



City of Boston
Worker Empowerment

**City of Boston-Office of Workforce Development
Request for Information (RFI)**

**Partners for the US Department of Labor's Building Pathways to Infrastructure
Jobs Grant Program FOA-ETA-23-31**

Background

The DOL's Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant program ([FOA-ETA-23-31](#)) is an initiative aimed at creating new opportunities for workers to develop the skills necessary to secure jobs in infrastructure-related industries, such as construction, transportation, and energy.

The program provides funding to partnerships between community organizations, workforce development boards, labor unions and non-union worker-centered organizations, and employers to develop training programs that will help individuals access good-paying jobs. The grant supports programs that provide training and support services, such as career counseling and job placement assistance, to help participants overcome barriers to employment and achieve long-term career success.

The goal of the program is to ensure that all Americans have access to the training and support they need to secure good-paying jobs in the growing infrastructure sector. This program is part of the larger Biden-Harris administration's efforts to invest in America's infrastructure and create millions of good-paying jobs for American workers.

There are two tracks available under this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA): the Development Track and the Scaling Track. The Office of Workforce Development (OWD), as part of the City's Worker Empowerment Cabinet, intends to apply for the Development Track to develop and implement local/regional worker-centered sector strategy programs. This track focuses on creating training opportunities for historically marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved populations. **The amount of funding available through this track ranges from \$500,000 to \$2 million.**

Through this Request for Information (RFI), OWD is seeking one or more partners who are interested in participating in this DOL grant funding opportunity by helping to develop a new pathway towards a career in one of the recommended industries outlined in the [FOA](#).

The City of Boston is particularly interested in partnering with organizations and employers that have a strong history of performance in workforce development, unions, worker centers, and educational institutions that can help develop and implement worker-centered training strategies aligning with the FOA's core program principles. These principles include:

- Centering diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and recruiting from the local workforce.
- Creating career pathways that combine academic and occupational skills training to align with employer needs.
- Improving job quality by developing pathways towards jobs with family-supporting wages, jobs with benefits, jobs that can form or already have unions, and jobs that ensure safe working conditions.

Pathways and programs must focus on careers in advanced manufacturing; information technology; or professional, scientific, and technical occupations that support the renewable energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure sectors. The FOA emphasizes the use of (though does not require) Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and other recognized work and learn approaches in high-demand occupations, and providing wrap-around services to address participant-specific employment barriers. A full description of the requirements for the program design can be found on page [20](#) of the FOA.

Funding provided by this grant opportunity is allowed for:

- *On-the-Job Training*: Funded only for unemployed and underemployed individuals.
- *Registered Apprenticeship Programs*: Funding is not available for placements made in temporary staffing agencies.
- *Structured Work Experiences and Internships*
- *Supportive Services*: Up to 15 percent of grant funds are available to provide supportive services to program participants.

Incumbent worker salaries are NOT allowable costs under this grant. Further information on allowable costs is available on pages [60-66](#) of the FOA.

Preference will be given for training providers experienced in developing programs in Boston serving the target populations, but OWD will consider proposals from those less experienced if they can demonstrate the sustainability of their proposed program in collaboration with the City.

Process overview

Responses for this RFI are due via email to yamilet.castaneda@boston.gov by **Wednesday, June 14th at 5 pm**. Respondents will be notified by June 21st. Successful applicants must be prepared to collaborate with OWD throughout the month of June to prepare the final proposal submission to DOL on or before the July 7, 2023 deadline. Depending on the nature of responses to this RFI, OWD reserves the right to not move forward with the application for the DOL grant program.

Eligibility

Eligible partners include employers; intermediary organizations; education or training providers; industry/trade associations; community-based organizations; minority serving institutions; workforce associations; labor organizations; private non-profit service providers; or organizations that support outreach and training.

Program participants must be at least 17 years of age and not currently enrolled in secondary school within a local educational agency. Among the individuals eligible to receive training, those of particular interest include underrepresented communities, particularly people of color, women, individuals with disabilities, veterans, military spouses, transitioning service members, and other populations with employment barriers.

Availability of Funds and Timeline

Funding of up to \$2 million will be available to support a proposal submitted by the City in partnership with employers and community workforce organizations. Funding is contingent upon approval from the Department of Labor. The FOA recommends leveraging other private, federal, and state funding resources, and encourages applicants to contribute at least 15 percent of the total amount of

requested funds. OWD reserves the right to partner with multiple organizations or no organizations depending on the responses received.

This funding opportunity will span 5 years; it has an anticipated start date of October 1, 2023 and end date of September 30, 2028.

Required Services

If selected to move forward with the City on this grant opportunity, partner organizations must commit to working and communicating regularly with OWD to develop and implement a training program that will prepare individuals to enter middle- and high-skilled occupations in advanced manufacturing, information technology, and professional, scientific, and technical services occupations that support renewable energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure sectors, or occupations along those career pathways. For a more comprehensive list, please see the (FOA) on the [Federal Grants Opportunities Website](#). To that end, potential partners must demonstrate their commitment to partnering with the City to develop a training program and apply to this grant opportunity.

Requested Information

Please provide the following information, limiting your responses to no more than 2 pages:

1. *Organization Information:* Please provide a point of contact (staff person name, title, email, and phone number) and a brief overview of your organization, including your mission, history, and experience in workforce development and/or your experience in a relevant sector as listed in the FOA.
2. *Proposed Partnership:* Please describe how your organization would like to partner with the City of Boston on the grant program, including the specific role that your organization would play in developing and implementing training strategies that meet the goals of the DOL FOA. Please describe how your proposed program strategy will be worker-centered and how it will align with each of the core principles of this FOA as listed in the Background section.

3. *Communities Served*: A priority of this grant program is to serve historically marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved populations. Briefly describe your track record of working with the above populations and how you would incorporate marginalized communities into your training programs.
4. *Labor Market Information*: Include in your response labor market data on the occupation(s) you are interested in providing services for.
5. *Additional Information*: Please provide any additional information that you believe is relevant to your organization's potential partnership with the City of Boston on the grant program.

Submission Instructions

Please submit responses with narratives no longer than up to 2 pages. Narratives should have one-inch margins, 12-point fonts, and be single spaced. Please submit your response as a PDF attachment. Responses are due by email no later than **5:00pm on Wednesday, June 14, 2023**. Please email responses to yamilet.castaneda@boston.gov. Any questions regarding this RFI may also be directed to this email address.