

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

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	Kristi Dula (kristi.dula@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	FY24-1
Funding Opportunity Title	Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program
CSFA Number	420-35-3345
CSFA Popular Name	Primes Contractor Accelerator Program
Anticipated Number of Awards	3
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$9,000,000
Award Range	\$1000000 - \$3000000
Source of Funding	State
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	No
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	04/03/2024
Application Date Range	04/03/2024 - 07/02/2024 : 5:00PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3345-2740.html
Technical Assistance Session	Offered : Yes Mandatory : No Date : 04/10/2024 : 3:00PM Registration link : https://illinois.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcpdeurrz8jGtMM10knGvs3d6Umxl7CTXhB#/registration

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program

NOFO ID: 3345-2740

For your application to be considered, your entity must be pre-qualified. For more information on pre-qualification, please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/granteeresources.html>.

A. Program Description

Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to launch the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program (the “Program”). DCEO will fund up to three (3) eligible applicant teams to serve as the Primes Program Leads to deliver the Program. It is Illinois’ goal to increase business opportunities for clean energy contractors that serve areas impacted by economic, social, and environmental challenges.

Program Description

This NOFO sets forth the requirements for funding for the Primes Program Leads who will deliver the Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, as specified by the Energy Transition Act (“Climate and Equitable Jobs Act,” or CEJA), 20 ILCS 730/5-55 Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program.

The Program will support the development and growth of clean energy contractor businesses. Program services will be offered in 3 Program delivery areas:

- Northern Illinois
- Central Illinois
- Southern Illinois

Primes Program Leads will provide services to a small cohort of participant businesses to help them grow their businesses, building their capacity to:

- Apply for appropriate State and private business opportunities.
- Apply for Minority Business Enterprise certification and other relevant certifications and approved vendor status for programs offered by utilities or other entities.
- Prepare bids and responses to Requests for Proposals.
- Become listed in any relevant directories and databases organized by the Department of Central Management Services.
- Connect with and participate in the Illinois Power Agency’s Illinois Shines Program (also referred to as the Adjustable Block Program) and Solar for All Programs and utility programs.
- Apply for financial development assistance programs such as zero-interest and low-interest loans of the Climate Bank.

Services provided by Primes Program Leads to participant contractors will include:

- Business coaching based on the participant's needs and opportunities to connect with participants in other Department programs
- Dispensing of operational support grants to support the growth of participant contractors (included in Primes Program Leads’ budget). Grants should not exceed \$1,000,000 annually and are to be used for upfront project costs and pre-development funding, among others. The amount of the grant will be based on the anticipated project size and scope.

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- Providing progressive, one-on-one business coaching based on participant needs. This will include monthly review of participant metrics and advice on achieving goals.
- Assistance in developing business plans, including a 5-year business strategy.
- Technical assistance and training.
- Assignment and supervision of mentors for a minimum of two years by a qualified company in the declared field for participant contractors.
- Connections to Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Services and other Department programs.

DCEO Program Administration

This Program will be administered by the Department through a Primes Program Administrator, hired by the Department (20 ILCS 730/5-55), who will oversee the work of the Primes Program Leads in each region. The Primes Program Administrator shall work with the Illinois Finance Authority and the Climate Bank as established by Article 850 of the Illinois Finance Authority Act or comparable financing institution so that loan loss reserves may be sufficient to underwrite \$7,000,000 annually in low-interest loans in each of the 3 Program delivery areas.

Participant Selection

A cohort of 3-5 participant contractors will be selected from each Program Delivery Area every 18 months, using selection criteria developed by the Department. The Primes Program Leads will assist the Department in selecting contractors who best meet the following criteria:

1. Two or more years of experience in a clean energy or a related contracting field;
2. At least \$5,000 in annual business; and
3. A substantial and demonstrated commitment of investing in and partnering with individuals and institutions in equity investment eligible communities.

