

State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Summary Information

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	John Barr (John.W.Barr@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	FY26-1
Funding Opportunity Title	WIOA Statewide Activities - Service Integration and Innovation - Nonformula
CSFA Number	420-30-0075
CSFA Popular Name	WIOA Service Integration and Innovation Grants - Nonformula
Anticipated Number of Awards	12
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$2,000,000
Award Range	\$50000 - \$500000
Source of Funding	Federal
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	Yes
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	09/04/2025
Application Date Range	09/04/2025 - 10/06/2025 : 5:00 PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7fb65b637da34f36b1b79ff87c03f23b
Technical Assistance Session	Offered : Yes Mandatory : No Date : 09/09/2025 : 10:00 AM Registration link : https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/meeting/register/Ns3hqYjiQmq0UGW96X6jfA

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

NOFO ID: 0075-3128

For information about grants please visit:
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/dceo-grants.html>

A. Program Description

Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the "Department" or "DCEO") is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity ("NOFO") to support Illinois Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs) in designating qualified staff as trainers to effectively implement the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) 2.0 reporting and case management system. Funding will enable up to 20 local trainers (based on the availability of funds) to deliver comprehensive training for career planners on IWDS 2.0 and associated workforce policies, promoting a customer-centered approach that aligns with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Program Description

Purpose

The DCEO Office of Employment & Training (OET), in collaboration with the Illinois WorkNet (IwN) team, is upgrading the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) platform to create "IWDS 2.0." This new application will serve as the reporting and case management system for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs, beginning in July 2026. It will feature a modern, user-friendly interface designed with accessibility and responsive design standards in mind, focusing on a streamlined customer workflow to meet federal and state reporting and case management requirements.

This system update is part of OET's commitment to providing a consistent, statewide, customer-centered service delivery approach. This approach emphasizes the unique strengths, needs, goals, and challenges of each participant, ensuring efficient services for all, regardless of their entry point. To support this transition, OET is implementing a training and capacity-building initiative for career planners, offering curriculum resources, online courses, mentorship opportunities, and train-the-trainer support.

Vision for Customer-Centered Service Delivery in the Illinois Workforce System

OET is committed to ensuring that WIOA Title I workforce development services are as effective and impactful as possible for Illinois workforce system customers. To that end, the system is transitioning to a consistent, statewide customer-centered service delivery approach for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, as well as Trade-funded services. This approach places the participant at the center of everything system partners do, recognizing that each individual has unique strengths, needs, goals, and challenges. By working collaboratively with participants, focusing on their strengths, and empowering them to make informed choices, the system can help them achieve sustainable employment and long-term success. Every customer can find efficient and streamlined workforce services that meet their needs, goals, and challenges, regardless of their point of entry into the system. Coupled with policy updates in development, the enhanced IWDS platform will advance the vision for a customer-centered service delivery model through the technology frameworks that underpin Illinois' workforce system.

Collaborative Training Approach

OET is planning a collaborative approach to training and capacity building to support a successful transition to IWDS 2.0 for WIOA Title I and Trade-funded career planners. The State will provide a comprehensive training curriculum, online courses, training mentors, and train-the-trainer support, with

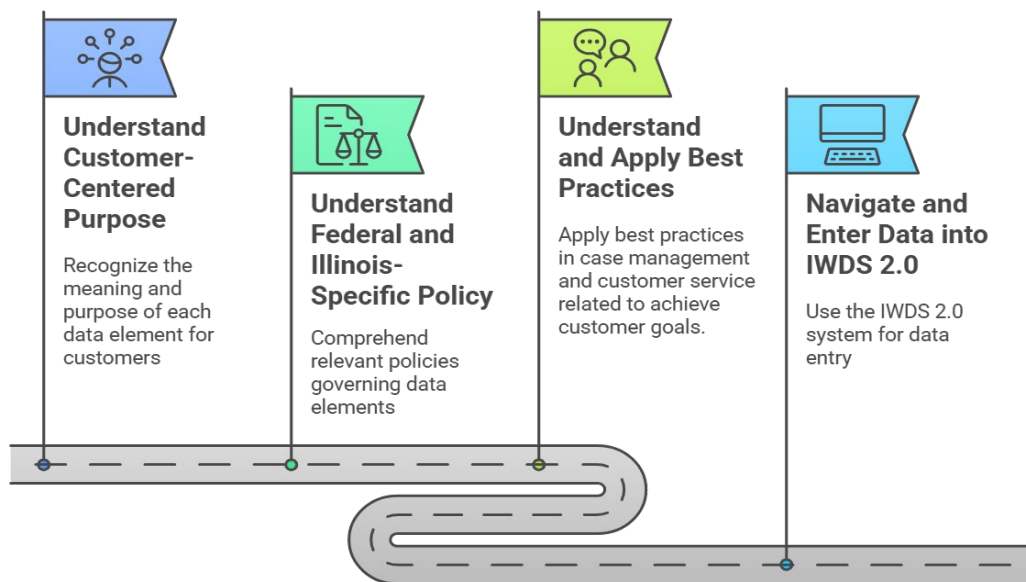
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training delivered regionally. DCEO/OET will fund approximately 15-20 trainers statewide to manage the training of around 900 case managers effectively. Training assignments will be based on Economic Development Regions and the size of the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA). Identified staff will serve as regional trainers, delivering in-person training to career planners.

