

# **Texas Workforce Commission**

Request for Applications (RFA) 32021-00010

Building Construction Trades

## **Issue Date**

March 25, 2021

## **Application Submission Deadline**

May 19, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m. CT

## **Grant Start Date**

August 25, 2021

## **NOTICE REGARDING THE INCLUSION OF CONFIDENTIAL, PROPRIETARY, TRADE SECRET OR PRIVILEGED INFORMATION IN AN APPLICATION**

Please take notice of the following:

If the Applicant includes proprietary or otherwise confidential information in its Application or other submitted documents, the Applicant must clearly mark and label all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged material in 14 point or higher bold font on each page where the information appears, and identify the specific exception to disclosure in the Texas Public Information Act (PIA) for each specific piece of confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information. Additionally, all confidential, proprietary, trade secret or privileged information must be segregated in a separate and discrete section of the Application, which must be able to be conveniently separated and detached from the other sections of the Application.

Failure to properly label, identify, and segregate any confidential, proprietary, trade secret or other privileged information in the Application may result in all such information or material being disclosed as public information. Merely making a blanket claim that the entire Application is protected from disclosure because it contains any amount of confidential, proprietary, trade

secret or privileged information is not acceptable, and may make the entire Application subject to release under the PIA.

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**TWC Contact:**

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## Definitions

The following definitions and acronyms are applicable to this RFA:

**Building Construction Trades (BCT).** Trades in the building construction industry (e.g., Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors, Building Equipment Contractors, Building Finishing Contractors). A complete list of allowable trades under this RFA are included in Appendix A of the Application.

**Causal Evidence.** Evidence that documents a relationship between an activity, treatment, or Intervention (including technology) and the intended Outcomes, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or Intervention.

**Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR).** A Clearinghouse for results of research on program effectiveness that provides practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and the general public with a central and trusted source of evidence on labor market Interventions and innovations relevant to the Department of Labor's work.

**Essentially Similar.** A degree of similarity and High Fidelity, or exactness, of the details or elements of the implementation plan between a program that is being proposed and the elements of the program which will be reproduced based upon its evidence of success with a population.

**Grantee.** A successful Applicant that receives a TWC grant award under this RFA.

**High Fidelity.** The high degree of exactness with which the program design and implementation are reproduced.

**Industry-Based Certification (IBC).** An IBC is awarded to an individual that demonstrates proficiency and knowledge, through examination, in a specific industry or trade. As opposed to a certificate, obtaining an IBC is not dependent on any actual education or training program. Instead, evaluating candidates for certification relies on independent, third-party professional and industry-based groups. These national organizations develop and maintain relevant, uniform proficiency standards that are assessed and sanctioned by industry-approved examination facilities, independent of any educational institution or training program. Furthermore, certifications often have an expiration date, requiring individuals to participate in continuing education or reexamination to stay current. This characterization of IBCs has been accepted and endorsed by national entities, such as the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

**Logic model.** A road map or depiction that presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, Outcomes, and impact for a program, which depicts the relationship between the program's activities and its intended effect.

**Opportunity Youth.** Youth between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-four (24) years who are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor market.

**Outputs.** What a program or activity has produced, e.g., number of program completers. Outputs do not address the value or impact of services.

**Outcomes.** The level of performance or achievement that occurred because of the activity, Intervention, or services a program has provided, e.g., the percentage of program completers who gain employment and remain employed at specific time intervals. Outcomes address value or impact of services.

**Performance Metrics.** A measure of the performance of a program through the documentation of specific data sets and measurement methodologies, allowing a basis to be formed regarding overall program success in achieving intended goals, Outputs, and Outcomes.



**Standard Occupational Classification (SOC).** A statistical standard used by federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into one of 867 detailed occupations according to their occupational definition. To facilitate classification, detailed occupations are combined to form 459 broad occupations, 98 minor groups, and 23 major groups. Detailed occupations in the SOC with similar job duties, and in some cases skills, education, and/or training, are grouped together.

