



Helping Justice-Involved Reenter Employment

## Helping Justice-Involved Reenter Employment (HIRE)

Cumulative questions and answers will be posted on the HIRE webpage every Friday, beginning May 26<sup>th</sup>. **Questions must be received each Tuesday by 2:00 PM (PST) to be included in that Friday’s weekly posting.** Questions submitted after the deadline will be included in the following week’s Q&A while the application is open. The last Q&A posting will be Friday, July 7.

Duplicative questions are not included. We encourage prospective applicants to utilize the search feature, CTRL + F, in this document to find answers to frequently or previously asked questions.

### Weekly Q&A as of July 7, 2023

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<b>Eligible Applicants</b>
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**Q: Does a local education agency, specifically a County Office of Education, qualify as an eligible applicant?**

A: The HIRE grant is open to community-based organizations (CBOs) and nonprofit organizations only. Nonprofit entities must be registered with the federal government pursuant to either Internal Revenue Code Sections 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10.

**Q: Can multiple applications be submitted, e.g., as Spoke and as an Independent project?**

A: CBOs with multiple locations in the state of California may submit one application per location, provided the organization’s locations have separate Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) numbers and Federal Tax IDs. Organizations that qualify may apply either independently, as part of a single network, or as part of multiple networks. Please see page 7 of the RFA for more information on Organizations with Multiple Locations.

**Q: Are for-profit organizations eligible to apply to this opportunity?**

A: The HIRE grant is open to CBOs and nonprofit organizations only. Nonprofit entities must be registered with the federal government pursuant to either Internal Revenue Code Sections 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10.

**Q: We are a local workforce board interested in applying as a Hub in partnership with several Spoke organizations, but we do not have non-profit status (we are a local government agency). Can we apply for this funding?**

A: Only organizations with nonprofit status are eligible to apply for HIRE funds. Nonprofits must be a registered 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10. All HIRE grantees are required to submit partnership agreements with the local workforce development board in the jurisdiction where services are planned to be delivered, therefore one of the identified CBO partners (provided they meet the

nonprofit eligible requirements) could serve as the lead applicant with the local workforce board serving as the required local board partner.

**Q: If a government agency or local workforce board is supporting a network, can they still support another network? If the sheriff's department of a county supports our network, are they "taken" and can no longer support any other applicant?**

A: A government agency or local workforce board can support multiple networks.

**Q: If we apply as a Hub, can one of the organizations that applies as a Spoke be a public agency, like the Public Defender's Office?**

A: Any applicant (either Hub or Spoke) must have nonprofit status as outlined in the RFA. A public agency such as a Public Defender's office would likely satisfy the requirement for a local government partner. If applying independently, that agency type could serve as the required local government partner provided, they are a government entity.

**Q: Can the Public Defender's Office be a subcontractor for this grant?**

A: Yes, a local government or local workforce board would be eligible to receive funding as a subcontractor/subrecipient of this grant, provided they are designated as such by an eligible applicant. Please see page 2 of the RFA for more information about eligible applicants.

**Q: Is there an opportunity to fund local workforce boards with HIRE funds?**

A: HIRE funding is primarily for community-based organizations and other nonprofits that serve the reentry population. Local boards and government partners can be subcontractors of this grant, provided they have been designated as such by a HIRE grantee.

**Q: We are a relatively new organization that provides job training for justice-involved individuals. We also provide wrap around services and are partnering with other organizations to provide additional supports. We just received our 501c3 letter, but we're not currently listed on the IRS website because it seems they have a big backlog of organizations. We have had Active status with the Secretary of State since 02/10/2022, and a Current status with the Attorney General since 02/06/2023. Would we be eligible to apply as a Spoke with our current track record and history?**

A: Applicants that can provide proof of nonprofit status are eligible to apply.

**Q: Is this grant open to a County Office of Education?**

A: All HIRE grantees must be a CBO or nonprofit organization. Government entities are a required partner for all applications (except Technical Assistance), therefore a government entity can serve as a partner to an eligible community based organization or other nonprofit either under the HIRE Network model or with another organization using the Independent project type; however the government entity could not be a lead applicant. Please see page 9 of the RFA for more information about required partners.

**Q: Are public institutions of higher education eligible for HIRE funding? We do not have a tax-exempt status with the IRS, but as a public college are a tax-exempt organization.**

A: Only organizations with nonprofit status are eligible to apply for HIRE funds. Nonprofits must be a registered 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10. All HIRE grantees are required to submit partnership agreements with a local government entity in the jurisdiction where services are planned to be delivered; therefore you could apply with an eligible CBO or nonprofit that plans to apply either independently or as part of the HIRE Network model. More information about the Hub and Spoke model can be found on page 8 of the RFA.

**Q: If an organization meets the eligibility definitions of (i) relationships with employers that hire individuals with a criminal record, and (ii) a history of developing training programs with feedback from the reentry population, can it apply to be a Spoke as it is community based, even if it is structured as a for profit rather than a non-profit?**

A: All Hub, Spoke, and Independent applications must include substantiation of non-profit status as outlined in the RFA. Nonprofits must be a registered 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10. Other organization types can serve as partners and receiving funding as a subcontractor should an eligible applicant designate them as such.