The Department shall develop additional scoring criteria to select contractors for the Program. Selection criteria will include job creation and wage benefits, maturity of contractor's strategic growth plans, quality of past projects, contractor capacity and future revenue potential, willingness to assume risk, evidence of business models that build wealth in the larger underserved community, and history of commitment to advancing equity. The Program shall cap contractors in the energy efficiency sector at 50% of available cohort spots as well as 50% of available grants and loans, if possible.

Mentorship Program

A key element of the Program is the mentorship of participant contractors. The Primes Program Leads shall recruit, and the Primes Program Administrator shall select the participants with the approval of the Department, private companies with the following qualifications to mentor participants for at least two years and assist them in succeeding in the clean energy industry:

1. Excellent standing with state clean energy programs;
2. Four or more years of experience in their field;
3. A proven track record of success in their field.

Mentor companies may receive a stipend, determined by the Department, for their participation, and mentor companies may identify what level of stipend they require. Stipends for mentor companies will be provided by the Primes Program Leads and shall be included in their annual budgets.

Program Coordination

The Program under this NOFO is part of a highly interconnected set of Illinois statewide clean energy workforce and contractor development programming. The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA, Public Act 102-0662 <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/102/PDF/102-0017.pdf>) establishes various new programs and sets forth goals and policies to accelerate the adoption of clean energy sources, electric vehicles, and energy efficiency. Because these goals will require significant expansion of businesses and well-trained workers in the clean energy industry, the CEJA legislation includes several new workforce and contractor development programs.

Primes Program Leads will be required to collaborate and coordinate with the other CEJA workforce and economic development programs as they become available. Successful applicants will demonstrate awareness of these programs and recognition of the need for collaboration and coordination.

Though these programs are not in operation yet, information about each program is available here: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/ceja.html>.

- Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (20 ILCS 730/5-20). Creates 13 workforce hubs run by community-based organizations to provide clean jobs training and a career pipeline for equity-eligible individuals and displaced energy workers.
- Energy Transition Navigators (20 ILCS 730/5-35). Community-based organizations that provide education, outreach, and recruitment to eligible populations to access workforce development programs.
- Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program (20 ILCS 730/5-40). Trains equity-eligible individuals for careers in clean energy sector construction and building trades.
- Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program (20 ILCS 730/5-50). Trains soon-to-be-released (within 36 months) incarcerated people for jobs in the solar and energy efficiency sectors.
- Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program (20 ILCS 730/5-45). A program for clean energy contractors seeking to grow their business through access to low-cost capital, business coaching, assistance applying for certifications, training, procurement programs, and preparing bids and proposals.
- Jobs and Environmental Justice Grant Program (20 ILCS 730/5-60). A program that provides upfront capital to support the development of projects, businesses, community organizations, and jobs creating opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations, and to provide seed capital to support community ownership of renewable energy projects (including community solar).

Contractor Incubator vs. Primes Accelerator. While the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program (“Contractor Incubator Program”) and the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program (“Primes Accelerator Program”) have some overlapping services, the Contractor Incubator Program is more focused on serving businesses in the start-up phase, while the Primes Accelerator Program is focused on next-stage business growth. There is also a significant difference in commitment from participant contractors. The Primes Accelerator Program provides intensive, long-term business coaching, technical assistance, and operational support grants to a small cohort of contractors. Contractor Incubator Program services are more short-term and individualized, with a menu of different technical assistance and training services that participant contractors can receive. It is expected that the Contractor Incubators will serve a larger number of contractor businesses. Contractors may start by receiving services with the Contractor Incubator Program and then later apply to participate in the Primes Accelerator Program when they are ready to commit to receiving more intensive support. Participant contractors in the Primes Accelerator Program may also receive services from the Contractor Incubator Program.

This Program is also intended to coordinate with and build upon the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network, which assists pre-venture entrepreneurs with launching their new business ventures and provides guidance to existing businesses to help them grow and expand, and the APEX Accelerator Network (formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, or PTACs), which provides guidance for government contracting success.