**Study.** A detailed investigation and analysis of a subject or situation.

**Target Occupation.** The Texas workforce system is charged with developing strategies to promote occupations that have or are projected to have a substantial number of openings due to job growth, and result in self-sufficient wages or in a career pathway that leads to self-sufficient wages. Commonly referred to as “Target Occupations,” these lists of occupations are determined by Workforce Development Boards (Boards) and the Texas Workforce Commission based on a number of economic indicators and local wisdom, and are used to guide workforce customers into aptitude-appropriate and economically relevant training.

## **A. Program Description.**

### **Purpose.**

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) seeks grant applications from eligible Applicants to provide training to Opportunity Youth that prepares them for employment in Target Occupations within Building Construction Trades (BCT) as well as leading to Industry-Based Certifications.

### **Program Requirements.**

An Applicant will provide information on the following Program Requirements in the Application.

Training for Target Occupations in the BCT sector that are allowable under RFA 32021-00010 are limited to the SOC listed under SOC Subsector 47-0000, Construction and Extraction Occupations of the Construction economic sector. The full list of applicable SOC codes is included in Appendix A of the Application.

Grantees under this RFA shall comply with the following requirements:

- conduct outreach to target the primary priority population of Opportunity Youth;
- conduct outreach and recruitment activities to enroll eligible participants in BCT training;
- enroll participants in BCT training that will lead to IBCs;
- provide BCT training to participants, scheduling classes funded under this RFA with all training a to be completed no later than eighteen (18) months / five hundred forty-seven (547) days after grant start date;
- track participants for sixty (60) days following training completion to obtain proof of receipt of IBC;
- track participants for one hundred twenty (120) days following training completion to obtain proof of start of employment;

- ensure that once the participant completes training, that employment is in the same field;
- assist participants in entering employment in a Target Occupation in BCT;
- provide a plan to secure training facility(ies), training materials, and equipment that complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title III Regulations and other reasonable, individualized accommodations for in-person instruction, which is preferred, and remote instruction, only as necessary; and
- provide a plan to ensure continuity of training in the event that the COVID-19 pandemic continues into the grant period (e.g., whether training will be delivered remotely or in-person).

Any amendment to a grant issued under this RFA is required to be within the scope of the original proposal, this RFA, and resulting grant. A substantial change in the scope of services or budget shall not be allowed.

### **Evidence Based Granting**

This RFA has been selected to pilot a new, evidence-based approach to grant making. Under this approach, up to ten (10) bonus points can be awarded, based on the level of Causal Evidence supporting the Application.

The most effective job training programs open up new opportunities and can ultimately help change a person's life. These programs result in meaningful employment in a career pathway that is well-suited to the individual and support economic mobility. At the same time, prioritizing high-quality programs opens up resources to serve new participants. These most effective programs serve populations with significant barriers to employment while reducing the number of job seekers who cycle in and out of low-quality or poor-fit jobs thereby also reduce the need for repetitious support from the workforce system.

Grant funding under this RFA can be used to facilitate innovative approaches to improve job training programs and to scale proven methods that lead to better employment Outcomes for workers and increased productivity for employers in Texas. With this in mind, Texas is

implementing a two-pronged approach that will link grant funds directly to common priority Outcomes while continuing to support innovative practices. This approach will create incentives for grant Applicants to identify and use program models that have a demonstrated record of effective Outcomes. To continue to encourage innovative, but less-tested program models, TWC is designing a tiered strategy under this RFA. Evidence tiers have been defined to support a graduated method for programs and Applicants to adapt to evidence-based grants. Some grant programs in Texas have already introduced and defined performance-based Outcomes metrics, and prior grant Outcomes data will be required in the Application process, where relevant.

Embedding Outcome-based Applications and Outcomes reporting in this program will help TWC learn about the implementation, effectiveness, and cost of various approaches. The Interventions that have been introduced by the workforce system to date have been producing a growing body of evidence that can be used to identify effective practices that help participants develop the skills required to find and maintain employment. Applicants will be encouraged to consider and identify applicable evidence. Similarly, the Outcomes of pilot programs can be shared to incentivize replication if the measures are clearly defined and relevant to the priority Outcomes.

