

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

Maya Kelley:

Welcome to this pre-recorded webcast for prospective applicants for ETA's Funding Opportunity Announcement 23-31 titled DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program. Thank you for joining us for today's webcast. To help you follow along, we recommend you have a hard copy of the Funding Opportunity Announcement, or FOA, handy when viewing this webcast. Additionally, when applying for ETA competitive grants, we recommend that you use our web-based toolkit for prospective applicants at the link on this slide.

Today, you'll be hearing from Jenn Smith, Division Chief for the Division of Strategic Investments or DSI, myself, Maya Kelley, a Program Manager in DSI, and Greg Scheib, a Workforce Analyst in DSI. We are from what is often called the DOL Program Office for this grant.

There are two representatives that we work closely with in ETA's Office of Grants Management. Ariam Ferro is the Grants Management Specialist for this funding opportunity. Please remember that while the FOA is open, all questions about this grant must be directed to Ariam Ferro. Contact information for Ariam can be found on page 78 of the FOA and later in these slides. Joining him is Todd Long, who is also a Grants Management Specialist in the Office of Grants Management.

Today we will focus on three key areas of the FOA: program overview, program design and expected outcomes; award information, eligibility, partnerships, opportunities for Tribal communities, and infrastructure resources; and application submission requirements. Now I'll turn it over to Jenn Smith to get us started. Jenn.

Jenn Smith:

Thanks Maya, and thank you to everyone listening to this prerecorded webinar. We are glad you're making the time to view this important presentation, and we believe it will be helpful in preparing your response to this Funding Opportunity Announcement. In the next few slides, I will go over the program's purpose and design as well as the geographic scope. Everything we cover in this webcast is from the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program Funding Opportunity Announcement, but this is only a summary of key aspects of the FOA. We strongly encourage you to read the FOA in its entirety before considering whether to apply for the funding and submitting an application.

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed into law the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also referred to as the BIL. The BIL is a once-in-a-generation investment to rebuild our roads, bridges, ports and airports, upgrade public transit and rail systems, replace lead pipes to provide clean water, provide affordable high speed internet to every family in America, and deliver cheaper and cleaner energy.

Since the passage of the BIL, additional landmark pieces of legislation have also been passed that build upon the BIL's historic infrastructure investments, including the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors or CHIPS and Science Act and the Infrastructure Reduction Act or IRA. According to a 2022 study by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the IRA together with the private investments this bill stimulates will create over 9 million good jobs over the next 10 years. This includes nearly 5 million clean energy jobs, more than 900,000 clean manufacturing jobs, more than 400,000 clean transportation jobs, more than 900,000 jobs related to constructing efficient buildings and about 150,000 environmental-justice related jobs.

The DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program will invest in public-private partnerships to develop, implement, and scale worker centered sector strategy training programs in H-1B industries and occupations critical to meeting the goals of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or BIL.

DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023

The United States will need a skilled workforce to fill the good paying jobs created by the BIL's historic investment along with the CHIPS and Science Act, Inflation Reduction Act and American Rescue Plan. This investment aligns with the President and administration's Invest in America agenda, and it represents a down payment to meet the future skilled workforce needs to implement BIL and other key policies to accomplish the President's vision of growing our economy from the bottom up and middle out by creating millions of jobs and also to provide an opportunity to address long-standing barriers that have left many, including women and people of color and rural communities, on the sidelines.

To maximize the impact of the BIL investment, this grant program will train job seekers in advanced manufacturing, information technology and professional, scientific, and technical services occupations that support renewable energy, transportation and broadband infrastructure sectors. These include occupations in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors, broadband expansion and smart city grids, and electrical, industrial and civil engineers and technicians who facilitate the design, construction, modernization and maintenance of the nation's infrastructure.

The DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant funds will help to build out some of these critical skilled workforce occupations that will see their demand rise rapidly in the next five to 10 years, including electric vehicle manufacturing; electric vehicle infrastructure, such as greatly expanding the number of EV chargers available and expanding the necessary workforce to build and maintain these chargers; increasing clean energy access and usage; and filling in existing gaps in broadband infrastructure and access, particularly in rural and underserved communities across the nation. Later we will highlight some of the key occupations that align with the training focus of this FOA and how they align with BIL-funded projects.

The DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program represents a down payment to meet the skilled workforce needs for implementation of the BIL by investing in workforce partnerships that build equitable pathways to good infrastructure jobs, particularly for workers from underserved and underrepresented populations in the local/regional communities where these infrastructure projects are located, as well as within these occupations, such as for women. This grant program aims to develop and diversify the talent pipeline necessary to support the infrastructure sectors.

