

Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) for Grants

Serving Young Adult Offenders and High School Dropouts in High-Poverty, High-Crime Communities

AGENCY: Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor

Funding Opportunity Number: SGA-DFA-PY-09-05.

Catalog Federal Assistance Number: 17.261

Questions and Answers

Question: My question pertains to the National and Regional Intermediaries; Who are these entities? As an example, would Catholic Charities, GoodWill or YouthBuild be eligible to pursue this grant? Would a nationally known or regional foundation (Ann E. Casey as an example) be an intermediary that is referred to in the grant?

Answer: As indicated in Section IIIA of the grant announcement under Eligible Applicants, "Applicants may be national and regional organizations with experience in conducting multi-site demonstrations and experience serving young adult ex-offenders. To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders."

Question: I spoke with a peer this afternoon who indicated that academic grade level testing, interest inventories and career exploration tools were not allowable uses under this solicitation. Can you verify or clarify that statement? Also is there a forum or webpage where these questions and answers are being posted to ensure a level playing field among competitors? If so, please forward that information.

Answer: Purchasing academic grade level testing materials, career interest inventories, and career exploration tools is allowable under this solicitation. They are not specifically listed under Section IE " *Allowable Uses of Grant Funds*, but this section allows for activities other than those listed as the section states that "Allowable uses of grant funds for projects funded under these grants include but are not limited to the following activities". Grade level testing, career interest inventories, and career exploration tools are consistent with the purpose of these grants as stated in Section I of the SGA "The purpose of these grants is to prepare these individuals for employment, by increasing the employment rate of participants, decreasing the recidivism

rate of young offenders served, increasing the rate at which participants receive high school diplomas and industry-recognized credentials, and increasing the rate at which participants enter post-secondary education and training. More specifically, grade level testing fits in with the stated allowable activity of basic skills instruction and remedial education, and interest inventories and career exploration tools fit in with the stated /allowable cost of career awareness classes.

Section VIII of the SGA states that “Questions and responses submitted to the Grant Officer regarding the SGA will be posted on the Employment and Training Web site at <http://www.doleta.gov>.”

Question: Is the creation of an Individual Employment (or Development) Plan an allowable activity?

Answer: Yes, the creation of an Individual Employment (or Development) Plan is an allowable activity.

Question: In this RFP it states that Subgrantee partners that must be included in each site location are:

- a. State Correctional agency
- b. Local parole office
- c. Local drug and alcohol abuse treatment centers
- d. Local WIB

Should the applicant have letters of support or any type of commitment letters from these organizations in the States, local communities that have been identified for the site locations based upon the poverty/crime rates?

Answer: As stated in Section IA “Selection of Sub-Grantees” of the solicitation, “Grantees will be required to competitively select local sub-grantees to operate the program in a minimum of five high-poverty, high-crime communities across at least two States. This competition should be held after grant award. The Department is not encouraging applicants to hold competitions or select local sub-grantees and sites prior to submitting their proposals and applicants will not receive any additional points for identifying local sub-grantees and sites in their proposals.” Since the solicitation states that the competition should be held after grant award, we are not expecting local sites to be identified in proposals submitted to DOL under this solicitation, and applicants will

not receive any additional points for identifying sites in their proposals or for including in their proposals letters of support from state and local agencies in sites that have been identified in the proposal.

Section ID “Required Partnerships” of the solicitation states that each sub-grantee will be required to develop partnerships with the State correctional agency, the local parole office, local drug and alcohol abuse treatment centers, and the local workforce investment board, and that in their solicitations to select sub-grantees, grantees must require applicants to have commitments to assist in these activities in place from these organizations.

Question: Camden County College is considering applying for this grant on behalf of its Campus located in Camden, NJ. Currently, CCC is overseeing a number of multi-site grants with multiple partners. For example, CCC is the lead agency for Camden County's Adult Basic Skills Consortium funded by WIA, Title II with a total of 6 partners including the College. Additionally, CCC is a collaborator on a number of projects with agencies in Philadelphia, PA. Do we meet the standard for applying for this grant?

Additionally, the Federal Register indicates that a total of 5 communities need to be served by the grant. Is it possible to serve 2 cities, Camden and Philadelphia, with multiple communities in the two cities? For example, there are 4 contiguous communities in Camden that have a poverty rate that is higher than 30% and a community in Philadelphia that we would like to target that also meets the poverty criterion. Is this serving 5 multiple sites?

Answer: The eligibility criteria stated in Section IIIA of the grant announcement under Eligible Applicants is as follows: “Applicants may be national and regional organizations with experience in conducting multi-site demonstrations and experience serving young adult ex-offenders. To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders.” Section VA of the solicitation provides the Evaluation Criteria that will be used, which includes Organizational Experience in Conducting Multi-Site Projects and Experience Serving Young Adult Ex-Offenders.

It is not appropriate for the Department of Labor to advise potential applicants whether or not they are eligible to apply. Rather, potential applicants need to review the eligibility criteria and the evaluation criteria in the solicitation to determine whether they meet the eligibility criteria and

whether they will be able to submit competitive proposals given the evaluation criteria. Note that eligibility criteria requires experience conducting at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State.

Similarly, the Department of Labor cannot comment on your plan to have all five sites located in two cities because if we did comment we would be providing guidance and direction to the preparation of your proposal.