### **Building Evidence for the Future**

As the process of awarding bonus points for program design and anticipated Outcomes that are based on evidence commences, TWC recognizes that this is a dynamic process. Applicants will find that while the Application asks for evidence to support the proposed program design and anticipated Outcomes, there is a place for all programs on the evidence continuum. From newly created programs to those that are replicating a program that has been rigorously evaluated by an external entity, all Applicants are encouraged to find the evidence tier that demonstrates and best supports their proposed program. In future grant solicitations, as Applicants become familiar with the types and use of evidence to support Applications, TWC anticipates that proposed programs will move into higher tiers of evidence.

For complete details, refer to the decision tree in the Evidence Based Granting Section that begins on page 67 of the Application for assistance making the determination for the Evidence Tier level reached (High Evidence, Moderate Evidence, Performance Program, Experience Program or New Program Tier).

## **Outcomes-Related Payment Structure**

This RFA provides for cost-based grant awards with fifteen percent (15%) of each award amount being conditioned on both actual allowable costs incurred and the Grantee meeting the eighteen (18) and twenty-two (22) month participant completion targets that the Grantee specifies in its Application for each of three (3) TWC-designated outcomes metrics as follows:

- Up to five percent (5%) of the fifteen percent (15%) outcomes-related money is based on actual allowable costs and the percentage of participants who complete their training, as compared to the Grantee's eighteen (18) month target for that metric.
- Up to five percent (5%) of the fifteen percent (15%) outcomes-related money is based on actual allowable costs and the percentage of participants who achieve an Industry Based Certification within sixty (60) days of the completion of their training, as compared to the Grantee's twenty-two (22) month target for that metric.
- Up to five percent (5%) of the fifteen percent (15%) outcomes-related money is based on actual allowable costs and the percentage of participants who gain employment in a Target Occupation within their field of training within one hundred twenty (120) days of the completion of their training, as compared to the Grantee's twenty-two (22) month target for that metric.

Performance will be determined based on reports submitted to TWC as described in Section A Reporting Requirements, below. All grant payments (draws) will be requested by the Grantee and processed through TWC's online Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting (CDER) system. Grant funds will become available for a Grantee to draw against as follows:

- Upon grant execution, eighty-five percent (85%) of the award amount becomes available for a Grantee to draw against on an as-needed basis over the term of the grant award to enable the Grantee to pay for an equal amount of actual allowable expenditures incurred under the grant award. Grantees may calculate individual draws based on either: (1) immediate future cash need for amounts that the Grantee will disburse for actual allowable expenditures within three (3) calendar days of receipt of payment from TWC (advance payment), or (2) reimbursement. The Grantee may submit draws against these funds as frequently as needed during the grant term. If the Grantee's actual allowable expenditures total less than eighty-five percent (85%) of the award, payments under this portion of the award shall not exceed the actual allowable costs incurred. Amounts not expended under this portion of the award are subject to deobligation and recapture by TWC.
- After twelve (12) months from the start date of the award, TWC will compare the Grantee's actual participant completions at the end of twelve (12) months in each of the three (3) TWC-designated outcomes metrics, to the Grantee's corresponding eighteen (18) or twenty-two (22) month participant completion targets for those metrics. TWC will then make a corresponding proportionate percentage of the fifteen percent (15%) performance-related money available to draw against for actual allowable expenditures incurred under the grant award. For example, if by twelve (12) months, the Grantee has met twenty-five percent (25%) of its eighteen (18) month training completion target, the Grantee will gain access to draw against twenty-five percent (25%) of the five percent (5%) of the performance-related money for which performance is based on participants who complete their training. Each of the other two (2) metrics will be assessed in the same manner against their twenty-two (22) month targets. The Grantee's subsequent draws against these funds will be calculated by the Grantee in the same manner and frequency as described for the eighty-five percent (85%) portion of the award in the preceding bullet point.
- After twenty-two (22) months, TWC will compare the Grantee's total actual participant completions at the end of eighteen (18) or twenty-two (22) months in each of the three

(3) TWC-designated outcomes metrics, to the Grantee's corresponding eighteen (18) or twenty-two (22) month participant completion targets for those metrics, and make a corresponding proportionate percentage of the remainder of the fifteen percent (15%) performance-related money available to draw against during the grant closeout period for actual allowable expenditures incurred under the grant award during the award term (see note 1 below).