The train-the-trainer model enhances organizations' capacity to deliver training by increasing reach, promoting consistency, and reducing costs while empowering employees to take on leadership roles. Investing in a core group of trainers ensures the sustainable expansion of professional development, embedding best practices, knowledge, and skills throughout the workforce ecosystem.

OET's training method intentionally integrates policy guidance with technical instruction, demonstrating how IWDS 2.0 functions as a case management system and supporting the application of WIOA policy along with the delivery of customer-centered services.

IWDS 2.0 User Learning Journey



Experienced local trainers will deliver instruction on the customer-centered service delivery model and system navigation, reinforcing the connection between policy, practice, and technology. This training will equip career planners and workforce partners to accurately interpret, comply with, and integrate policy requirements into their daily practices for effective case management and accurate reporting.

This funding opportunity will provide Illinois LWIAs with the resources necessary to cover personnel, travel, facility rentals, and materials/supplies required to train career planners in customer-centered service delivery and the use of IWDS 2.0.

Training Regions

It is expected that the training will be delivered regionally. The DCEO/OET will fund approximately 15-20 trainers across the State, each working at approximately 25% Full-Time Equivalent (FTE), to effectively

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manage the training of around 900 case managers. The grant will cover the costs for LWIA staff to serve as regional trainers who will deliver training and support to career planners, as outlined in the table below.

OET has reviewed staff counts and recommends the groupings in the table, taking into account both staff availability and geographic areas. To ensure effective interaction and participation, OET suggests that training sessions be limited to no more than 20 participants each. Each trainer can provide training to a maximum of 80 career planners annually.

LWIA	# of Trainers	LWIA	# of Trainers
LWIA 1	1	LWIA 17	1
LWIA 2		LWIA 18	
LWIA 3	1	LWIA 23	
LWIA 4		LWIA 19	1
LWIA 5	1	LWIA 20	
LWIA 6		LWIA 21	
LWIA 10	1	LWIA 22	1
LWIA 11		LWIA 24	
LWIA 13	1	LWIA 25	1
LWIA 14		LWIA 26	
LWIA 15		LWIA 7	5

Overview of Training Strategy to Support the Roll-Out of IWDS 2.0

The following outlines DCEO's comprehensive training strategy, incorporating both a dedicated train-the-trainer model and a system-wide training for workforce staff. This dual approach ensures robust preparation and effective statewide implementation of the IWDS 2.0 customer-centered service delivery system driven by WIOA policy.

Train-the-Trainers (Local Level Staff)

IWDS 2.0 trainers are local workforce development professionals who will be responsible for delivering information and instruction to support the roll-out of IWDS 2.0, the state-wide adoption of customer-centered service delivery, and ensuring consistent application of WIOA policies. They are vital in bridging knowledge gaps and ensuring career planners can effectively apply what they've learned.

