

Workforce Accelerator Fund
Frequently Asked Questions
UPDATED MAY 23, 2014

- 1. In Section E – Funding, the RFA states that “successful applicants will demonstrate a dollar for dollar match of cash or in-kind support for their project activities.” Are there any additional restrictions in terms of the matching funds?**

There are no additional restrictions in terms of matching funds; any source of match may be used for this grant.

- 2. May a Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) submit more than one grant application?**

Yes, an LWIA - or any organization - may submit more than one application.

- 3. Is the definition for a Returning Veteran the same as a Recently Released Veteran, which is a veteran released from the military in the last 48 months?**

Any veteran status will meet the definition for the purposes of this application.

- 4. Can the Ex-Offender be a youth (14-21) or an adult?**

Yes, ex-offenders may be either youth or adult.

- 5. If we combine target groups into one grant is the maximum that would be funded still \$150,000 or can we apply for more than \$150,000?**

\$150,000 is the maximum amount available when combining target groups.

- 6. Would a California State University (CSU) be eligible?**

Yes, a CSU is considered an eligible applicant.

- 7. Is the healthcare industry the only industry that can be addressed with returning veterans?**

\$500,000 is available for project serving veterans in Healthcare. Applicants may propose projects targeting veterans in other industries; however, these applicants will be funded from the \$1.5 million pool.

- 8. Are Slingshot and the Workforce Accelerator RFA the same funding opportunity?**

Slingshot and this grant is aligned conceptually, both are designed to be used for developing and prototyping new ideas for the workforce system. Slingshot is focused regionally and this grant is focused on targeted populations.

- 9. Can Federal funds be used for matching support for Workforce Accelerator Fund grants?**

Yes, federal funds may be used for matching support for this grant.

10. Are incentives or stipend payments allowed to participants in the program?

Yes, incentives or stipends are allowed for participants, clients, or students in the program. If requesting, please include in the budget.

11. How can I get a copy of the presentation slides?

The presentation will be posted on the State Board website, www.cwib.ca.gov, under the INITIATIVES tab.

12. Are letters from our partners required?

No letters, MOU's or any other partner documentation is required to be included in your application.

13. If local WIA funding is used to support WAF participants, must these WAF participants be co-enrolled with the local WIA and be counted to the LWIA's performance outcomes?

No, WAF participants do not need to be co-enrolled or counted toward LWIB/LWIA annual performance targets (see page 8 of the RFA for more information).

14. Does the project performance have to be in line with the WIA common performance measure goals?

WAF project goals do not need to align with WIA performance outcomes.

15. Will the list of webinar attendees be made public?

No, The State Board did not keep a track of the attendees beyond it being listed in the discussion bar during the call.

16. If we need to match 1 to 1, then the minimum project would need to be \$100,000, is that correct?

Yes. However, applicants may apply for an amount of less than \$50,000, but the one to one match is still required. Applicants are encouraged to propose project budgets that meet the needs of their project goals, and the recommended minimum is \$50,000 request.

17. Should we budget to travel to the learning community or will that be provided separately?

Applicants should allow for travel and time for Learning Community activities within proposed budgets.

18. The text on the forms has been limited to what fits in the window, is it okay if the text continues out of the screen?

Please stay within the text constraints of the form.

19. What is a DUNS number?

Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) provides a D-U-N-S Number, a unique nine digit identification number, for each physical location of your business. D-U-N-S Number assignment is FREE for all businesses required to register with the US Federal government for contracts or grants. As WAF is using federal Department of Labor resources, this is required of all successful grantees. See <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> for more information.

20. How can the lack of transferability for college credits for Veterans be addressed? They often receive little or no credit for the training and experience they received while in the military.

This is where the innovation freedom of the grant comes into play; the State Board encourages project proposals that addresses this issue in some way.

21. Can grey area of budget be used for match OJT and employer wages?

Yes. The area is greyed to indicate that direct services are not a requirement, but are an allowable cost. Applicants may enter numbers into these cells.

22. Why is the funding for veterans limited to healthcare? What about employment support?

Employment support as relates to assisting veterans in their healthcare training or career activities may be funded in this category. Project targeting veterans in other industries may also be proposed as part of the RFA- see Question 7 above.

23. Must our project respond to all target populations or can it be a subset?

Applicants may target one or more target populations described in the WAF RFA. Applicants may also narrow project to a subset group of job seekers within a target population.

24. Can you elaborate on what you have in mind for creating new modes for funding alignment?

- Braiding of existing resources to allow a full continuum of services
- Filling gaps in funding alignment for services, activities, outcomes, or populations (for example, working poor individuals)
- Bundling hiring incentives, employment subsidies, and/or training for new or incumbent workers
- Creation of social enterprise or contracting and procurement activities for businesses employing target population(s).

