U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration

DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program
Funding Opportunity Announcement

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Updated November 28, 2022

GRANT PROGRAM BASICS

1. What is the timeline of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)?

The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is **January 6, 2023**. We must receive applications no later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time**.

2. What is the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program?

The **DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program** is designed to address bottlenecks in training the United States (U.S.) nursing workforce and to expand and diversify the pipeline of qualified nursing professionals who can fill quality jobs in healthcare through two training tracks: 1) Nurse Education Professional Track and 2) Nursing Career Pathways Track.

The first track (Nurse Education Professional Track) will increase the number of nursing instructors and educators (including classroom and vocational/clinical instruction) by training new or upskilling experienced current or former nurses (including retired nurses) into advanced postsecondary credentialing necessary for nurses to become nursing instructors and educators.

The second track (Nursing Career Pathways Track) will train participants as frontline healthcare professionals and paraprofessionals, including direct care workers, to advance along a career pathway and attain postsecondary credentials needed for middle- to high-skilled nursing occupations during the grant period of performance.

3. What is the grant program's purpose?

The purpose of this program is to increase nursing instructors and educators, and to expand and diversify the pipeline of nursing professionals who can fill quality jobs to boost the nation's healthcare systems while advancing equity.

To achieve the goals of the program, applicants are required to propose research and evidence-based solutions that address one of the following two training tracks:

1. **Nurse Education Professional Track:** Increase Nursing Instructors and Educators to Train the Next Generation Healthcare Workforce and Build Resilient Healthcare Systems

This track will fund projects to bolster the nursing instructor and educator infrastructure by developing innovative strategies for recruiting and training current and former nurses to transition their nursing careers, in whole or in part, from a healthcare clinician focus to a nurse education focus.

2. **Nursing Career Pathways Track**: Expanding the Pipeline of Nursing Professionals
   This track will expand the pipeline of nursing professionals by providing nursing career pathways training and employment programs to train participants as frontline healthcare professionals and paraprofessionals, including direct care workers, seeking to advance to quality jobs along the nursing career pathway. A key aspect of nursing training is the mentorship of an experienced nurse during a nurse trainee's clinical rotation, referred to as preceptors. Preceptors are experienced nursing professionals who provide one-on-one relationships with students to help them develop clinical skills and competencies, gain practical experience working with patients in the work environments, understand the clinical setting and the patient population, and acclimate to the role of a professional nurse. These preceptor duties are in addition to a nurse's regular day-to-day duties, and often are done for no additional monetary or non-monetary compensation. To achieve the FOA's goal to expand the pipeline of nursing professionals, applicants must describe the strategy to support the increased uptake of experienced nursing professionals who will become preceptors to mentor and prepare a new generation of nurses.

4. Can I submit an application for both tracks?

No. Applicants may only apply for and propose grant projects which address <u>one</u> of the training tracks identified in this FOA (Nurse Education Professional Track <u>or</u> Nursing Career Pathways Track).

Applicants may only submit <u>one</u> application for this FOA. **Applications that include both training tracks will be considered nonresponsive.**

5. What is a preceptor? Do I have to incorporate preceptor preparation into my grant application?

A preceptor provides a one-on-one relationship with the student to help the student develop clinical skills and competencies, gain practical experience working with patients in the work environments, understand the clinical setting and the patient population, and acclimate to the role of a professional nurse. The preceptor is responsible for the daily teaching and assignment of individuals to be cared for, supervision, participation in the evaluation of the nursing student, and providing the student with an environment that permits observation, active participation, and management of the assigned care. In the context of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), the preceptor is an APRN such as a nurse practitioner or nurse midwife or other health professional responsible for specific aspects of the clinical learning experience. The APRN preceptor provides the student with an environment that permits observation, active participation, and management of primary healthcare.

Currently, there is an insufficient number of experienced nurses willing or able to take on the role of preceptors. As such, applicants applying for the **second track** (**Nursing Career**

Pathways Track) will propose outreach and recruitment strategies, innovative partnership agreements with clinical setting employers, and leverage employer-funded financial incentives or other types of non-monetary incentives provided by the employer to address the critical shortage of nursing preceptors.