**Q: Are organizations allowed to be a Spoke in multiple HIRE Network applications?**

A: Larger CBOs with multiple locations in the state of California may submit one application per location, provided the organization's locations have separate Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) numbers and Federal Tax IDs. Individual locations must substantiate the size of each location's annual budget in determining whether they are a large or small CBO per the definitions provided in the RFA.

**Q: If a Spoke is a non-profit but does not have a UEI number, do they still qualify to be part of our Network?**

A: All applying organizations for HIRE must be a registered nonprofit pursuant to either Internal Revenue Code Sections 501(c)3, (c)4, (c)6 or (c)10. If an organization utilizes a DUNS # instead of a UEI, please provide this number in lieu of the UEI. Both databases will be utilized during CWDB's technical review round.

## HIRE Project Types

**Q: What is the difference between these two categories: HIRE Program and HIRE Technical Assistance?**

A: Technical assistance (TA) applicants will be providing support in the continued development and implementation of awarded projects; the awarded TA provider *will not* provide direct services to participants. HIRE program applicants will be applying as either an Independent Project, Network Hub, or Network Spoke. Awarded applicants under these categories *will* provide direct services to participants. For more information on Project Types, please see page 3 of the RFA.

## HIRE Networks: Hub and Spoke Model

**Q: How many Hubs can a large Hub have as a Spoke?**

A: Depending on their annual operating budget last year, Hubs may partner with up to 9 Spokes. See page 5 of the RFA for detailed information on the maximum number of Spokes a Hub organization can include.

**Q: Can Spokes become a Hub under the large Hub?**

A: To ensure an equitable distribution of grant funds, HIRE Networks may consist of one Hub only. For more information about HIRE Networks, please see page 5 of the RFA.

**Q: Are Hubs required to have both large and small CBOs in the network, or could it be all large CBOs?**

A: HIRE Networks may consist of any combination of large and/or small CBOs.

**Q: Can Spokes provide self-referrals to their services or does all the coordination need to flow through the Hub?**

A: Spokes may provide referrals to their own services. Hubs are not necessarily required to coordinate all services provided by Spokes.

**Q: Can an agency apply as a Spoke for two different Hubs?**

A: Larger CBOs with multiple locations in the state of California may submit one application per location, provided the organization's locations have separate Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) numbers and Federal Tax IDs. Individual locations must substantiate the size of each location's annual budget in determining whether they are a large or small CBO per the definitions provided in this RFA. These entities may apply either independently, as part of a single network, or as part of multiple networks.

**Q: As a Spoke we have a contract with our local workforce board and Probation Department. If our Hub does not have one with the local workforce board, would our contract meet the partnership requirements for our Network? They do have contracts with the County Probation Department.**

A: Hubs are required to submit partnership agreements from a local workforce board and one government entity in the jurisdiction(s) where services are planned to be delivered. The CWDB encourages applicants within a HIRE Network with existing partnership agreements with the required partners to facilitate the establishment of partnership agreements between their Hub and their existing local government and/or workforce board partners.

**Q: Is the additional 10%, available to Hubs, taken from the Spokes' budgets, or is it part of the award to the Hub?**

A: The 10% for Hubs is an additional award and does not impact the Spokes' awards.

**Q: Can our proposed HIRE network include a Spoke that is also planning to partner with another Hub? If not, can the CWDB please reconsider this rule?**

A: Organizations must choose if they are applying independently or as part of the HIRE Network model. Unless a Spoke organization has multiple locations, each with their own UEI, they may only apply as part of one HIRE Network. This policy is intended to align with the maximum award amounts per organization outlined in the RFA.

**Q: If an organization only has one UEI or tax identification number, can they submit multiple applications to be a Spoke for different Hubs?**

A: No, organizations with one UEI or federal tax ID are only eligible to submit one application either as a Hub or Spoke.

**Q: If an organization would be providing the same services, can one application be considered to be included as a Spoke as part of multiple Hub applications?**

A: Organizations can only apply as part of one network unless they have multiple locations (and multiple UEI and tax ID numbers). While organizations can only submit one application, reentry service organizations are not precluded from serving as a subcontractor under multiple applications should they be designated as such by an eligible lead applicant.

**Q: Can an organization that is fiscally sponsored by the network's Hub submit an application for HIRE as a Spoke, or would they need a UEI separate from Hub?**

A: Organizations applying as a Spoke under the HIRE Network model must have separate and unique UEIs than their proposed network's Hub, unless they operate at multiple locations throughout the state. Organizations that are fiscally sponsored by a network Hub and are ineligible to apply as a Spoke because they do not operate at multiple locations, may receive HIRE funding by being designated as a subcontractor by an eligible Hub or Spoke applicant.

**Q: As the lead agency are we allowed to replace Spokes who appear to not meet the terms of our in house/contract agreement with them?**

A: Yes, Hubs have the ability to add or remove potential unauthorized Spokes from their application (prior to submission) by sending an e-mail to [Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov](mailto:Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov).

