2020 DELTA WORKFORCE GRANT PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DELTA WORKFORCE PROGRAM

A Program of the Delta Regional Authority

2020 Delta Workforce Program: Request for Proposals (RFP) for Project Grants

Executive Summary

RFP Release Date: August 12, 2020
Proposal Due Date: October 12, 2020

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) is publishing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit applications for grants under the 2020 Delta Workforce Grant Program (DWP).

The goal of the program is to target federal resources towards communities in the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions particularly hard hit by industrial downsizing, business closures, and job losses as a result of the public health and economic crisis.

DWP supports projects and initiatives that create a more vibrant economic future for the Delta region by expanding job training and re-employment opportunities, aligning workforce and economic development strategies, creating sustainable talent pipelines, establishing or enhancing locally/regionally significant public-private partnerships, and supporting enhanced workforce productivity through investments in innovative programming.

This RFP is organized to provide a general overview of the DWP program as well as the specific requirements needed to complete a grant application. Additional background information on DWP is available at **https://www.dra.gov/workforce**.

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A. DRA OVERVIEW

DRA is a regional economic development agency representing a partnership between federal, state, and local governments. Established by an act of Congress through the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000 7 U.S.C. § 2009aa1-13, DRA makes strategic investments of federal appropriations into the physical and human infrastructure of Delta communities. DRA is composed of the governors of the eight Delta states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. Local participation is also provided through 45 multi-county local development districts. DRA serves the 10-million people residing in the 252 counties and parishes that include parts of the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee[1].

B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Program Overview

DWP is an initiative targeting federal resources towards communities in the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions particularly hard hit by industrial downsizing, business closures, and job losses as a result of the public health and economic crisis. DWP supports projects and initiatives that create a more vibrant economic future for the Delta region by expanding job training and re-employment opportunities, aligning workforce and economic development strategies, creating sustainable talent pipelines, establishing or enhancing locally/regionally significant public-private partnerships, and supporting enhanced workforce productivity through investments in innovative programming.

This program is designed to support projects that:

- Develop or enhance cross-sector collaboration by aligning economic development, workforce training, education, and other strategies to advance local or regional priorities and initiatives;
- Deliver specific workforce services meeting identified local or regional needs, including the development or expansion of apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training models and other work-based learning approaches, among others;
- Create or expand workforce training programs addressing high quality employment opportunities in existing or emerging industry sectors; and
- Support the acquisition or development of curriculum and/or equipment ensuring the delivery of quality, innovative training and workforce services.

[1] An interactive map of the DRA region can be found **here**.

DWP seeks to align and leverage complementary economic development programs and resources through a competitive grant process to organizations and partnerships located within or serving the Delta region. Therefore, DRA solicits and prioritizes projects that integrate economic development partners and leverage new or existing resources to address the workforce development and job-training needs of Delta communities and regions.

2. 2020 DWP Grants

The 2020 DWP competitive grant competition is administered as follows:

Funding Cycle Opens:	**August 12, 2020**
Application Deadline:	**October 12, 2020**

All applications received by the deadline will be screened for eligibility. Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be reviewed and scored. Top-scoring applications will be selected to receive a 2020 DWP grant. Applications not selected for funding during this cycle can be revised and resubmitted in future funding cycles, pending availability of federal funds.

Applicants are encouraged to contact DRA program staff for additional information about the 2020 DWP application submission requirements as well as for assistance in developing their applications. Technical questions about the RFP should be directed to **workforce@dra.gov** with the subject line: Delta Workforce Program RFP. Include the contact name, applicant organization, and phone number in the body of your email.

In addition to the requirements described in this RFP and online at **https://www.dra.gov/workforce,** all applications must also meet the general requirements for DRA funding and be consistent with **DRA's Regional Development Plan III (RDP3)**.

3. 2020 DWP Priorities, Objectives, and Funding Principles

This section provides information describing the 2020 DWP priorities, objectives, and funding principles. Potential applicants should review this information thoroughly before submitting a project proposal.

