



2024 Delta Workforce Grant Program: Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Executive Summary

FOA Release Date: September 21, 2023

Application Due Date: December 21, 2023

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) is publishing this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to solicit applications for grants under the 2024 Delta Workforce Grant Program (DWP).

The goal of the program is to target federal resources toward communities in the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions particularly hard hit by industrial downsizing, business closures, and job losses. In accordance with DRA's [Equity Action Plan](#) and [Tribal Consultation Plan](#), DWP prioritizes projects that demonstrate strategic partnership(s) with Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs), Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and/or Federally Recognized Tribes. Additionally, DRA also prioritizes projects that impact distressed/isolated counties/parishes.

As provided in Goal 2, Nurture Local Workforce Ecosystems, of the [DRA Regional Development Plan IV](#), DRA will improve networks of agencies, organizations, businesses, and educational institutions providing workforce development opportunities. It will promote access to services, funding, and programs that enable career stability, including health care, housing, education, and food security. DWP supports projects and initiatives that create a more vibrant economic future for the Delta region by expanding opportunities to recruit, train, and retain a diverse and local workforce, aligning workforce and economic development strategies, creating sustainable talent pipelines, establishing or enhancing locally/regionally significant sector-based partnerships, and supporting enhanced workforce productivity through investments in innovative programming or services.

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

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A. DRA OVERVIEW

The DRA was established in 2000 as a formal framework for joint federal-state collaboration to promote and encourage the economic development of the lower Mississippi River and Alabama Black Belt regions. To fulfill this purpose, DRA invests in projects supporting transportation infrastructure, basic public infrastructure, workforce training, and business development. DRA works to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of those that reside in the region. DRA's region encompasses 252 counties and parishes in parts of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

(An interactive map of the DRA region can be found [here](#).)

B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Program Overview

The Delta Workforce Grant Program (DWP) is an initiative targeting federal resources toward communities in the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions particularly hard hit by industrial downsizing, business closures, and job losses. In accordance with DRA's [Equity Action Plan](#) and [Tribal Consultation Plan](#), DWP prioritizes projects that demonstrate strategic partnership(s) with Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs), Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and/or Federally Recognized Tribes. Additionally, DRA also prioritizes projects that impact distressed/isolated counties/parishes. DWP supports projects and initiatives that create a more vibrant economic future for the Delta region by expanding job training and reemployment 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 or services.

To support career development, applicants are encouraged to adopt worker-centered sector strategies. A sector strategy is a systems approach to workforce development that involves a public-private partnership of multiple employers within an industry; brings together education and training providers; workforce development entities; and labor, worker, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of the industry within a given labor market. Sector strategies often bring together partners that jointly execute a career pathways model.

This program is designed to support projects that:

- Develop or enhance cross-system partnerships 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 Registered 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 industries or sectors,

- Support the acquisition or development of curriculum and/or equipment, ensuring the delivery of quality, innovative training and workforce services.

2. 2024 DWP Grants

The 2024 DWP competitive grant competition is administered as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Funding Cycle Opens: | September 21, 2023 |
| Application Deadline: | December 21, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. CDT |

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 2024 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 2024 DWP application submission requirements as well as for technical assistance in developing their applications. Technical questions about the FOA should be directed to workforce@dra.gov with the subject line: Delta Workforce Program FOA. Include the contact name, applicant organization, and phone number in the body of your email.

In addition to the requirements described in this FOA 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 IV \(RDP4\)](#).

3. 2024 DWP Priorities and Anticipated Outcomes

This section provides information describing the 2024 DWP investment priorities and objectives. Potential applicants should review this information thoroughly before submitting a project application.

Background on DRA's Strategic Investment Goals

As described in the agency's strategic plan, [Navigating the Currents of Opportunity: DRA Regional Development Plan IV](#), DRA has identified four 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 DRA region. While each goal 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 – Invest in Public Infrastructure:** Expand and invest in the resiliency of the region's public infrastructure to improve residents' quality of life and increase economic opportunity. This includes utilities (e.g., water, sewer), digital communications (e.g., broadband, cellular), and transportation (e.g., road improvements, public transit).

- **Goal 2 – Nurture Local Workforce Ecosystems:** Improve networks of agencies, organizations, businesses, and educational institutions providing workforce development opportunities. It will promote access to services, funding, and programs that enable career stability, including health care, housing, education, and food security.
- **Goal 3 – Promote Business Growth and Entrepreneurship:** Strengthen the competitiveness of the region’s employers and attract new employers to the region. Support the long-term growth of micro and small businesses, especially those that promote local industries such as tourism.
- **Goal 4 – Support Community Place-Making and Capacity-Building:** Expand efforts to enhance sustainable and inclusive local placemaking, quality of life, and community capacity. This includes enabling community connectedness, increased efficacy, leadership development, and the ability to receive federal support, especially with under-resourced groups.

