



CEJA ILLINOIS

Clean Jobs Workforce
Network Program



CEJA ILLINOIS

Energy Transition
Navigator Program

Rolling Back the Curtain: What CEJA Merit Reviewers are Looking For 1/19/2024



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Today's Focus: 2 CEJA Workforce Programs



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Clean Jobs Workforce
Network Program

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (“Workforce Hubs”)

- **Goal:** Provide training to prepare people for entry-level clean energy jobs.
- **Hub areas accepting applications:** Chicago South, Waukegan, Joliet, Aurora, Peoria, Danville, Carbondale, and East St. Louis
- Submit by February 23, 2024 to be included in the second round of reviews.



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Energy Transition
Navigator Program

Energy Transition Navigators Program

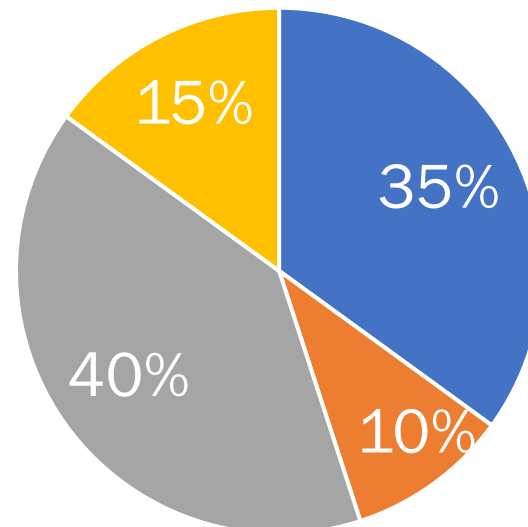
- **Goal:** Conduct outreach & education to raise awareness of CEJA programs, recruit participants, and build connections
- **Hub areas accepting applications:** Waukegan, Joliet, Aurora, Peoria, Danville, Champaign, Decatur, East St. Louis, Alton
- Submit by February 23, 2024 to be included in the second round of reviews.

Purpose: Help you Prepare a Successful Proposal

Applicant Review Criteria

- Applicant Team Qualifications & Capacity
- Documentation of Need
- Project Quality & Integration
- Cost Effectiveness

Today's focus



*Based on feedback from merit reviewers



Agenda

- **Merit Review Process Overview**
- **Documentation of Need (10%)**
 - What reviewers are looking for
 - Resources and tips
 - Q&As
- **Project Quality (40%)**
 - What reviewers are looking for
 - Resources and tips
 - Q&As
- **Resources and Additional Technical Assistance**

Review Process Overview



Step 1: Initial administrative review

- Do you have all required elements of the application package?
- Are you GATA pre-qualified?
- Are you an eligible applicant?
- Did you turn in your application on time?

If you fail this step, your application will not advance to the merit review stage.



What does a complete application package look like?

Find all materials on the NOFO webpages.

Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format

Uniform Budget utilizing template provided by DCEO

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Mandatory Disclosure

Technical Proposal

Supplemental project documents (attachments)



Step 2: Merit review

Team of merit reviewers appointed and trained.

Each reviewer reviews applications separately, filling out scoring sheet, comments.

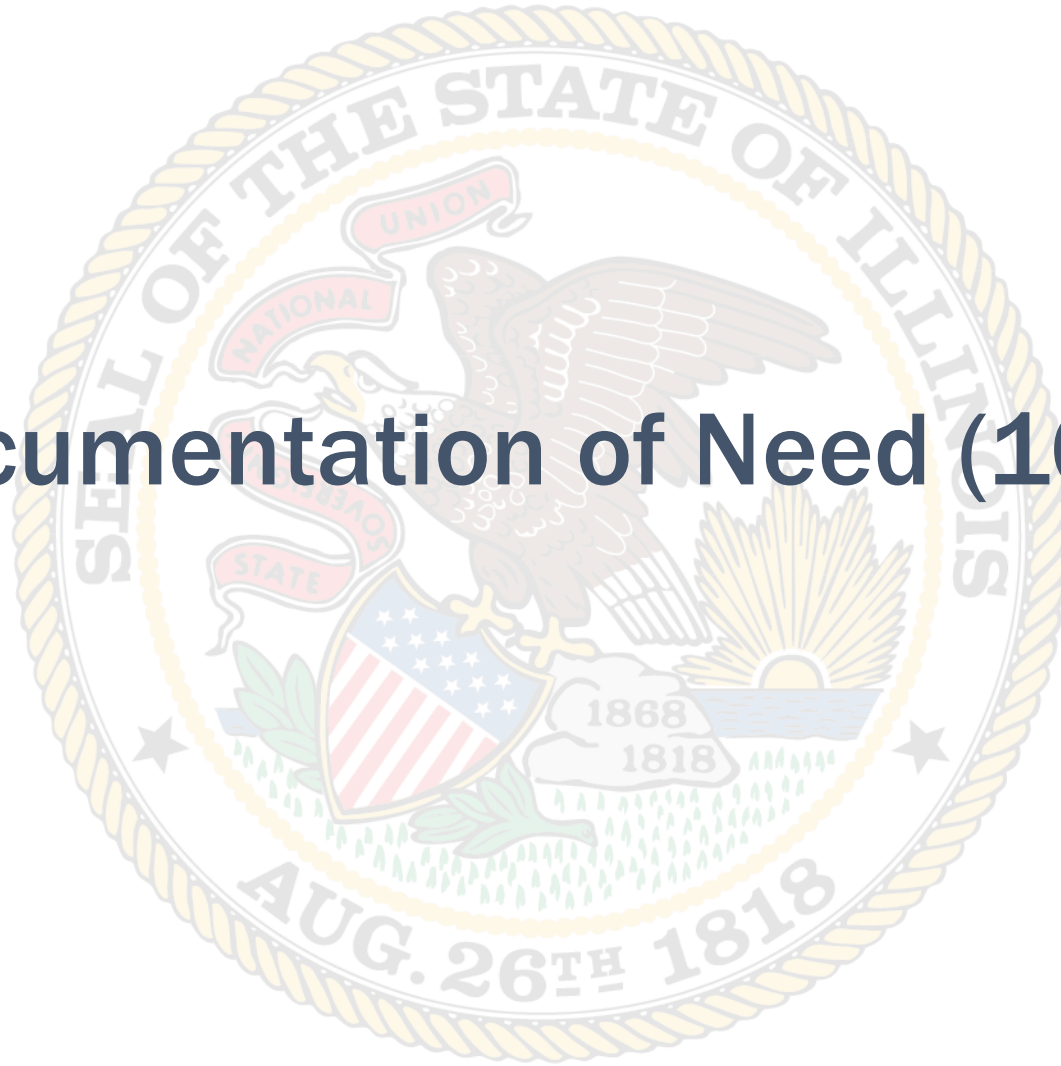
Team meets to discuss discrepancies, adjust scores as needed.

Final reviewer scores for each application are combined into composite score.

Highest scoring application for each region that meets minimum score threshold is selected.



Documentation of Need (10%)



Documentation of Need: What reviewers are looking for

Documentation of Need (10%)

The project's focus on specific equity investment eligible communities or populations; identification of barriers that these target communities or populations may face; and workforce needs in target communities.	4%
The project's identification of the clean energy employment needs and targeted occupations in the proposed area(s) and how the applicant will address these needs through clean jobs training program as demonstrated through local and regional labor market information.	3%
Expected impact of project on the identified target communities, populations, and job growth in target trades.	3%



What are reviewers looking for?

Identify target areas/populations

- Hub area + surrounding areas
- Equity investment eligible communities
- Specific populations (particularly returning residents)

Identify needs of target areas & populations

- Social/economic conditions of area
- Barriers target areas or populations face
- Employment and training needs of the area

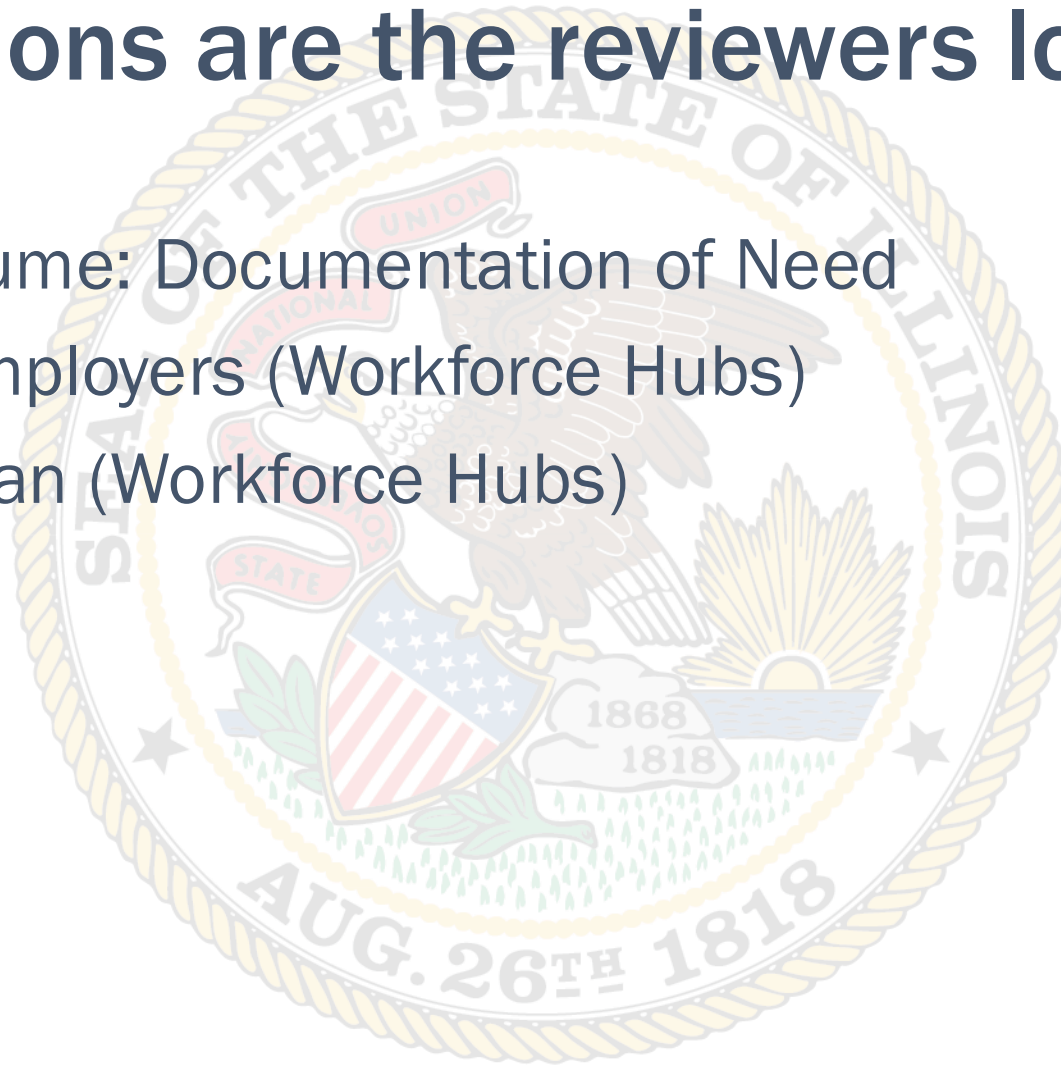
Identify clean energy job & training opportunities & gaps