**Q: Will our potential Spokes' outstanding balance(s) with the IRS be a barrier for us to partner with under HIRE's Network model?**

A: This may potentially impact the described Spoke organization's eligibility but would not impact the eligibility of other network partners. While CWDB does not have a policy of excluding organizations with financial challenges, an outstanding balance with the IRS may impact an organization's tax-exempt status. All applying organizations will undergo an initial round of technical review in which tax-exempt status is verified. The CWDB has a right to disqualify applications that fail technical review due to their nonprofit and/or tax-exempt status.

**Q: What are the instructions for deleting an unauthorized Spoke?**

A: Please e-mail [Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov](mailto:Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov) for assistance with removing an unauthorized Spoke from your HIRE Network application.

**Q: If a Hub does not intend to provide direct services, only serve as coordinator of services and the project network, should they answer the service strategy and other sections?**

A: All applicants should make their best attempt to answer every application question. Hubs choosing to serve as conveners without providing direct services to participants, should document their planning/coordinating activities amongst their Network throughout the grant term.

## Required Partners

**Q: If our partner has a history of placing people in unionized or career track employment, and they are written into the budget, does that count for the bonus point?**

A: Provided this type of partner is sufficiently detailed in the narrative response to this application question, such a response would likely qualify an application to receive the bonus point.

**Q: Do referrals to America’s Job Centers of California (AJCC) that result in career track employment count as an employer relationship?**

A: The CWDB strongly encourages interested grantees to partner with local workforce development boards to facilitate participant referrals to the AJCC system; however, the referral process itself would not constitute a partnership with an employer.

**Q: Can employer partners include staffing agencies?**

A: The CWDB has not established formal criteria for qualifying employer partners; however, the CWDB strongly encourages applicants to partner with employers that can facilitate participants’ placement into quality jobs. Priority consideration will be given to applications that include employer partners that can demonstrate a history of serving the reentry population.

**Q: Does placement by staffing agency partners into unionized or career track employment count as placing program graduates into unionized and career-track employment?**

A: Likely yes, applicants are encouraged to detail how program partners will facilitate placement into unionized and career-track employment in their application narrative response(s).

**Q: What are the requirements needed in the partnership agreements with local workforce development boards and local entities? Will it be provided in the HIRE Application Guide when it is published?**

A: Partnership agreements must outline the partner role as part of the proposed project in each jurisdiction where services are to be delivered. The HIRE [Application Guide](#) provides technical



information for prospective applicants to reference as they complete the online application and narrative questions. For more information about the role of local workforce development boards and local entities under HIRE, please see page 10 of the RFA.

**Q: Are applicants (Independent or Network) required to submit letters from local workforce boards in all geographic regions served?**

A: Yes, per AB 178 partnership agreements are required for all project types (excluding Technical Assistance) and must outline the partner role as part of the proposed project in each jurisdiction where services are to be delivered. Organizations applying as a Spoke as part of a HIRE Network do not need to submit partnership agreements for local workforce board and/or local government partners, provided their network's Hub is submitting signed partnership agreements with local government and local workforce development board partners in the same geographic area as the Spoke's proposed service delivery area. Please see page 10 of the RFA for more information about Required Partners.

**Q: What would it look like if our partners, along with us, are applying for the funding separately. Would we still be able to work together as listed partnerships if we both received funding independently, without utilizing the Hub and Spoke model?**

A: Yes, Independent Project grantees can collaborate with outside partner organizations.

**Q: As we begin to put our collaboration of partners together, we would like to inquire if there are any specifics you would like to be included in our "letter of support" template we are sending out to our community partners.**

A: The partnership letters should outline the roles and responsibilities of the local workforce board and local government partners as they pertain to the implementation of the HIRE program.

**Q: If a Hub operates in additional counties outside of each county the Spokes are in, does the Hub need local board and/or government partners in all locations where the Hub agency might provide services outside of the Spokes? Or just in the counties where the Spoke agencies operate?**

A: Hubs should seek to obtain partnership letters from local government and local workforce boards in the jurisdiction(s) where the Hub will be providing services.

**Q: If the Probation department applies under the Independent project type, do they need to partner with the County's Workforce agency? Or can they just apply without the county's workforce agency and subcontract other organizations later?**

A: A probation department would need to have nonprofit status as outlined in the RFA in order to be eligible to submit an application. A partnership agreement with the local workforce board is a requirement for all applications.

**Q: Would our local laborer's union qualify as a "local workforce development board"?**

A: Partnerships with local labor unions are encouraged; however, this would not constitute a partnership with a local workforce development board. Visit [California's 45 local boards](#) webpage to locate a local board in your area.

**Q: In the RFA, on page 16, it indicates that Spokes are not required to submit a letter from a government agency and a WIB. Yet, in the documents section of the Spokes' application there is a star next to the MOU or letter line, indicating a mandatory attachment. Can you please clarify what is required?**

A: Spokes are not obligated to submit a partnership letter from the required local government and local workforce development board partners *unless* they are operating their programming in a geographic area different than their hub. While this document is marked as required in the online application, the Cal-E-Grant system will allow applicants to submit their application without attaching these documents.

