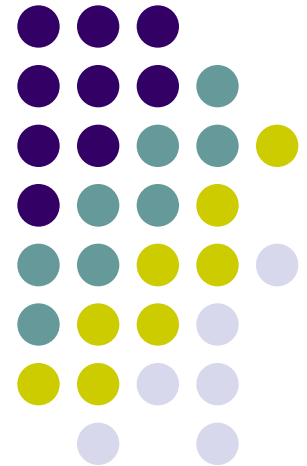


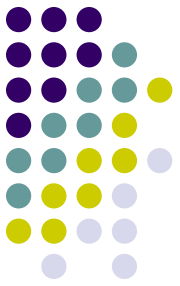
Grant Applications 101

A Straightforward Guide to ETA Competitive Grants



U.S. Department of Labor
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

ETA Grant-Making

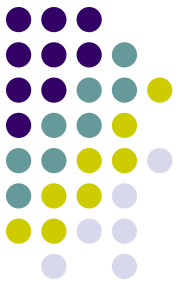


- ETA oversees workforce development programs and services throughout the country.
- ETA funding is distributed either by formula, or by open competitions for grants.
- Competitive grants are typically awarded to organizations to create or expand innovative workforce development programs for workers and employers.

ETA MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Employment and Training Administration is to contribute to the more efficient functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high quality job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through state and local workforce development systems.

Find Open Grant Competition Opportunities



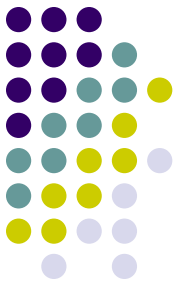
- Grant competitions are formally announced through Solicitations for Grant Applications, or SGAs.
 - SGAs are published:
 - In the Federal Register: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>
 - On the Grants.gov website: <http://grants.gov/>
 - On ETA's Grants and Contracts website: http://www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm
- Sign up to receive email alerts about new SGAs on the home pages of these Web sites.

Understanding the SGA



- ***Read the SGA thoroughly and become familiar with all of its contents and requirements!***
 - The SGA provides you with the framework for your grant application.
 - Applications that don't meet all requirements may be deemed “non-responsive” and may not be reviewed or considered for funding.
 - Use the toolkit to better understand SGAs and how to respond to them.

Critical Questions for Your Initial Review



- Application submission process, methods, and closing date and time:
 - Do you have time to respond before the closing date?
- Background on the funding effort and types of projects to be funded:
 - Are these the types of projects that your organization is in a position to support?
- Organizations eligible to apply for funding:
 - Is your organization among those eligible to apply for grant funding?



Understand the SGA: Other Key Components



- Anticipated grant award amount range and limits, and grant performance period;
- Allowable grant activities and eligible grant participants;
- Partnership requirements;
- Cost-sharing/matching requirements;
- Other administrative requirements and restrictions;
- Application evaluation criteria;
- Information about ETA's application review, selection, and grant award processes; and
- ETA point of contact for the SGA.

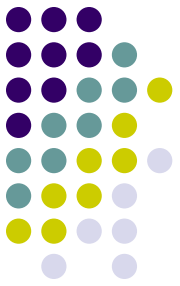


Informational Opportunities for Applicants



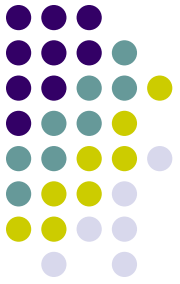
- Often, ETA will host Webinars or other events about new SGAs for prospective applicants.
 - These will be discussed in the SGA.
- These events offer you the opportunity to learn more about the specifics of a particular grant competition.

Understand ETA's Evaluation of Grant Applications: Overview



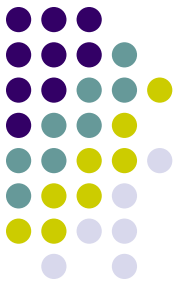
- Each application is evaluated by a technical review panel of Federal staff and other workforce development experts.
- Reviewers evaluate and score applications based solely upon the evaluation criteria in the SGA.
- Ranked application scores serve as the primary basis for ETA's selection of applications for funding.
 - The SGA will note other evaluation considerations, which may include geographical and organizational diversity.

Sample Criteria



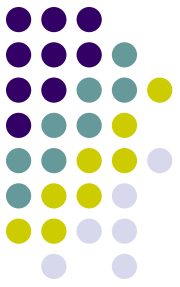
- Statement of Need: **15 points**
- Project Management and Organizational Capacity: **15 points**
- Strategy and Project Work Plan: **50 points**
- Outcomes and Deliverables: **15 points**
- Suitability for Evaluation: **5 points**

Outline and Plan Your Application



- Start early to give yourself and your project partners **ample time!**
 - SGA deadlines are not negotiable, and late applications are not reviewed.
- Create an outline of your application based upon the evaluation criteria framework.
 - **Make it easy** for reviewers to find your responses to each criterion.
- Create a concrete project plan for the entire application development process.
 - **Define** tasks, roles, timelines, and a checklist for completion.