- Existing clean energy training opportunities
- Gaps in training opportunities—need for training
- Hiring needs of current employers



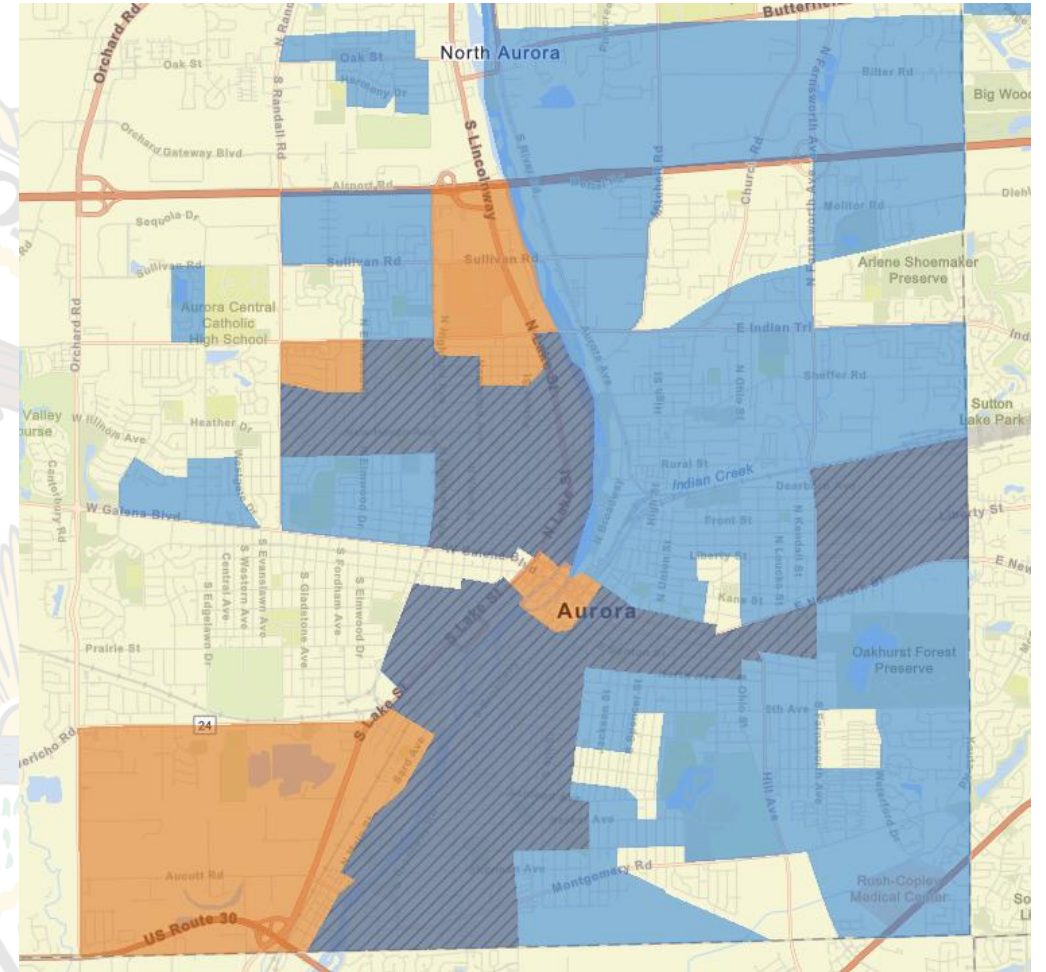
What sections are the reviewers looking at?

- Technical Volume: Documentation of Need
- MOUs with Employers (Workforce Hubs)
- Curriculum Plan (Workforce Hubs)



Identify focus areas

- Hub location and surrounding areas
 - Equity investment eligible communities
 - Where does your organization have a presence?
 - Where are the greatest needs?
 - Consider areas that are both EJ and R3 areas.



CEJA Grantee Map <https://arcg.is/1D54za>



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- Consider serving surrounding areas



- EJ/R3 communities should be prioritized “where the applicant pool allows”

Consider target populations

- Returning Residents
- Displaced energy workers →
- Foster care members/graduates
- People with barriers to employment (language, low education)

Coal plants	County	Date retiring	Job losses
Baldwin Energy Complex	Randolph	2025	138
Kinkaid Generating Station	Christian	2027	123
Newton Power Plant	Jasper	2027	82
Powerton Station	Tazewell	2028	205
Edwards Power Plant	Peoria	2022	73
Waukegan	Lake	2022	19
Will County	Will	2022	331
Joppa	Massac	2022	121

See Energy Transition Workforce Commission Reports.

https://dceo.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dceo/events/energy-transition-workforce-commission/etwc_phaseireport.pdf



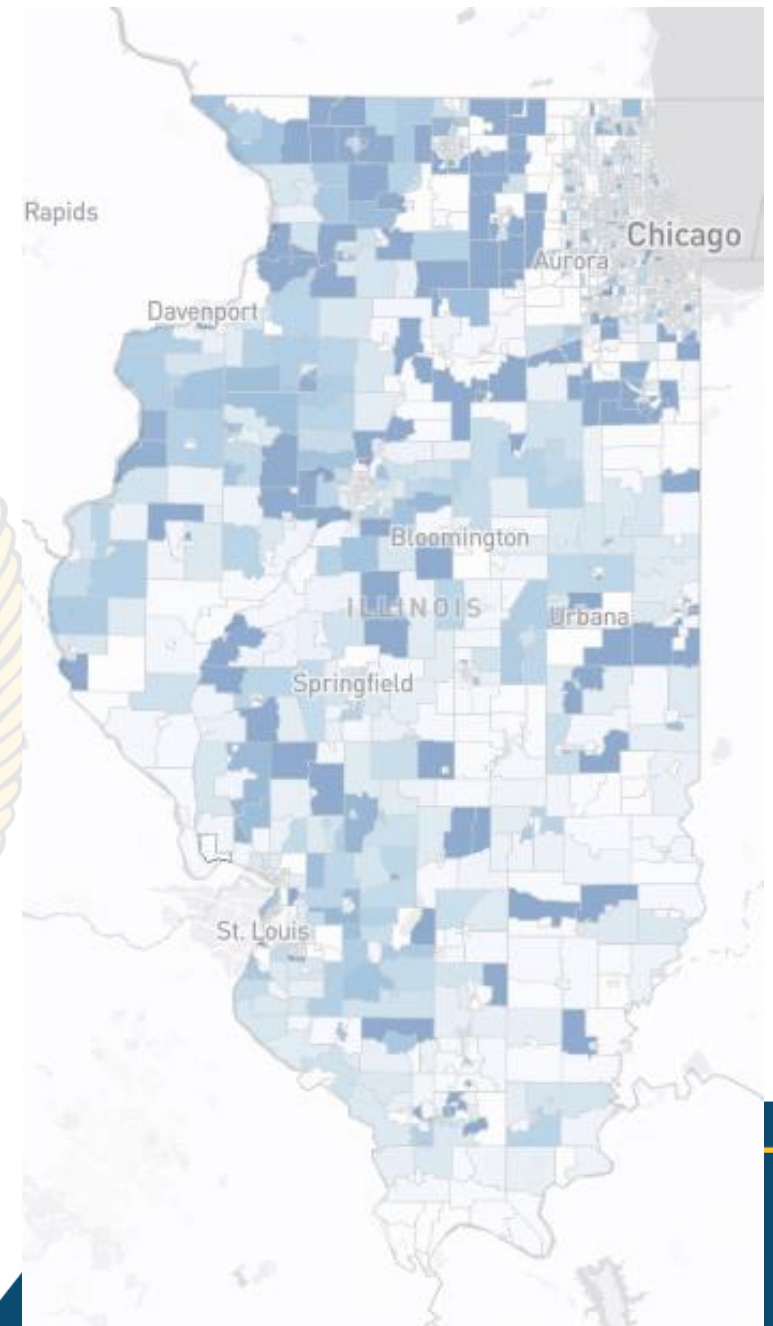
Identify community needs

- Census data
 - Identify the census tract or block group number of your target areas.
 - Use tools to identify socio-economic characteristics
 - [US Census Map](#)
 - [EDA-Census Poverty Status Viewer](#)



Identify clean energy training & employment needs

- Existing training programs?
- Gaps?
- Who are the clean energy employers? Do they have trouble hiring? What jobs are they looking to fill?
- Have clean energy projects have been implemented in target areas?



CEJA Grantee Map <https://arcg.is/1D54za>
<https://ilsolarmap.com/>

Identify manufacturing centers, investments

<https://www.energy.gov/invest>

Company	Technology	County	Jobs
Lion Electric	Electric Vehicle Assembly	Will County	745
Gotion	Battery cells, packs	Kankakee	2,600
TCCI Manufacturing	Electric Vehicle Components	Macon	50
Rivian	Electric Vehicles	McLean	800

Investment Announced Under Biden Administration

TECHNOLOGY

- Batteries
- Electric Vehicles
- Offshore Wind
- Solar

BY REPORTED AMOUNT (\$USD)

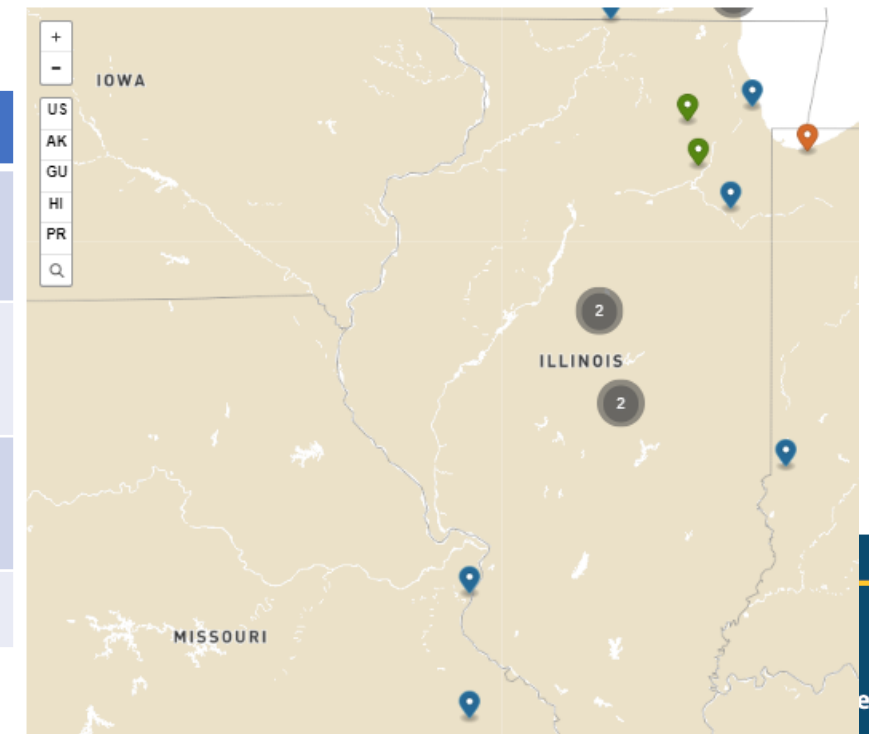
- Not Specified
- Less than 10M
- 10M - 100M
- 100M - 1B
- Over 1 Billion