Background on DRA's Strategic Investment Goals

As described in the agency's strategic plan, *Moving the Delta Forward: Regional Development Plan III*, DRA has identified three investment goals to advance its vision and mission and to guide its programs and investments. These goals reflect a consensus among local, state, and federal partners on the most critical investment opportunities in the Mississippi River Delta region. While each of these goals provides a tailored approach to advancing the Delta economy,

these avenues are often complementary and cumulative, with progress in one goal area leading to advancement in another. All applications must address one or more of these goals:

- **Goal 1 - Improved Workforce Competitiveness**: Advance the productivity and economic competitiveness of the Delta workforce.
- **Goal 2 - Strengthened Infrastructure**: Strengthen the Delta's physical, digital, and capital connections to the global economy.
- **Goal 3 - Increased Community Capacity**: Facilitate local capacity building within Delta communities, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

DWP Investment Priorities

The 2020 DWP Investment Priorities build upon DRA's Strategic Investment Goals and are summarized and described below. Ultimately, the focus of DWP is on investments that are local or regional, industry-driven, and transformational to help revitalize Delta communities and spur economic development in DRA's eight-state region. In general, DRA is targeting investments focused on four key priorities:

- **Supporting Industry-Led Workforce Training**
- **Building Collaborative Talent Pipelines**
- **Supporting or Enhancing Industry Clusters**
- **Accelerating Local or Regional Economic Development**

Projects that do not fit this list of investment priorities will still be considered for funding, but all applications will be scored on their ability to address one or more of these priority areas.

Below are some examples of project activities that target each DWP investment priority. Applications that address these activities should consider the following guidance:

Support Industry-Led Workforce Training. Applicants should engage local or regional industry partners to understand their ongoing and evolving needs to develop or expand workforce training programs that address the skills gap that is preventing these employers from filling vacant positions or expanding their operations (e.g. **Black River Technical College CDL Training Program**, Pocahontas, AR).

Building Collaborative Talent Pipelines. Applicants should develop collaborative partnerships between K-12 education systems, institutions of higher education, workforce training partners, and local or regional industry partners to sustain a talent pipeline that meets the current and future workforce needs of employers in high-growth sectors (e.g. **Base Camp Coding Academy**, Water Valley, MS).

Supporting or Enhancing Industry Clusters. Applicants should assess industry clusters – *groups of interrelated industries that drive wealth and job creation in a particular area* – that exist in their region to create or expand workforce training programs that address the skills gap that exists in these high-growth industries and strengthen the economic competitiveness of the region (e.g. **GNO Inc. Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program**, New Orleans, LA).

Accelerating Local or Regional Economic Development. Applicants should assess existing data and studies informing local and regional economic development priorities to ensure the proposed project advances local or regional economies (e.g. **Apprenti Louisiana**, Baton Rouge, LA).

2020 DWP Objectives

The overall objective of DWP is to invest in workforce development projects that produce one, or any combination, of the following outcomes:

- **Job Creation** – Provide workforce development services to dislocated workers, incumbent workers, or new entrants to the workforce ultimately leading to gainful employment in high-growth industries.
- **Workforce Training for High Demand Careers** – Provide skills training and workforce development services, including paid work-based learning opportunities, resulting in industry-recognized credentials or certifications for high-quality, in-demand jobs.
- **Capital Investment** – Attract new sources of job-creating investment – both public and private – to strengthen industry clusters and advance local and regional economies, especially in federally-designated **Opportunity Zones (defined by the U.S. Department of Treasury's Internal Revenue Service),** economically distressed counties/parishes (defined by DRA) or persistent poverty counties/parishes (defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service).

Applicants are encouraged to leverage programs and resources from a variety of sources, including public and private, to successfully address these objectives and maximize local and regional impact.

2020 DWP Funding Principles

To maximize DRA investments supporting the development of a competitive workforce, projects must address one or more of the following principles:

- **Assessment and Planning** – Applicants should assess the labor market in their project service area using demographic data and economic indicators to demonstrate need for

the development or expansion of a targeted workforce development program. Projects must align with local or regional economic and workforce development strategies.

- **Collaborative** – Applicants should develop cross-sector partnerships (e.g. K-12, institutions of higher education, workforce training providers, employers, wraparound service providers, etc.) that demonstrate the involvement and commitment of key stakeholders from various disciplines engaged in project design and implementation.
- **Evidence of Leverage** – Applicants should demonstrate local and/or regional commitment to the proposed project by leveraging other public and private resources.
- **Outcome-Driven –** Applicants should assess what their proposed project is seeking to achieve by identifying short- and long- term outcomes. Overall, the anticipated outcomes should be specific, measurable, achievable and reasonable and focus on strengthening workforce training and economic development in the project service area.

