# **Frequently Asked Questions**

# **National Farmworker Jobs Program, Career Services and Training**

# **Funding Opportunity Announcement FOA-ETA-24-15**

Please note, this is a list of some frequently asked questions. Please see the funding opportunity announcement, [FOA-ETA-24-15](https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/352100), for full application requirements.

**AWARD INFORMATION**

1. **Could you explain the award selection process generally?**

A technical merit review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria to determine the merit of applications. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this funding opportunity announcement. Up to 100 points may be awarded to an application, 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 selection of applications for funding.

The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Grant Officer reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to take into consideration other relevant factors when applicable. Such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds; category of applicant; target population such as adult participants, youth participants, or both adult and youth participants; available funding; proposed service area; coverage for Significant Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker States; selected sector(s); and other relevant factors. The Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to their attention.

1. **What is a service area?**

Section III.A. of the funding opportunity announcement (FOA) provides service area requirements for eligible applicants and specifies that a service area is the geographical jurisdiction in which an applicant is proposing to provide grant services and must include a state and specific county(ies) within that state. The smallest unit of service for this program is a county. For example, an applicant must propose to serve a county or counties within a state, but not specific cities or townships. Grantees will be responsible to provide NFJP services to eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents in the approved service area. Section IV.B.3.a.i. of the FOA provides specific instructions for how applicants must identify the proposed service area in their narrative and on appropriate application forms.

1. **This FOA lists several states where the Department may make two awards instead of just one, which is different than previous competitions. As an applicant, how do I know how much funding my organization should request if we are proposing to serve one of these states?**

Section II.A. of the FOA specifies that the Department intends to award up to seven grants for CA. It also specifies that the Department intends to award a grant, and *may* award up to two grants in: AZ, FL, ID, IL, MI, NY, NC, OR, PR, TX and WA. As explained in the same section of the FOA, this allows for greater competition within states with relatively large migrant and seasonal farmworker populations and NFJP funding allotments.

The FOA does not prescribe specific sub-state service areas in these or any other states; rather, the applicant must propose its service area. The FOA also does not prescribe sub-state funding allotment amounts. Rather, as specified in Section III.C.4., applicants must request grant funding that is commensurate with the scope and scale of the project proposed, considering the minimum number of enrolled participants and other factors. Also, as specified in Section II.A., applicants must request *one* year’s worth of funding in applying to this FOA.

DOL will determine the *total* funding awarded to the grantee or grantees in each state by applying the funding formula to the final fiscal year 2024 appropriation, which determines each state’s total allotment. As the best proxy for estimating PY 2024 allotments, the FOA links to the program year 2023 allotments for Career Services and Training Grants in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 17-22](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-17-22).

In a state where the Department expects to award up to two grants, applicants may choose to apply for the full amount expected to be allotted in that state, or may choose to apply for a smaller amount, commensurate with the scope and scale of the applicant’s proposed project. In California, where the Department intends to award up to seven grants, applicants are to request the amount of grant funding commensurate with the scope and scale of the project proposed, and the Department expects award amounts to range from approximately $1 million to $8 million. In a state where the Department expects to award only one grant, the Department generally expects that applicants will apply for the full amount expected to be allotted in that state.

In general, the Department may award applicants less funding than requested, particularly in states where it expects to award more than one grant. As explained in section VI.A. of this FOA, before the actual grant is awarded, the Department may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation.

1. **Related to Question #3 above, how will the Department determine whether to award multiple grants within certain states, and how will it determine each grantee’s service area in states where multiple grants are awarded?**

Through the review and selection process described in Section V.B. of the FOA, the Department will make award decisions that best achieve the goals and objectives of the FOA and NFJP. Whether the Department awards multiple grants within a given state, how much funding it awards each grantee, and how each grantee’s service area is defined, will depend on the applications the Department receives, the final scores of those applications as determined through the review and selection process, and other relevant factors when applicable. Section V.B.1. of the FOA specifies that such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds; category of applicant; target population such as adult participants, youth participants, or both adult and youth participants; available funding; proposed service area; coverage for Significant Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker States; selected sector(s); and other relevant factors.

Note that, as specified in Section II.A. of the FOA, awards made under this FOA are subject to the availability of federal funds. In a state where the Department selects more than one grantee, the total of the amounts awarded to such grantees will equal the total funding allotted to that state via the NFJP funding formula. As noted above, the Department may award applicants less funding than requested, particularly in states where it expects to award more than one grant. Consistent with the Department’s general award practices, in instances where it must award a lower amount than originally requested by an applicant, the Department will request modified grant documents that correspond to the revised award amount (for example, an updated budget and budget narrative, and an updated statement of work).