The Program’s regional focus facilitates reduced administrative costs, the maximum use of available resources, and stronger regional coordination of all small business assistance services to better meet regional needs.

Program Definitions

This NOFO uses the following definitions established in CEJA.

Equity investment eligible community: The geographic areas throughout Illinois that would most benefit from equitable investments by the State. These investments are designed to combat discrimination and foster sustainable economic growth. Specifically, equity investment eligible community means the following areas:

- R3 Areas, as established in Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, including opportunities in the energy sector. Eligible R3 Areas are defined in the R3 service map: <https://r3.illinois.gov/eligibility>. Criteria for defining R3 Areas include rates of gun injury, unemployment, child poverty, incarceration with Illinois Department of Corrections, and historic disinvestment.
- Environmental justice communities, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency pursuant to the Illinois Power Agency Act, but excluding racial and ethnic indicators, where residents have historically been subject to disproportionate pollution burdens, including pollution from the energy sector. For more information on the criteria and for a map that defines these areas in Illinois, refer to the Illinois Solar For All webpage on Environmental Justice Communities (<https://www.illinoissfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/>). The budget should include the operational support grants not to exceed \$1,000,000 annually to support the growth of participant contractors with access to capital for upfront project costs and pre-development funding, among others. The amount of the grant shall be based on anticipated project size and scope.

Approved vendor, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency, means vendors that are approved to develop projects for Illinois Solar for All and the Adjustable Block Program (Illinois Shines). See <https://www.illinoissfa.com/for-vendors/> and <https://illinoissshines.com/vendors-and-designees/>

Minority business means a minority owned business, defined in Section 2 of the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act, means a business which is at least 51% owned by one or more minority persons, or in the case of a corporation, at least 51% of the stock in which is owned by one or more minority persons; and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more of the minority individuals who own it. .

Minority Business Enterprise certification means the certification or recognition certification affidavit from the State of Illinois Department of Central Management Services Business Enterprise Program or a program with equivalent requirements.

Returning Resident means any United States resident who is 17 years of age or older and who has been in the physical custody of the Department of Corrections within the last 10 years.

Core equity values, as defined in the Illinois Office of Equity “Illinois Toward Equity Action Framework” (<https://oe.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/oe/documents/illinois-towards-equity/ite-action-framework-toolkit-3-13-23.pdf>).

Required Program Elements

The Primes Program Leads will be responsible for providing Program services within their respective delivery areas. The required Program elements to be delivered are as follows:

1. **Outreach and recruitment.** Primes Program Leads will publicize the program and recruit a cohort of 3-5 applicants every 18 months. Applicant Team budgets may include funds to pay community-based organizations with a track record of working with equity investment eligible communities to assist with this work. Solicit information from participants, which participants shall be required to provide, necessary to understand the participant's business, including financial and income information, certifications that the participant is seeking to obtain, and ownership, employee, and subcontractor data, including compensation, length of service, and demographics.