DCEO is using a phased-in approach for local area trainers. Training and related work to prepare them for the eventual training rollout will begin in the Fall of 2025. Training for trainers will include the following components:

- **WIOA Policy Integration:** Clear instructions on how IWDS supports the implementation of WIOA requirements by mapping policy to the relevant data fields within IWDS 2.0 and participating in scenario-based discussion that demonstrate how to apply the policy.
- **Comprehensive System Familiarization:** In-depth discovery, user interface, and training sessions covering all modules of IWDS 2.0.
- **Interactive Learning Methods:** Participation in hybrid online and in-person training on the customer-centered service delivery approach, relevant policy formalizing the approach, and use of the new IWDS 2.0 system. These will be Instructor-led sessions, eLearning modules, role-playing, and simulations of real-world scenarios.
- **Hands-On Application:** Completion of background reading and pre-work assignments that include guided practice sessions to develop troubleshooting skills and build user support confidence.

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DCEO expects that local area trainers will spend approximately 32 hours participating in pre-work, online, and in-person training activities. Of this total time, in-person training will comprise 10-16 hours.

By the end of the Train the Trainer Program, participants will:

- Demonstrate Comprehensive Knowledge: Understand IWDS 2.0 features, functionality, and workflows.
- Apply and Teach WIOA Policy: Confidently explain and demonstrate how WIOA requirements integrate into IWDS usage.
- Demonstrate Effective Training Skills: Acquire the communication, facilitation, and troubleshooting competencies necessary to train end users.
- Support Continuous Learning: Provide ongoing support, updates, and refresher sessions to ensure sustained proficiency.

System-Wide Training

DCEO anticipates that training for local area staff will take place in the second quarter of 2026, following identification and development of a cadre of trainers. Training will be ongoing as IWDS 2.0 is launched in July 2026 and beyond. The training model will be a blended approach to accommodate diverse learning preferences. It will include the following components:

- A hands-on, in-person training course delivered by regional trainers (likely 10 - 16 hours in length)
- Virtual Training: Webinars and virtual training sessions delivered by subject matter experts (up to 12 hours)
- A self-paced online course, which will be available to staff as a required complement to in-person training, a knowledge “refresher” for existing staff, and a tool for new staff onboarding
- Instructional resources in various formats, including documents, desk aids, quick-start guides, and videos
- Virtual Office Hours: Regularly scheduled sessions hosted by regional trainers and subject matter experts for real-time support

Trainers will be point of contact staff throughout the state and region to support the implementation of the customer-centered service delivery model and the transition to the enhanced IWDS platform.

Roles and Responsibilities of Local Area Trainers

Required Activities

Beginning in spring, 2026, regional trainers will begin delivering training to colleagues in their regions. Local trainers will be responsible for conducting the following activities to support roll-out and implementation of the WIOA policy and IWDS 2.0 system:

- Master IWDS 2.0 system and WIOA policy to accurately convey information
- Conduct outreach and share information about the training
- Schedule training sessions and update the statewide training calendar
- Handle all logistics associated with regional in-person training events
- Support learners participating in self-paced, online training activities
- Host regular office hours to answer questions from and assist training participants and staff using IWDS 2.0
- Serve as an ongoing resource for end users post-training (e.g., hosting Q&A sessions).
- Troubleshoot common user issues and escalate complex problems effectively
- Provide monthly reports to DCEO on staff participation in in-person training, staff evaluations of the training, and other topics as requested
- Participate in quarterly virtual coordination meetings and attend an annual in-person meeting for trainers
- Actively contribute to continuous improvement by providing feedback on training materials and approaches

Level of Effort

DCEO expects that regional trainers' time investment will be more intensive in Q2 and Q3 of 2026, as IWDS 2.0 is launched and large numbers of staff are trained on the new customer service delivery model, WIOA policy revisions, and the updated IWDS system. As more staff are trained and become proficient, local area trainers' level of effort will lessen. On average, regional trainers will need to devote up to approximately 32 hours/month, or four workdays, to supporting IWDS 2.0 training efforts, as follows:

Phase 1: Preparation and Orientation (September, 2025 – March 2026)

- During this phase, regional trainers will work approximately 16 hours/month on the following required activities.
 - o User group discovery and testing of IWDS 2.0
 - o User group feedback on customer-centered service delivery policy updates
 - o Training on group facilitation and related training skills
 - o Participating in State trainings and coordination meetings

Phase 2: Intensive Transition Training (April – September, 2026)