1. **How will ETA determine funding levels for program year 2024?**

Through this FOA, the Department announced the availability of approximately $90,000,000 in grant funds authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 167 for the National Farmworker Jobs Program, Career Services and Training. The total funding awarded to each state will be determined by applying the funding formula to the final fiscal year 2024 appropriation. The formula was developed for the purpose of distributing funds geographically by state on the basis of each state’s relative share of persons eligible for the program. At the time of FOA publication, the Department had not yet finalized the results of the allotment formula. In the meantime, as the best proxy for estimating PY 2024 allotments, the FOA links to the program year 2023 allotments for Career Services and Training Grants in [TEGL No. 17-22](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-17-22).

1. **Explain more about Category A (returning) applicants versus Category B (new) applicants. Are those categories determined state by state? And, how does an applicant’s category factor in to the Department’s award decisions in a given state?**

In this grant competition, the Department has established two distinct categories to apply for NFJP awards:

* Category A Applicants are applicants that received an NFJP award in the most recent competition cycle (program years 2020-2023). The FOA does not specify that this category distinction is based on the state(s) the applicant serves through its PY 2020-2023 grant or the state(s) it is now applying to serve in the PY 2024-2027 grant cycle. As such, the Department will determine an applicant’s Category A status irrespective of the state(s) it currently serves or the state(s) it proposes to serve.
* Category B Applicants are other eligible applicants that did not receive an NFJP award in the most recent competition cycle (program years 2020-2023).

Further, as specified in Section II.A. of the FOA, the Department anticipates it will award *up to* 50 percent of the *total* available grant competition funding to Category B applicants. Conversely, the Department intends to award *at least* 50 percent of the *total* available grant competition funding to Category A applicants. With this mix of grant recipients, DOL intends to give organizations with experience delivering employment and training services but with little or no experience with a DOL NFJP grant an opportunity to implement such a program, while also allowing opportunities for previously funded NFJP grantees with a record of success to continue to deliver services.

As noted above in this FAQ document, the Department’s decisions regarding which applicant(s) to award in a given state will depend on the applications it receives, the final scores of those applications as determined through the review and selection process, and other relevant factors when applicable. Section V.B.1. of the FOA specifies that such factors may include the geographic distribution of funds; category of applicant; target population such as adult participants, youth participants, or both adult and youth participants; available funding; proposed service area; coverage for Significant Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker States; selected sector(s); and other relevant factors.

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

1. **Who is eligible to apply for an NFJP grant?**

Section 167(b) of WIOA and 20 CFR 685.200 specify that to be eligible to receive an NFJP grant, an entity must have: 1) an understanding of the problems of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including their dependents; 2) a familiarity with the agricultural industries and the labor market needs of the proposed service area; and 3) the ability to demonstrate a capacity to administer and deliver effectively a diversified program of workforce investment activities, including youth workforce investment activities, and related assistance for eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Organizations that meet these three criteria are eligible to apply, and the Project Narrative section of this funding opportunity announcement is designed to elicit information from applicants to demonstrate these criteria. Neither the statute, the regulations, nor the FOA further specify or limit the *types* of organizations (e.g., non-profits, local government agencies, state agencies, etc.) that are eligible. As stated in Section III.A. of the FOA, the Department encourages education and training providers, advocacy organizations, labor or worker organizations, industry representatives, and organizations that provide services to farmworkers and other populations facing multiple barriers to employment to consider applying for this Announcement.

1. **Is the Department solicitating grant application for all states?**

With the exception of Alaska and the District of Columbia, the Department is soliciting Career Services and Training grant applications for all states and Puerto Rico.

1. **Will the Department accept applications for combined states?**

Unlike previous competition years, applicants may not submit applications for combined states (for example, one application for Virginia and West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland, or Connecticut and Rhode Island combined). Applicants must submit a distinct application for each proposed state.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

1. **Are applicants required to select agriculture as one of the 1-3 selected sector(s) (industry or clusters of occupations) on which to focus their NFJP Career Services and Training project?**

As specified in Section IV.B.3.b.ii., applicants are not required to select agriculture as one of the 1-3 sectors on which to focus their proposed project, and the FOA scoring criteria do not assign specific points for applications targeting the agricultural sector.

The NFJP regulations at 20 CFR 685.100 specify that “The purpose of the NFJP…is to strengthen the ability of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) and their dependents to obtain or retain unsubsidized employment, stabilize their unsubsidized employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency, *including upgraded employment in agriculture*.” (emphasis added). Consistent with the program’s purpose, the Department is encouraging applicants to submit a proposed project design that either focuses only on the agriculture sector or includes the agriculture sector as a part of the one to three sectors for their proposed project design, especially given the agriculture sector’s workforce challenges as well as its pivotal role in the nation’s food security and economy. It is not a required application component to receive full points in the merit review.

1. **How does the funding opportunity announcement incorporate DOL’s Good Jobs Principles?**

Good jobs (or quality jobs) are the foundation of an equitable economy that lifts workers and families and makes businesses more competitive. A good job helps workers achieve economic stability and mobility, while prioritizing diversity and worker voice.

Applicants must incorporate DOL’s Good Job Principles in the Project Design section and Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity section of their application.

As specified in Section IV.B.3.b.i Project Design of the FOA,

* Applicants must identify which Good Jobs Principles (a minimum of two) they will focus on through their sector-based training and partnerships and explain why they have chosen the selected principles.
* Applicants must provide a comprehensive narrative description of how the grant project will integrate and align with a minimum of two of the Department’s eight principles of job quality. The description must address: a) the current state in each targeted sector(s) with respect to the two selected Good Jobs Principles specifically; b) specific actions that may be taken by the applicant or employer partners with support of the applicant to address the two selected Good Jobs Principles; c) how improved job quality will positively impact employment outcomes for both participants and employers; and d) identify a subset of performance indicators to measure progress towards achieving goals for a minimum of two good job principles. See Appendix B Examples of Good Jobs Principles for Program Design.

As specified in in Section IV.B.3.b.ii Project Design of the FOA,

* Applicants must describe a plan to establish or maintain partners in a strategic and coordinated manner to identify the policies and actions that can be implemented to grow good job opportunities or adopt good jobs practices into existing jobs for the target population.

As specified in Section IV.B.3.c.i Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity of the FOA,

* Applicants must identify a minimum of two Good Jobs Principles they will focus on and adopt within their organization. This will ensure that NFJP grant staff, who oversee the primary grant management functions, also experience the impact of embedding the Department’s Good Jobs Principles. These identified Good Job Principles may be a different set than those selected in section IV.B.3 for the grant project.
1. **Could you explain the Guidelines for Minimum Number of Participants?**

The Department developed the Guidelines for Minimum Number of Participants to be enrolled based on an analysis of previous participant enrollment levels and spending trends, as described in Section III.C.4 Figure 1 of the FOA. The Department is encouraging applicants to consider these guidelines as well as other relevant factors specified in Section III.C.4. when determining the minimum number of enrolled participants.

If the proposed minimum number of participants to be enrolled is higher or lower than the guidelines, applicants must explain the difference and use available data to support their explanation (for example, when determining the minimum number of participants to be enrolled, consider your estimated cost-per-participant range, the type of services that will be included in your proposed project design, costs for sector specific training, and the type of supportive services that participants need to successfully engage in the program and realize their career goals).

1. **Is there a page limit for the project narrative?**

The Project Narrative must demonstrate your capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this funding opportunity announcement. The Project Narrative provides a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project. It must be succinct, self-explanatory, and well-organized so that reviewers can understand the proposed project.

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. You must number the Project Narrative beginning with page number 1. Within the Project Narrative, DOL encourages using a table format where useful. Tables must be legible but are not required to be 12-point font. DOL will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process.

See the Attachments to the Project Narrative section in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

1. **State Workforce Agencies’ State Monitor Advocates are required to have an established memorandum of understanding (MOU) with National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees. Data-sharing is often part of the MOU between State Monitor Advocates and National Farmworker Jobs Program.  Could State Workforce Agencies’ use National Farmworker Jobs Program’s performance data as their own past performance if they submit an application for this funding opportunity announcement?**

No. If a State Workforce Agency is interested in submitting an application for this grant, and did not receive an NFJP award in the most recent competition cycle (program years 2020-2023), they must follow the past performance instructions for Category B applicants. Category B applicants must provide past performance data from a completed project. Past performance data includes information for participant enrollment per year, career services and training related performance measures, and size and scope for a federally-and/or non-federally-funded assistance agreement that is similar in size and relevance to the proposed project and was completed within the last five years of the closing date of this funding opportunity announcement. The information must be provided in a Past Performance Chart as an attachment to the Project Narrative. The chart must be signed by the grantor or a letter must be provided from the grantor verifying the past performance data. This letter must be on grantor letterhead and contain contact information for the grantor. The Past Performance Chart must include the following information: Grantor name and contact information; project information/grant objectives; and performance goals and size and scope.