PRODUCT

All ▼

TIMELINE ⓘ

All ▼



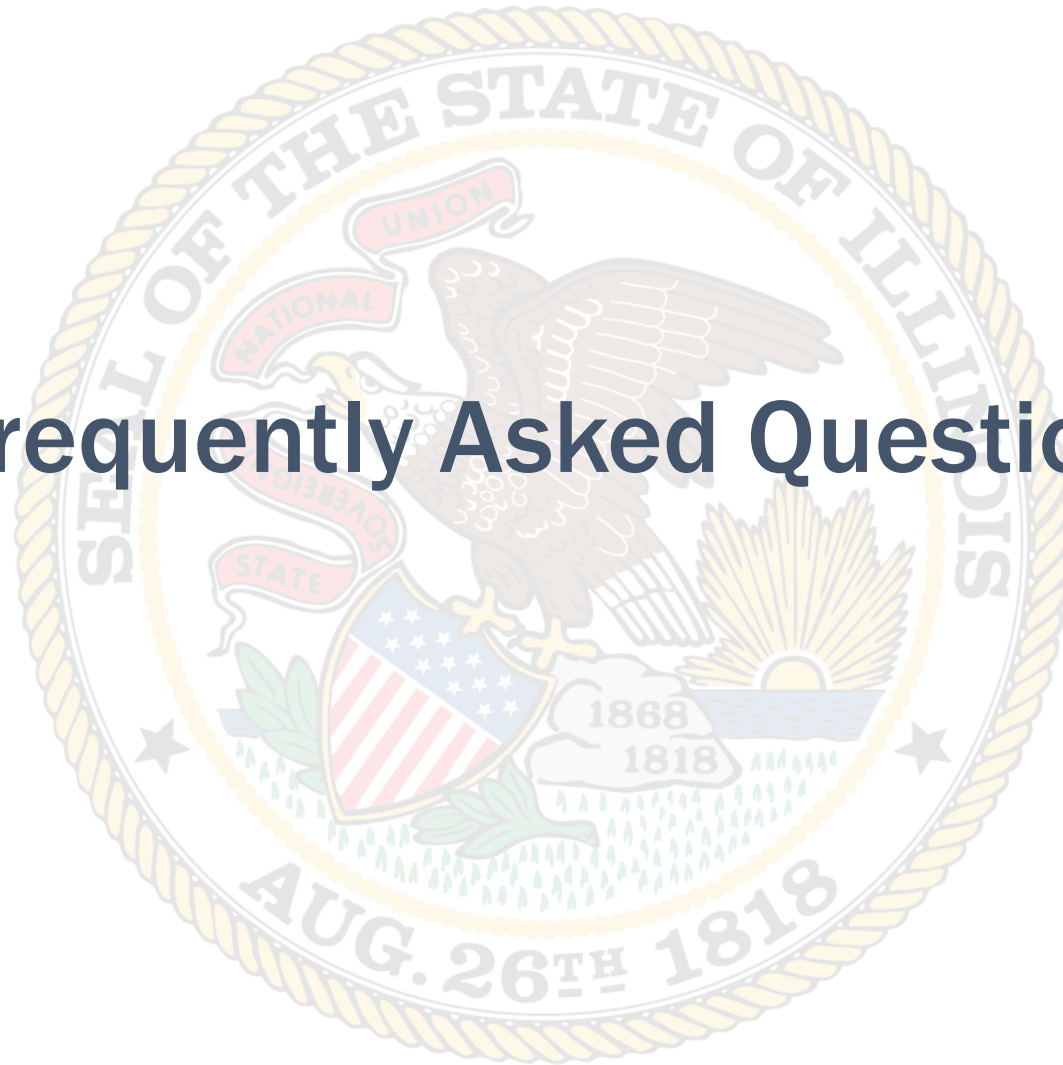
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Workforce Hubs: Demonstrate Need for Job-specific Training in your Curriculum Plan

Job specific training 1	
Job specific training option	
Jobs people will be trained for	
Career progression	
Demonstrated need for training	
Job demand (# of job openings, current jobs in region)	
Existing training programs in region & need for additional training	
Employer partnerships	



Frequently Asked Questions



What should I do if there are not many R3 or EJ communities or residents in my hub area?

- Placement and recruitment priorities apply for each Hub site “where the applicant pool allows”
- Consider placing a larger focus on people with barriers to employment and displaced energy workers.
- Consider serving eligible communities in the surrounding areas (e.g., Decatur Hub might propose to serve Springfield)



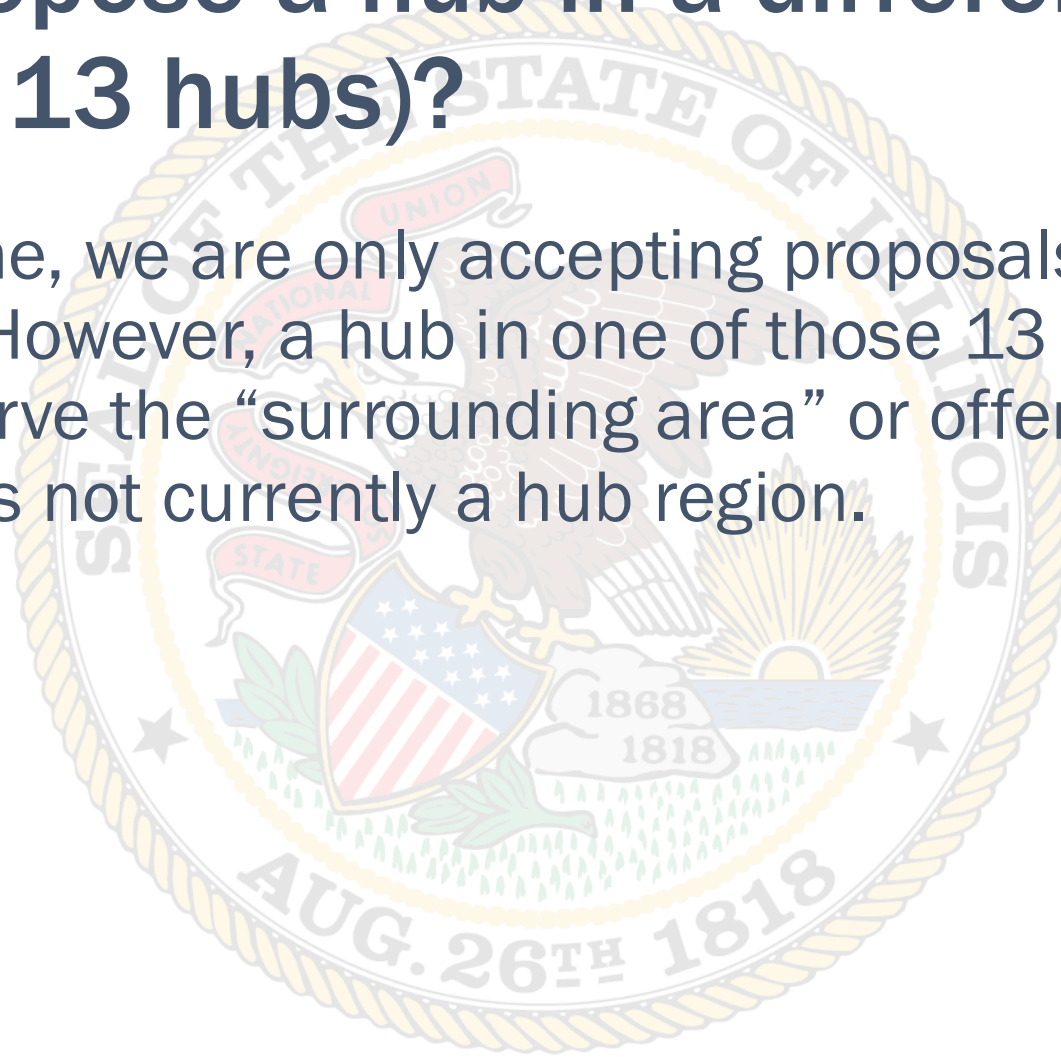
How will areas located far away from hubs be served?

- Hubs might propose to serve surrounding areas.
- Hubs might offer satellite training in other regions.
- Hubs might offer portions of training online.
- Hubs might reduce transportation barriers for individuals who have to travel to training.



Can we propose a hub in a different region (not one of the 13 hubs)?

- No. At this time, we are only accepting proposals for the designated hub regions. However, a hub in one of those 13 regions could propose to serve the “surrounding area” or offer satellite training in an area that is not currently a hub region.



