

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Veterans' Employment and Training Service

Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA)

[SGA # 09-02/PY 09]

Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) Grants

for Program Year (PY) 2009, July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

AGENCY: Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

ACTION: Posting of SGA # **09-02**

DATES: The closing date for receipt of the application is 30 days from the date of publications in grants.gov.

Address: Applicants are encouraged to apply electronically at **<http://www.grants.gov>**.

Instructions for electronic applications are in Section IV. 3. of this Notice. Applications submitted by U.S. Mail, professional overnight delivery service or hand-delivery must be addressed to:

Department of Labor

Procurement Services Center

Attention: Cassandra Mitchell, Reference SGA # **09-02**

200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room S-4307

Washington, DC 20210

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cassandra Mitchell, Grants Management Specialist, Procurement Services Center, at (202) 693-4570 (this is not a toll free number).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

(Applicants for Grant Funds Should Read This Notice in Its Entirety)

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), announces a grant competition under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) for Program Year (PY) 2009, as authorized under Section 168 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. This Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) notice contains all of the necessary information and forms needed to apply for grant funding. Selected programs will assist eligible veterans by providing employment, training, support services, credentialing, networking information, and/or other assistance.

Under this PY 2009 SGA, VETS anticipates that up to \$6,900,000 will be available for grant awards up to a maximum of \$500,000 for each grant award. VETS anticipates approximately 13 awards will be made under this solicitation with the possibility of additional awards contingent upon applicant funding requests. The period of performance for these PY 2009 grants will be July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. Two (2) optional years of additional funding may be available, depending upon Congressional appropriations, the agency's decision to exercise the optional year(s) of funding, and satisfactory grantee and sub-awardee(s) performance. Failure to provide timely and accurate reporting may jeopardize optional year funding.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION:

WIA section 168 amended the training programs made available to veterans (see 29 U.S.C. 2913). WIA section 168 authorizes the Department of Labor to make grants to meet the needs for workforce investment activities of veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated veterans within 48 months of discharge (under conditions other than dishonorable). Veterans who received a “dishonorable” discharge are ineligible for VWIP services. Priority of service for veterans in all Department of Labor funded training programs is established in 38 U.S.C. 4215.

USDOL is authorized to competitively award VWIP grants to public agencies, State and Work Force Investment Boards and private non-profit organizations (including faith-based and neighborhood partnerships) that the Secretary determines to have an understanding of the unemployment problems of veterans, familiarity with the area to be served, linkages with the One-Stop Career Centers, and the capability to administer a program of workforce investment activities for such veterans effectively.

1. Program Concept and Emphasis:

VWIP grants are intended to address two objectives: (a) to provide services to assist in reintegrating eligible veterans into meaningful employment within the labor force; and (b) to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex employability problems facing eligible veterans. For this PY 2009 grant solicitation, VETS seeks applicants that will provide services through a case management approach that network with Federal, State, and local resources for veteran support programs.

Applicants must propose clear strategies and obtainable goals for employment that focus on one of the following areas:

In support of the President's Green Vets commitment, applicants must propose clear strategies and obtainable goals on training and employment in the renewable energy economy (Green Energy Jobs) that focus on one of the following areas:

1. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment in Green Energy Jobs for veterans who are recently separated (within 48 months) from discharge from the military; or
2. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment through training that result in Green Energy Job licensing, and or certification, for veterans seeking employment where a credential is desired or required. Successful grantees will help veterans overcome barriers to employment by increasing opportunities for veterans to obtain credentials in the civilian workforce based on their military experience, training and service.

Any application that does not focus clearly on either category 1 or 2 above will be considered a non-priority application. Non-priority applications will be considered separately and may receive a grant if there are not enough credible applications that warrant grant awards in category 1 or 2 above. Green Energy Jobs for purposes of this SGA include jobs in the energy-efficient building, construction, and retrofits industries; the renewable electric power industry; the energy efficient and advanced drive train vehicle industry; the bio-fuels industry; the deconstruction and materials use industries; the energy efficiency assessment industry serving the residential, commercial, or industrial sectors; and manufacturers that produce sustainable products using environmentally sustainable processes and materials.. This definition of Green Jobs is based on language in the Green Jobs Act of 2007.

Successful applicants will design programs that assist eligible veterans by providing outreach, intake, pre-enrollment assessment, job placement services, job training, counseling, mentoring, supportive services, and other assistance to expedite the reintegration of eligible veterans into the labor force.

Grantees and sub-awardee(s) are to coordinate efforts on behalf of participants with local One-Stop Career Centers that provide employment and training services such as basic skills instruction, training necessary to fill gaps in academic or experiential requirements necessary for a license or professional certification, remedial education activities, job search activities including job search workshops, job counseling, job preparatory training including resume writing and interviewing skills, subsidized trial employment, on-the-job training, classroom training, and various other employment related services. In PY 2009, VWIP will seek to continue to strengthen development of effective service delivery systems, to provide comprehensive services through a case management approach that addresses complex problems facing eligible veterans trying to transition into gainful employment, and to improve strategies for employment and retention in employment.

2. Project Awareness Program Information and Orientation Activities:

In order to promote networking between the VWIP-funded program and local service providers (and thereby eliminate gaps or duplication in services and enhance the provision of assistance to participants), the grantee and sub-awardee(s) must provide project orientation workshops and program awareness activities that it determines are the most feasible for providing information about the VWIP program to other service providers.

Grantees and sub-awardee(s) are encouraged to propose strategies for incorporating faith-based and neighborhood partnerships (defined as organizations with social services budgets of \$500,000 or less and ten (10) or fewer full-time employees) into their outreach plans. Project orientation workshops conducted by grantees and sub-awardee(s) have been an effective means of sharing information and informing the community of the availability of other services; they are encouraged, but not mandatory. Rather, grantees and sub-awardee(s) will have the flexibility to attend service provider meetings, seminars, and conferences, to outstation staff, and to develop individual service contracts as well as to involve other agencies in program planning.

3. Coordination and Collaboration with the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff at the One-Stop Career Center Office in their jurisdiction is required. DVOP specialists and LVER staff members are an integral part of the One-Stop Career Centers. Additionally, wherever possible, DVOP and LVER staff should be utilized for job development and placement activities for veterans who are ready to enter employment and/or who are in need of intensive case management services for employment purposes. Many of these DVOP and LVER staff members have received training in case management for employment purposes at the National Veterans Training Institute and have a priority focus on assisting those veterans most at a disadvantage in the labor market. VETS require successful applicants to collaborate and coordinate with DVOP and LVER staff to avoid duplication of efforts and to achieve economies of resources.

4. Scope of Program Design:

In addition to the activities described above, the project design must include the following services:

A. Outreach, intake, assessment, peer counseling and mentoring to the degree practical, employment services, and follow-up support services to enhance retention in employment. Program staff providing outreach services should have experience in dealing with, and an understanding of the needs of, veterans. Outreach activities must include and coordinate with the local Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), if applicable, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

B. Provision of or referral to employment services such as: job search workshops, job counseling, assessment of skills, resume writing techniques, interviewing skills, subsidized trial employment (work experience), job development services, job placement into unsubsidized employment, and job placement follow-up services to enhance retention in employment.

