Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT)
Grant Program
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated April 2, 2012 – Look for NEW!
Updated May 3, 2012 – Look for NEW!

NEW FEATURES OF SGA 2012

Q: What are the new features of SGA 2012?
A: The Department of Labor (the Department) intends to award grants of $2.5 to $3.0 million each to one individual applicant from each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (for a total of approximately $150 million). In addition, the Department intends to award grants of $5 million to $15 million to consortium applicants that propose programs that will impact TAA-eligible workers and other adults across a state, region or regions, industry sector or cluster of related industries (for a total of approximately $350 million).

SGA 2012 includes a strong emphasis on serving **TAA-eligible workers**. The SGA requires applicants to submit evidence that they will serve TAA-eligible workers through community outreach, partnerships with TAA agencies, and strategic alignment with employers and the public workforce system.

SGA 2012 requires five "**core elements**" that must be addressed by all applications regardless of their focus or priority. The core elements are: 1) Evidence-Based Design; 2) Stacked and Latticed Credentials; 3) Online and Technology-Enabled Learning; 4) Transferability and Articulation; and 5) Strategic Alignment.

Finally, SGA 2012 requires that all applications must include a budget, design and implementation plan for an appropriate **third-party evaluation** of their proposed project to be funded as part of the grant. As a result of requiring a program evaluation, the period of performance for grants funded under SGA 2012 will be four years to allow time for the evaluation (three for project development and delivery and one for evaluation).

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Are territories eligible to apply for TAACCCT grants?
A: Yes. Educational institutions in the U.S. territories are eligible if they offer programs that can be completed in not more than two years and are accredited by an agency or association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. However, applications from institutions not located in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico will not have certified TAA for Workers participants and may not be eligible for the full 10 points in Section V.A.1.i.

Q: Are community college districts or system offices eligible institutions? Can they be the lead/fiscal agent for a consortium?
A: No. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education that offer programs that can be completed in not more than two years and are accredited by an agency or association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. A database of institutions that are accredited

by bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education can be found at
http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/. Applicants are strongly encouraged to check this Web site, as
the Department will reference this database in determining an applicant's accreditation to
ensure its eligibility.

Q: May an eligible institution be a Grantee Institution of one consortium application and also be a member (non-lead) of another consortium application?
A: Yes. As stated in Section III.C of the SGA, "Eligible institutions may submit an application as a single eligible institution, and also serve as a member of a consortium in one or more consortium applications in which they do not serve as the Grantee Institution."

Q: Can an eligible institution apply as the Grantee Institution for both a single institution application and a consortium application?
A: No. As stated in Section III.A of the SGA, "Eligible institutions may submit only one application in response to this SGA, either as a single eligible applicant or as the lead Grantee Institution in a consortium application. Eligible institutions that submit more than one application will be found non-responsive and none of their applications will be considered for funding."

Q: Are community colleges the only entities eligible to apply for TAACCCT grants?
A: No. As stated in Section III.A. of the SGA, "Eligible institutions are institutions of higher education as defined in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002) which offer programs that can be completed in not more than two years. They include public, proprietary, or other nonprofit educational institutions. Generally, such institutions of higher education include 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving Institutions, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving Institutions." This includes career and technical education institutions, as well.

Q: Could an eligible institution that belongs to a system of colleges apply as the lead of a consortium that includes members of the same college system?
A: Yes. If the individual colleges meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of the SGA, then 2 or more of those eligible colleges could apply as a consortium with one being the lead applicant having overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant.

Serving TAA-Eligible Workers

Q: What is the TAA for Workers Program?
A: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (referred to in this FAQ as the "TAA for Workers program") is a federal program that provides a path for employment growth and opportunity

through aid to US workers who are in a group of workers that the Department has certified as trade-affected because foreign trade was an important cause of their actual or threatened job loss. The TAA for Workers program seeks to provide these trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to become reemployed. The program provides benefits and services that are available to individual workers and are administered by the states through agreements between the Secretary of Labor and each state Governor. More information about the TAA for Workers program can be found at http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact.