DWP Investment Priorities

The 2024 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’s Investment Priorities are meant to advance worker-centered sector strategies. A sector strategy is a systems approach to workforce development that involves a public-private partnership of multiple employers within an industry; that brings together education and training providers; workforce development entities; and labor, worker, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of the industry within a given labor market. Rigorous evidence has shown that sector strategies improve the labor market outcomes of disadvantaged workers. Within this broad focus, 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 into 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, Worker-Centered 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 build pathways to good-

paying jobs¹ that are tailored to the unique needs of these communities or that address the skills gaps and places workers in quality jobs thereby supporting regional economies with the skilled, diverse workforce necessary to compete in the 21st century.

Building Collaborative Talent Pipelines. This priority advances the goals of the president’s Talent Pipeline Challenge that calls on employers, education and training providers, states, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and philanthropic organizations to make commitments that support equitable workforce development opportunities for infrastructure jobs. Applicants should develop collaborative partnerships between K-12 education systems, institutions of higher education, workforce training partners, and local or regional industry partners to develop training programs that place Americans into high-quality infrastructure jobs and support equitable workforce development in electric vehicle production, skilled construction trades, telecommunications, and logistics in order to help rebuild infrastructure and achieve steady, stable growth in communities throughout the DRA region.

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 skill demand needs for high-growth industries and strengthen the economic competitiveness of the region.

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 and that may support initiatives with a direct connection to economic development.

2024 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 Placement & Quality Wages** – Provide workforce development services to dislocated workers, incumbent workers, or new entrants to the workforce, ultimately leading to gainful employment in high-growth industries or sectors.
- **Career Development** – Provide skills training and workforce development services in high-quality training efforts, like Registered Apprenticeships, that result in industry-recognized credentials or certifications for high-quality, in-demand careers.
- **Strategic Investment** – Strengthen industry clusters or sectors and advance local and regional economies, especially in economically distressed counties/parishes (defined by DRA) or persistent poverty counties/parishes (defined by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service](#)).

¹ A quality job (or a “good-paying job”) is a job that exceeds the local prevailing wage for an industry in the region, includes basic benefits (e.g., paid leave, health insurance, retirement/savings plan) and/or is unionized, and helps the employee develop the skills and experiences necessary to advance along a career path. “Prevailing wage” is defined by the Department of Labor as “the equivalent to the wage paid to at least 30% of workers, rather than 50% of workers, in a given trade in a locality.”

Applicants should incorporate these investment priorities and objectives 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.

2024 DWP Anticipated Outcomes

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

- **Jobs Created** – The estimated number of jobs created as a direct result of your project, measured during the project period and up to two years after the project end date.

Projects should provide sustainable, employer-driven career pathways that meet employers’ needs for talent in that specific industry/sector that your program/project will support to expand workforce opportunities to dislocated workers, incumbent workers, or new entrants to the workforce, ultimately leading to gainful employment in high-growth industries or sectors.

- **Jobs Retained** – The number of jobs retained as a direct result of your project.

Projects should provide supportive services and innovation strategies that assist with the retention of employed individuals. Employed dislocated workers, incumbent workers, or new entrants to the workforce should be provided with a retention plan to ensure success and career growth, and sustainability.

- **Persons Trained** – The number of participants served by the project, measured during the project period. Projects that expand existing programs should only count the additional number of participants that the project will serve.

Project should provide and align the development of industry-recognized certifications, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, internships within in-demand industries, and career pathways leading to quality jobs.

- **Communities Served** – The number of communities served or impacted by the project.

Applicants should demonstrate the impact and relevance of the proposed program. By understanding and addressing the needs and aspirations of communities, applicants can effectively tailor their efforts and generate positive outcomes.

C. AWARD INFORMATION

1. Availability of Funding

2024 DWP grant funds are available as follows:

DRA is making approximately **\$10,000,000** available for DWP project grants.

DWP funding is made available through P.L. 117-58 – Infrastructure Investment and

Jobs Act.

In general, DRA expects to make individual grant awards ranging between \$50,000 - \$450,000 for each project it awards within the DRA region. Specific awards will vary by project type at the discretion of DRA. Applications with funding requests above the grant maximum of \$450,000 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 and parishes 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 FOA 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

The period of performance for awards made under this program will be no more than 24 months, with an anticipated start date of April/May 2024, for all grantees.

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,
- Public or private nonprofit organizations or associations,
- Regional development organizations,
- Economic development organizations,
- Workforce investment boards,
- Unions/labor organizations,
- Community-based organizations,
- Faith-based organizations,
- Institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education,

- Historically Black Colleges & Universities,
- Minority-serving institutions,
- Trade/technical schools, and
- Federally Recognized tribes.

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. Eligible Participants

Applicants must propose a project that serves individuals in one or more of the following targeted categories: new entrants to the workforce, dislocated workers, and/or incumbent workers. The definitions for each category are described below.