25. Can participants use program funds for licensing?

Yes, these funds can be used for licensing.

26. Can funds be used for testing for certifications needed for employment?

Yes, these funds can be used for the purpose of achieving certification.

27. Can funds be used to supplement salaries to place trainees in new pilot positions?

Applicants may propose budgets that include salary supplements or stipends, however, must articulate how this funding will be used to demonstrate or leverage system change goals and/or will lead to strategies for scaling and replication of supplements or stipends.

28. Can equipment already purchased for this project be used as matching funds?

Applicants may include equipment as matching funds, but must articulate how this is directly leveraged for the proposed project activities and goals.

29. Can low-income workers also include low-income individuals who are temporarily unemployed and /or cycling through jobs?

Yes, this group of individuals can be included in this definition of “low-income” workers.

30. Is the Accelerator grant exclusively a planning grant? Is a proposal that includes planning and pilot program allowed?

This grant is not exclusively a planning grant. We are looking for development, i.e. new tools, ideas, strategies. Prototyping and testing or piloting of new ideas is encouraged. See Section D – Project Activities (pages 7-8) for more information.

31. Are Accelerator Funds WIA funds and not subjected to current PY 13-14 LWIA Performance Goals?

Yes, this grant is funded through WIA funds however, applicants will not be not subject to local or state performance goals. The State Board encourages proposing the best project to ideally deliver on, and applicants should propose project goals and outcomes in the applications.

32. Form 1: Project Budget, Line Items H-M indicates a grey-shaded area, does this indicate that these categories of expenses are out of bounds for the grant? Are training expenses in particular to be funded from another source?

The area is greyed out to indicate that direct services are not a requirement, but are an allowable cost. Applicants may type into these cells.

33. Can the applicant agency (CBO) be one of the three members of the project team (expert, innovator, customer)?

Yes, the applicant may be part of the project team.

34. Regarding Project Team, may a project team remain anonymous?

Project team individual members may remain anonymous, however, applicants must include information such as experience, role, and organization they belong to.

35. On Page 9, it states “grantees will be required to develop working relationship with both regional and state stakeholders.” Please explain the meaning.

This statement is made in the context of the Learning Community. Grantees will be required to work with regional and state stakeholders to ensure that projects are not “stand alone”, but have the opportunity to impart lessons for scaling, replication, and systems change beyond the actual project impact.

36. What is the grant/ project start date?

Grants are anticipated to start between June 16-30, 2014.

37. Are the nonprofits and organizations we partner with to achieve the goals of the proposed project required to receive part of the grant dollars?

No, partners and Project Teams should determine appropriate roles and funding mix, including which organizations and activities will be funded with dollars awarded through this RFA.

38. The grant term is 10 months. Our organization operates on the Fiscal Year, which would be 7/1/2014 – 6/30/2015. Should our budget reflect our fiscal year, or only the 10 month grant period?

The budget included in as part of your RFA (Form 1: Project Budget), should only reflect the period of the grant (up to 10 months).

39. Should applications contain insight into how the proposed innovation will be executed/expanded to the identified population to fill a specific employment gap; not necessarily how funds will be utilized to implement the idea? Therefore, is the applications intent to articulate the viability of such innovation conducting R&D among the intended population, essentially producing an end project report within 10 months that speaks to implementation and scale of such innovation?

The application should include both the specifics of the funded project, and the opportunity for replication or scaling. End products may include a plan or strategies for project expansion, but the gap and opportunity should be addressed in the proposed application. Please see Section D: Project Activities (p. 7 of the WAF RFA), and the Project Design and Project Activities slides of the [Application Workshop Presentation](#) for more information.

40. If the innovation has been or is being piloted, may funding be utilized to enhance or scale the current model?

Yes. Project tactics may include “Tools, models or resources that are already developed but not used in the public workforce system, with the targeted populations, or are not at scale”- see page 7 of the RFA.

- 41. What is the maximum amount of funds the innovation can seek for At-risk/Disadvantaged Youth category? And, if for instance if the at-risk/disadvantaged youth are selected and the innovation also address/includes long-term employment among adults what would be the maximum amount of combined funding that may be requested?**

The maximum grant award for individual or multiple target populations is \$150,000. See Question 5 above.

- 42. RFP it said projects could be extended up to 24 months. What is the protocol for such an extension?**

Applicants should propose projects that can be completed within the 10 month terms of the grant. Extensions would be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with individual grantees after awards have been made.

- 43. The RFA states that a one-for-one dollar match is required. Does that mean pro bono equipment and services is not applicable? Must the match be cash?**

Match may be in-kind or cash. See Questions 1, 9, and 28 above.

- 44. The RFA says grants will be between \$50K to \$150K, but we've got a small proposal that we'd like to establish as a pilot. Can we apply for less than \$50K?**

Applicants may propose less than \$50,000. See Question 16 above.