C. Provision of or referral to training services such as: basic skills instruction, remedial education activities, life skills and money management training, on-the-job training, classroom training, vocational training, specialized and/or licensing training programs, and other formal training programs as deemed appropriate to benefit the participant. At least 80% of the enrolled VWIP participants must participate in training activities.

D. Grantees and sub-awardee(s) must perform a preliminary assessment of each participant's eligibility for Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) service-connected disability, compensation, and/or pension benefits. As appropriate, grantees and sub-

awardee(s) will work with the veterans' service organizations or refer the participants to DVA in order to file a claim for compensation or pension. Grantees and sub-awardee(s) will track the progress of claims and report outcomes in individual participant case management records.

E. Networking, collaborating, and coordinating efforts with veterans' service organizations such as: The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, The American Veterans (AMVETS), or etc. to ensure participants apply for and/or receive other veterans' benefits for which they may be eligible.

F. Referral as necessary to health care, counseling, and rehabilitative services including, but not limited to: alcohol and drug rehabilitation, therapeutic services, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) services, and mental health services.

5. Performance Measures:

For purposes of assessing performance of grantees selected under this SGA, VETS will focus on the two performance measures described below. However, grantees also will be required to report additional performance information, as required in the provided USDOL guidance on Common Measures and as also described below. All technical performance outcomes will be reported quarterly using an Internet-based reporting system with access provided to successful grantees after the award process has been completed.

There are two (2) outcome measures with established performance targets for VWIP grants. The first Common Measure outcome measure is the Entered Employment Rate (EER) with a performance target for grantees and sub-awardee(s) to meet a minimum EER of 65%. This is determined by dividing the number of participants who entered employment (who are still employed 90 days after their actual placement or when they are *exited* from the program) by the number of participants who have *exited* the program. Under Common Measures, a person is considered to have *exited* the program if they have secured a job and/or not received job search or employment service (other than follow-up and retention services) for 90 days. Job retention and counseling services, while required and expected, do not count as a “service” that would prevent a person from being *exited* from the program after they have been placed into employment. For example, awardees should not have a reported EER in the first quarters, since it requires at least 90 days by definition after a person is placed into employment to be considered *exited* from the program and consequently counted as an entered employment. While the percentage of VWIP participants who enter employment is an important outcome, it is also necessary to evaluate and measure the program’s longer-term results, through the 180-day, and 270-day employment retention follow-up periods after a VWIP participant is placed into employment. The second outcome measure is retention following placement with a performance target for grantees and sub-awardee(s) to meet a minimum rate of retention of 65%. This is determined by dividing the number of participants who entered employment (or those still employed 90 days after their placement or when they are *exited*) and who were still employed 180 days and 270 days after they were placed (or 90 days and 180 days after they were counted as an entered employment) divided by the total number of participants

who entered employment. For example, awardees should not have a reported retention rate in the first, second, or third, quarters, since it requires at least 180 days by definition after a person is placed into employment and 90 days to be considered *exited* from the program for the awardee to be able to post job the first quarter of retention. While there is no performance target established for retention at 90 days following entered employment, grantees are required to collect and report the rate of retention in employment at that point. The Common Measures Technical Assistance Guide for Competitive Grantees (Appendix H) describes in detail the specific technical performance data grantees will be required to collect and report on utilizing the Common Measures definitions, methodologies, and reporting requirements. Appendix H and the Recommended Format for Common Measures Planned Quarterly Technical Performance Goals (Appendix D) are provided to assist applicants in determining their planned goals.

6. Results-Oriented Model: No specific model is mandatory, but successful applicants will design a program that is responsive to the needs of the local community and achieves the VWIP objectives. The VWIP objectives are to successfully reintegrate veterans into the workforce and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems facing veterans. Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Congress and the public are looking for program results rather than program processes. Priority of service for veterans in all Department of Labor funded training programs is established in 38 U.S.C. 4215. The applicant's program should be based on a results-oriented model. The first phase of activity should consist of the level of outreach necessary to introduce the program to eligible veterans. Outreach also includes establishing contact with other agencies that encounter eligible veterans. Once the eligible

veterans have been identified, an assessment must be made of each individual's abilities, interests, needs, and barriers to employment. A determination should be made as to whether the VWIP enrolled participant would benefit from pre-employment preparation such as resume writing assistance, job search workshops, related employment counseling, and case management, or possibly an initial entry into the job market through a temporary job. Additionally, sheltered work environments such as the Department of Veterans' Affairs Compensated Work Therapy Program, classroom training, and/or on-the-job training must be evaluated. Such services should be noted in an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to facilitate the staff's successful monitoring of the participant's progress. Entry into full-time employment or a specific job-training program should follow, in keeping with the overall objective of VWIP, to assist the eligible veteran in finding and obtaining meaningful employment. The grantee should provide or arrange for these supportive services that will enable the VWIP enrolled participant to successfully perform all the activities specified in the IEP. Job development, a crucial part of the employability process, usually occurs when there are no competitive job openings that the VWIP-enrolled participant is qualified to apply for; therefore, a job opportunity with an employer is created, developed, and customized specifically for that VWIP enrolled participant. VWIP-enrolled participants who are ready to enter employment and/or who are in need of intensive case management services for employment purposes are to be referred to the DVOP and LVER staff at a One-Stop Career Center. DVOP and LVER staff members are able to provide VWIP participants the following services: job development, employment services, case management for employment purposes and career counseling. All DVOP and LVER staff members provide employment-related services to veterans who are most at a disadvantage in the labor market. DVOP/LVER staff may also be able to provide valuable assistance to grantees and sub-

awardees in tracking participants in their State wage record management information system for follow-up purposes at 90 and 180 days after a participant is counted as an entered employment. The applicant's program must include tracking of program participants. Tracking should begin with the referral to supportive services and training, continue through placement into employment, the documentation of the individual as "exited" from the program as an entered employment, and through the 90-day and 180-day follow-up periods after the participant's entered employment is documented. It is important that the grantee and sub-awardee(s) maintain contact with veterans after placement to ensure that employment-related problems are addressed. The 90-day and 180-day follow-ups are fundamental to assessing program results. Grantees and sub-awardee(s) need to budget for 90-, 180-, and 270-Day follow-up activity so that it can be performed for those participants placed at or near the end of the grant performance period. All grantees and sub-awardee(s), prior to the end of the grant performance period, must obligate sufficient funds to ensure that follow-up activities are completed. Such results will be reported in the final technical performance report.

II. AWARD INFORMATION:

1. Type of Funding Instrument: One (1) year grant with optional funding for up to an additional two years. Note: Selection of an organization as a grantee does not constitute final approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, USDOL may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, staffing, and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation. If the negotiations do not result in a mutually acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the application.

2. Funding Levels: The total funding available for this VWIP solicitation is up to \$6,900,000. It is anticipated that approximately 13 awards will be made under this solicitation with the possibility of additional awards contingent upon applicant funding requests. Awards are expected to range from a minimum of \$100,000 to a maximum of \$500,000. Please be advised that requests exceeding \$500,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated. If there are any residual program funds the Grant Officer may select the application(s) to award a grant up to one (1) year after the initial performance period begins or June 30, 2010.