- **New Entrants to the Workforce:** This term refers to those who have never worked before or who have been out of the workforce for a long enough time to make it as if they are entering the workforce for the first time. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, the long-term unemployed and formerly incarcerated individuals. Also eligible, consistent with federal and state wage and employment laws, are youth who are enrolled in high school and are currently or will be eligible to be employed before or within six months after the end of the grant lifecycle and youth who have dropped out of school and are seeking their first full-time job.
- **Dislocated Workers:** This term refers to individuals who were terminated or laid off or have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment or were self-employed but are now unemployed.
- **Incumbent Workers:** This term refers to individuals who are employed but need employment and training services to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations. This includes workers who are paid low- and medium wages who would benefit from upgrading their skills to retain employment or advance in their careers, and workers who are currently working part-time.
- Within these categories, applicants may serve a wide range of individuals, including high school or post-secondary students, individuals requiring adult basic and other education programs, individuals with disabilities, veterans, individuals with Limited English Proficiency, and individuals impacted by Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Applicants are encouraged to conduct outreach among people and communities who have historically experienced systemic and programmatic inequities in employment and economic outcomes, including but not limited to people of color; immigrants and refugees; individuals with disabilities; individuals who were formerly incarcerated; and lesbian, gay,

bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ+) individuals.

3. Eligible Activities

Applicants may propose projects that include any of the following types of activities:

i. Training and Work-Based Learning Models

Workforce training strategies must align with the target community's or region's strategic plan or economic development priorities. Some of the allowable training and learning approaches include, but are not limited to:

- work-based learning such as Registered Apprenticeships, customized training programs, incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, internships, or other work experiences; or
- traditional classroom or virtual training.

These may occur before or after a layoff in order to help facilitate reemployment.

ii. Other Employment-Related Activities

Eligible employment-related activities include, but are not limited to:

- in-depth participant assessment and evaluation to identify employment barriers and develop individual employment plans,
- career planning, including using labor market information to help participants select training and careers that lead to family-sustaining wages and benefits, job coaching, and job matching services, and
- employability skills training.

iii. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

DWP projects may support innovative service delivery strategies that address economic and workforce-related challenges. Such innovations might include application of new business models, including bringing together workers, labor, employers, and training providers to address workforce issues, new products, services, technology, or capital improvements/equipment. A capital improvement/equipment innovation for DRA communities and regions might include adapting spaces previously unusable for training, e.g., the purchase of an HVAC training unit used to provide participants with hands-on experience with the heating, refrigeration, and air conditioning industries as part of a broader regional service delivery strategy.

Online and technology-enabled (including hybrid or a blend of online and classroom instruction) learning strategies provide participants an opportunity to balance the competing demands of work and family with acquiring new knowledge and skills at a time, place, and/or pace that are convenient for them. The use of technology to deliver training online, modularize content delivery and accelerate course delivery (among other strategies) can help increase access to education and training programs, especially in rural areas.

In addition, new and emergent technologies, such as interactive simulations, personalized and virtual instruction, educational gaming, and digital tutors, offer the opportunity to improve the quality of online instruction, especially in ways that can increase opportunities for learning, support student success, and connect students with in-demand job opportunities.

In light of broad shifts in the economy to more virtual and hybrid learning and working, applicants may choose to focus their efforts toward building their capacity to facilitate online conversion and to become fully operational within a context of distance learning or to address other unique challenges in addressing the needs of job seekers and workers in the DRA region, in communities covered by the proposed project.

Such approaches might include, but are not limited to:

- expanding access to high-speed internet to provide distance learning,
- supporting digital literacy among program participants,
- developing or enhancing partnerships with a broad range of regional institutions, including libraries, community colleges, community organizations, and others, to collaborate in needs identification and implementation of new strategies,
- increasing availability of mobile service units, such as custom vehicles equipped with technology, and other technology-enabled solutions to flexibly deliver training, outreach, and/or employment in remote areas,
- developing or expanding use of online or hybrid online and in-person training, employment services, and work experiences,
- using software or hardware tools to implement virtual student services to support career and academic planning, or
- deploying technology intensively to create competency-based, self-paced, skills-based learning and making interactive resources, such as simulations and videos, widely accessible.

iv. Participant Support Services

Support services are necessary activities or resources that enable eligible individuals to participate in and complete career and training services or other employment-related activities or to gain or retain employment. Grant recipients are encouraged to offer necessary support services to job seekers and workers directly or through partner organizations.

Generally, customized support service strategies meet the specific needs of a participant and can ensure participants are able to complete a program or services, particularly longer-term training, which prepares participants for more economic mobility. Such support services may include, but are not limited to:

- assistance with transportation, child or dependent care, or housing,
- counseling or other mental health services,

- provision of stipends, wages, or other incentives to ensure select participants are able to participate in the program or to obtain/retain employment,
- linkages to community services, including services offered by partner organizations designed to support grant participants,
- assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear,
- assistance with laptops or tablets, books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in training, work-based learning, or other elements of the proposed project,
- payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications,
- workforce strategies addressing SUD such as, but not limited to, recovery coaches, job/career coaches, and health navigator services, and
- training site and/or workplace substance use testing and/or drug screening for trainees when required by the career or workplace that the individual is in training to enter.

v. Employer Support Services

All applicants are required to demonstrate partnership with at least one employer or industry representative as part of their proposed project. In addition, providing direct services to employers as part of grant activities is an important dimension of DWP. Applicants are encouraged to provide services to local employers, particularly small and medium-sized employers, to help them in a wide range of areas, including improving job quality such as adopting more competitive wage scales, establishing more predictable work schedules, examining how benefits may be offered, creating opportunities for advancement, advising employers on how to adhere to nondiscrimination laws, and adopting practices that ensure workers know their rights and that incorporate worker voice. Applicants are also encouraged to provide services to employers that already offer quality jobs, including those with family-sustaining wages, benefits, opportunities for advancement, and worker voice, to enhance their economic success, growth, or sustainability. This can be accomplished by coordinating with local business services teams at American Job Centers or other local business and economic development partners.