Q: What types of TAACCCT programs would be approved for TAA-funded training?
A: Typically, the program helps workers to receive training in industries and occupations that can lead to high skilled, high wage jobs that can be found in one or more geographical areas. Applicants are encouraged to contact their State TAA Coordinators for detailed information about the training needs of TAA participants and approvable programs specific to their local area. A list of TAA representatives can be found at
http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/contacts.cfm.

Q: Are there educational or training programs that would not be approved for TAA-eligible workers?
A: According to the Department's regulations, a state may approve training for TAA-eligible workers in any program that would reasonably lead to employment of that worker with an employer following completion of the program, assuming that the other regulatory (and statutory) criteria for approval of training have been met: there is no suitable employment available for the worker, the worker would benefit from appropriate training, the worker is qualified to undertake and complete such training, and such training is suitable for the worker and available at a reasonable cost that the TAA for Workers program will cover. Programs that are designed to lead solely to self-employment or employment as an independent contractor, for example, are not approvable. However, program participants are not prohibited from starting a new company provided that the credentials and certifications obtained could also lead to re-employment with an employer.

Q: How can my school develop or offer entrepreneurship education or training programs that would be suitable for TAA-approved training?
A: Entrepreneurship as a strategy is broader in scope than a particular program resulting in a "Certificate of Entrepreneurship," or similar credential, or a particular employment outcome such as a start-up business, which would not be suitable for participants in the TAA for Workers program. The development of an entrepreneurship program should be done in consideration of a broader spectrum of possible career pathways. For example, a mixed "Financial Services and Entrepreneurship" program would be within the parameters required for TAA-eligible workers to be approved for this training and also provide participants the possibility of employment with an existing firm in the financial services sector.

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<mark>**Q: If my school offers entrepreneurship education or training programs, would TAA-eligible workers be able to pay for that training with their benefits under the TAA for Workers program?**</mark>
A: TAA-eligible workers who wish to receive TAA benefits are not prohibited from enrolling in an entrepreneurship program. Determinations of individual eligibility for the TAA for Workers program and approval of TAA-funded training will continue to be made by the relevant cooperating State agency in accordance with the requirements of Section 236(a)(1) of the Trade Act. Since any participant may choose to enroll in a TAACCCT-funded program (subject to that particular institution's enrollment criteria), any participant would be allowed to enroll in an entrepreneurship program, *including TAA-eligible workers*. However, if the entrepreneurship program does not meet the approval criteria for TAA-funded training, the TAA-eligible participant would have to seek alternate sources of funding for their enrollment in this course offered through the TAACCCT program.

PARTICIPANTS AND OUTCOMES

<mark>**Q: Can TAACCCT grants serve workers who are not TAA-eligible workers?**</mark>
A: As Section III.C of the solicitation states, "Eligible participants are the diverse population of workers eligible for assistance under the TAA for Workers program, as well as other participants whom grantees determine to be eligible for training and educational opportunities under this grant. Eligibility requirements for those participants who are not eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program must be based on the admission requirements of the institutions funded. In addition, successful applicants must give priority of enrollment to workers eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program."

<mark>NEW!</mark> <mark>**Q: Do participants need to be tracked beyond the 36-month grant period?**</mark>
A: Yes. The period of performance of the grants is 48 months, although all programs must be developed and offered and all funds spent on program development and delivery within the first 36 months of the grants. During the final 12 months of the grant, successful applicants will be expected to track and report all outcome measures for all program participants and follow the third-party evaluation plan for the project, including the submission of the final report, which is due at the end of that 12-month period. These are the only allowable activities during the last 12 months of the grant. Grantees are not expected to track participants after the period of performance ends.

<u>**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**</u>

Q: If a grantee purchases a ready-made solution from a vendor (such as an online training module), would this become part of the open source materials for this grant even if it was not developed with grant funds?
A: Only work that is developed by the grantee with the grant funds is required to be licensed under the CCBY license. Pre-existing copyrighted materials licensed to, or purchased by the grantee from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the particular license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CCBY license requirement.

