

implementation in a variety of settings; and

(7) The importance or magnitude of the outcomes, which are likely to be attained by the proposed project.

In evaluating the quality of the proposal narrative, ODEP will consider needs identified and the applicant's proposed approaches to addressing the needs in the context of ODEP's priorities.

2. Comprehensive Service Strategy (30 points)

The purpose of the Comprehensive Service Strategy criteria is to identify the approach proposed by the applicant to implement the Customized Employment grant. The strategy should implement the purpose and objectives of this SGA to enhance the capacity of the workforce investment system to increase employment, choice and wages for persons with disabilities through the use of customized employment strategies and to ensure that such strategies are systemically included in the policy and practice of the One-Stop Center(s).

Proposed Project Design and Its Evaluation—the application must address the proposed design for the Customized Employment grant including its response to the requirements outlined in Part V (Eligible Applicants and Required Partnerships) of this Solicitation.

The Project Design must:

(1) Develop strategic planning and implementation activities across the One-Stop required partner programs as identified in the WIA (such as Vocational Rehabilitation and others as appropriate) as well as other essential programs (such as Medicaid, Medicare, Mental Health, Transportation, Small Business Development Centers, State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, community colleges, benefits counseling and assistance programs, lending and financial institutions), whose expertise, services, and funds could contribute to employment services and supports needed by people with disabilities in order to secure customized employment. Planning activities must include a review of policy and practice as it relates to people with disabilities to provide customized employment for persons with disabilities. Such capacity includes enhancing collaboration between required WIA partners and building new collaborative initiatives with other essential programs;

(2) Develop local and statewide policy initiatives to ensure that customized employment and multiple innovative strategies and promising practices become part of the menu of services

available to people with disabilities, including investigating alternative methods for performance accountability that consider the characteristics of the population;

(3) Develop employment opportunities in a variety of jobs, industries and at a variety of levels, including self-employment and entrepreneurship, based on the strengths, needs and desires of the individual with a disability as well as creating and cultivating demand for these opportunities by forging and developing relationships with employers. The design must organize services and supports in ways that provide informed choice and promote self-determination and provide services, including follow-up services to ensure job retention and career development;

(4) Develop and document the capacity of the One-Stop system to increase the wages of people with disabilities who are currently working at less than minimum wage through the use of customized employment strategies;

(5) Develop an increased understanding by One-Stop Centers' staff about health care, work incentives, benefits planning, "tickets" and other provisions under TTW; and document increased use of these programs by the One-Stop Center and its partner programs to secure customized employment for recipients of SSI and SSDI who are entering the workforce or returning to work. This may include registering as an Employment Network under TTW;

(6) Document the increasing use of resources from a number of system partners and other essential programs, including providing individual budgets and other forms of self-directed accounts (e.g., individual training accounts or contractual services; tickets; vouchers; and other sources of individualized funding or personal funding accounts) for persons with disabilities to obtain customized employment;

(7) Develop, leverage and document linkages with other state and local initiatives that provide services and supports for people with disabilities (including, but not limited to, state systems change efforts which promote systems improvement and comprehensive coordination; initiatives involving health care; benefits planning and assistance; housing; transportation; education; supported employment; small business development; technology-related assistance; initiatives of private foundations; and faith-based and community organization programs and others, as appropriate);

(8) Establish connections to and collaborate with other entities, including employers, persons with disabilities, their parents and other family members, community rehabilitation agencies, lending and financial institutions, foundations, faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education, small business development centers and others, as appropriate, to further customized employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in local communities. These partners may become a subgroup or an advisory group of the Local Board. They may be specifically charged with coordinating funding, resources and expertise to increase customized employment for people with disabilities in the community and may involve grant design and implementation;

(9) Educate relevant stakeholders, including state and local policymakers and systems personnel, about needed changes in policy and practice in order to increase customized employment and wages for people with disabilities;

(10) Include education activities to enable customized employment and personalized supports to become available and used in local communities, including (as appropriate) activities necessary to secure adoption of the Medicaid buy-in by the state;

(11) Market and develop ongoing linkages with employers, and their professional, business and service organizations and trade associations, as appropriate;

(12) Expand the use of customized employment strategies over time to:

a. All groups of persons with disabilities targeted under this solicitation; and
b. Other groups of individuals with disabilities (such as individuals who are receiving TANF benefits) following completion of the grant;

(13) Track and respond to customer service and satisfaction for both persons with disabilities and employers; and

(14) Identify and pursue other activities appropriate to achieving the goals of these grants.

Activities may include the following:
Necessary staffing across agencies to implement grantee activities and otherwise demonstrate effective partnerships and interactions necessary to effectively leverage resources and expertise from partnering systems and programs;

(1) Outreach to relevant stakeholders;

(2) Demonstration activities which provide methods to increase the employment, choice, and wages of people with disabilities that are designed for systemic inclusion