Grants under this program are H-1B skills training grants, which means they are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the US under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program and intended to provide workers training and related activities to assist them in gaining the skills and competencies needed to obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries or economic sectors.

This grant program will train individuals whose employment status when determined eligible for the program is unemployed, underemployed, or an incumbent worker. The definitions of unemployed, underemployed and incumbent worker are found on page 37 of the FOA. Participants served through this grant program must be at least 17 years old and not currently enrolled in secondary school within a local educational agency such as a high school.

Now let's get into the various elements of the project design for this grant program. To achieve the goals of the FOA, applicants must choose one of the following tracks for this grant program. The Development Track is focused on establishing local and regional partnerships that will develop and implement worker-centered sector strategy training programs in one or more infrastructure-related sectors. Applicants are expected to use evidence-based training strategies such as registered apprenticeship programs and other recognized work and learn approaches.

Additionally, applicants may propose to implement innovative, otherwise unproven strategies and approaches to recruitment, education and training, and partnership development that support or complement the evidence-based strategies to further inform promising sector strategy models. The

Development Track will target populations in smaller and/or rural communities as well as historically marginalized, underrepresented and underserved populations.

The Scaling Track will invest in established partnerships that have demonstrated evidence of effectiveness in implementing a sector strategy training program in one or more infrastructure-related sectors. This demonstrated effectiveness should include supporting data that shows employment outcomes, wage progression, and other evidence of sector training program achievement. Applicants will broaden the geographic scope of their existing effective sector strategy training program and incorporate worker-centered sector strategies. This track requires project designs which utilize evidence-based training models. Additionally, the Scaling Track will ensure that expansion efforts specifically target those populations that have historically been marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved within the identified sectors and communities.

This grant program is designed to ensure workers are at the center of the grant program's training and employment strategies. A sector strategy is a systems approach to workforce development that involves a public-private partnership of multiple employers within an industry sector that brings together educational institutions, economic development agencies, workforce development systems, and labor worker and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry sector within a given economic region. Worker-centered sector strategies build on the sector partnership to provide training programs that are industry-driven and responsive to local and regional infrastructure sector demands in the proposed service area to meet industry needs while also engaging workers in training program designs that support the attainment of quality jobs. Quality jobs are those that ensure adequate staffing, offer family sustaining wages and career pathway progression, require robust safety and health protocols, offer quality worker benefits such as health insurance, paid leave and retirement, and support recruitment and retention practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

This also should include, whenever possible, collaboration with unions and worker organizations to develop and deliver training and/or to provide supervised work-based learning. The worker-centered approach ensures that workforce development and employment opportunities are accessible to and shaped by communities of color and low-paid workers by considering their needs and actively working to address the barriers to good jobs while ensuring that workers have agency and voice and are treated with dignity and respect.

Through this grant program, DOL will advance worker-centered sector strategies that engage workers, worker organizations, unions or labor management partnerships, employers, workforce development entities, training entities and community organizations to create strong and sustainable partnerships that collaboratively address local or regional economic needs in real time. This collaboration will create an ecosystem of economic prosperity that is grounded in three core principles. One, strategies for ensuring diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, and prioritizing recruitment, training and retention of a local workforce; two, career pathways; and three, approaches for increasing job quality.

The next few slides will provide an overview of each of these principles; however, the core principles are described in full on pages 12-19 of the FOA and criteria for how an application should incorporate these core principles can be found on pages 47-50 of the FOA. Ensuring diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility is a fundamental principle of worker-centered sector strategies. Worker-centered sector strategies create pathways to economic prosperity for those who have been historically marginalized by discrimination, economic exclusion and exploitation, including people of color, justice-impacted and/or housing insecure individuals as well as women, people with disabilities, immigrants and other populations who experience economic and social inequities in the applicable service area.

DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023

Applicants must propose strategies that advance equity and embed these strategies in the grant program design to build equitable pathways into the target infrastructure-related industries and occupations that have historically lacked it. Applicants should be intentional and proactive in designing programs and strategies that ensure the greatest levels of equity. This includes demonstrating how the proposed program will be developed with the input of impacted workers, worker organizations or labor management partnerships; how it incorporates the lived experience of historically marginalized or underrepresented populations; how it prioritizes local targeted hires from these communities; and how it utilizes recruitment and supportive services that attract, retain, and advance historically marginalized and underrepresented populations in the infrastructure-related occupations within their service areas.