3. Period of Performance: The period of performance will be for the twelve (12) month period of July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, unless modified by the Grant Officer. It is expected that successful applicants will begin program operations under this solicitation on July 1, 2009. All program funds must be obligated by June 30, 2010; a limited amount of funds should be obligated and reserved for follow-up activities and closeout.

4. Optional Year Funding: Should Congress appropriate additional funds for this purpose, VETS may consider up to two (2) additional years of optional funding. The Government does not, however, guarantee optional year funding for any grantee or sub-awardee(s). In deciding whether to exercise any optional year(s) of funding, VETS will consider grantee and sub-awardee(s) performance during the previous period of operations as follows:

A. The grantee and sub-awardee(s) must meet, at minimum, 90% of planned cumulative goals for Federal expenditures, enrollments, placements into employment, and training by the end of the third quarter; and

B. The grantee and sub-awardee(s) must have complied with all terms identified in the Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA), General and Special Grant Provisions, and grant award document; and

C. All program and fiscal reports must have been submitted by the established due dates and verified for accuracy.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

1. Eligible Applicants: Applications for funds will be accepted from public agencies and non-profit organizations, including state and local workforce investment boards and faith-based and neighborhood partnerships, that are determined to have familiarity with the area and population to be served and can administer an effective program, under WIA section 168(a) (2).

Eligible applicants generally fall into one of the following categories:

State and local Workforce Investment Boards (SWIBs), established under Sections 111 and 117 of the Workforce Investment Act. Public agencies, meaning any public agency of a State or of a general purpose political subdivision of a State that has the power to levy taxes and spend funds, as well as general corporate and police powers. (This typically refers to cities and counties.) A State agency may propose in its application to serve one or more of the jurisdictions located in its State. This does not preclude a city or county agency from submitting an application to serve its own jurisdiction. Non-profit organizations (including faith-based and neighborhood partnerships). If claiming 501(c) (3) status, the Internal Revenue Service statement indicating 501(c) (3) status approval must be submitted.

Applicants for VWIP must satisfy a “responsibility review” that demonstrates an ability to administer Federal funds. See 20 CFR 667.170. Other eligible applicants include joint labor-management training programs, representatives from local governments, conservation corps, community colleges, and small businesses.

Entities described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive funds under this announcement because Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Public Law No. 104-65, 109 Stat. 691, prohibits the award of Federal funds to these entities. In accordance with 29 CFR Part 98, entities that are debarred or suspended shall be excluded from Federal financial assistance and are ineligible to receive a VWIP grant.

2. Cost Sharing: Although VETS encourages applicants to use cost sharing and matching funds, Veterans Workforce Investment Grants do not require grantees or sub-awardee(s) to share costs or provide matching funds. However, we do encourage grantees and sub-awardee(s) to maximize the resources available to the VWIP program and its participants.

3. Other Eligibility Criteria:

A. Programs must be “employment-focused.” An “employment-focused” program is a program directed toward: (1) increasing the employability of eligible veterans through training or arranging for the provision of services that will enable them to reintegrate into the labor force and (2) matching eligible veterans with potential employers and/or entrepreneurial opportunities.

B. Applicants are encouraged to utilize, through partnerships and/or sub-award(s), experienced public agencies, private non-profit organizations, private businesses, faith-based and neighborhood partnerships, and colleges and universities (especially those with traditionally high enrollments of minorities) that have an understanding of unemployment and the barriers to employment unique to eligible veterans, a familiarity with the area to be served, and the capability to effectively provide the necessary services.

C. Legal Rules Pertaining to Inherently Religious Activities by Organizations That Receive Federal Financial Assistance Direct Federal grants, sub-award funds, or contracts under this program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the services funded under this program. Neutral, secular criteria that neither favor nor disfavor religion must be employed in the selection of grant and sub-grant recipients. In addition, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and USDOL regulations implementing the Workforce Investment Act, a recipient may not use direct Federal assistance to train a participant in religious activities, or employ participants to construct, operate, or maintain any part of a facility that is used or to be used for religious instruction or worship. See 29 CFR 37.6(f). Under WIA, “no individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with, any such program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex (except as otherwise permitted

under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993), national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.’’ Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at 29 CFR Part 2, Subpart D. Provisions relating to the use of indirect support (such as vouchers) is at 29 CFR 2.33(c) and 20 CFR 667.266.

A faith-based organization receiving federal funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with Federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives Federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization’s name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization’s mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of USDOL funded activities.

The Department notes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. sec. 2000bb, applies to all Federal law and its implementation. If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled to receive Federal financial assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and maintain that hiring practice even though Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act contains a general ban on religious discrimination in

employment. If you are awarded a grant, you will be provided with information on how to request such an exemption.

4. Participant Eligibility Criteria. To be eligible for participation in a training program administered under VWIP, an individual must be a veteran who falls within one of the following categories: "...veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated veterans [those within 48 months of discharge]." See Section 168 (a) (1) of the Workforce Investment Act.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

1. Address to Request an Application and Amendments: This SGA, together with its attachments, includes all the information needed to apply. Additional application packages and amendments to this SGA may be obtained from the VETS website address at www.dol.gov/vets and the Federal Grant Opportunities website address at <http://www.grants.gov>. Additional copies of the standard forms can be downloaded from: http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/forms_repository_information.jsp http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp#1

All applicants are encouraged to apply online at www.grants.gov (applicants can submit either hard copy or electronic submissions). If we receive multiple copies through [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) we will take the latest submission. It is strongly recommended that before the applicant begins to write the proposal, applicants immediately review the www.grants.gov website to include all frequently asked questions (FAQs), and initiate and

complete the “Get Started” registration steps at <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>. These steps may take multiple days to complete and this time should be factored into plans for electronic submission in order to avoid facing unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application as untimely. When submitting electronically through www.grants.gov, the application and the related attachments must be submitted as .doc, .pdf, or .xls files. Except as provided in Section IV.3., any application received after the deadline will be considered as non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

2. Content and Form of Application: The application must include the name, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address (if applicable) of a key contact person (program and fiscal) at the applicant’s organization in case questions should arise.

To be considered responsive to this solicitation the application must consist of three (3) separate and distinct sections: the Executive Summary, the Technical Proposal, and the Cost Proposal. The information provided in these three (3) sections is essential for applicants to demonstrate an understanding of the programmatic and fiscal requirements of the VWIP. If there are missing documents, the applicant’s proposals will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

The application must focus on one of the following strategies:

In support of the President’s Green Vets commitment, applicants must propose clear strategies and obtainable goals on training and employment in the renewable energy economy (Green Energy Jobs) that focus on one of the following areas:

1. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment in Green Energy Jobs for veterans who are recently separated (within 48 months) from discharge from the military; or

2. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment through training that result in Green Energy Job licensing, and or certification, for veterans seeking employment where a credential is desired or required. Successful grantees will help veterans overcome barriers to employment by increasing opportunities for veterans to obtain credentials in the civilian workforce based on their military experience, training and service.