Note 1: No additional performance-related money will be available for outcomes that exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the Grantee's eighteen (18) or twenty-two (22) month participant completion targets for the three TWC-designated outcomes metrics. However, if the Grantee achieves less than one hundred percent (100%) of its eighteen (18) or twenty-two (22) month target for any of the three (3) outcomes metrics, the maximum amount available under the corresponding five percent (5%) performance-related money for that metric will be reduced proportionately, regardless of actual costs incurred. In that case, any costs that a Grantee incurs in excess of what the Grantee ultimately earns under the grant award would be incurred at the Grantee's own risk and will not be eligible for reimbursement under the award. Conversely, total grant funding (including both base funding and outcome-related funding) earned under the award cannot exceed actual costs incurred (see note 2 below).

Note 2: The fund source for this RFA does not permit Grantees under this RFA to retain revenues in excess of actual costs incurred under these grant awards. In the event that a Grantee achieves one hundred percent (100%) of targets, but has not fully expended the grant, additional eligible participants may be enrolled and trained under this grant but will not be counted towards performance-related money. These additional participants may be trained beyond the eighteenth (18) month and should be reported in the quarterly reports. All rules governing allowability of expenditures will apply to these additional participants.

## **Reporting Requirements.**

A Grantee will be required to submit Monthly Performance Reports; quarterly WIOA performance data; performance-related payment documentation and proof at twelve (12) and twenty-two (22) months, monthly expenditure reports; a financial closeout report; grant evaluator reports; and ad-hoc reports to TWC. A Grantee is also required to submit a final report in a format specified by TWC not later than thirty (30) days after the grant end date. The Reporting Requirements are further identified in the Application and incorporated into a grant award.

Grantees shall comply with the WIOA Performance Accountability, Information, and Reporting requirements in WIOA § 116 (29 USC § 3141), 20 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Parts 675-687 and, 29 C.F.R. Part 38. The Grantee shall provide such reports on a reporting template provided by the designated TWC Grant Manager after the grant is executed.

## **B. Funding and Authority Information.**

Approximately one million, five hundred dollars (\$1,500,000) is available for grant(s), based on the availability of funds and as approved by TWC. This amount does not include additional funding that may be added in subsequent years to fund a renewal or extension.

The funding source(s) for this program is Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Statewide Activity Funds (WIOA §§ 128 and 133), 29 United States Code (U.S.C.) §§ 3163 and 3173. In addition to the referenced funding source, the controlling authorities for this program are the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub.L. 116-94), Federal Regulations in 20 C.F.R. Parts 675 through 687, and 29 C.F.R. Part 38, Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Parts 200 and 2900; WD Letters, and any further TWC issuances.

## **Maximum Award.**

TWC will award a grant or grants to as many high-quality Applications that demonstrate the ability to meet the program criteria as is possible with the available funding. The maximum



amount that can be requested by Applicants is three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000), with payment partially subject to performance as described in the section entitled “Outcomes-Related Payment Structure” in this RFA.

### **Awarding of Grants.**

TWC has the right to reject Applications, or to cancel or modify an RFA at any point before a grant award is signed. The award of any grant is subject to the availability of funds. Final approval of a grant award is solely at the determination of TWC.

### **Length of Funding.**

Funding will be for approximately twenty-four (24) months from the grant start date, with the option of renewals or extensions in any combination of years or months, at TWC’s discretion, provided that the total grant period does not exceed five (5) years. In considering such renewal, TWC will consider performance, progress toward expected outcomes, and expenditures, as well as other factors.