Worker-centered sector strategies incorporate career pathways strategies by aligning education and training programs with industry needs. They represent a strategic approach to building employer-driven regional talent pipelines by addressing skill gaps and creating meaningful career pathways to quality jobs for diverse workers in important regional industries. This grant program seeks to advance strategies that support participants entering and progressing in career pathways programs leading to good quality, in-demand jobs in middle to high-skilled infrastructure-related occupations.

Applicants must propose projects that describe the infrastructure-related career pathway, identify entry and exit points, describe credential attainment such as certificates, certifications, licenses, or degrees, and outline the expected employment outcomes, including wages and increased roles and responsibilities. Applicants must develop career plans that directly align with the current and planned infrastructure projects in the proposed target area and describe how the grant will help participants navigate and assess their various career pathway options, including identifying skills and competencies needed for those occupations and describing how the education and training provided will assist individuals in moving along a career pathway within infrastructure-related occupations.

The Department of Labor defines good-quality jobs as those that pay family-sustaining wages and provide wage progression, benefits, access to paid leave, opportunities for career advancement through training and education, and to the strongest extent possible, a platform for worker voice to support all workers and ensure fair pay and safe working conditions.

Applicants must embed job quality into their program design to ensure meaningful impact on and benefit to the infrastructure-related workforce. This grant program requires applicants to incorporate the department's eight principles of job quality, which include recruitment and hiring, benefits, diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, empowerment and representation, job security and working conditions, organizational culture, pay, and skills and career advancement. See Section IA of the FOA for further detail and examples of each of these principles.

I'm now going to pass this over to Greg Scheib to talk about project design issues and grant performance outcomes.

Gregory Scheib:

Thanks, Jenn. To achieve the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program goals, successful applicants will design their grant projects from both a strategic level, such as describing their planned activities for convening sector partnerships, assessing the workforce needs within a specific geographic scope, and devising a comprehensive workforce strategy; and an operational level, such as incorporating in their plans how they will implement their comprehensive workforce strategy and deploy the training activities.

Grant proposals must include the following activities: developing or scaling sector partnerships of public and private sector entities to address in-demand workforce needs in the proposed service area; incorporating worker voice into the development, implementation, and scaling of the training program

as described in Section IA2 of the FOA; developing or scaling career pathway programs that emphasize the skills, competencies and credentials needed for middle to high skill H-1B occupations that are aligned with industry and employer needs. For example, incorporating battery manufacturing training into a current advanced manufacturing training program focused on solar panel manufacturing; offering high quality training options including work-based learning models to prepare individuals to successfully move into high-quality jobs in middle to high-skilled employment in H-1B occupations upon completion of such training; advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility in the infrastructure workforce by recruiting, training and expanding the pool of workers with transferable certified skills aligned with employer needs for good jobs, particularly, recruiting and hiring women, people of color, justice-impacted individuals, individuals with disabilities and other populations with employment barriers that hinder movement into career pathways leading to middle to high-skilled H1B occupations.

Grant proposals must also include the following activities: emphasizing registered apprenticeship programs as a earn and learn pathway and an equity strategy to break down barriers to infrastructure jobs for individuals without degrees; developing and implementing training program models, the Development Track, or scaling established training program models, the Scaling Track; prioritizing occupations and career pathways within the identified infrastructure sectors that are in demand and offer above-average pay and benefits for the applicable industry and/or location and opportunities for career advancement; providing intensive wraparound supportive services to participants who need them to ensure they can participate and complete the training programs and enter good-quality employment; offering proactive and comprehensive career navigation services to participants; developing a new or leveraging an existing system for reviewing and collecting participant data and monitoring results to assess program performance; leveraging other private, federal and state funding resources including BIL resources; and institutionalizing the practice of worker-centered sector strategies by creating systemic changes including through partnerships, policies, and procedures to successfully sustain sector strategy models after the life of the grant.

Projects funded under this FOA will provide a range of training and education services that lead to middle to high-skill jobs in infrastructure-related occupations and sectors. An innovative mix of services will include assessment, coaching and counseling, supportive services, and occupational skills training that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials and/or employment. All projects must incorporate a strong worker-centered assessment component that allows for a customization of services and training to meet the needs of the program participants to get a quality job, retain their employment, or advance to a new position in the targeted sector.

Applicants should include robust, comprehensive, and customized paid work-based learning strategies such as RAPs and pre-apprentice programs that articulate to RAPs during the grant period of performance, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, paid internships, and other forms of paid work experience. Other allowable training strategies include classroom competency-based accelerated learning and technology-based training strategies.