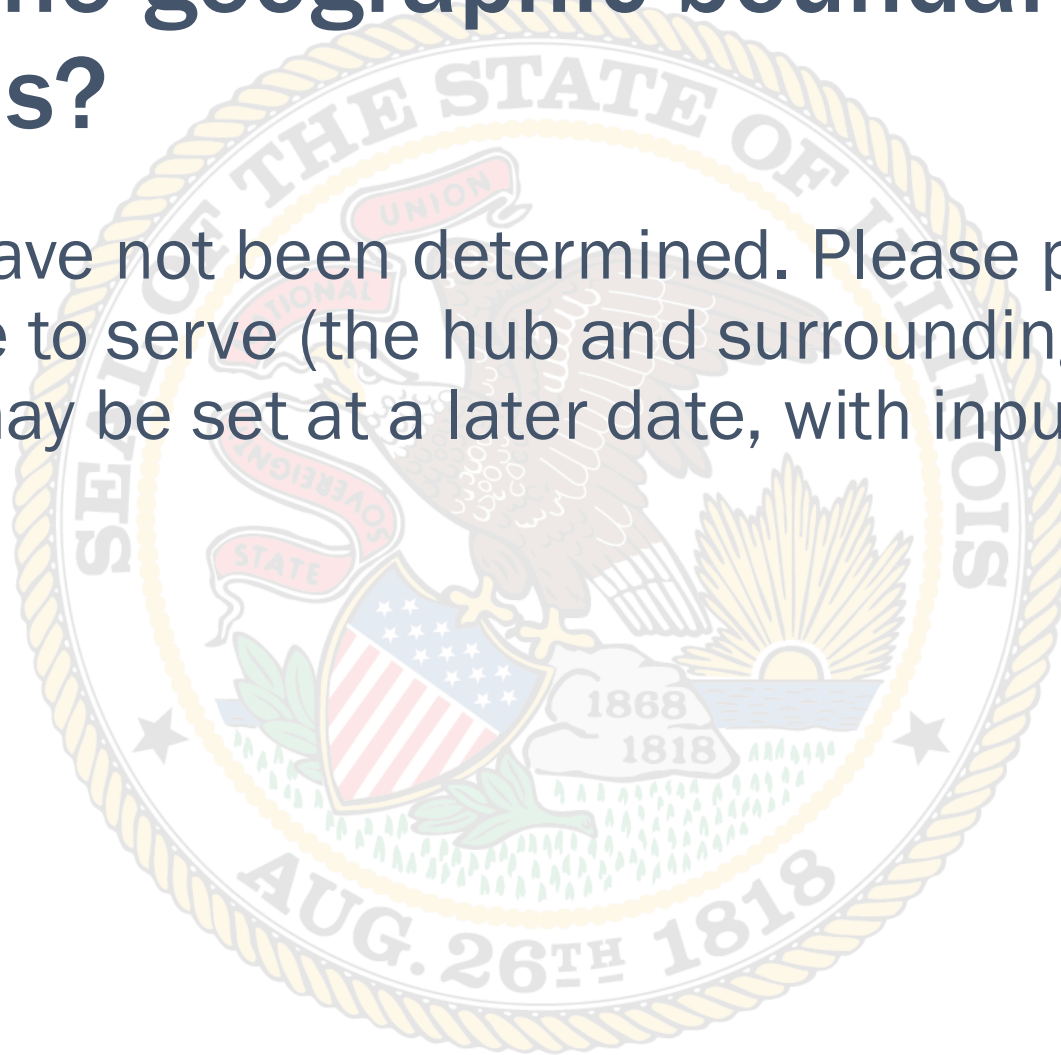
Do training locations need to be within equity investment eligible communities?

- Not necessarily—but they should be accessible to the people you are serving, particularly equity investment eligible community residents.



What are the geographic boundaries between hub regions?

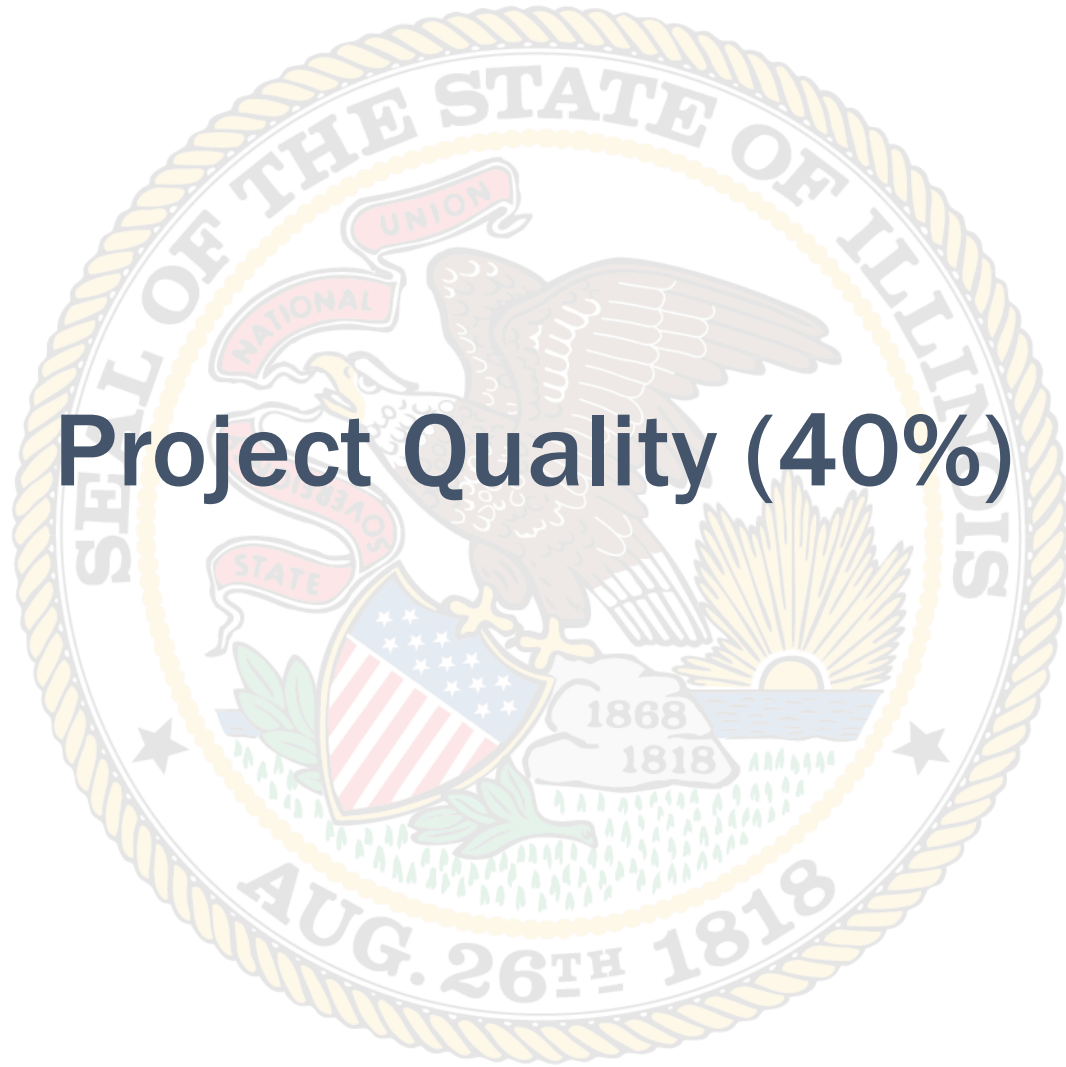
- Boundaries have not been determined. Please propose the area you would like to serve (the hub and surrounding areas). Boundaries may be set at a later date, with input from grantees.



How can I determine the need for clean energy jobs in my region?

- Look at job demand (number of current job openings or anticipated job growth)
- Look at existing training programs in the region and need for additional training
- Ask around: Contact the main clean energy employers in your region.
- Resources:
 - [The Illinois Clean Energy Jobs and Training Program Inventory](#)
 - [Local WIOA Plans for Economic Development Regions](#)
 - [USEER Energy Employment Report by State](#)





Project Quality (40%)



Review Criteria

Project Quality and Integration (40%)	
Quality of plan to recruit eligible participants and assist with enrollment.	5%
Quality of training program design, curriculum and methods of delivery. Demonstrated and clear integration of Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework and Bridge Program Curricula in training program design and how these elements support the needs of program participants. Quality and feasibility of program goals and outcomes (including number of students served, industry recognized skills, certifications, and employment)	15%
Quality of plan for delivering Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program Services (wrap-around services) to facilitate access to and completion of training program, including a list of services to be provided.	5%
Quality of plan to help participants transition to employment in the clean energy industry and strength of partnership agreements with employers for job placement and work-based learning opportunities.	5%
Quality of plan to address equity in program design, recruitment, wrap-around supports and transition services.	5%
Quality of plan to track program outcomes, assess the program and use this information to improve program delivery	5%

Sections we're looking at

- Technical Proposal
 - Project Plan
- Workplan
- Curriculum Plan
- Outcomes Summary
- MOUs with employers



Project Plan Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Include all required elements
- Follow application instructions
- Follow the technical proposal outline
- Provide adequate details and examples to show **how** you will deliver program elements
- Make sure your technical proposal matches the other attachments

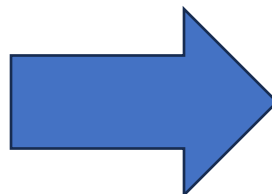
Don't

- Present your proposal in a creative way (not following instructions)
- Repurpose old proposals without careful editing and reframing.
- Propose services or training that is not within scope of NOFO.
- Propose something without details for how you'll deliver it.



Provide a **three-year plan** that describes the design and implementation of all elements of the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Hub Program and Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program support services. The plan should, at a minimum, include the following:

- A plan for **outreach and recruitment strategies** to target populations specifically in equity investment eligible communities, in coordination with Energy Transition Navigators, once they become available.
- The **Program design, curriculum, and methods of delivery**, including:
 - A **summary and description of the Program services** to be offered and the overall approach to delivering these services. The summary should include the program duration, numbers of cohorts or classes per year (if applicable), hours per week and delivery methods, including any plans to improve accessibility of instruction (such as online synchronous instruction or open entry/exit models). The narrative should align with Attachment 1: Proposed Work Plan.
 - The **goals and anticipated outcomes** of the program, including number of participants served, number of certifications achieved, number of individuals who complete the different job-specific training options, numbers of participants employed in clean energy jobs post-graduation or enrolled in other advanced training programs. Provide a brief narrative explaining how these outcomes will be achieved. The narrative should align with Attachment 2: Participant Demographics & Outcomes Summary.
 - A brief **description of the training and curricula** to be used that aligns with the Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework. The narrative must describe how the bridge program will be delivered and propose to offer at least (2) job-specific training options. The narrative should list the nationally recognized certifications or credentials program participants will achieve during training and should align with Attachment 3: Sample Curriculum and Proposed Curriculum. Applicants should provide evidence of employer demand if they propose additional job-specific training options, beyond those described in the Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework. These additional training options must include industry-recognized credentials.
 - **Work-based learning opportunities** (minimum of 10% of training hours), as well as plans to provide education around exploration of clean energy career pathways, job search skills, resume development and interview practice.
 - A brief description of any **existing training programs or on-the-job training opportunities** the program will connect participants to.