2. **Application assistance and participant selection.** Primes Program Leads will assist applicants in applying to participate in the Program. They will assist the Department in selecting participants for each cohort, using selection criteria defined in Statute.
3. **Assessments and goal setting.** Once participants have been selected, Primes Program Leads will conduct entry and annual assessments with the cohort of participants to identify training, coaching, and other Program service needs. They will assist participants in developing workplans and goals on entry and annually.
4. **Business coaching.** Primes Program Leads will provide a progressive course of one-on-one coaching. This will include assisting participants in developing an achievable 5-year business plan and advice on achieving participant goals.
5. **Expert coaching referrals.** Primes Program Leads will match participants with individualized expert coaching as needed, including training on working with returning residents and companies that employ them.
6. **Participant progress tracking.** Primes Program Leads will utilize a metric reporting system developed by the Department to track participants' progress towards meeting their own goals and Program goals. They will meet monthly with participants to track metrics and review progress. On an annual basis, they will review participants' metrics and make a recommendation to the Department about whether the participant should continue in the Program, be considered a Program graduate, and whether adjustments should be made to a participant's grant funding, loans, and related services.
7. **Training and technical assistance.** Primes Program Leads will provide training and technical assistance to help participant contractors:
 - a. Apply for appropriate government and private business opportunities.
 - b. Apply for Minority Business Enterprise certification and other relevant certifications and approved vendor statuses.
 - c. Prepare bids and responses to Request for Proposals.
 - d. Become listed in any relevant directories and databases organized by the Department of Central Management Services.
 - e. Connect with and participate in the Illinois Power Agency's Illinois Shines and Solar for All Programs and utility programs.
 - f. Apply for approved vendor status for programs offered by utilities or other entities.
 - g. Apply for financial development assistance programs such as zero-interest and low-interest loans of the Climate Bank as established by Article 850 of the Illinois Finance Authority Act or comparable financing mechanism.
8. **Mentorship recruitment & coordination.** Primes Program Leads will recruit mentor companies in participant contractors' field to provide mentor services to participant contractors. They will collaborate with mentor companies to create a plan for at least two years of ongoing contact and mentor services, such as on-the-job training, site walkthroughs, business process and structure walkthroughs, quality assurance and quality control reviews, and other relevant activities. They will recommend the mentor company-mentee pairings and associated mentor company stipends for approval. They will conduct an annual review of each mentor company-mentee pairing and recommend whether the pairing continues for a second year and the level of stipend that is appropriate. The review shall also ensure that any profit sharing and purchased services agreements adhere to guidelines established by the Primes Program Administrator.
9. **Networking and connections:** Primes Program Leads will host networking events and other activities to facilitate connections between participants and potential partners, subcontractors and employees. Primes Program Leads will provide networking opportunities for participants to connect with participants in other Department programs supporting contractors, such as PTACs and SBDCs. They will utilize the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to connect participating contractors with Illinois Power Agency (IPA) resources.
10. **Coordination.** Primes Program Leads will coordinate efforts and services with the other CEJA workforce programs, as directed by the Department. This will include coordinating with Contractor Incubator Program grantees (when selected) to match participant contractors with Contractor Incubator Program offerings.

11. **Operational grant disbursement.** Primes Program Leads will dispense a participant's awarded operational grant funding, based on anticipated project size and scope. Operational grant funding should be included in the applicant's budget. Grants should not exceed \$1,000,000 annually to support the growth of participant contractors with access to capital for upfront project costs and pre-development funding, among others. The amount of the grant shall be based on anticipated project size and scope.
12. **Metrics and reporting.** Primes Program Leads will collect and report data from participants, which participants shall be required to provide, necessary to understand the participant's business, including financial and income information, certifications that the participant is seeking to obtain, and ownership, employee, and subcontractor data, including compensation, length of service, and demographics.

Performance Goals and Measures

The primary goal of the Program is to increase the economic vitality of participant contractors to develop and implement clean energy projects.

Performance Measures and Reporting: Each Prime Program Administrator and Primes Program Leads shall be required to collaborate, collect, and submit quarterly reports as required by the Department.

Program performance metrics include, but are not limited to:

- Demographic information on cohort recruiting and formation, including racial, gender, geographic distribution data, and data on the number and percentage of R3 residents, environmental justice community residents, foster care alumni, and formerly convicted persons who are cohort applicants and admitted participants
- Participant contractor engagement in other Illinois clean energy programs such as the Adjustable Block program, Illinois Solar for All program, and the utility-run energy efficiency and electric vehicle programs*
- Retention of participants in each cohort
- Total projects bid, started, and completed by participants, including information about revenue, hiring, and subcontractor relationships with projects*
- Certifications issued
- Employment data for contractor hires and industry jobs created, including demographic, salary, length of service, and geographic data*
- Grants and loans distributed
- Participant satisfaction with the Program
- Number of business coaching and consultation hours

*Starred metrics shall be collected from Program participants and graduates for 10 years from entrance into the Program to help the Department and Program Administrator understand the Program's long term effect.