Additionally, grantees are encouraged to leverage other sources of funding for training or supports. For example, utilizing registered apprenticeship funds, assisting participants in obtaining Pell grants for tuition, co-enrolling participants into Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs for supportive services and non-duplicative skills training, utilizing other federal funds such as those from the CARES Act or American Rescue Plan, or leveraging other federally funded employment or training programs such as those supported by the National Science Foundation and the Departments of Commerce, Education, Energy, Transportation, Veteran Affairs and others where appropriate.

A robust supportive service strategy is required as part of the proposed program design under the FOA. Supportive services are resources necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and

training activities funded through this grant program. Examples of such services include but are not limited to childcare, dependent care, transportation, mental health counseling, books, housing and needs-related payment or other services necessary to enable an individual to participate and complete education and training activities.

This means that all grant projects must document in their Project Narrative, Budget and Budget Narrative that their application includes a supportive service needs assessment of all participants and procedures for the provision of supportive services for participants who need them. Up to 15% of grant funds may be used to provide supportive services for training participants, and additional supportive services may also be provided as a leveraged cost. Grantees may fund supportive services through various means including providing the actual supportive service, for example, childcare; providing participants with a voucher for the service, for example, public transportation cards or tokens; or providing a stipend directly to the participant. ETA strongly encourages grantees to leverage partnerships with their local workforce boards and other programs for supportive services when a participant is eligible for human services, WIOA or other programs, reserving grant funds for those participants who need support but are not eligible for other assistance.

Applicants must identify the geographic scope of the proposed project. The FOA identifies three types of geographic scope: local/ regional, which means serving part or all of an economic region within one state or a contiguous economic region that may cross more than one state. This also includes economic development districts as recognized by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Agency. Statewide, which means serving an entire state or multiple non-contiguous economic regions or EDDs within one state; national, which means serving multiple economic regions or EDDs in multiple states. The service area does not need to be contiguous.

Applicants who select the Development Track must one, establish a program within one identified local/regional service area; two, explain how their proposed training model both leverages evidence-based training strategies and implements innovative and unproven strategies to support the proposed sector strategy model; and three, describe the partnership status prior to the submission of the application, in other words, new partnerships, partially established partnerships or fully established partnerships. Please note that the Development Track applicants may only recruit and serve participants in the proposed local/regional service area.

Applicants who select the Scaling Track must one, demonstrate that they have operated or are currently operating an effective sector strategy program and provide supporting documentation; two, explain how their proposed training program leverages evidence-based training models; and three, broaden the geographic scope of its implementation in one of the following ways: scale an existing local/regional model to an entire economic region or economic development district, scale an existing local/regional model to a statewide geographic scope, scale an existing statewide model to a national geographic scope, or further scale a current national model that encompasses multiple economic regions or EDDs into additional states.

Applicants who select the Scaling Track must identify the service area the program is currently operating in and the additional service areas or economic regions or economic development district the program will scale to over the grant of performance. Please note that applicants who select the Scaling Track may only recruit and serve participants within the identified service areas. In both tracks, applicants that demonstrate in their application that they are serving smaller and/or rural communities as defined in Appendix E of the FOA Key Definitions will receive two priority consideration points towards their overall application score. The bonus points are not dependent on the number of smaller rural community areas within the proposed physical service area. Applicants may use the data provided through the Health Resources and Services Administration, or HRSA, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy provided here on

the slide to assist in documenting that the proposed service area includes smaller and/or rural communities.

Now, let's turn to the performance outcome measures for this grant program. All applicants must clearly identify the performance outcomes and indicators that the project will achieve during the period of performance. Successful applicants will be required to track and report participant level data on these outcomes and indicators during the life of the grant. Applicants will need to include comprehensive numerical outcome projections for each required performance outcome measure. After awards, successful applicants will also submit annual targets for each performance outcome measure that show cumulative progress towards the target submitted. The department uses these annual targets to assess performance progress and inform technical assistance to grantees.

Applicants are required to provide targets for the following two tracking indicators; however, this data will not be treated as an outcome measure for performance purposes. One, the total number of participants served, and two, the total number of participants who begin receiving education and job training activities. Applicants are also required to provide targets for the following four performance outcome measures: one, total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities, total number of participants who completed education/job training program activities and obtained a credential, total number of unemployed or underemployed participants who completed education/job training program activities and entered unsubsidized employment, and four, total number of incumbent worker participants who completed education/job training program activities and advanced into a new position.

