

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
MAKE IT IN AMERICA CHALLENGE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Names:** Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), bureaus of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC); Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL); and Delta Regional Authority (DRA).
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** *The Make it in America Challenge*
- **Announcement Type:** Initial announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) dated March 18, 2013.
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** miia2013
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:** 11.307, Economic Adjustment Assistance; 11.611, Manufacturing Extension Partnership; 17.268, H-1B Job Training Grants; and 10.773, Delta Regional Authority Rural Business Opportunity Grant
- **Dates:** The deadline for receipt of applications is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on **May 31, 2013**. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applications will only be accepted electronically through grants.gov (Grants.gov). Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in Section V. of this FFO.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** This FFO announces the availability of funding for the Make it in America Challenge. The Make it in America Challenge will provide up to \$40 million in competitive grant funding through the DOC’s EDA and NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP), DOL’s ETA, and the DRA. This collaboration allows applicants to submit one application to leverage complementary Federal funding sources to support the development and implementation of a regionally driven economic development strategy that accelerates job creation by encouraging re-shoring¹ of productive activity by U.S. firms, fostering increased Foreign Direct Investment,² encouraging U.S. companies to keep or expand their businesses—and jobs—in the United States, and training local workers to meet the needs of those businesses.

¹ Also sometimes referred to as “on-shoring,” “insourcing,” or the “relocation” of jobs back to the United States.

² FDI is direct investment of production into a country by a company located in another country, either by buying a company in the target country or by expanding operations of an existing business in the target country. The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis defines foreign direct investment in the United States as the ownership by a foreign investor director of 10 percent or more of a U.S. business. The direct investor is known as the foreign parent, and the foreign-owned U.S. business is known as the U.S. affiliate.

Federal support for the Make it in America Challenge is expected to be used to fund up to 15 projects, each with a project period of up to 3 years. If, however, a project includes EDA-funded construction, that component of the project may have a project period of up to five years. The funding level of each participating Federal Agency will vary, subject to the availability of their respective appropriations. *See* Section III, Award Information, in the Full Announcement Text of this FFO.

- **Informational Webinar:** An informational webinar for the Make it in America Challenge is available for viewing at http://manufacturing.gov/make_it_in_america.html.
- **Designated Contact:** General questions regarding the Make it in America Challenge should be emailed to makeitinamerica@eda.gov. Agency-specific questions should be directed to the applicable Agency point of contact for EDA, NIST, DOL, or DRA. *See* Appendix D to this FFO for applicable Agency contact information.

THE MAKE IT IN AMERICA CHALLENGE

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
I. Program Overview and Objectives	4
A. What are the objectives of the Make it in America Challenge?	4
B. What are the benefits of the Make it in America Challenge?	5
II. Participating Federal Agencies and Programs	6
A. Funding Agencies	6
B. Additional Regional Funding.....	7
C. Other Non-Funding Federal Support	7
III. Award Information	8
A. How much funding is available from the Funding Agencies?.....	8
B. What are the elements of a multi-agency project?.....	10
C. What could an integrated project look like?	11
IV. Agency Specific Information	12
A. EDA	12
B. NIST MEP	17
C. ETA.....	19
V. Application and Submission Information	28
A. How do I obtain an application package?	28
B. Deadline for Receipt of Applications	28
C. Required Application Forms and Content	29
D. Application Submission Requirements.....	36
VI. Application Review Information	40
A. Project Narrative Requirements and Evaluation Criteria.....	40
B. Review Process	52
C. Transparency.....	54
VII. Award Administration Information	54
A. Award Notification	54
B. Unsuccessful Competition	55
C. National and Agency Specific Policies.....	55
D. Project Outcomes Evaluation and Data Collection.....	61
E. Reporting Requirements	61
VIII. Additional Information and Requirements	63
A. No Obligation for Future Funding	63
B. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure	64
C. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions	64
D. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN), Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and Central Contractor Registration (CCR).....	64
E. C.F.R. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	66
Appendix A. Integrated Work Plan – Suggested Template	67
Appendix B. DRA Eligibility and Submission Guidelines	69
A. Overview.....	69

A. What are DRA’s eligibility requirements?	69
B. What are the DRA permitted activities?	69
C. What is the cost sharing or matching share requirement for DRA funding?	70
D. DRA Scope of Work	70
E. DRA Performance Metrics	70
F. DRA Application Submission Guidelines	70
G. DRA Forms	71
H. DRA Award Notification	71
I. DRA Reporting Requirements	71
Appendix C. H-1B Visa Information	72
Appendix D. Contact Information	74
A. EDA Contact Information	74
B. NIST Contact Information	75
D. ETA Contact Information	75
E. DRA Contact Information	75

I. Program Overview and Objectives

A. What are the objectives of the Make it in America Challenge?

The United States faces great competition to retain and attract industries of the future and the jobs they will create. The Obama Administration’s top priority is strengthening the economy and creating American jobs. To lay a foundation for an economy built to last, the Administration believes it is important to provide support for:

- Foreign businesses to bring new production into the United States;
- U.S. companies to return previously off-shored operations to the United States; and
- All companies doing business in the U.S. to keep and expand their production here.

The United States offers significant competitive advantages – from a strong business climate, to a highly-skilled and productive workforce – that make it a profitable place for businesses to invest. Investing in businesses and production here can help put more Americans back to work. Some of the ways in which the Administration has already helped American workers and businesses thrive include enhancing the general business climate, securing access to markets for U.S. exports, providing financial and technical support for companies to grow and expand, providing funding to improve education and training opportunities to develop a skilled workforce, and enforcing global trade rules to ensure that American businesses and workers are competing on a level playing field.

Recognizing that the U.S. Government has complementary resources available to support the development of vibrant regional economies, the Administration created the Taskforce for the

Advancement of Regional Innovation Clusters (TARIC)³ to coordinate a Federal partnership across multiple agencies to leverage resources that support regional economic growth and related cluster industries. To advance these efforts and ensure that the U.S. will continue to out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the world, the Department of Commerce (DOC), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) are partnering on the Make it in America Challenge.

This new initiative will assist American communities with critical infrastructure, strategic planning, capacity building, technical assistance, and workforce development resources to help them become more attractive locations for business investment. The Make it in America Challenge will also help workers develop the skills they need to do the jobs of a 21st century global economy. By encouraging investment in high-growth⁴ industries, spurring small business development, and encouraging worker training and job creation, this Challenge is designed to help support businesses that are committed to making it in America.

B. What are the benefits of the Make it in America Challenge?

The Make it in America Challenge coordinates complementary Federal investments, providing applicants the opportunity to submit one Project Narrative to compete for multiple funding sources to support the development and implementation of regionally-driven economic development strategies that will accelerate job creation by encouraging re-shoring⁵ of productive activity by U.S. firms, fostering increased foreign direct investment (FDI),⁶ encouraging companies who are considering leaving the U.S. to keep or expand their businesses—and jobs—here at home, and training local workers to meet the needs of those businesses. Through these coordinated investments, the Make it in America Challenge will:

- Strengthen and expand existing strategies and activities and develop new ones that will drive company growth and accelerate high-quality job creation;
- Develop a skilled and diverse workforce through targeted training and employment activities that move workers up and along a career pathway and support the needs of employers; and
- Help ensure companies seeking to invest and grow in the U.S. have access to qualified suppliers with the needed capabilities, capacity and skills.

³ TARIC is a Federal inter-agency body designed to support best practices, engage in joint activities, and share information to develop strong regional economies through clusters.

⁴ Grants under this Solicitation will focus on high-growth industries and occupations as defined in the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA), as amended (29 U.S.C. § 2916a) that: (1) are projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy; (2) are being transformed by technology and innovation requiring new skill sets for workers; (3) are new and emerging businesses that are projected to grow; or (4) have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations.

⁵ Also sometimes referred to as “on-shoring,” “insourcing,” or the “relocation” of jobs back to the United States.

⁶ FDI is direct investment of production into a country by a company located in another country, either by buying a company in the target country or by expanding operations of an existing business in the target country. The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis defines foreign direct investment in the United States as the ownership by a foreign investor of 10 percent or more of the voting securities of a U.S. business. The direct investor is known as the foreign parent, and the foreign-owned U.S. business is known as the U.S. affiliate.

The Make it in America Challenge will build upon the Administration's bottom-up approach to strengthening the economy by partnering with state, regional and local co-investors. Successful projects will leverage funding from the Funding Agencies (as defined in section II.A.) to include:

- Construction projects that revitalize, expand and upgrade publicly owned physical infrastructures or publicly owned equipment;
- Technical assistance in developing new strategies and tools or in strengthening and expanding those already in existence;
- Assessments of small-to-medium sized enterprise (SME) capabilities to provide a viable supply chain, and technical assistance to ensure that SMEs have needed certifications, processes, and technologies to meet the needs of businesses;
- Technical assistance to companies looking to invest in innovative technologies, new products or services, or enhanced processes that will grow sales and jobs; and
- Targeted training and employment activities that support the local workforce needs of employers, move new and current workers up and along a career pathway, and strengthen America's highly-skilled and diverse workforce.

II. Participating Federal Agencies and Programs

The participating agencies in the Make it in America Challenge intend to offer a combination of up to \$40 million in funding and technical assistance for up to 15 projects across the United States, as outlined below.

A. Funding Agencies

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), both operating units of DOC; and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), an operating unit of DOL (each a Funding Agency, and collectively, the Funding Agencies) are offering funding, subject to the availability of appropriations, for the Make it in America Challenge through separate funding sources.

- **EDA** funds will support construction and non-construction projects through the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program under Section 209 of the *Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965*, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 3149) (PWEDA). EDA's regulations at 13 C.F.R. parts 300 and 302 and 13 C.F.R. part 307, subpart A, set forth the general and specific regulatory requirements applicable to the EAA program. EDA's regulations are accessible at www.eda.gov/pdf/EDAs_regs-13_CFR_Chapter_III.pdf.
- **NIST** funds will be made available through the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program. The statutory authority for NIST's Hollings MEP Program is 15 U.S.C. § 278k(f).
- **ETA** funds will be made available through the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant funds. This program is authorized under Section 414(c) of the *American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998*, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 2916a).

B. Additional Regional Funding

The DRA is making up to \$900,000 available through its allocation of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP) funding, specifically within the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program found in (7 C.F.R. 4284.638(a)(2)(iii)), for award(s) to be made within the DRA's congressionally designated area of 252 counties or parishes within the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and/or Tennessee. DRA expects to approve up to three separate awards of up to \$300,000 each within the DRA Region for a period of up to 2 years; DRA will only approve awards for projects that also leverage funds from the other Funding Agencies through this FFO.

DRA funds may be used to assist in the economic development of rural areas in its region by providing technical assistance for business development and economic development planning. Grant funds may be used for, but are not limited to, the following purposes: 1) Identify and analyze business opportunities that will use local rural materials or human resources. This includes opportunities in export markets, as well as feasibility and business plan studies; 2) Identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; 3) Establish business support centers and otherwise assist in the creation of new rural businesses; 4) Conduct local community or multi-county economic development planning; 5) Establish centers for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to rural businesses in the utilization of interactive communications technologies to develop international trade opportunities and markets; 6) Conduct leadership development training of existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; or 7) Pay reasonable fees and charges for professional services necessary to conduct the technical assistance, training, or planning functions.

Guidelines specifically pertaining to accessing DRA funding for projects within the DRA Region, including evaluation criteria, can be found in Appendix B.

C. Other Non-Funding Federal Support

1. SelectUSA

DOC's SelectUSA will provide additional Federal support to recipients of Make it in America Challenge grants. SelectUSA is the Federal-wide initiative to promote and facilitate business investment in the United States. SelectUSA partners with U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs) to support their efforts to attract, bring back, retain and expand business investment, and provides information to companies to help them build their business in the United States. SelectUSA is a part of the International Trade Administration's U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service within DOC. SelectUSA exercises complete geographic neutrality and represents the entire United States. SelectUSA can work directly with Make it in America grantees and potential investors to offer:

- **Business Solutions:** SelectUSA works directly with firms to help identify Federal programs and services available to businesses operating in the United States, provide information about the competitive and regulatory landscape of the United States, and establish connections with economic development organizations.

- **Ombudsman Assistance:** SelectUSA works with firms or EDOs on a case-by-case basis to address issues or questions involving Federal regulations, programs, or activities related to existing, pending, and potential investments. Working with SelectUSA, investors can develop a better understanding of how to navigate the U.S. regulatory environment.
- **Economic Development Organization Counseling:** As subject-matter experts, SelectUSA staff can help EDOs successfully recruit and retain investment. For example, SelectUSA can share best practices with EDOs on how to improve their own FDI attraction efforts and create and implement an investment strategy.
- **Advocacy for U.S. Cities, States and Regions:** SelectUSA helps level the playing field for U.S. EDOs competing with foreign locations for new foreign direct investment. With SelectUSA, EDOs now have an advocate at the national level to help attract, retain, and grow investment in the United States.
- **Investment Events and Facilitated Missions:** SelectUSA leverages the Foreign Commercial Service network across 72 countries to provide EDOs with unique international promotion opportunities and access to potential investors.

Visit www.selectUSA.gov for more information.

2. **Appalachian Regional Commission**

The ARC will provide additional support to Make it in America Challenge grant recipients whose projects serve Appalachian counties. Make it in America Challenge grantees can receive post-award technical assistance to achieve success in activities that:

- Improve access to capital and credit for new and growing businesses;
- Increase the availability of high speed Internet connectivity for business startup and development;
- Help adult workers acquire new certifications and credentials required for access to competitive new jobs in growth industries; and
- Enable Appalachian businesses to grow by increasing their access to overseas markets.

Visit the ARC website at www.arc.gov or email insourcing@arc.gov for more information.

III. **Award Information**

A. **How much funding is available from the Funding Agencies?**

This coordinated, multi-agency initiative offers applicants the opportunity to submit one Project Narrative to multiple funding sources to support the development and implementation of a regionally driven economic development strategy that will accelerate job creation by encouraging re-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms, fostering increased FDI investment, encouraging U.S. companies to keep or expand their businesses—and jobs—here at home, and training local workers to meet the needs of those businesses. All awards and the funding amounts referenced in this FFO are subject to the availability of funds, and the Funding Agencies will not be held responsible, individually or collectively, for application preparation or other pre-

award costs. Awards will be made in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, depending on the level of involvement anticipated on the part of the Federal Agency making the award. Publication of this FFO does not obligate the Funding Agencies to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement, and the Funding Agencies reserve the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to this FFO.

Each Funding Agency expects to make separate awards to the same 15 projects that may be selected under this competition.⁷ Preference will be given to applicants that have not received prior awards under the “Jobs Accelerator” funding opportunities. Applicants must plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance indicated on their grant award, which will include necessary start-up and implementation activities. Applicants are required to ensure full transparency and accountability for all expenditures. Specific details about each Funding Agency’s available funding and period of performance are outlined below:

- **EDA** is making up to \$13 million available to help distressed regions build on existing assets and create a competitive environment for foreign-owned and domestic firms to establish and grow their U.S. operations, and create jobs. Funding is allocated evenly amongst EDA’s six Regional Offices (*see* Appendix D for a list of Regional Offices and the states they cover). EDA expects to make up to 15 awards (approximately 2-3 per Region).

For non-construction/technical assistance projects individual grant awards are expected to range from \$100,000 to \$500,000 (depending on the proposed scope of work) over an expected project period of three years.

For construction-related projects individual grant awards are expected to average approximately \$2 million over an expected project period of five years. Funding may be higher or lower depending on the proposed scope of work; award amounts are expected to be consistent with other awards for similar projects funded under the EAA program. EDA may consider extending the project period depending upon the availability of funds, satisfactory performance, and acceptable progress in achieving milestones and program objectives set forth in the scope of work, as determined by EDA and expressed in written notice. EDA expects that all projects will proceed efficiently, and encourages investments with a demonstrated capacity to be implemented expeditiously in order to accelerate the potential positive economic impact as a result of this investment.

- **NIST** is making up to \$6 million available through the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). MEP expects to issue new cooperative agreements of up to \$125,000 per year over three years to up to 15 MEP Centers as part of selected Make it in America Challenge projects, subject to availability of funds and satisfactory performance.
- **ETA** is making up to \$20 million available in H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant funds for training and training-related employment activities to develop a skilled workforce for the target industry. Targeted training and employment activities must support the development of a highly skilled and diverse American

⁷ Information regarding the funding provided by the Delta Regional Authority can be found in Appendix B.

workforce that moves new and current workers up and along career pathways in high growth industries or occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. All projects must lead to employment for program participants and incorporate activities that: 1) address skills and competencies demanded by employers and businesses that are re-locating or expanding in the area; 2) provide education and training for jobs that are currently available or will be upon grant announcement; and, 3) result in an industry-recognized credential as specified by employers. ETA expects to make up to 15 awards as part of selected Make it in America Challenge projects, with individual grant awards of approximately \$1.3 million. The project period for H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant funds provided by DOL will be up to 3 years from the date of execution of the award documents. Grantees are encouraged to begin providing skills training to participants within the first year.