Outline for 3-year Plan for Program Delivery

1. Outreach and Recruitment
2. Program design, curriculum, methods of delivery
 1. Description of program services
 2. Goals and outcomes
 3. Training and curricula description
 4. Work-based learning
 5. Existing training programs
 6. Student support services
 7. Performance based stipends
3. Barrier Reduction Program Services
4. Coordination of Activities
5. Equity focused Program Culture
6. Data tracking and Reporting

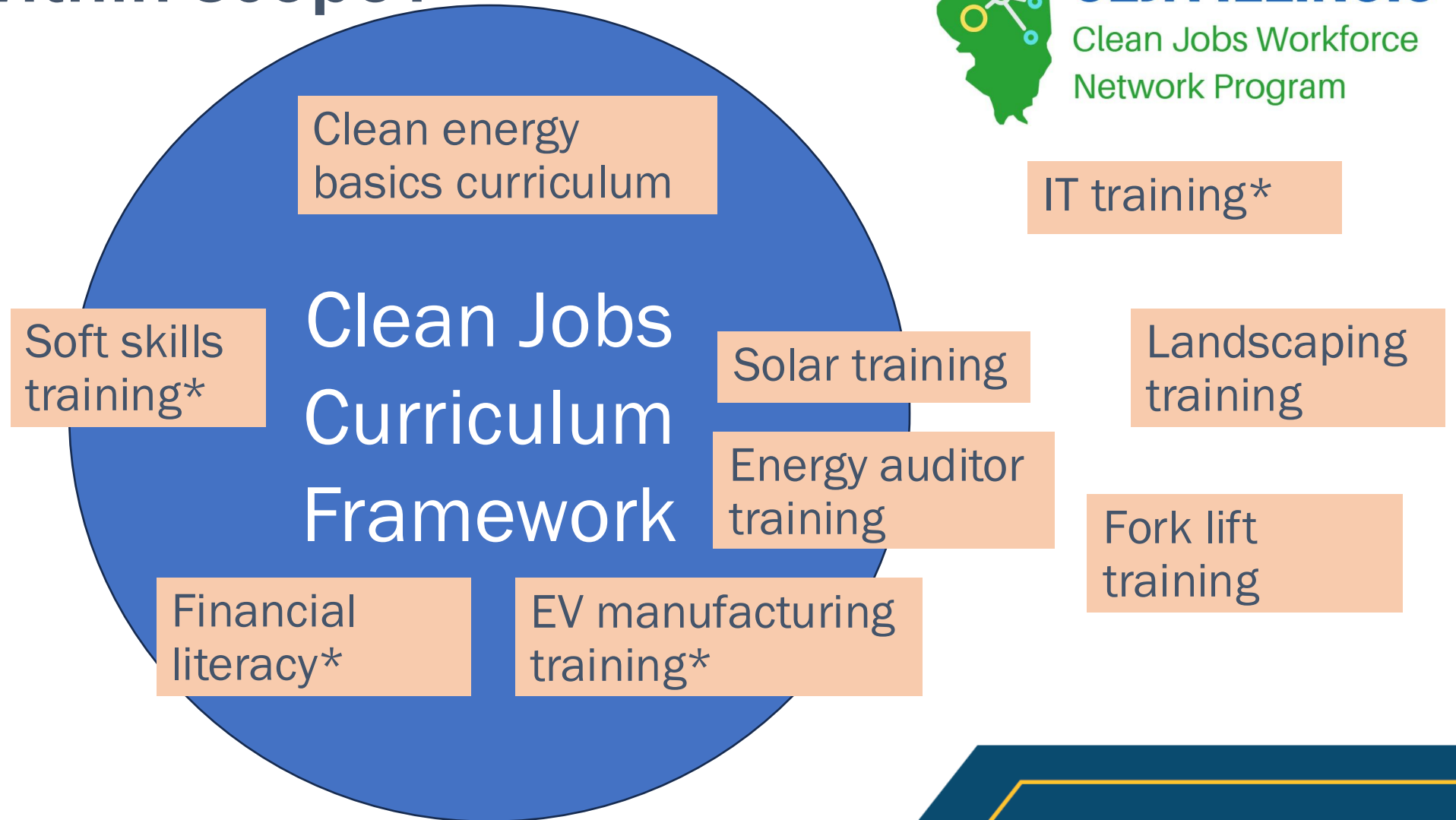


What is within scope?



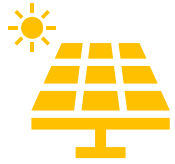
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A reminder: The focus is clean energy jobs



- Solar energy



- Wind energy



- Electric vehicle
- Green hydrogen



- Energy efficiency
- Healthy building materials



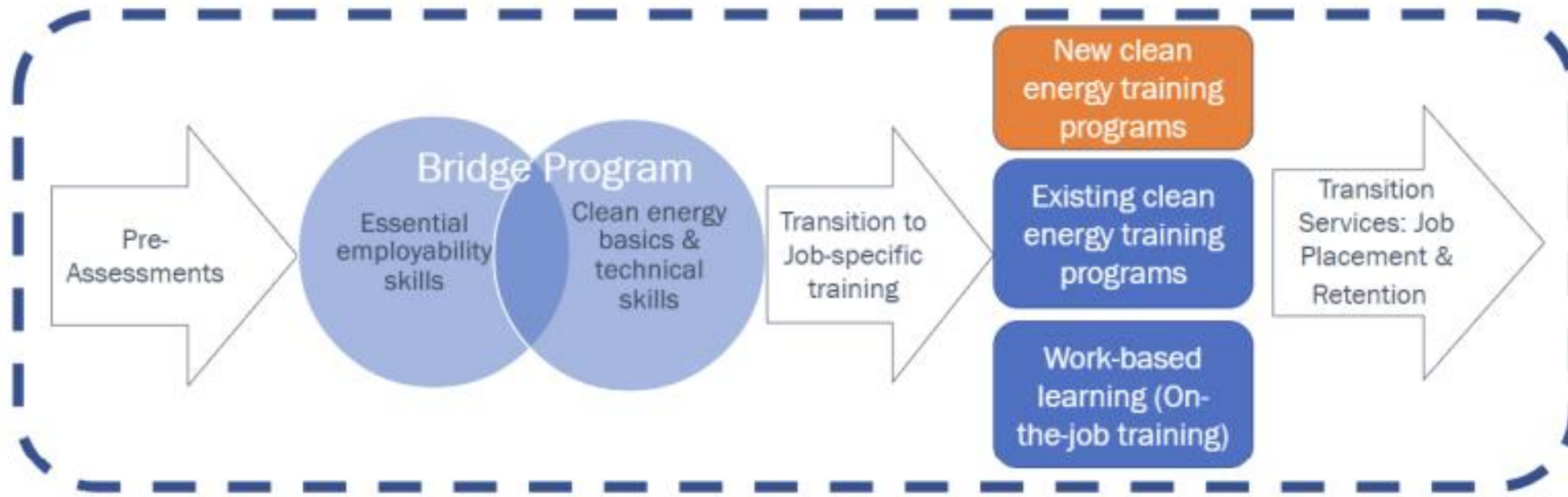
- Energy storage
- Industries achieving emission reductions

Clean energy businesses or nonprofits **manufacture, develop, build, install, maintain, or provide ancillary services** in these industries. They provide administrative, sales, and other support functions in these industries.

Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework



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Wrap-around support: stipends, childcare, tutoring, transportation, etc.

Job Specific Training
Options



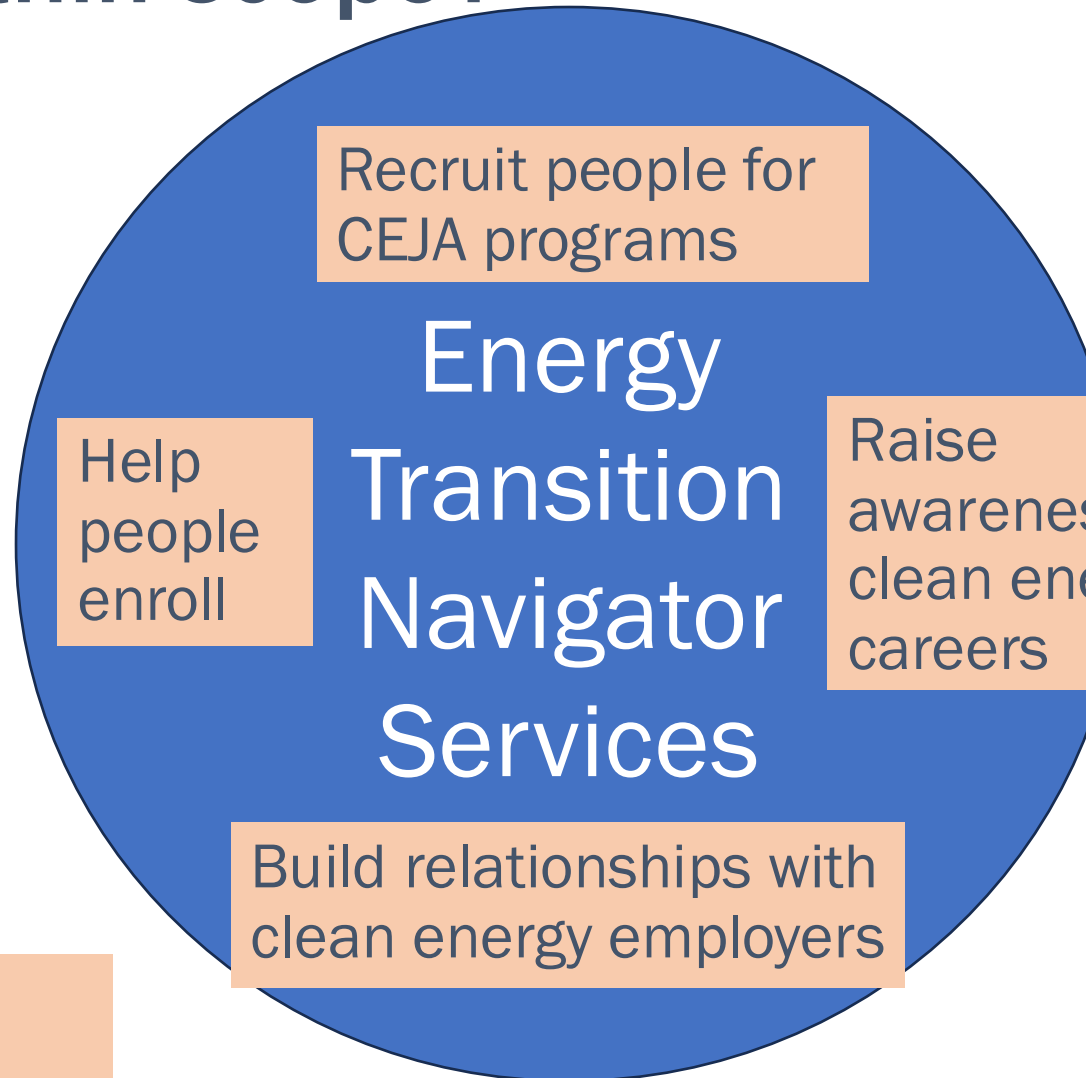
- Solar PV training
- Energy auditor training
- Weatherization training
- HVAC training
- Construction & building inspector training
- Auto mechanic training with hybrid/EV focus
- Wind turbine technician training

What is within scope?