<u>**ALLOWABLE COSTS**</u>

NEW! **Q: We have read TAACCCT Amendment One and understand that graduate degree programs may not be funded through the TAACCCT program. We are considering applying to develop a two-year program that requires completion of a single graduate-level course. Would the cost of developing and delivering that graduate-level course be an allowable cost under the TAACCCT SGA?**
A: Yes. While it is not allowable to develop or deliver a graduate-level degree program (such as a Master's Degree), the costs to develop or deliver an individual graduate-level course that is part of an undergraduate education or training program would be an allowable cost under a TAACCCT grant, provided that the program meets the other requirements of the TAACCCT SGA.

Q: Can a participant's tuition, books, fees, and other personal expenditures required to attend a TAACCCT-funded program be charged to the grant?
A: No. As stated on page 19 of the solicitation, "Unallowable activities include the use of grant funds to pay the costs of a participant's tuition (including scholarships), books, fees, and other personal expenditures; incentive payments for participants such as performance-based cash bonuses; wages of participants (including the wages of students participating in co-operative education programs, Registered Apprenticeship, or internships) and stipends for wage replacement of participants; the purchase of real property; and construction (not including altering or renovating facilities, as described above). Applicants should ensure they do not propose the unallowable activities listed above. These activities may duplicate services and benefits provided to TAA-eligible workers, adults who receive Unemployment Insurance, or adults who participate in Workforce Investment Act programs."

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FUNDING

Q: How long will funded grantees have to implement their projects?
A: As stated in Section II.B. of the SGA – "The period of performance for these grant awards will be 48 months from the effective date of the grant. Applicants may propose a period of grant performance that is less than 48 months if it is reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline, deliverables, and proposed award amount. The performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities, program development and enhancement, evaluation implementation and analysis, and pre- and post-program services. All programs must be developed and offered within the first 36 months of the period of performance, with grant funds allocated for program development and delivery expended during that time. ETA expects that grantees will begin enrolling participants in education and training programs no later than approximately 12-18 months after the date of grant award. The final 12 months of the period of performance should be limited to gathering information and data for reporting outcome measures, as discussed in Section V.A.4, and completing the requirements for the third-party evaluation, as discussed in Section V.B."

Q: As two kinds of proposals will be funded (individual applications and consortia applications) will these come from two "pots" of funding or will all proposals be funded from the same source based on points alone?
A: The Department intends to fund grants of $2.5 to $3.0 million each to one individual applicant from each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately $150 million. In addition, the Department intends to fund grants of $5 million to $15 million to consortium applicants as described in Section III.B, for a total of approximately $350 million.

Q: The SGA states that "The Department intends to fund grants ranging from $2.5 million to $3 million for individual applicants and from $5 million to $15 million for consortium applicants." Are the funding figures per year of the project?
A: No, the funding amount is not per year. It is for the entire period of performance, which is up to 48 months (includes a 12-month evaluation period).

Q. Will DOL fund projects that are similar or the same as those funded under SGA 2011?
A: All applicants must reach out to organizations that received funding under the FY 2011 TAACCCT SGA (as appropriate) to help decrease duplication and strengthen geographic reach, and should coordinate efforts where possible. This engagement could include sharing information, lessons learned, and program content; sharing technological innovations; developing transferability and articulation agreements; and working together to standardize credentials. By reducing duplication, applicants will be making the best use of TAACCCT funds. Please note, however, that the Department does not intend to fund the continuation or expansion of previously-funded TAACCCT projects.

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Q. Will my single school application have to compete against consortium applications?
A. No. Unlike the 2011 SGA, grants to single applicants and consortia applicants will be awarded separately and the scores of single applicant scores will be compared only to other single applicants. In accordance with the TAACCCT requirement that each state receive at least 0.5 percent of the approximately $500 million total amount of funds available under this SGA, the Department intends to fund grants of $2.5 million to $3.0 million each to one individual applicant from each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately $150 million. In addition, the Department intends to fund grants of $5 million to $15 million to consortium applicants, for a total of approximately $350 million. The Grant Officer will select one individual (non-consortium) applicant from among the fundable applications within each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. After the Grant Officer has selected one individual (non-consortium) applicant from among the fundable applications within each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico as described above, consortium applicants will be selected separately. See Section II.A of the SGA for more information.

