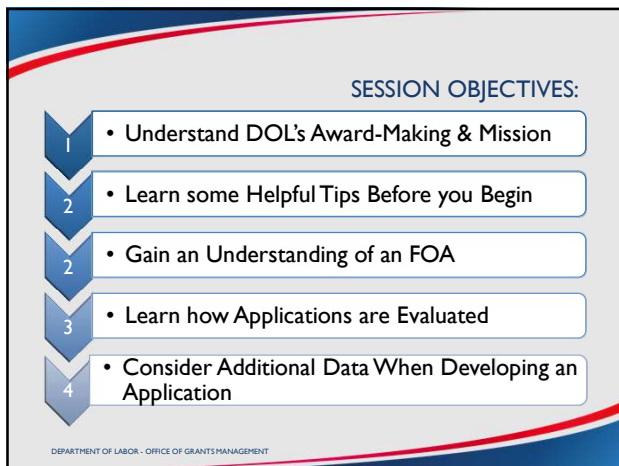




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FEDERAL GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT ACT (1977)

- ▶ To guide government agencies in their use of Federal funds – particularly by distinguishing between contracts, cooperative agreements and grants.
- ▶ Contracts, the law states, are awarded when a Federal agency is acquiring something – a service, for example. Both grants and cooperative agreements are awarded when a Federal agency is providing assistance – the latter occurring when substantial involvement by the agency is anticipated.

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GRANT

- A legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity that, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6302, 6304:
 - Is used to enter into a relationship the principal purpose of which is to transfer anything of value to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States (see 31 U.S.C. 6101(3)); and not to acquire property or services for the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity's direct benefit or use;
 - Is distinguished from a cooperative agreement in that it *does not* provide for substantial involvement of the Federal awarding agency in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award.
 - Does not include an agreement that provides only:
 - Direct United States Government cash assistance to an individual;
 - A subsidy; A loan; A loan guarantee; or Insurance.

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COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

A legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency and a recipient or a pass-through entity and a sub-recipient that, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6302-6305:

- Is used to enter into a relationship the principal purpose of which is to transfer anything of value to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States (see 31 U.S.C. 6101(3)); and not to acquire property or services for the Federal Government or pass-through entity's direct benefit or use;
- Is distinguished from a grant *in that it provides for substantial involvement* of the Federal awarding agency in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award.
- The term does not include:
 - A cooperative research and development agreement as defined in 15 U.S.C. 3710a; or
 - An agreement that provides only:
 - › Direct United States Government cash assistance to an individual;
 - › A subsidy; A loan; A loan guarantee; or Insurance.

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UNDERSTAND ETA'S MISSION

DOL's MISSION STATEMENT

To foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

The mission of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is to contribute to 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.

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WHERE TO FIND: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (FOAs)

► Grant competitions are formally announced through FOAs and published at:

- <https://www.dol.gov/grants#open>
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants>
- <http://grants.gov/>

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HELPFUL TIPS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN:
HELPFUL TIPS

- ▶ Start early
- ▶ Read the FOA **thoroughly**
 - Use the FOA as a framework for your application.
- ▶ Create an outline for your application
- ▶ Develop a concrete project narrative
- ▶ Register at Grants.gov
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>
- ▶ Register and apply on <https://sam.gov/SAM/> for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN:
HELPFUL TIPS

Before you start on your application:

ASK

- ▶ Is your organization eligible to apply to this FOA?
- ▶ Do you have time to respond before the closing date?
- ▶ Is this a type of project and population that your organization can support?
- ▶ Are you familiar or have experience with this type of project?

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
BREAKING DOWN THE FOA

- ▶ Funding Opportunity Description
- ▶ Award Information
- ▶ Eligibility Information
- ▶ Application and Submission Information
- ▶ Application Review Information
- ▶ Award Administration Information

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION & ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Establishes the program's purpose and funding
 - Identifies the program's authority
 - Asks applicants to specify the geographic scope on where the participants will receive services
 - Identifies the allowable program activities

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
AWARD INFORMATION

- ▶ Establishes the award type and the range for each award amount
 - Notes that awards are subject to the availability of Federal funds
- ▶ Establishes the award's period of performance
 - Identifies the anticipated start date of the awards
 - Clarifies the treatment of start-up and follow-up activities during the period of performance

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- ▶ Establishes the entities and types of organization that can apply
- ▶ Outline any required or optional partners such as a one-stop partner with the local American Job Center (AJC) Network - <https://www.servicelocator.org>
- ▶ Defines who are eligible participants
 - Includes a Veterans' priority for participants
- ▶ Includes an Application Screening Criteria – a checklist of forms and documents needed for the grant application

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
MATCH & LEVERAGED RESOURCES

- ▶ Establishes how you and your partners will contribute other non-Federal resources to the project (match and leveraged resources):
 - In your application, you should identify:
 - Source, nature, and number (dollar amount) of resources; how resources will be used; and how they will add value to the project
 - How will it be used to support the award objectives and goals
 - If required, match or leveraged resources will be part of the scoring criteria

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- ▶ Establishes how to access an application package
- ▶ Identifies the required forms to be included in your submission:
 - SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
 - Project Budget, composed of the SF-424A and budget narrative
 - Project narrative
 - Any attachments to the project narrative

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- ▶ Identifies submission date, time, process, and address
- ▶ Notes any funding restrictions and Federal guidelines to be followed for allowable costs

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

- ▶ Establishes the scoring or evaluation criteria in which applications are scored and judged against
- ▶ Outlines the process of DOL's technical merit review
- ▶ Establishes the risk factors that DOL assesses prior to making an award:
 - Financial System Risk Assessment Form
 - Financial stability
 - Quality of management systems
 - History of performance
 - Reports and findings from audits performed
 - Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities

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UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- ▶ All award notifications will be posted on the DOL's grant homepage at: <https://www.dol.gov/grants> or <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/>.
 - Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the grant's execution.
 - Non-selected applicants will be notified by mail or email and may request a written debriefing on the significant weaknesses of their application
- ▶ Outlines any special program and reporting requirements

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**UNDERSTANDING THE FOA:
INFORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- ▶ Often, DOL will host webinars or other virtual events about new FOAs for prospective applicants
 - These will be discussed in the FOA
- ▶ These events offer the opportunity to learn more about the specifics of a particular FOA or grant competition

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EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

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EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

- ▶ Each application is evaluated on its merits by a technical review panel
- ▶ Reviewers evaluate and score applications based upon the evaluation criteria in the FOA
- ▶ DOL utilizes government-wide resources when reviewing applicants such as but not limited to SAM.gov, FSRs.gov, and the Federal Audit Clearinghouse

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EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS: SAMPLE CRITERIA	
Criteria	Points (range)
Statement of Need	15-40
Expected Outcomes and Outputs	15-25
Project Design	25-50
Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity	10-15
Past Performance – Programmatic Capability	5-15
Budget and Budget Narrative	10-20

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**DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

► Ensure 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”
- Align your application with the FOA
- Demonstrate familiarity with existing programs, models, and strategies
- Avoid using industry-specific language that is not publicly known and acronyms
- Don’t merely reiterate language from the FOA

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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
BEFORE YOU BEGIN CONT.

- ▶ Ensure that your application:
 - Adheres to formatting requirements
 - Is consistent with budget amounts throughout the application
- ▶ Complete all requirements outlined in the FOA
 - Non-responsive applications will not be reviewed or considered for funding



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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
USE DATA TO ESTABLISH NEED (1)

- ▶ Document your need for Federal funding with authoritative data, not anecdotes
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics: www.bls.gov/bls/topicsaz.htm
 - BLS is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy
 - Census Bureau: www.census.gov/about/index.html
 - The Census Bureau is the federal government's largest statistical agency, and provides current facts and figures about America's people, places, and economy.

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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
USE DATA TO ESTABLISH NEED (2)

- ▶ Document your need for Federal funding with authoritative data, not anecdotes.
 - U.S. Ed, NCES: <https://nces.ed.gov/>
 - The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. NCES is located within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences.
 - U.S. Ed, Digest of Education Statistics: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/>
 - The primary purpose of the *Digest of Education Statistics* is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from prekindergarten through graduate school.

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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
USE DATA TO ESTABLISH NEED (3)

- ▶ Document your need for Federal funding with authoritative data, not anecdotes.
 - Portal of workforce and labor market information for data-driven planning: <https://lmi.workforcegps.org/>
 - The Labor Market Information (LMI) Central community is intended to be a leading source of information and collaboration on the wide array of resources and information products available to guide you in your data-driven decision-making.
 - State and local AJC Network and One-Stop partners: <https://www.servicelocator.org>
 - This site has a complete listing of all current state and local one-stops by zip code, county and State.

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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
DEMONSTRATE EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY

- ▶ Demonstrate project management expertise and organizational capacity to manage a Federal grant
- ▶ Discuss previous relevant grant management success and results



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DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION:
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.

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DEVELOP YOUR APPLICATION:
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 FOA
- ▶ If funded, proposed specific strategies, budget, outcomes and deliverables will be incorporated into formal grant agreement
- ▶ Pay close attention to performance goals and program outcomes – be **realistic**

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DEVELOP YOUR APPLICATION:
OFFER A REASONABLE BUDGET

- ▶ 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"
- ▶ Review salaries, bonuses, and fringe benefit packages and ensure that they are comparable to similar/same positions in your local area.
 - Salary and Bonus limitations apply to most FOAs.
- ▶ Review current rent to ensure that it comparable to similar spaces in the local area.

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DEVELOP YOUR APPLICATION:
OFFER A REASONABLE BUDGET CONT.

- ▶ Budget form and budget narrative:
 - Make sure amounts are consistent throughout
 - Justify all budget line items in your budget narrative
 - Identify the specific items going into each budget line item and explain any specific items to ensure full comprehension by any application reader

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FINALIZE AND SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION: CHECK FOR COMPLETENESS

- ▶ Submit your application on time and through the acceptable method(s) noted in the FOA.
- ▶ DOL will contact applicants selected for funding directly.
 - Awarded grants are announced on DOL's website at: <https://www.dol.gov/grants>



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SUMMARY

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SUMMARY: CHECK YOUR APPLICATION FOR COMPLETENESS

- ▶ Do a final review of your application.
- ▶ Use the checklist provided in the FOA.



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SUMMARY: TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

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

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

How to Apply: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply>

Grant Application and Management Community of Practice:
<https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/>

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