diversity and equity in apprenticeship for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. Please see Appendix A for a definition on “Equity Partnerships.”
- **Category 4: Registered Apprenticeship Hubs:** Grantees will establish a Registered Apprenticeship Hub by forming a multi-partner network capable of serving as a RAP sponsor or intermediary with the primary focus of supporting industry’s needs for creating and expanding RAPs in new and emerging sectors and occupations.

**5) Can applications submitted for Category 4: Apprenticeship Hubs include areas of focus, in addition to a target industry or industries?**

Yes. Hubs can be led by a variety of organizations and are encouraged to include additional areas of focus (e.g. youth, equity, career pathways leading to RAP enrollment) beyond the primary focus of expansion of Registered Apprenticeship in the target industry or industries.

**6) Can applicants apply for more than one ABA grant category?**

Applicants may apply for more than one grant category, but must provide a separate application for each. Applications including multiple grant categories within the same application package will be found non-responsive and will not receive further consideration.

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

We expect availability of approximately \$113,000,000 to fund approximately 20-30 grants. You may apply for a ceiling amount of:

- State Apprenticeship System Building and Modernization: up to \$4 million;
- Expansion of RAP opportunities for youth: up to \$5 million;
- Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships: up to \$3 million;
- Registered Apprenticeship Hubs: up to \$6 million for projects with a local/regional or statewide geographic scope; and up to \$8 million for projects with a national geographic scope.

Of the \$113,000,000 in grants funds available for the ABA grant program, ETA intends to commit up to \$50 million in funding awards (of the total \$113 million available) to projects primarily focused on equity partnerships and/or pre-apprenticeship activities that result in enrollment in RAPs.

**8) How do applicants indicate they are applying for the equity partnership and pre-apprenticeship set-aside?**

Projects funded under this set-aside may come from any of the four grant categories described in this FOA. If applying for the set-aside, please ensure that you indicate so in the Abstract (see Appendix D for the Suggested Abstract Template).

**9) What information should be provided by applicants that are applying for the set-aside?**

Your Project Narrative should clearly address the following guidelines: 1) a purpose statement describing the equity partnerships and/or pre-apprenticeship efforts in the community(ies) you intend to outreach, 2) your success benchmarks and measures, 3) a description of the specific population(s) you intend to impact, 4) the name of the lead organization and the partnerships you will form, 5) the baseline number of Registered Apprentices within the identified area(s), and 6) a description of how your partnership(s) will increase equity in Registered Apprenticeship and/or pre-apprenticeships leading to RAPs.

**10) When are applications due?**

The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is April 25, 2022. You must submit your application electronically on <https://www.grants.gov> no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to minimize the risk of late receipt. We will not review applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by hard-copy, e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

**11) How long is the grant period of performance?**

The period of performance is 48 months with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2022. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

**ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES**

## 12) What are the geographic scope applicants can propose?

Applicants must identify the geographic scope of the proposed project. Applicants may choose one of the following geographic scopes: local/regional, statewide, or national scope. The geographic scope is the physical service area in which awarded applicants will serve participants and/or provide services.

- Local/regional means serving a part of one state or a contiguous area that includes multiple sites that may cross more than one state;
- Statewide means serving an entire state or multiple non-contiguous sites within one state; and
- National means serving multiple states in multiple locations across the country. The service area does not need to be contiguous.

Applicants applying under Category 1: State System Building and Modernization are required to target a statewide geographic scope.

## 13) What are required grant activities?

Applicants must propose projects that comprise all of the following activities:

- **Launch and/or Expand RAPs, increase RAP opportunities for youth, and/or pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to RAP enrollment.**
- **Industry Engagement and Support:** Grantees must engage employers and other industry organizations to demonstrate insights into industry and workforce needs; become partners in design, implementation and investment of resources; and develop longer-term relationships and efforts to support ongoing employer engagement.
- **Promotion and Outreach Activities:** Grantees must engage in efforts to promote and conduct outreach to industry partners and stakeholders regarding the value and benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeships that lead to RAP enrollment, as appropriate.
- **Partnership Building:** Grantees must identify and collaborate with a broad range of partners to promote RAPs and pre-apprenticeship programs. Grantees are expected to actively support the development and introduction of new apprenticeship partners, including employers, industry associations, labor unions, Registered Apprenticeship Intermediaries, and workforce and educational entities. Grantees are expected to directly and indirectly support the expansion of national, regional, and local RAP and/or pre-apprenticeship models.
- **Engaging Underrepresented Populations and Underserved Communities:** Grantees must have a wide range of services, policies and procedures that enable them to effectively serve underrepresented populations and underserved communities specifically.
- **Leveraging Resources:** Grantees must leverage local, state, federal, and private sector resources to increase the impacts of grant funding. Leveraged funds must be described in the Budget Narrative as described in Section IV.B.2. Project Budget.
- **Data-informed Decision Making:** Grantees must use labor market information, industry and occupational trends, assessment data, and other information to guide investment,

programmatic, and other key decisions regarding grant planning, implementation, and system capacity. All grantees are required to collect data on the required program elements for tracking and reporting performance outcomes of enrolled apprentices.

- **Policy and System Alignment:** Grantees must align and connect with policies and initiatives across workforce development, economic development, education, and other systems to improve grant outcomes and create longer-term conditions for success.

In carrying out the above activities, applicants may apply to one or more of the ABA grant categories based on eligibility of the applicant. For more information, please see Section III.A. Eligible Applicants and Section III.C.2. Number of Applications Applicants May Submit.

**14) Can applicants propose projects that include pre-apprenticeships that do not lead to RAPs?**

No. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded through this grant must directly lead to RAPs during the grant period of performance. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded under this grant should ensure that the skills and competencies being developed align with industry needs. It is allowable and encouraged for pre-apprenticeship completers to receive grant-funded services in a RAP so they may be a grant participant.

**MISC.**

**15) Who can I contact for further questions about the ABA FOA?**

For further information about this FOA, please contact Denise Roach, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management at roach.denise@dol.gov. Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to roach.denise@dol.gov and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-22-06, and along with question(s), include a contact name, and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.doleta.gov/grants> and at <https://www.grants.gov>.

**Updated March 28, 2022**

**New 16) For states in the process of obtaining or retaining formal, written notice from the OA Administrator affirming the state's regulatory compliance with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30, eligible to apply, what documentation needs to be provided?**

States that do not yet have formal, written notice from the OA Administrator affirming the state's regulatory compliance with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30 must provide as part of their application a description of their activities towards obtaining or retaining formal, written notice from the OA Administrator affirming the state's regulatory compliance with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30. This description must clearly identify steps taken to seek formal approval for 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30, including: submission of request for approval to OA, communications with OA, preliminary approval letters, steps taken to make modifications based on OA recommendations, or other efforts the state can document for consideration. This document must be uploaded as an attachment to the application package and labeled "Efforts in obtaining compliance with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30."

Applicants should note that all programs and activities funded under the ABA grant must be in compliance with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30.