Q. If a single applicant in my state gets funded with the highest score for my state, but our application is in the fundable range, will we still get funded?
A. The Department intends to fund grants of $2.5 million to $3.0 million to individual applicants from each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately $150 million, and $5 million to $15 million to consortium applicants, for a total of approximately $350 million. It could be possible for more than one application to be funded per state; however, this would depend on the number, quality, and funding amounts of the single institution applications and consortium applications we receive.

<u>OTHER</u>

Q: For consortium applicants, does every member institution have to provide evidence of partnering with their respective local workforce system partner?
A: As stated in the SGA, "Applicants must describe their plan to engage and collaborate with the public workforce system in the development and delivery of their programs. Applicants must provide evidence that workforce system partner(s) are committed to be involved in the project." While not required, ETA encourages consortia to provide evidence of multiple workforce system partnerships that represent the various demographic areas of consortium members.

Q: What obligations does the institution have for continuing the TAACCCT-funded program after the grant period has expired?
A: As stated on page 7 of the SGA, "Because the Department does not intend to fund the continuation of projects funded, applicants should consider project strategies that will have a lasting impact, and must plan to sustain effective innovations developed under this program after the grant period ends. As indicated in Section V.A.3.ii, applicants must describe how they

will use data to determine which strategies and activities were effective and explain how they would integrate effective practices into core programs to enact broader institutional improvements."

==**Q: Even though the SGA states that the technical proposal must be double-spaced, can tables be single spaced?**==
A: Yes. It is permissible to use single spacing in tables. However, please do not use this flexibility to exceed the page limits as stated in Section IV. Application and Submission Information of the SGA – 30 pages for single applications and 45 pages for consortia applications.

==**Q: Do the attachments described in Part III (Attachments to the Technical Proposal) count in the overall page count for the application?**==
A: No. As stated in Part II of the SGA, "The Technical Proposal for single applications is limited to 30 double-spaced single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12-point text font and 1-inch margins. For applications from consortia of eligible institutions, the Technical Proposal is limited to 45 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12-point text font and 1 inch margins." And to clarify, as stated in Part III of the SGA, the attachments are in addition to the Technical Proposal and therefore are not included in the overall page count.

==NEW!== ==**Q: What are the requirements for individual-level data transmission to the Department under this solicitation?**==

In Section V.B.1, there is a requirement for grantees to "transmit data from their third-party evaluators, including name, Social Security number, and date of birth of [TAACCCT-funded] program participants [as well as] individuals in the control or comparison groups, using a secure data system specified by the Department." Grantees must transmit this data to the Department annually. This is separate from and unrelated to the aggregate reporting requirements as described in Section VI.C.

Applicants have the option to provide individual-level data for non-TAACCCT-funded program participants (not including control and/or comparison group participants for the TAACCCT-funded program) on an annual basis and can receive one bonus point in their applications only if they decide to exercise this option and to commit to providing this data in the application, as described in Section V.A.5.

==NEW!== ==**Q: In Section I.B.3, the SGA states that "the Department encourages applicants to leverage the Department of Energy's National Training and Education Resource (NTER), which provides open source tools to help subject matter experts create compelling, 3D interactive content quickly and easily." Who can we contact with specific questions regarding the use of NTER?**==

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A: Specific questions regarding the use of NTER may be directed to Michelle Fox at Michelle.Fox@ee.doe.gov or Alex Cohen at Alex.Cohen@hq.doe.gov.

Q: Will ETA review draft grant applications before the deadline?
A: No. Applicants should not submit draft grant applications, and the Department will not review draft grant applications.

Q: Will grant applications be reviewed upon receipt?
A: No. Technical review panels will convene after the closing date of the SGA. The closing date for this SGA is May 24, 2012.