Applicants must provide one performance table that contains the two tracking indicators and four performance outcome measures. The table must clearly identify the four performance outcome measures and two tracking indicators listed above, and the total end of grant numerical targets that will result from the project. Appendix B provides a sample format you may use. In formulating numerical targets, applicants should factor in that their project design must address the full purpose of the FOA within the 60-month period of performance. Please see Section IIB for more information.

Applicants should also consider factors of their proposed project design, such as the track selected and the geographic scope, recruitment and outreach activities, employment status at entry of the participants targeted, training type and length of training offered, and other factors relevant to the achievement of each of the targets for performance outcome measures and tracking indicators.

To align with other DOL grants, the department also requires that H-1B grants report on the six Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Primary Indicators of Performance. The following primary indicators of performance are applicable to H-1B grants: employment rate second quarter after exit, employment rate fourth quarter after exit, median earnings second quarter after exit, credential attainment and measurable skills gain.

The information collected on these measures is used to assess performance across numerous programs administered by the department. The department understands that successful H-1B grant applicants may not have access to unemployment insurance wage records in order to track and report exit-based outcomes on employment, median earnings and the effectiveness in serving employer measures. Therefore, the department matches unemployment insurance wage records on behalf of grantees in order to capture these specific exit-based outcomes for participants that have successfully exited the H-1B program for the following indicators: employment rate second quarter after exit, employment rate fourth quarter after exit, and median earnings second quarter after exit. WIOA credential attainment and measurable skills gain measures will be calculated using participant level performance data collected during the grant period of performance by successful grant applicants.

I'm now going to turn things back over to Maya.

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

Maya Kelley:

Thanks, Greg. In the next few slides, we will cover award information, eligibility, partnerships, opportunities for Tribal communities and infrastructure resources.

Here's some basic information about the Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Awards. The Department of Labor anticipates awarding approximately 80 million in DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program grants in round one. Pending availability of funds, the department intends to make approximately 200 million available over the multiple competitive rounds of funding for this grant program. The department intends to commit up to 50% of the total available funding to projects that develop local/regional worker-centered sector strategy programs, the Development Track, and the department intends to commit the remaining funds for projects focused on scaling effective worker-centered sector strategy programs, the Scaling Track. We expect to fund 15 to 25 grants. The same FOA will be used for each round. The second round will open on March 15, 2024 and close on June 14, 2024.

Applications for each round should be prepared and submitted following the requirements and processes outlined in this FOA. All awards made under the current announcement are subject to the availability of funds. Successful applicants who are awarded funding as a lead in the first round are not eligible to apply for the second round of funding as a lead applicant. However, they may be a required or optional partner in applications for the second round. Unsuccessful round one applicants may apply for round two as a lead applicant.

Now let's turn to who's eligible to be a lead applicant. For the purposes of this FOA, the following entities are eligible to apply as a lead applicant: national or community-based nonprofit organizations targeting advanced manufacturing, information technology and/or professional, scientific, and technical services occupations related to renewable energy, transportation and/or broadband infrastructure sectors including nonprofit, trade, industry or employer professional associations and advocacy groups representing the identified industries and sectors; labor unions, labor-management organizations and worker organizations that represent workers in advanced manufacturing, IT and/or professional, scientific, and technical services occupations; education and training providers; public or private nonprofit education and training providers.

These are public or private nonprofit education and training providers, which includes institutions of higher education as defined in Section 101A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, historically Black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges and universities, minority serving institutions, which include predominantly Black institutions, Hispanic serving institutions, Native American non-Tribal institutions, Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiians serving institutions, an Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander serving institutions. This also includes community and technical colleges and systems, nonprofit and community-based organizations that offer job training including providing training programs that are included on the state's eligible training provider list under WIOA.

We also have workforce development entities involved in administering the public workforce system established under WIOA, including state and local workforce development boards and Indian and Native American program entities eligible for funding under WIOA Section 166; economic development agencies, including the district organization of an EDA-designated economic development district; Native American Tribal governments federally recognized; state, county and local governments including cities and townships and state workforce agencies; or state government agencies that receive funds pursuant to the Wagner-Peyser Act to administer the state's public labor exchange activities; or the lead state agency responsible for the administration of WIOA Title I activities.

It is the department's expectation that the lead applicant has the organizational capacity to carry out the programmatic functions of the grant, and the department strongly discourages applications that result

DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023

in pass-through grants. This is where the lead applicant sub-awards the majority of grant funds and operational activities to one or several sub-recipients.

