

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

**WIRED Initiative
Frequently Asked Questions, Volume III
December 22, 2005**

Why is the governor's office involved?

The Governor has been designated as the applicant to ensure the leadership and commitment of the state in selected regions.

Is a multi-state application preferred over an application from a single state?

No. Each proposal will be considered on its merits.

Can one application list the same partners as another application from the same or different state?

Yes.

Do you have to be designated as an enterprise zone to apply as a region?

No.

In a multi-state proposal, can the fiscal agent be from a different state than the lead, grant recipient state?

Yes. The fiscal agent is designated by the lead governor.

If one state in a multi-state award is to be the grantee, is the limit for both states still \$5 million per year?

Yes.

If partners are in different states, but the affected economic region is in a single state, do governors from both states have to submit the proposal?

Signatures from multiple Governors are only required when the proposed region crosses state borders.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

If the regional economy crosses national boundaries, can funds and/or resources be used outside the U.S.?

No. H-1B grant funds must be used for projects in the United States to increase the skills of and opportunities for U.S. workers.

With whom is Puerto Rico, Hawaii, or Alaska contiguous?

Regions are not required to be multi-state.

Can third parties who are involved be assigned management responsibilities when multiple states are involved?

Yes.

Because of short turn around between the release of the RFP and the due date, how much of the grant period should be devoted to planning and creating new linkages?

Applications should devote as much planning as the region requires.

Is the department more interested in supporting already-formed partnerships that have begun working constructively together or in assisting the formation of entirely new partnerships?

We are interested in partnerships that help to transform a regional economy and make talent a key asset in that economy. Such partnerships need to demonstrate the ability to work together in support of that common goal.

Although labor is not an identified constituency in the SGA, should they still be included as a strong stakeholder?

Each region should determine who the important stakeholders are and include them in their proposal.

Are memorandums of understanding preferred?

Partnership mechanisms should be determined by the state.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

In the demonstration of strategic partnerships, who do you consider to be investors?

We consider both the public and the private sector to be investors. Some states are providing seed dollars. More often, private venture capitalists, financial institutions, and foundations are among the investor populations in the strategic partnerships that we find.

What existing Work-Flex activity provisions do you see as underused?

The overuse or under use of Work-Flex provisions is not germane to this Initiative. States should request the waivers that they believe necessary for this project, regardless of the number of such waivers previously issued.

Who are the three technical assistance contractors?

Council on Competitiveness, New Economy Strategies, and Council for Adult & Experiential Learning.

What is the role of ETA's technical assistance contractors in this initiative? What products and tools will they provide?

A wide array of project management, data collection and analysis, and subject specific tools in the areas of workforce development, education and economic development and other areas will be available to successful applicants. Quarterly meetings will be held with all regional teams to assess progress and share challenges and best practices. The full extent and nature of technical assistance effort will be tailored to the specific needs of each selected region.

When is the post-webinar deadline for submitting questions?

Questions can be received and answers posted to the FAQ section of the ETA web site up-to the proposal submission deadline.

Who will be reviewing the proposals?

Applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of Federal officials and outside experts.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

What procurement guidelines apply to non-governmental grant recipients?

Governors are the recipient of the Federal grant. How those funds are distributed or awarded at the state level is at the discretion of the Governor.

Is there a per-student training cost cap?

No.

Will high crime and high drop-out MSAs be eligible?

If areas have specific barriers to economic growth, those barriers should be discussed in the submission as well as plans to overcome those barriers.

Will School to work programs be included?

Determinations on the inclusion of individual programs should be made by regions and the Governor.

Who is responsible for submitting the grant application through grants.gov?

The governor or designated agency can submit a proposal. If a designated agency submits a proposal, ETA must receive an original signature letter from the Governor endorsing his/her support of the proposal.

Which DUNS # is required for the SF-424?

Applicants must supply their DUNS number in item #5 of the SF-424. The SGA specifically states that the State Governors are the eligible applicants for the WIRED initiative. As such, the Governors are responsible for submitting applications that clearly identify their DUNS number, the entity designated to administer the grant, as well as the fiscal agent. Please note that the administering entity and fiscal agent may be two separate entities or the same entity.

Do WIA 189/192 waivers apply to the WIRED initiative?

The WIRED grants will be funded with H-1B funds. The WIA regulations do not apply to these grants.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

What are the submission guidelines regarding the inclusion of budget documents?

The required submission includes the standard form 424, which has a cover sheet and also has budget documents as part of it. We're interested here in the non-construction budget forms obviously. We're particularly interested in section a which is the budget summary of the 424 and that got really shows the total amount of funds requested. We're also interested in part B of that form which takes the total funds request and breaks it down into various categories. There are other parts of the budget form which are optional if you care to submit them. But it's really part A, section A and section B which you're required to submit.

Will grant funds cover capital costs such as, leases, construction, IT infrastructure, equipment and training?

The focus of the WIRED initiative is developing new, innovative strategies for transformation of the traditional workforce system and increasing partnerships to implement those strategies. Therefore, it is not the Employment & Training Administration's intention that these grants will be used for the purchase of buildings, equipment, and other capitol improvements. The ultimate goals of the WIRED initiative are to expand employment and advancement opportunities and create high-skill and high-wage opportunities in the context of regional economies. If an applicant's proposal includes capitol leases, equipment purchases, building renovations, IT software and equipment etc., those requests must be in support of overall WIRED goals and as such synergize the partnership for improved job training, curriculum development, and workforce innovation strategies within a specified region. The costs must be reasonable and necessary to the grant and allowability will be determined in accordance with applicable federal cost principles.

Does the grant allow equipment purchases valued at \$5,000 or more?

It is intended that the grant resources not be used specifically for major equipment or IT purchases. However, equipment and IT purchases necessary to administer and carry out the purposes of the proposed project must have grant officer approval prior to purchase and be purchased in accordance with the appropriate OMB circular.

What are the limitations on the types of activities that can be performed?

Activities proposed for funding under this grant program are subject to the appropriate OMB Circular and H-1B funding restrictions.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

Will the states receive funding to cover the administrative costs associated with proposal development?

An entity that receives a grant may use a portion of the grant award to pay administrative costs associated with the overall management of the program or project. The administrative cost limit for each project will be negotiated at the time of award.

How will the rates and terms for indirect costs be determined?

Indirect cost rates will be negotiated at the time of the award.

How many years of funding does the SF-424 require?

The SF-424 should reflect funding for the entire 3-year grant period.

What role does the budget play in the evaluation process of the proposal?

None. See the SGA.

Who is responsible for reporting and administration of the grant?

The Governor can designate an agency for reporting purposes.

May Indian Tribal Governments apply directly for WIRED grants?

No. Under the SGA applicants are limited to state Governors, but nothing prohibits an application from including tribal areas in the region and/or tribal entities in the partnership.

Under “Eligible Applicants” on page 5, the SGA states that joint applications for regions which cross state lines must be jointly submitted by the Governors of all impacted states. Does this mean that all Governors must sign the SF-424?

A joint submission may be accomplished in two ways: (1) All Governors can sign the SF-424; or (2) the lead Governor can sign the SF-424 and attach letters of concurrence from the Governors of the other states involved.

The following document contains questions received during the December 7, 2005 on-line prospective applicant conference but not answered at the time. It also contains questions received by the Employment and Training Administration from a variety of other sources since the announcement of the Initiative.

What are the funding provisions?

If awarded, funds must be directed by the state according to the proposal that was submitted. Funds will be available immediately following the announcement. Funds are contingent on their availability. See the OMB Circulars or the Cash Management Improvement Act