

provided through the workforce investment boards under the 75 percent provision due to barriers in meeting those partnership eligibility criteria. For example, if the scope of the business partnerships is national or multi-state, this may make the partnership ineligible for the 75% funding stream. Applicants must explain the barriers that prevent them from working through their local workforce investment board and letting the workforce investment board be the applicant.

The application must clearly identify the applicant as well as the fiscal agent, the grant recipient (and/or fiscal agent), and describe its capacity to administer this project. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with entities that possess a sound grasp of the job market in the region and are in a position to address the issue of skill shortage occupations. These entities include organizations such as private, for-profit businesses—including small and medium-size businesses; business, trade, or industry associations such as local Chambers of Commerce and small business federations; and labor unions.

According to Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engages in lobbying activities will not be eligible for the receipt of Federal funds constituting an award, grant, or loan.

Note: Except as specifically provided in this Notice, DOL/ETA's acceptance of a proposal and an award of Federal funds to sponsor any program(s) does not provide a waiver of any grant requirements and/or procedures. For example, the OMB Circulars require and an entity's procurement procedures must require that all procurement transactions are conducted, as much as practical, to provide open and free competition. If a proposal identifies a specific entity to provide services, the DOL/ETA's award does not provide the justification or basis to sole-source the procurement, *i.e.*, it does not authorize the applicant to avoid competition when procuring these services.

B. Submission of Proposals

Applicants must submit an original signed application and two copies. The proposal must consist of two (2) separate and distinct parts, Parts I and II. Failure to adhere to the instructions in this section will be considered as non-responsive.

Part I of the proposal must contain the Standard Form (SF) 424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (Appendix C), the Budget Information Form (Appendix D) and the Project Profile Information form (Appendix E). Upon confirmation of an award, the individual signing the

SF 424 on behalf of the applicant shall represent the responsible financial and administrative entity.

In preparing the Budget Information form, the applicant must provide a concise narrative explanation to support the request. The statutory language of ACWIA 2000 is specific in stating that grant resources are to be expended for programs or projects to provide technical skills training. An illustrative, but not exclusive, list of allowable and allocable types of administrative costs is provided in the WIA regulations at 20 CFR 667.220. The budget narrative should discuss precisely how the administrative costs support the project goals.

Part II of the application must contain a technical proposal that demonstrates the applicant's capabilities to plan and implement an H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant Program in accordance with the provisions of this solicitation. Part II of the grant application is limited to twenty-five (25) double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 inch x 11 inch pages with one-inch margins. In addition, the applicant may provide resumes, a staffing pattern, statistical information and related material in attachments, which may not exceed fifteen (15) pages. Although not required, letters of commitment from partners or from those providing matching resources may be submitted as attachments. Such letters will not count against the allowable maximum page total. The applicant must briefly itemize those participating entities in the text of the proposal. Text type shall be 12 point or larger. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not be considered. Each application must include a Time Line outlining project activities and an Executive Summary that is not to exceed two pages. The Time Line and the Executive Summary do not count against the 25-page limit. No cost data or reference to prices should be included in the technical proposal.

C. Award Amount and Period of Performance

It is anticipated that individual awards will not exceed \$3 million. The initial period of performance will be up to 36 months from the date of execution of the grant documents. ETA may elect to exercise its option to award no-cost extensions to these grants for an additional period not to exceed 12 months, based on the success of the program and other relevant factors.

Part IV—Review Process and Rating Criteria

A. The Review Process

Applications for the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants will be accepted after the publication of this announcement until the closing date. A technical review panel will make careful evaluation of applications against the criteria below which include the policy goals, principles, priorities and emphases set forth in this SGA. Final funding decisions will be based on the rating of applications as a result of the review process, and other factors such as regulatory and statutory requirements and considerations. These factors may include urban/rural and geographic balance, the requirement that at least 80 percent of funds be awarded for high technology, information technology, and biotechnology occupational training, the availability of funds, and what is most advantageous to the Government. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. The Government may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the applicants. In situations without discussions, an award will be based on the applicant's signature on the SF 424, which constitutes a binding offer.

B. Rating Criteria

This section identifies and describes the criteria that will be used to evaluate H-1B Technical Skills Grant proposals. These criteria and point values are:

Criterion	Points
A. Statement of Need	10
B. Level of Training and Service Delivery Strategy	25
C. Target Population	10
D. Sustainability	15
E. Linkages with Key Partners	15
F. Outcomes, Management and Cost Effectiveness	25
Total Possible Points	100

1. Statement of Need (10 points)

Analysis of Labor Market: ACWIA 2000 is a response to high technology skill shortages around the country in specific occupations. Applicants must describe the local area or region for which training services are to be provided and the high technology skill shortages prevalent in the geographic area or region. The process through which training needs were identified to ensure that the proposed training is relevant to local and regional labor market shortages should be clearly explained. Evidence of a comprehensive