Workforce Innovation Fund – Round Two
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1) **What is the timeline of the Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) announcement and funding?**
The Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) will be announced in May 2014 and awards will be made in September 2014.

2) **Who can apply?**
Eligible institutions are: 1) State Workforce Agencies; 2) Local Workforce Investment Boards; and 3) entities eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants.

3) **Are current Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grantees eligible to apply?**
Current WIF grantees are eligible to apply; however, the proposed project cannot be an expansion of the current WIF project and must be entirely separate from any existing project funded under the WIF.

4) **May I apply for more than one grant?**
Applicants may submit no more than one application.

5) **What project type I should apply for?**
If you are proposing new or emerging structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that have been tried in limited circumstances (if at all) but are supported by strong logic models and/or successful outcomes data, you should apply as Project Type A: New and Untested Ideas.

If you are proposing structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that either 1) have been implemented and evaluated previously, where evaluation results indicate some potential for positive impacts on participant or system-wide outcomes; or 2) are supported by strong evidence of positive change, but have never before been implemented by your organization, you should apply as Project Type B: Promising Ideas.

If you are proposing structural and/or service delivery projects that a) have been evaluated before using a random assignment design, and evaluation findings indicate some potential for positive impacts on participant or system wide outcomes, and b) your organization has implemented the program before, you should apply as Project Type C: Adapting Proven Ideas.

6) **What amount of funding is available? Is there a limit?**
Up to $53 million in grant funds will be awarded to approximately 8 to 15 applicants. Individual grant amounts will range up to $12 million depending on the project type. The grant amounts for Project Type A must not exceed $3 million; Project Type B must not exceed $6 million; and Project Type C must not exceed $12 million.

7) **How long are the grants?**
The period of performance for all project types will be 60 months total—12 months for planning and startup, 36 months for technical grant performance, and an additional 12 months available to complete evaluation activities.

8) **Is there anywhere I can go for assistance in preparing my application?**
ETA encourages new prospective applicants to view the online tutorial, "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available through Workforce3One at:

http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit. Please consult that guide for advice on how to organize your application. Also, a pre-recorded Prospective Applicant Webinar will be available for viewing on-line atwww.workforce3one.org after May 23, 2014.

In addition, ETA encourages prospective applicants to view the online materials available at http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation. The materials include an online toolkit – *Evaluation Toolkit for Prospective Workforce Innovation Fund Grantees* and a *WIF Applicant Information Sheet*.

General FAQs

To assist organizations with submitting applications, ETA has developed several frequently asked questions relating to submission and responsiveness requirements. There are two actions that must be fully and accurately completed for your application to move forward for review by a technical panel review: 1) Your submission must be submitted by the deadline for timely submissions - either electronically through Grants.gov or following the Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) instructions for paper submissions; and 2) Your application must be responsive – *all* responsive items listed in Section III of the SGA must be included and/or addressed as instructed in your application. If all the requirements for an application to be responsive are not met, the application will be determined to be non-responsive, and will not be referred to a technical review panel to be considered for a potential grant.

WARNING: Grants.gov does *not* check an application for required forms, narratives etc. (responsive items); hence, an application can be "successfully" submitted or "validated" through Grants.gov, but may be lacking one or more responsive items that will result in the application being determined to be non-responsive. Applicants are strongly urged to double check their application before the closing date/time and must resubmit before the deadline for applications, if necessary.

Timely Submissions:

1) **Question: If I am submitting electronically and experience trouble with Grants.gov, where do I go for assistance?**

   Answer: The website for Grants.gov has a wealth of technical assistance information. Grants.gov also has a help desk and we strongly recommend obtaining an official ticket to document any trouble that you experience. Submitting an application through Grants.gov can be complex and time-consuming. As noted in the solicitation, applicants are warned to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for leaving enough time (we strongly suggest at least 48 hours) to resolve technical problems if necessary. If Grants.gov goes "down" or has a documented system problem, DOL will consider circumstances beyond the control of applicant(s) when determining if an application is to be deemed late. Technical problems that are the responsibility of the applicant (e.g., DUNS # does not work, SAM registration is not current or was not renewed in time to meet the application deadline, Authorized Organization Representative not available, not allowing enough time to finish the Grants.gov application process prior to the SGA closing time, etc.) that are not resolved through a corrected application being submitted electronically or via paper before the deadline for submission, will result in the application being determined to be non-responsive.

2) **Question: I submitted my application a week ahead of the closing date, but found an error the next day. Can I re-submit a corrected application?**

Answer: Yes, applicants can submit a corrected or revised application as long as the re-submission is before the deadline for submission of the solicitation. If repeated applications are submitted, ETA will review the application with the latest date/time stamp that is received <u>before</u> the deadline has passed. Previous applications will not be reviewed if the last timely application is determined to be non-responsive.

3) **Question: I started my application submission in Grants.gov before the closing time listed in the SGA, but I did not complete my submission before the time listed in the SGA. Is my application timely?**

Answer: No. The Grants.gov date and time stamp will be used to determine if your application was submitted timely. If that date and time stamp is after the deadline for timely submission of the application, the application is untimely and will not be reviewed at all.

<u>Responsive Submissions:</u>

1) **Question: I failed to include my DUNS number on my paper SF-424 application, and it is one of the required items mentioned in the Screening Criteria section in the SGA. Can I send it separately?**

Answer: No. Only applications that are complete and received timely will proceed through the application review process. A Federal Register Notice issued on June 27, 2003 (68 Fed. Reg. 38402), established the government-wide policy of requiring DUNS number: "Every application for a new award or renewal of an award, including applications or plans under mandatory grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003 must include a DUNS number for the applicant. Unless an exemption is granted, an application will not be considered complete until a valid DUNS number is provided by the applicant." 68 Fed. Reg. 38405. Exemptions are not granted by the Employment and Training Administration. If you can fix the error and resubmit your application with your DUNS number on the SF-424 before the deadline for timely submissions, that application will be deemed timely.

2) **Question: I forgot to include my budget narrative, and it is one of the required documents mentioned in the Screening Criteria section in the SGA. Can I fix my application and send in the missing budget narrative after the deadline for submissions?**

Answer: No. Only applications that are complete and received timely will proceed through the technical panel review. If you can fix the error and resubmit your application before the deadline for timely submissions, that application will be deemed timely.

3) **Question: I failed to include the abstract, and it is one of the required documents mentioned in the Screening Criteria section in the SGA. Can I fix my application and send in the missing documentation after the deadline for submission?**

Answer: No. Only applications that are complete and received timely will proceed through the technical panel review. If you can fix the error and resubmit your application before the deadline for timely submissions, that application will be deemed timely.

4) **Question: I registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) over a year ago and my registration was not active when I submitted my paper application. Will my application proceed through the review process?**

Answer: No. Applications submitted by applicants found to not have an active registration will not be referred to the technical panel review.

5) **Question: If I receive an e-mail from Grants.gov saying my application was "successfully validated" does that mean my application was timely and responsive**?

Answer: No. Grants.gov does not check an application for required forms, narratives, etc. (responsive items); hence, an application can be successfully submitted through Grants.gov, but may be lacking one or more responsive items. In addition, Grants.gov only has one submission time, 11:59:59pm for the specified closing date. If ETA designates a closing time of 4:00:00pm, you can submit an application through Grants.gov until 11:59:59pm; however, ETA will deem all applications submitted after 4:00:00pm as "late."