**Q: Does the MOU with our local government agency partners need to be specific to the HIRE initiative, or can it be a standing MOU that we have with the agency, prior to the HIRE initiative?**

A: Applicants with an existing MOU with a local government partner may use that MOU to satisfy the local government partnership requirement, provided the role of the local government as described in the MOU aligns with the activities the local government partner will be providing to HIRE participants. Applicants in this scenario should provide narrative content or other supporting documentation that describes how HIRE program activities will leverage the local government partner's commitments outlined in the MOU.

**Q: The required Partnership Agreement may need to go through the County or City Managers/City Council and may not get done before the application is due. How do we indicate support from the county for a partnership on this grant if this is the circumstance?**

A: Applicants in this scenario should submit the proposed partnership agreement with supporting documentation and/or narrative content indicating the local government’s intended commitment. If awarded funding, applicants will be required to submit the signed partnership letter prior to entering into a contract with the CWDB.

**Q: Will a letter of intent to partner be sufficient to satisfy the partnership agreements requirement? The reason I ask is that both our WDB and our Probation Department, that would be the jurisdiction partner, have the authority to provide a letter of intent to partner. However, both entities will need to go to the our County’s Board of Supervisor’s to establish a formal partnership agreement, a process that takes a significant amount of time and we would not be able to accomplish prior to the application due date.**

A: Applicants in this scenario should submit the proposed partnership agreement with supporting documentation and/or narrative content indicating the local government’s intended commitment. If awarded funding, applicants will be required to submit the signed partnership letter prior to entering into a contract with the CWDB.

## Eligible Activities

**Q: Can grant funds be used to pay a HIRE participant a stipend or wages while attending a job training program.**

A: Yes. See page 10 of the RFA for more information about eligible activities.

**Q: Does each Spoke need to provide the range of services, or could one Spoke just do needs-related support, while other Spokes provide the training, job placement, etc.**

A: Yes, network Spokes can provide different types of services.

**Q: Can the funding be used for providing employment training for currently incarcerated individuals participating in a Custody to Community Transition Reentry Program (CCTRP)?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Can we use the funds to provide pre-release activities?**

A: Yes, HIRE funds may be used for currently incarcerated individuals—namely those who are expected to be released during the grant term.

**Q: Are stipends to support individual's reentry and subsequent job search considered to be Needs-related payments, or a direct service?**

A: Needs-related payments may be used to support participants' transition out of the corrections system and entrance into employment. Stipends refer to payments associated with training or employment and would fall under the direct services category.

**Q: Our current program serves reentering clients with services that are similar to those described in the RFA. Would we be able to provide them with some services that are not currently described as well as extend our program to additional reentry populations if awarded funding?**

A: HIRE funding is intended to support activities including, *but not limited to*: reskilling, upskilling, training, and supportive services for the reentry population to ensure employment. If an expense is listed in a grantee's budget but the CWDB cannot determine how the cost is related to the scope of work, deliverables, and outcomes, and/or activities, the CWDB has a process in place to allow grantees to provide justification and explain how the cost is related to the scope of work, deliverables, and outcomes, and/or activities. Please see page 10 of the RFA for more information on eligible activities.

**Q: Are we allowed to use HIRE grant funds to pay for stipends that will pay individuals' legal fees and child support payments?**

A: This type of cost would more likely fall under the supportive services and/or needs related payment categories; but generally, yes, HIRE funds can be used for this type of support. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a detailed plan for how HIRE funds will be used to support participants' transition into a quality job.

**Q: What is the difference between supportive services and needs related payments?**

A: Supportive services are services that are necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in or receive workforce, education, and other related services. Needs related payments are direct assistance to participants to address basic needs such as housing, food, technological needs, and transportation. See page 10 of the [RFA](#) for more information.

**Q: Can we provide client stipends under supportive services?**

A: Stipends are considered a Direct Service for the purposes of the HIRE initiative. Supportive services can include, but are not limited to, assistance with: transportation, childcare, technology, food, housing, and other obstacles necessary for program participants to successfully enter and complete training, education, and employment. Needs related payments to participants may be provided, but not as a cost coverage for participation in workforce programs.

**Q: For the needs related payments, do the payments go directly to the client to use the funds or do we have to pay the source where the funds will be going to?**

A: Applicants may propose strategies for the provision of needs related payments as best suited to the needs of their target population. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a detailed strategy for how needs related payments will support their participants' successful transition into quality employment.

**Q: Are we allowed to use HIRE grant funds to pay for stipends to be used to pay individuals' DMV fees?**

A: Yes, HIRE funding may be utilized for stipends and/or needs-related payments to participants. Grantees are also encouraged to report on any Milestones participants may achieve throughout the grant term, such as obtaining a driver's license or paying off debts. For more information about Milestones, please see page 12 of the [RFA](#).

**Q: Can a Spoke exclusively offer barrier removal services without career training and job placement?**

A: This service strategy is allowable for a network Spoke. Applicants in this scenario are strongly encouraged to outline, in their application narrative responses, which program partners will be providing workforce training and how their own organization's services will support training and job placement.

**Q: Can a Spoke exclusively offer secondary education (High School/GED) with barrier removal services attached (taking education referrals from other spokes and the Hub)?**

A: This service strategy is allowable for a network Spoke. Applicants in this scenario are strongly encouraged to outline, in their application narrative responses, which program partners will be providing workforce training and how their own organization's services will support training and job placement.