Efforts may focus on individual employers or have an industry-based approach for clusters or sectors and may include activities such as: providing technical assistance materials to support job quality or ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws; designing/disseminating tool kits and training for employers to develop standards/processes for SUD recovery-friendly workplaces or to implement job accommodations to meet the needs of current or future employees; establishing peer coaching, counseling, and

worksite mentoring programs; creating, expanding, or enhancing Registered Apprenticeships, internships, and other work experiences, including subsidies of apprentice and intern wages; creating customized training programs; or establishing school-to-work activities.

In addition to meeting the workforce needs of these employers, applicants are encouraged to consider and incorporate where feasible, other roles that employers may play in grant activities, which might include:

- supporting strategic planning activities,
- advising on defining high-quality jobs for the area and providing input on the skills and experiences needed for employment or advancement in such jobs,
- participating in career exploration activities for youth or new entrants,
- participating in or serving as a convener for sector strategies planning,
- serving as host sites for internships and work experience, or
- importantly, committing to hire participants upon program completion.

vi. Purchasing Equipment and Making Renovations

Capital expenditures, such as the purchase of equipment or capital improvements, are allowable provided they directly facilitate or address the employment and training needs of job seekers or workers in the communities served by the proposed project.

Possible allowable capital improvements include, but are not limited to, improvements to buildings or equipment that would materially increase their value or useful life such as the cost to put the asset or improvement in place. For buildings, this could include the cost of upgrading, installing, or retrofitting a building's internal systems or utilities (e.g., electrical plumbing, HVAC, communications) to accommodate training courses or equipment. This could also include structural improvements or upgrades, including the relocation, modification, retrofitting, or enhancement of interior load-bearing walls or interior floors to accommodate training courses or equipment. This could also include implementing and/or enhancing the information technology infrastructure used to provide education and training and related activities.

Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements of buildings, facilities, or equipment are allowable, provided they facilitate or address the employment and training needs of job seekers or workers in the DRA region. Minor alterations, renovations, or rearrangements may include the activities and associated costs of relocating, modifying, replacing, or adding items (e.g., switches and outlets) related to internal environments (e.g., temperature, humidity, ventilation, and acoustics) and installation of fixed equipment (including fume hoods and audio/visual equipment).

Allowable costs also include leasing space that is used for the grant

participant education, training, and related activities as well as the alternating or renovating of such facilities. Allowable renovations include those related to federal architectural accessibility obligations requiring facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities.

Prohibited activities with regard to capital expenditures include new construction or property acquisition.

4. 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 toward 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 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 ([Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#)). 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/>

5. Cost Sharing or Matching

Applicants must demonstrate at least a 10 percent cost share (cash and/or in-kind) matched by non-DRA sources. Matching sources may be non-federal, other federal², or a combination of sources. Applicants located in and/or serving distressed counties/parishes do not need to demonstrate a match of any kind. In general, applications that demonstrate leveraged resources from private entities/employers are encouraged but will not receive additional points for their application.

6. Project Team Composition

In accordance with DWP Investment Priorities, applicants are expected to develop new or strengthen existing partnerships of community and economic development stakeholders 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, at least one member of the project team must be located in the DRA region; however, it is not a requirement for each member of a project team to be located in the DRA region. 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 be comprised of, but is not limited to, any type of organization listed as an Eligible Applicant in Section D.1 complemented by additional organizations such as:

- 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,
- Registered 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,
- Historically Black Colleges & Universities,
- Nonprofit and community-based organizations that provide supportive services, and
- Chambers of commerce.

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.

E. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. How to Apply

The electronic DWP application will be available on September 21, 2023. Applicants may access the application electronically at:

<https://dra.communityforce.com/Login.aspx>

2. Content and Form of the DWP Application

DWP is administered in accordance with DRA's standard application policies and procedures. ALL applicant organizations must be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) and provide DRA with the Unique Entity ID (UEI) number generated by SAM at SAM.gov.

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

- SAM.gov UIE number (*free at SAM.gov*)
- Your organization's IRS 501c3 certification letter, articles of incorporation, and/or parish/city-town charter
- Project name
- Project type (Construction/non-construction)
- Project summary/abstract
- Project length
- Project description
- Project location, i.e., address/latitude-longitude
- Project rationale
- Project team and relevant experience
- Local and regional collaboration
- Anticipated project outcomes
- Work plan, deliverables, and timeline
- Evidence of workforce demand & employer needs
- 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 2024 DWP grant cycle are as follows:

2024 Delta Workforce Grant Program

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Funding Cycle Opens: | September 21, 2023 |
| Pre-Award Technical Assistance: | Week of October 16, 2023 |
| Grant Application Deadline: | December 21, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. CDT |
| Award Announcements: | March/April 2024 |

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact DRA program staff (workforce@dra.gov) or their Local Development District (<https://dra.gov/funding-programs-states-economic-development/local-development-districts2/>) for additional information about the 2024 DWP application submission requirements as well as for technical assistance in completing applications.