## **C. Eligibility.**

### **Applicant Eligibility.**

An Eligible Applicant under this RFA is one of the following entities that offer training leading to Industry-Based Certifications:

- Non-profit organizations that provide training of occupations under SOC Subsector 47-0000, Construction and Extraction Occupations;
- General Academic Teaching Institution in Texas, as defined by Texas Education Code § 61.003(3);
- Institution of Higher Education in Texas, as defined by Texas Education Code § 61.003(8);
- Other Agency of Higher Education in Texas, as defined by Texas Education Code § 61.003(6); or

- Private or Independent Institution of Higher Education in Texas, as defined by Texas Education Code § 61.003(15).

An Applicant may submit only one (1) Application. If more than one (1) Application is received from an Applicant, TWC will only screen and evaluate the first Application received from that Applicant. Amendments to the Application are discussed in the Award Administration Guidelines section, below.

### **Eligible Population to be Served.**

The eligible population to be served under this grant award consists of individuals who:

- are sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) years of age not currently in school or training;
- are United States (U.S.) citizens or certified to work in the U.S.; and
- meet U.S. Selective Service registration requirements (if male).

Grantees shall determine eligibility for each participant prior to participant receiving any services funded through this grant. The Grantee shall document and maintain confidential eligibility documentation files for each participant receiving services funded through this grant. Maintenance of these eligibility files shall conform to TWC's policy for Security of Personal Identity Data requirements in WD Letters 13-08 and 02-18, including any subsequent issuances. Failure to determine eligibility, document eligibility, or maintain the required files for all enrolled participants may result in unallowable costs and subsequent repayment of grant funds, in accordance with Section 1, Expenditure Limitations, of the Financial Requirements included in the Application package and made a part of a final grant award.

### **Allowable Costs.**

This grant program may fund costs as allowed by: the laws, regulations, rules, and guidance governing fund use for the fund sources identified in the Funding and Authority Information provisions in this RFA, the Application, and the resulting grant.

Costs must conform to the limitations or exclusions as to the types or amounts of cost items set forth in the following:

- laws, regulations, rules, and guidance governing fund use for the fund sources identified in the Funding and Authority Information provisions in this RFA;
- the cost principles and requirements in the General Terms and Conditions of the Application;
- the expenditure limitations in this RFA; and,
- the resulting grant.

All costs must be reasonable and necessary for the performance of the award. Costs must be allocable to the award i.e., chargeable or assignable to the award in accordance to relative benefits received.

Refer also to Section “Outcomes-Related Payment Structure” in this RFA.

### **Unallowable Costs.**

Refer to the Unallowable Costs tab in the Budget Workbook for examples of unallowable costs.

### **Administrative Costs.**

Administrative costs shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of total funds expended under the grant.

Refer to the Program and Administrative Descriptions tab in the Budget Workbook for the definition of administrative costs and examples of program costs.

### **Indirect Costs.**

Indirect costs, if any, charged to this grant must result from one of the following:

- proper application of an indirect cost rate approved by the Applicant’s federal cognizant agency for indirect costs, or other authorized entity, as appropriate;
- proper application of the de minimis rate as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.414, if eligible; or

- a rate negotiated with TWC for purposes of an award resulting under this RFA.

Identify the indirect cost rate in the space provided on the Budget Summary Form of the RFA.

An Applicant that is not required by OMB Uniform Guidance (2 C.F.R. Part 200) to have an approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between itself and the federal government, or other authorized entity, as appropriate, and which ordinarily charges all costs as direct costs, may continue to do so under this RFA, and is not subject to the indirect cost rate limitations described in this Section.

## **D. Application and Submission Information.**

### **Application Components.**

The grant Application consists of the following components:

1. Application (using TWC's designated Application package);
2. Signed Application Certification form;
3. Budget (using TWC's designated Budget Workbook); and
4. The High Demand Occupation - Board Confirmation form signed by an authorized representative of the Board confirming that the program targets a high demand occupation.