- During this phase, regional trainers will work up to 16 hours/week on the following activities
 - o Outreach and information sharing
 - o Scheduling, tracking training registration and participation, reporting, analyzing feedback from standard training evaluation forms (provided by DCEO) and other administrative tasks
 - o Participating in State trainings and coordination meetings
 - o Delivering in-person training
 - o Supporting learners participating in online training
 - o Hosting regular office hours (at least once/week after training begins)
 - o Answering *ad hoc* questions

Phase 3: Maintenance Training (October 2026 – June 2027)

- During this phase, regional trainers will work up to 16 hours per month on the following required activities:
 - o Delivering on-going training related to WIOA policy and practice
 - o Hosting regular office hours (at least 2x month)
 - o Answering *ad hoc* questions
 - o Participating in State trainings and coordination meetings

Selection Criteria for Local Area Trainers

DCEO requests that LWIAs work together based on the regional groupings outlined in the table (above) to identify the individual(s) who possess the necessary skills, interest, and availability to serve as regional trainers for the new customer-centered service delivery model and the IWDS 2.0 system. Nominated regional area staff members should have the following capabilities and characteristics:

Knowledge and Experience

- Possesses a firm knowledge of effective case management and a willingness to learn and become a subject matter expert on IWDS 2.0 and the details of state WIOA case management policies
- Can address complex inquiries with accuracy, provide detailed explanations, and stay up to date with the latest developments in their field

Passion and Connection

- Demonstrates genuine enthusiasm for the subject matter and DCEO's vision for customer-centered service delivery

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- Is able to share relevant examples and applications of the content, fostering a deeper understanding

Strong Communication and Training Skills

- Able to use/follow the train-the-trainer guide that will be provided to all local area trainers
- Able to use language the audience understands, avoids jargon, and models customer-centered language
- Able to provide opportunities for learners to ask questions and seek clarification
- Can confirm understanding through techniques like summarizing and paraphrasing

Effective Facilitation

- Cultivates an inclusive and supportive learning environment
- Encourages active participation, manages discussions effectively, and addresses questions and concerns with patience and insight
- Manages group dynamics to ensure that all voices are heard and respected
- Provides constructive feedback and guidance to help learners achieve their learning goals

Performance Goals and Measures

Specific project outcomes, goals, and deliverables must be included in the proposal. Agreed upon deliverables and outcomes will be tracked utilizing tools developed by DCEO and Illinois workNet. Note that grant funds should not supplant or replace the applicant's current operations. Grant reviewers will be looking for the following metrics:

- MEASURE: Trainer attendance at mandatory trainings and meetings.
GOAL: Trainers must commit to attending at least 90% of all Phase 1 meetings and activities and 100% of all Phase 2 train-the-trainer activities and events in preparation for delivering career planner training.
- MEASURE: Number of career planners trained during Phase 2 and Phase 3.
GOAL: 90% of all career planners in the LWIAs included in the proposal receive Phase 2 training by August 31, 2026.
- MEASURE: Number of office hours held
GOAL: During Phase 2 (minimum is 1x week) and Phase 3 (minimum is 2x month)
- MEASURE: Feedback on standard training evaluations (to be provided by DCEO).
GOAL: Trainers achieve an average satisfaction rating of 80% or greater.

Other Information

N/A.

B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing federal funds from the United States Department of Labor awarded to DCEO and appropriated by the State of Illinois. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$1.5 to \$2 million. Awards will range from \$50,000 to \$500,000 based on the projected number of trainers that are funded and the level of activities planned. The Department expects to make 10-12 awards through this NOFO.

The period of performance is expected to be October 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027. Preaward costs may be allowed starting on July 1, 2025 based on the final negotiation of the terms of the grant award.

Cost Per Trainer: Cost per staff trainer will generally range between \$50,000-\$100,000 based on an average of .25 FTE.. When preparing your budget proposal, it is crucial to provide your best offer to ensure transparency, accuracy, and alignment with the program's goals and funding requirements. The Department reserve the right to negotiate all proposed grant costs as a part of the grant establishment process.