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Energy Transition
Navigator Program



Recruit people for
CEJA programs

Help
people
enroll

Energy
Transition
Navigator
Services

Raise
awareness of
clean energy
careers

Build relationships with
clean energy employers

Recruit people for
other workforce
programs

Provide clean
energy training

Help place
people in jobs

Mentor
participants



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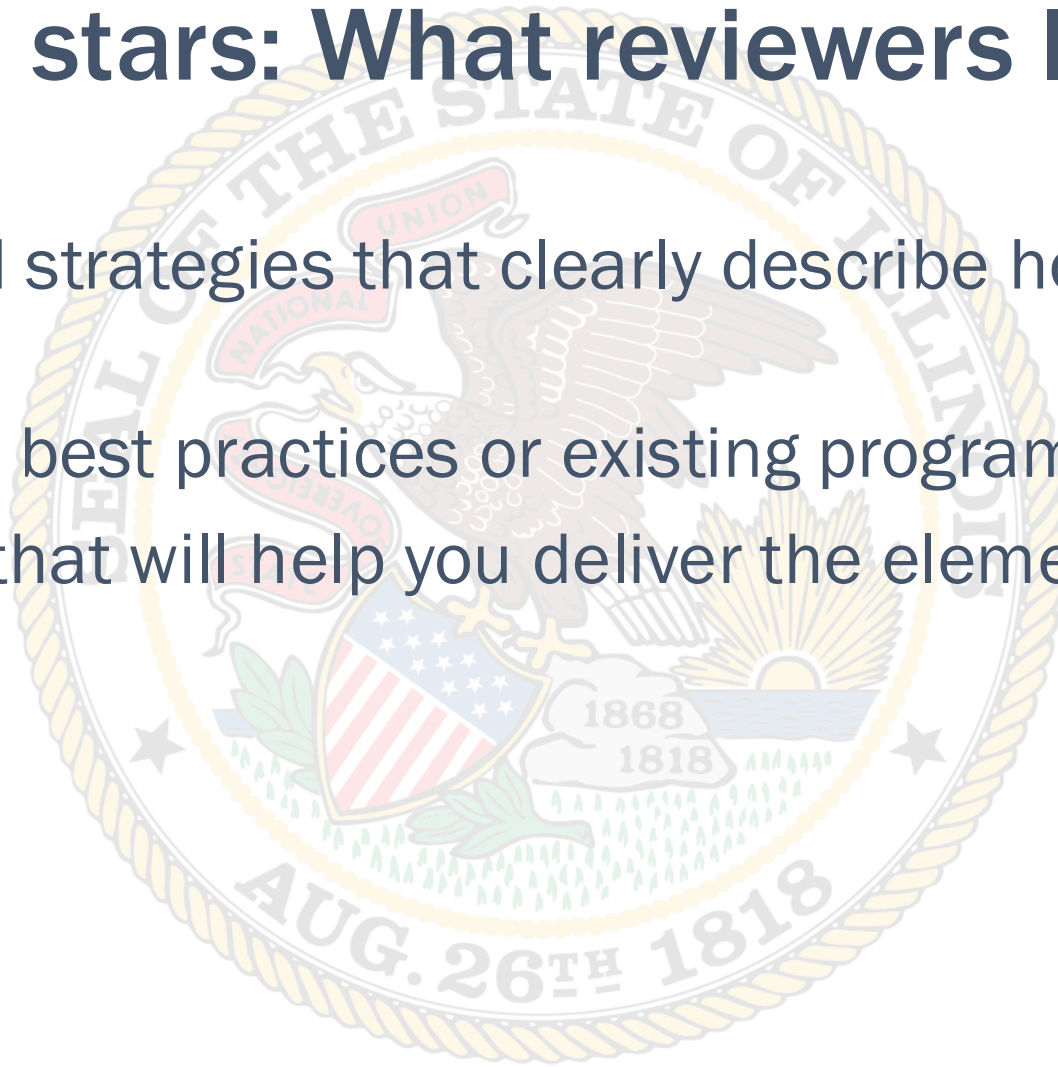
NOFO explains *what*; You explain *how*

What	How
Recruit target populations	Specific recruitment strategies & activities, equity focus
Deliver clean energy basics curriculum	How you'll deliver the curriculum, strategies, activities, and materials you'll use
Deliver barrier reduction services	How you'll partner with other organizations to provide services for people.
Coordinate with other CEJA programs	How you'll work with other CEJA grantees (ET Navigators, Workforce Hubs) to accomplish common recruitment goals.



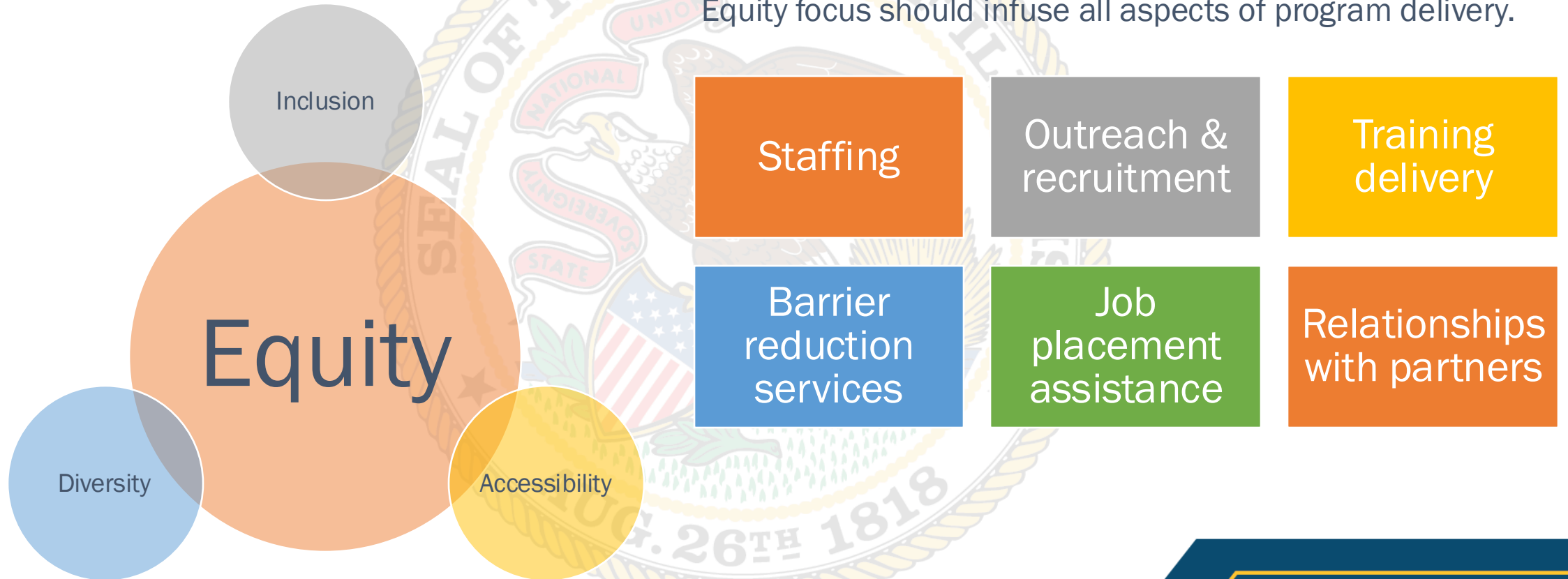
Some gold stars: What reviewers like to see

- Examples and strategies that clearly describe how you'll deliver the program.
- References to best practices or existing programs that work.
- Partnerships that will help you deliver the elements effectively and efficiently.



Equity-focused program culture

Equity focus should infuse all aspects of program delivery.



Equity-focused strategies

What	How
Staffing	Diverse hiring, equity training
Outreach	Strategies, partnerships, events to reach diverse target populations effectively.
Training	Strategies to leverage the strengths of diverse participants, supportive communications, empowering skill training. Strategies to make training more accessible.
Transition services	Plans to support and coach diverse participants as they transition to employment.
Wrap around services	Strategies to reduce barriers to participation. Strategies to empower participants.



Frequently Asked Questions



How much customization is allowed of the training?

- Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework outlines minimum requirements which include delivery of bridge program and at least two job-specific training options.
- Hubs may propose:
 - Job specific training options (pick 2—or propose a different one based on local job needs)
 - Connections to existing training options
 - Additional content
 - Specific curriculum
 - Delivery methods
 - Work-based learning opportunities



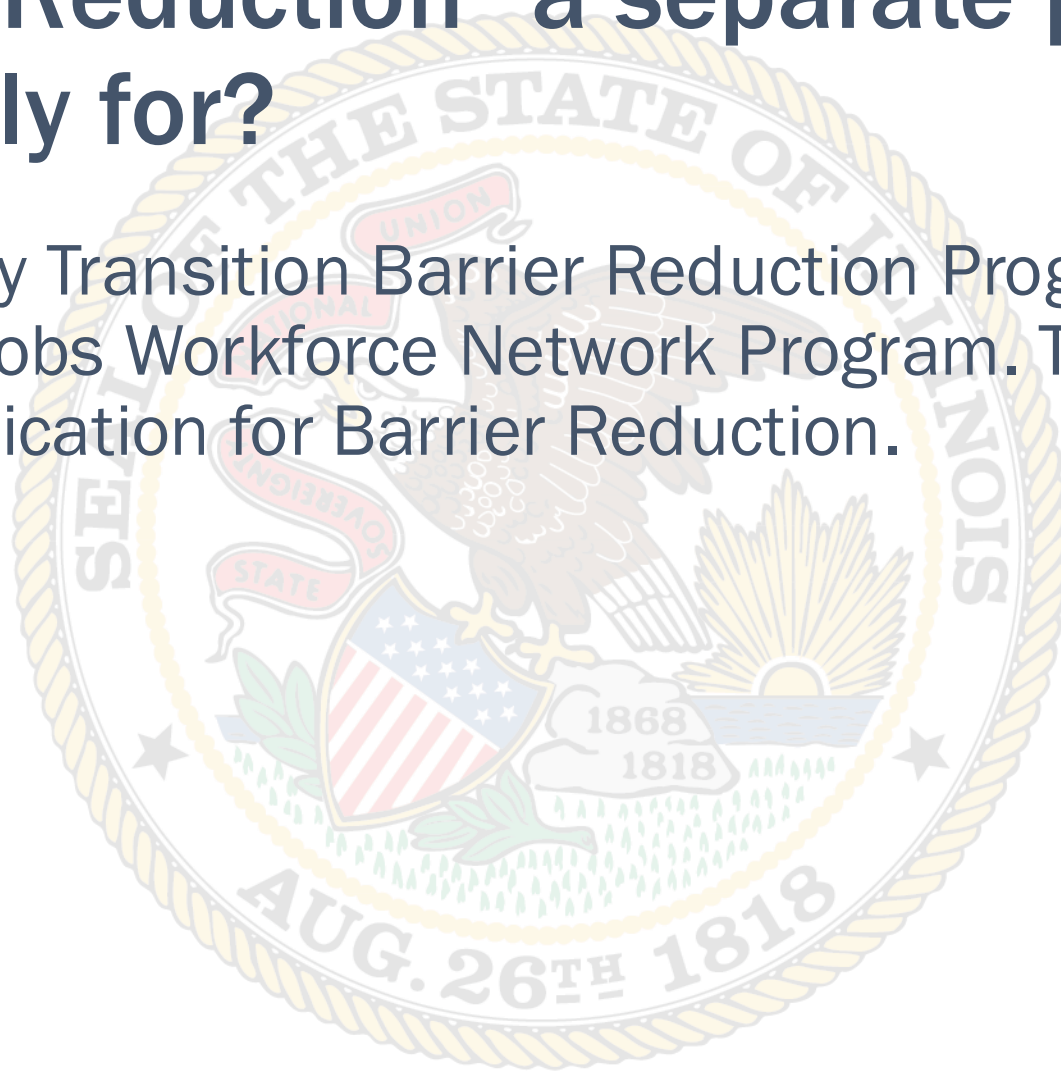
How do I find partners & employers?