Any application that does not focus clearly on either category 1 or 2 above will be considered a non -priority application. Non-priority applications will be considered separately and may receive a grant if there are not enough credible applications that warrant grant awards in category 1 or 2 above. Green Energy Jobs for purposes of this SGA include jobs in the energy-efficient building, construction, and retrofits industries; the renewable electric power industry; the energy efficient and advanced drive train vehicle industry; the bio-fuels industry; the deconstruction and materials use industries; the energy efficiency assessment industry serving the residential, commercial, or industrial sectors; and manufacturers that produce sustainable products using environmentally sustainable processes and materials. This definition of Green Jobs is based on language in the Green Jobs Act of 2007.

A complete grant application package must be written in English and must not exceed 75 single-sided pages (8-1/2" x 11"), double-spaced, 12-point font, typed pages (all attachments are included in the 75 page maximum). Any pages over the 75-page limit will not be reviewed. Major sections and sub-sections of the application are to be divided and clearly identified (e.g. with tab dividers), and all pages must be consecutively numbered.

To be considered responsive, grant applications are to include (electronic submissions thru www.grants.gov will not require copies):

An original, blue ink-signed, and two (2) copies of the cover letter.

An original and two (2) copies of the Executive Summary (see below);

An original and two (2) copies of the Technical Proposal (see below) that includes a completed Technical Performance Goals form (Appendix D). Also include all attachments with the technical proposal, such as the applicant's information showing outcomes of employment and training programs that it has had in the past three (3) years in terms of enrollments and participants who have entered into employment.

An original and two (2) copies of the Cost Proposal (see below) that includes an original , blue ink-signed, Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424 (Appendix A), a Budget Narrative, Budget Information Sheet SF 424A (Appendix B), and original, blue ink-signed, Assurances and Certifications Signature Page (Appendix C), a Direct Cost Description for Applicants and Sub-applicants (Appendix E), a completed Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Appendix F), and the applicant's grant specific financial audit and /or audit statement dated within the last 18 months (does not count toward the 75 page limitation). If any documents from the specified list noted above are missing, the application will be considered non-responsive and it will not be evaluated.

A. Section 1 – Executive Summary: A one to two page summary reflecting the grantees' and sub-awardee(s) proposed overall strategy, timeline, and an outcome to be achieved in their grant proposal is required. The Executive Summary should include:

- The proposed area to be served through the activities of this grant.
- The grantee's experience in serving the residents in the proposed service area.

- The proposed projects and activities that will expedite the reintegration of eligible veterans into the workforce.
- A summary of anticipated outcomes, benefits, and value added by the project.

B. Section 2 - Technical Proposal consists of a narrative proposal that demonstrates the need for this particular grant program, the services and activities proposed to obtain successful outcomes for eligible veterans to be served; and the applicant's ability to accomplish the expected outcomes of the proposed project design.

Required Content: There are program activities that all applications must contain to be found technically acceptable under this SGA. Programs must be "employment-focused" and must be responsive to the rating criteria in Section V. The required program activities are: participant outreach and project awareness activities, pre-enrollment assessments, individual employment plans for each enrolled participant, case management, job placement, job retention follow-up at 90 and 180 days after individual enters employment, utilization and coordination of employment services through the One-Stop Career Center System, including the DVOP and LVER staff, and with community linkages with other programs that provide support to eligible veterans. These activities are described in section I. of this SGA.

The following format for the technical proposal is recommended:

Need for the program: The applicant must identify the geographical area to be served and provide an estimate of the number of eligible veterans in the designated geographical area. Include poverty and unemployment rates in the area and identify the disparities in the local

community infrastructure that exacerbate the employment barriers faced by the targeted veterans, including regulations or other restrictions on the recognition of relevant military training by civilian licensing or certification authorities. Include labor market information on the outlook for job opportunities in the employment fields and industries that are in demand in the geographical area to be served. Applicants are to clearly describe the proposed program awareness and participant outreach strategies.

If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Need for the program are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Approach or strategy to increase employment and job retention: Applicants must be responsive to the Rating Criteria contained in Section V and address all of the rating factors as thoroughly as possible in the narrative.

The applicant must:

Describe the specific employment and training services to be provided under this grant and the sequence or flow of such services;

Indicate the type(s) of training that will be provided under the grant and how it relates to the jobs that are in demand, length of training, training curriculum, and how the training will improve the eligible veterans' employment opportunities within that geographical area;

Provide a follow-up plan that addresses retention after 90 and 180 days with participants who have been documented as an entered employment;

Include the completed Planned Quarterly Technical Performance Goals (and planned expenditures) form listed in Appendix D. If the Planned Quarterly Technical Performance Goals form listed in Appendix D is not completed and submitted, the grant application package will be considered as non-responsive.

If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Approach or strategy to increase employment and job retention are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Linkages with facilities that serve eligible veterans: Describe program and resource linkages with other facilities that will be involved in identifying potential clients for this program. Applicants are encouraged to submit a list of their local area network of service providers that offer and provide services to benefit VWIP participants. Describe any networks with other related resources and/or other programs that serve eligible veterans. Indicate how the program will be coordinated with any efforts that are conducted by public and private agencies in the community. If a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other service agreement with service providers exists, copies should be provided.

If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Linkages with facilities that serve eligible veterans are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Linkages with other providers of employment and training services to eligible veterans: Describe the linkages, networks, and relationships the proposed program will have with other providers of services to eligible veterans; include a description of the relationship with other employment and training programs in the One-Stop Career Centers such as Disabled

Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP), the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) program, and local Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Programs (HVRP); list the type of services that will be provided by each. Note the type of agreement in place, if applicable. Linkages with the workforce investment system are required. Describe any networks with any other resources and/or other programs for eligible veterans.

If an MOU or other service agreement with other service providers exists, copies should be provided.

If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Linkages with other providers of employment and training services to eligible veterans are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Linkages with other Federal agencies: Describe program and resource linkages with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), to include the Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) and Grant and Per Diem Programs.

If an MOU or other service agreement with other service providers exists, copies should be provided. If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Linkages with other Federal agencies are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Proposed supportive service strategy for veterans: Describe how supportive service resources for veterans will be obtained and used. If resources are provided by other sources or linkages, such as Federal, State, local, faith-based and neighborhood partnerships, the applicant must fully explain the use of these resources and how they will be applied.

If an MOU or other service agreement exists with other service providers, copies should be provided. If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Proposed supportive service strategy for veterans are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

Organizational capability to provide required program activities: The applicant's relevant current and prior experience (within the last three year period) in operating employment and training programs is to be clearly described, if applicable. A summary narrative of program experience and employment and training performance outcomes is required. ***The applicant must provide information showing outcomes of employment and training programs that it has had in the past three (3) years in terms of enrollments and participants who have entered into employment.*** An applicant that has operated a VWIP or other employment and training program must also include the final or most recent technical performance report.

Please note that the Department of Labor grant review panel members who will be reviewing all grant applications submitted as a result of this SGA, do not have access to any reporting information systems during the review process, therefore, if final or most recent technical performance reports are not submitted, the grant application may be considered non-responsive.

The applicant must also provide evidence of key staff capability to include resume, staff biographies, organizational charts, statements of work, and etc. It is preferred that the grantee and sub-awardee(s) be a well established service provider and not in the initial start-up phase or process.