Outline and Plan: Content and Format



- Cost Proposal, or budget request:
 - Make sure that your budget amounts are consistent throughout the application.
- Technical Proposal, or a description of your proposed project and capabilities:
 - Follow the outline of the evaluation criteria.
- Attachments to the Technical Proposal, such as a letter(s) of commitment from project partners, a project Abstract, etc.
 - Only include letters of commitment as required by the SGA.
 - Make sure that your project Abstract is complete and gives reviewers a great first impression.

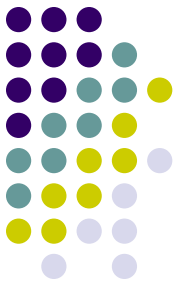
Developing the Application



- Be sure that your application is comprehensive, clear, and easy for reviewers to follow.
- Demonstrate your capacity and a clear project plan.
- Show the “**how**,” don’t merely tell the “what.”
- Avoid using jargon and acronyms.
- Don’t merely reiterate language from the SGA.



Developing the Application: Context



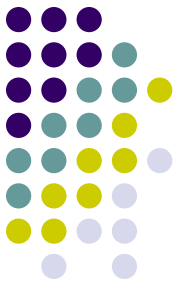
- Demonstrate familiarity with existing programs, models, and strategies.
 - Don't ask for funding to “reinvent the wheel.”
- Learn more about existing programs and competitive grants awarded in the past
 - Grants toolkit:
www.workforce3one.org (also on handout)
- Use Data to Establish Need
 - Document need with authoritative data: BLS, Census, ETA Catalogue, state and local workforce system partners

Align Your Project with the SGA



- Your project plan and strategies should directly address the challenges outlined in your application's statement of need.
- Your proposed project and project activities should reflect the funding opportunity description and allowable activities discussed in the SGA.
- Don't propose activities not called for in the SGA.

Demonstrate Experience AND Capacity

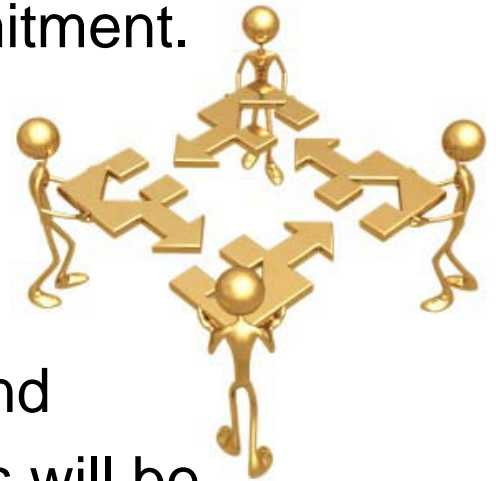


- Demonstrate your project management expertise and organizational capacity to manage a Federal grant.
 - Previous Federal grant management experience should be discussed but is not required for ETA grants.
- Discuss your previous relevant grant management success and results.
 - **Show** how you will bring previous management experience to scale in support of this Federal investment.

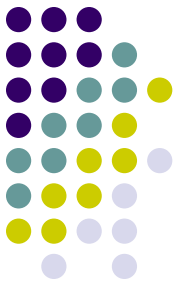
Provide Evidence of Partnerships



- Provide evidence of robust strategic partnerships that can support your project.
 - Don't merely "list" potential partners.
 - Don't provide generic "form" letters of commitment.
- Describe in detail:
 - Relationships among partners;
 - Each partner's role;
 - Partners' specific resource commitments; and
 - How each partner's strengths and resources will be leveraged and coordinated for the grant effort.

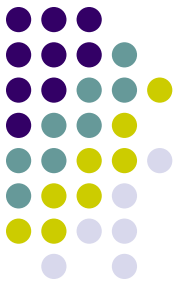


Discuss Leveraged Resources



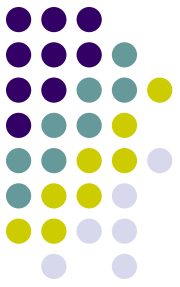
- Describe how you and your partners will contribute non-Federal resources to the project:
 - Source, nature, and amount of resources;
 - How resources will be used; and
 - How they will add value to the project.
- Leveraged resources may demonstrate:
 - Your interest in magnifying the impact of the Federal investment; and
 - Your capacity to sustain the project after the Federal investment ends.