This program will award grants to a DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program partnership, a public and private sector entity. Eligible lead applicants must establish a partnership that includes the following entities; employer partners, where the Development Track, a representative group of no less than two employer partners who are committed to hiring opportunities for participants trained through the grant. An applicant may meet this employer partnership requirement by partnering with an industry trade association that represents at least two employers in the service area who are committed to providing hiring opportunities for participants trained through the grant.

For the Scaling Track, a representative group of no less than four employer partners who are committed to providing hiring opportunities for participants trained through the grant who support the employment needs of the skilled workforce being created in those service areas. An applicant may meet this employer partnership requirement by partnering with one or more industry trade associations that represent multiple partners who are committed to hiring opportunities for participants trained through the grant and operate in the identified service areas.

Applicants are required to have one or more public or private nonprofit education and training providers. Applicants are also required to have a workforce development entity. Additionally, required partners include worker organizations, labor-management organizations or labor unions. Finally, applicants proposing registered apprenticeship programs in states with federally recognized state apprenticeship agencies must include the state apprenticeship agency as a required grant partner. While an eligible lead applicant may represent one of the required partners, it is expected that applicants demonstrate quality representation from each type of required partner. Therefore, an entity cannot serve as more than one type of required partner in the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program for the purpose of meeting FOA requirements.

We strongly encourage applicants to collaborate with other partners that can support and advance the work of proposed training programs. These include nonprofit organizations specializing in advanced manufacturing, IT and/or professional, scientific, and technical services occupations that support renewable energy, transportation and/or broadband; state agencies with the responsibility for transportation, infrastructure, the environment and energy; foundations and philanthropic organizations, agencies administering other federal funding such as the Departments of Education, Commerce, Energy and Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Science Foundation; economic development agencies; community-based organizations that represent and serve marginalized and underrepresented populations such as workers with disabilities, justice-impacted individuals and people of color; and finally, organizations that aid newly-arriving immigrant, refugee, asylee and special immigrant visa populations.

Now, I'd like to take a moment to highlight and summarize some of the opportunities for Tribal entities in this FOA. As mentioned, the target populations for both training tracks include Tribal communities. The Development Track will target populations in smaller and/or rural communities as well as historically marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved populations. The Scaling Track will ensure that expansion efforts specifically target those populations that have been historically marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved within the identified sectors and communities. Native American Tribal governments that are federally recognized are eligible lead applicants, and in terms of required partners, Tribal colleges and universities meet the criteria for the education and training provider partner. Native American program entities eligible for funding under WIOA Section 166 meet the criteria for the workforce development entity partner.

DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023

The worker-centered approach ensures that workforce development and employment opportunities are accessible to and shaped by communities of color and low-paid workers by considering their needs and actively working to address the barriers to good jobs while ensuring that workers have agency and voice and are treated with dignity and respect.

Among the individuals eligible to receive training, those of particular interest include historically marginalized and underrepresented populations, including women, who are underrepresented in many key infrastructure occupations, people of color, justice-impacted individuals, individuals with disabilities and others. Finally, in both tracks applicants that demonstrate in their application that they are serving smaller and/or rural communities will receive two priority consideration points. Smaller rural communities include any federal recognized Indian tribe.

According to the White House's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Tribal Playbook, in response to the chronically underfunded infrastructure in Tribal communities, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will deploy record investments to provide affordable high speed internet, safer roads and bridges, modern waste water and sanitation systems, clean drinking water, reliable and affordable electricity, and good-paying jobs in every Tribal community. The law provides more than 13 billion in funding to directly support Tribal communities and make tribes eligible to apply for and request billions in discretionary formula and other funding.

All of these focused efforts on Tribal communities will require complementary workforce training to ensure Tribal communities have the skilled workforce necessary to support the initial deployment of these investments, as well as creating a career pathway pipeline to support the ongoing commitments to develop and maintain the built infrastructure that will be required in the next several decades.

This is just a quick overview of some of the key H-1B occupations that align with BIL projects, which are described in Appendix A of the FOA. They are mapped to some of the large infrastructure projects to demonstrate where there is alignment between the specific funding buckets and the occupations that may be trained for through this grant opportunities funding. These occupations are not an exhaustive list of what is allowable, but represent some of the most common H-1B visa occupations for which employers request foreign labor.

Applicants may choose to target a specific H-1B occupation outside of advanced manufacturing, IT and professional, scientific, and technical occupations for which a significant number of H-1B visas has been certified, even if that occupation is not identified in Appendix A. If this occupation is not within the H-1B industries identified in Appendix A, the application must provide data showing that the proposed occupation is one for which a significant number of H-1B visas have been certified and demonstrate that this occupation is related to renewable energy, transportation and/or broadband. Applicants must use verifiable data to make this demonstration. Such as data provided by DOL's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center.