If any rates or other information specifically requested above under the Organizational capability to provide required program activities are not provided, points will be deducted from the evaluation of the submitted application.

1. Measures of Success – Applicants are to describe the measures of success for the proposed plan. Applicants are to describe the proposed outcomes, goals, number served, number hired, increased wages, educational degrees, cost effectiveness, result-oriented model, feedback mechanism, performance accountability, evaluation and improvement, and/or the proposed system to monitor the implementation of program activities and achievement of stated project objectives. Applicants must indicate their planned level of performance utilizing the Common Measures reporting methodology as described in Appendix H. If the Common Measures reporting methodology is not utilized by the applicant, the application will be considered non-responsive and it will not be evaluated.

Sustainability – Applicants are to describe how the proposed program can or will outlast the federal funding being provided under this grant.

C. Section 3 – The Cost Proposal must contain the following: Applicants can expect that the cost proposal will be reviewed for allocability, allowability, and reasonableness.

(1) Standard Form SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance” (with the original signed in blue-ink) (Appendix A) must be completed; The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this program is 17.802 and it must be entered on the SF-424, in Block 11. The organizational unit section of Block 8 of the SF-424 must contain the Dun and Bradstreet Number (DUNS) of the applicant. Beginning October 1, 2003, all applicants for Federal

grant funding opportunities are required to include a DUNS number with their application.

See OMB Notice of Final Policy Issuance, 68 Federal Register 38402 (June 27, 2003).

Applicants' DUNS number is to be entered into Block 8 of SF-424. The DUNS number is a nine-digit identification number that uniquely identifies business entities. There is no charge for obtaining a DUNS number. To obtain a DUNS number call 1-866-705-5711 or access the following web site: <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com/> if no DUNS number is provided then the grant application will be considered non-responsive and it will not be evaluated. Requests for exemption from the DUNS number requirement must be made to the Office of Management and Budget.

(2) Standard Form SF-424A "Budget Information Sheet" (Appendix B) must be included;

(3) As an attachment to SF-424A, the applicant must provide a detailed cost breakout of each line item on the Budget Information Sheet. Please label this page or pages the "Budget Narrative" and ensure that costs reported on the SF- 424A correspond accurately with the Budget Narrative;

2. The Budget Narrative must include, at a minimum:

Breakout of all personnel costs by position, title, annual salary rates, and percent of time of each position to be devoted to the proposed project (including sub-grantees) by completing the "Direct Cost Descriptions for Applicants and Sub-Applicants" form (Appendix E); Explanation and breakout of extraordinary fringe benefit rates and associated charges (i.e., rates exceeding 35% of salaries and wages); Explanation of the purpose and composition of, and methodology used to derive the costs of each of the following: travel, equipment, supplies, sub-awards/contracts, and any other costs. The applicant must include costs of any

required travel described in this Solicitation. Planned travel expenditures may not exceed 5% of the total VWIP funds requested. Mileage charges may not exceed 58.5 cents per mile or the current Federal rate; All associated costs for obtaining and retaining participant information pertinent to the follow-up survey, at 90-, 180-, and 270-days after the program performance period ends. In addition, if State Unemployment Insurance data will be used to substantiate an applicant's follow-up results, it is suggested that the applicant include any official Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or other formalized agreements that enable the applicant to obtain such information; Description/specification of, and justification for, equipment purchases, if any. Tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit must be specifically identified; and Matching funds, leveraged funds, and in-kind services are not required for VWIP grants. However, if matching funds, leverage funds, or in-kind services are to be used, an identification of all sources of leveraged or matching funds and an explanation of the derivation of the value of matching/in-kind services must be provided. When resources such as matching funds, leveraged funds, and/or the value of in-kind contributions are made available, please describe in Section B of the Budget Information Sheet. A completed Assurance and Certification signature page (Appendix C) (signed in blue ink) must be submitted; All applicants must submit evidence of satisfactory financial management capability, which must include recent (within the last 18 months) grant specific financial and/or audit statements (does not count towards the 75 page limitation). All successful grantees and sub-awardee(s) are required to utilize Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP), maintain a separate accounting for these grant funds, and have a checking account. If an audit or other grant specific financials are not included, the application will receive zero (0) points in this section of the evaluation;

All applicants must include, as a separate appendix, a list of all employment and training government grants and contracts that they have had in the past three (3) years, including grant/contract officer contact information (this list is included in the 75 page limitation). VETS reserves the right to have a USDOL representative review and verify this data; A completed Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Appendix F) must be provided; A completed Indirect Charges or Certificate of Direct Costs form (Appendix I) must be provided.

3. Submission Dates and Times (Acceptable Method of Submission):

To be considered for funding under this SGA, it is encouraged that all applicants submit their grant applications electronically at website address: <http://www.grants.gov> (hard copies submissions are accepted). Applications submitted electronically through Grants.gov must be successfully submitted at <http://www.grants.gov> no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on closing date and then subsequently validated by Grants.gov. The submission and validation process is described in more detail below. The process can be complicated and time-consuming. Applicants are strongly advised to initiate the process as soon as possible and to plan for time to resolve technical problems if necessary.

Applications submitted by e-mail, telegram or facsimile (fax) will not be accepted.

Applicants are advised that mail delivery in the Washington area may be delayed due to mail decontamination procedures. Mailed, overnight or hand carried applications must be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on closing date to:

Department of Labor

Procurement Services Center

Attention: Cassandra Mitchell, Reference SGA # **09-02**

200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room S-4307

Washington, DC 20210

It is strongly recommended that before the applicant begins to write the proposal, applicants should immediately initiate and complete the “Get Registered” registration steps at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. These steps may take multiple days or weeks to complete, and this time should be factored into plans for electronic submission in order to avoid unexpected delays that could result in the rejection of an application. It is highly recommended that applicants use the “Organization Registration Checklist” at http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf to ensure the registration process is complete.

Within two business days of application submission, Grants.gov will send the applicant two email messages to provide the status of application progress through the system. The first email, almost immediate, will confirm receipt of the application by Grants.gov. The second email will indicate the application has either been successfully validated or has been rejected due to errors. Only applications that have been successfully submitted and successfully validated will be considered. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure a timely submission, therefore sufficient time should be allotted for submission (two business days), and if applicable, subsequent time to address errors and receive validation upon resubmission (an additional two business days for each ensuing submission). It is important

to note that if sufficient time is not allotted and a rejection notice is received after the due date and time, the application will not be considered. The components of the application must be saved as either .doc, .xls or .pdf files. Documents received in a format other than .doc, .xls or .pdf will not be read.

The Grants.gov helpdesk is available from 7 a.m. (Eastern Time) until 9 p.m. (Eastern Time). Applicants should factor the unavailability of the Grants.gov helpdesk after 9 p.m. (Eastern Time) into plans for submitting an application. Applicants are strongly advised to utilize the plethora of tools and documents, including FAQs, that are available on the “Applicant Resources” page at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp#faqs. To receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users and other time sensitive updates as information is available, applicants may subscribe to “Grants.gov Updates” at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp. If applicants encounter a problem with Grants.gov and do not find an answer in any of the other resources, call 1-800-518-4726 to speak to a Customer Support Representative or email support@grants.gov.