1. Personnel Costs

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- Salaries or wages for trainers conducting training activities.
 - Costs associated with trainers attending required orientation, professional development, or "train-the-trainer" sessions.
 - Staff time dedicated to training logistics, outreach, coordination, and administrative tasks.
2. Travel Expenses
- Mileage reimbursement, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses for trainers to attend required "train-the-trainer" orientation sessions, statewide coordination meetings, or other mandatory meetings.
 - Local travel costs for trainers conducting training sessions within their region or across regions as necessary.
3. Facility Costs
- Rental fees for training spaces, including conference rooms, classrooms, or event venues necessary to host in-person training sessions.
 - Audio-visual and technology equipment rental (e.g., projectors, microphones, screens) needed for conducting training.
4. Supplies and Materials
- Printed training materials, workbooks, manuals, handouts, and other instructional resources.
 - Training aids such as flipcharts, markers, easels, sticky notes, and other consumable supplies.
5. Technology and Software
- Licensing or subscription fees for virtual meeting platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for hosting online sessions, webinars, and virtual office hours (if not provided by the State).
 - Necessary software or technology tools specifically required for trainers to deliver effective training (e.g., survey tools, interactive software).
6. Communications and Outreach
- Expenses related to advertising, outreach, and promotional activities aimed at informing participants about training sessions and encouraging attendance.
 - Development and distribution costs for communication materials, such as flyers, newsletters, emails, or website updates.
7. Evaluation and Reporting
- Costs associated with tracking attendance, managing participant data, and reporting training outcomes to DCEO, including licenses or subscriptions for tracking and reporting tools.
 - Expenses related to participant feedback collection and analysis to support continuous improvement of training programs.
8. Trainer Support and Professional Development
- Expenses related to ongoing professional development for trainers (e.g., advanced workshops, refresher courses, coaching sessions).
 - Costs of providing virtual office hours, mentorship, or other direct learner-support activities.

Administrative Costs: It is expected that administrative costs, both direct and indirect, will represent a small portion of the program budget. Competitive applicants will keep administrative costs to 10 percent (10%), or less, of direct costs as outlined at 20 C.F.R. 683.205. Program budgets and narratives will detail how all proposed expenditures are directly necessary for program implementation and will distinguish between direct/indirect administrative and direct/indirect program costs.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxpayer-identification-numbers->

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tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number);

- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<https://sam.gov>), SAM.gov registrations must be marked as “public” to allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information;
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>);
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at <https://sam.gov>);
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable (https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/business_services/corp.html);
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal)
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>).

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

Eligible Applicants include LWIA grantees of the WIOA Title I grant funds.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

State Cost sharing or matching is not required for this opportunity.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine

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months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year, depending on the grantee's audit type requirements.

c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect to waive payments for indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to "Waive Indirect Costs" into the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system.

The following State University Facilities & Administration Rate and Base will apply to all State issued awards that contain either Federal pass-through funding or State funding.

RATE:

20% Rate for awards or programs administered On-Campus*

10% Rate for awards or programs administered Off-Campus*

BASE:

Base approved in the State Universities' current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

*Criteria for utilization of the On/Off campus rate is located within the general terms and conditions of Federal NICRA for each State University. If not clearly defined, State awarding agencies and officers will make final determination based upon the purposes of the grant scope.

4. Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information.

Applications and accompanying materials are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be clearly identified as such in the application materials. The Department will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

5. Other, if applicable.

Applicants may submit 1 application for this opportunity.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the "Grant Application Link" field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

Sara Blalock
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
1011 S 2nd St

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Springfield IL 62704
Email: sarah.blalock@illinois.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- ☐ Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format.
 - Signature page must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project.
 - The entire Excel document with all the tabs included, even if the tabs are not relevant to the grant opportunity, must be submitted.
 - Do not send a restricted version of the Uniform Budget.
 - Certification page must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Conflict of Interest Disclosure.
 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Mandatory Disclosure.
 - Mandatory Disclosure must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the submission of the following other programmatic specific items as part of the program application:

☐ **Program Narrative: Create a Program Narrative that answers each of the specific questions that are listed below and save this as a Word or PDF document. Note that this Program Narrative should describe how you will administer the program following the program requirements outlined in this NOFO.**

☐ **1. Application Executive Summary (one page maximum)**

- *Provide a brief overview of the LWIAs that will be serviced by the grant, including the applying local workforce area, the other LWIAs included in the training area and the number of WIOA Title I-funded career planners in the training area as applicable.*
- *Provide a concise overview summarizing the objectives and anticipated outcomes of local participation in the IWDS 2.0 Train-the-Trainer initiative.*