B. What are the elements of a multi-agency project?

All applications must propose one integrated project with three scopes of work (SOW) that are consistent with the Evaluation Criteria discussed in Section VI.A. of this FFO. Applicants must propose projects that include activities and outcomes for each of the following general scopes of work:

- Strengthening Regional Assets (see Section VI.A.1.a) – funded by EDA;
- Connecting Regional Supply Chains and Assisting SMEs (see Section VI.A.1.b) – funded by NIST MEP;⁸ and,
- Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce to Meet Employer Demand – funded by ETA (see Section VI.A.1.c)

Applicants cannot use multiple funding sources available under this FFO to fund the same activities. Applicants should clearly demonstrate that there will be no duplication of efforts and costs across funding sources. Requested award amounts will be reduced by the amount that the Funding Agencies deem duplicative.

An application package must be submitted by an organization or a team composed of organizations (referred to as the Applicant Team) that meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section IV. of this FFO for **each** of the funding agencies. An individual organization or an Applicant Team must address each of the three scopes of work. For example, one organization that meets all the agencies' eligibility requirements could submit an application package that proposes activities for all funding sources. Alternatively, an Applicant Team consisting of two or more organizations could submit an application package that proposes activities with each organization responsible for a portion of the scope of work for one or more of the three Funding Agencies.

Each project will consist of one award from each of the Funding Agencies. However, where access to an MEP Center is not reasonably available, only EDA and ETA will make awards to

⁸ While all applicants must identify ways that they will assist SMEs, NIST MEP will only fund existing MEP Centers that are part of the applicant team.

that project. For projects where an MEP Center is not reasonably available,⁹ the applicant or Applicant Team will still be expected to describe how the applicant or a member of the Applicant Team will engage appropriate SMEs and partners to address the outreach, service delivery, and technology commercialization needs of SMEs.

The following table indicates the section or appendix in this FFO where applicants can find a complete description of activities that may be supported by each of the Funding Agencies.

Agency	Description of supported activities
EDA	Section IV.A.
NIST	Section IV.B.
ETA	Section IV.C.
DRA ¹⁰	Appendix B.

C. What could an integrated project look like?

The following is a hypothetical example of how organizations could partner to propose one integrated project concept with distinct scopes of work that the Funding Agencies could fund.

A region has established an economic development strategy team – comprised of economic development organizations, an MEP Center, Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and American Job Centers, a university or community college, and related intermediary organizations – to lead the region’s economic development planning efforts. On a regular basis, the team analyzes economic development data and trends to identify industries that hold a comparative advantage for the region or where investment has been increasing. As part of this effort, the team prepared an asset map and developed a comprehensive regional strategy for growing jobs in key industries. The data reveal that the region is continuing to experience growth in the manufacturing sector. This validates the team’s thinking because they have successfully encouraged several manufacturers to expand operations locally, plus they attracted three manufacturers in the last year.

The region’s strategy team meets to discuss options presented by this FFO. The team reviews their existing asset map and comprehensive regional strategy to assess strengths and weaknesses. The team develops a series of specific tasks in the areas of economic development, supply chain development, and workforce training that best positions the region to attract new investments and expand more manufacturing operations. The team strategizes to demonstrate how work in all three of these areas together will grow manufacturing.

⁹ “Not reasonably available” means that there is no MEP Center that can provide the desired services in the targeted region. Applications that do not include an MEP Center as a Team Member must explain why services are not “reasonably available” from an MEP.

¹⁰ Funding is available only for the Delta Region. Please see Appendix B for more information.

Based on the results of their planning efforts, the leadership team decides to develop a proposal for funding to support the development and execution of an integrated targeted manufacturing strategy for their region. The team has carefully considered the sequence of activities for each of the three project components. While the MEP Center and the WIB are ramping up the supply chain and workforce development aspects, the infrastructure project will be completed in time and ready for the newly trained workers. The team outlines three innovative and complementary scopes of work:

The EDA applicant, the eligible economic development organization, decides to focus on updating the existing capacity of publicly-owned infrastructure, which is necessary to facilitate the expansion of production capacity of businesses at the region's industrial park. Tenants specifically cited lack of water connectivity as a barrier to growth. The EDO outlines a plan to upgrade these public assets, which will benefit the entire manufacturing supply chain.

The NIST applicant, the region's MEP Center, decides on two ways to work with current or prospective suppliers for the manufacturer in the targeted industry: 1) Scouting suppliers in the region to provide market intelligence, industry trends, and data about the region's supply chain capabilities and capacity and suppliers' ability to satisfy requirements of potential new customers/companies that are considering investing in the region; and 2) Providing technical assistance to SMEs, ensuring that the region's suppliers can meet the needs of companies interested in investment and expansion.

The WIB, **ETA's applicant**, is already working in close partnership with the MEP Center to identify manufacturers' workforce requirements. These requirements will be communicated to the local community college to ensure that new entrants and incumbent employees' skills are aligned to the skills demanded by the employer and are up to current industry standards. Skilled workers ensure that the pipeline of qualified job applicants will support business growth in the region, particularly for occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to employ foreign workers. *See Appendix C for more information.*

IV. Agency Specific Information

A. EDA

1. EDA Overview

EDA's mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. In implementing this mission, EDA advances economic growth by providing strategic, catalytic, and merit-based investments and technical assistance to distressed communities and regions experiencing high unemployment and low-per-capita income to develop and implement strategies that foster an environment conducive to economic growth and job creation.

2. Who is eligible to apply for EDA funding under this announcement?

a) Eligible Applicants

Pursuant to PWEDA, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance under this FFO include a(n):

1. District Organization;
2. Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
3. State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions;
4. Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or
5. Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.¹¹

EDA is **not** authorized to provide grants to individuals or for-profit entities, and such requests will not be considered for funding.

b) EDA Economic Distress Criteria

In order to be eligible for funding under this FFO, an applicant must propose a project located in a Region that meets EDA's distress criteria as of the date EDA receives the application. Applicants must provide third-party data that clearly indicates that the relevant Region is subject to one (or more) of the following economic distress criteria: (i) an unemployment rate that is, for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available, at least one percentage point greater than the national average unemployment rate; (ii) per capita income that is, for the most recent period for which data are available, 80 percent or less of the national average per capita income; or (iii) a "Special Need," as determined by EDA.¹²

EDA will review and evaluate documentation submitted by the applicant to determine eligibility. EDA will reject any documentation of eligibility that the agency determines is inaccurate or incomplete, which may cause the application to be rejected. In cases where EDA receives an application six months or more before the time of award, EDA will re-evaluate the project to determine continued eligibility for investment assistance before making an award.

To determine eligibility, an applicant must define their Region in one of the following ways:

1. The Region where the proposed project will be located;
2. When the Project is located in an Economic Development District that is located in a Region that doesn't meet EDA's economic distress criteria, the geographic area where substantial direct project-related benefits will occur; or
3. The geographic area of poverty or high unemployment where the project will be located.

¹¹ See section 3 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122) and 13 C.F.R. 300.3.

¹² See section 301 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3161) and 13 C.F.R. 301.3.

See also 13 C.F.R. 301.3(a).

To determine eligibility, applicants must self-define the appropriate geographical area that constitutes their Region. For construction projects (including design and engineering) the project must be located within an eligible Region. For non-construction projects, the investment's scope of work must primarily benefit an eligible Region and stakeholders from that eligible Region must be directly engaged. EDA suggests that applicants work closely with their Regional Office as they define an eligible project in their Region.

(1) Unemployment Rate and Per Capita Income¹³

For economic distress levels based on the unemployment rate or per capita income requirements, EDA will base its determination upon the most recent American Community Survey (ACS) data published by the U.S. Census Bureau. If recent ACS data are not available to determine project eligibility, EDA will base its decision on the most recent Federal data from other sources (e.g., data available from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureaus of Economic Analysis, Labor Statistics, and Indian Affairs). If no Federal data are available, an applicant must submit to EDA the most recent data available from the government of the State in which the region is located (i.e., conducted by or at the direction of the State government).¹⁴

(2) "Special Need" Criteria

For the purposes of determining eligibility based on a "Special Need," an applicant must provide current and appropriate economic and demographic statistics for the applicable Region to support the identified "Special Need." EDA will base its determination of eligibility for "Special Need" on whether the proposed project meets the specific requirements outlined below, or in cases where specific thresholds are not identified, on whether the data and information provided by the applicant presents a compelling case that the Region meets the "Special Need" criteria, as defined by EDA.

A project may be eligible pursuant to a "Special Need" if the project is located in a Region that meets one or more of the criteria described below:¹⁵

- a. Closure or restructuring of industries or the loss of a major employer essential to the Regional economy as defined by:
 - i. An actual closure or restructuring of a firm within the 12 months prior to application submission, resulting in sudden job losses and meeting the dislocation criteria in a.iii. below; or
 - ii. A threat of closure that results from a public announcement of an impending closure or restructuring of a firm expected to occur within two years of application submission; AND
 - iii. Such actual or threatened closure results in sudden job losses meeting the following dislocation criteria:

¹³ Data on unemployment and per capita income can also be accessed through the StatsAmerica website: www.statsamerica.org/distress

¹⁴ See section 301 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3161) and 13 C.F.R. 301.3.

¹⁵ The following criteria are published in accordance with 13 C.F.R. 301.3(a)(1)(iii) and define what may constitute a "Special Need" (as defined in 13 C.F.R. 300.3) sufficient to make a project eligible for Public Works or Economic Adjustment investment assistance, as described in section III.B. of this announcement.

- i. For Regions with a population of at least 100,000, the actual or threatened dislocation is 500 jobs, or one percent of the civilian labor force (CLF), whichever is less.
 - ii. For Regions with a population up to 100,000, the actual or threatened dislocation is 200 jobs, or one percent of the CLF, whichever is less.
- b. Substantial out-migration or population loss.
- c. Underemployment, meaning employment of workers at less than full-time or at less skilled tasks than their training or abilities permit.
- d. Military base closures or realignments, defense contractor reductions in force, or Department of Energy defense-related funding reductions.
 - i. A military base closure refers to a military base that was closed or is scheduled for closure, realignment, or growth pursuant to the base closure and realignment process or other Department of Defense (DOD) process. Unless further extended by the Assistant Secretary, the Region is eligible from the date of DOD's recommendation for closure, realignment, or growth until five years after the actual date of closing of the installation or five years after the announced realignment or growth actually occurs.
 - ii. A defense contractor reduction-in-force refers to a defense contractor(s) experiencing defense contract cancellations or reductions resulting from official DOD announcements that have aggregate value of at least \$10 million per year. Actual dislocations must have occurred within one year of the date an application is submitted to EDA and threatened dislocations must be anticipated to occur within two years of application to EDA. Defense contracts that expire in the normal course of business will not be considered to meet this criterion.
 - iii. A Department of Energy defense-related funding reduction refers to a Department of Energy facility that has experienced or will experience a reduction of employment resulting from its defense mission change. The Region is eligible from the date of the Department of Energy announcement of reductions until five years after the actual date of reduced operations at the installation.
- e. Natural or other major disasters or emergencies. Unless further extended by the Assistant Secretary, a Region that has received one of the following disaster declarations is eligible and the applicant may apply for EDA assistance for a period of 18 months after the date of declaration:
 - i. A Presidentially Declared Disaster (declared under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.*)); or
 - ii. A Federally declared disaster (pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1861a(a)); the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. § 1961); or the Small Business Act, as amended (Pub. L. No. 85-536, 15 U.S.C. § 631 *et seq.*, 72 Stat. 384 (1958)).
- f. Extraordinary depletion of natural resources or other impact attributable to a new or revised Federal regulation or policy that will have a significant

impact on a community's ability to prevent an extraordinary depletion of natural resources. For example, in the case of a Federal fishing regulation designed to promote and sustain a community and its fishery in the long-term, EDA could quickly help a coastal community respond to any short-term economic dislocations.

- g. Communities undergoing transition of their economic base as a result of changing trade patterns, for example, an area certified as eligible by the North American Development Bank (NADBank) Program or the Community Adjustment and Investment Program (CAIP).
- h. Other Special Need. The area is experiencing other special or extraordinary economic adjustment needs, as determined by the Assistant Secretary.

3. What activities are permitted in the EDA Scope of Work?

In keeping with the objectives of the Make it in America Challenge, EDA will target investments that help distressed regions build on existing regional assets to create a competitive environment for foreign-owned and domestic firms to establish and grow their U.S. operations, and create jobs. Allowable activities may include: feasibility studies; planning; technical assistance; purchase and installation of publicly-owned equipment; renovation of publicly-owned buildings; expansion of critical publicly-owned infrastructure such as water, sewer, and roads. Applicants should ensure that the scope of work and individual activities for the EDA portion of work supports the overall Make It in America Challenge objectives, and that the relevant portion of the Project Narrative discusses how the proposed EDA activities will directly affect the region or geographic area that meets the economic distress criteria listed in Section IV.A.2. of this FFO.

4. What is the cost sharing or matching share requirement for EDA funding?

Under this FFO, applications must include in their budgets a Matching Share (as defined in 13 C.F.R. § 300.3) from non-Federal sources that must be available, unencumbered, and committed to the project. Generally, the amount of EDA assistance may not exceed 50% of the total cost of the project. However, projects may receive up to 80% of total cost, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. *See* Section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1).

Table 1 sets forth the maximum allowable Investment Rate for Projects located in Regions subject to certain levels of economic distress. In cases where Table 1 produces divergent results (i.e., where Table 1 produces more than one maximum allowable Investment Rate based on the Region's levels of economic distress), the higher Investment Rate produced by Table 1 shall be the maximum allowable Investment Rate for the Project.

Table 1: Maximum Allowable Investment Rate for EDA Assistance

Projects located in regions in which:	Maximum Allowable Investment Rates (percentage)
(A) The 24-month unemployment rate is at least 225% of the national average.	80
(B) The per capita income is not more than 50% of the national average.	80
(C) The 24-month unemployment rate is at least 200% of the national average.	70
(D) The per capita income is not more than 60% of the national average.	70
(E) The 24-month unemployment rate is at least 175% of the national average.	60
(F) The per capita income is not more than 65% of the national average.	60
(G) The 24 month unemployment rate is at least 1 percentage point greater than the national average.	50
(H) The per capita income is not more than 80% of the national average.	50

Source: 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)

The Matching Share requirements may be met through cash or in-kind contributions, consisting of contributions of space, equipment, services, or forgiveness or assumptions of debt. *See* Section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144). EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs, verifiable through clear documentation, and meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements. Matching funds must be used to support the EDA Scope of Work and may be subject to audit. Funds from other Federal financial assistance awards are considered Matching Share funds only if authorized by statute that allows such use, which may be determined by EDA’s reasonable interpretation of such authority. *See* 13 C.F.R. 300.3. In addition, applicants must provide letters of commitment to demonstrate that the Matching Share is committed to the project for the project period, will be available as needed, and is not or will not be conditioned or encumbered in any way that would preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. *See* 13 C.F.R. 301.5. For more information about EDA’s Matching Share requirements, please contact the applicable EDA Regional Office representative listed in Appendix D.

B. NIST MEP

1. NIST MEP Overview

NIST is making available funds to support the objectives of the Make it in America Challenge through its MEP program. MEP works with small and mid-sized U.S. manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits, and save time and money. The nationwide network of MEP Centers provides a variety of services, from innovation strategies to process improvements to green manufacturing. MEP also works with partners at the State and Federal levels on programs that put manufacturers in position to attract new customers, expand into new markets, and create new products. The MEP Centers’ staff includes over 1,400 technical experts

serving as trusted business advisors, focused on solving manufacturers' challenges and identifying opportunities for growth.

The objective of the MEP funding is to ensure that small and mid-sized manufacturers are fully prepared to meet these challenges and the supplier needs of companies looking to invest in the U.S. or to expand existing U.S. operations. The purpose of MEP's participation is to add capabilities to the MEP program. New capabilities could involve use of new materials or tools, such as those available through the recent MEP Supply Chain t-CAR project,¹⁶ as well as ways to solve new or emerging manufacturing problems and to increase the viability both of traditional manufacturing sectors and other sectors. Other sectors include those, such as construction, that increasingly rely on manufacturing through the use of manufactured components and manufacturing techniques, including supply chain integration and quality management.

It is nearly inconceivable to imagine attracting new manufacturing companies or supporting expansion of existing companies without collaboration between customers and suppliers. Many manufacturers are presented with supply chain issues every day ranging from the identification of new suppliers and materials through manufacturing transportation and distribution to customers. It is not uncommon for both complex, multi-national manufacturers and small or medium-sized manufacturers to face challenges. From reducing risk and volatility to identifying and collaborating with suppliers through understanding the true cost of the supply chain, increased investment depends on effectively understanding challenges and implementing solutions.

2. Who is eligible to apply for NIST funds under this announcement?

Only an existing MEP Center in good standing is eligible to receive NIST funding under this FFO. Existing MEP Centers must be U.S.-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, higher education-based, or State government-based entities.

Individual NIST MEP Centers selected under this competition will receive funding directly from NIST under this FFO. For projects where an MEP Center is not reasonably available, NIST funds will not be awarded; however, all applications must propose engagement with appropriate SMEs and partners to address outreach, service delivery, and technology commercialization needs of SMEs.¹⁷ If the geographical scope of the proposing region involves coverage areas of more than one MEP Center, those MEP Centers should collaborate in developing the NIST MEP component of the application. Only one MEP Center can be designated as the primary NIST MEP recipient; the other MEP Center or Centers may be proposed as sub-awardee(s) for an award with a single NIST Scope of Work.

3. What activities are permitted in the NIST MEP Scope of Work?

Applicants must clearly identify and describe the proposed activities for which NIST MEP funds will be awarded to an MEP Center. Permitted activities include those activities or services typically provided by an MEP Center to enhance the competitive position of one or more U.S.

