

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

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 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, to a level that clearly prepares individuals to meet the H-1B visa definition of "theoretical and practical application of a body of specialized knowledge." A discussion of the impact of skills training in response to the identified skill shortages of the region should be included. Since the H-1B skill level is at the Bachelor degree level or above, training may include formal education. 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.

Training at a sufficiently high skill level will be an important factor in this criterion. 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 in the context of service delivery is also considered essential and is a basic principle of H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants and can represent a wide variety of approaches and techniques. Innovation may be implemented in the manner 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). Creativity in developing the service strategy is also encouraged. The service delivery strategy must meet the needs of business partners, providing skills identified in the statement of need. Evidence should be provided that business partners have been involved in developing the training service delivery plan. The service delivery strategy should also effectively reach out to and meet needs of the target population, *i.e.*, desired candidates are recruited and training conducted in such a manner that participants can attend without undo hardship (training during workday, on weekends and/or through distance learning methods). Applicants should fully describe any innovative and creative approaches contemplated.

3. Target Population (10 points)

The eligibility criteria for skills training enumerated in ACWIA 2000 are extremely broad and include employed and unemployed workers. This section should clearly identify the targeted workers, including their characteristics and explain why they are targeted. A discussion of what assessment procedures are to be used to ensure that the targeted individuals are qualified for the training and have a high likelihood of successful completion of the training is critical. The applicant should address some specific issues relating to the target 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 Statement of Need.
- It is extremely important that the selection process for workers, both employed and unemployed, be carefully described to make it clear 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. In the case of both incumbent workers and unemployed workers, there needs to be an extensive discussion of the criteria to be used to assess and enroll individuals. Applicants shall describe how members of the target population will be selected and the technical skills training needs of the target population in such a way as to

verify that H-1B level training is actually required, especially in the case of incumbent workers. Applicants shall describe the assessment tools used to ensure that proposed trainees are able to complete H-1B level training, in terms of ability and educational preparation. Note that trainees must possess a fairly advanced skills set prior to the start of H-1B training, *i.e.*, they should be capable of pursuing training at the college level.

- What is the business partners' involvement in the selection of candidates?
- What is the targeted education and skill level of trainees as they enter the program?

4. Sustainability (15 points)

Sustainability refers to the continuation of the partnership based on the strength of that partnership and the ability of the training program to deliver value to employers. Applicants must demonstrate that they will meet the statutory requirement to provide a 50 percent match to the resources for proposed projects. Matches may either be in-cash or in-kind and federal resources cannot be counted towards the matching requirement. Applicants must describe to what extent the partners provide matching funds or services and how this contribution assists in building the foundation for a long-term partnership, *i.e.*, sustainability. Matching resources and partnerships are considered an integral element of the project, as they support and strengthen the quality of the technical skills training provided and contribute materially toward sustainability. This section MUST contain a detailed discussion of the size, nature, and quality of the non-federal match and how the match will be used to further the goals of the project. Proposals not presenting a detailed discussion of the non-federal match or not meeting the statutory 50 percent match requirement will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered.

Technical Skills Training Grant resources are limited to raising the skill levels of individuals to fill high skills H-1B occupations. Applicants will be given preference for identifying other resources both federal and non-Federal, because they can contribute materially toward quality outcomes and sustainability. (Note that although federal resources may not be counted as match, they may be counted to demonstrate the project sustainability.) Applicants are also encouraged to establish relationships with State Workforce Investment Boards and