- 45. I noticed in another question (Question 12 above) that letters of recommendation are not required. We have letters another unrelated application that can demonstrate strong support for our proposal. Can they still be submitted?**

Letters of support may be submitted, but are not required, and will not count against the page limits. However, the WAF RFA is a unique grant structure, and any letters should reflect the specific nature of the proposed project.

- 46. Do the activities for this grant have to directly tackle job-market issues (like direct training for particular industries), or can the activities address very important indirect job-market issues (presentation, writing skill development, self-confidence, teamwork, etc.)?**

Applicants may address any aspect of the workforce or skill development pipeline that is impacting the ability of the target population(s) to be successful in training, education, job placement, or career development.

- 47. The WAF RFA states that job seeker participants must meet WIA eligibility requirements but are not required to be co-enrolled [in WIA] under this grant. These participants also do not**

need to meet WIA performance measures. Where should these participants to be enrolled? What of reporting mechanism exists to account for them? How will we produce a report to show how these participants meet the particular outcomes that we are encouraged to devise for ourselves?

If the proposed project includes participants, but is not providing job seekers services directly with WAF dollars, enrollment and outcomes can be reflected in the data system that your program is currently using to track these participants- which may or may not be a WIA funded system. For those WAF projects that will be enrolling participants and paying for direct service delivery with WAF dollars, they will receive a specific grant code and instructions for this project. The State Board and EDD will work with each successful grantee to determine appropriate reporting mechanisms specific to the scope of work of the project.

- 48. Is there an ideal number of people a program could affect? Would a proposal with an in-depth program that can really turn lives around be looked upon as favorably as a proposal that affects a lot of people on a less impactful level? Especially if we're looking to establish a replicable pilot?**

The WAF RFA does not require specific participant levels, and applicants may propose projects that are piloted with fewer individuals than may ultimately be served at scale or with replication. The WAF is intended to fund promising ideas with the potential to greatly impact and accelerate the success of the target populations in the labor market. Applicants should address these issues in the project narrative (See Project proposal Table – page 12 of the RFA).

- 49. Who will be reviewing the applications?**

State staff will review the WAF applications.

- 50. Are there any samples or suggested language you could direct us to? We have a proposal concept that involves new ideas on how to positively impact these populations, and we want to insure we use the right kinds of terms and concepts to describe the program.**

Applicants are encouraged to work with their Project Team partners to develop their application and narrative language. The WAF does not require specific language to describe your Team's idea- use the language that best describes your goals, project, and impact.

- 51. On the Project Overview Matrix under ""Project Focus,"" what's the difference between Service Delivery and Funding Alignment?**

This is the "shorthand" version of the Project Activities referred to on page 7 of the WAF RFA:

"Under this RFA, the State Board will fund projects that address gaps and increase efficiencies in:

- *The service delivery pipeline of the workforce system*

- *The alignment of funding for the targeted populations”*

Service delivery refers to the direct service pipeline that job seekers or employers interact with-training programs, America’s Job Centers of California, educational system, hiring practices, etc. Funding Alignment refers to the foundational resource support for direct service delivery.

52. Can funding that has been applied for, but is still pending, count as “matching funds”?

Applicants may include unsecured funding as match for the purposes of the grant application budget; however, funding must be secured and documented as matched by the close of the grant period.

53. When at the earliest and when at the latest could the 10 month project period begin?

Grants are anticipated to start between June 16-30, 2014, and end 10 months after the start date.

54. Does an applicant need to document that the required Project Team is in place and has assisted in developing the application.

Yes, the Project Team must be identified, and ready to begin work at the state of the grant period.

55. Do we need to partner with a workforce job center in order to be eligible for this grant? Are any other partners required?

There are no specific organizations or types of organizations that must be partnered with for the WAF. Project Teams must consist of Experts, Innovators, and Customers as described in the RFA (see pages 5-6), however, applicants are encouraged to develop Projects Teams with any partners that best meet the goals of their project.

56. Can funds be used train artists for careers in the opera field?

Funding may be used for accelerator activities in any industry sector, though \$500,000 will be dedicated specifically to veteran’s health care projects.

57. The RFA mentions on p. 8 that "The State Board and EDD reserve the option to extend grants up to an additional 24 months." Can you clarify if this means an extension of the time in which the services may be delivered or an extension in the funding as well?

This could be an extension of the grant term, with no additional funding (a no-cost extension), or an extension of time and additional funding.

58. Can we send Letters of Support in addition to our application? Can we include an appendix with Letters of Support and still fall within the application instructions without losing points?

Letters of support may be submitted, but are not required, and will not count against the page limits for the application.

59. Can we include (or do we need) Letters of Commitment from WorkSource Centers?

No. See Questions 55 and 58 above.