- See our “partnering” [contact list](#)
- Identify the training providers and community-based organizations in your area.
 - Who offers construction training?
 - Who offers training in clean energy?
 - Who offers job readiness training?
 - Who offers GED/Adult education training?
 - Who offers support services?
- Identify the clean energy employers in your region
 - Who might help with work-based learning? Hiring your participants?



Is “Barrier Reduction” a separate program one has to apply for?

- No, the Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program is embedded in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program. There is not a separate application for Barrier Reduction.



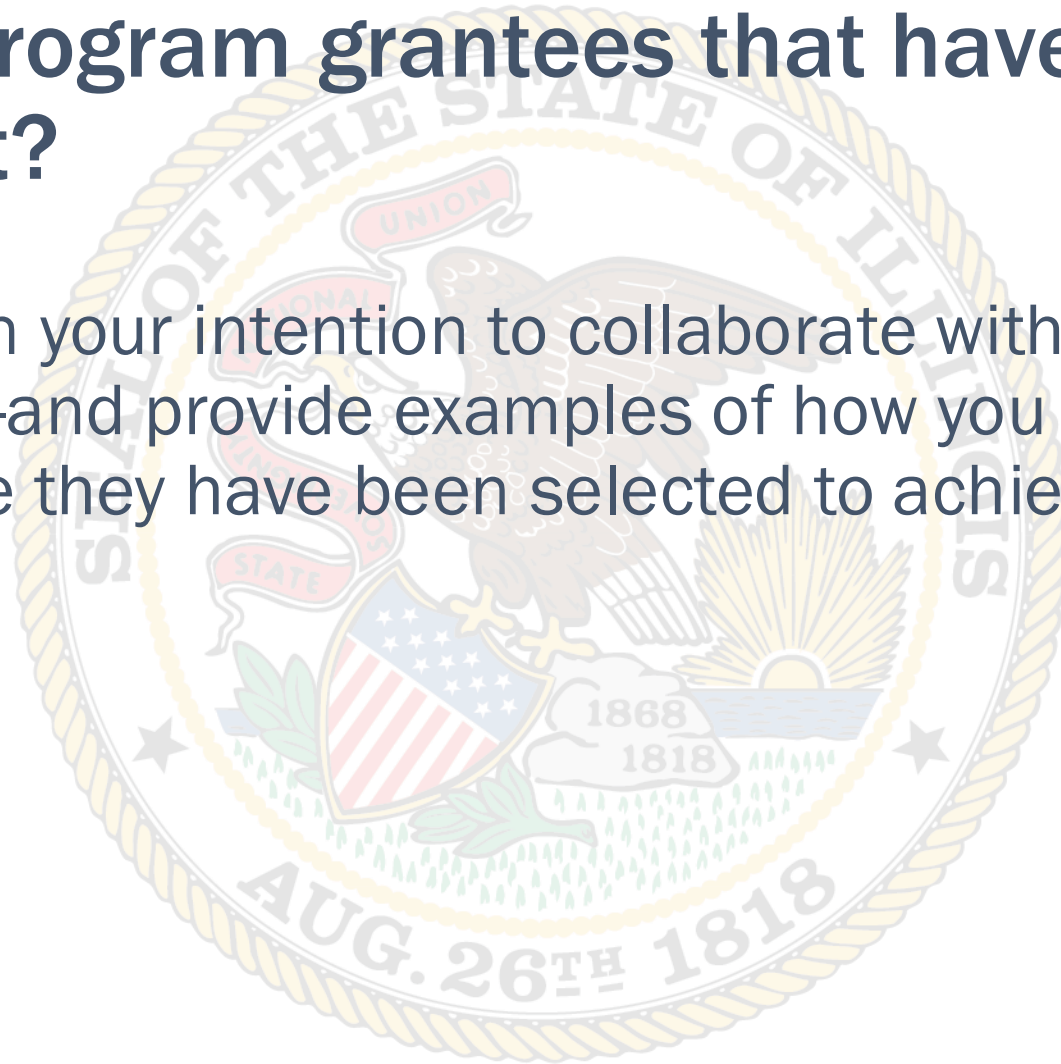
What are reasonable goals for enrollments, completions, and transitions?

- Consider a cost per enrolled participant range between \$10,000 and \$15,000 (not including barrier reduction).
- What percentage of enrollees will complete the program? What percentage will get a job? You tell us what is reasonable, based on past experience, expectations.



How can applicants explain how they will partner with CEJA program grantees that haven't been selected yet?

- Please explain your intention to collaborate with the grantees that are selected—and provide examples of how you might work with grantees once they have been selected to achieve program goals.



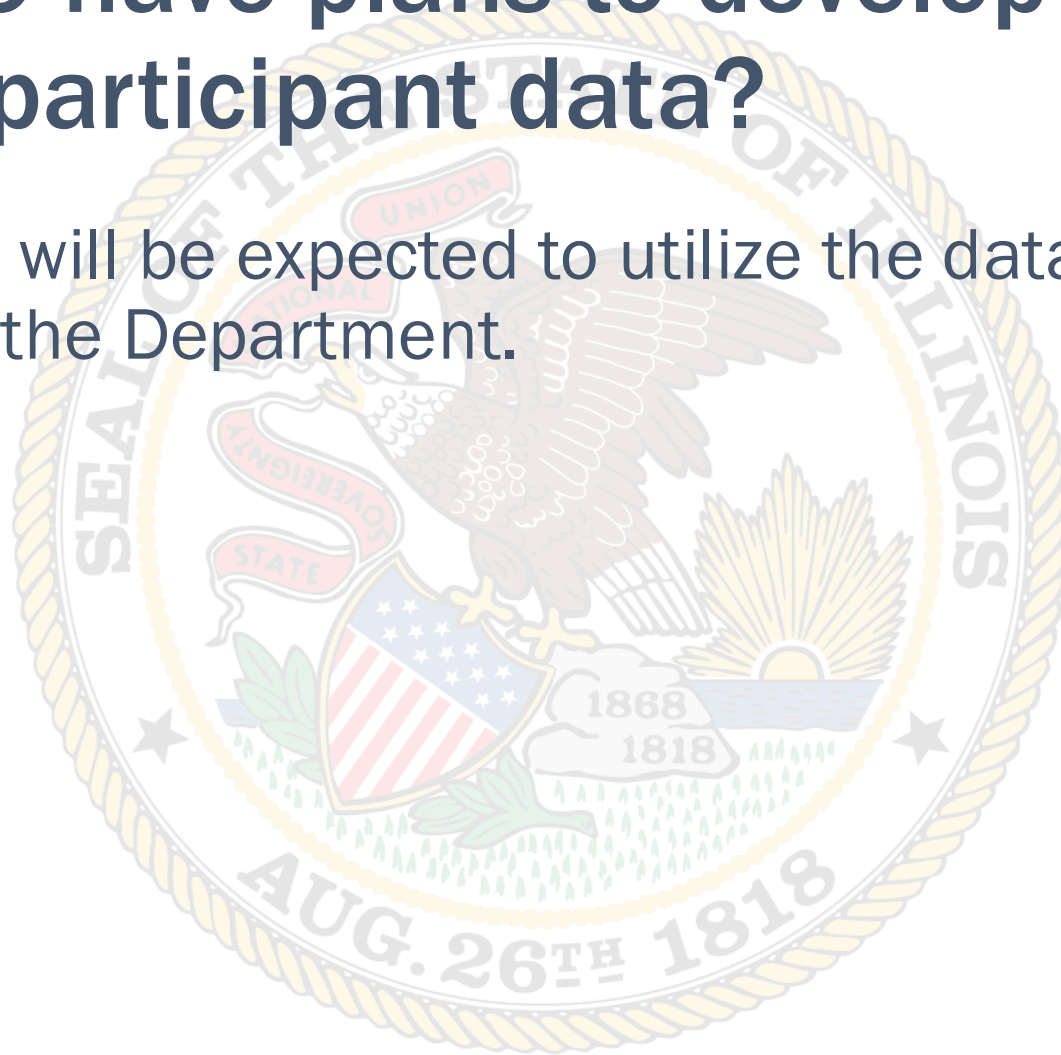
Is the department weighing one target population over the other when evaluating applications?

- People with barriers to employment, people living in equity investment communities, displaced energy workers, foster care alumni, and returning residents are ALL prioritized.
- Note the prioritization for participation placement “where the applicant pool allows.”
- Among these areas and populations, you tell us where the greatest needs are in your community and how you will meet those needs through programming.