6. What does it mean to have a worker-centered sector strategy?

Projects funded by this FOA will have a worker-centered sector strategy as an overarching framework. A worker-centered sector strategy is a systems approach to workforce development that involves a public-private partnership that creates a comprehensive infrastructure of support for the healthcare industry in which employers, education and training providers, labor unions, labor-management partnerships, and other worker organizations, workforce development entities and workers collaboratively address nursing occupation needs in real time and prepare for the future of work with a focus on equity, job quality, and attracting, training, hiring, and retaining skilled workers especially from underserved communities. By engaging worker voices, this approach ensures workforce development and employment opportunities are accessible to and shaped by communities of color and low-paid workers, offer jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits, ensure workplaces are safe and healthy, and that workers have agency and voice and are treated with dignity and respect.

Criteria for demonstrating that your application incorporates a worker-centered sector strategy partnership model can be found on pages 38-39 of the FOA.

7. What are the cross-cutting principles and how should I incorporate them into my application?

To completely address a worker-centered sector strategy approach, applicants must embed the three cross-cutting principles into their program design to ensure meaningful impact on, and benefit to, the nursing workforce. The cross-cutting principles are:

1. Strategies for Ensuring Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility;
2. Career Pathways; and
3. Approaches for Increasing Job Quality.

The cross-cutting principles are described in full on pages 8-12 of the FOA.

Criteria for demonstrating that your application incorporates the cross-cutting principles can be found on pages 39-41 of the FOA.

8. Updated! How long is the grant period of performance?

The period of performance is 60 months with an anticipated start date of April 1, 2023. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

Grantees may not enroll any new participants after the end of the fourth year of the period of performance. The final 12 months of the period of performance must be spent ensuring

participants who began training during the first 48 months of the grant complete their training programs and capturing program completion outcomes such as credential attainment and employment placements.

9. How is this grant program funded?

The DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program is authorized under Section 414(c) of the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA), as amended (codified at 29 U.S.C. 3224a). These grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the United States under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program.

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW

10. Updated! Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

The following six types of entities are eligible to apply as a lead applicant:

- **Nonprofit healthcare organizations** (this includes community or faith-based organizations, community health centers, and other medical facilities);
- **Nonprofit trade, industry, or employer associations**, including but not limited to advocacy groups and professional associations, representing target populations in the nurse education professional occupations and nursing occupations;
- **Labor unions, labor-management organizations, and worker organizations** that represent workers in nurse education professional occupations and nursing occupations;
- **Education/Training Provider(s):** Public or nonprofit education and training providers, including institutions of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001); Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) or Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) colleges (as designated by the Higher Education Act's Title III and V funding), among others (see http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html); community and technical colleges and systems; nonprofit and community-based organizations that offer job training, including those organizations that have been approved as WIOA Eligible Training Providers;
- **Workforce Development Entities** established under WIOA, including State and Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and Native American Program entities eligible for funding under WIOA Section 166; and
- **Native American Tribal Governments** (Federally recognized) which are defined as the recognized governing bodies of any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, component band, or component reservation, individually identified (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of this paragraph pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

The Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 defines Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) separately from non-profit organizations. Per the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR 200.1, a non-profit organization is defined as any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including IHEs, that:

(1) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest;

(2) Is not organized primarily for profit; and

(3) Uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.

Separately from the definition of a non-profit organization, 2 CFR 200.1 uses the definition of Institution of Higher Education at 20 U.S.C. 1001, which includes as part of that definition that an IHE is "a public or other nonprofit institution."

We allow all non-profits (as defined by 2 CFR 200.1), including IHEs, to apply, except for 501(c)(4)s, which are prohibited, per Section VI.B.2.b. of the FOA. For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply for these grants.

11. New! Are for-profit institutions of higher education eligible to apply for this grant?

For-profit education and training providers are not eligible as a lead applicant.

Page 22 of the FOA states that eligible lead applicants include "[p]ublic or nonprofit education and training providers, including institutions of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)."

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Separately from the definition of a non-profit organization, 2 CFR 200.1 uses the definition of Institution of Higher Education at 20 U.S.C. 1001, which includes as part of that definition that an IHE is "a public or other nonprofit institution."

12. New! Are private institutions of higher education eligible to apply for this grant?

Yes, private institutions of higher education are eligible to apply, as long as they are **non-profits**. As described in the answer to question 11 above, the eligibility requirements allow for both public and private non-profit institutions of higher education to apply for this grant opportunity.

13. New! Are hospital-based nursing programs eligible to apply?

As long as the hospital-based nursing program is sponsored by a **non-profit** hospital, they would be eligible to apply.