Applicants should incorporate the 2020 DWP Investment Priorities, Objectives, and Funding Principles vigorously into their proposed projects. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to contact DRA program staff for specific guidance pertaining to the eligible use of DWP funds.

C. AWARD INFORMATION

1. Availability of Funding

2020 DWP grant funds are available as follows:

DRA is making **$1,500,000** available for DWP project grants.

On average, DRA expects to make individual grant awards ranging between $25,000 - $150,000 for each project it awards within the DRA service area. Specific awards will vary by project type at the discretion of DRA. Applications for larger dollar requests will not be considered.

DRA reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applications that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove or adjust certain proposed costs.

Projects must serve and benefit a portion of the Delta region as defined by the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as amended. The Delta region includes certain counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, and Tennessee. If projects extend beyond the DRA region, only that portion that is within the region is eligible for DRA funding. A map of the Delta region is available online at **https://dra.gov/about-dra/map-room/**.

DRA may also choose to make awards via cooperative agreements.
DRA will not be held responsible for proposal or application preparation costs. Publication of this RFP does not obligate DRA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement nor to obligate all or any part of available funds.

2. Period of Performance

Applicants can determine the required time period necessary to meet the objective of their project. The period of performance for awards made under this program may be up to two years (24 months) if warranted by the size and scope of the project.

D. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include:

- Counties/parishes, cities, or other political subdivisions of a state, including a special purpose district of a state or local government engaged in economic or community development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions;
- Regional development organizations;
- Workforce investment boards;
- Institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; and
- Public or private non-profit organizations or associations.

In addition, DRA has additional geographic eligibility requirements. To be eligible for DRA funding, applicants must propose to serve and benefit a portion of the Delta region as defined by the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as amended. A map and a description of the DRA region can be found online at: **https://dra.gov/about-dra/map-room/**.

2. Documentation of Economic Impact

Eligible DWP projects must be located within the Delta region as defined by the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as amended, and be targeted towards communities or regions that have been recently impacted, or can reasonably demonstrate that they will be impacted in the near future, by the loss of employment in a locally- or regionally-significant industry sector, or identify opportunities for improving the competitiveness of a locally- or regionally-significant industry sector through expanded or enhanced workforce training and skills development.

Complete applications for a DWP grant must provide appropriate third-party economic and demographic statistics for the applicable community or region in order to document the extent to which contractions in a regionally-significant industry sector have negatively impacted the community or region, or identify evidence-based opportunities to support existing business(es) or industry clusters. The applicant will need to cite the data source used to demonstrate impact. Economic indicators, labor market analyses, official announcements made by local and regional industries and firms, demographic or industry data, and peer reviewed scholarly articles and publications are strong sources of data to demonstrate these impacts. Applicants are encouraged to provide data (median household income, unemployment rate, etc.) from federal sources that may include, but are not limited to, the following sources:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - Economic Research Service (ERS): **https://www.ers.usda.gov**
- U.S. Department of Commerce
  - Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA): **http://www.bea.gov/**
  - U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS): **https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs**
  - U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA): **https://www.eda.gov**
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): **http://www.bls.gov/**
- U.S. Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service (IRS): **https://www.irs.gov/**
- Federal Reserve Bank
  - St. Louis: **https://www.stlouisfed.org/**
  - Atlanta: **https://www.frbatlanta.org/**
  - Dallas: **https://www.dallasfed.org/**

3. Cost Sharing or Matching

Applicants must demonstrate at least a 15% cost share (cash and/or in-kind) matched by non-DRA sources. Matching sources may be non-federal, other federal[2], or a combination of sources. Applications that demonstrate leveraged resources from private entities/employers are highly encouraged.

4. Project Team Composition

In accordance with DWP Investment Priorities and Funding Principles, applicants are expected to develop new or existing partnerships of community and economic development stakeholders

[2] In general, DRA has the ability to accept other federal dollars as a matching contribution. However, some federal agencies and/or specific projects may have limitations on the use of other and/or total federal funding. Prospective applicants are encouraged to consult with DRA program staff prior to submission if planning to use other federal funds as a source to meet the matching funds requirement.

to serve as members of a project team, which may include partners that are not eligible for DRA funding but are integral to a proposed project's success.