**Q: Can secondary education (High School/GED) count as placement in the participant plan?**

A: Additional guidance on participant outcome reporting will be provided to awarded grantees. For the purposes of the application, this type of outcome should be counted under the *credential/degree attainment* category.

**Q: Is every Spoke required to have employment and training placement per participant plan?**

A: No, Spoke applicants may or may not provide direct services to participants. For more information about eligible activities, please see page 10 of the [RFA](#).

**Q: Our organization is planning on applying for the HIRE grant as a Network Hub. We are looking to partner with our local Office of Education to strengthen our existing programs at their sites. Can the Office of Education be a recipient of funds?**

A: HIRE funding is primarily for community-based organizations and other nonprofits that specialize in serving the reentry population. One or more government entity(ies) are required to partner with any HIRE applicant (except TA), and may be eligible to receive funding from a HIRE grantee (Hub, Spoke, or Independent) as a subcontractor/subrecipient, provided they have been designated as such in the application.

**Q: Are incentive payments to employers for hiring participants allowable?**

A: Incentive payments to employers for hiring HIRE participants are allowable provided the proposed incentives are reasonable and sufficiently described and justified in the application. Awarded grantees proposing employer incentive payments may be subject to additional requirements including, but not limited to: a required period of retention for participants placed into employment with the subsidized employer partner(s), a signed MOU with the relevant employer partner(s) outlining their commitments to employ HIRE participants, and/or the awarded grantee's completion of a Use of Funding form.

## Eligible Participants

**Q: Does the target population include only recently formerly incarcerated, or justice involved individuals, or is the timeframe post-release more flexible?**

A: For the purposes of this grant, the reentry population includes individuals who were previously incarcerated at any time in a state and/or local juvenile or adult correctional facility, and justice involved individuals as defined in Section 14040 of the Unemployment Insurance Code.

**Q: Are individuals who are on or have been on federal supervision or have only been in custody in a federal prison institution eligible for services through the HIRE Initiative?**

A: Yes, for the purposes of this grant, an individual who was incarcerated in a federal facility is justice-involved and thus considered part of the reentry population.

**Q: Are juveniles under the age of 18 who previously incarcerated in a juvenile facility considered eligible participants for HIRE?**

A: Yes. See page 11 of the [RFA](#) for more information on eligible participants.

**Q: Can we serve individuals who are undocumented residents of our region? What evidence, if any, will participants be required to demonstrate their eligibility?**

A: Undocumented individuals are eligible to receive services through the HIRE initiative. The CWDB does not require evidence of eligibility beyond participant self-attestation.

## Application Elements

**Q: We see on the budget, work plan, and participant plan, there are 13 quarters listed. Since it is only a year-long project, would we only fill in the first 4 quarter columns?**

A: Yes. As the HIRE grant term is 12 months, applicants only need to complete the first 4 quarter columns. Please see page 16 of the RFA for more information about application elements. Refer to the HIRE [Application Guide](#) for additional information.

**Q: Does the requested grant amount section on the application include Spokes or is it just for the Hub?**

A: The Hub should submit the total request for the full network, which will include the award request for the Hub, award request for all Spokes, and the 10% bonus for the Hub.

**Q: In the application portal, Section Five: Services Strategy – Should responses in this section focus on the services provided by the Hub organization, or should they also address the proposed services of the associated Spoke organizations?**

A: Hub applicants should respond to these questions with information about their own service strategies. Spoke service strategies will be scored based on the responses provided in the network Spokes' application.

**Q: In the Application Portal Work Plan, how many objectives/activities are expected to be provided for each quarter?**

A: Applicants need to input for at least one activity per line, per quarter.

**Q: Can a budget be created for specific staff, that is separated from the Hub budget for training so that salaries can be funded?**

A: Yes, staff salaries should be listed in the corresponding line items in the application budget exhibits.

**Q: Is the 3,000 character limit for each question with spaces, or without spaces?**

A: The 3,000 character limit per each narrative question includes spaces.

**Q: Can we use financial statements instead of a budget to justify our operating budget?**

A: Organizations applying independently and under the HIRE Network model must upload their operating budget for the previous fiscal year. Please see page 17 of the HIRE [Application Guide](#) for more information on verifying operating budgets.

**Q: Is there a way for our Spokes to see the questions they will have to answer before our Hub has completed the application? If so, how do they do that?**

A: Yes, once a Hub organization begins an application, a Spoke organization may begin their own application. Upon completion of the cover page section of the Spoke application, Spoke applicants will be able to view the full list of questions and required exhibits.

**Q: If an organization is a registered non-profit and not a "charitable trust," does this satisfy the requirement for all applying organizations to be registered with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts (RCT)11?**

A: A registry status of "Current" or "Exempt" with the California Attorney General's RCT is a requirement for all organizations that apply for funding. Statuses will be verified during CWDB's technical review process.

**Q: The TA application has a limit of 20% for administrative costs. Since we would be applying to provide TA, which is mostly staffing costs, how would that fit? Would we add those under program costs?**

A: Yes.