14. Who are the required partners for the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program?

This program will award grants to a DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program Partnership of public and private sector entities. Eligible lead applicants must establish a partnership that includes the following entities:

- **Employer Partners** - applicants are required to partner with at least four employers (An applicant may meet this employer partnership requirement through establishing a partnership with one hospital system with at least four (4) departments or specialties included to meet the employer partner threshold; or an industry/trade association that represents at least four (4) employers who are committed to hiring participants trained through the grant.)
- **Education and training providers**;
- **Workforce development entities**;
- **Worker organizations, labor-management organizations, or labor unions**; and
- **State Apprenticeship Agencies** (Required only if applicant is proposing to provide Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) training in an SAA state)

While a lead entity may represent one of the required partners, an entity cannot serve as more than one type of required partner in the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program Partnership. Additionally, applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with other optional partners that can support and advance the work of nurse and nurse education professional training programs.

15. Can we include additional partners?

Yes, applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with other optional partners that can support and advance the work of the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program Partnership.

Optional partners may include:

- Organizations functioning as workforce and industry intermediaries (including entities such as community-based organizations, and industry associations, which help broker local, regional, statewide, and national workforce solutions);
- Organizations designated as "Primary Care Associations" by the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA);
- Nonprofit organizations specializing in healthcare;
- State agencies with the responsibility for public health;
- Foundations and philanthropic organizations;
- Agencies administering federal funding from Departments of Veteran Affairs, Education, Health and Human Services, Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Agriculture;
- State Boards of Nursing;

- Job Corps;
- Professional nursing organizations that represent and serve marginalized and underrepresented populations, such as nurses with disabilities and nurses of color; and
- Organizations that aid newly arriving immigrant, refugee, asylee and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) populations.

16. As a lead applicant, can I sub-award grant funds to sub-recipients?

The Department expects the lead applicant to have the organizational capacity to implement the proposed program design. Sub-recipients are allowable; however, the Department discourages applications that result in a "passthrough" of grant funds to a third-party entity (i.e., where the lead applicant sub-awards the majority of grant funds and operational activities to a single sub-recipient). Experience has shown that grant projects where the lead applicant is only nominally involved with operational aspects of the grant, delegating grant administration and operational control to a pass-through entity, increases the risk for compliance and performance-related issues that can negatively impact grant performance and sustainability of the program.

Therefore, applicants that have allocated a majority of the total grant award to one or more subrecipients will be assessed during the post-award ETA compliance review process to ensure effective grants management.

In the Budget Narrative (under the "Contractual" line item), applicants must clearly outline all sub-recipient allocations (See Section IV.B.2.a.).

17. Can I apply as a lead applicant for more than one grant?

We will consider only one application from each organization applying as lead applicant. If we receive multiple applications from the same lead applicant organization, we will consider only the most recently received application that met the deadline. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, we will not replace it with an earlier application.

An organization that applies as a lead applicant may be included as a partner on other applications.

18. Updated! Who can be served through this grant program, and who is the target population?

Eligible participants served through this grant program must be at least 17 years old and not currently enrolled in secondary school within a local educational agency. Among the individuals eligible to receive training, those of particular interest include veterans, military spouses, transitioning service members, and historically marginalized and underrepresented populations, including women, people of color, justice-impacted individuals, individuals with disabilities, and other populations with employment barriers that hinder movement into career pathways that lead to middle- to high-skilled healthcare occupations. This grant program will train individuals whose employment status when determined eligible for the program is unemployed,

underemployed, or an incumbent worker. The definitions of unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent worker are found on page 29 of the FOA.

AWARDS OVERVIEW

19. What is the total amount of grant funds that will be awarded?

The Department of Labor will award up to $80 million in DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program grants, depending on funds available.

The Department intends to commit up to 65 percent of the total available funding for projects under the Nurse Education Professional Track focused on increasing the number of nursing instructors and educators by connecting and recruiting experienced existing nurses (as well as former nurses) into advanced postsecondary credentialing necessary for nursing faculty, with an emphasis on those from historically marginalized and underrepresented populations. The Department intends to commit the remaining funds for projects under the Nursing Career Pathways Track focused on training participants as frontline healthcare professionals and paraprofessionals, including direct care workers, with an emphasis on those from historically marginalized and underrepresented populations, into higher-paying occupations that require more training during the grant period of performance.