### **Other Requirements.**

In accordance with the reporting requirements established by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006, Pub. L. 109-282, as amended by Pub. L. 110-252, title VI, § 6202(a), June 3, 2008, according to the instructions specified in WD Letter 29-12 and subsequent issuances, Eligible Applicants will be required to comply with WD Letter 29-12 and subsequent issuances during the term of the grant.

Before submitting an Application, it is recommended that the Applicant submit paperwork for a D-U-N-S® number and SAM registration or ensure that its D-U-N-S® number and SAM registration are accurate, current, and active.

A valid D-U-N-S® number and active SAM registration must be in effect at the time of grant award.

Information on how to obtain a D-U-N-S® number may be found on Dunn & Bradstreet's website ([fedgov.dnb.com/webform](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform)) or by calling Dunn & Bradstreet, toll-free, at 866-705-5711. Information regarding SAM registration may be found at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). Obtaining a D-U-N-S® number and registering in SAM.gov is free.

### **Application Checklist.**

Applicants may use the Application Checklist included in the Application as a guide when preparing the Application package for submittal. Required documents itemized in the Application Checklist must be submitted by the Application due date and time. When applying for a grant, the Application package must be downloaded and the forms within the Application package must be completed and submitted in their entirety, without any alteration of the form or formatting. Failure to utilize the forms and Application as provided will result in disqualification of the Application prior to evaluation.

### **Application Submission.**

The TWC [RFA Grants](mailto:RFAGrants@twc.texas.gov) (RFAGrants@twc.texas.gov) must receive the emailed Application package no later than the Application deadline. Application packages that are received after the Application deadline will not be accepted.

TWC only accepts emailed Application packages. If a hard copy of the Application package is submitted, it will not be screened for this RFA and will not be returned unless the sender makes arrangements for return costs prior to return.

Email the Application package to [RFA Grants](mailto:RFAGrants@twc.texas.gov) by the submission deadline.

TWC is not responsible for Application packages emailed late, illegible, incomplete, or otherwise considered disqualified due to failure of electronic equipment or operator error.

Email instructions:

To: [RFA Grants](#)

Subject line: 32021-00010: Building Construction Trades

[Applicant Name]

Authorized TWC Contact: Cassandra Johnson at [RFA Grants](#)

### **Withdrawal of Application.**

An Application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the selection announcement date by writing to the TWC Contact. A withdrawn Application will not be considered for award but will be retained by TWC in accordance with the Application Information Confidentiality and Records Retention provisions in this RFA.

### **Amendment of Application.**

An Application may be amended in writing at any time after submission, but prior to the Application submission deadline. An amended Application must be submitted to the TWC Contact. An Application may be amended after the Application submission deadline only at the direction of TWC.

Unless specifically requested by TWC, material submitted after the Application submission deadline will not be considered.

### **Application Format.**

Applicants responding to this RFA must use TWC designated Application package for this specific RFA.

Failure to use the Application package for this specific RFA (e.g., using a previous Application package or component) will result in disqualification prior to evaluation. Alteration of the

Application package (deleting sections, revising formatting, or changing page orientation) may result in disqualification prior to evaluation.

Failure to comply with any one (1) or more of the following requirements may result in disqualification of the Application.

1. The Application submitted in response to this RFA must be in the 8 1/2" by 11" paper layout. The type must be a minimum font size of 12, and margins of no less than 0.5 inch.
2. Email the following four (4) files as individual attachments, or the four individual files may be submitted in a Zip-file attached to the email. Each electronic file should be titled with the RFA number and Applicant's name:
  - the Application in Microsoft Word;
  - the budget workbook in Microsoft Excel;
  - a searchable, editable, Portable Document Format (PDF) file version of the signed complete hard copy Application package and attachments, if any; and
  - a word or PDF version with redactions of information asserted to be confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or privileged, if any.

All information conveyed in the Application is subject to validation by TWC. Information obtained by TWC during validation will be considered in the final evaluation and award decision. TWC reserves the right to waive minor technicalities in determining whether to evaluate an Application.