**Q: In the Grantee Requirements section, it is asking for contact information for the team members who will be responsible for entering data into HIRE's program data collection system. Do you want both Hub and Spoke team members listed?**

A: The CWDB envisions that data reporting will largely be the responsibility of the network Hub. Hub applicants should detail the planned reporting structure of their network. Spoke



organizations may also have a data collection/reporting role and should provide detail about how they will report participant data to their network Hub.

**Q: How should we address literature citations in our narrative? Is an uploaded attachment allowable?**

A: Yes. Supporting documents can be submitted via the Upload Documents tab.

**Q: The HIRE application guide suggests April 1, 2024 as the start date for projects, but defines the project's four quarters as:**

***Quarter 1: January to March***

***Quarter 2: April to June***

***Quarter 3: July to September***

***Quarter 4: October to December***

**Since the Q & A states that we should fill out the first 4 quarters in the online application, can you confirm that quarter 1 of the project would actually be April to June if we start April 1? Or is there some other way you would like us to fill out the information?**

A: For the purposes of the HIRE grant, Q1 begins April 1, 2024. Applicants should submit a project plan for four quarters (12 months).

**Q: In the HIRE application online, the Funding Plan and Work Plan include 13 quarters of activity. I understand that the grant term is 12 months, but help me understand the purpose of having 13 quarters in the application?**

A: The Expenditure, Participant, and Work Plan application exhibits share a design template used for other CWDB grant initiatives that have a longer grant term. HIRE applicants should only complete the first four quarters for each of these exhibits.

**Q: According to the language in the online Supplemental Budget form, Contractual Services are rendered by Service Providers. By contrast, Subrecipient Services are rendered by Agencies. Does this mean that contractors may be either individuals or organizations, while subrecipients may be organizations only?**

A: For the purposes of the HIRE application process, the CWDB defers to the subrecipient and contractor distinctions guidance outlined in [WSD18-06](#). While accurately submitting this information during the application process is required, this element of the supplemental budget

will not be considered in the CWDB's application scoring process. The CWDB will work with awarded grantees to correct and finalize all budget exhibits during the contracting process.

**Q: If we are applying as a Spoke, do we still answer the partnership section in the application in detail for how the Hub will operate?**

A: Spoke applicants should respond to these questions with information about their own service strategies. Hub service strategies will be evaluated based on the responses provided in the network Hubs' application.

**Q: In the participation plan, are the numbers for each quarter cumulative or only for that quarter?**

A: Applicants should enter the total number of new participants for each category for each quarter. The total number of participants served for all quarters will be automatically summed in the furthest right-hand column. Please see page 15 of the [Application Guide](#) for more information about Participant Plans.

**Q: Please clarify how we should complete the work plan details on the placement outcomes. Do you want specifics of who is providing the services? How many hours are the training, etc.?**

A: Applicants are encouraged to identify the organization(s) providing services and specify the proposed outcome(s) of each work plan item.

**Q: Does the narrative content have to be typed directly into each text box? It cannot be cut and pasted from a MS Word document?**

A: Copying and pasting is not recommended, but it is allowed. CWDB encourages applicants to type responses directly into the applications text boxes to ensure that information appears consistently throughout the application.

**Q: In the Funding Summary, can you clarify what should be included in the field "Total Administration - 20% Cap". For Hub applications, should this include the 10% admin budget plus any administrative costs for the hub and spoke programs?**

A: Yes, the total administration column should include administrative costs for the full network, including the additional 10% for the Hub.

**Q: If our Spokes are entering their own budgets into their applications. As a Hub, do we need to sum this data across the Spokes and enter cumulative budget data in our application? Or does the portal consolidate across network applications?**

A: Spokes must complete and submit their applications before the Hub can submit its application on behalf of the Network. It is the Hub's responsibility to manage the application period for their Network, making sure that the Spoke applications are submitted early enough to allow time for the Hub to review and consolidate information into the lead application and submit before the deadline.

The Hub's total requested funding must include: 1) the total amount of their own HIRE project (up to \$750,000), 2) the total amount of all their Spokes(s) requested funding, and 3) up to 10% of the collective amount of awarded funding to their network's Spoke(s).

Note the Hub may adjust the total funding requested while the application is in-progress by clicking the pencil icon on the cover page.

**Q: Can Secondary Education (high school, GED) be used as a placement measure in the participant plan? Is this a placement measure that can be added to the portal? Or is this counted as a barrier removal service?**

A: Secondary Education is a type of training service. Participants who earn their secondary education credentials should have that documented in the HIRE participant data system as an industry-recognized credential. While credentials are not a type of placement, they are a positive outcome the CWDB is interested in tracking.

Although Secondary Education is not utilized as a placement measure in the application, HIRE funding can be used to address participants' secondary education needs if they serve as bridge activities that serve as leading to enrollment and completion of training programs for the reentry population.

**Q: Can referrals to training count as placement?**

A: No, referrals to training do not count as a job placement.

**Q: Is there a limit to the number of objectives per quarter? I want them to appear in a logical order, which means I want to insert them at the top. Is there a way to do that without having to retype them or cut and paste again?**

A: Applicants must enter at least one objective per quarter. There is no limit to the number of objectives that may be entered. You cannot reorder objectives once they have been entered and saved.