Late Applications: For applications submitted on Grants.gov, only applications that have been successfully submitted no later 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the closing date and successfully validated will be considered. For applicants not submitting on Grants.gov, any application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received before awards are made, was properly addressed, and was: (a) sent by U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications (e.g., an application required to be received by the 20th of the month must be

post marked by the 15th of that month) or (b) sent by professional overnight delivery service not later than one working day prior to the date specified for receipt of applications. “Post marked” means a printed, stamped or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service.

Therefore, applicants should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation “bull’s eye” postmark on both the receipt and the package. Evidence of timely submission by a professional overnight delivery service must be demonstrated by equally reliable evidence created by the delivery service provider indicating the time and place of receipt. Failure to adhere to the above instructions will be a basis for a determination of non-responsiveness.

4. Intergovernmental Review: Not applicable.

5. Funding Restrictions:

A. Rules relating to allowable costs are addressed in 20 CFR 667.200 through 667.220.

Under 20 CFR 667.210(b), limits on administrative costs will be negotiated with the grantee and identified in the grant award documents. Construction costs (as opposed to maintenance and/or repair costs) are generally not allowed under WIA.

B. Proposals exceeding \$500,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

C. There is a limit of one (1) application per submitting organization and physical location serving the same VWIP participant population. If two (2) applications from the same

organization for the same physical location serving the same VWIP participant population are submitted, the application with the later date will be considered as non-responsive, and will not be evaluated. Please do not submit duplicate grant applications because only one (1) grant application will be considered for funding purposes.

D. There will not be reimbursement of pre-award costs unless specifically agreed upon in writing by the Grant Officer.

E. Entities described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to receive funds under this announcement because Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Public Law No. 104-65, 109 Stat. 691, prohibits the award of Federal funds to these entities.

F. Limitations on Administrative and Indirect Costs

Administrative costs, which consist of all direct and indirect costs associated with the supervision and management of the program, are limited to and may not exceed 10% of the total grant award.

Indirect costs claimed by the applicant must be based on a Federally approved rate. A copy of the current negotiated approved and signed indirect cost negotiation agreement must be submitted with the application. Furthermore, indirect costs are considered a part of administrative costs for VWIP purposes and, therefore, may not exceed 10% of the total grant award.

If the applicant does not presently have an approved indirect cost rate, a proposed rate with justification may be submitted. Successful applicants will be required to negotiate an

acceptable and allowable rate within 90 days of grant award with the appropriate USDOL Regional Office of Cost Determination or with the applicant's cognizant agency for indirect cost rates (See Office of Management and Budget web site at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/attach.html>).

Indirect cost rates traceable and trackable through the State Workforce Agency's Cost Accounting System represent an acceptable means of allocating costs to USDOL and, therefore, can be approved for use in grants to State Workforce Agencies.

Successful grant applicants that are/will be receiving HVRP funds and are/will be receiving Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) funds are **not** authorized to co-enroll participants in both the HVRP and VWIP programs. A successful grantee is to provide employment and training services to eligible participants through HVRP or VWIP, but not both. If the same grantee provides services to a veteran under both HVRP and VWIP, it may be considered an audit exception. However, a HVRP grantee and a separate non-affiliated VWIP grantee may coordinate efforts on behalf of eligible veterans.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION:

1. Application Evaluation Criteria: Applications will receive up to 100 total points based on the following criteria:

A. Need for the project: 20 points

The applicant will document the need for this project, as demonstrated by: (i) the potential number or concentration of eligible veterans in the proposed project area relative to other similar areas; (ii) the rates of poverty and unemployment in the proposed project area as determined by the census or other surveys; and (iii) the extent of the gaps in the local

infrastructure to effectively address the employment barriers that characterize the target veteran population.

B. Overall strategy to develop and promote maximum employment and training opportunities and retention in employment of eligible veterans: 40 points

Successful grantees will propose clear strategies and obtainable goals for employment that focus on one of the following areas:

In support of the President's Green Vets commitment, applicants must propose clear strategies and obtainable goals on training and employment in the renewable energy economy (Green Energy Jobs) that focus on one of the following areas:

1. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment in Green Energy Jobs for veterans who are recently separated (within 48 months) from discharge from the military; or
2. For counseling, training, employment (job placement) and retention of employment through training that result in Green Energy Job licensing, and or certification, for veterans seeking employment where a credential is desired or required. Successful grantees will help veterans overcome barriers to employment by increasing opportunities for veterans to obtain credentials in the civilian workforce based on their military experience, training and service.

Any application that does not focus clearly on either category 1 or 2 above will be considered a non -priority application. Non-priority applications will be considered separately and may receive a grant if there are not enough credible applications that warrant grant awards in category 1 or 2 above. Green Energy Jobs for purposes of this SGA include jobs in the energy-efficient building, construction, and retrofits industries; the renewable

electric power industry; the energy efficient and advanced drive train vehicle industry; the bio-fuels industry; the deconstruction and materials use industries; the energy efficiency assessment industry serving the residential, commercial, or industrial sectors; and manufacturers that produce sustainable products using environmentally sustainable processes and materials. This definition of Green Jobs is based on language in the Green Jobs Act of 2007.

The application must include a description of the approach to providing comprehensive employment and training services, including outreach, pre-enrollment assessment, job training, job development, obtaining employer commitments to hire, placement, and post-placement follow-up services. Applicants must address how they will target occupations that are locally in demand with career growth potential and that will provide wages to ensure self-sufficiency for the participant. Supportive services provided as part of the strategy of promoting job readiness and job retention must be indicated. The applicant must identify the local services and sources of training to be used for participants. At least 80% of enrolled participants must participate in training activities. A description of the relationship with other employment and training programs delivered through the One-Stop Career Center System must be specified. Applicants must indicate how the activities will be tailored or responsive to the needs of eligible veterans. A participant flow chart may be used to show the sequence and mix of services.

Note: The applicant must complete Appendix D, the Recommended Format for Planned Quarterly Technical Performance Goals, with proposed programmatic outcomes, including participants served, placement/entered employments and job retention.

C. Quality and extent of linkages with other providers of services to eligible veterans: 20 points

The application must provide information on the quality and extent of the linkages this program will have with other providers of services to eligible veterans in the local community including faith-based and neighborhood partnerships. For each service, the applicant must specify who the provider is, the source of funding (if known), and the type of linkages/referral system established or proposed. Describe how the proposed project links to the appropriate State Workforce Agency and One-Stop Career Center(s) including coordination and collaboration with DVOP/LVER and other One-Stop Career Center staff, DVA, and/or other local neighborhood partnerships and the services that will be provided as necessary on behalf of the eligible veteran participants to be served.

D. Demonstrated capability in providing required program services, including programmatic reporting and participant tracking: 20 points

The applicant must describe its relevant prior experience in operating employment and training programs and providing services to participants similar to those that are proposed under this solicitation. Specific outcomes previously achieved by the applicant must be described, including percentage of enrolled participants placed into employment and cost per entered employment. The applicant must also address its capacity for timely startup of the program, programmatic reporting, and participant tracking. The applicant should describe its staff experience and ability to manage the administrative, programmatic, and financial aspects of a grant program. Include a recent (within the last 18 months) grant specific financial statement and/or audit (does not count towards the 75 page limitation). Final or most recent technical reports for other relevant programs must be submitted, if

applicable. Because prior VWIP experience is not a requirement for this grant, some applicants may not have any VWIP technical performance reports to submit but may have other similar type programmatic performance reports to submit as evidence of experience in operating other employment and training type programs.