In addition to the requirements described in this FOA 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, *Navigating the Currents of Opportunity: DRA Regional Development Plan IV*.

Technical Assistance

Applicants who are interested in starting a Registered Apprenticeship program are encouraged to contact one or more of the Registered Apprenticeship Technical Assistance Centers of Excellence, supported by the U.S. Department of Labor, including Jobs for the Future – Diversity and Inclusion Center, Safal Partners – Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment Center, Urban Institute – Apprenticeship Occupations and Standards Center, and The Council for State Governments – Data and Performance and Best Practices Center.

PRE-AWARD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: At the pre-award workshop(s), applicants will have the opportunity to meet current grantees and learn more about the workforce development projects they are implementing in their communities and throughout the Delta region. The workshop focuses on best practices, practical challenges, and solutions and witnesses first-hand the successful workforce training programs being implemented through DWP. Additionally, potential applicants will learn about information we may ask you to submit for possible funding, what DRA staff will be reviewing in your application prior to award (level of effort, indirect costs, etc.), and what will be required to ensure compliance with other federal and organizational requirements.

POST-AWARD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Successful applicants will receive technical assistance from DRA staff during the period of performance 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 focused on the implementation of their proposed workforce development programs and effective deployment of federal resources.

Additionally, DRA will provide technical assistance to unfunded applicants who send a request to workforce@dra.gov at the conclusion of the funding cycle.

4. Application Submission Instructions

Project applications (with related attachments) must be submitted electronically via DRA's Grants Management System at:

<https://dra.communityforce.com/Login.aspx>

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 FOA.

| Criterion | Points (maximum) |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Project Information | Section Total 60 Points |
| I. Project Description | 25 Points |
| a. Description of Project Service Area and Community Needs | 7 |
| b. Project Design | 15 |
| c. Demonstration of Inclusion in a Distressed/Isolated County/Parish | 3 |
| II. Project Rationale | 25 Points |
| a. Description of Workforce Needs | 12 |
| b. Alignment with DRA’s Strategic Investment Goals | 3 |
| c. Alignment with DWP Investment Priorities | 7 |
| d. Alignment with Local Workforce or Economic Development Priorities | 3 |
| III. Project Team and Relevant Experience | 5 Points |
| IV. Local and Regional Collaboration | 5 Points |
| a. Demonstration of Local and Regional Partnerships | 3 |

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| b. Demonstration of Partnership(s) with HBCU, MSI, and/or Federally Recognized Tribe(s) | 2 |
| Anticipated Project Outcomes | Section Total 6 Points |
| Work Plan | Section Total 16 Points |
| I. Project Deliverables | 12 |
| II. Project Timeline | 4 |
| Evidence of Workforce Demand & Employer Needs | Section Total 15 Points |
| I. Demonstration of Workforce Demand from Local/Regional Employers | 5 |
| II. Evidence of Employer Engagement | 10 |
| Funding Information | Section Total 3 Points |
| I. Budget/Budget Narrative Alignment | 3 |

Project Information – 60 Points

Project Description – 25 Points

The applicant should demonstrate how the proposed activities support industry-driven workforce development in the DRA region. To be considered for full points, the applicant must include a description of the project service area and community needs, alignment with strategic plans, project design and approach, and declare if project activities will occur in a designated distressed/isolated county/parish.

a. Description of Project Service Area and Community Needs (7 Points)

The extent to which the applicant describes the project service area, community needs, and target population to be served by the proposed project. Applicants should describe the service area’s socioeconomic and workforce challenges, including the service area’s population, median household income, unemployment rate, and labor force participation rate.

b. Project Design (15 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. The project design must describe all grant activities by demonstrating how the applicant will implement its proposed workforce development program, including how the applicant plans to recruit the target population. This section must also clearly be reflected in the work plan, project timeline, budget, and budget narrative. The applicant must address factors that could impact the project’s success and a related contingency plan, especially programmatic

impacts stemming from the coronavirus pandemic.

c. Demonstration of Inclusion in Distressed County or Parish/Isolated Area within a Non-Distressed County or Parish (3 Points)

The applicant must demonstrate that project activities take place in at least one or more distressed/isolated county/parish as defined by DRA. To be distressed, counties and parishes must meet the following criteria: 1) An unemployment rate of one percent higher than the national average for the most recent 24-month period, and 2) Have a per capita income of 80 percent or less of the most recent national per capita income level.