¹⁶ Further information on this project is available on the MEP website at www.nist.gov/mep.

¹⁷ As noted above in section III.B of this FFO, "not reasonably available" means that there is no MEP center that can provide the desired services in the targeted region. Applications that do not include an MEP Center as a Team Member must explain why services are not available from an MEP.

manufacturers. Activities that may be particularly relevant in support of a Make it in America Challenge project include:

- Scouting suppliers in the region to provide market intelligence, industry trends, and data about the region's supply chain capabilities and capacity and suppliers' ability to satisfy requirements of potential new customers/companies that are considering investing in the region;
- Providing technical assistance to SMEs, ensuring that the region's suppliers can meet the needs of companies interested in investment and expansion. Includes assessment of SME strengths, capabilities and capacity; assisting SMEs in obtaining required certifications for industry; identifying bottlenecks and constraints and enhancing capabilities and capacity where gaps are identified; supporting collaboration between suppliers and customers on innovation and new product development efforts; and,
- Tracking performance measures (e.g., jobs created/retained, sales increased or retained, cost savings, new sales, new investments, commercialization of products and/or parts using advanced manufacturing technologies, adoption of advanced manufacturing processes by manufacturers).

The MEP Center will be required to designate a full time resource (FTE) dedicated to this project and a single point of contact for the project. In addition, the FTE will serve as regional expert and connection point for regional supply chain information dissemination regarding re-shoring and supplier scouting efforts. This regional network will begin to establish a system that can educate, train, mentor, and deliver services to support supplier development among SMEs.

4. What is the cost sharing or matching share requirement for NIST funding?

There is no cost share requirement for the supplemental funds provided to an existing MEP Center under this announcement as authorized in 15 U.S.C. § 278k(f).

C. ETA

1. ETA Overview

The H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant Program is intended to raise the technical skill levels of American workers so they can obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries and/or occupations. Technical Skills Training is designed to provide education and job placement assistance in occupations and/or industries that have high-growth potential for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire temporary, high-skilled foreign workers, and the related activities necessary to support such education and job placement activities. H-1B training grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the U.S. under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program. Over time, these education and training programs will help businesses reduce their use of skilled foreign professionals permitted to work in the U.S. on a temporary basis under the H-1B visa program.

While the occupations at the H-1B skill levels are generally defined as requiring a bachelor's degree or comparable experience, education and training conducted through this program is not limited to skill levels commensurate with four-year undergraduate degrees, and can include the

preparation of workers for employment along career pathways for a broad range of occupations and/or industries in which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. In addition, occupations that could utilize earn and learn strategies such as Registered Apprenticeship that combines both employment with classroom instruction may be included.

Targeted skills training allows new and existing workers to gain the necessary skills to understand and operate advanced technologies and processes that employers demand. Technical training projects can target strategies that up-skill incumbent workers to maintain or retain a good job, or can ensure new workers are qualified and ready for jobs requiring higher skill levels. Workers who obtain an enhanced education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) can ensure that regional labor pools remain viable for employment.

ETA is particularly interested in the development and demonstration of scalable models that have the potential to significantly increase the earnings of American workers. H-1B grant funds are not intended to address entry-level, low-skills worker shortages, nor may they fund programs aimed at imparting basic educational skills (unless they are fully integrated within the technical skills training). The skills training (including apprenticeship models) must result in higher-level skills as evidenced by the achievement of one or more industry-recognized credential(s) and/or significant wage gains. In emerging industries where credentials are not yet established or available, grantees will be required to demonstrate how the skills training and/or apprenticeship strategies will help participants achieve significant wage gains.

2. Who is eligible to apply for ETA funding under this announcement?

Applicants must identify a public workforce system entity as the lead eligible organization for this FFO. The lead eligible organization must be a state or local Workforce Investment Board or an American Job Center (formerly One-Stop Career Center). The workforce system partner will be the lead organization that will coordinate and collaborate with other partner organizations that will support worker skills training including: education and training providers, business-related non-profit organizations, community based organizations, and labor-management organizations.

In addition, the ETA applicant must partner with at least one employer; however, the applicant is likely to partner with more than one employer, given that it will be providing training that would benefit the selected region's targeted industry sector.

WIBs typically provide Labor Market Information (LMI) including characteristics and demographics of the available workforce to economic development agencies when they are proposing to bring new operations or expand existing operations in their area. In addition, these organizations can identify targeted industries, occupations, and hiring needs, as well as populations to be served, and provide relevant sources of data; identify and refer candidates for education and training in the grant program; connect and place participants with employers that have job openings; and collect, track, and report participant data to ETA.

ETA requires **one** SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" from the lead organization that will serve as the grantee. The grantee must have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant. The grantee organization must be the organization specified in block 8 of the SF-424, and will be: a) the point of contact with ETA to receive and respond to all inquiries or communications under this FFO and any subsequent grant award; b) the entity with authority to

withdraw or draw down funds through HHS - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS); c) responsible for submitting to ETA all deliverables under the grant, including all technical and financial reports related to the project; d) the entity that may request or agree to a revision or amendment of the grant agreement or statement of work; e) the entity with overall responsibility for carrying out the programmatic functions of the grant, as well as for the stewardship of all expenditures under the grant; and f) the entity responsible for working with ETA to close out the grant.

ETA strongly encourages applicants to collaborate with other critical partners such as education/training providers, including community colleges. For the purposes of this FFO, education and training providers are institutions of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (20 U.S.C. § 1001). These “institutions of higher education” include public or other nonprofit educational institutions.

If partnering with an educational institution, applicants must identify an educational institution partner’s institution type in Block 9 of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. Institutions eligible to be secondary partners must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. A database of institutions accredited by bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education can be found at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to check this website, as the Department will use this database in determining applicant’s accreditation to ensure eligibility. Generally, institutions of higher education include 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions, among others.

In addition, community-based organizations that provide training and other workforce development services also are considered to be education and training providers for this funding opportunity. Community-based organizations possess a deep understanding of the populations they serve and are key providers of supportive services, technical skills training, and workforce development services in communities across the country. Community-based organizations understand the importance of leveraging resources, engaging employers to better understand their workforce needs and secure employment for their participants, and providing comprehensive supportive services in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate, to the extent legally allowed, for workers and training participants.

Business-related non-profit organizations include trade or industry associations, such as local Chambers of Commerce and small business federations, and labor organizations. Employers and business-related non-profit organizations may contribute in one or more of the following ways: defining the program goals and activities; identifying skills and competencies; providing resources to support education/training (such as equipment, instructors, funding, internships, Registered Apprenticeship training programs or On-the-Job Training (OJT) and other work-based learning activities); providing assistance with program design; and hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs.

Labor organizations also may contribute by identifying skills and competencies; developing new or modifying existing curricula; conducting occupation and skills training; and issuing industry-recognized degrees or certificates.

3. Training for a Skilled Workforce

To satisfy the legislative intent to train American workers to reduce the need for foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their education and training programs to support industries and/or occupations within a sector for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. Applicants should review the attached list of industries and occupations that are most frequently using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers (See Appendix C); applicants may also refer to the Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site (<http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/performance/data.cfm>) for the most updated database of occupations approved under H-1B petitions.

Training under this funding opportunity cannot be used for entry-level occupations, but must focus on occupations along the career pathways that require higher skill levels. Applicants must propose projects that provide job training and related activities that are designed to assist workers in gaining the skills and competencies needed to obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries and/or occupations, or along the career pathways for such industries and/or occupations in the targeted industry sector. A career pathway is defined as a system of career options which allows opportunities for professional growth and upward mobility.

a) Training Strategies

ETA will fund a range of training strategies, including but not limited to: OJT; Registered Apprenticeships, customized training, classroom occupational training; distance learning; and incumbent worker training, for particular employers or groups of employers.

- On the Job Training (OJT) is distinguished by several factors: a) participants are hired and earn wages from employers during training; b) it is based on an individualized training plan that reflects the results of an individual skills assessment and an analysis of job requirements; c) training is conducted in the work setting under the direction of one or more of the employer's supervisory personnel; and d) the employer is paid a reimbursement to cover the extraordinary costs of the training.
- Registered Apprenticeships combine classroom instruction with work-based learning and typically put workers into highly-skilled occupations. Pre-apprenticeships will not be considered responsive due to the FFO's focus on higher-level skills;
- Customized training is defined as training that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (or group of employers); is provided after a commitment by the employer to employ, or continue to employ, the individual on successful completion of the training;
- Classroom occupational training is conducted in an institutional setting or worksite setting and is designed to provide or upgrade technical skills and information required to perform specific tasks or functions. Participants must be qualified for employment in a specific occupation upon completion of the training;
- Distance learning activity is a formal teaching and learning system that uses technology to connect learners to educational resources and skills training;
- Incumbent worker training is provided to employed individuals whose skills have been outdated by the development of new technologies or processes, and who require new

skills set to obtain a new position, retain a current position, or advance in their careers;
and,

With each type of training strategy, there are a number of activities that applicants can include to ensure that the programs meet participants' needs. All training strategies must: a) target skills and competencies in demand by industries and/or occupations in the targeted industry sector for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers; b) provide education and training for jobs that are currently available; and, c) result in an industry-recognized credential when available.

ETA encourages applicants to use program models with demonstrated success in training workers, especially those with strong program evaluations showing positive impacts on participants in terms of increased rate of completion of industry-recognized credentials, reduced time to complete industry-recognized credentials, increased earnings, or similar evidence-based program evaluation metrics.

These grants are primarily training grants with only a modest amount of the total budget available for activities that support the selected training strategy. In implementing a training program, applicants may propose to use grant funds for a wide range of allowable activities that support the **direct** education and training of eligible participants, including but not limited to, the following:

- Cost of training as described above;
- Work experience and internships;
- Costs related to credential attainment for individual participants, e.g., certification exam fees;
- Recruitment of eligible participants;
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and competencies, including prior learning assessment;
- Job search and placement assistance, as well as career counseling;
- Leveraging existing workforce resources;;
- Providing Labor Market Information (LMI) for the identified project area;
- Scholarships, limited to tuition and other training-related costs including books, tools, and academic fees; and,
- Updating or replicating existing industry-recognized curricula to support direct education and training provided through the grant.

Applicants may not use grant funds for any activities that do not directly support the education and training of participants, including any capacity-building activities such as:

- New curriculum development;
- Costs related to accrediting employer and/or industry-recognized credentials;

- Other costs of program development such as using subject matter experts from industry, education, and other areas to assist in curriculum design;
- Equipment purchases over \$5,000; and
- Payment of wages of incumbent workers.

Activities that are not directly related to the provision of education, training, and other related services for high-growth industries and/or occupations in the targeted industry sector for which employers are using H-1B visas are not allowable activities under this grant. Applicants should refer to Section VII.C.2 of the FFO for a list of relevant Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars related to cost principles, administrative and other requirements that apply to this FFO and to Section IV.C.6 for a discussion of costs that are not allowable for H-1B funds under this FFO.

b) Other Activities That Support Training

In developing training programs, applicants are encouraged to utilize tools related to ETA's Industry Competency Model Initiative, as appropriate. A competency model is a collection of competencies that, taken together, define successful performance in a particular work setting. Competency models serve as a starting point for the design and implementation of workforce and talent development programs. For example, there are three competency models designed for different facets of the manufacturing sector: Advanced Manufacturing, Automation, and Mechatronics. Each of these models has been validated by industry representatives, educators and employers. To learn about the industry-validated models visit the Competency Model Clearinghouse (CMC), <http://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel>. The CMC site also provides tools to build or customize industry models, as well as tools to build career pathways for regional economic development activities.

In addition, ETA maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants seeking information about the sector and occupations:

- Training and Employment Notice No. 19-10, an electronic guide to State and local workforce data to support analysis and informed decision making: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2965;
- The CareerOneStop portal, <http://www.careeronestop.org>, provides national and state career information;
- The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>, and companion sites, My Next Move and My Next Move for Veterans (<http://www.mynextmove.gov> and <http://www.mynextmove.org/vets>) provide occupational competencies and career profiles;
- mySkills myFuture, <http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/> provides career exploration options based on an individual's past jobs and offers tools to compare careers, find training, and search for jobs; and,
- The Certification Finder, http://www.acinet.org/certifications_new/default.aspx, assists in increasing personnel certifications related to careers in targeted industries.

c) Specific Requirements for Using an On-the-Job Training Strategy (OJT)

Under this FFO, OJT will follow the definitions and requirements under *Workforce Investment Act* (WIA) section 101(31). Incumbent workers are not eligible for OJT under this FFO. OJT is provided under a contract with an employer in the private-nonprofit or private sector. Through the OJT contract, occupational training is provided for the eligible trainee in exchange for the reimbursement to the employer of up to a negotiated percentage of the wage rate to compensate for the employer's extraordinary costs of training the individual. The employer pays wages to the participant. For complete information on the specific WIA parameters for OJT, please refer to WIA regulations 20 C.F.R. 663.700 – 663.710, as well as 20 C.F.R. 663.730.

In addition, applicants also must follow these additional guidelines:

- Eligible OJT trainee participants cannot be currently employed by the employer;
- Trainee placements may only occur in private for-profit and non-profit sectors (i.e., the grant does *not* allow for public sector placements);
- No placement may be made in agencies providing workers on a temporary basis to employers for which the agency receives compensation from the employer; and,
- Grantees should negotiate contracts with employers that lead to transitioning participants to permanent employment in as short a time as possible. The period of reimbursement to the employer must be an adequate length to ensure the participant has acquired the technical skills needed for employment but in no case may a participant have an OJT longer than 12 months. In addition, individuals may not be co-enrolled in other ETA programs for the purpose of extending OJT beyond 12 months. ETA anticipates that grantees may establish blanket contracts with employers for longer than 12 months to facilitate the hiring of more than one participant.

Typically, the negotiated reimbursement percentage for OJT under WIA may be as high as 50% of the participant's hourly wage. However, for grants awarded under this funding opportunity, the negotiated reimbursement percentage may be as high as 90% of the participant's hourly wage based on employer size: up to 90% of the participant's wage rate for employers with 50 or fewer employees; up to 75% of the participant's wage rate for employers with 51-250 employees; and, up to 50% for employers with more than 250 employees. Grantees are also encouraged to negotiate lower rates or variable rates (such as starting at 90 and reducing the subsidy over time) where possible to ensure that the maximum number of participants are served by the project.

Finally, upon receipt of a grant, applicants must develop OJT contracts. The contract process sets the ground rules for an OJT effort with an employer and contributes to the determination whether an employer is eligible to provide an OJT opportunity. The contract must include the federally-required elements of an OJT agreement. States, counties or municipalities may have additional contract requirements. Contracts also outline the terms and conditions that the employer and OJT provider agree to provide for an OJT experience. Contracts with an employer can be set up for a specific period of time but need not necessarily specify the individual trainees to whom they apply. This allows the employer to provide training to more than one trainee. If an employer only has one position or plans to limit the training experience to one employee, then a contract must also include the individual trainee's information. For these grants, contracts

must provide that the employer is responsible for documenting skills gained by participants during the training period. It should also include a description of how the reimbursement level was determined. For sample templates and other resources, grantees may access ETA's on-line technical assistance related to an OJT contract at the following web address:
https://ojttoolkit.workforce3one.org/page/contracts_and_mods.

4. What is the cost sharing or matching share requirement for ETA funding?

a) Match Requirement

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required for the ETA portion of funds under the FFO.

b) Leveraged Resources

Leveraged resources are all non-grant resources used by the grantee to support grant activity and outcomes. ETA strongly encourages applicants and their partners to document in their application how they plan to leverage resources beyond those awarded by other Funding Agencies to support the ETA scope of work in the proposed project. Leveraged resources expand the scope of the project beyond the Federal investment and demonstrate a commitment by the grantee and its partners to the project and its long-term sustainability post award. These funds may be used to support activities that are not allowable costs under the ETA scope of work. Additionally, leveraged resources carry quarterly reporting requirements. The definition of and requirements regarding leveraged resources are discussed in more detail below. Applicants should note that leveraged resources are NOT listed on the SF-424 or SF-424A; however the amounts of leveraged resources MUST be included in the budget narrative.

All leveraged resources must be expended on costs that are allowable under the OMB Circulars (2 C.F.R. Parts 220, 225, and 230 and 48 C.F.R. Part 31) and used to further grant activity and outcomes. The costs of leveraged resources may be paid for with either Federal or non-Federal funds. Examples of costs that would be considered as leveraged resources are the costs of services provided to grant participants that are funded by another Federal program such as the WIA formula grant program, the provision of child care as a supportive service by a grantee sub-recipient, and the purchase or construction of a structure that will house grant activity which is paid for by the organization using non-Federal resources.

ETA requires that all leveraged resources be reported in grantee quarterly program narrative reports. In addition, some leveraged resources are to be reported on the ETA-9130 Quarterly Financial Report including: 1) all costs of the grant recipient and/or sub-recipients as well as all third party in-kind contributions that would have qualified as match had it been required; and 2) all allowable costs for goods and services provided to grant participants or in support of the grant program which are paid for by the grant recipient and/or sub-recipients using other Federal grant funds. Instructions and the ETA Form 9130 may be found at
http://www.doleta.gov/grants/financial_reporting.cfm.