2. Review and Selection Process:

Applications will initially be screened by the Grant Officer to ensure timeliness, completeness, and compliance with the SGA requirements.

Applications that satisfy this initial screening will receive further review as explained below. Grant applications will be reviewed by a Department of Labor grant review panel using the point scoring system specified above in Section V(1). The grant review panel will assign a score after objectively and carefully evaluating each complete grant application and all complete grant applications will be ranked based on this score. The ranking will be the primary basis to identify applicants as potential grantees. The grant review panel will establish a competitive range, based upon the proposal evaluation, for the purpose of selecting qualified applicants. For this solicitation, the minimum acceptable score is 70.

The grant review panel, the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET), and Grant Officer may further evaluate grant applications deemed within the competitive range in order to compare goals of other grant applications deemed within the competitive range. The grant review team, the ASVET, and the Grant Officer may consider any information that comes to their attention, including past performance of a previous grant, and will make a final selection determination based on what is most advantageous to the Government, considering factors such as grant review panel findings, geographical presence of the applicants, existing grants, or the areas to be served and the best value to the

government, cost, and other factors considered. The grant review panel's conclusions are advisory in nature and not binding on the Grant Officer. However, if no application receives at least the minimum acceptable score, the Grant Officer may either designate no grantee or may designate an entity based on demonstrated capability to provide the best services to the client population. Further, the Grant Officer reserves the right to select applicants with scores lower than the minimum or lower than the competing applications, if such a selection would, in the Grant Officer's judgment, result in the most effective and appropriate combination of services to grant beneficiaries. The grant review panel will screen all applicant cost proposals to ensure expenses are allocable, allowable, and reasonable. Determinations of allowable costs will be made in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles, e.g. Non-Profit Organizations – OMB Circular A-122. Unallowable costs are those charges to a grant that a grantor agency or its representatives determines to not be allowed in accordance with the applicable Federal Cost Principles or other conditions contained in the grant. If the grant review panel, ASVET, and Grant Officer conclude that the cost proposal contains an expense(s) that is not allocable, allowable, and/or reasonable, the application may be considered ineligible for funding. Further, the grant review panel, ASVET, and the Grant Officer will consider applicant information concerning the proposed cost per placement, percentage of participants placed into unsubsidized employment, average wage at placement, and 90- and 180-day retention in employment percentages. The national average cost per placement for VWIP for last year was \$2,837.50. The Government reserves the right to ask for clarification on any aspect of a grant application. The Government also reserves the right to discuss any potential grantee and sub-awardee(s) concerns amongst Department of Labor staff. The Grant Officer's determination for award under SGA # **09-02** is the final agency action.

The submission of the same proposal from any prior year VWIP competition does not guarantee an award under this Solicitation.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates:

Announcement of this award is expected to occur by June 30th, 2009. Successful grantees must bear in mind that the grant provisions do not allow encumbrance of grant funds prior to the beginning of the period of performance.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION:

1. Award Notices:

A. The Notice of Award signed by the Grant Officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail and/or by electronic means to the authorized representative listed on the SF-424 Grant Application. Notice that an organization has been selected as a grant recipient does not constitute final approval of the grant application as submitted.

Before the actual grant award, the Grant Officer and/or the Grant Officer Technical Representative may enter into negotiations concerning such items as program components, funding levels, and administrative systems. If the negotiations do not result in an acceptable submittal, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the proposal.

B. A post-award conference will be held for all grantees awarded PY 2009 VWIP funds through this competition. The post-award conference is expected to be held in early August 2009 and up to two (2) grant recipients' representatives must be present. The site of the post-award conference has not yet been determined, however, for planning and budgeting purposes, applicants should allot four (4) days and use Washington, DC as the conference

site. The post-award conference will focus on providing information and assistance on reporting, record keeping, grant requirements, and also include networking opportunities to learn of best practices from more experienced and successful grantees and sub-awardee(s). Costs associated with attending this conference for up to two (2) grantee representatives will be allowed as long as they are incurred in accordance with Federal travel regulations. Such costs must be charged as travel expenditures and reflected in the proposed budget.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: All grantees and sub-awardees must comply with the provisions of WIA and its regulations, as applicable.

A. Administrative Program Requirements

All grantees and sub-awardees will be subject to applicable Federal laws (including provisions of appropriations law), regulations, and the applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars. The grant(s) awarded under this SGA will be subject to the following administrative standards and provisions, if applicable:

20 CFR part 667 – Administrative provisions for programs, including VWIP, under Title I of WIA.

29 CFR part 2 – General Participation in Department of Labor Programs by Faith-based and Community Organizations; Equal Treatment of All Department of Labor Program Participants and Beneficiaries.

29 CFR part 30 – Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training.

29 CFR part 31- Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Labor - Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

29 CFR part 32 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

29 CFR part 33 – Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Labor.

29 CFR part 35 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Age in Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the Department of Labor.

29 CFR part 36 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance.

29 CFR part 37 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

29 CFR part 93 – New Restrictions on Lobbying.

29 CFR part 94 – Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

29 CFR part 95 - Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-Profit Organizations, and with Commercial Organizations.

29 CFR part 96 - Audit Requirements for Grants, Contracts and Other Agreements.

29 CFR part 97 - Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

29 CFR part 98 – Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non procurement).

29 CFR part 99 - Audit of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

Applicable cost principles and audit requirements under OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-122, A-110, A-133, and 48 CFR part 31.

In accordance with WIA section 195(6), programs funded under this SGA may not involve political activities. Additionally, in accordance with Section 18 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Public Law 104-65 (2 U.S.C. 1611), non-profit entities incorporated under 501(c) (4) that engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to received Federal funds and

grants. Requirements for priority of service for veterans in Department of Labor training programs are identified in 38 U.S.C. Section 4215.

3. Reporting - All VWIP grantees will enter data electronically and attach their quarterly technical performance reports, success stories, etc. into the USDOL, VETS Outcomes and Performance Accountability Reporting (VOPAR) System. The Financial Status Report SF-269 data will only be entered into the USDOL E-Grants System according to the reporting requirements and timetables described below. As the SF-269 will eventually be replaced by the Federal Financial Report (FFR) potential applicants are encouraged to transition to using the FFR. Further guidance regarding the conversion from the SF-269 to the FFR will be forthcoming. Prior to submitting the financial reports via E-Grants, grantees must submit these reports to their assigned Grant Officer Technical Representative for review and approval.

Access to both VOPAR and E-Grants reporting systems will be authorized to successful grant applicants within 45 days of the date of award. Failure to provide timely and accurate financial reports electronically may affect option year grant award. Please note that the “active” grant performance period is awarded July 1, 2009 thru June 30, 2010, with the “follow-up” period immediately following starting July 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011, as per Common Measures reporting requirements.