Project Rationale – 25 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 and DWP Investment Priorities, Objectives, and Funding Principles. Additionally, the applicant must describe how the proposed project aligns with local, regional, or statewide economic and/or workforce development plans and priorities.

a. Description of Workforce Needs (12 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. Further, applicants should describe how the workforce needs are being addressed for job seekers and/or workers that are proposed to be served by the project.

b. Alignment with DRA's Strategic Investment Goals (3 Points)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates alignment with one or more of DRA's Strategic Investment Goal(s) outlined in the agency's [Regional Development Plan IV](#).

c. Alignment with DWP Investment Priorities (7 Points)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates alignment with one or more of DWP's Investment Priorities.

d. Alignment with Local Workforce or Economic Development Priorities (3 Points)

The applicant must identify and describe how the project aligns with an existing local, regional, or state economic development plan(s) and/or workforce strategy. Applicants must demonstrate how the project advances relevant goals or addresses a component, need, or action item outlined in the identified plan(s). Further, applicants must demonstrate how the project activities and anticipated results address, support, or advance specifically identified portions of the plan(s). DRA will accept the inclusion of any plan published or produced by local public bodies, regional development organizations, workforce investment boards, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, relevant

state agencies, or related organizations.

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, including but not limited to prior experience in or demonstrated capacity for managing complex federal grant requirements. Staff resumes and/or job descriptions (for positions the applicant is proposing to fill with grant funds) must be included as attachments to the application.

Local and Regional Collaboration - 5 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).

a. Demonstration of Local and Regional Partnerships (3 Points)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates partnerships with local and regional entities, representing the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and local unions. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide letters of support from engaged partners. Letters of support must describe the extent of each partner's engagement with the proposed project.

b. Demonstration of Partnership(s) with HBCUs and/or Federally Recognized Tribe (2 Points)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates substantial involvement of at least one (1) HBCU, MSI and/or Federally Recognized Tribe. To receive full points, applicants must provide letter(s) of engagement from at least one (1) HBCU, MSI and/or Federally Recognized Tribe. Letters of engagement must describe how the HBCU, MSI and/or Federally Recognized Tribe will be involved in the proposed project and the extent to which a partnership between them and the applicant has evolved, and how it will be strengthened.

Anticipated Project Outcomes - 6 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, and challenges identified in the Project Description and Project Rationale. At a minimum, the applicant must include the number of communities served, individuals trained, jobs created/retained, and industry/businesses served as anticipated project outcomes. If applicable, the participant supportive service's outcomes and barriers addressed by the service(s) must be outlined here.

Work Plan - 16 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 – 12 Points

The extent to which the applicant proposes appropriate and relevant deliverables to ensure efficient deployment of project resources.

Project Timeline – 4 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 Workforce Demand & Employer Needs – 15 Points

The applicant must demonstrate how the project develops and/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 region, the workforce training and jobs to be created/retained must not require participants to relocate outside of the DRA region. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide specific information about the employer(s) that will participate in or benefit from the proposed project and provide letters of engagement from each of these identified employer/industry partner(s).

Demonstration of Workforce Demand from Local/Regional Employers – 5 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 – 10 Points

The extent to which the applicant provides letter(s) of engagement from at least one (1) local/regional employer. Letters of engagement must describe the employer’s workforce challenges, including the specific skills gap to be addressed by the project and how the employer intends to participate (ex., curriculum development, on-the-job training, Registered Apprenticeship, etc.) in the proposed project. Applications that do not include at least one letter from an employer partner will not be considered.

Funding Information – 3 Points

The applicant must provide the total amount of funding being requested from DRA and at least 10 percent of matching funds from non-DRA funding sources, unless the applicant is located in, or the proposed project takes place in distressed/isolated county(ies)/parish(es). The applicant must provide information about the source(s) of the matching funds, including a letter of commitment or other supporting documentation as evidence from each source. To be considered for full points, the applicant must provide a detailed categorical budget narrative for both DRA and non-DRA funds and describe how

these costs align with the proposed project.

Budget and Budget Narrative Alignment – 3 Points

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

2. Review and Selection Process

Applications submitted to DRA within the 2024 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 FOA. 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 award decision made by DRA is final.

G. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Please see Appendix 1 for Award Administration requirements.

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 2024 DWP program awards will be made only to the extent that funds are available. Publication of this FOA 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 FOA does not commit DRA to award a contract, to procure, or to contract for services or supplies. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the FOA, DRA reserves the right to award grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts to communities or regions that best meet the requirements of the FOA, 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 FOA 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 FOA. 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 FOA.

Appendix 1

DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY: AWARD ADMINISTRATION

1. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees will be subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the OMB Uniform Guidance and the terms and conditions of the award. The grant(s) awarded under this FOA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions.

- i. Nonprofit Organizations, Educational Institutions, For-profit entities, and State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments—2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards)
- ii. All recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law No. 113-328, 128 Stat. 1425 (codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. 3101 et. seq.) and the applicable provisions of the regulations at 20 CFR Part 675 et. seq. Note that 20 CFR Part 683 (Administrative Provisions) allows unsuccessful applicants to file administrative appeals.
- iii. All entities must comply with 29 CFR Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 CFR Part 94 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 2 CFR Part 180 (OMB Guidance to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)), and, where applicable, 2 CFR Part 200 (Audit Requirements).
- iv. All entities must comply with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Build America, Buy America Act (the Act), Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52, as well as the Executive Memorandum M-22-11, dated April 18, 2022, Initial Implementation Guidance on Application of Buy America Preference in Federal Financial Assistance Programs for Infrastructure.