5. Who is eligible to receive ETA-funded training under this announcement?

a) Participants Eligible to Receive Training

Applicants may propose projects that focus on providing education and training to unemployed workers, incumbent (employed) workers, and/or post-secondary students who are pursuing a high-skill occupation. Participants must be at least 18 years of age and eligible to work in the United States.

Candidates for education and training funded through these grants must not be at the beginning of a career pathway and must have at least a high school diploma or a GED, as well as some post-secondary education and/or work experience that would allow them to enter the defined career pathway at a later point. Candidates may already have an associate's or bachelor's degree, but they do not necessarily have to possess advanced degrees to be eligible.

In addition, one of the objectives of DOL is to ensure that the training programs offered through this grant opportunity are available to historically underrepresented and excluded communities in the region being served. Historically underrepresented and excluded communities include areas or groups that face socioeconomic challenges such as a high concentration of low income or unemployed individuals; high poverty; high unemployment; discrimination in housing, credit, or the labor market; or mass layoffs. The make-up of the individuals residing in these communities also may vary in different regions; for example, they may include ethnic and racial minorities such as Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Black or African Americans, Latinos or Hispanics, Asian-Americans or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders; or other groups such as veterans, women, or persons with disabilities.

b) Veterans Priority for Participants

The *Jobs for Veterans Act* (Public Law 107-288) requires grantees to provide priority of service for veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by ETA. The regulations implementing this priority of service can be found at 20 C.F.R. Part 1010. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two equally qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service, a veteran or spouse must first meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with ETA guidance on veterans' priority. ETA's *Training and Employment Guidance Letter* (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by ETA. TEGL No. 10-09 is available at <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL10-09.pdf>.

c) Payments to Participants

For the purposes of grants awarded under this FFO, organizations may only use grant funds to pay for the wages of participants in two specific activities - paid work experience and paid internships. Grant funds may not be used to pay incumbent worker salaries.

d) Incumbent Worker Salaries

Incumbent worker training is defined as training developed with an employer or employer association to upgrade the skills of a particular workforce. It usually takes place in the workplace or after work hours for employees of a specific employer or employer association.

Salaries paid to incumbent workers may not be reimbursed using grant funds.

Direct payments to help support participants' training, such as stipends for the purposes of wage replacement or incentives to participate in training, are not allowable costs under these grants.

e) Use of Funds for Supportive Services

Under this FFO, supportive services for training participants follow the definitions in WIA Sections 101(46), 134(e)(2), and 134(e)(3). They include services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, and housing that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and training activities funded through this grant. Under WIA Section 134(e)(3), supportive services can include needs-related payments (NRPs) that are necessary to enable individuals to participate in training activities funded through this grant. Supportive services activities may include, but are not limited to, provision of the actual supportive service (i.e., childcare); providing participants with a voucher for the service (i.e., public transportation cards or tokens); or providing a stipend directly to the participant. Applicants should note that where stipends for supportive services are provided, the stipend amount must be for costs of a specific supportive service (i.e., childcare), rather than simply based on an unidentified need.

For the purposes of this FFO, grantees may use up to 5% of grant funds to provide supportive services only to individuals who are participating in education and training activities provided through the grant when: 1) they are unable to obtain such services through other programs, and 2) such services are necessary to enable individuals to participate in education and training activities under the grant. Grantees may establish limits on the provision of supportive services or provide their sub-recipients with the authority to establish such limits, including a maximum amount of funding and maximum length of time for supportive services to be available to participants. Grantees must ensure that their use of grant funds on supportive services is consistent with their organization's established written policy on the provision of supportive services and relevant WIA regulations. Additionally, ETA encourages grantees to leverage other sources of funding for supportive services, including WIA formula funds.

V. Application and Submission Information

A. How do I obtain an application package?

Applicants may access the application package for this FFO electronically at <http://www.grants.gov> (Grants.gov). See Section V.D. of this FFO for detailed instructions on application submission.

B. Deadline for Receipt of Applications

Applicants must submit their application electronically via Grants.gov. The deadline for receipt of applications through Grants.gov is **May 31, 2013** at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

The Funding Agencies will not accept any changes, additions, revisions or deletions to applications after the closing date and time have passed. However, throughout the review and selection process, the Funding Agencies, with the exception of DOL, reserve the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered. See also Section VI. of this FFO for application review and selection information.

C. Required Application Forms and Content

To be considered complete, an application package must consist of:

- All required forms for each Funding Agency;
- The Proposal, which includes the Executive Summary, Project Narrative, Integrated Work Plan and Budget Description; and,
- Addenda to the Proposal.

Applications that do not contain all required forms listed in each part, or that fail to adhere to the instructions in this FFO, may be considered incomplete and may not be considered for funding. Additional application materials not requested under this FFO will not be reviewed or evaluated.

Applicants are advised to carefully read the instructions contained in this FFO and in all forms contained in the application package. It is the sole responsibility of each applicant to ensure that a complete application package is received.

1. Required Forms

All applicants must include the following forms at the time of application submission. The forms should be uploaded as separate Adobe portable document format (PDF) files. All forms listed in this section will be available in the Grants.gov application package. Note that only the forms pertaining to the EDA portion of the application will be found under the “Application” tab in the application package generated by Grants.gov. All other forms pertaining to the application can be found under the “Full Announcement” tab of the Grants.gov announcement and **must be included as attachments to the application package. Please see the application checklist at http://manufacturing.gov/make_it_in_america.html for detailed instructions.**

a) Forms required by all Funding Agencies

Each Funding Agency must receive a separate set of the following forms reflecting the funding requested from that Funding Agency.¹⁸ **For example, an Applicant Team with three Team Members each requesting funds from one of the three Funding Agencies will be required to submit three SF-424s—one each to EDA, NIST, and ETA, while an Applicant Team with only two Team Members requesting funds from the three Funding Agencies will still be required to submit a total of three sets of forms – one each to EDA, NIST, and ETA.**

- Form SF-424 – *Application for Federal Assistance*
- Form SF-424A – *Budget Information- Non-Construction Programs*

¹⁸ Co-applicants for EDA funding should submit a set of forms for each applicant.

- Form SF-424B – *Assurances – Non-Construction Programs* ¹⁹
- Form SF-LLL – *Disclosure of Lobbying Activities*, if applicable. Applicants may be required to provide certain lobbying information using Form SF-LLL . Please note that, if applicable, one Form SF-LLL must be submitted for each applicant that has used or plans to use non-Federal funds for lobbying in connection with a covered Federal transaction.

b) Form required by both EDA and NIST

Each applicant to EDA and NIST is required to submit the following form at the time of application submission, in addition to the forms listed under Section V.C.1.a.

- Form CD-511 – *Certification Regarding Lobbying*

c) Form required by EDA only

EDA applicants must submit the following form at the time of application, in addition to the forms listed under Sections V.C.1.a and V.C.1.b.

- Form ED-900 – *EDA Application for Investment Assistance*. The applicant should disregard the statement in the “Note on EDA’s Application Process” that advises applicants that EDA will request the listed materials only after a project has been determined to “merit further consideration.” **All sections listed below must be complete at the time of application submission.**

The first page of Section A of Form ED-900 contains a list of all EDA programs along with the relevant sections that must be completed to apply under each. For purposes of this FFO, Sections A, B, E, K, M, N and Exhibit C of Form ED-900 must be completed. For any question in Form ED-900 that can be answered through reference to other parts of the application (for example, the Proposal), the applicant may reference the specific part of the application where the answer can be found, including the specific page number, as applicable.

The following special instructions apply for Form ED-900:

Form ED-900 Question/Section	Special Instruction
Questions A.2, A.4, and A.6.	Enter “See Proposal” and reference the relevant pages.
Question B.5	Jobs figures and private investment information should be estimated using a 9 year time horizon. Totals for these fields should match the long-term estimates provided in the Integrated Work Plan. Applicants should indicate the targeted industry by providing the relevant 5-digit NAICS code (for a searchable list of codes, see

¹⁹**CONSTRUCTION-RELATED PROJECTS:** If a project involves use of EDA funds solely for construction activities (including design, engineering and equipment), the EDA applicant will be required to submit to EDA forms SF-424C – *Budget Information- Construction Programs* and SF-424D – *Assurances –Construction Programs* in lieu of the SF-424A and SF-424B. Applicants requesting funding for **both** construction and non-construction activities should submit both sets of forms, using form SF-424C to detail their budget for construction activities and form SF-424A to detail their budget for non-construction activities. See section V.C.3.f. for more information.

Form ED-900 Question/Section	Special Instruction
	http://www.naics.com/search.htm).
Question E.3.	Enter “See Resumes of Key Personnel.”
Section M	Complete this section if your application has construction components
Section N	Complete this section if your application has design/engineering components
Section K.	Select “no” in response to the question “Are you applying for a Strategy Grant under 13 C.F.R. 307.3?”
Exhibits A, D, and E	Complete this section if your application has construction components.
Exhibit C.	Applicants for non-construction and design/engineering assistance must submit Exhibit C. To submit additional copies of Exhibit C, please print out Exhibit C, complete it, and upload it as an attachment to the application package.

2. Proposal Content

The Proposal must clearly articulate the overall goals of the project, the specific and distinct Scopes of Work and concrete activities that will be accomplished under awards from each Funding Agency, and the anticipated outcomes that these activities are expected to yield from each Funding Agency. The Proposal must also demonstrate each applicant’s capability to implement the proposed activities in accordance with the requirements of this FFO. Together, the Scopes of Work should aim to achieve the common objectives outlined in Section I.A. Applications will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria outlined in Section VI.A. **Applicants must adhere to any page limits for each section of the proposal.** Pages beyond the specified page limit for each section will not be read or considered.

A complete Proposal must include the following components:

a) Executive Summary:

The Executive Summary should serve as a high-level summary of the proposed project, including the overall goals and objectives that will be advanced, and must include a short summary of the distinct Scopes of Work that will be supported by each Funding Agency. Executive Summaries of proposals may be made public in the form originally submitted; therefore, **applicants must not include proprietary, confidential commercial/business, or personally identifiable information in the Executive Summary.** The Executive Summary may not exceed **two pages double-spaced 8.5x11-inch pages with 12-point font and 1-inch margins.** The Executive Summary must include the following information:

- The project name;
- The organizations composing the Applicant Team;
- The identified region and targeted industry;

- A summary of the integrated project and overall project objective, including how the region’s strategy and proposed activities will increase investment (including re-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms, foreign direct investment, and retention and growth of U.S. businesses and jobs) in the targeted industry;
- A brief description of the Scopes of Work to be funded by **each Funding Agency**; and,
- A summary of the performance measures for each scope of work by each funding source.

b) Project Narrative:

The Project Narrative must provide a detailed description of all activities that will be undertaken using each source of funds requested under this FFO, a summary of how these activities support the overall project’s goals, and a clear data-driven overview of anticipated impacts for each Funding Agency. The Project Narrative may not exceed **35 double-spaced 8.5x11-inch pages with 12-point font and 1-inch margins**. Within the Project Narrative, applicants must address all of the following evaluation criteria, which are set forth more fully in Section VI.A:

1. Agency-Specific Evaluation Criteria
 - a. Strengthening Regional Assets – funded by EDA
 - b. Connecting Regional Supply Chains and Assisting SMEs – funded by NIST MEP
 - c. Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce to Meet Employer Demand – funded by ETA
2. Common Evaluation Criteria
 - a. Investing in the United States
 - b. Soundness of Approach
 - c. Integrated Project Concept
 - d. Project Impact and Measurable Outcomes
 - e. Sustainability of Project Outcomes

See Section VI.A for narrative requirements and the evaluation criteria. Applicants may include a map delineating the region at the end of the Project Narrative, which will not count towards the 35 page limit. Any Project Narrative text beyond the specified page limit will not be read or considered. Applicants must consecutively number the pages of the Project Narrative, beginning with page number one. The Project Narrative must be submitted as one PDF file, and only one Project Narrative may be submitted per application.

c) Integrated Work Plan:

Applicants must document the major proposed activities, anticipated completion date of the activities, and outcomes as a result of the activities in an Integrated Work Plan (IWP). A suggested template for the IWP can be found in Appendix A to this FFO. Information for objectives, resources/inputs, and activities should mirror the Agency-specific Scopes of Work. Appendix A and Section VI.A provide instructions and further information on how to complete the IWP. Only one IWP may be submitted with the application.

d) Budget Narrative (by Funding Agency):

A single Budget Narrative must be created and submitted that outlines the budget for each Funding Agency's Scope of Work. The budget must be dated: Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Multi-year Total, as applicable. The Budget Narrative must provide a detailed breakdown of each of the object class categories as reflected on the SF-424A. The budget narrative should address all of the budget categories (personnel, fringe benefits, equipment, travel, supplies, contractual, and other direct costs and indirect costs). The written justification must include the necessity and the basis for the cost. The requirements for each category are:

1. Personnel - At a minimum, the Budget Narrative for personnel must include the following:
 - Name and Job title,
 - Commitment of effort on the project (in hours or effort level),
 - Salary Rate,
 - Total charges on the project, and,
 - Description of the role of the individual on the project and the work to be performed.
2. Fringe Benefits - Fringe benefits must be identified separately from salaries and wages, and based on a rate determined by organizational policy. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (health insurance, parking) cannot be charged under another cost category.
3. Equipment - Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the supplies line item. The Budget Narrative must list each piece of equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the project. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) that is charged directly to the grant, must be allocated according to usage.
4. Travel - For travel costs requested in the application, the Budget Narrative must include the following: destination; names/number of people traveling; dates and/or duration; mode of transportation, lodging and subsistence rates; and description of how the travel is directly related to the proposed project.
5. Supplies - Provide a list of the supplies, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the project.
6. Contractual - Each contract or subcontract must be treated as a separate item. Describe the services provided and the necessity of the subgrant or contract to the successful performance of the project.
7. Other Direct Costs - For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, please list the cost, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the project. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award.

8. Indirect Costs - Provide the latest negotiated rate with a cognizant Federal agency or estimate a rate to be negotiated with the Department of Commerce or Department of Labor.

3. Addenda to the Proposal

Applicants must also submit the following Addenda to the Proposal in PDF format. Applications that do not include the required Addenda will be considered incomplete and/or non-responsive and may not be reviewed.

a) Résumés of Key Personnel (by Funding Agency) – required:

Applicants must attach the résumés of key project staff for each Scope of Work, which cannot exceed two pages in length (per résumé). Applicants must provide a two-page summary description of all personnel and contractors named in the application. Résumés must be compiled and uploaded together as one PDF file.

b) Verification of Matching Funds/Cost Share – required (EDA):

Each EDA applicant must provide a commitment letter from each identified prospective matching share source. Each signed letter should include a short description of the matching share source, type, availability, and amount of the matching share. A matching share letter may not exceed one page, and information beyond this length will not be considered. *See* Section IV.A. for more information on the matching share requirement for EDA funding.

c) Applicant Team Agreement:

If more than one organization is applying for funds under this FFO, the Applicant Team must provide a copy of a written agreement signed by the authorized representative of each Team Member that reflects a binding commitment to undertake the proposed project, the respective scopes of work, and perform the duties, roles, and responsibilities identified in the Project Narrative. The Agreement must include the project title and list each Team Member and the source of funds for which they are applying. The Agreement should also identify a designated point of contact for the Applicant Team.

d) Facilities and Administrative or Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (by Funding Agency):

As specified in the applicable Federal cost principles, which also are listed in Section VII.C.2 of this FFO, indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective.²⁰ An indirect cost rate (ICR) is required when an organization operates under more than one grant or other activity, whether Federally assisted or not. Organizations must use the ICR supplied by their Federal Cognizant Agency. If an organization requires a new ICR or has a pending ICR, the Grant Officer will award a temporary billing rate for 90 days until a provisional rate can be issued. This rate is based on the fact that an organization has not established an ICR agreement. Within this 90 day period, the organization must submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal to their Federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional ICR.

²⁰ *See* 2 C.F.R. Parts 220, 225, and 230, and 48 C.F.R. 31.2, as applicable.

In the interest of maximizing program delivery, applicants are strongly encouraged to direct the majority of funding received under this FFO to program implementation rather than to facilities and administrative costs.