Again, the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant is focused on the infrastructure sectors most commonly used with H-1B visas. There are strong overlap between these industries and the skilled workforce that is needed to support the infrastructure investments. In particular, the focus on improving Tribal broadband connectivity will require a huge investment in training and upskilling current and future workers to support this very important focus.

The broadest category of occupations for training under the DOL infrastructure FOA is the professional, scientific and technical services sector. There is some overlap between this and the information technology sector, as IT is used in every industry. But this is also where some of the construction-related occupations reside. H-1B visas are focused on middle to high-skilled occupations; those that require some training beyond a high school diploma and may even require a college degree. So the general construction laborer is not the focus of these training funds, but construction-related occupations such

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

as engineers, construction managers, and other specialized occupations do align with the training allowed with these funds. You'll see some of these highlighted here. All of this information is also contained in Appendix A of the FOA.

Now let's turn to some helpful infrastructure resources. The Training Employment Notice 08-22 entitled Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers: Framework for Preparing An Infrastructure Workforce is a publication from DOL's Employment and Training Administration that promotes a framework for all workforce stakeholders, including infrastructure project leads to engage the public workforce system in implementing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law with strong workforce commitments and proven strategies that provide high quality education, training, and employment opportunities for all workers. Equity and job quality are at the core of the infrastructure TEN framework just as they are for the infrastructure FOA. These elements are essential to the workforce system's ability to attract and retain the necessary diverse skilled workforce.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Guidebook is a roadmap to funding available under the law, as well as an explanatory document that shows in as much detail as is currently available, program by program information.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Tribal Playbook is a roadmap for delivering opportunity and investments in Indian country. The White House: Advancing Equitable Workforce Development for Infrastructure Jobs is a guide that provides an overview of the federal funding resources to support equitable workforce development, particularly for funding included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support workforce development either through dedicated resources or flexibly through a broader funding stream and key federal funding sources outside of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support workforce development.

The Good Jobs Initiative focuses on providing workers with easily accessible information about their rights, including the right to form a union and bargain collectively, engaging employer stakeholders as partners to improve job quality and workforce pathways to good jobs, supporting partnerships across federal agencies, and providing technical assistance on grants, contracts, and other investments intended to improve job quality.

Finally, the Training and Employment Notice 0-22 Reference and Resource List includes a comprehensive list of resources, fact sheets, technical assistance materials, and search tools to help practitioners develop and implement effective and evidence-based infrastructure workforce projects. The list is sorted by topics including partnership, engaging underserved communities, asset mapping, procurements, funding, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship, work-based learning and more.

With that, now I'll turn things over to Ariam to cover application submission requirements. Ariam.

Ariam Ferro:

Thank you, Maya. In the next few slides, I'll go over the application submission requirements. Proposals submitted in response to this Funding Opportunity Announcement must consist of four separate and distinct parts: one, the standard form or SF-424, which is the Application for Federal Assistance; two, the Project Budget which consists of the SF-424A and the Budget Narrative; three, the Project Narrative; and four, attachments to the Project Narrative. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and subparts of the application. Applicants must include the items listed here. There is no exception to this requirement.

The SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. All applicants for federal grant and funding opportunities must have a unique entity identifier, or UEI, and must supply or UEI number on the SF-424. Applicants must also register with the System for Award Management, or SAM, before submitting an application.

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

Please note, a recipient must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which an application is under consideration or when it has an active federal award.

The project budget, which consists of the SF-424A Budget Information Form and the Budget Narrative. In preparing the Budget Information Form, you must provide a concise and narrative explanation to support the budget request. The Budget Narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A. The budget and budget justification do not count against the page limit requirements for the Project Narrative.

Next is the Project Narrative. Applicants will likely spend the majority of their time preparing the Project Narrative. This is where applicants demonstrate their capability to implement the grant project in accordance with the provisions of this announcement. Applicants should provide a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project. It must be succinct, self-explanatory, and well-organized so that reviewers can understand the proposed project. The guidelines for preparing the Project Narrative are found in Section IV.B.3, and it'll be evaluated using the criteria identified in Section V.A. The project narrative is limited to 25 double-spaced single-sided, 8-1/2 x 11 inch pages using Times New Roman 12-point text font and one-inch margins. You must number the pages of the project narrative beginning with page number one.

Please note, we will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process. All the items I covered here are explained in more detail in the FOA, and all must be addressed in the application or your application will be deemed non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

I'll now turn it over to Todd to go over the evaluation criteria used for assessing a technical merit of grant applications and the application submission requirements.

