Workforce Accelerator Fund 8.0 RFA

Weekly Question & Answer

December 20, 2019- FINAL

QUICK INDEX

FUNDING

Q: 1) Subsequent use of matching funds: can we use matching funds that run subsequently? For example, the match funds are used up before the new grant starts, but both funding streams are in the same program year for the same project.

A: Matched funds (cash or in-kind support) should be used simultaneously with WAF 8.0 grant funds.

Q: 2) Can we use WIOA Title-I funds as matched funds?

A: Yes, WIOA Title I funds can be used as match for WAF. All other non-WIOA federal funds need to be approved by their source to be allowed as match.

Q: 3) What is the award amount?

A: The total grant amount for a New Accelerator Project is up to $150,000 and requires a 1:1 cash or in-kind match. The total grant amount for an Accelerator Technical Assistance and Support is up to $300,000 and does not require matched funds. Reference page 11 of the RFA under Grant Awards.

Q: 4) Can this funding be used to cover housing costs for participants?

A: No. An award amount of $150,000 would not be enough to cover housing costs for participants. Funds should be used to plan, create, design or implement a project.

Q: 5) Can an organization propose to generate in-kind match after being award?

A: No. Applicants must list matched funds (either cash or in-kind) when they apply.

Q: 6) Is WAF funding considered federal funding?

A: Yes, Workforce Accelerator Funds are from the WIOA 15% Governor's Discretionary Fund.

Q: 7) Can the TA funds include funds for both TA and project activities (funding be combined)?

A: No. If you plan to apply for a New Accelerator Project and Technical Assistance Support grant, you must submit separate forms for both applications.

Q: 8) Is the 10% cap on administrative cost negotiable?

A: No.

Q: 9) For new projects, there is a 1:1 match. Can this be in-kind?

A: Yes. Reference page 11 of the RFA under Grant Awards.

Q: 10) Our team is asking for guidance on what you expect to see in the budget categories, particularly since expense categories we'd need for planning, program design, and testing of a pilot program seem to fall under more of the administrative cost categories (attachment B of RFA) and the limit is 10% on those. Is there more you can share, what you're looking for or would expect to see in a successful budget?

A: Administrative activities are defined here: Administrative Costs
Program design, implementation and testing should be billed to program unless the activity is specifically identified as administrative.

Q: 11) Can WAF 7.0 funds be used to cover the time period from February 2020 to September 2020 as part of the match funding?

A: No. WAF 7.0 Funds need to be spent as outlined for that project.

Q: 12) Can pending funding be used as match funds?

A: Match included in the proposal should be available for the project. It is hard to answer this because it is not clear if the funding is absolute and has not dropped into a budget yet or if it is being applied for and the agency may not receive it. If it is the latter it should not be included as match.

Q: 13) Can Workforce Accelerator funding be used to pay stipends to interns?

A: For youths, yes, there is a grant code in CalJOBS and stipends are allowable. For Adults (18+) it is a bit different. WIOA law does not speak to incentives for Adults, since they are not restricted they are allowed but require justification and it needs to serve a business purpose. All expenses need to be allowable, reasonable and allocable. In order to use stipends for Adults, a Local Board or agency needs to have a stipend policy in place and prior approval from the state is required. Placing the use of stipends into the proposal is not considered prior approval. If awarded in order to use stipends for Adults an agency may need to provide local stipend policy and an explanation of how the stipends will be used.

Q: 14) Can Workforce Accelerator funding be used to pay for home construction for participants in the program?

A: We are unable to respond to this as written. Please provide added details of what you intend to do with the funding for participants.

Q: 15) Can Workforce Accelerator funding be used to pay the costs of a training/certification program for clients?

A: Yes, there are two directives that will help with training guidance:

WIOA Training Expenditure Requirement - only refer to page 5 and 6 in the section titled 'Qualifying Training Services' – the rest does not apply.

Workforce Eligible Training Provider List – this will explain the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in the event you are using an activity that requires an ETPL approved trainer.

Q: 16) Since applicant budgets for the Accelerator 8.0 Technical Assistance and Support contain no program dollars are they subject to the 10% Administrative cost cap?

A: The funds for Technical Assistance are considered program funds and allow for 10% administrative to be taken. The 10% administrative cap should include indirect costs and administrative activities as described here: [Administrative Costs]

The remainder of costs should be direct billed to staff time, travel and other activities that support providing technical assistance to the programs.