20. Updated! How many grants will be awarded?

Based on the anticipated funding amount, the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program will fund approximately 15 to 25 grants, though this is subject to change if the final funding amount changes.

21. What are the funding ranges for these grants?

Nurse Education Professional Track - Individual grant amounts for this track will range from $2 million to $6 million.

Nursing Career Pathways Track - Individual grant amounts for this track will range from $1 million to $3 million.

The Department reserves the right to change these amounts depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted. Applicants should request funding that is commensurate with the scope and scale of the project proposed.

22. Is there a match or leveraged funds requirement for these grant projects?

This grant program requires cost sharing or matching funds. Such funds may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions and must be equal to 20 percent of the total Federal share of costs. Any resources contributed to the project in addition to cost sharing or matching funds will be considered leveraged resources.

DOL encourages applicants to leverage additional resources beyond the required match to supplement grant activities. Applicants must count and document as leveraged resources any cash or in-kind commitments beyond 20 percent of the grant award amount required as matching funds.

GRANT ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

23. Which occupations will be targeted through these grant projects?

Allowable occupations include, but are not limited to, middle- to high-skilled nursing occupations such as licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), registered nurses (RNs), APRNs, as well as nursing instructors and educators. A list of allowable occupations along career pathways leading to middle- to high-skilled H-1B healthcare occupations is provided in Appendix A of the FOA.

Applicants may also choose to target specific occupations along career pathways leading to middle- to high-skilled H-1B healthcare occupation(s) even if that occupation is not in one of the identified occupations listed in Appendix A. If the occupation is not listed in Appendix A, the application must provide data demonstrating that the occupation is in-demand in the proposed service area, along a career pathway leading to middle- to high-skilled H-1B healthcare occupations and is one for which a significant number of H-1B visas have been certified. Applicants must use verifiable data to make this demonstration, such as labor market data and data provided by DOL's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center.

24. What is the geographic scope for these grant projects?

Applicants may choose one of the following geographic scopes: local/regional, statewide, or national:

1. **Local/regional** serving part or all of an economic region within one state or a contiguous economic region that may cross more than one state.
2. **Statewide** means serving an entire state or multiple non-contiguous economic regions within one state.
3. **National** means serving multiple economic regions in multiple states. The service area does not need to be contiguous.

25. What types of activities will this grant program fund?

All applicants must propose projects that incorporate the cross-cutting principles of program design described in Section I.A.2. of the FOA. Applicants must incorporate these principles by including the following activities:

- Developing or expanding sector strategy partnerships of public and private sector entities that include worker voice as described in Section I.A.2.c.;
- Engaging healthcare providers, employers, workers, labor, and education and training institutions in the adoption and deployment of employment and training services to

address specific nurse education professional occupations and nursing occupations which are in-demand in the proposed service area;

- Advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility through strategies to recruit and serve individuals from historically marginalized and underrepresented populations;
- Expanding career pathways in the healthcare sector that focus on the skills, competencies, and credentials needed for middle- to high-skilled nurse education professional and nursing occupations, including Registered Apprenticeships;
- Utilizing training program models with demonstrated evidence of success in serving the targeted population(s), especially models shown by rigorous program evaluations to have positive impacts on participants' employment and earnings outcomes;
- Offering high-quality training options (including work-based learning training models) to prepare individuals to successfully move into middle- to high-skilled employment in nurse education professional and nursing occupations;
- Providing robust supportive services to participants who need them to ensure individuals can participate and complete the training program and enter employment;
- Developing a new, or leveraging an existing, system for reviewing and collecting participant data, and monitoring results to assess program performance; and
- Creating infrastructure (e.g., partnerships and operating systems) to successfully sustain program components after the life of the grant.

The Nurse Education Professional Track and Nursing Career Pathways Track each have distinct allowable activities which are outlined in Section I.E. of the FOA.

Funded projects will provide a range of training and education services that lead to middle- and high-skilled jobs in the proposed Nurse Education Professional and Nursing Career Pathways tracks. Applicants must consider including robust, comprehensive, and customized work-based learning strategies, such as On-the-Job Training, incumbent worker training, Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and pre-apprenticeship programs that articulate to RAPs during the grant period of performance, paid work experience, and paid internships. Other allowable training strategies include classroom, competency-based, and technology-based training strategies.

26. Does my application need to include the provision of supportive services?

Yes. "Providing robust supportive services to participants who need them to ensure individuals can participate and complete the training program and enter employment" is listed as a required activity on page 15 of the FOA.

Supportive services are those necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and training activities funded through this grant program. Examples of such services include, but are not limited to, childcare, dependent care, transportation, mental health counseling, books, academic fees, supplies, parking, printing, tutoring, licensing exam fees, professional dues, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and training activities. Grantees may fund supportive services through various means, including providing the actual supportive service (e.g., childcare), providing participants with a voucher for the service (e.g., public transportation cards or tokens), or providing a stipend

directly to the participant. DOL strongly encourages grantees to leverage partnerships with their local workforce boards and other programs for supportive services when a participant is eligible for human services, WIOA, or other programs, reserving grant funds for those participants who need support but are not eligible for other assistance. See Section IV.E.5.e. Use of Funds for Supportive Services.

A robust supportive services strategy is required as part of the proposed program design under the FOA. This means all grant projects must document in their project narrative, budget, and budget narrative that their application includes a supportive service needs assessment of all participants and procedures for the provision of supportive services for participants who need them. Up to 15 percent of grant funds may be used to provide supportive services for training participants, and supportive services may also be provided through leveraged resources.

27. New! Can my application focus on a career pathway model that trains and upskills current entry-level healthcare workers?

This grant program does allow for recruitment of current entry-level healthcare workers. However, for any projects proposing to serve individuals in entry-level healthcare occupations, the proposal must describe a career pathway plan to develop progression from those entry-level occupations to middle- and high-skilled occupations for the participants served.

This does not mean that all applications must focus on those populations or that all participants must be entry-level healthcare workers. This FOA intends to promote opportunities for a more equitable and diverse healthcare workforce, particularly for the middle- to high-skilled occupations within the nursing profession. Therefore, it is important to ensure opportunities for those in entry-level healthcare occupations to gain additional skills and career growth, by developing training models and employer partnerships that create the career pathways that lead such participants to these opportunities.

Note: For the purpose of this FOA, middle-skilled occupations are generally those that require some significant education and training beyond high school (but less than a Bachelor's degree), such as a recognized postsecondary credential or Registered Apprenticeship Program. High-skilled occupations are generally those that require a Bachelor's degree or higher.

28. New! For the Nurse Education Professional Track, can we propose recruiting recently retired nurses to become nursing educators?

Recruiting recently retired nurses to become nursing educators would be an allowable use of funds for this grant program. Page 2 of the FOA states:

> The first track (Nurse Education Professional Track) will increase the number of nursing instructors and educators (including classroom and vocational/clinical instruction) by training new or upskilling experienced current or former nurses **(including retired nurses)** into advanced postsecondary credentialing necessary for nurses to become nursing instructors and educators. Former nurses are individuals who are not actively working as nurse professionals, but who have the postsecondary credentials, licensure,

and years of experience that will support the transition from a healthcare clinician to a nurse education professional. **This may include those who have recently retired or left the workforce.** Applicants will propose strategies to improve nursing professional, instructor, and educator recruitment; preparation; development; training; and retention.

PERFORMANCE AND APPLICATION SCORING OVERVIEW

29. What are expected outcomes and outputs of the grant program?

Applicants must include numerical targets for the full grant period of performance for each of the performance outcome measures related to the nursing track for which an application is being submitted: the Nurse Education Professional Track or the Nursing Career Pathways Track. Grantees will track these outcome measures and report to the Department throughout the grant using DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS).

Performance Outcome Measures: Nurse Education Professional Track

1. Total number of participants served;
2. Total number of participants who began receiving education/job training activities;
3. Total number of participants who began receiving education/job training activities and achieved a measurable skills gain;
4. Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities;
5. Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities and obtained a credential; and
6. Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities and either entered unsubsidized employment or advanced into a new position.

Performance Outcome Measures: Nursing Career Pathways Track
1. Total number of participants served;
2. Total number of participants who began receiving education/job training activities;
3. Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities;
4. Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities and obtained a credential;
5. Total number of unemployed and underemployed participants who completed education/job training program activities and entered unsubsidized employment; and
6. Total number of incumbent worker participants who completed education/job training program activities and advanced into a new position.

Nurse Education Professional Track only: The target submitted for Performance Outcome Measure #6 (Total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities and either entered unsubsidized employment or advanced into a new position) should include both the number of unemployed and underemployed participants who enter employment after completion and the number of incumbent worker participants who advance in employment. After award, successful Nurse Education Professional Track applicants will be required to provide a disaggregation of this performance outcome measure by participant type, where

appropriate to the program design. Please see Appendix B of the FOA for more information about this performance outcome measure and its definition.