Additional information on indirect cost requirements for EDA and NIST can be found in the DOC Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements (73 FR 7696 at 7699, February 11, 2008).

e) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – required (EDA):

Applications for EDA assistance must be consistent with the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or alternate EDA-approved economic development strategic planning document. See Section A.3 of Form ED-900, which requires applicants to identify the relevant plan. If EDA does not already have the applicable plan, the applicant must provide a copy of the plan or a functioning hyperlink to where the plan can be found online. In addition, the applicant may be required to obtain a letter from the organization that developed the plan certifying that the proposed project is consistent with the strategy. If you have questions regarding this requirement, contact the appropriate EDA Regional Office representative listed in Appendix D.

f) Additional Requirements for Non-Profit Organizations – required (EDA):

In addition to all applicable items listed above, EDA applicants that are non-profit organizations must submit the following:

- A certificate of good standing from the State of its incorporation;
- A copy of the organization’s Articles of Incorporation;
- A copy of the organization’s By-Laws; and
- A resolution (or letter) from a general purpose subdivision of a government of a State, acknowledging that the organization is acting in cooperation with officials of that unit of government.

g) Additional Requirements for Projects with Construction (including design and engineering) or Equipment Costs - required (EDA):

For all projects that include construction (including design, engineering, or equipment) costs, the following additional documentation (i to ix below) is required. For projects funded by EDA that include equipment costs, a list of the equipment to be purchased or used in the project, its intended use (including percentage of time the equipment is expected to be in use), useful life, and the estimated unit cost is required. In addition, if the equipment requires a new air, water, or sewer permit or construction activities in order to be installed at the project site, the following are also required:

- i. One **Form SF-424C** (Budget Information-Construction Programs) per project;
- ii. One **Form SF-424D** (Assurances-Construction Programs) from each co-applicant, as applicable;
- iii. **Maps of the project site** (U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) map(s) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain map(s)) with project

- components and beneficiaries noted (see Section A.2. of Form ED-900), as applicable;
- iv. **Letters of commitment and assurances of compliance** (Exhibit A to Form ED-900) from beneficiaries of the proposed project identified in Section B.5. of Form ED-900;
 - v. **Comments from the metropolitan area review/clearinghouse agency**, if applicable. If the comment period has not expired or comments were not received, a copy of the applicant's request for comments is sufficient (see Section M.1. of Form ED-900); however, in that instance, the final determination will be required prior to award;
 - vi. **A preliminary engineering report.** The requirements for this report are listed in Section M.3. of Form ED-900; special formatting of the report is not required. For additional guidance on preparing a preliminary engineering report, please contact the applicable EDA representative listed in Section VIII. of this FFO;
 - vii. **An environmental narrative** that will enable EDA to comply with its National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities. An environmental narrative outline that details required components may be accessed on EDA's website at http://www.eda.gov/files/012_Environmental_Narrative_Template.zip. Please note that the environmental narrative required for a complete application does not need to include all applicable approvals at the time of submission. Applicants must include Appendix A (Applicant's Certification Clause) to the environmental narrative signed by each co-applicant, as applicable;
 - viii. **Copies of any existing correspondence with or sign-offs/approvals from other agencies with respect to the project**, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or the State or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, if applicable. If the application does not include sign-offs/approvals from appropriate agencies and EDA subsequently determines that these are required, the applicant will be required to obtain them before EDA will release funding. For additional information about this requirement, please contact the applicable Regional Environmental Protection Specialist listed in Section VIII. of this FFO; and,
 - ix. **Copies of any other environmental studies** that have already been completed for the project site, if available.

D. Application Submission Requirements

An applicant must obtain the appropriate application package electronically at grants.gov. All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded (in a screen-fillable format) at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp. Electronic files must be submitted in PDF format. Limit the total application size, including all attachments or addenda, to 50MB. The Funding Agencies recommend that large files are compressed and that large items within documents (such as maps or images) are removed. Files over 50MB may not transfer correctly and could impact the ability to fully review all materials. **Please note: the lead EDA applicant must submit the application package for the entire project on behalf of the Applicant Team.** The lead EDA applicant must complete the grants.gov registration process to submit completed applications through grants.gov; however, please note that

registration is not required for an applicant to access, view, or download the application packages.

1. Electronic Submission via Grants.gov

Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. Applicants must not wait until the application closing date to begin the registration and submission process. In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants first must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. **Note that this registration process can take as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly and in a timely manner** (see www.grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp). Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, now a part of the System for Award Management (SAM) (www.sam.gov), registration up-to-date or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov.

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) requirement. Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. As part of the registration process, you must register at least one AOR for each organization. AORs registered at Grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications via Grants.gov. Note that a given organization may designate multiple individuals as AORs for Grants.gov purposes. Please ensure that your organization's application is submitted by an AOR. If the application is submitted by anyone other than an AOR for your organization, it will be rejected by Grants.gov and cannot be considered. **Please note: an Applicant Team must submit its application package using the registered AOR for the lead applicant for EDA funds.**

The Funding Agencies will not accept late submissions caused by Grants.gov registration issues, including CCR/SAM and AOR issues.

Once an applicant is registered, the following list provides step-by-step instructions for accessing, completing and submitting an application via Grants.gov. Please also read the instructions posted at Grants.gov.

- Ensure that you have installed a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, as incompatible versions of Adobe Acrobat Reader may cause errors. See www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp.
- Navigate to Grants.gov and select "Apply for Grants" from the left-hand menu.
- Select the link for "Download a Grant Application" package.
- Enter Funding Opportunity Number "**mia2013**" and click on "Download Package."
- Click on the "download" link under "Instructions and Application" for the instructions and application specific to the type of project and EDA program under which you are applying.
- A new window should pop up. In the new window, click on "Download Application Instructions" to review the instructions posted on Grants.gov and "Download Application Package" when you are ready to begin the application.

- Save the applicable application package to your computer or network drive. Note that the package file can be shared among multiple users; however, each user must have a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed in order to save changes to the application package.
- Click on each of the documents in the “Mandatory Documents” box and, after selecting each one, click on the arrow to move these into the “Mandatory Documents for Submission” box.
- In the “Optional Documents” box, click on Form SF-LLL if non-Federal funds have been or are planned to be used for lobbying in connection with this competitive solicitation and then move this to the “Optional Documents for Submission” box. Click on “Attachments” and move this to the “Optional Documents for Submission” box. The Attachments form allows applicants to attach any documents required as attachments under this competitive solicitation, such as a CEDS or letters of support.
- The application package should pre-populate with all selected forms embedded. Complete all mandatory fields (highlighted in yellow) on the forms. Note that mandatory fields will vary based on the type of applicant and the type of assistance sought. On Form CD-511, type “not awarded yet” in the “project number” field. Save the application package at regular intervals to avoid losing work.
- Attach any required attachments. The preferred file format for attachments is Adobe PDF; however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Excel formats.
- When all mandatory fields have been completed, scroll to the top and click on “Check Package for Errors.”
- Click “Save.”
- Click “Save and Submit.” At this point the lead EDA applicant’s AOR must be connected to the Internet and will be asked to enter its Grants.gov user id and password in order to submit via Grants.gov. As noted above, if the application is submitted by anyone other than an AOR (again, the lead EDA applicant’s AOR), the application will be rejected by the Grants.gov system and the Funding Agencies will not receive the application.

Field limitations and special characters. Please be advised that Grants.gov provides the following notice with respect to form field limitations and special characters:

Are there restrictions on file names for any attachment I include with my application package?

Please limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%/,#) in attachment names and application form fields (including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks) or attach documents with the same name. An underscore (example: my_Attached_File.pdf) may be used to separate a file name. **Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.**

What kind of information can be entered into form fields within my application?

Grants.gov application packages offer fields to enter a set amount of data. When the limit is reached for a certain field, you will no longer be able to enter data into that field. For every form, there are different limitations to the data that you are allowed to enter (this varies between agency and form). Refer to the agency instructions available for download with the application package for more detail.

Do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%,/,#) within the application form fields including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks; an underscore may be used. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

In EDA's experience, use of apostrophes (') in file names and fillable fields of required forms has resulted in application submission issues. Accordingly, please periodically check the status of your application to make sure it has been validated, and use file naming conventions that do not negatively affect your application submission.

If a response exceeds the field limit requirements of any form, including Form ED-900, the applicant is advised to include the response as an attachment to the application. The applicant should move 'Attachments' to the 'Optional Documents for Submission' box in the application package, and clearly indicate in the form field that the information is included as an electronic file.

Verify submission was successful. Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. Since email communication can be unreliable, applicants must proactively check on the status of their application if they do not receive email notifications within a day of submission.

An applicant should expect to receive two initial emails from Grants.gov: the first will confirm receipt of the application, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the Funding Agencies or has been rejected due to errors. Because it can take up to two business days after Grants.gov receives an application for applicants to receive email notification of an error, the Funding Agencies strongly suggest that applicants submit their applications at least five days before the application deadline. Applicants will receive a third email once EDA has retrieved their application from Grants.gov.

Applicants must refrain from submitting multiple copies of the same application package. Applicants should save and print both the submitted application confirmation screen provided on Grants.gov after submitting an application, and the confirmation email sent by Grants.gov when the application has been successfully received and validated in the system. If an applicant receives an email from Grants.gov indicating that the application was received and subsequently validated, but does not receive an email from Grants.gov indicating that EDA has retrieved the application package within 72 hours of that email, the applicant may contact the appropriate person listed in Appendix D. of this FFO to inquire if EDA received the submission.

It is the applicant's responsibility to verify that its submission was received and validated successfully at Grants.gov. To see the date and time your application was received, log on to

Grants.gov and click on the “Track My Application” link from the left-hand menu. For a successful submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number assigned. If your application has a status of “Received” it is awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/submit_application_faqs.jsp. For more detailed information on why an application may be rejected, please see “Troubleshooting Tips” at www.grants.gov/help/trouble_tips.jsp.

Systems issue. If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission, please (i) print any error message received and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1 800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. *Please note:* problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “system issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered AOR with the lead EDA applicant submits the application, or (iii) notice receipt of an email message from Grants.gov, are not considered system issues. A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely.

Applicants are to access the following link for assistance in navigating Grants.gov and for a list of useful resources: www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp. The following link lists frequently asked questions (FAQs): www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp#faqs. If you do not find an answer to your question under the “Applicant FAQs,” try consulting the “Applicant User Guide” or contacting Grants.gov via email at support@grants.gov or telephone at 1 800-518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2. Withdrawal of Applications

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice from the designated point of contact at any time before an award is made. Please make the written request to makeitinafrica@eda.gov.

VI. Application Review Information

Applications received in response to this FFO will be reviewed and selected in accordance with the following process. Throughout the review and selection process, the Funding Agencies, with the exception of DOL, reserve the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered. Applicants may be asked to clarify objectives and work plans, modify budgets or other specifics necessary to comply with Federal requirements, or provide required supplemental information.

A. Project Narrative Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

The following sections describe the requirements for the Project Narrative and the evaluation criteria. As outlined in Section VI.B.2, each Funding Agency will convene a merit panel that will focus specifically on the scope of work proposed for funding from that agency and its role

within the broader project concept. NOTE: Applications will be evaluated based on their ability to satisfy the core evaluation criteria listed, with each agency-specific panel giving each criterion under their review equal consideration.

1. Agency-Specific Evaluation Criteria

The Project Narrative must clearly delineate the Scope of Work for each Funding Agency. In developing the individual Scopes of Work, applicants must clearly tie their activities to the measurable outputs and outcomes included in the IWP within these three areas:

- ***Project Outputs*** are the immediate activities undertaken by the project. These *Outputs* then lead to the *Outcomes* outlined below. Examples of Output measures may include: the number of organizations actively engaged, number and nature of services offered that strengthen the targeted industry's and/or company's capabilities; the number of new products developed; or the number of workers completing skills training.
- ***Capacity Outcomes*** are those that build the regional capacity that will facilitate, for example, economic growth, entrepreneurship, job creation and innovation. Capacity outcomes from the project could include improvements in:
 - *Community Capacity* such as physical, energy and communications infrastructure; social capital and networks or environmental quality;
 - *Firm and Industry Capacity* such as a skilled workforce, access to financial capital or shared facilities and equipment; or
 - *Innovation Infrastructure* such as research facilities, innovation support services and access inventive activity (e.g. patent generation).
- ***Realized Outcomes*** result from successful utilization of *Capacity Outcomes*. If the project is successful in ensuring that communities and businesses actually take advantage of the capacities improved by the project, they should realize outcomes such as organizational start-ups, job creation, earnings improvements, business growth, and increases in exports and Foreign Direct Investment. Examples of Realized Outcome measures may include:
 - **Business Outcome Impacts**: These may include measures of new businesses formed, businesses directly impacted and assisted, number of new sales generated, or growth in revenue overall and share from exports by partner businesses.
 - **Number, Quality, and Retention of Jobs**: These should include number of jobs created, number of participants completing skills training, number of participants entering employment as a result of the skills training, and number of participants retained as a direct result of funding from one or more of the Funding Partners. Anticipated jobs should be reported as full time equivalent (FTE) or equivalents which are annualized for the entire

project period.²¹ The expected quality of the jobs created and retained can be demonstrated through a discussion of the level of wages, skills, industry-recognized credentials earned, etc. of the jobs.

- Investment (number and amount): This may include measures of private investment leveraged, direct investment generated from domestic and foreign sources, and new equity investments or loans in industry firms.

The following sections (a-e) describe the Project Narrative requirements and evaluation criteria for the individual Scopes of Work funded by each Funding Agency. NOTE: Each criterion will be considered with equal weight.

a) Strengthening Regional Assets – funded by EDA

The applicant must demonstrate how it will utilize EDA funds to help distressed regions build on their existing assets. Applicants must indicate how the assets will be leveraged to enhance the competitive environment for foreign and domestic firms to establish and grow their U.S. operations, increase productivity, and create jobs.

(1) Strengthening Regional Assets – Narrative Elements:

The narrative response must:

- i. Describe the proposed EDA-funded Scope of Work to be implemented by the applicant, including the specific activities that will be undertaken and the anticipated completion date of each major activity in narrative form;
- ii. Discuss how the proposed activity will directly affect the region or geographic subdivision that meets the economic distress criteria listed in Section IV.A.2. of this FFO;
- iii. Describe how the proposed Scope of Work will help distressed regions build on existing assets, while working with the WIB and MEP Center, to enhance the competitive environment for foreign and domestic firms to establish and grow;
- iv. Describe how the proposed Scope of Work is anticipated to contribute to the region's economic development, including the creation/retention of jobs and the project's ability to leverage private investment, especially foreign direct investment; and,
- v. Explain how the Scope of Work will implement applicable goals, objectives, or actions identified in a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or other EDA approved regional strategic plan.

(2) Strengthening Regional Assets – Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed Scope of Work:

- i. Assists the distressed region that is the basis for eligibility, as described in Section IV.A.2 of this FFO;

²¹ For purposes of determining outcomes, applicants should consider FTE employees as those who work a total of 40-hours per week, or 2080 hours per year. Part time jobs can be converted to FTE by summing the total part time hours worked per week and dividing by the hourly work week for full-time employees, or 40 hours.

- ii. Builds on existing regional assets and coordinates with the WIB and MEP Center to address identified regional needs or gaps;
- iii. Supports the objectives set forth in this FFO, especially attracting foreign direct investment and promoting on-shoring of jobs;
- iv. Has the ability to start and complete the proposed project quickly, efficiently, and effectively;
- v. Demonstrates the project's potential to foster job creation/retention and promote private investment in the regional economy; and,
- vi. Implements the specific goals, objectives or actions identified in the applicable CEDS or regional strategic plan.

b) Connecting Regional Supply Chains and Assisting SMEs – funded by NIST MEP

This section must be included in all applications, but the applicants will only receive funding from NIST MEP if an MEP Center is a member of the applicant team.

(1) Assisting SMEs – Narrative Elements:

Applicants must clearly identify the proposed activities for assisting SMEs and describe how the proposed activities will accelerate investment by: scouting for potential qualified suppliers; gathering and disseminating market intelligence, industry trends, and data about the region's supply chain capabilities and capacity as well as ability to support potential new customers/companies that are considering investing in the region; providing technical assistance to SMEs, ensuring that the region's suppliers can meet the needs of companies interested in investment and expansion; and tracking performance measures (e.g., jobs created/retained, sales increased or retained, cost savings, new sales, new investments, sales to new customers and/or penetration in new markets, sales from new products, commercialization of advanced manufacturing products, adoption of advanced manufacturing technologies and processes by manufacturers). Applicants should include in the narrative some discussion of how the proposed work would advance the following objectives as noted in the NIST authority at 15 U.S.C. § 278k(f). Applicants may satisfy these conditions either directly through companies engaged in the project or through downstream suppliers. The objectives:

- i. create jobs or train newly hired employees;
- ii. promote technology transfer and commercialization of environmentally focused materials, products, and processes;
- iii. increase energy efficiency; and,
- iv. improve the competitiveness of industries in the region in which the Center or Centers are located.

(2) Connecting Regional Supply Chains and Assisting SMEs – Evaluation Criteria:

This section of the application will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant clearly explains the specific activities the project proposes to:

- i. Assist suppliers in achieving the capabilities and capacity to meet the needs of potential customers;

- ii. Improve the competitiveness of the supply chain for the targeted industry;
- iii. Articulate how the technology assets in the region will be developed and deployed to support innovation and growth of SMEs in the target industry, including promoting environmentally focused materials, products, and processes and increasing energy efficiency;
- iv. Explain how the proposed activities of the MEP Center, in conjunction with the WIB and EDA-funded activities (and other engaged organizations), will support foreign direct investment, expansion of existing companies, and job creation through the integrated work plan to address the identified needs or opportunities for SMEs in the target industry; and,
- v. Demonstrate that the MEP Center (or other engaged organization) has the capacity and expertise to provide the activities in the Scope of Work.

c) Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce to Meet Employer Demand-Funded by ETA

The applicant must demonstrate how it will utilize ETA funds to provide training and education that will raise the technical skill levels of American workers so they can obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries or occupations. The proposed skills training must result in higher-level skills as evidenced by the achievement of one or more industry-recognized credential(s) or significant wage gains.

(1) Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce to Meet Employer Demand – Narrative Elements:

The application will be evaluated based on the capacity of the proposed ETA Scope of Work to complement all other elements of the project and support the overall Make it in America Challenge goals, and result in measurable and attributable outcomes based on the specific activities. Applicants must present a comprehensive program plan that demonstrates their understanding of all the current and future workforce needs in the targeted industry and/or occupation(s) in the region and industry targeted by the project, the needs of participants, and how the proposed training programs and strategies address these needs.