Q: 17) Are partner subgrantees subject to the 10% Administrative cost cap?

A: A total of 10% admin can be taken from the award amount. Typically the awarded agency utilizes the 10% admin.

Q: 18) Amazing Pathways is a career pathways program and new technology, for profit and is partnered with Karen's House, non-profit, which provides emergency shelter for victims and children. We already have the funding for housing but would cost $100 per person a night. And the career pathways training is separate. Should we bulk it in one line or separate it?

A: Funds provided to clients should be placed in the appropriate line items and a description should be included on F2, Budget Narrative. If you intend to use funds to pay for On-The-Job Training, those funds should be placed in line J of the budget forms. If you intend to provide supportive services, the amount would be placed in Line L on the budget forms with a description of those services on Exhibit F2.

Q: 19) Grantees do not have to match line-by-line in the budget, as long as the full ask of $150k is matched 1:1 via cash or in-kind? For instance, can we can leave X line item unmatched and provide a 2 or 3:1 match in another?

A: That is correct. The match must be dollar for dollar, cash or in kind, but does not have to match by budget line items.

Q: 20) We have a federally-approved indirect cost rate of 32.58%. Would we be permitted to charge this rate, or is the 10% cap on administrative costs firm regardless of federal indirect rate status?

A: 10% cap on indirect cost rate is set. Please review the Appendices in the RFA and other Q&A to help you determine what is and is not considered indirect/administrative costs. For example, program staff should be supported with program dollars separately from fiscal or administrative staff.

Q: 21) Can a portion of the WAF grant budget provide clients with rental assistance during the course of the program? We already have access to funds that can provide rental assistance for our cohort participants for up to 6 months, and we would like to extend those funds with additional rental assistance from a Workforce Accelerator Fund grant while participants are in a vocational training program. In the Questions & Answers, it mentions that the funds cannot be used for housing costs… wondering if that includes rental assistance.

A: Accelerator funds are not intended to be used for this purpose.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Q: 1) Is a community based organization, 501c(3), eligible to apply individually, or does it need to collaborate with an "Experts" organizations?

A: CBOs may apply for a project individually; however, referring to page 5 of the RFA, under Project Design: Project Team, each project team must include at least one unique member from each category group: Experts, Innovators, Customers, and Influencer. Definitions for each can be found on page 5 and 6 of the RFA.

Q: 2) Does the applicant need to apply with a regional workforce development board to qualify?

A: It is not required that an applicant partner with a local workforce board.

Q: 3) Is a current WAF grantee eligible to reapply for a new project within the same organizations?

A: Yes but your application must be for a new project.

Q: 4) Who can be the lead applicant on one application?

A: Reference page 12 of the RFA under Eligible Applicants. Any of the listed eligible applicants can be a lead applicant, with the exception of a for-profit private business or for-profit consortium of businesses.

Q: 5) Can a nonprofit that is not business related apply for this grant?

A: Yes.

Q: 6) Can a city government apply for this grant?

A: Yes.

Q: 7) Can an organization submit an application as a lead applicant and also be part of another agency's application?

A: Yes.

Q: 8) All projects must be new and cannot be funded currently. By currently funded, does this also mean projects that are publicly funded? Can we apply for a funding for a project that is currently privately funded?

A: Accelerator funds should be used to fund new projects that do not already exist. They can be used to test a new element, bring in a new partner, etc. for an existing project. It is not the intent of Accelerator funds to continue to support projects that already exist via other funding sources.

Q: 9) May we apply exclusively for a Technical Assistance grant for an unrealized project that is not an approved Accelerator project?

A: The agency awarded the Technical Assistance (TA) grant will be providing TA to all awarded WAF 8.0 grantees. It is not for a specific project and it is for the WAF 8.0 grantees only.

APPLICATION

Q: 1) Can a project include the development of advocates for policy changes as either part of their training or outcome? Would it be okay to include a reference attachment to support the approach or would including a cited link in the text suffice?

A: Your application will need to demonstrate innovation and uniqueness. If developing an advocacy process is part of your application, you can describe it in the narrative. Do not submit any forms other than what is required. They cannot be considered in the scoring process. You can include a cited link and text within the narrative.

Q: 2) Do applicants need to complete the Project Narrative using Form D or can they use four pages in a separate word document?

A: Applicants must complete the Project Narrative using Form D.

Q: 3) Does the project application have be a brand new service model and not be currently funded?