For program eligibility, it is not a requirement for each member of a project team to be located in the DRA service area; however, proposed projects must accrue benefits to communities located within the DRA region. Any eligible member of a project team may serve as the applicant and recipient of a DWP grant award.

Overall project team membership can comprise of, but is not limited to, the following types of organizations:

- Industry and trade associations, local and regional businesses, and other representatives from the private sector;
- Economic development organizations;
- Local governments;
- Planning organizations and development districts;
- Labor unions and labor-management apprenticeship programs;
- State and local workforce organizations;
- Institutions of higher education, including (but not limited to) community colleges and other job training and adult education providers;
- Nonprofit and community-based organizations that provide supportive services; and
- Chambers of commerce.

E. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Request an Application

The electronic DWP application will be available on August 12, 2020. Applicants may access the application electronically at: **https://workforce.dra.gov**.

2. Content and Form of the DWP Application

DWP is administered in accordance with DRA's standard application policies and procedures.

Application narratives are limited to the applicant's responses to the questions within the electronic application. The type of information requested by DRA includes:

- Project description;
- Project rationale;
- Project team;

- Local and regional collaboration;
- Anticipated project outcomes;
- Evidence of local/regional demand;
- Project management (i.e. work plan); and
- Budget and budget narrative.

The completion of federal forms and other supporting documentation will be required when an application is selected for funding.

Supplemental resources and additional guidance about project application requirements are provided at **https://www.dra.gov/workforce**.

3. Submission Dates and Times

The submission dates and times for the 2020 DWP grant competition are as follows:

2020 Delta Workforce Grant Program

Grant Application Deadline:	October 12, 2020
Award Announcements:	November 2020

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact DRA program staff (**workforce@dra.gov**) and their Local Development District (**https://dra.gov/funding-programs-states-economic-development/local-development-districts2/)** for additional information about the 2020 DWP application submission requirements as well as for assistance in completing applications.

In addition to the requirements described in this RFP and online at **https://www.dra.gov/workforce**, all applications must meet the general requirements for DRA funding and be consistent with DRA's strategic plan, **Moving the Delta Forward: Delta Regional Development Plan III**.

Technical Assistance

Successful applicants will receive up to 50 hours of intensive technical assistance from DRA staff to ensure the development and long-term sustainability of their proposed projects. The purpose of the technical assistance is to provide grantees with tailored guidance focusing on the implementation of their proposed workforce development programs and effective deployment of federal resources.

4. Application Submission Instructions

Project applications (with related attachments) must be submitted electronically via the DWP Portal available at: **https://workforce.dra.gov.**

Prior to submission of an application, every applicant should contact their state designee or alternate(s) to ensure that their proposal aligns with workforce and economic development priorities in their state.

Neither facsimile nor email transmissions of applications will be accepted.

After an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process during which the application may be accepted or rejected due to errors, incomplete information, or eligibility disqualifications. Be advised that it may take several days for the validation process to be completed and that the process may not begin until after the application deadline. Applications that do not include required information or contain critical errors will not be reviewed or evaluated for DWP funding.

F. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

DRA has instituted a technical review process to provide for an objective review of applications. The evaluation criteria are based on the program's priorities, objectives, and funding principles outlined in Section B: Program Description. of this RFP.

Criterion	Points (maximum)
Project Information	**Section Total 40 Points**
I. Project Description	17 Points
a. Description of Community(ies) and Needs	5
b. Alignment with Strategic Plans	1
c. Project Design	8
d. Demonstration of Inclusion in a Qualified Opportunity Zone	2
e. Demonstration of Inclusion in a Persistent Poverty County/Parish	1

II. Project Rationale	15 Points
a. Description of Workforce Needs	8
b. Alignment with DRA's Strategic Investment Goals	1
c. Alignment with DWP Investment Priorities	3
d. Alignment with DWP Objectives	2
e. Alignment with DWP Funding Principles	1
III. Project Team and Relevant Experience	5 Points
IV. Local and Regional Collaboration	3 Points
Anticipated Project Outcomes	**Section Total 10 Points**
I. Demonstration of Realistic and Attainable Outcomes	6
II. Demonstration of Specific and Relevant Outcomes	4
Work Plan	**Section Total 5 Points**
I. Project Deliverables	3
II. Anticipated Long-Term Outcomes	5
Evidence of Local Demand/Employer Letters	**Section Total 10 Points**
I. Demonstration of Demand from Local/Regional Industry	6
II. Evidence of Employer Engagement	4
Funding Information	**Section Total 5 Points**
I. Budget/Budget Narrative Alignment	3
II. Commitment of Matching Funds	2