- i. Identify the high-growth industry and/or occupation(s) in the sector targeted by the project, citing evidence that the industry and/or occupation are identified in the list of industries and occupations for which employers currently seek H-1B visas and/or is an occupation(s) along the career pathway to the occupation or in the relevant industry;
- ii. Describe the current and future workforce needed by the identified industry, including the skills and/or credentials necessary for entry into or retention in the industry and/or occupation(s); describe the education and training, both theoretical and practical, including licensure and/or industry-recognized competencies required to attain these credentials and practice in the occupation;
- iii. Describe the targeted population, including: 1) the demographic characteristics of the population, including education and work experience; 2) the reason for targeting the population; and 3) the recruitment strategies that will be used to attract a sufficient number of participants to the training program, including strategies for recruiting

- participants from historically underrepresented and excluded communities in the region;
- iv. Describe how the training strategy selected is the best choice for meeting the outcomes for this project, including how the team leveraged the expertise of the NIST MEP center to ensure that the training strategy is aligned to industry needs and maximizes the latest in technology;
 - v. Provide a detailed training plan that describes the proposed training program, including: 1) the training scope including objectives, and goals of the program, 2) a description of the training strategy and any technology-based interventions being used to enhance the delivery of the training; 3) the training offerings and an overview of how participants will advance through the coursework including the minimum requirements with respect to education and work experience; 4) the roles and responsibilities for all of the organizations providing and/or involved in the delivery of training; and 5) how completion of the training program positions trainees to enter occupations for which H-1B visas are currently used and/or advance into higher levels along the career pathways of those occupations, including a list of the degrees and industry-recognized credentials that will result from the training programs and how they fit the specific H-1B occupation(s) or those along the career pathway;
 - vi. Describe how the training program will be implemented by all of the required partners and how the partners will collaborate to ensure quality training and skilled participants that meet employer demand throughout the duration of the training program;
 - vii. Describe the specific activities that applicants and their partners will take to ensure participants obtain employment or advance along the career pathway upon completion of the training program; and,
 - viii. Provide outcome projections for each year of the project for individual participants served with grant funds for those projections in the following suggested format:

	PROJECTED OUTCOMES							
	UNEMPLOYED PARTICIPANTS				EMPLOYED PARTICIPANTS AND INCUMBENT WORKERS			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Total Participants Served								
Total Began Receiving Education/Job Training Activities								
Total Completed Education/Job Training Activities								
Number Completed Program Activities and Obtained a Credential								
Average Total Number of Credentials each Participant Received								
Total Number of Completers who Entered Unsubsidized Employment								
Total Number Entered Unsubsidized Training-Related Employment								
Total Number Who Retain Unsubsidized Employment in the 1st and 2nd Quarters								
Average Wage at Placement								
[Numerator]/[Denominator] = [Average]								

(2) Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce to Meet Employer Demand– Evaluation Criteria:

The application will be evaluated based on whether the Scope of Work and projected outcomes table fully address the following:

- i. The description of current and future workforce needs as indicated by employers and current Labor Market Information (LMI), including the use of the average, current wages offered in the industry based on national, state, or local data. This description must include a comprehensive strategy that is based on forming close ties within and among economic development organizations, an MEP Center, the workforce investment system, and post-secondary education and training providers to grow jobs in the region, both from new FDI as well as expansion of existing businesses;
- ii. The training being provided is for an industry and/or occupation in the sector that qualifies as high-growth according to one or more of the following factors: 1) it is

projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy; 2) it is being transformed by technology and innovation requiring new skill sets for workers; 3) it is supporting new and emerging businesses that are projected to grow; and 4) it will have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations;

- iii. The recruitment strategies that will be employed to attract sufficient numbers of participants to the training program and sequenced to meet employer demand with particular attention paid to timing. Additionally, the applicant will be evaluated based on any description of strategies for recruiting participants from historically underrepresented and excluded communities in the region;
- iv. The training program developed leveraging the expertise of the NIST MEP Center, uses a proven, effective model and leads to industry-recognized credentials that are valued by employers;
- v. The training program is comprehensive and the training offerings will address employers' expressed workforce needs and also advance participants along a clear career pathway and ensure that workers are moving up as they gain higher skills, wages and especially employment with committed employer partner(s);
- vi. The participant outcomes projected are adequate, appropriate, reasonable and viable given the proposed training program length and scope; and,
- vii. The applicant has a clear commitment from the required employer partner(s) to contribute to the training project in one or more of the following ways by: defining the program goals and activities, identifying necessary skills and competencies, providing resources to support education/training, providing assistance with program design or delivery, and hiring qualified participants.

2. Common Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used by each Funding Agency to judge the individual scopes of work during the merit review. NOTE: Each criterion will receive equal consideration. Applicants must ensure that all three scopes of work in their proposed project clearly demonstrate their strengths in the following areas:

a) Investing in the United States

Present a compelling description of the economic ecosystem of the region, including evidence of existing or emerging industry clusters and the specific manufacturing industry that will be targeted by the proposed project. The applicant must describe the capabilities, networks, and assets that contribute to the region's competitiveness and potential for growth of the target industry.

(1) Investing in the United States – Narrative Elements:

For this Project Narrative section, the application must:

- i. Clearly describe the geographic region of the proposed project. Regions may be single or multi-jurisdictional areas. The region description must include the location of project recipients for the scopes of work. Applicants must provide information about areas and/or sectors of economic distress.

- ii. Demonstrate that the region possesses the assets and capabilities to attract new manufacturing companies from specific overseas markets; attract capital from foreign companies; or encourage U.S. businesses to expand their manufacturing operations in the local area or region, rather than move them abroad.
- iii. To the extent to which information is available, applicants must also provide details on the composition of the existing workforce and supply chain, including any existing relationships with foreign firms in the region.

(2) Investing in the United States – Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be evaluated in this section based on the project’s ability to promote at least one of the following:

- i. Re-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms;
- ii. Increasing foreign direct investment;
- iii. Increasing skill-levels of American workers; or
- iv. Retaining and growing U.S. businesses and jobs that may otherwise be relocated outside of the U.S.

b) Soundness of Approach

The feasibility and likelihood of success for the overall application will be considered under this criterion based on the qualifications of the project’s key personnel and resources presented.

(1) Soundness of Approach – Narrative Elements:

The narrative response must demonstrate the soundness of the proposed Integrated Project Concept. The application must:

- i. Identify the key institutions and personnel that will oversee the development and implementation of the three Scopes of Work;
- ii. Describe the relevant prior experience and accomplishments of the lead institutions and key personnel in accelerating regional development and industry development;
- iii. Describe the resources available to support the targeted industry, including access to existing production facilities, relevant equipment, and workforce;
- iv. Provide a plan for implementing (how and when) the Scopes of Work for the three Funding Agencies including the individuals and entities that will manage or oversee activities; and,
- v. Provide a detailed budget as described in Section V.C.2.d.

(2) Soundness of Approach – Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be evaluated in this section based on:

- i. Capacity and commitment of the Applicant Team to carry out the proposed work and achieve success based on strength of previous experience and accomplishments, especially in the areas of regional development;

- ii. Appropriateness, quality, and availability of any facilities, materials and resources to be used in implementing the proposed plan;
- iii. Capacity to effectively manage and implement fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed project;
- iv. Adequacy, appropriateness, and reasonableness of the proposed budget to accomplish the stated objective; and,
- v. Adequacy of the proposed implementation plan (how and when) to accelerate job creation by encouraging re-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms, fostering increased FDI, encouraging U.S. companies to keep or expand their businesses—and jobs—here at home, and training local workers to meet the needs of those businesses.

c) Integrated Project Concept

Applicants must demonstrate how each Scope of Work will be complementary with all other elements of the project and support the overall Make it in America Challenge goals (for an example, see Section III.C. of this FFO). Moreover, the applicants must demonstrate the Applicant Team’s complete understanding of all responsibilities and costs required to implement each phase of the project within the timeframe of the individual Funding Agency performance period.

(1) Integrated Project Concept – Narrative Elements:

The narrative response must:

- i. Present how the Applicant Team, by leveraging multiple resources, intends to meet project objectives and the overall objectives of the FFO, address identified needs, and capitalize on opportunities;
- ii. Clearly express how the proposed Agency-specific scopes of work will complement one another and support the attraction of FDI and expansion of existing companies within the region, leading to growth of the targeted industry; and,
- iii. Describe how the project will promote the growth of manufacturing companies within the region, including how it will foster job creation.

(2) Integrated Project Concept – Evaluation Criteria:

This section of the Project Narrative will be evaluated based on:

- i. The degree to which the proposed concept leverages multiple resources and integrates complementary Scopes of Work to meet the goals and objectives of the FFO;
- ii. Strength and likelihood of the concept to address the identified manufacturing industry needs and opportunities;
- iii. Strength and likelihood that the concept will accelerate receipt of foreign direct investment and expansion of existing manufacturing companies in the U.S.; and
- iv. Strength and likelihood that the concept will grow the targeted industry create businesses, foster job creation, and train high-skilled workers to advance along a career pathway or fill new job openings.

d) **Project Impact and Measurable Outcomes**

(1) **Project Impact and Measurable Outcomes – Narrative Elements:**

Competitive applications will have clearly defined goals and impacts that are aligned with the objective of this Make it in America Challenge FFO and will successfully address the elements and sub-elements that comprise the “Project Impact and Measurable Outcomes” Evaluation Criteria.

Applicants are required to submit an IWP as an addendum to their application (see above at Section V.C.2.c of this FFO). The IWP should be one chart that will capture the combined proposed activities that will be supported by each Funding Agency, the anticipated dates these activities will be completed, and the anticipated magnitude and nature of impacts and measurable outcomes of these activities.

Applicants must input details from each Agency-Specific Scope of Work into the IWP (*see* the suggested template provided in Appendix A). For each Funding Agency, applicants must clearly identify each of the proposed activities.

For each activity, applicants must identify:

- i. The timeline for implementation and completion;
- ii. The resources and inputs used in this activity, including any leveraged resources from other Federally funded activities and partnership networks;
- iii. The measurable program outcome or deliverables over the grant performance period and over the long-term. For example, applicants may consider Agency-specific metrics such as: number of new businesses created; number of workers trained; number of jobs created, etc.; and,
- iv. The methodology and mechanisms for tracking and reporting on these outcomes.

A competitive Applicant Team will also include an assessment of any challenges to meeting the targeted metrics and milestones.

Applicants will be required to utilize the IWP to report quarterly on the **project period** (within the three year funding period) outcomes of their activities. In addition, applicants may utilize the IWP to capture any progress towards **long term** (within nine years after date of award) outcomes of these targets that were identified in their Agency-specific project narratives within the following three areas identified in Section VI.A.3 above:

- i. *Project Outputs*
- ii. *Capacity Outcomes*
- iii. *Realized Outcomes*

Applicants should note that the submitted IWP and associated information will form the basis upon which selected projects will be monitored. Grantees will be required to submit regular reports to the Funding Agencies which document project progress against the scopes of work, deadlines, and measures outlined in the IWP. Grantees are required to report progress in a single unified document that follows the IWP outline and may be submitted to all agencies. Other

reporting requirements for grant recipients are detailed in Section VII.E. below and are identified within the Terms and Conditions of the grant award.

(2) Project Impact and Measurable Outcomes – Evaluation Criteria:

The application will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant documents and provides credible evidence through the Scopes of Work and IWP that the proposed activities will lead to quantifiable impacts that encourage re-shoring of productive activity by U.S. firms, foster increased foreign direct investment, encourage U.S. companies to keep or expand their businesses—and jobs—here at home, and train local workers to meet the needs of those businesses. In addition, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which applicants present practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms for outputs and outcomes which are linked to achieving the objectives identified in this FFO.

These include:

- i. The proposed metrics are relevant to the proposed scopes of work and address Agency-specific requirements as described in section (1) above and Section VI.A.1. of this FFO;
- ii. The quality and reasonableness of the proposed metrics and milestones that are incorporated within the project plan;
- iii. Quality of the methodology presented to capture, report, and track progress against identified metrics and milestones; and,
- iv. The quality and reasonableness of the proposed metrics and milestones within the project plan and the use of available data to drive the development of baselines and projections of overall impacts.

e) Sustainability of Project Outcomes

Applications will be evaluated in this section based on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates resources to ensure institutional capacity to support the industry in the long-term, demonstrates strong potential to continue to develop the industry without future Federal funding, and describes how partnerships and leaders in the region have a deep commitment to support and engage the industry. The Funding Agencies particularly encourage partnerships that include multiple employers in a region and a concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, researchers and developers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular industry that are linked by common workforce needs. Working with multiple businesses helps ensure that training prepares workers for a range of employer needs in the target industry, making participants more employable and giving businesses a stronger employee pool. The applicant must include this information for each activity in the Scope of Work sections of the Project Narrative, as described in Section V.C.2.b of this FFO.

(1) Sustainability of Project Outcomes – Narrative Elements:

In this section, the application will describe the sustainability of the proposed project beyond the project performance period by describing:

- i. Sources of funding or a revenue model which will support the project beyond the award period, without future Federal funding;

- ii. Plans to review needs of and opportunities for the targeted industry over time; and,
- iii. Additional resources and partnerships that will continue to support the project beyond the award period; and,
- iv. The impact on regional clusters in which the project is located.

(2) Sustainability of Project Outcomes – Evaluation Criteria:

The application will be evaluated on the applicant’s plan for sustaining success beyond the period of Federal funding, including:

- i. Demonstrated sustainable funding sources or likelihood for the project to succeed and be sufficient for ongoing activities;
- ii. Adequacy and likelihood of the plan to promote the sustained growth of SMEs beyond the award period;
- iii. Adequacy of plan to continuously identify needs and opportunities; and,
- iv. Strength of partnerships, level of commitment, and potential to take advantage of new opportunities to maintain the region’s competitiveness and contribute to the successful growth of the targeted industry.

B. Review Process

1. Technical Review

Each Funding Agency will conduct an initial review of applications submitted and received by the deadline stated in Section V.B. of this FFO. Each Funding Agency will conduct an independent responsiveness review to ensure compliance with its agency-specific requirements. This review will determine if the application satisfies: (a) all requirements for a complete submission (including all required forms, documentation of cost share or matching funds, and addenda to the Proposal); (b) agency-specific eligibility criteria (listed by agency in Section IV of this FFO); and, (c) agency-specific requirements for permitted activities. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review. Upon completion of the technical review, applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive by all Funding Agencies will proceed to full merit reviews in accordance with the following review and selection processes.

2. Merit Review Panels

Each Funding Agency will convene one or more Merit Review Panels, as necessary, to first review and evaluate proposals based on the agency-specific evaluation criteria enumerated in Section VI.A. of this FFO. Merit Review Panels will consist of a minimum of 3 panelists. Each agency merit review panel will separate applications into at least three categories representing the strongest to weakest applications, and rank the strongest to weakest applications within each category. Based on this evaluation, each Agency’s panel will determine which applications merit further consideration. If non-Federal reviewers are used, reviewers may discuss applications, but scoring will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus. Applications determined to merit further consideration by all three Funding Agency panels will be forwarded to the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee in ranked order.

To further clarify, both the Technical and Merit Reviews will be conducted separately at EDA, NIST MEP and DOL. Based on their evaluation, each Agency will determine which applications merit further consideration. At that point, applications determined to merit further consideration by all three Funding Agency panels will be forwarded to the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee in ranked order.

3. Policy Review and Recommendation Committee

The Policy Review and Recommendation Committee (the Committee) will include one representative from each Funding Agency. The Committee will first consider the applications that all agencies' Merit Review Panels rate strongest. Should additional applications need to be considered in order to meet funding and geographic distribution goals, the Committee will then look at applications that some agencies rated strong but others rated lower before considering applications that all agencies have rated not as strong. The Committee will consider the rankings from each agency along with the same policy factors as the Committee deems appropriate:

- strength of the integrated project concept;
- geographic balance of funded projects;
- range of funded project types and targeted industries;
- variety of organizations funded;
- diversity of populations served;
- availability of funds; and,
- applicants' performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards.

Following its review, the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee will recommend up to 15 applications to the Agency Selecting Officials.

4. Agency Selecting Officials

Selecting officials are authorized to make selection decisions and will forward the results to respective agency Grants Officers to process the awards. The selecting officials for EDA are the Regional Directors in EDA's six regional offices, who will review award recommendations from the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee and select EDA awardees for their respective region. The NIST selecting official is the Director of the MEP program. The ETA selecting official is the designated ETA Grants Officer. In the event a selection official is not available, the official's designee may serve. Selecting officials may follow the recommendations of the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee, and may also consider the policy factors listed in section 3 above in making their selections. If the selecting officials select an application that is not included in the set of applications recommended by the Policy Review and Recommendation Committee, the selecting officials must document the rationale for the decision in writing and confer with other agencies on final selections. In accordance with the Federal appropriations law expected to be in effect at the time of project funding, selected applicants may be provided a form and asked to make a representation regarding any unpaid delinquent tax liability or felony conviction under any Federal law.

Funding Agencies reserve the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs. Additionally, Funding Agencies may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information. Funding Agencies also reserve the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the applicant. Funding Agencies may select part, some, all, or none of the applications. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the Funding Agencies' Grant Officer. The award decisions of the Funding Agencies' Grant Officers are final.