A: Yes. See also question 8 under Eligible Applicants.

Q: 4) Can a proposal be implemented by one agency only?

A: One agency must be the lead applicant, fiduciary, and be responsible for reporting back to the state. Implementation of a projects that is developed by the proposed team (see page 5 in the RFA) can be implemented by one or more organizations.

Q: 5) What are some examples (individuals or organizations) that might be considered "influencer?"

A: An influencer is an individual or organization that can help promote system change based on successes or lessons that emerge from your project. This would be someone who has the authority to recommend and support change in any part of the workforce system. This could be a state partners, local board director, city or county leaders, local community college leadership, etc.

Q: 6) Is there any space limitations for other forms, such as the budget narrative and work plan?

A: No.

Q: 7) Is there any formatting instructions for the forms?

A: Yes. Reference page 15 of the RFA under Required Application Content.

Q: 8) What is the difference between the partner roles and responsibilities on Form D: Project Narrative vs. Form J: Partner Roles and Responsibilities?

A: The narrative should contain a description of how the partners will work together to support the project. Experience and credentials, specific roles would be described in the team description. The Partners Roles and Responsibilities form would list all partners (whether or not they are part of the prosed Team), their role, and details around cash or in-kind match provided by those partners.

Q: 9) What is a Technical Assistance grant?

A: Reference page 9 of the RFA under Accelerator 8.0 Technical Assistance and Support.

Q: 10) Can applicants apply for funding to connect existing innovative and successful strategies to a new partner, such as a workforce development board?

A: Yes.

Q: 11) Can you expand on the criteria for a New Project?

A: Reference page 8 of the RFA under New Accelerator Projects.

Q: 12) In the left column on page 17 of the RFA, it says "Project Narrative," but in the "Description" column, it lists the Work Plan, Project Matrix, and Partner Roles Forms. Then, on the next page, it says "Project Team" in the left column and says what to include - but not where to include this narrative, since it is not part of the Project Narrative section. Could you clarify?

A: Page 17 through 19 in the RFA lists the rubric for how the application will be scored. Reference page 15 in the RFA for a list of all required documents. Prompts that ask you to address the Project Team are the last three in the Narrative Form D.

Q: 13) Regarding the Workforce Accelerator Fund application: can two separate applications be submitted to focus on two distinct populations?

A: Yes.

Q: 14) Our agency is forming a team to apply for the Technical Assistance portion of the Accelerator 8.0 grant. Do we need to fill out the "service Delivery Goals" portion of the grant application?

A: No it is not necessary for Technical Assistance applicants to complete the Service Delivery Goals section of the Project Matrix.

Q: 15) What is the best way to submit a Flow Chart (sized 8 1/2 x 11) into the grant application to ensure it will be considered?

A: Submit the attachment in the zip file, submission instructions are on page 14 of the RFA.

Q: 16) Are nonprofits considered ineligible because of a fiscal sponsorship?

A: A non-profit with a 501-(c)(3) status is eligible.

Q: 17) On page 15 of the RFA it specifies that the project narrative is not to exceed 4 pages. Pages 17 and 18 outline the narrative sections but this breakdown includes forms other than Form D (the Narrative Template). Can Form D be up to 4 pages in length or should all the items listed in p. 17 and 18 be no more than 4 pages in length in total?

A: Form D, Project Narrative cannot exceed 4 pages. The other forms and cover page do not count in the 4 page limit.

Q: 18) There are guidelines stating that the narrative must be no more than 4 pages. Is Form D the narrative to which that 4-page guideline refers, or should we prepare a separate 4-page narrative document in addition to Form D?

A: Form D is the narrative, not to exceed four pages.

Q: 19) Is it allowable to add resumes of Project Team members and mock-ups (proposed online system) of your new project?

A: Your application must comply with the page limits outlined in the RFA. Hyperlinks within those pages are allowed but additional pages will not be considered.

Q: 20) If our project does not provide direct services (it is a research and program model development project), do we have to enter Service Delivery Goals in the Project Matrix?

A: No.

Q: 21) Exhibit E - A15 does not include the % for admin, it says monthly expenditures but the dates are for quarters and cells F20 through F25 are not correct, can you provide guidance?