Project Information – 40 Points

Project Description – 17 Points

The applicant should demonstrate how the proposed activities address industry-driven workforce development in the DRA service area. To be considered for full points, the applicant must include a description of community needs, alignment with strategic plans, project design and approach, inclusion in a Qualified Opportunity Zone, and project activities occurring in a Persistent Poverty County or Parish.

a. **Description of Community(ies) and Needs (5 Points)**
The extent to which the applicant describes the service area, target population, and workforce needs to be served by the proposed project.

b. **Alignment with Strategic Plans (1 Point)**
The applicant must describe how the project aligns with an existing local or regional economic development plan or workforce strategy. DRA will accept the inclusion of any plan published or produced by local public bodies, regional development organizations, or chamber of commerce. If a local plan does not exist, DRA will accept plans or strategies produced by state agencies.

c. **Project Design (8 Points)**
The extent to which the applicant describes a coherent and feasible approach for successfully addressing the identified needs of the community, employers, job seekers, and workers.

d. **Demonstration of Inclusion in Opportunity Zone (2 Points)**
The applicant must demonstrate the project service area includes at least one census tract designated as a **Qualified Opportunity Zone**. Opportunity Zones are economically distressed communities designated under the authority of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (Public Law 115-97, enacted December 22, 2017).

e. **Demonstration of Inclusion in Persistent Poverty County/Parish (1 Point)**
The applicant must demonstrate that project activities take place in at least one or more Persistent Poverty County/Parish as defined by the 1990, 2000, and 2010 U.S. Census.

Project Rationale – 15 points

The applicant must describe why the project is necessary, including the specific workforce needs of local and/or regional employers and the specific skills gap addressed by the proposed project. To be considered for full points, the applicant must demonstrate how the project aligns with DRA's Strategic Investment Goals as well as DWP Investment Priorities, Objectives, and Funding Principles.

f. **Description of Workforce Needs (8 Points)**
The extent to which the applicant describes the workforce needs of local and/or regional employers and the specific skills gap to be addressed by the proposed project.

g. **Alignment with DRA's Strategic Investment Goals (1 Point)**
The extent to which the project aligns with one or more of DRA's Strategic Investment Goal(s) outlined in the agency's **Regional Development Plan III**.

h. **Alignment with DWP Investment Priorities (3 Points)**
The extent to which the project aligns with one or more of DWP's Investment Priorities.

i. **Alignment with DWP Objectives (2 Points)**
The extent to which the project aligns with one or more of DWP's Objectives.

j. **Alignment with DWP Funding Principles (1 Point)**
The extent to which the project aligns with one or more of DWP's Funding Principles.

Project Team and Relevant Experience – 5 Points
The applicant must identify key members of the project team and describe their roles and responsibilities as a part of the project. To be considered for full points, the applicant must demonstrate the project team has relevant experience and the organizational capacity to manage and implement the proposed project. Staff resumes or job descriptions must be included as attachments to the application.

Local and Regional Collaboration – 3 Points
The applicant must demonstrate local and/or regional collaboration with public and private partners. To be considered for full points, the applicant must describe the role and responsibilities of each partner and identify any leveraged resources (i.e. cash, in-kind, other).

Anticipated Project Outcomes – 10 Points

The applicant must provide specific, measurable, achievable, and reasonable project outcomes to be accomplished during the period of performance. To be considered for full points, the applicant must identify outcomes that align with the need, gaps, or challenges identified in the Project Description. At a minimum, the applicant must include the number of communities served, individuals trained, and industry/businesses served as anticipated project outcomes.

Demonstration of Realistic and Attainable Outcomes – 6 Points
The extent to which the applicant proposes realistic and attainable outcomes to be achieved during the period of performance.

Demonstration of Specific and Relevant Outcomes – 4 Points
The extent to which the applicant proposes specific and relevant outcomes to be achieved during the period of performance.

Work Plan – 5 Points

The applicant must describe the tasks necessary to complete the project including key personnel assigned, time period for completion, deliverables, and budget for each task. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide a detailed work plan for the entire period of performance which may not exceed 24 months.

Project Deliverables – 3 Points
The extent to which the applicant proposes appropriate and relevant deliverables to ensure efficient deployment of project resources.

Project Timeline – 2 Points

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates project completion during the period of performance. The timeline must cover the entire proposed period of performance which may not exceed 24 months.

Evidence of Local Demand/Employer Letters – 10 Points

The applicant must demonstrate how the project develops or enhances the skills of the target population to meet the needs of employer/industry partner(s). Although employer/industry partner(s) may be located outside of the DRA service area, the workforce training and jobs to be created/retained must not require participants to relocate outside of the DRA service area. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide information about the employer(s) that will participate in or benefit from the proposed project and provide letters of engagement from each of the identified employer/industry partners.

Evidence of Local Demand – 6 Points

The extent to which the applicant provides evidence of demand for skilled workers from local or regional businesses in high-growth industries.

Evidence of Employer Engagement – 4 Points

The extent to which the applicant provides letter(s) of engagement from a least one (1) local/region employer. Applications that do not include any letters from an employer partner will not be considered.

Funding Information – 5 Points

The applicant must provide the total amount of funding being requested from DRA and at least 15% of matching funds from non-DRA funding sources. The applicant must provide information about the source(s) of the matching funds, including a letter of commitment from the source or other supporting documentation as evidence. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide a categorical budget narrative for both DRA and non-DRA funds, and describe how these costs align with the proposed project.

Budget/Budget Narrative Alignment – 3 Points

The extent to which the items included in the Budget/Budget Narrative are consistent with the Project Information and Work Plan.

Commitment of Matching Funds – 2 Points

The applicant must provide evidence of cost share from non-DRA funding sources. To be considered for full points, the applicant must demonstrate at least 15% of the total project cost is committed by non-DRA funding sources.

2. Review and Selection Process

Applications submitted to DRA within the 2020 DWP funding cycle will first be pre-screened to determine eligibility and completeness. Once project eligibility has been determined, DRA

program staff will conduct a preliminary review to ensure the project scope is compatible with program guidelines, investment priorities, objectives, and funding principles established in this RFP. Once the preliminary review process is complete, DRA program staff will review and score each application based on the criteria set forth in Section F: Application Review Information.

DRA reserves the right to negotiate all budget costs with applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove or adjust certain proposed costs. Additionally, DRA may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information pertaining to any aspect of the application. DRA also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the applicant's ability to successfully fulfill the objectives and requirements of the grant award.

DRA, under its complete and sole discretion, may select for award some, all, or none of the applications received under this competitive solicitation. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be made by DRA's Federal Co-Chairman. The award decision made by the Federal Co-Chairman is final.

G. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Administration of DRA awards are subject to the same regulations, restrictions, and requirements as other federal awards. These include, but are not limited to, administrative requirements and cost principles, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), past performance and non-compliance, environmental and historic preservation, and the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA) requirements.

Grants involving construction will require the use of a basic agency to administer the funds, and grantees will be subject to the reporting requirement of the agency. Partnerships submitting applications involving construction, renovation, restoration, and other similar activities are strongly encouraged to contact DRA program staff for guidance.

H. DRA CONTACT INFORMATION

DRA strongly encourages interested applicants to contact DRA program staff and their respective Local Development District(s) with any questions they have about the DWP Program in general, as well as with any specific questions they have about the use of agency funds to support projects in Delta communities and regions. Applicants with additional questions are encouraged to submit these to **workforce@dra.gov**.

I. GENERAL DISCLOSURES

The 2020 DWP program awards will be made only to the extent that funds are available. Publication of this RFP does not obligate DRA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds. Applicants intending to contract with a specific individual, consulting group, or organization with DRA funding must have a competitive procurement policy in place.

This RFP does not commit DRA to award a contract, or to procure, or to contract for services or supplies. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the RFP, DRA reserves the right to award grants, cooperative agreements or contracts to communities or regions that best meet the requirements of the RFP, and not necessarily to the lowest cost proposers. DRA solely reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request; to negotiate with all qualified sources; or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if it is in the interests of DRA to do so.

Please note that DRA will not reimburse for any other costs associated with the preparation of a response to this RFP. Any DRA contracts awarded to work directly with consultants or consulting organizations will likely be a firm fixed-price contract or a cooperative agreement. Consultants and consultant teams that are legally barred from receiving federal contracts or contract payments will not be considered for work with communities or regions under this RFP.

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