Question: I was reading through the grant solicitation and wanted to clarify the following: "Grantees will be required to competitively select local sub-grantees to operate the program in a minimum of five high poverty, high-crime communities across at least two States." Am I correct in my interpretation that the State of Florida would have to apply as the grantee and then if they were awarded the grant would be required to competitively select local sub-grantees to operate the program in a minimum of five high-poverty, high-crime communities in the State? We were encouraging our local Regional Workforce Boards to apply but after reading this more thoroughly I'm not sure that they could apply as a local entity. Can you clarify and forgive me if I have interpreted this incorrectly. Thanks in advance!

Answer: The eligibility criteria stated in Section IIIA of the grant announcement under Eligible Applicants is as follows: "Applicants may be national and regional organizations with experience in conducting multi-site demonstrations and experience serving young adult ex-offenders. To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders." Section VA of the solicitation provides the Evaluation Criteria that will be used, which includes Organizational Experience in Conducting Multi-Site Projects and Experience Serving Young Adult Ex-Offenders.

It is not appropriate for the Department of Labor to advise potential applicants whether or not they are eligible to apply. Rather, potential applicants need to review the eligibility criteria and the evaluation criteria in the solicitation to determine whether they meet the eligibility criteria and whether they will be able to submit competitive proposals given the evaluation criteria. Note that solicitation requires that grantees competitively select local sub-grantees to operate the program in a minimum of five high poverty, high-crime communities across at least two States.

Question: I am contacting you regarding SGA-DFA-PY-09-05. I represent a city government and would like to know if we are eligible for this particular grant.

Answer: The eligibility criteria stated in Section IIIA of the grant announcement under Eligible Applicants is as follows: "Applicants may be national and regional organizations with experience in conducting multi-site demonstrations and experience serving young adult ex-offenders. To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders." Section VA of the solicitation provides the Evaluation Criteria that will be used, which includes Organizational Experience in Conducting Multi-Site Projects and Experience Serving Young Adult Ex-Offenders.

It is not appropriate for the Department of Labor to advise potential applicants whether or not they are eligible to apply. Rather, potential applicants need to review the eligibility criteria and the evaluation criteria in the solicitation to determine whether they meet the eligibility criteria and whether they will be able to submit competitive proposals given the evaluation criteria.

Question: May YouthBuild USA apply for these grants given that YouthBuild programs already receive a separate appropriation from Congress?

Answer: We know of no legal reason why YouthBuild USA can not apply for the ex-offender funding. There would be a legal concern if ETA were using money appropriated for Youth Offenders to fund additional YouthBuild grants, either directly or by funding grants that only nominally carry out the purpose of the ex-offender funding. However, the Young Adults Offenders grant program is a different program from YouthBuild with its own authority, selection criteria, requirements and performance measures. The Young Adult Offenders program is not a simply a broader version of the YouthBuild program. Any overlap between the programs that encourages YouthBuild USA to apply for the Young Adult Offenders program is incidental to the larger differences between the programs. An applicant for the Young Adult Offenders grant must satisfy the requirements of the Young Adult Offenders SGA in order to receive the grant and must operate the program in accordance with the terms of the SGA. If YouthBuild USA can fulfill the specific requirements of the Young Adult Offenders SGA it should be considered for funding, even if it receives money through the YouthBuild program as well. Furthermore, if YouthBuild USA receives funding through the Young Adult Offenders SGA in addition to through YouthBuild grants, it will have to comply with the reporting and performance measures and other requirements of each grant and therefore it will have to keep the two programs separate.

Question: I understand that the program in which I am interested in is only available to organizations. Are there any grants available to individuals like myself? I would also like to add, I am working closely with a local District Attorney's office along with the sitting judge on record, to inculcate this program in the community, who is in great need. Is there anyway I can use this grant in conjunction with the courts as an organization?

Answer: Thank you for your e-mail. We do not currently have grant announcements open to individuals wishing to start programs for offenders. Regarding working with courts or any other organization to apply for this grant, they would need to meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section IIIA of the grant announcement under Eligible Applicants, "Applicants may be national and regional organizations with experience in conducting multi-site demonstrations and experience serving young adult ex-offenders. To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders."

Question: An agency here in Puerto Rico is considering submitting an application for this RFP however it says the entity that receives the funding must serve at least two states...how would we address this issue since Puerto Rico is an island and the closest area is the US Virgin Islands which is a state and not a territory.

Answer: Applicants need to follow the requirements in the SGA, which state that "Grantees will be required to competitively select local sub-grantees to operate the program in a minimum of five high-poverty, high-crime communities across at least two States", and that "To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult ex-offenders".

Question: For the Department of Labor grant are applicants able to apply for this grant on a cooperative basis? In our case we are seeking to apply as a cooperative of 3 organizations.

Answer: The SGA states under Section IIIA *Eligible Applicants* that “To be eligible for awards, applicants must show evidence that they have both (1) conducted at least one multi-site project operated concurrently in at least five local areas across more than one State, and (2) have experience serving young adult exoffenders. The experience in conducting multi-site projects does not necessarily have to be in serving ex-offenders.” One of the organizations would need to have had experience in conducting a multi-site project concurrently in at least five sites across more than one state, in which case that organization would be the applicant. Also, review criteria #3 in the SGA *Organizational Experience in Conducting Multi-Site Projects and Experience Serving Young Adult Ex-Offenders* calls for applicants to discuss their organization’s experience conducting multi-site projects in at least five local areas across at least two States, to select one multi-site project that makes the strongest case for their ability to conduct such projects, to describe this project, the number of participants, the oversight and coordination that they provided to grantees, the technical assistance that they provided sub-grantees, the extent of their success in implementing the project, the outcomes of participants in the project, and the partnerships developed in carrying out this project.