A: We apologize for this form being incorrect. In A15 the administrative amount is 10%. In cells B19 and D19, instead of Monthly it should say quarterly, add quarterly amounts. F20 through F25 formulas need to be changed to add the amounts from columns B and D. For example, F20s formula should be B20+D20. F21s formula should be B21+D21, etc. each formula in F20 through F25 need to be adjusted to have the total be correct.

Q: 22) Can an organization take both an administrative cost and indirect cost?

A: Yes, for more information about indirect cost rates, review this directive: https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd18-15.pdf

Q: 23) Can indirect be claimed without a negotiated cost agreement from a federal agency?

A: Yes, under certain circumstances, please see the indirect cost directive for details: https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd18-15.pdf

Q: 24) The formula for Total Award (row 32) does not include Administrative Cost (row 33). How should we ensure Administrative Cost is factored into the Total Award without a formula, particularly since Administrative Cost is not a budget line item that rolls up to row 32. Should we insert it into Row O/Other?

A: You will need to identify the amount of administrative costs you are taking and add the amount into row 33 and it cannot exceed 10% of the total amount being requested. Your administrative costs should be directly applied to the appropriate line items.

PARTNERSHIPS

Q: 1) Do each of the team members have to be unique organizations or can they unique individuals from the same organization? Can one agency be considered in multiple team roles?

A: Your Project Team must have at least one unique individual, each from different organizations represented in the Team categories. Members from one organization may be listed in multiple categories as long as the single unique member is also present.

Q: 2) Do we need to submit any letters of support, Memoranda of Understanding, etc. to show our leverage and/or relationship with the CoC?

A: The documents that are required are listed on page 16 of the RFA. Form F, Budget Summary should include the source of the leveraged funds and amounts.

Q: 3) We did not see a requirement in the RFA for MOUs in submitted proposals. Do we need to have MOUs in place, or is the section on partner roles and responsibilities sufficient by the Dec. 23rd deadline?

A: The documents that are required are listed on page 16 of the RFA. An MOU is not required. Partner roles and responsibilities can be captured in Form J Partners Roles and Responsibilities.

Q: 4) What is the definition of a "Sustainability Partner," a category listed on the Partner Form?

A: A sustainability partner means that the partner will continue to do the work even after the grant funding from EDD ends. The funding is in alignment with what the partner already does. It's basically a measure to see whether this will be a one-time effort by the partner with the effort ending once the funding has ended, or whether the grant funding will lead to a lasting improvement in the workforce development system.

Q: 5) Do partner subgrantees need to be competitively procured in accordance with federal and state procurement regulations and policies? If yes, would a sole source justification as described in the Uniform Guidance be acceptable?

A: Procurement needs to follow federal and state requirements. Reference https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd17-08.pdf to make sure that you are in compliance.

Q: 6) Will it be necessary to include participation letters from each project partner? Or, is it expected to identify each partner and strengthen partnership linkages as the innovation begins development?

A: The required forms are outlined on page 16 of the RFA. Partners should be listed on the forms that request this information and incorporated into the narrative where appropriate.

GENERAL

Q: 1) What is the criteria for precariously housed?

A: This population is considered "at-risk" of homelessness and may share multiple vulnerabilities, some of which include:

- Couch surfing, staying with friends or family but who are not on the lease or don't own a home.
- Households who would become homeless in less than one-three months if they suddenly lost their primary source of income.
- More than one family sharing accommodations. Families are "doubled up" or living in overcrowded or unsafe conditions.

Q: 2) Will projects need to be able to demonstrate that a participant is precariously housed or can low income participants be considered in the target population?

A: Projects should identify and list the vulnerabilities that make the population "at-risk" of homelessness.

Q: 3) Where can an applicant locate the "big idea" examples from the Application Workshop?

A: Reference page 3 of the Accelerator 8.0 Application Presentation Slides (Accessible). You can locate the document on the CWDB Workforce Accelerator Fund page.

Q: 4) Does everyone on the team need to attend the Communities of Practice or can it just be one representative for the entire team?

A: We ask that two to four people from one team attend the Communities of Practice and they should represent the different team categories.

Q: 5) Can some of the deliverables proposed by the project be outside of the 18 month grant period?

A: No.

Q: 6) Will there be funding available for a WAF 9.0?

A: We are unsure.

Q: 7) Is it possible to apply for both a New Project and Technical Assistance grant?

A: Yes, and you must submit two separate applications.

Q: 8) Is there a preference for project stages that are eligible for funding? For example, is a planning proposal less competitive than a pilot or implementation proposal?

A: No.