1. **Are we required to develop apprenticeships with this funding opportunity announcement?**

No, applicants are not required to develop apprenticeship programs but may do so. Under this FOA, migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents, including youth and adults, will receive quality career services and training opportunities that lead to industry-recognized credentials and good jobs in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. Under the NFJP model, grant recipients are required to leverage their familiarity with the agricultural industries and the labor market needs of the proposed service area and their understanding of the challenges that migrant and seasonal farmworkers experience to be better positioned to design, administer, and deliver effectively a diversified program of workforce investment activities. As discussed in Sections I.A and IV.B 3.b.ii, this may include development of pre-apprenticeship programs linked to a Registered Apprenticeship program or an initial development of Registered Apprenticeship programs.

1. **Are applicants expected to propose a project that incorporates a full-scale regional sector strategy?**

Under this FOA, applicants must select one to three sector(s) on which to focus their projects. However, note that the FOA states that DOL does not generally expect that all NFJP applicants will lead or be part of a full-scale regional sector strategy. Nevertheless, this FOA requires applicants to demonstrate that they will incorporate and embed key elements of worker-centered, sector-based training into their project design. For example, Section IV.B.3.b.ii of the FOA, titled “Worker-Centered Sector-Based Training and Employer Partnerships,” requires, in part, that applicants:

* Describe their plans to establish partnerships or maintain existing partnerships with at least three employers;
* Demonstrate how they will work with the employer partners to provide input to inform the development and implementation of sector-focused career services and training that are responsive to the skill needs of employers in proposed sector(s); and
* Explain how those partnerships will lead to win-win outcomes for both participants and employers such as participant placement in quality jobs, livable wages for participants, meet industry demands, and address the business needs and skill needs of the employers of the local communities.

(Please note, these examples are provided for illustrative purposes only -- please see the FOA for full application requirements.)

As background, sector strategies result in good job opportunities for job seekers and address the talent needs of employers. A sector strategy is a partnership of employers within a critical industry that brings together education, economic development, workforce systems, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a state and local labor market. As additional background, the FOA links to a [sector strategies implementation framework](https://businessengagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/04/12/13/53/Sector-Strategies-Implementation-Framework) for more information, including information about sector-based service delivery.

1. **Can applicants propose to use NFJP funds to provide training to H-2A workers?**

No. H-2A workers are not eligible to receive training and some other services as explained in TEGL 10-23, *Reducing Administrative Barriers to Improve Customer Experience in Grant Programs Administered by the Employment and Training Administration*. Applicants who propose project designs for the agricultural sector must commit to helping agricultural employers in the U.S. recruit, hire, and train agricultural workers who are available in the local area for good jobs and, when necessary, leverage the [Agricultural Recruitment System](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/agriculture/monitor-advocate-system/services). The Agricultural Recruitment System is a part of the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service. Through the Agricultural Recruitment System, State Workforce Agencies can recruit and refer qualified U.S. workers from within a state and from other states when they anticipate that there are less agricultural workers available than needed in the local area. The State Monitor Advocate is responsible to conduct an ongoing review of the delivery of services and protections to migrant and seasonal farmworkers afforded by the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service regulations. To better deliver services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers, WIOA regulations call for collaboration between SMAs and NFJP grantees, including that SMAs establish MOUs with NFJP grantees. Applicants must describe what they have done already to develop this partnership with the SMA. Explain how applicants will use this partnership to benefit its delivery of NFJP services and respond to the needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents. To learn about NFJP eligibility requirements, see [TEGL No. 18-16, Change 1](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-18-16-change-1) or in successive guidance. Information about the MOU between State Monitor Advocates and NFJP grant recipients is available in [TEGL No. 08-17](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-guidance-letter-no-08-17).

1. **Will there be a prospective applicant webcast for this FOA?**

Yes. On April 4, 2024, the Department published a prospective applicant webcast on WorkforceGPS at: [WorkforceGPS - Prospective Applicant Webcast - National Farmworker Jobs Program, Career Services and Training Grant](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffarmworker.workforcegps.org%2Fresources%2F2024%2F03%2F21%2F15%2F36%2FProspective-Applicant-Webcast-for-2024-Funding-Opportunity-Announcement&data=05%7C02%7CFraga.Lynn%40dol.gov%7C9a69b83c18d9414e953708dc54d9068a%7C75a6305472044e0c9126adab971d4aca%7C0%7C0%7C638478538330423738%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=158fgXqUgLjx7aWo%2Be034pqsmyzyChsGJpngzHWjr4Y%3D&reserved=0). This is a pre-recorded event viewable at any time. A transcript is available.

1. **Who can I contact for additional information?**

For further information about this FOA, please email NFJP.OGM@dol.gov. Applicants must specifically reference FOA-ETA-24-15, and along with question(s), include a contact name and phone number.