

analysis of the region's labor market and skills shortages and identity of the source of the data used in the analysis should be provided. Include an explanation of how the skills training will impact the identified skills shortages of the region.

A general description of the local area or region should provide information such as urban or rural and socioeconomic data, with a particular focus on general education and skills levels prevalent in the area. In addition, a description of the characteristics of the political, economic and administrative jurisdictions (local workforce boards, labor market areas, special district authorities) that led them to partner for the purpose of this application should be incorporated. Information on transportation patterns, demographics and other factors, as they affect the high skill shortage situation, may be useful in explaining the training needs.

Business Environment: Answers should be provided to questions germane to the business environment such as:

- What is the general business environment?
- What industries and occupations are growing and declining?
- What types of skills are being sought in the geographic area or region by the major employers in general, and this grant application's member companies, in particular?
- How many H-1B visa petitions were filed by area employers and in this grant application's member companies, in particular? For which occupations? Which specific skills did H-1B visa workers have that were not available in the area?
- What high skills needs are expected to be met through the H-1B grant project?

2. Level of Training and Service Delivery Strategy (25 points)

Comprehensive Strategy: Applicants must lay out the comprehensive strategy proposed for providing the technical skills training that is mandated as the core activity of these grant awards. Applicants shall describe a service delivery strategy that provides training at or directly leading to an H-1B level skill. Part 1C of this SGA spells out very clearly DOL's strong interest in achieving a higher level of training than has occurred in some H-1B grants in the past and thus, training at a sufficiently high skill level will be an important factor in this criterion. Specific issues that must be addressed as part of this section include:

- The range and identity of potential training providers, including identifying

whether they are on the eligible training provider list as described in WIA, section 122, the types of skills training that will be offered, how the training will meet the local area or regional skills needs, and how the training will be provided.

- The targeted occupations and skill level and how the skill upgrading will be measured. If degrees and/or certificates are contemplated, the type and recognition authority should be described as well as an estimate of the number and type to be attained.
- What steps will be taken to reach out to the community(ies) to provide information about the project and planned training activities.
- How will the types of training planned for project participants be determined.

Career Ladders: If career ladder training is proposed, the applicant must provide adequate detail demonstrating that all rungs of the ladder lead to H-1B training at the top rung and that it is reasonably likely that the majority of individuals on the ladder will complete the highest rungs of H-1B level training under the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant.

Innovation: Applicants should fully describe any innovative and creative approaches to be undertaken in the context of service delivery. Innovation can be represented by a wide variety of creative approaches and techniques in which training services are provided, e.g., distance learning to provide instruction, interactive video self-instructional materials, and flexible class scheduling (sections of the same class scheduled at different times of the day to accommodate workers whose schedules fluctuate).

Business Involvement and Trainee Needs: The service delivery strategy must meet the needs of business partners, providing the skills identified in the statement of need. Evidence should be provided that business partners have been involved in developing the training service delivery plan, which may include designing the training program and curricula as well as operating the program. The service delivery strategy should also effectively reach out to and meet the needs of the target population, i.e., desired candidates are recruited and training conducted in such a manner that participants can attend without undue hardship (training during the workday, on weekends and/or through distance learning methods).

Timing: DOL anticipates that the focus on a higher level of training and on H-1B occupations may necessitate

formal education and/or a longer period of training than many other employment and training programs. As a result, applicants should carefully plan and coordinate preparatory activities, such as recruitment and assessment, with training providers to ensure that there is sufficient time for participants to complete training during the grant period. Applicants should identify assessment/enrollment and training phase activities in project operation timeline charts.

3. Target Population (10 points)

Employed and/or Unemployed Workers and Why: The eligibility criteria for skills training enumerated in ACWIA 2000 are extremely broad: employed and unemployed workers.

Applicants must clearly describe how and why members of the target population will be selected as well as their technical skills training needs in such a way as to verify that H-1B level training is actually required, especially in the case of incumbent workers. Applicants should also describe the partners' involvement, particularly business, in the selection process as well as that of any involved community and faith-based organizations.

Assessment: Applicants shall describe the assessment tools used to ensure that proposed trainees are qualified for the training and have a high likelihood of successful completion of the H-1B level training, in terms of ability and educational preparation. In addition, the applicant should discuss how those individuals will be determined to possess the capacity after the completion of training to accept jobs that previously were filled via the H-1B visa process, or could be filled at the H-1B level.

Specificity: The applicant should address some specific issues relating to the targeted worker population such as:

- How many employed workers and unemployed workers will be targeted for services and why?
- What are the technical skills training needs of those workers to fulfill skill shortage occupations at the H-1B level? Note that employers' needs should be addressed in the Statement of Need section.
- What criteria will be utilized to select employed and unemployed workers?
- What assessment tools will be used to ensure trainees will be able to complete this high level of training?
- What is the business partners' involvement in the selection of candidates?