Q: 9) How many grants does the State Board anticipate awarding?

A: There is approximately $3 million available for funding, up to $300,000 of which is set aside for Technical Assistance. The balance would fund up to 18 projects.

Q: 10) Is there a preference for a specific target population? For example, is one target population weighted more than the other?

A: The target population **must be homeless or precariously housed**. Naturally, this population may also fall into one or more of the other target populations listed on page 10 of the RFA under Target Population.

Q: 11) Would the eligible target population include immigrants seeking or waiting for work authorization? Or is it limited to immigrants who are work authorized already? What legal status (if any) does the population have to have to be eligible for services under this grant?

A: The target population must be homeless or precariously housed. Immigrant Job Seekers are another population and can only be addressed in this grant if they are also homeless or precariously housed. At the time of enrollment Right to Work documents are not required and there are services that can be provided including using funds to assist an individual in getting Right to Work documents. When services necessitate coordination with an employer such as on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship training and job referrals, Right to Work documents are required. The following directive provides more guidance: EDD Directive 18-03

Q: 12) How will reports be submitted to CWDB/EDD? Will it be by using CalJOBS as the tracking mechanism?

A: Quarterly report templates will be sent out near the end of each quarter and will require narrative and fiscal reporting. CalJOBS will be used to draw down funds and if you are directly spending WAF funds on participants they will need to enrolled into CalJOBS.

Q: 13) Individual Placement and Support (IPS) method of Supported Employment is an Evidence Based Practice which is the most researched supported employment model for people with behavioral health issues and which has been proven to help about 60% of people who receive services become a part of the competitive labor market. IPS has been effective with a variety of special populations including first episode psychosis, substance use and co-occurring disorders, criminal justice involvement, and transition age youth. Would be a competitive applicant if our focus was primarily on providing technical assistance and support to projects that propose to implement IPS Supported Employment, or are you are looking for a broader and more general level of expertise?

A: It is up to the applicant to determine what would make a strong proposal. WAF provides an opportunity to identify a challenge or gap and address it. Successful applicants will demonstrate how their projects will direct existing resources and efforts in new, more efficient and effective ways.

Q: 14) Can we give the homeless population at the shelter employment and workforce training?

A: Yes. For a more detailed list of WIOA Allowable Activities, please see Appendix A on page 20 of the RFA.

Q: 15) Has the list of AB1111 awardees been published yet?

A: Yes, the list of awardees can be found at: https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/ab1111/

Q: 16) I don't see instructions for the various budget forms, are there any instructions for them?

A: Currently, there are no instructions available however they are being developed. If awarded there will be an opportunity to revise and staff will be available to clarify and answer questions.

Q: 17) Are technical assistant applicants expected to support all awarded projects or may an applicant focus exclusively on providing technical assistance to support a specific project application being submitted?

A: Technical Assistance applicants are expected to support all awarded projects and the CWDB throughout the TA grant period (which extends beyond the project grant period).

Q: 18) Cover Page: Is there a page in the instructions that defines "Total Project Budget"?

A: Total project budget is the sum of the request amount and the match.

Q: 19) Exhibit E: Is there a page in the instructions that defines "Section I Funding Plan"?
A: Currently, there are no instructions for the exhibit forms. In Section I. Funding Plan, you are only required to complete item F. Total Administration (the cap is 10%) and item E. Total Program Cost. You need to add in the total program and admin amounts for the 15% WAF funds and in-kind. The totals should align with budget forms.

Q: 20) Regarding Exhibit E, What is YOA, Subgrant Number and Grant Code?
A: These fields can be left blank.

Q: 21) Is the formula on Exhibit E incorrect?
A: Yes. CWDB was made aware that the form has a formula that is incorrectly calculating totals. It is however, an editable cell. You can manually enter the correct amounts for the purpose of the application. *If awarded, a contracts analyst will work with you to correct the form.*

For the formulas in F20 through F25 - each line needs to add the amounts from columns B and D. For example, F20s formula should be B20+D20. F21s formula should be B21+D21, etc.... each formula in F20 through F25 need to be adjusted to have the total be correct.

Q: 22) We have a 7.0 project that we want to expand to another location, would that be a "New' project or "Technical Assistance?"

A: All projects in 8.0 are "New" unless the applicant is going to provide technical assistance to all awarded projects. You are welcome to apply, keeping in mind that the focus of 8.0 is targeting the homeless population.