**Q: In the online application, which budget item and/or form should be used for needs related payments? Stipends?**

A: Any organization planning to issue needs related payments or stipends as part of their proposed project should include those costs in the Budget Summary form on the line-item L, *Participant Supportive Services*. For additional details on Direct and Supportive services refer to page 10 of the RFA.

**Q: In the application, which budget item and/or form should be used for employer incentives?**

A: Applicants should use the *On-The-Job Training* line item in the Budget Narrative for employer incentive payments.

**Q: Given that justice system partners are also government entities, can you clarify the intended difference between questions 2 (Re: role of proposed government entities) and 5 (Re: proposed justice system partners) of the partnership section of the narrative?**

A: Not all justice system partners may be affiliated with a government entity. For more information about the role of Required Partners in HIRE, please see page 9 of the HIRE [RFA](#).

**Q: Spokes are providing different types of services and may serve the same individual with different activities and outcomes. Is the total participant count for the project intended to be non-duplicative?**

A: Yes, HIRE network partners should coordinate to ensure participants receiving services from more than one network partners are not double counted in the participant plan or participant outcome reporting.

**Q: Can the partnership agreement be in the form of a letter?**

A: Partnership agreements must outline the partner role as part of the proposed project in each jurisdiction where services are to be delivered. Agreements may take the form of a letter and/or a contract/MOU.

## Scoring Criteria

**Q: It seems that Network Hubs can score up to 100 points, and each Network Spoke can also score a maximum of 100 points. Will Hub and Spoke Model applications score cumulatively (giving more preference for configurations with a greater number of Spoke partners?)**

A: The size of a network will not impact how an application is scored. All network applications will be scored on a 0-100 scale based on the overall quality of the Hub and Spokes' application content.

**Q: Will the application be evaluated by region to ensure each local board is represented by a Hub?**

A: The CWDB will seek to award HIRE funding to grantees from a diversity of geographic areas to the extent feasible; however, geography is not a criterion upon which individual applications will be evaluated.

## Direct, Indirect, and Administrative Costs

**Q: Up to what percent can be budgeted for indirect costs? For most grants the average is 6%, but I wanted to confirm what is HIRE's percentage?**

A: See pages 19-20 of the [RFA](#) for guidance on Direct, Indirect, and Administrative costs.

**Q: Will documentation be required for administrative costs? Will these costs need to be itemized in case of audit or other request for documentation?**

A: Additional guidance regarding administration of HIRE funds will be provided to awarded grantees. Applicants should complete the required budget exhibits, which include line items for administrative and indirect costs. No additional documentation is required as part of the application. A full explanation of Administrative and Indirect costs is included in the Direct, Indirect, and Administrative Costs section on pages 19-20 of the [RFA](#).

**Q: Will documentation be required for leveraged costs? Will specific leveraged costs be itemized in monthly invoices?**

A: Documentation will not be required for matched/leveraged costs during the HIRE application process. Further guidance about invoicing requirements will be provided to awarded grantees.

**Q: Do administrative costs get accounted for under the "Other" section in the budget? Can you clarify the indirect cost rate?**

A: All administrative costs should be accounted for in the corresponding line item in the Budget Summary tab. Information about direct, indirect, and administrative costs can be found on page 18-20 of the [RFA](#) and page 13 of the [Application Guide](#).

**Q: We have a federally-assigned indirect rate of 12%. Can we charge 20% to the HIRE grant?**

A: If your organization has a federally assigned indirect cost rate, your application should reflect as such in alignment with federal law.

### Reporting Requirements

**Q: What platform will be used for participant data reporting?**

A: All participant reporting data will be entered utilizing the Salesforce platform. More guidance on this process will be provided to awarded grantees.

### Payment Provision & Invoicing

**Q: Will funding awards be given directly to Spoke organizations, or will the funding go through the Hub?**

A: Awarded funding will be distributed to network Hubs, who will distribute funding to their network's Spokes.

### Other

**Q: Is it possible that an individual Spoke within a Hub would not be funded?**

A: If an applying Spoke organization is disqualified or does not meet the minimum qualifications for an award, the CWDB may award the remaining organizations in a network.

**Q: How can an organization access an offline version of the application questions for the Spoke applicants if we have already initiated an application as a Hub?**

A: Once initiated as a Network Hub, Hubs may only access their own part in the HIRE application. Organizations interested in viewing the Spoke narrative questions are welcome to join a HIRE Network or apply independently. Once initiated as a Spoke or Independent

applicant, organizations may access the Print View function of their application to print the narrative questions. To access, select Print View in the upper right-hand corner of the application to generate a PDF file with all tabs of the application. This function will display all inputs made to application tabs at the time it's printed.

**Q: If a local board, which is a registered nonprofit, applies as a Hub, can a community-based organization in that county still apply as a Hub separate from that local board Hub? Since CBOs need the local board's support to apply, is the local board's application as a Hub a conflict preventing them from supporting a CBO in the required partner agreement? If so, does this mean a CBO can't apply in that county?**

A: A local workforce board applicant with non-profit status serving as a HIRE applicant would not preclude that local workforce board from submitting a partnership letter on behalf of additional HIRE applicants in their jurisdiction.