## **E. Application Review Criteria.**

### **Criteria and Scoring.**

This is a competitive grant solicitation. The range of points and maximum number of points for each category of the Work Plan is shown below, for a total of one hundred (100) points, and there is the potential for ten (10) bonus points.

1. Executive Summary – Required
2. Training Plan – 25 points
3. Outreach, Recruitment and Retention – 20 points
4. Employment Outlook – 20 points
5. Program Plan: Activities and Milestones – 25 points
6. Budget Workbook – 10 points
7. Program Evidence – 10 BONUS points

Relevance and appropriateness of the design and activities to the program and purpose of the grant program will be considered in the scoring of all Work Plan criteria. See Section titled Evaluation Criteria in the Application for detailed scoring information.

### **Screening and Evaluation.**

All Applications received will be screened to determine eligibility. Applications with significant errors, omissions, or eligibility issues will not be screened or evaluated. Applications that meet the following minimum technical requirements will be considered eligible for further evaluation.

- (1) The Application was submitted by an Eligible Applicant, as stated in the above section entitled “Applicant Eligibility”;
- (2) The Application submitted must include the signature of an authorized representative of the Applicant on the required Certifications; and
- (3) The Application must include the High Demand Occupation - Board Confirmation form signed by an authorized representative of the Board confirming that the program targets a high demand occupation.



## **Selection and Award Announcement.**

Evaluators will review and score Applications based on the evaluation criteria in the RFA using only the information provided in the written Application. The final scores will serve as the primary basis for selection of Applications for funding. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding to TWC. TWC reserves the right to make selections based solely on the final scores or to consider other factors determined by TWC to be relevant to its decision, including the geographic distribution of funds for areas served, e.g., rural representation or past performance.

TWC may elect to award the grant(s) with or without discussions with the Applicant. Should a grant be awarded without discussions, the award will be based on the Applicant's Application submission, which constitutes a binding offer by the Applicant. To receive an award, the Applicant must accept any additional or special terms and conditions listed in the grant award and any proposed and accepted changes to the grant Application as submitted.

TWC will post the grant award decision on the [Electronic State Business Daily](http://www.txsmartbuy.com) at [www.txsmartbuy.com](http://www.txsmartbuy.com) after the award(s) are finalized. TWC staff will notify unsuccessful Applicants in writing following execution of all grant awards.

No public disclosures or news releases pertaining to the RFA or any resulting grant shall be made without the prior written approval of TWC.

## **F. Administration Guidelines.**

### **RFA Components.**

This RFA solicitation consists of the Request for Applications and the Application Package. The Application package consists of Special Terms and Conditions, if applicable, General Terms and Conditions, Financial Requirements, Reporting Requirements, Certifications, Work Plan, and Budget Workbook.

The Application Package includes the format in which an Application must be completed and returned to be considered for a grant. The RFA Solicitation is published on the [Electronic State Business Daily](#) that may be accessed at [www.txsmartbuy.com](http://www.txsmartbuy.com) and [Texas.gov eGrants](#) at [txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/egrants/search.htm](http://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/egrants/search.htm).

### **Changes and Amendments to this RFA Solicitation.**

TWC reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFA at any time by posting amendments or cancellations on the [Electronic State Business Daily](#) at [www.txsmartbuy.com](http://www.txsmartbuy.com).

### **Amendments.**

Any amendment to a grant awarded under this RFA is required to be within the scope of the original Application, resulting grant, and this RFA. A substantial change in the scope of services or budget through amendment to the grant award will not be allowed.

### **Question & Answer (Q&A) Document.**

After the issuance of the RFA, the Q&A Document is a primary source of information for Applicants. Applicants' questions must be submitted in writing via email to the Authorized TWC Contact by April 1, 2021 by 4:00 p.m. CT.

TWC will publish the Q&A Document on the [Electronic State Business Daily](#) at [www.txsmartbuy.com](http://www.txsmartbuy.com) on or about April 23, 2021.