C. Transparency

The agencies and bureaus involved in this initiative are committed to conducting a transparent financial assistance award process and publicizing information about investment decisions. Applicants are advised that their respective applications and information related to their review and evaluation may be shared publicly. For further information on how proprietary, confidential commercial/business, and personally identifiable information will be protected see Section VIII.B. of this FFO. In addition, information about project progress and related results may also be made publicly available.

VII. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notification

Applicants selected for awards will be contacted directly before execution of the financial assistance award documents. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by mail or email that their application was not selected for funding, and may request a debriefing on their submitted application. A list of successful awardees may be posted on the Funding Agency websites (including the Make it in America Challenge webpage at http://manufacturing.gov/make_it_in_america.html).

Important: Selection of an organization under this FFO does not constitute approval of the proposed project as submitted. Before any funds are awarded, the Funding Agencies may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support implementation of the award. The amount of available funding may require the final award amount to be less than that requested by the applicant. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant for the applicable Funding Agency reserves the right to terminate the negotiations and decline to fund the application. The Funding Agencies reserve the right not to fund any application received under this FFO.

- If an application is selected for funding and the applicant successfully and timely completes all due diligence requirements, the expectation is that the EDA selecting official (who also serves as the Grant Officer) will issue the EDA grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document. By signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. The grant award shall be submitted by two day express mail to the appropriate business office of the recipient

organization. The recipient must sign and return the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date of EDA's signature on the form.

- Successful NIST applicants will receive an award from the NIST Grant Officer. The award cover page, i.e., CD-450, Financial Assistance Award is available at http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01_002513.pdf and the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (January 2013), which may be updated by the time of award, are available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.pdf.
- ETA may elect to award the H-1B Technical Training Grant funds with or without engaging in discussions with the successful applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the applicant's signature on the Form SF-424, including electronic signature via E-Authentication on Grants.gov, which constitutes a binding offer by the applicant.

B. Unsuccessful Competition

On occasion, competitive funding opportunities or competitive panels produce less than optimum results, such as a competition resulting in the receipt of no applications, a competition resulting in the receipt of only unresponsive or unqualified applications, or too few highly-rated applications. In the event that these conditions arise, the Funding Agencies shall take the most time- and cost-effective approach available that is in the best interest of the Federal government. This includes (1) re-competition, (2) re-paneling, or (3) formal negotiation.

C. National and Agency Specific Policies

Award recipients under this FFO are subject to all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and OMB Circulars.

1. Department of Commerce Administrative and National Policies

a) EDA's Non-Relocation Policy

Applicants are advised that should an application be selected for award, the recipient will be required to adhere to a special award condition relating to EDA's non-relocation policy as follows:

In signing this award of financial assistance, Recipient(s) attests that EDA funding is not intended by the Recipient to assist its efforts to induce the relocation of existing jobs within the U.S. that are located outside of its jurisdiction to within its jurisdiction in competition with other U.S. jurisdictions for those same jobs. In the event that EDA determines that its assistance was used for those purposes, EDA retains the right to pursue appropriate enforcement action in accord with the Standard Terms and Conditions of the Award, including suspension of disbursements and termination of the award for convenience or cause, which may include the establishment of a debt requiring the Recipient to reimburse EDA.

For purposes of ensuring that EDA assistance will be used to advance new economic opportunities and not to merely transfer jobs from one location in the United States to another,

each applicant must inform EDA of all employers that constitute primary beneficiaries of the project assisted by EDA. EDA will consider an employer to be a “primary beneficiary” if the applicant estimates that such employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance, provided that such employer also is specifically named in the application as benefitting from the project, or is or will be located in an EDA-assisted building, port, facility, or industrial, commercial, or business park constructed or improved in whole or in part with assistance prior to EDA’s final disbursement of funds. In smaller communities, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs.

b) NIST MEP Funding Instrument

The funding instrument that will be used for each award is a cooperative agreement. The nature of NIST’s “substantial involvement” will generally be collaboration between NIST MEP and the recipient organizations. This includes MEP collaboration with a recipient on its progress and approving changes in the statement of work. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in the *DOC Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual*, which is available at

http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.pdf.

c) NIST and EDA Award Notices and DOC Standard Award Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants will receive an award from the EDA or NIST Grants Officer. The award cover page, i.e., CD-450, *Financial Assistance Award* is available at

http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01_002513.pdf and the *DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions* (January 2013), which may be updated by the time of award, are available at

http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.pdf.

d) NIST and EDA Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all DOC awards apply to this competition. These requirements may be found in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, published in the Federal Register on December 17, 2012 (77FR 74634). This notice may be accessed at the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-17/pdf/2012-30228.pdf>. You may locate the notice by clicking on the radial buttons until you reach the Federal Register published on December 17, 2012 and then clicking on “Commerce Department,” Uniform Administrative Requirements and Federal Cost Principles. This notice may be amended by the time of the award.

The uniform administrative requirements for DOC grants and cooperative agreements are codified at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24, as applicable. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, supplies, and other expenses that are reasonable and necessary for the completion of the Scope of Work. EDA allowable costs are determined in accordance with the following regulations (incorporated by reference at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24); (i) 2 C.F.R. Part 220, *Cost Principles for Education Institutions* (OMB Circular A-210); (ii) 2 C.F.R. Part 225, *Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian tribal Governments* (OMB Circular A-87); (iii) 2 C.F.R. Part 230, *Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations* (OMB Circular A-122); and, (iv) Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 31.2, *Contracts with Commercial Organizations*, codified at 48

C.F.R. 31.2. Applicable administrative requirements and Federal cost principles are incorporated by reference into the terms and conditions of each EDA and NIST award.

e) NIST and EDA Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of FY 2013 Federal appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will EDA and NIST or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not obligate NIST to make an award to any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

f) NIST Award Implementation

Given the partnership nature of MEP Centers, and to clarify and support the project activities and budget, NIST may ask recipients to provide copies of sub-tier agreements, including sub-awards and contracts. In addition, to better understand and implement the national manufacturing extension network and partnership, NIST may ask recipients to provide an Operating Plan and Budget showing manufacturing extension service activity and costs in which the Center is engaged outside the Federal share.

g) Collaborations with NIST Employees

All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed by an entity other than the applicant, and the cost of such work should ordinarily be included in the budget. If an applicant proposes collaboration with NIST, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention, a description of the collaboration, and prominently identify the NIST employee(s) involved, if known. Any collaboration by a NIST employee must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the approval of the proposed collaboration. Any unapproved collaboration will be stricken from the application prior to the merit review.

h) Use of NIST Intellectual Property

If the applicant anticipates using any NIST-owned intellectual property to carry out the work proposed, the applicant should identify such intellectual property. This information will be used to ensure that no NIST employee involved in the development of the intellectual property will participate in the review process for that competition. In addition, if the applicant intends to use NIST-owned intellectual property, the applicant must comply with all statutes and regulations governing the licensing of Federal government patents and inventions, described in 35 U.S.C. §§ 200-212, 37 C.F.R. Part 401, 15 C.F.R. 14.36, and in Section B.21 of the *DOC Pre-Award Notification Requirements*, 77 FR 74634 (December 17, 2012). Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803.

Any use of NIST-owned intellectual property by an applicant is at the sole discretion of NIST and will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis if a project is deemed meritorious. The applicant should indicate within the statement of work whether it already has a license to use such intellectual property or whether it intends to seek one.

i) Collaborations Making Use of Federal Facilities

All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed using Federal facilities. If an applicant proposes use of NIST facilities, the statement of work should

include a statement of this intention and a description of the facilities. Any use of NIST facilities must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the availability of the facilities and approval of the proposed usage. Any unapproved facility use will be stricken from the application prior to the merit review. Examples of some facilities that may be available for collaborations are listed on the NIST Technology Services Web site, <http://www.nist.gov/user-facilities.cfm>.

2. ETA Administrative and National Policies

a) Administrative Program Requirement

The ETA funds awarded under this FFO will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions:

- i. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A–122 (Cost Principles), codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 230, and 29 C.F.R. Part 95 (Administrative Requirements);
- ii. Educational Institutions – OMB Circular A–21 (Cost Principles), codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 220, and 29 C.F.R. Part 95 (Administrative Requirements);
- iii. State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments – OMB Circular A–87 (Cost Principles), codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 225, and 29 C.F.R. Part 97 (Administrative Requirements);
- iv. Profit Making Commercial Firms – Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) – 48 C.F.R. Part 31 (Cost Principles), and 29 C.F.R. Part 95 (Administrative Requirements);
- v. All grant recipients must comply with the applicable provisions of 20 C.F.R. 667 Subpart F;
- vi. All entities must comply with 29 C.F.R. Part 93 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), 29 C.F.R. Part 94 (Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), 29 C.F.R. 95.13 and Part 98 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, and drug-free workplace requirements), and, where applicable, 29 C.F.R. Part 96 (Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements) and 29 C.F.R. Part 99 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations);
- vii. 29 C.F.R. Part 2, subpart D—Equal Treatment in Department of Labor Programs for Religious Organizations, Protection of Religious Liberty of Department of Labor Social Service Providers and Beneficiaries;
- viii. 29 C.F.R. Part 31—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Labor—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- ix. 29 C.F.R. Part 32—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance;
- x. 29 C.F.R. Part 35—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor;
- xi. 29 C.F.R. Part 36—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance;

- xii. 29 C.F.R. Part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; and,
- xiii. 29 C.F.R. Parts 29 and 30—Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs, and Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training, as applicable.

b) Other Legal Requirements

ETA notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000bb) applies to all Federal law and its implementation. If your 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 Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and maintain that hiring practice even though Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act contains a general ban on religious discrimination in employment. If you are awarded a grant under this FFO, you will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

c) Other Administrative Standards and Provisions

Except as specifically provided in this FFO, ETA’s 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 Circulars require that an entity’s procurement procedures must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide open and free competition. If an application identifies a specific entity to provide services, ETA’s award does not provide the justification or basis to allow sole source the procurement (i.e., avoid competition) unless the activity is regarded as the primary work of an official partner to the application. Grantees that use sub-grantees are advised that for commercial organizations, the earning of profits is not an allowable cost item. For governmental, non-profit, and public or non-profit educational institutions, earnings above actual costs incurred are to be treated as program income. Any program income earned must be used towards program purposes.

General economic development projects, including revolving loan accounts, do not meet the H-1B requirements for training and development of job opportunities in high-growth industries and occupations. Examples of general economic development that may not meet this standard include but are not limited to infrastructure investments in businesses, increases in inventory, participation in trade shows, revolving loan accounts, new or additional equipment used for purposes other than training activities, capital asset purchases, and other costs not specifically related to increases in actual job opportunities.

d) Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

e) ETA Funding restrictions

All costs described in the application must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with Federal guidelines. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles. Disallowed costs are those charged to a grant that the grantor agency or its representative determines not to be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles or other conditions contained in the grant.

(1) Administrative Costs

Under this FFO, an entity that receives a grant to carry out a project or program may not use more than 5% of the amount of the grant to pay administrative costs associated with the program or project. Administrative costs could be direct or indirect costs, and are defined at 20 C.F.R. 667.220. Administrative costs do not need to be identified separately from program costs on the SF-424A *Budget Information Form*. However, they must be tracked through the grantee's accounting system. To claim any administrative costs that are also indirect costs, the applicant must obtain an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement from its Federal Cognizant agency, as specified above.

(2) Intellectual Property Rights

The recipient may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was developed, or for which ownership was purchased, under an award. The Federal awarding agencies reserve a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes, and to authorize others to do so. Recipients are subject to applicable regulations governing patents and inventions, including government-wide regulations issued by the Department of Commerce at 37 C.F.R. Part 401, "*Rights to Inventions Made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts and Cooperative Agreements.*"

Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. The grantee may not use Federal funds to pay any royalty or license fee for use of a copyrighted work, or the cost of acquiring by purchase a copyright in a work, where the Department has a license or rights of free use in such work. If revenues are generated through selling products developed with grant funds, including intellectual property, these revenues are program income. Program income is added to the grant and must be expended for allowable grant activities.

3. Grant Amount Determination

In the event the applicant is awarded a grant that is less than the amount requested, the applicant will be required to modify its application to conform to the reduced amount before execution of the grant agreement. The Agency reserves the right to reduce or withdraw the award if acceptable modifications are not submitted by the awardee within 15 working days from the date the request for modification is made. Any modifications must be within the scope of the original application.

4. Other Legal Requirements

a) Lobbying or Fundraising the U.S. Government with Federal Funds

In accordance with Section 18 of the *Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995* (Pub. L. No. 104-65) (2 U.S.C. § 1611), non-profit entities incorporated under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(4) that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive Federal funds. No activity, including awareness-raising and advocacy activities, may include fundraising for, or lobbying of, U.S. Federal, State or Local Governments (see OMB Circular A-122).

b) OMB Circular A-133 Audit Requirements

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in OMB Circular A-133, "*Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit*

Organizations,” and the related Compliance Supplement. OMB Circular A-133 requires a non-Federal entity (i.e., non-profit organizations, including non-profit institutions of higher education and hospitals, States, local governments, and Indian Tribes) that expends Federal awards of \$500,000 or more in the recipient’s fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the Circular. Applicants are reminded that the agencies and their Offices of Inspector General also may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

D. Project Outcomes Evaluation and Data Collection

The Funding Agencies are considering a range of options for post-award evaluation of the outcomes and benefits of the Make it in America Challenge, including evaluation conducted with existing resources at each Agency as well as potential retention of an independent evaluator. By accepting funds under this FFO, grantees agree to participate in any such evaluation. Grantees will be expected to make records of their program participation, metrics, underlying data, participants, employers and funding available and to provide access to program operating personnel and to participants, as specified by any evaluator (whether independent or within one or more of the Funding Agencies), including after the period of operation.

E. Reporting Requirements

All recipients are required to submit financial and performance reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award. For all recipients, this includes a Quarterly Narrative Report that updates all Funding Agencies on quarterly program activities, outcomes, and outputs identified in the IWP. As noted above, recipients are encouraged to report progress in a single unified document that follows the IWP outline and may be submitted to all agencies. This collaborative report will be submitted electronically and provide a succinct overview that describes how current quarter activities contribute to the long-term success of the project.

Additional Agency-specific reporting requirements for recipients are detailed in sections 1-5 below and are identified within the Terms and Conditions of each individual grant award.

1. EDA Reporting Requirements

All recipients are required to submit financial, performance, and impact reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award, generally no less than semi-annually. All project progress and financial reports must be submitted to the applicable EDA program officer in electronic format.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. part 170 (2010), which can be accessed at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl.

EDA may require additional data on actual impact of the funded investment, pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), to be submitted to EDA up to nine years after the grant award.

The conditions of the grant award will be developed based on the project type, scope, and risk, as presented in the recipient's Project Narrative and Integrated Work Plan (*see* Section VI.A.).

Award agreements will include additional information on reporting requirements, including requirements for reporting on project progress and project impact and measurable outcomes as outlined in Section V.A.2.d. The recipient will be required to submit periodic financial and project progress reports throughout the project period, as well as final project and financial reports at the end of the award. The recipient may also be required to provide qualitative and quantitative data on project progress and best practices, including through learning events or forums throughout the project period.

2. NIST MEP Reporting Requirements

a) Reporting Requirements

In lieu of the reporting requirements described in Sections A.01 Financial Reports and B.01 Performance (Technical) Reports of the *DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions* dated January 2013

(http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.pdf), the following reporting requirements shall apply:

- **Financial Reports.** The recipient shall submit a “Federal Financial Report” (Form SF-42) on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30, or any portion thereof, unless otherwise specified by a special award condition. Reports are due no later than 30 days following the end of each reporting period. A final Form SF-425 shall be submitted within 90 days after the expiration of the project period. The reports must be submitted to the Grants Officer electronically, or in hard copy (no more than an original and two copies), in accordance with award conditions.
- **Performance (Technical) Reports.** Each award recipient will be required to submit a performance (technical) progress report electronically or in hard copy (no more than an original and two copies), in accordance with the award conditions, on a quarterly basis for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. A final technical progress report shall be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the award. Two copies of the technical progress report shall be submitted to the Project Manager and the original report to the NIST Grants Officer. Technical progress reports shall contain information as prescribed in 15 C.F.R. § 14.51.

b) Post Project Client Follow-Up:

For demonstration activities, as applicable, the recipient shall provide client and project data in the specified format to the organization identified by NIST MEP in order for post-project follow-up data to be obtained (OMB Control Number 0693-0032).

MEP Centers will be expected to report on activities implemented under this FFO as part of the Annual and Panel Review process.

3. ETA Reporting Requirements

a) Quarterly Financial Reports

A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the project period has expired. Quarterly reports are due no later than 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter, and reports will be accepted earlier to better align with the other Federal Agency reporting timelines. Grantees must use ETA's Online Electronic Reporting System. Information and instructions will be provided to grantees.

b) Quarterly Performance Reports

The grantee must submit a quarterly progress report no later than 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter, and reports will be accepted earlier to better align with the other Federal Agency reporting timelines. The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities. Grantees must collect participant-level data on individuals who receive education/training and other services provided through the grant. This data will be the basis for reporting against the outcomes included in the Final Performance Report as well as additional outcomes that will be defined through reporting requirements. An applicant must collect and report participant-level data from the following categories: demographic (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, disability status) and socioeconomic characteristics; services provided; and, outcomes achieved. Grantees will be required to report on post-program outcomes for all participants, as well as on post-program follow-up and tracking activities for all participants.

c) Final Performance Report

The last quarterly progress report that grantees submit will serve as the Final Performance Report. This report should provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant activities. It must summarize project activities, employment outcomes and other deliverables, and related results of the project, and should thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches used by the grantee. ETA will provide grantees with formal guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis.