A. Quarterly Financial Reports:

No later than 30 days after the end of each Federal fiscal quarter (October 31st, January 31st, April 30th, July 31st), the grantee must report outlays, program income, and other financial information on a Federal fiscal quarterly basis using SF-269 (guidance on the conversion to

the FFR is forthcoming), Financial Status Report and submit a copy of the HHS/PMS 272 draw down report. These financial reports must be data entered into the E-Grants system and must cite the assigned grant number.

B. Quarterly Program Reports:

No later than 30 days after the end of each Federal fiscal quarter (October 31st, January 31st, April 30th, and July 31st), grantees must submit a Quarterly Technical Narrative Performance Report that contains the following:

(1) A comparison of actual accomplishments to planned goals for the reporting period and any findings related to monitoring efforts;

(2) An explanation for variances of plus or minus 15% of planned program and/or expenditure goals, to include: identification of corrective action that will be taken to meet the planned goals, if required; and a timetable for accomplishment of the corrective action.

C. 90-Day Follow-Up Performance Report:

No later than 210 days after the grant performance expiration date (October 31st), the grantee must submit to the VOPAR and E-Grants Reporting Systems reports showing results and performance as of the 90th day after the grant period, and containing the following:

(1) Final Financial Status Report SF-269 (that obligates remaining funds for follow-up purposes, as needed); and

(2) Technical Performance Report comparing goals vs. actual performance levels.

D. 180-Day Follow-Up Report:

No later than 210 days after the active grant performance period (January 31st), the grantee must electronically submit to the VOPAR and E-Grants Reporting Systems a Follow-Up Report showing results and performance as of the 180th day after the grant active performance period, and containing the following:

(1) Final Financial Status Report SF-269 Long Form (if not previously submitted); and

(2) 180-Day Follow-Up Report/Longitudinal Survey identifying:

(a) The total combined (directed/assisted) number of veterans placed into employment during the entire grant period;

(b) The number of veterans who retained employment as defined under Common Measures at the 90-, 180-day follow-up periods;

(c) If the veterans are still employed at the same or similar job, and if not, what are the reason(s);

(d) Whether training received was applicable to jobs held;

(e) Wages at placement and at the 90- and 180-day follow-up periods;

(f) An explanation of why those veterans placed during the grant, but not employed at the end of the follow-up period, are not so employed; and

(g) Any recommendations to improve the program.

E. 270-Day Final / Follow-Up Performance Report:

No later than 300 days after the grant active performance period or April 30th, the grantee must electronically submit to the VOPAR and E-Grants Reporting Systems a Final Financial Status Report (SF-269) and a Final Follow-up Report showing results and performance as of the 270th day after the active grant performance period, and containing the following:

- (a) The total number of veterans who entered employment during the entire grant period;
- (b) The number of veterans who retained employment as defined under Common Measures at the 90-, 180- and 270-day follow-up periods;
- (c) If the VWIP participants are still employed at the same or similar job, and if not, what are the reason(s);
- (d) How many homeless veteran participants are now receiving fixed income benefits such as DVA disability/retirement pensions, Social Security income, etc. as a result of grantee referrals and networking on behalf of the veteran?
- (e) Whether training received was applicable to jobs held;
- (f) Participant average hourly wages at placement and weekly wages at the 90-, 180-, and 270-day follow-up periods;
- (g) An explanation of why those veterans entered employment during the grant, but not employed at the end of the follow-up period, are not so employed; and
- (h) Any recommendations to improve the program.

Agency Contact:

All questions regarding this SGA should be directed to Cassandra Mitchell, e-mail address: mitchell.cassandra@dol.gov, at tel: (202) 693-4570 (note this is not a toll-free number). To obtain further information on the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program of the U.S.

Department of Labor, visit the USDOL website of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service at www.dol.gov/vets.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION:

A. Acknowledgement of USDOL Funding.

1. Printed Materials: In all circumstances, the following must be displayed on printed materials prepared by the grantee while in receipt of USDOL grant funding: "Preparation of this item was funded by the United States Department of Labor under Grant No. [Insert the appropriate grant number]."

- All printed materials must also include the following notice: "This document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government."

2. Public references to grant: When issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other documents describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with Federal money, all grantees receiving Federal funds must clearly state:

- The percentage of the total costs of the program or project, which will be financed with Federal money;
- The dollar amount of Federal financial assistance for the project or program; and
- The percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources.

B. Use of USDOL Logo: Prior to the use of the USDOL Logo, the Grant Officer must approve such use. In addition, once approval is given the following guidance is provided:

- The USDOL logo may be applied to USDOL-funded material prepared for distribution, including posters, videos, pamphlets, research documents, national survey results, impact evaluations, best practice reports, and other publications of global interest. The grantee(s) must consult with USDOL on whether the logo may be used on any such items prior to final draft or final preparation for distribution. In no event will the USDOL logo be placed on any item until USDOL has given the Grantee permission to use the logo on the item.
- All documents must include the following notice: “This documentation does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.”

C. OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires September 30, 2009. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the OMB desk officer for VETS, room N1301, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210.

This information is being collected for the purpose of awarding a grant. The information collected through this “Solicitation for Grant Applications” will be used by the Department of Labor to ensure that grants are awarded to the applicant best suited to perform the functions of the grant. Submission of this information is required in order for the applicant to be considered for award of this grant. Unless otherwise specifically noted in this announcement, information submitted in the respondent’s application is not considered to be confidential.

D. Resources for the Applicant: The Department of Labor maintains a number of web-based resources that may be of assistance to applicants. The webpage for the USDOL VETS at www.dol.gov/vets/programs/main.htm is a valuable source of information including the program highlights and brochures, glossary of terms, frequently used acronyms, general and special grant provisions, power point presentations on how to apply for VWIP funding, On-Site Monitoring Visits, etc. America’s Service Locator at webpage www.servicelocator.org provides a directory of our nation’s One-Stop Career Centers and www.workforce3one.org is another Department of Labor resource site. The National Association of Workforce Boards maintains a webpage at www.nawb.org that contains contact information for the State and local Workforce Investment Boards. Applicants may also review “VETS’ Guide to Competitive and Discretionary Grants” located at webpage http://www.dol.gov/vets/grants/Final_VETS_Guide-linked.pdf. For a basic understanding of the grants process and basic responsibilities of receiving Federal grant support, please see “Guidance for Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government” at webpages www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci and www.dol.gov/cfbci. Also see the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans webpage at www.nchv.org.

Appendices: (Located on U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service website address: www.dol.gov/vets follow link for the applicable SGA listed under announcements.)

Appendix A: Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Appendix B: Budget Information Sheet SF-424A

Appendix C: Assurances and Certifications Signature Page

Appendix D: Recommended Format for Planned Common Measures Quarterly

Technical Performance Goals

Appendix E: Direct Cost Descriptions for Applicants and Sub-Applicants

Appendix F: Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

Appendix G: Common Measures Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) for Competitive

Grantees

Appendix H: Indirect Charges or Certificate of Direct Costs

Signed at Washington, DC. this 4th day of May, 2009.



Cassandra Mitchell, Grant Officer

BILLING CODE: 4510-79P