Nursing Career Pathways Track only: After award, successful Nursing Career Pathways Track applicants will be required to provide a target for the following outcome measure: *Total Number of Experienced Nursing Professionals Who Were Placed into a Preceptor Role*. This performance outcome measure includes the number of experienced nursing professionals who take on a preceptor role as a result of the grant and will be reported cumulatively each quarter in the Quarterly Narrative Report (QNR).

30. How will past performance be evaluated?

Section IV.B.3.e of the FOA provides full information on providing data on past performance.

Applicants will receive points based on past performance data. Applicants must use the information below and provide the applicable past performance information.

- Applicants must provide a full description of the lead applicant's prior experience in the development of employment and training programs, or capacity to establish or expand employment and training programs within a local/regional, statewide, or national area during the grant period. This could include evidence of existing partnerships, prior experience in taking employment and training programs to scale, and the number of participants served in prior programs.
- Applicants must demonstrate that partners have experience in deploying employment and training programs, including classroom training, work-based learning programs, internships, mentorships, externships, or clinical placements within the proposed industry, and in enrolling participants in employment and training programs, including securing employment placements, and/or wage increases.
- Applicants must provide a past performance chart that shows the performance outcome measures achieved and spending rate analysis for a grant initiative completed in the previous five years using the chart format described below. There are different chart format instructions depending on past grant experience. Applicants must use the information below to determine which instructions are applicable to their organization. Applicants that do not have completed grant experience within the past five years as described in the instructions below will not submit a chart and no points will be awarded for this rating factor. Failure to provide a past performance chart will result in zero points awarded for this rating factor.

All applicants must complete a Past Performance Chart that includes the overall objectives of the grant, population served, funding amount, and grantor contact information. There are different instructions in the FOA for:

- **Past Recent H-1B Awardees:** Applicants that have received an H-1B-funded grant award from the Department whose period of performance ended <u>within the past five years of the closing date of this announcement;</u>

- **Past Employment Training Administration (ETA) Grant Awardees:** Applicants that have received an ETA grant award that was not an H-1B-funded grant award, whose period of performance ended <u>within the last five years of the closing date of this announcement</u>; and
- **Past Non-ETA Grantees:** Applicants that have received non-ETA assistance agreements (federal or non-federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) whose period of performance ended <u>within the past five years</u>.

Applicants must submit, as part of the Past Performance Chart described, the total grant amount and the percentage of grant funds spent during the original period of performance for the grant as identified through the Past Performance Chart Instructions specified.

A sample Past Performance Chart is provided on page 46 of the FOA.

31. How will applications be evaluated for funding?

We have instituted procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against which your application will be judged. The evaluation criteria are based on the information required in the application as described in Sections IV.B.2. (Project Budget) and IV.B.3. (Project Narrative). Reviewers will award points based on the evaluation criteria described below (which can be found on page 57-58 of the FOA).

Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative of this FOA has several "section headers" (e.g., IV.B.3.a. Statement of Need). Each of these "section headers" of the Project Narrative may include one or more "criterion," and each "criterion" includes one or more "rating factors," which provide detailed specifications for the content and quality of the response to that criterion. Each of the rating factors have specific point values assigned. These point values are the number of points possible for the application to earn for the rating factor.

Criterion	Points (maximum)
1. Statement of Need (See Section IV.B.3.a. Statement of Need)	10 total
2. Expected Outcomes, and Outputs (See Section IV.B.3.b. Expected Outcomes and Outputs)	20 total
3. Project Design (See Section IV.B.3.c. Project Design)	50 total
4. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity (See Section IV.B.3.d. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity)	8 total
5. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability (See Section IV.B.3.e. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability)	10 total

6. Budget and Budget Narrative (See Section IV.B.2.Project Budget)		2 total
	TOTAL	**100**

MISCELLANEOUS

32. I am an applicant that has completed an H-1B-funded grant award within the past five years. The Quarterly Performance Report used for that grant was the ETA-9172 and not the ETA-9136. When I report information about my past performance, should I use the data from the ETA-9172?

Yes. Applicants that used the ETA-9172 on their H-1B-funded grant within the past five years should use data from that form to support their past performance information submission.