

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 667.200. In general, however, this grant does not contemplate or permit the purchase of capital equipment. The budget narrative should discuss precisely how the administrative costs support the project goals.

Part II must contain a technical proposal that demonstrates the applicant's capabilities in accordance with the Statement of Work. A grant application is limited to twenty-five (25) double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 inch x 11 inch pages with one-inch margins. 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. Hand Delivered Proposals

Hand delivered proposals will be received at the address identified above. Telegraphed and/or faxed proposals will not be accepted. Failure to adhere to the administrative instructions pertaining to Submission of Proposals (contained in Section B) and Delivery of Proposals (contained in Section C) will be considered as non-responsive.

D. Period of Performance

The initial period of performance will be up to 36 months from the date of execution of the grant documents. It is anticipated that individual awards will not exceed \$3,000,000. ETA may elect to exercise its option for a no-cost extension for 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 & Rating Criteria

A. The Review Process

Applications for the H-1B technical skills training grants will be accepted continuously after the publication of this announcement until further notice. Technical review panels will meet periodically on an as-needed basis, given the number of applications and the availability of funds.

The technical review panel will make careful evaluation of applications against the criteria below. Final funding decisions will be based on the rating of applications as a result of the review process, and other factors such as statutory requirements (urban/rural balance, geographic balance, the requirement that at least 80 percent of funds be awarded for high technology, information technology, and biotechnology occupational training and that not more than 20 percent of funds be available for training in any single specialty occupation), 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 offeror(s). In situations without discussions, an award will be based on the offeror(s) signature on the SF 424, which constitutes a binding offer.

The rated applications will be placed in the following categories:

(1) If the application receives a rating of 80 and above, it will be placed on an eligible to be funded list. The applicant will remain on this list for 9 months before resubmittal is required.

Applicants in this category may require further discussions. Inclusion on this list is not a guarantee of funding.

(2) If the application receives a rating of 79 or below, the applicant will be eligible to receive technical assistance through group workshops in areas such as:

- Grant Writing
- Partnership Building/Linkages
- Administrative Requirements
- Service Delivery Strategies

(3) Those applications receiving a rating of 70–79 will also be eligible to receive additional individualized technical assistance.

All applicants will receive written notice of their rating which will include a summary of their strengths and weaknesses in the application at the conclusion of the review process.

B. Rating Criteria

Applications will be rated on how completely they respond to the criteria set forth below, and how responsive they are to the policy goals and emphases set forth in Part II of this document.

1. Statement of Need (10 points)

ACWIA 2000 is a response to high technology skill shortages around the country in specific occupations. The most recent H-1B occupation data are provided as an attachment to this solicitation. Applicants should clearly describe the local area or region for which services are to be provided and the high technology skill shortages prevalent in the geographic area and region.

Applicants are encouraged to utilize all available data resources to ensure that their descriptions of need are relevant to local and regional labor market shortages. Information can include, but is not limited to: statistical information from Federal government sources, state labor market information, H-1B applications, newspaper want ads, expressed employer hiring demands, and information from the One-Stop system, in responding to this criterion. Descriptive items about the local area or region, such as rural or urban, should be included. (What high technology needs and opportunities exist in the region? What are the particular characteristics of the local political, economic and administrative jurisdictions—Local Boards, labor market areas, or special district authorities—that led them to associate for the purpose of this application?)

A general description of the local area or region should include socioeconomic data, with a particular focus on the general education and skill levels prevalent in the area. Applicants are encouraged to include information such as transportation patterns, and statistical and demographic information (e.g., age and income data). Other germane questions that will provide greater depth of description include: 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 the partnership member companies, in particular? Data from local and regional employers relating to the use of H-1B visas to import foreign workers to meet their high technology skill needs will be of special help in demonstrating high technology training needs.