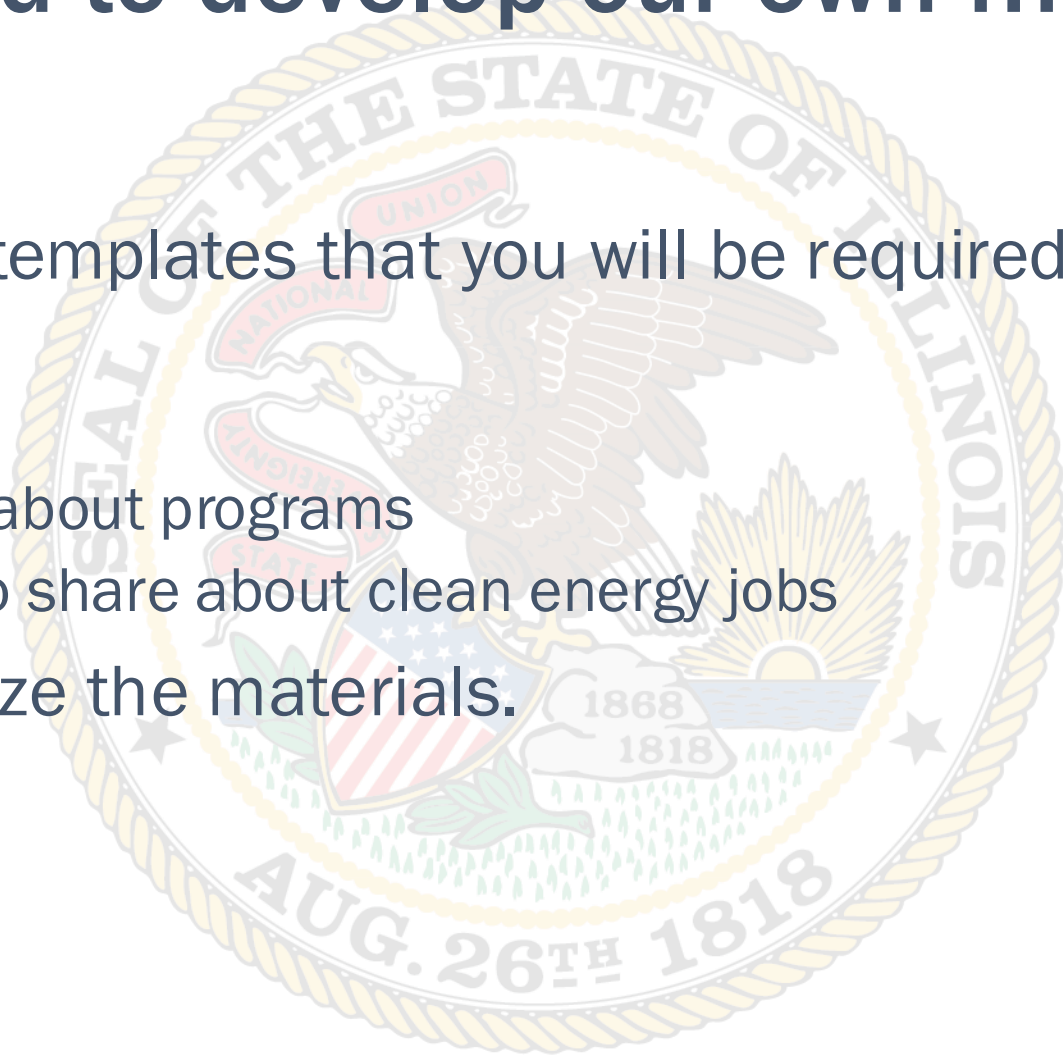
Does DCEO have plans to develop a system for collecting participant data?

- Yes, Grantees will be expected to utilize the data reporting system developed by the Department.



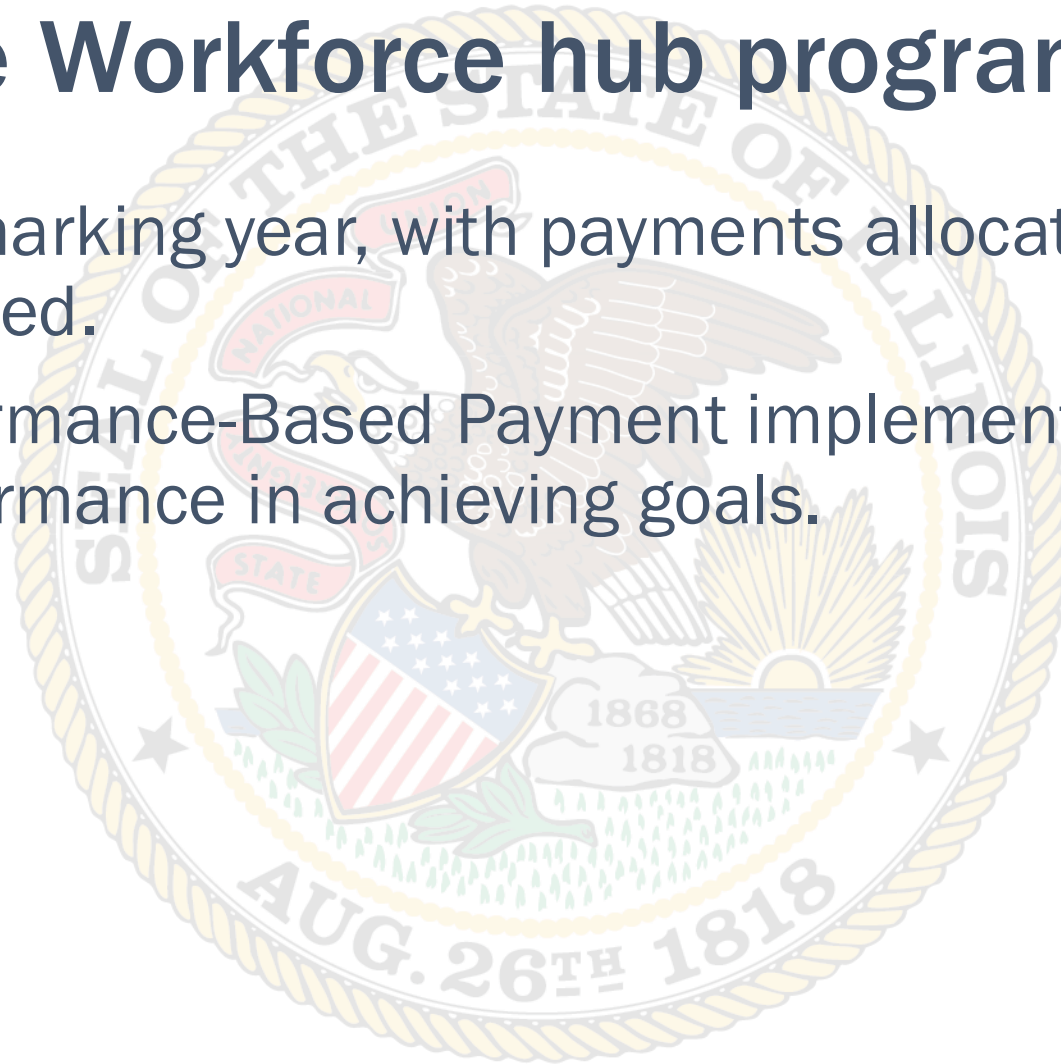
Do we need to develop our own marketing materials?

- We'll provide templates that you will be required to use.
 - Fliers
 - Posters
 - Fact sheets about programs
 - Resources to share about clean energy jobs
- You'll customize the materials.



Will the performance-based payment model be used for the Workforce hub program?

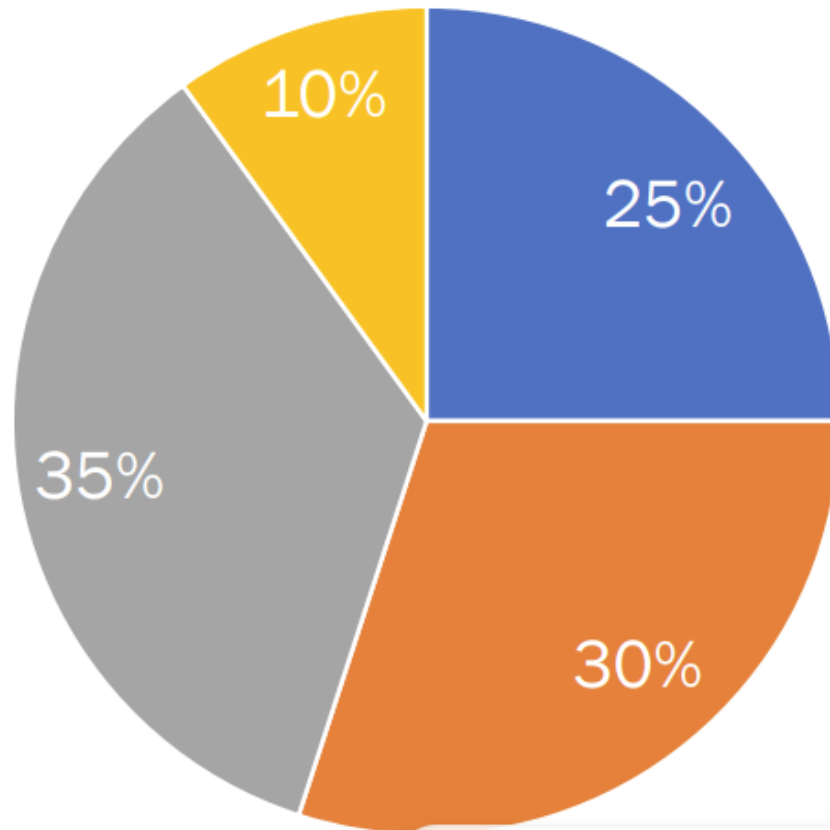
- Year 1: Benchmarking year, with payments allocated based on services rendered.
- Year 2-3: Performance-Based Payment implemented, with payments based on performance in achieving goals.



Performance-based Payment Model

- Enrollments
- Completions
- Transitions
- Close-out reports

*Only Clean Jobs
Workforce Network
Program



Real-time reporting,
monthly disbursements.



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Year 1: Benchmarking

Payments will be provided for services rendered.

Grantees work with Program/Grant Managers to establish reasonable Year 1 Work Plan Goals

- Start-up Goals, Milestones
- Enrollment Goals
- Completion Goals
- Transition Goals

Year 1 Performance in achieving goals will impact renewal for years 2 and 3



Year 2 and Beyond: Performance-Based Payment

- What is Performance-Based Payment?
 - Rooted in belief that funding should be based on an org's measurable impact
 - Grantees are reimbursed on a per-participant basis according to the reported progress – reimbursed as you meet outcomes and goals



Will the Energy Transition Navigator utilize a performance-based payment model?

No.



Can we request upfront funding to get the program started?

- Yes! Up to 20% of the total annual grant amount can be requested.



More support for Applicants



Sign up for one-on-one Technical Assistance

CEJA NOFO Coaches provide technical assistance on developing an effective grant application. Applicants may sign up for multiple TA sessions.

Use the QR code or link to sign up:

https://forms.office.com/r/4qUkTd_gCFY

CEJA NOFO Applicant Technical Assistance Sign Up



Applied before?

- Get feedback from merit reviewers.
- Contact Char Flickinger to set up a meeting, get a summary of reviewer comments.
 - Charlotte.Flickinger@illinois.gov



Technical Assistance Webinars

Watch recordings of previous sessions on the NOFO Application pages.



Reminder: Application Due Date

- Submit applications by February 23rd to be considered for Round 2.



Upcoming NOFO release estimates

Within the next month, the Department expects to release the following three Notices of Funding Opportunity

- Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program
- Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program
- Community Solar and Energy Sovereignty Program

Stay tuned! <https://dceo.illinois.gov/ceja.html>



Send questions to
ceo.ceja@illinois.gov

Review answers by looking at the Q&A
on the NOFO pages



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