The Act requires the following Buy America preference:

- (i.) All iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States. This means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States.
- (ii.) All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States. This means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States, and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation.

(iii.) All construction materials are manufactured in the United States. This means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

Pursuant to Section 70914(c) of the Act, DRA may waive the application of a Buy America preference under an infrastructure program in any case in which the FCC of DRA finds that—

(i.) applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest (a “public interest waiver”);

(ii.) types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality (a “nonavailability waiver”); or

(iii.) the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent (an “unreasonable cost waiver”).

Before applying a Buy America preference to a covered program that will affect Tribal Communities, DRA will follow the consultation policies established through Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, and consistent with policies set forth in the Presidential Memorandum of January 26, 2021, on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-Nation Relationships.

i. Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

ii. Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the DRA pursuant to the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended. The Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of age by recipients of federal financial assistance and in federally assisted programs or activities but permits the use of certain age distinctions and factors other than age that meet the requirements of the Act and this part.

iii. Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (except sections 904 and 906 of those Amendments) ([20 U.S.C. 1681](#), [1682](#), [1683](#), [1685](#), [1686](#), [1687](#), [1688](#)), which is designed to eliminate (with certain exceptions) discrimination on the basis of

sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, whether or not such program or activity is offered or sponsored by an educational institution as defined in these Title IX regulations.

iv. Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

v. Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.

vi. DRA will follow the procedures outlined in the agency's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) policy. If DRA receives a FOIA request for your application, the procedures in DRA's FOIA policies for responding to requests for commercial/business information submitted to the government will be followed, as well as all FOIA exemptions and procedures. See generally 5 U.S.C. § 552

vii. DRA is supportive of the presidential administration's comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all in line with Executive Order 13985. As an identified agency with covered programs, DRA will comply with the actions required of agencies that manage covered Justice40 programs. These actions include identifying the benefits of covered programs, determining how covered programs distribute benefits, and calculating and reporting on reaching the 40-percent goal of the Justice40 Initiative. Benefits include direct and indirect investments (and program outcomes) that positively impact disadvantaged communities. Therefore, all entities must comply with reporting, data collection, and evaluation necessary for DRA to comply with Justice40 Initiative requirements as outlined in M21-28 Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and EO 14008.

2. Other Legal Requirements

i. Religious Activities

DRA notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, applies to all federal law and its implementation. If an applicant organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled to receive federal financial assistance under this grant solicitation and maintain that hiring practice. Religious organizations are eligible, on the same basis as any other organization, to seek DRA support or participate in DRA programs for which they are otherwise eligible.

ii. Lobbying or Fundraising the U.S. Government with Federal Funds

In accordance with Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-65) (2 U.S.C. § 1611), nonprofit entities incorporated under Internal Revenue Service Code section 501(c)(4) that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive federal funds and grants. No activity, including awareness-raising and advocacy activities, may include fundraising for, or lobbying of, U.S. federal, state, or local governments (see 2 CFR 200.450 for more information).

iii. Transparency Act Requirements

You must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. Law 109-282, as amended by the Government Funding Transparency Act of 2008, Pub. Law 110-252, Title VI, Chap. 2, Sec. 6202), as follows.

a. Except for those excepted from the Transparency Act under subparagraphs 1, 2, and 3 below, you must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, should you receive funding.

b. Upon award, you will receive detailed information on the reporting requirements of the Transparency Act, as described in 2 CFR Part 170, Appendix A, which can be found at <https://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-22705.pdf>.

The following types of awards are not subject to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act.

i. Federal awards to individuals who apply for or receive federal awards as natural persons (e.g., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization he or she may own or operate in his or her name),

ii. Federal awards to entities that had a gross income, from all sources, of less than \$300,000 in the entities' previous tax year, and

iii. Federal awards if the required reporting would disclose classified information.

iv. Safeguarding Data, Including Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
Applicants submitting applications in response to this FOA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to DRA and must be observed except where disclosure is allowed by the prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order. By submitting an application, you are assuring that all data exchanges conducted through or during the course of performance of this grant will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable federal law and TEGL 39-11 (issued June 28, 2012). All such activity conducted by recipient(s) will be performed in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal laws.