☐ **2. Commitment Statement from Local Leadership (two page maximum)**

- *Describe the process that was used to identify the trainer(s)*
- *Provide a narrative statement from the LWIA leadership of each participating local workforce area confirming their full support for proposed trainers and their willingness to coordinate and collaborate to identify dates and locations of career planner training and to make career planners available for those trainings*
 - *Attach a partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding if applicable*
- *Provide a narrative assurance that proposed trainers will be provided the necessary time, resources, and support required to fulfill training responsibilities effectively.*

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☐ 3. *Trainer Identification, Qualifications and Experience (four page maximum)*

- *Trainer skills and expertise*
 - *Identify the proposed trainer(s) for the training area (see table on page 3)*
 - *Provide a brief overview of each trainer's relevant professional background, key skills, career highlights, and contributions to workforce development.*
 - *Describe each trainer's knowledge of and experience with effective case management and their ability to accurately address complex questions related to case management policy and practice.*
 - *Describe each trainer's experience with WIOA Title I policy implementation and customer-centered service delivery*
 - *Describe the proposed trainer's communication, training, and facilitation skills, including previous training and facilitation experience.*
- *Capacity building/professional development:*
 - *Demonstrate the trainers' previous engagement and commitment to ongoing professional development, particularly related to workforce development and training methodologies.*
 - *Grant activities and outcomes*
 - *Confirm each trainer's commitment to attending all training and preparation activities across all phases of the project.*
 - *Provide an estimate of the number of case managers that will be trained through this grant.*
 - *Provide information regarding the physical location(s) where the in-person training will be coordinated*
- *Resumes of Proposed Trainers (no page limit)*
 - *Attach a clearly formatted, detailed resume highlighting relevant education, experience, training expertise, policy knowledge, and technical proficiency related to IWDS 2.0 and WIOA implementation.*

☐ 4. *Budget and Budget Justification (two pages maximum)*

- *Provide a detailed budget narrative to document the reasonableness of the proposed costs clearly linking expenditures to training needs, anticipated outcomes, and compliance with NOFO guidelines*
- *Provide information regarding any programs or funds that will be leveraged to support this initiative.*

3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: [How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab](#). SAM.gov registrations must be "public."
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in the GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that

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determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

4. Submission Dates and Times.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted 30 days from release of NOFO to be considered in the first round of funding after this NOFO. Application that are recieved after this time may be reviewed based on the availability of funding.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7fb65b637da34f36b1b79ff87c03f23b>.

The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

6. Funding Restrictions.

This opportunity may allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. Other restrictions can be found in Sections A., B., and C.

7. Other Submission Requirements.

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be scored on a 100-point scale (or on a percentage scale). The Department shall consider the following criteria when evaluating the application submittal: Capacity, Quality and Budget.

Capacity	
LWIA Capacity and Commitment	30%
Quality	
Trainer Qualifications and Projected Outcomes	60%
Budget	
Project Cost	10%

2. Review and Selection Process.

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. Grants will be awarded according to the following process:

A team of professionals will complete the *merit review* of the applications and develop a funding recommendation. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined per

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application based upon compliance with the requirements of this NOFO. Based on the review, applicants may be selected to enter into negotiations with the Department for a grant. The purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budgetary and scope of work provisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made. The Department of Commerce reserves the right to request additional information from applicants for evaluation purposes. At its sole discretion, the Department reserves the right to reject all applications, reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement, award in part or total, and waive minor defects.

The Merit Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappealreview.html>.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a merit review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.

The Department reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

Subrecipients and Subcontractors: Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

Grant Uniform Requirements: The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

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Procurement: Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

3. Reporting.

Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

Monitoring

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

Audit

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Admin Rules shall apply (See 44 IL Admin Code 7000.90).

Program Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements. In addition to the PPR and PFR outlined above, grantees will be required to report real-time program activities and outcomes using the Illinois workNet reporting system as required by the Department.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Grant Help Desk
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Email: CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov

H. Other Information, if applicable

The Department reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to evaluate applications.

Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application or pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant's beginning date.

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Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information: Applications are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could reasonably be considered to be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the application. The Department of Commerce will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

Renewals and Grant Modifications: The Department *may* authorize the renewal of projects awarded under this NOFO and additional funding based on the activities, outcomes and performance of the grantee as well as the availability of funds under the program.