Todd Long:

Thanks Ariam. In addition to the Project Narrative described by Ariam, applicants must also submit attachments. All attachments must be clearly labeled as attachments. We will only exclude those attachments listed in Section IV.B.4 from the page limit. Please note that while these attachments are requested and their omission will not cause us to disqualify the application, omission could impact scoring unless otherwise noted. Please read the entire FOA. You must not include additional materials such as resumes or general letters of support. These will not be considered. You must submit your application as one package. Documents received separately will be tracked separately and will not be attached to the application for review.

The checklist shown here should be used as a guide when preparing your application package. Please note that this checklist is only an aid for applicants and should not be included in the application package. We do urge you to use this checklist to ensure your application has met all required screening criteria. If your application does not meet all of the screening criteria, your application will be considered non-responsive, and it will not move forward through the merit review process.

We have instituted procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications to provide for an objective review of the applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against what your application will be judged. The evaluation criteria is based on the information required as described in Sections IV.B.2, the Project Budget and 4.B.3, the Project Narrative. Reviewers will award points based on the evaluation criteria as shown in this chart. You must ensure you are responding to the appropriate criteria in your application. Please see the Funding Opportunity Announcement for the full description of each criterion.

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

This slide, which can be found on Section V.A of the Funding Opportunity Announcement shows the standards for evaluating the applicant's response to each requirement. Applicants must fully and convincingly respond to each rating factor. In order to receive the maximum points for each rating factor, applicants must provide a response to the requirement that fully describes the proposed program design and demonstrates the quality of approach rather than simply restating a commitment to perform prescribed activities. In other words, applicants must describe why their proposal is the best strategy and how they will implement it rather than that the strategy contains elements that conform to the requirements of this FOA. For all criteria, full points always conform to the thoroughly meets and zero points always conform to the fails to meet rating. Scores for each criterion will be dependent on the rating factors within that criterion.

The Project Narrative provides a detailed explanation of the information an application must include, for example, the statement of need, program design for the whole period of performance with feasible and realistic dates, expected outcomes and outputs. Reviewers will rate each rating factor based on how fully and convincingly the applicant responds. For each rating factor under each criterion, panelists will determine whether the applicant thoroughly meets, partially meets or fails to meet the rating factor unless otherwise noted in Section IV.B.3 based on those definitions.

Applications must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on the closing date, which is July 7, 2023 for this FOA. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to minimize the risk of late receipt. We will not review applications received after this 11:59 PM Eastern Time deadline, and there are no exceptions. You submit applications online via www.grants.gov. Please reference FOA-ETA-23-31 in your application submission. The FOA details on how to register through grants.gov and how to submit your application.

The application process can be complicated and time-consuming. Applicants are strongly advised to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for the time to resolve technical problems. Read through the registration process carefully before registering. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure a timely submission. These steps may take as long as four weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for timely electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application.

Again, all applicants should email all technical questions to IN_FOA-ETA-23-31@dol.gov and reference the FOA. If applicants are experiencing difficulties with submissions, applicants need to call the grants.gov support center and also obtain a ticket number with grants.gov support.

The merit review and selection process and the risk review process are conducted after the closing date for the FOA. A technical review panel will carefully evaluate applications against the selection criteria. These criteria are based on the policy goals, priorities, and emphases set forth in this FOA. Up to 102 points may be awarded to an applicant depending on the quality of the responses to the required affirmation as described in the FOA.

Should a grant be awarded without discussion, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF-424 including electronic signature via e-authentication on grants.gov, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant. Prior to making an award, ETA will review information available through various sources, including its own records and any OMB-designated repository of government-wide eligibility qualification, or financial integrity information, such as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System or FAPIIS and Do Not Pay. Additionally, ETA will comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 180 codified at 2 CFR Part 2998, non-procurement, debarment and suspension. Section V.B of the FOA details more information about the review and selection process. I will now turn this back over to Maya for our closing remarks. Maya.

**DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program
04/2023**

Maya Kelley:

Thank you Ariam, Todd, Greg and Jenn. This concludes our Prospective Applicant Webcast. Please read the frequently asked questions or FAQs at the website link provided here. The link also includes the Funding Opportunity Announcement. Please remember to check the site frequently for any newly-posted FAQs. After reading the FAQs if you have additional questions on the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program Funding Opportunity Announcement, you may contact Ariam Ferro, who is the Grants Management Specialist listed as the contact in the Funding Opportunity Announcement. Thank you for joining us today.