CONNECT with other efforts



- Demonstrate how you will connect your project to other ETA-funded programs in your state or region.
- Discuss how you will work with state and/or local workforce system partners.
 - National Association of State Workforce Agencies
 - National Association of Workforce Boards
 - Workforce Investment Boards and One Stop Career Centers

Discuss Outcomes and Deliverables



- Proposed outcomes should be appropriately challenging, reasonable, and attainable.
- Outcomes should align with your statement of need, your project plan, and your budget.
- Provide targets for all performance measures noted in the SGA.
- Specific strategies, budget, outcomes and deliverables proposed in your application will be incorporated into your formal grant agreement if you are funded.

Offer a Reasonable Budget



- Your funding request should be reasonable relative to your statement of need, level of effort, project activities, and outcomes.
 - Don't request more than you can manage.
 - Don't request "contingency funding."
- Budget form and budget narrative:
 - Make sure amounts are consistent throughout.
 - Justify all budget line items in your budget narrative.

Finalize and Submit Your Application!

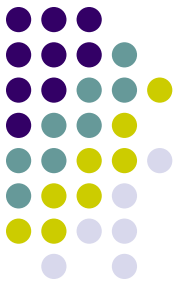


- Do a final review of your application, project plan, and checklist.
- Submit your application on time and through the acceptable method(s) noted in the SGA.
 - ETA will contact applicants selected for funding directly.
 - Awarded grants are announced on ETA's Web site at <http://www.doleta.gov/>.
- If you are unsuccessful, request the review panel's feedback from ETA's Grants Office.

Summary: Key Tips for Applicants

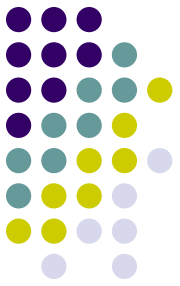


- Confirm that you are eligible to apply. ✓
- Start developing your application early. ✓
- Register early on Grants.gov. ✓
- Meet all SGA requirements for application content, structure, and format. ✓
- Provide data to document need. ✓
- Document your relevant experience and organizational capacity. ✓



Summary: Key Tips (continued)

- Don't propose unallowable activities or ineligible participants. ✓
- Provide evidence of required partners and partnerships. ✓
- Propose reasonable outcomes. ✓
- Make a reasonable budget request. ✓
- Don't exceed page limitations. ✓
- Submit your application on time, through accepted channels. ✓



Use the ETA Online Toolkit!



Annotated Sample SGA

An annotated sample SGA, which is based on a competitive grant solicitation that ETA published in the summer of 2009. Annotations throughout the document include comment notes that provide readers

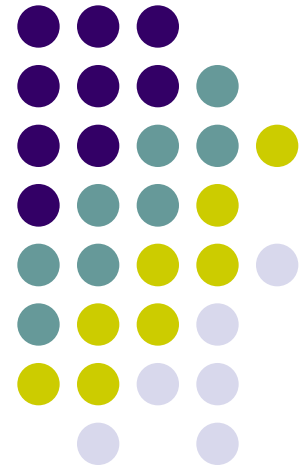


Helpful Resources

A compilation of resources that may help prospective applicants develop competitive grant applications. ETA's guide, [Applying for ETA Grants: A Guide to the Competitive Grant Process](#), is recommended reading for all new applicants.

The screenshot shows the Workforce One website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'About', 'Contact', and 'Help', along with 'Login' and 'Signup' options. The Workforce One logo is prominently displayed with the tagline 'Collaborate. Innovate. Transform.'. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Resources', 'Newsletters', 'Podcasts', and 'Webinars'. The main content area features a large heading: 'Applying for ETA Competitive Grants: A Web-Based Toolkit for Prospective Applicants'. Below this heading, there is a 'Guide Overview: The Grant Application Process' section with a list of steps: 'Understand ETA grant-making', 'Find open grant opportunities', 'Understand the SGA', 'Understand evaluation of applications', 'Outline and plan for development', and 'Develop your application'. To the right of this list is a 'View Guide Now' button. Below the overview, there is a 'Background & Information' section with text explaining the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) mission and the competitive grant process. The text states that ETA is committed to ensuring that as many entities as possible — in particular, smaller entities such as community-based and faith-based groups, as well as those entities that have not previously managed Federal grant programs — are aware of competitive grant application opportunities. ETA does not encourage the submission of concept papers, abstracts, or other unsolicited proposals, as all discretionary grant opportunities to date are conducted through a competitive process. Recognizing that smaller community organizations and entities that are "new" to the Federal grant-making process may be unfamiliar with ETA SGAs and with ETA's process for evaluating grant applications, ETA has developed several tools to help new organizations craft competitive applications. This Web site is a central clearinghouse for these tools, and will be updated with additional tools as they are published.

Upcoming Funding Opportunities



U.S. Department of Labor
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION