

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is seeking proposals for “Learning Labs” (workshops) for the Workforce Innovations 2008 conference. Workforce Innovations, co-hosted by ETA and the American Society for Training and Development, is the premier annual conference promoting collaborative leadership among workforce development, business, economic development, education, faith-based and community organizations, and philanthropy. Over 3,500 participants are expected to attend the conference, which will be held July 15-17, 2008 in New Orleans, Louisiana. This year, the theme for Workforce Innovations is “Success Decoded.” The conference will bring together local, state, and national-level strategic workforce investment partners to learn from successes to cultivate the talent development solutions needed in today’s global economy. Workforce Innovations will provide an unparalleled opportunity to dialogue with a wide range of practitioners and thought leaders who are forging effective strategies for regionally-driven innovation and talent development.

Strategic workforce partners – such as the public workforce investment system, business, economic development, educational institutions, faith-based and community organizations, philanthropy, and associations representing these fields – are eligible to submit Learning Lab proposals. **All proposals must be submitted via the online database at www.WorkforceInnovations.org/CFP2008.cfm by Friday, February 22, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) and must meet the criteria outlined below.** All questions should be submitted by email to info@workforceinnovations.org. Updated information about this Call for Presentations may be posted on the Web site above.

LEARNING THEMES

All Learning Lab proposals must fall specifically within one of the following seven themes:

1. Globalization and the Innovation Economy
2. Regional Talent Development Solutions for the Global Economy
3. Leveraging Resources for Increased Impact
4. Innovations in Education and Workforce Partnerships
5. Business Engagement and Leadership
6. Maximizing Your Talent Pool
7. Workforce System Leadership and Transformation

Globalization and the Innovation Economy

Technological advances and increased international trade have intensified competition for the production of goods and services. This has resulted in a high premium on entrepreneurialism and the ability to transform ideas into new products and services. The public workforce investment system is a critical partner and leader in helping regional economies identify and build upon their competitive advantages. Learning Labs submitted under this theme should present tools, resources and strategies that help strategic workforce development partners understand and respond to the dynamics of a global economy. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Emerging trends in talent development;
- Strategies to nurture innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Innovations in rural America;
- Building regional identity;
- Workforce information intelligence and tools that drive regional planning and action;
- Identifying a region's competitive advantage through asset mapping and data-driven SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis;
- Applying data from foreign labor certification applications;
- Responses to economic transitions and opportunities using National Emergency Grants, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Regional Innovation Grants; and
- Industry clusters in a regional and global context.

Regional Talent Development Solutions for the Global Economy

A talent development system is required to educate and prepare workers for career advancement in the global economy. Such a system not only meets the workforce challenges of employers in a region, but also collaborates with economic development organizations to foster emerging industries and partners with educational institutions to prepare the pipeline of skilled workers. Learning Labs submitted under this theme should present examples of agile and forward-thinking strategies that help regions implement talent development solutions that drive prosperity. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- How strategic and social-networks help regional leaders be more effective;
- Developing a strategic regional plan and operationalizing it;
- Learning from regional sectoral strategies;
- Understanding 21st century competencies and credentials, and how they impact workforce development and education strategies;
- Developing pathways for career advancement;
- Implementing technology-based learning strategies;
- Lifelong learning strategies;
- Successful workforce intermediary models; and
- Assisting regions impacted by Base Realignment and Closure activities meet their workforce challenges.

Leveraging Resources for Increased Impact

The public workforce investment system maximizes the impact of its investments by leveraging strategic partners' resources, including financial investments, expertise, and models of promising practices. Learning labs submitted under this theme should present examples of how leveraging resources, *particularly at the local level*, has improved outcomes for employers and workers. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Collaborating successfully with state and Federal partners, including implementing the Federal shared youth vision;
- Achieving results through innovative public/private partnerships with economic development organizations, foundations, and/or faith-based and community-based organizations;
- Finding resources in unusual places;
- Funding flexibility across the Federal government; and
- Identifying waivers to help facilitate leveraging and integration of resources.

Innovations in Education and Workforce Partnerships

In order to maintain America's competitive position in the global economy, it is critical to provide workers with lifelong learning opportunities to keep pace with technological advances and upgrade their skills. Partnerships between the public workforce investment system and institutions in the continuum of education – including the K-12 system, community colleges, land grant colleges, and universities – are essential for preparing a pipeline of skilled talent and to providing workers with opportunities to expand their capacity for career advancement. Learning Labs submitted under this theme should highlight collaborations between the public workforce investment system and educational institutions that have successfully prepared workers for the global innovation economy. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Partnering successfully with K-12 systems;
- Collaborating with community colleges, land-grant colleges, and universities in regional talent development;
- Partnering with adult basic education to respond to today's literacy and language challenges;
- Multiple pathways to education for youth; and
- Building and sustaining an educated and prepared STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) workforce.

Business Engagement and Leadership

Employers require highly-skilled talent in order to compete. The public workforce investment system is uniquely positioned to help employers meet their workforce challenges. Employers – particularly the private sector – define workforce challenges and inform policy and investment decisions to link workers with in-demand occupations. Employers also connect with the workforce system for services needed to attract and retain skilled workers. Learning Lab proposals accepted under this theme may be included in Workforce Innovations 2008 Business Leadership Day. Learning labs submitted under this theme should present examples of how the public workforce

investment system and employers are collaborating to meet the talent demands of critical businesses and industries within regional economies. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Building employer understanding of the workforce investment system;
- Increasing the workforce investment system's understanding of employer needs;
- Obtaining and retaining employer engagement in talent development; and
- Engaging business in strategic partnerships.

Maximizing Your Talent Pool

Access to a qualified workforce is essential to the economic viability of the United States. For example, the availability of skilled labor is one of the top factors influencing a firm's decision on where to build, relocate, or expand operations. One asset the public workforce investment system brings to regional economic and talent development is access to talent – particularly untapped labor pools such as ex-offenders, older workers, veterans, individuals with disabilities, military spouses, individuals with limited English proficiency, and refugees. Learning Labs submitted under this theme should present examples of how the public workforce investment system is leveraging this asset and collaborating with strategic partners to build the pipeline of skilled workers.

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Building the pipeline of future workers with untapped labor pools;
- The next generation of apprenticeship;
- Strategies and tools for reemployment;
- Advancing low-skilled workers; and
- Preparing youth for career success, including YouthBuild.

Workforce System Leadership and Transformation

The demands of the global economy require innovations in workforce development. Strong leadership is essential to sustaining the transformation of the public workforce investment system into a source of talent development solutions that support regional economic competitiveness. Learning Labs submitted on this theme should focus on examples of how leadership at the state and local levels has led to systemic and institutional transformation of the public workforce investment system. Topics include but are not limited to:

- Managing change to drive transformation throughout the One-Stop system;
- Transformational Workforce Investment Board and state leadership that results in to systemic and institutional change;
- Aligning workforce development, education, and economic development strategic plans and strategies;
- Bridging the gap between education and business;
- Integrating regional and other transformation strategies into One-Stop system services; and
- Innovations in performance and fiscal accountability.

SUBMISSION CRITERIA

Workforce Innovations 2008 aims to provide conference attendees with the strategies, tools, and resources that are needed to implement talent development solutions that drive regional economic prosperity. Due to the anticipated number of applications and the limited number of Learning Lab slots, only two learning lab proposals per organization will be accepted for review.

Submitters will be notified if they have been accepted by April 2008. Accepted proposals will:

- Feature strategies that have *demonstrated improved outcomes* for employers and workers;
- Communicate tangible actions that participants can implement in their own communities and regions;
- Discuss strategies for sustainability;
- Provide examples of effective tools and resources that participants can utilize in their own communities and regions;
- Allow for significant dialogue among participants, and between participants and presenters; and
- Stimulate new thinking and action.

Guidelines for Submission

Only proposals submitted via the online database at

www.WorkforceInnovations.org/CFP2008.cfm by Friday, February 22, 2008 at 5:00

p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) will be accepted for review. Instructions on how to use the database may be found on this Web site. All proposals must be submitted in their entirety; partial submissions will not be considered. Completed submissions must:

- Present ideas and information that are relevant and significant to the Workforce Innovations 2008 theme “Success Decoded” and that fall under one of the seven themes.
- Target the public workforce investment system and strategic partners, including business, industry, and educational leaders.
- Be designed for a 60 minute session.
- Include a title (15 words or less) and description (75 words or less). If submission is accepted, this title and description will be published in the conference program book.
- Identify one to three learning objectives; each learning objective must be 15 words or less. If accepted, the learning objectives will be published in the conference program book.
- Indicate if the Learning Lab content is “introductory” or “advanced” to help conference participants identify sessions that meet their needs. Introductory sessions are intended to provide an overview and help orient participants to a new strategy or idea. Advanced sessions are designed for participants with experience in the specific topic to further their knowledge by “delving deeper” into the issue.

- Include a description (100 words or less) regarding how the strategy highlighted in the proposal has improved outcomes for employers and workers.
- Include a description (100 words or less) of the approach that is being used to ensure sustainability of the strategy that is being highlighted in the proposal (if applicable).
- Provide examples (100 words or less) of the tools and resources that will be shared with Learning Lab participants.
- Include a description (50 words or less) on how the session is designed to promote dialogue among participants, and between participants and speakers (e.g., significant question/answer time, audience participation activities, uses a format other than PowerPoint presentation, etc.).
- Feature no more than two speakers, plus a moderator (if applicable) in each learning lab. *Proposals must provide a rationale as to why there is significant value to having more than two speakers.*
- A primary contact must be identified for each Learning Lab proposal submission. The primary contact is responsible for communicating with all workshop speakers (if applicable).
- Indicate, as applicable, any special requests regarding room set-up and audio/visual equipment needs.

ETA reserves the right to publicize presentations and speakers of accepted proposals on the conference Web site and in relevant marketing materials. ETA also reserves the right to edit or combine presentations submitted through the Call for Presentations process. Selected proposals will be notified in April 2008.

Other Information and Requirements

Audio/Visual (A/V) Equipment

- Each room will be equipped with a laptop (PC), LCD projector and screen, one podium microphone, and two table-top microphones.
- Speakers must use the A/V equipment that is provided in the learning lab room. Due to limited on-site support technicians, speakers are asked to not use their own equipment (e.g., laptops, etc.).
- Additional A/V equipment (e.g., wireless microphones) may be requested in the submission form. Requests will be considered depending on availability of equipment.

Room Setup

- Learning Lab rooms will be set in either theatre or roundtable style. One room will be designated as the “computer lab” for Learning Labs that require the Internet for hands-on demonstrations.
- You may request a room setup preference; however due to space limitations, ETA reserves the right to assign room setup styles.

Handouts

- Selected speakers must submit an electronic version of their presentation and handouts to ETA at www.WorkforceInnovations.org/speakersinfo.cfm by Monday, June 30, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).
- During the conference, speakers should expect to provide 75 – 150 handouts on-site to participants. (Final number of handouts will be provided based on room assignments.)
- Speakers must bring an electronic version of their presentation and handouts to the conference on a flash or thumb drive.

Speaker Information

- Speakers may not promote or sell any products or services.
- ETA must be notified of any speaker substitutions immediately by emailing info@workforceinnovations.org.
- ETA will not be able to offer reimbursements for travel or other expenses to speakers.
- Speakers are responsible for accessing relevant Workforce Innovations 2008 information and materials at www.WorkforceInnovations.org/speakersinfo.cfm. This Web site will be updated regularly.
- Speakers must register for Workforce Innovations 2008. Speakers are responsible for registering themselves and paying the applicable registration rate:
 - Attending only the day of your presentation: Complimentary registration.
 - Attending full conference: \$250 reduced speaker rate.