By submitting a grant application, you agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality by complying with the following provisions that are applicable in governing the handling of confidential information: You must ensure that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with DRA funded grants is securely transmitted.

a. To ensure that such PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, all PII and other sensitive data transmitted via email or stored on CDs, DVDs,

thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. You must not email unencrypted sensitive PII to any entity, including DRA or contractors.

b. You must take the steps necessary to ensure the privacy of all PII obtained from participants and/or other individuals and to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure. You must maintain such PII in accordance with the DRA standards for information security and any updates to such standards we provide you. Grantees who wish to obtain more information on data security should contact their Federal Project Officer.

c. You must ensure that any PII used during the performance of your grant has been obtained in conformity with applicable federal and state laws governing the confidentiality of information.

d. You further acknowledge that all PII data obtained through your DRA grant must be stored in an area that is physically safe from access by unauthorized persons at all times, and the data will be processed using recipient-issued equipment, managed information technology (IT) services, and designated locations approved by DRA. Accessing, processing, and storing of DRA grant PII data on personally owned equipment, at off-site locations (e.g., employee's home), and non-recipient managed IT services (e.g., Yahoo mail) is strictly prohibited unless approved by DRA.

e. Your employees and other personnel who will have access to sensitive / confidential / Proprietary / private data must be advised of the confidential nature of the information, the safeguards required to protect the information, and that there are civil and criminal sanctions for non-compliance with such safeguards that are contained in federal and state laws.

f. You must have policies and procedures in place under which your employees and other personnel, before being granted access to PII, acknowledge their understanding of the confidential nature of the data and the safeguards with which they must comply their handling of such data, as well as the fact that they may be liable to civil and criminal sanctions for improper disclosure.

g. You must not extract information from data supplied by DRA for any purpose not stated in the grant agreement.

h. Access to any PII created by the DRA grant must be restricted to only those employees of the grant recipient who need it in their official capacity to perform duties in connection with the scope of work in the grant agreement.

i. All PII data must be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/ documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving such records by computer, remote terminal, or any other means. Data may be downloaded to, or maintained on, mobile or portable devices only if the data are encrypted using NIST-validated software products based on FIPS 140-2 encryption. In addition, wage data may be accessed only from secure locations.

j. PII data obtained by the recipient through a request from DRA must not be disclosed to anyone but the individual requestor except as permitted by the Grant Officer or by court order.

k. You must permit DRA to make onsite inspections during regular business hours for the purpose of conducting audits and/or conducting other investigations to ensure that you are complying with the confidentiality requirements described above. In accordance with this responsibility, you must make records applicable to this Agreement available to authorized persons for the purpose of inspection, review, and/or audit.

l. You must retain data received from DRA only for the period of time required to use it for assessment and other purposes, or to satisfy applicable federal records retention requirements, if any. Thereafter, you agree that all data will be destroyed, including the degaussing of magnetic tape files and deletion of electronic data.

v. Record Retention

You must follow federal guidelines on record retention, which require that you maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of at least three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report. See 2 CFR 200.333-.337 for more specific information, including information about the start of the record retention period for awards that are renewed quarterly or annually and when the records must be retained for more than three years.

vi. Use of Contracts and Subawards

You must abide by the following definitions of contract, contractor, subaward, and subrecipient.

Contract: Contract means a legal instrument by which a non-federal entity (defined as a state or local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), nonprofit organization, for-profit entity, foreign public entity, or a foreign organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient) purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a federal award. The term as used in this FOA does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-federal entity considers it a contract when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a federal award or subaward (see definition of Subaward below).

Contractor: Contractor means an entity that receives a contract as defined above in Contract.

Subaward: Subaward means an award provided by a pass-through entity (defined as a non-federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program) to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of a federal program. A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract.

Subrecipient: Subrecipient means a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other federal awards directly from a federal awarding agency.

You must follow the provisions at 2 CFR 200.330-.332 regarding subrecipient monitoring and management. Also, see 2 CFR 200.308(c)(6) regarding prior approval requirements for subawards. When awarding subawards, you are required to comply with provisions on government-wide suspension and debarment found at 2 CFR Part 180 and codified at 2 CFR Part 2998.

vii. Closeout of Grant Award

Any entity that receives an award under this Announcement must close its grant with DRA at the end of the final year of the grant.

3. Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

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

4. Special Program Requirements

i. DRA Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, grantees are required to participate in an evaluation if undertaken by DRA. The evaluation may include an implementation assessment across grantees, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grantees, and a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. Conducting an impact analysis could involve random assignment (which involves random assignment of eligible

participants into a treatment group that would receive program services or enhanced program services, or into control group(s) that would receive no program services or program services that are not enhanced). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to:

- (a) make records available to the evaluation contractor on participants, employers, and funding,
- (b) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, operational and financial records, and any other relevant documents to calculate program costs and benefits, and
- (c) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services, including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants, and
- (d) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of DRA.

ii. Performance Goals

Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided, and failure to meet those outcomes may result in technical assistance or other intervention by DRA and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with DRA.

5. Definitions

Construction materials:

Construction materials include an article, material, or supply – other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives – that is or consists primarily of:

- non-ferrous metals,
- plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables),
- glass (including optic glass),
- lumber, or
- drywall.

Domestic content procurement preference means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States, the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States.

Infrastructure:

Infrastructure includes, a minimum, the structure, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States (1) roads, highways, and bridges; (2) public transportation; (3) dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime systems; (4) intercity passenger and freight railroads; (5) freight and intermodal facilities; (6) airports; (7) water systems; including

drinking water and wastewater systems; (8) electrical transmission facilities and systems; (9) utilities; (10) broadband infrastructure; and (11) buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy.

Project:

Project means the construction alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States.