### **Communications with TWC during the RFA and Award Process.**

Communication with any TWC personnel in reference to or concerning this RFA, other than the TWC Contact listed in this RFA, is prohibited. Failure to follow this provision may be grounds for disqualification of the Application.

## **Application Information Confidentiality.**

All Application information submitted in response to the RFA is subject to and will be handled in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act, Government Code, Chapter 552. The Public Information Act allows the public to have access to information in the possession of a governmental body. Therefore, any confidential or proprietary information contained within an Application must be clearly identified by the Applicant in the Application itself. Proprietary information identified by the Applicant in advance will be kept confidential by TWC to the extent permitted by state law.

## **Records Retention.**

All information submitted in response to this RFA must be retained by TWC for the period specified in TWC's record retention schedule created pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 441. The information will not be returned to the Applicant.

## **Monitoring.**

Items that a Grantee must maintain on site and make available for monitors include:

- list of entities that are receiving funds under any grant resulting from this RFA;
- a list of participants and participant files verifying eligibility;
- all financial records pertaining to the grant;
- policies and procedures, if applicable; and
- oversight activities of other grant partners and subrecipients, if applicable.

## **Protests.**

Any Applicant wishing to protest the grant award must submit the following information by certified mail to the address listed:

Lowell Keig, Director, Business Operations  
Texas Workforce Commission  
101 East 15<sup>th</sup> St., Room 316T

Austin, Texas 78778-0001

The written protest, including relevant written information, must be received by TWC within ten (10) business days from the date of the Notice of Grant Award posted on the ESBD. The written protest must:

- identify the RFA being protested;
- state the grounds for the protest, including a description of any alleged acts or omissions by the entity that forms the basis for the protest;
- provide any written information that the protestor believes is relevant to the award; and
- provide the basis for the protestor's interest in the award.

## **G. Informational Resources.**

[Texas Local Workforce Development Boards](http://www.twc.texas.gov/dirs/wdbs/workforce-development-boards-websites.html) (www.twc.texas.gov /dirs/wdbs/workforce-development-boards-websites.html)

[TWC Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts](http://www.twc.texas.gov/partners/financial-manual-grants-contracts) (www.twc.texas.gov /partners/financial-manual-grants-contracts)

[WD Letter 29-12 “Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 – Update”](https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-29-12-twc.pdf) and subsequent issuances (https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/policy\_letters/wd-29-12-twc.pdf)

[WD Letter 13-08, “Security of Personal Identity Data,”](http://www.twc.texas.gov/boards/wdletters/letters/13-08.pdf) and subsequent issuances (www.twc.texas.gov /boards/wdletters/letters/13-08.pdf)

[WD Letter 02-18 “Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information and Other Sensitive Information”](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-02-18-twc.pdf) and subsequent issuances (https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy\_letters/wd-02-18-twc.pdf)

[WD Letter 44-05 “Texas Workforce Commission Online Contract Closeout Process”](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-44-05-twc.pdf) and subsequent issuances (https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy\_letters/wd-44-05-twc.pdf)

[WD Letter 04-15, Change 2, "Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting System Instructions,"](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-04-15ch2-twc.pdf)  
([https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy\\_letters/wd-04-15ch2-twc.pdf](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-04-15ch2-twc.pdf))

[WD Letter 28-07, Change 1, "Limitations on Salaries and Bonuses Paid with Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Funds— Update"](https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-28-07ch1-twc.pdf) ([https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/policy\\_letters/wd-28-07ch1-twc.pdf](https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/wd-28-07ch1-twc.pdf))

[2018 Standard Occupational Classification System](http://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/major_groups.htm)  
([http://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/major\\_groups.htm](http://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/major_groups.htm))

TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 61.003(3),(6),(8),(15)

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/word/ED.61.doc>

[Texas Workforce Commission Evidence Based Grantmaking](https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/texas-workforce-commission-evidence-based-grantmaking) (Including recordings of two webinars, a copy of the evidence framework, and an FAQ document)  
(<https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/texas-workforce-commission-evidence-based-grantmaking>)