Applicants must follow Federal guidelines on record retention, which require grantees to maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of not less than three years from the time of final award close-out.

VIII. Additional Information and Requirements

A. No Obligation for Future Funding

If an applicant is awarded funding under this FFO, neither the DOC, EDA, NIST, DOL, nor the ETA are under any obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award or to make future award(s). Amendment or renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the governmental entities identified in Section IV. of this FFO.

B. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

The *Freedom of Information Act* (5 U.S.C. § 552) (FOIA), the DOC's implementing regulations at 15 C.F.R. Part 4; and DOL's implementation regulations at 29 C.F.R. Part 70, set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications submitted by applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information." Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

C. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by the DOC (or any of its operating units) or DOL ETA and may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: (1) establishing an account receivable; (2) withholding payments to the recipient under any DOC or ETA award(s); (3) changing the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only; (4) imposing other special award conditions; (5) suspending any active DOC or DOL award(s); and (6) terminating any active DOC or DOL award(s).

D. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN), Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and Central Contractor Registration (CCR)

All applicants for Federal financial assistance are required to obtain a universal identifier in the form of DUNS number and maintain a current registration in the CCR database, **now a part of SAM and is located at www.sam.gov**. On the Form SF-424 items 8.b. and 8.c., the applicant's 9-digit EIN/TIN and 9-digit DUNS number must be consistent with the information on the CCR and Automated Standard Application for Payment System (ASAP). For complex organizations with multiple EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers, the EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers **MUST** be the numbers for the applying organization. Organizations that provide incorrect/inconsistent EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers may experience significant delays in receiving funds if their application is selected for funding. Confirm that the EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers are consistent with the information on the CCR and ASAP.

1. DUNS Number and CCR Registration

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the CCR, now a part of SAM and is located at www.sam.gov, and DUNS, and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. parts 25 and 170 (2010). The guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 25 may be located at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl, and the guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 170 may be located at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl.

2. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

DOL is committed to conducting a transparent grant award process and publicizing information about program outcomes. Posting grant applications on public websites is a means of promoting and sharing innovative ideas. No other parts of or attachments to the application will be published. The Technical Proposals and Abstracts will not be published until after the grants are announced. In addition, information about grant progress and results may also be made publicly available.

DOL recognizes that grant applications sometimes contain information that applicant may consider proprietary or business confidential information, or may contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Proprietary or confidential commercial/business information is information that is not usually disclosed outside an organization and the disclosure of which is likely to cause substantial competitive harm. PII is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information.

Abstracts will be published in the form originally submitted, without any redactions. However, in order to ensure that PII and proprietary or confidential commercial/business information is properly protected from disclosure, grantees will be required to submit a second redacted version of their Technical Proposal, with any proprietary, confidential commercial/business, and PII redacted within 30 days of grant award. All non-public information about applicant's staff should be removed as well. The Department will contact applicants whose technical proposals will be published by letter or email, and provide further directions about how and when to submit the redacted version of the Technical Proposal. Submission of a redacted version of the Technical Proposal will constitute permission by applicant for DOL to make the redacted version publicly available. If applicant fails to provide a redacted version of the Technical Proposal, DOL will publish the original Technical Proposal in full, after redacting PII. (Note that the original, unredacted version of the Technical Proposal will remain part of the complete application package, including applicant's proprietary and confidential information and any PII.)

Applicants are required to exercise restraint in redacting proprietary, confidential commercial/business, and PII from their technical proposals, and to redact only information that clearly is proprietary, confidential commercial/business information, or PII. The redaction of entire pages or sections of the Technical Proposal is not appropriate, and will not be allowed, unless the entire portion merits such protection. Should a dispute arise about whether redactions are appropriate, DOL will follow the procedures outlined in the Department's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations (29 CFR Part 70).

Redacted information in grant applications will be protected by DOL from public disclosure in accordance with federal law, including the Trade Secrets Act (18 U.S.C. § 1905), FOIA, and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a). If DOL receives a FOIA request for an application, the procedures in DOL's FOIA regulations for responding to requests for commercial/business information submitted to the government will be followed, as well as all FOIA exemptions and procedures. 29 CFR § 70.26. Consequently, it is possible that application of FOIA rules may result in release of information in response to a FOIA request that applicant redacted in its "redacted copy."

E. C.F.R. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued revised regulations implementing Title II of the ADA (28 C.F.R. part 35; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13285) and Title III of the ADA (28 C.F.R. part 36; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13286). The revised regulations adopted new enforceable accessibility standards called the “2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design” (2010 Standards). The 2010 Standards are an acceptable alternative to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). DOC deems compliance with the 2010 Standards to be an acceptable means of complying with the Section 504 accessibility requirements for new construction and alteration projects under 15 C.F.R. 8b.18(c), as follows:

Public Recipients subject to Title II of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS where the physical construction or alternations commence on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (see 28 C.F.R. 35.151(c)(2)); and,

Private Recipients subject to Title III of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is certified to be complete by a State, county, or local government (or, in those jurisdictions where the government does not certify completion of applications, if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is received by the State, county, or local government) is on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012, or if no permit is required, if the start of physical construction or alterations occurs on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (see 28 C.F.R. 36.406(a)(2)).

As of March 15, 2012, all new construction and alteration projects must comply with the 2010 Standards. In all cases, once a recipient selects an applicable ADA accessibility standard (i.e., the 2010 Standards or UFAS), that standard must be applied to the entire facility.

Appendix A. Integrated Work Plan – Suggested Template

All applicants are required to submit an Integrated Work Plan that demonstrates how the proposed project concept will produce substantial benefits and meet the objectives of this FFO using the following suggested template or a format of their choice that provides the information below. Applicants applying for DRA funds should also include information for DRA in the integrated work plan.

Funding Agency and Objective	Activity (list grant activities by agency)	Activity Timeline	Resources: Inputs, Leveraged Funds	Program Outcome or Deliverables (Grant Period of Performance and Long-term)	Methodology (including Tracking and Reporting Mechanism)
EDA Strengthening Regional Assets					
NIST ²² Connecting Regional Supply Chains and Assisting SMEs					
ETA Building a Highly-Skilled and Diverse Workforce					

Other Narrative Elements

Funding Agency/Project	Assessment of Challenges or Potential Barriers to Success
EDA	
NIST	
ETA	

²² For projects where there is not reasonable availability of an MEP center in the targeted region, the proposing organization will still be expected to engage appropriate SMEs and partners to address outreach, service delivery, and technology commercialization needs of SMEs and the requested information on this form is still required. However, no NIST funds will be awarded. NIST MEP will only fund existing MEP Centers that are part of the applicant team.

Integrated Work Plan Definitions

- **Activity:** The specific proposed activities or programs that will address the objectives of each funding agency.
- **Activity Timeline:** The anticipated duration of each listed activity, denominated in quarter-years.
- **Resources/Inputs:** The investment in the project such as funds, partnerships, equipment, etc. that will be utilized to meet the objective.
- **Program Outcome or Deliverables (Period of Performance):** The immediate, short-term result(s) of each listed activity. Applicants must list activities according to the timeframes associated with each requested funding source.
- **Program Outcome or Deliverables (Long-term):** The long-term benefits that will ensue from successful completion of the listed activities. These outcomes must be consistent with the goals and objectives of each funding agency.
- **Methodology:** A short summary outlining how the outcome will be measured/calculated and the mechanism by which it will be tracked, as well as any additional information about the numeric value that will be reported (for example, about the quality or type of jobs, source of private investment or types of businesses assisted).

Project Contacts

	Grantee Name	Project Name	Project Lead/Point of Contact and Contact Information
EDA			
NIST			
ETA			

Appendix B. DRA Eligibility and Submission Guidelines

A. Overview

The Delta Regional Authority's rural communities programs address three of the four congressionally mandated goals of the Authority: 1) Improve basic public infrastructure in distressed or isolated areas of distress; 2) Business development, with emphasis on entrepreneurship; and 3) Job training and employment-related education.

The projects funded through this program have improved local water and sewer systems; developed strategic plans for rural communities; provided entrepreneurship training to countless Delta residents; and provided job training to thousands, many of which have been employed immediately upon completion of training.

For complete DRA eligibility and submission instructions please go to www.dra.gov.

A. What are DRA's eligibility requirements?

The DRA Federal funding program is available only to participating member states, local governments (city and county) and non-profit entities, for projects within the DRA member states' counties and parishes as defined by the Delta Regional Authority Act as amended. A list of DRA member states' counties and parishes can be found at: <http://www.dra.gov/about-us/eight-state-map.aspx>. Applicants are not required to be located in a rural area to apply. However, projects must impact rural communities, defined by USDA as any area other than (i) a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants; and (ii) the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such city or town.

B. What are the DRA permitted activities?

DRA grant funds may be used to assist in the economic development of rural areas by providing technical assistance for business development and economic development planning. Grant funds may be used for, but are not limited to, the following purposes:

- Identify and analyze business opportunities that will use local rural materials or human resources. This includes opportunities in export markets, as well as feasibility and business plan studies;
- Identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers;
- Establish business support centers and otherwise assist in the creation of new rural businesses;
- Conduct local community or multi-county economic development planning;
- Establish centers for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to rural businesses in the utilization of interactive communications technologies to develop international trade opportunities and markets;
- Conduct leadership development training of existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers; or

- Pay reasonable fees and charges for professional services necessary to conduct the technical assistance, training, or planning functions.

C. What is the cost sharing or matching share requirement for DRA funding?

Under this FFO there is no matching requirement for DRA funds. However, DRA gives preference to proposals that have at least 25% matching funds. Note that DRA funds being sought under this FFO are ineligible for use as Matching Share for EDA, or other Federal funds also being sought under this FFO.

D. DRA Scope of Work

As identified in section VI.A.1. of this FFO, applicants must clearly identify a distinct scope of work for DRA funds. This scope of work must include a description of the proposed project, details of the proposed activities to be accomplished and timeframes for completion of each task, the number of months duration of the project, and the estimated time it will take from grant approval to beginning of project implementation. The DRA scope of work must be distinct from EDA, NIST and ETA activities. The funds for the DRA scope of work cannot also fund the scopes of work proposed for EDA, NIST and ETA funds. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that funds will not overlap across scopes of work. **See DRA’s regulations at 7 C.F.R. 4284.638(a)(2)(iii) or go to www.dra.gov for additional requirements for the DRA scope of work.**

E. DRA Performance Metrics

All recipients of DRA funds are required to submit quarterly reports on their activities, which must address the progress achieved toward the accomplishments projected in the scope of work.

Performance metrics will be based on the actions proposed in the scope of work. Metrics should reflect the number of actions as a result of the grant investment as well as other appropriate economic development metrics. **Applicants must integrate DRA activities and associated performance measures into the Integrated Work Plan** as outlined in section VI.A.2.d and Appendix A, clearly showing how DRA funds will contribute to the measures listed.

F. DRA Application Submission Guidelines

In order to apply for DRA funds, applicants must send DRA application materials **directly** to DRA. DRA will not accept applications transmitted by facsimile, courier, or postal mail. DRA is not currently accepting applications through www.grants.gov and will accept a proposal submitted through the Accelerate link at www.dra.gov by following these steps:

- Click Accelerate link on www.dra.gov main page;
- Under the heading “*Need to create an account for the DRA Grants site? Sign up here:*” fill in the requested information and click **Create Account**;
- Fill out all documents following instructions provided in the documents; and
- Click **Submit Forms**.

Or, applicants may save application materials as a single PDF file attached to an email and send to accelerate@dra.gov.

G. DRA Forms

All forms required by DRA can be found at www.dra.gov, and must be submitted electronically as outlined in section F above. Required forms include:

- SF-424
- SF-424A
- SF-424B

H. DRA Award Notification

DRA will notify award winners by email or by postal mail. Upon approval of a mutually acceptable submission, a grant agreement will be sent to the recipient's business office by the DRA Director of Project Development & Management. The DRA grant agreement must be signed and returned without modification by an authorized representative of the recipient within 30 days after receipt.

USDA Instruction 4284-G is the regulation that administers this DRA grant and is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/4284g.pdf>. Requirements to adhere to applicable administrative requirements and Federal cost principles are incorporated by reference into the terms and conditions of each DRA award. Award recipients must follow the OMB circular appropriate for their type of organization.

I. DRA Reporting Requirements

Financial and performance progress reports, submitted by electronic means, are required from each recipient in accordance with the grant agreement. Quarterly report narratives shall include current information and reflect back on the tasks, timeline, and output/outcome measures described in the grant application and also included in the IWP as outlined in section VI.C.2.c. and Appendix A. Relevant information should include activities which occurred during the previous quarter, any problems or disruptions which prevented project goals from being met, how the grantee expects to overcome the issues and complete the project on time, and what tasks are expected to occur in the coming quarter. Quarters are divided by the calendar quarter and reports are due to DRA by the 15th of the month following the end of each quarter.

For complete information regarding applying for DRA funds, please go to www.dra.gov.

Appendix C. H-1B Visa Information

The following tables reflect top 2011 H-1B Visas by North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Codes, Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Codes, SOC Occupation Titles, and Annual Median Wage. **Please note:** this list is not exhaustive and applicants are advised to also refer to the Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site (<http://www.flcdatacenter.com/CaseH1B.aspx>) for the latest database of occupations approved under H-1B petitions.)

STEM-Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (NAICS: 54)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary ¹
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	94,670
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	83,550
19-1021	Biochemists and Biophysicists	87,640
17-2051	Civil Engineers	82,710
19-2031	Chemists	74,780
15-2041	Statisticians	77,280
27-1024	Graphic Designers	48,690

Manufacturing (NAICS: 31-33)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary ¹
13-1111	Management Analysts	87,980
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	67,130
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	79,840
11-2021	Marketing Managers	126,190

Information (NAICS: 51)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary ¹
15-1131	Computer Programmers	76,010
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	82,320
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	100,420
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	92,080
15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	74,270
15-1799	Computer Occupations, All Other*	80,500
15-1141	Database Administrators	77,350
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	125,660
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	101,360

Finance and Insurance (NAICS: 52)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary¹
13-2051	Financial Analysts	87,740
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	70,130
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	69,070

Educational Services (NAICS: 61)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary¹
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	55,270
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational	56,760

Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS: 62)

SOC Codes	Name	Annual Salary¹
29-1069	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	184,650
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	78,840
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	87,640
29-1123	Physical Therapists	79,830
29-1063	Internists, General	189,210
29-1051	Pharmacists	112,160

¹Source: The Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2011 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates

²Only the Occupations with at least 1,000 H-1B Visas issued were used.

Appendix D. Contact Information

The Make it in America Challenge website at http://manufacturing.gov/make_it_in_america.html contains additional information, including an extensive list of frequently asked questions (FAQs). Questions regarding the content of this announcement must be submitted to makeitinamerica@eda.gov not later than 3 business days prior to the application due date. In addition, you may contact the appropriate person listed below for technical questions.

A. EDA Contact Information

Applicants should direct all technical questions regarding the EDA program to the appropriate EDA Regional Office contact listed below. EDA's website at www.eda.gov contains additional information on EDA and its programs.

EDA Regional Office Contact:	States Served:
Austin Regional Office Rick Sebenoler: (512) 381-8155	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas
Atlanta Regional Office Robin Cooley: (803) 253-3640	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee
Chicago Regional Office Robin Bush: (312) 353-8143 x146	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa (Muscatine and Scott counties), Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin
Denver Regional Office Justin Fazzari: (303) 844-4089	Colorado, Iowa (excluding Muscatine and Scott counties), Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming
Philadelphia Regional Office Chivas Grannum (215) 597-8723	Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands
Seattle Regional Office Mary Rudokas: (206) 220-7694	Alaska, Arizona, American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nevada, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Republic of Palau, and Washington

B. NIST Contact Information

Questions should be directed to the following contact persons:

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Programmatic and technical questions	Mark Troppe Manufacturing Extension Partnership NIST Phone: 301-975-5745 Fax: 301-963-6556 E-mail: mark.troppe@nist.gov
Administrative, budget, cost-sharing, and eligibility questions, and other programmatic questions	Diane Henderson Manufacturing Extension Partnership NIST Phone: 301-975-5105 Fax: 301-963-6556 E-mail: diane.henderson@nist.gov
Grants.gov - Proposal submission	Christopher Hunton Grants & Agreements Management Division NIST Phone: 301-975-5718 Fax: 301-840-5976 E-mail: christopher.hunton@nist.gov
Grant rules and regulations	Leon Sampson Grants & Agreements Management Division NIST Phone: 301-975-3086 Fax: 301-926-6458 E-mail: leon.sampson@nist.gov

D. ETA Contact Information

Applicants should direct all technical questions regarding the ETA program to:

Jeannette Flowers
202-693-3322
Flowers.Jeannette@dol.gov

Questions will be accepted by ETA up to 3 business days prior to the application due date.

E. DRA Contact Information

Applicants should direct all technical questions regarding the DRA program to:

Kemp Morgan, Director
Project Development & Management
662-624-8600
kmorgan@dra.gov