**Q: Any suggestions or advice for how a technology provider can connect with the reentry community?**

A: Companies and organizations that serve or hire the reentry population are encouraged to complete the [Prospective Applicant Survey](#). Results will be shared with others who complete and can be used by those seeking to connect with other service providers in their area.

**Q: Is it allowable for the local board to encourage local CBOs to apply?**

A: Yes, local boards that are encouraged to share information about HIRE with their networks and/or direct interested applicants to the HIRE website.

**Q: Is the Hub and Spoke model all in funding?**

A: No. If, for any reason, a Spoke is disqualified the CWDB may still award funding to the other organizations in the same network minus the disqualified organization(s).

**Q: Does the CWDB list specific training needs? Or can funding be for any training in general?**

A: The HIRE RFA provides guidance on specific types of training; however, HIRE applicants are encouraged to propose training strategies that correspond to the needs of their community. The CWDB encourages applicants to propose training strategies that align with its [State Plan](#).

**Q: Are organizations that supported, served in an advisory capacity and/or were involved in the development of HIRE or it's RFA eligible to apply for funding?**

A: Yes, provided they meet the eligible applicant requirements outlined in the RFA.

**Q: I am the Executive Director of a community-based reentry service provider. We are very interested in applying for HIRE as a Spoke. What is the best practice for identifying suitable organizations for our organization to partner with as a potential Hub?**

A: Organizations that serve or hire the reentry population are encouraged to complete the [Prospective Applicant Survey](#). The survey is a tool that gathers information about other interested applicants and their proposed plans for funding. Results will be shared with organizations who complete the survey and can be requested by emailing [Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov](mailto:Solicitations@cwdb.ca.gov).

**Q: Organizations are asked to describe how their project will strengthen employment connections for the reentry population to the local and state corrections system(s). Does this have to do with providing services in the jails? Or do you mean the ability to replicate?**

A: Services to currently incarcerated individuals who are anticipated to be released during the HIRE grant term are allowable. Some organizations have established—or are in the process of establishing—connections between agencies that currently deliver services to incarcerated individuals who have received a release date with plans to connect these individuals to services immediately upon release (this process is often referred to as a “warm handoff”). HIRE applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their service strategy will establish and/or strengthen partnerships with workforce service and supportive service providers in the area(s) their pre-release population will be discharged.

**Q: Organizations are asked to describe how this partnership will facilitate a connection between community-based organizations and local government partners and the broader workforce and education system. I see how the partnership facilitates a connection between CBO's and local governments, but what do you mean by a connection to the broader workforce and education system? Are you looking for something more systematic?**

A: HIRE applicants should seek to form strategic partnerships and braid resources with existing workforce development infrastructure focused on serving formerly incarcerated and justice involved individuals. The State's [15 RPUs](#) have been awarded roughly \$57 million in grant funding to serve these populations via the CWDB's [Prison to Employment Initiative](#) (P2E) and have developed and implemented successful regional strategies to support this population's transition from the corrections system to the labor market. HIRE applicants should seek to align their service strategies with the network of partnerships that have formed and developed



under the P2E Initiative, among other entry points into California's public workforce development system.

**Q: This question is specific to the Technical Assistance application. Is CWDB interested in increasing visibility of grantees to the public?**

A: Up to \$500,000 is available to fund a Technical Assistance (TA) team that will support the continued development and implementation of awarded projects. The TA grantee will also provide a forum for cross-project communication and peer-to-peer learning and play key roles in capacity building, regional coordination, development of materials/media, and knowledge sharing via Communities of Practice. Page 8 of the [RFA](#) has more information about the Technical Assistance grant.

**Q: Will there be additional funding to sustain successful HIRE programs beyond 12 months, or should we expect this source of funding to end after 12 months?**

A: The HIRE program is currently funded through this current cycle only. The grant term of the HIRE program is 12 months.

**Q: We would like to submit our application as a Spoke. Our Hub partner has not yet initiated the application, but we would like to begin drafting the proposal questions. Is it possible to get a copy of the Spokes' questions without being connected to a Hub through Cal E-Grants?**

A: Organizations that will be applying as a Spoke should coordinate with their Network's Hub in order to gain access to the HIRE application. Please see page 4 of the [Application Guide](#) for more information about linking Hub & Spoke.

**Q: Is detail on past performance in job placement required in the Hub application if we serve the reentry population, but have not historically provided this service to this population (delivering job placement services)? Our Spokes have previous performance outcomes in this area which we are asking them to detail in their applications.**

A: Spokes are encouraged to submit narrative responses that describe both their past and proposed service strategies.

**Q: How does the CWDB, as it pertains to HIRE, define job mobility – is it geographic, or does it reference career growth and development?**

A: For the purposes of HIRE, job mobility is in reference to career growth and development. The CWDB envisions HIRE grantees will make their best attempt to connect reentry job seekers with clearly defined career ladder opportunities that lead to family-sustaining wages for workers.

**Q: Is it possible to use the total number from our last fiscal year operating budget instead of our 990 Form?**

A: No, CWDB must retain a copy of the 990 Form for accounting and reporting purposes. Failure to upload this form may be cause for an application's disqualification.