Confidentiality: The Primes Program Leads and the Department shall protect the confidentiality of any personal information provided by Program participants regarding the participant's status as a formerly incarcerated person or foster care recipient. However, the Department may publish aggregated data on the number of participants that were formerly incarcerated or foster care recipients so long as that publication protects the identities of those persons. Any person who applies to participate in the Program may elect not to share with the Primes Leads and the Department whether they are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system or were formerly convicted.

Other Information

B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing state funds from the Energy Transition Assistance Fund appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly under Public Act 103-0006

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(<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/103/PDF/103-0006.pdf>. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is up to \$Total is,000,000 for the first twelve (12) months of the award. Awards will range from \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 for the delivery of the Clean Energy Primes Accelerator Program in each region identified in Section A of this NOFO. An applicant may submit multiple applications if they intend to administer the Program in more than one region.

The Department expects to make three (3) awards through this NOFO.

Anticipated start date for awards is September 1, 2024. The period of performance is expected to be September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025.

The initial period of performance is expected to be twelve (12) months. The Department intends to offer up to two (2) twelve (12) month extensions for each award based on the performance of the grantee. Additional funds of up to \$9,000,000 may be available for each of the twelve (12) month extension periods.

Applicants should include the cost for participation in regular meetings and networking activities in their budgets. This is a direct cost for the grant and not an administrative cost. It should estimate time and potential in-state travel costs.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need as defined in Section E.1.

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-tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number>);
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>);
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<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.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/corp.html);
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>).

Marking SAM.gov registrations as “public” will allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information. Making the SAM.gov registration “private” will not prevent the review; however, it will slow down the review process.

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.

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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:

Eligible applicants are organizations located within their Program Delivery Area that have experience in the following:

- Leading a large contractor-based business in Illinois;
- Coaching and mentoring;
- Developing relationships with companies in the Program Delivery Area;
- Working with equity investment eligible community members, organizations, and business;
- Knowledge of the Illinois clean energy industry.

Organizations may propose to deliver all required elements or may subcontract to other entities for the provision of portions of Program elements.

The Department will consider eligible applicant organizations and teams led by experienced organizations that demonstrate the required history, knowledge, and qualifications, as described above, and the capacity to deliver all required Program elements. The Department encourages applicant teams to include experienced organizations that deliver other contractor assistance programs, such as the Illinois Small Business Development Centers and the Illinois APEX Accelerator Program (formerly the Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Program, or PTAC). Organizations that deliver these programs may be the lead applicant or a sub-grantee.

Organizations with less experience and the history, qualifications, and capacity to deliver some but not all required Program elements are encouraged to apply in partnership with other relevant organizations to create a team with the required history, qualifications, and capacity to effectively design and deliver all required services.

The Department reserves the right to assign partners, mentors, and training to the awarded grantees to increase the Department’s capacity to successfully deliver the Program.

Organizations that wish to apply to deliver multiple CEJA workforce and contractor programs (including the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, the Energy Transition Navigator Program, and the Clean Jobs Contractor Incubator Program) as well as other DCEO programs must consider their capacity to deliver all proposed services if their proposals are selected.

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.

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 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 10% 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.

State Universities may request an indirect cost rate of 10% due to the State of Illinois' continuous funding of a portion of facility and administrative costs.

4. Other, if applicable.

Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the applicant and shall not be reimbursed by the Department.

Once an entity is registered in the GATA Grantee Portal, they must complete the Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ) to assess risk relative to fiscal and administrative controls. The ICQ must be completed as part of the pre-award. Risks identified by the ICQ and the programmatic risk assessment will be incorporated into the grant agreement.

Applicants may submit multiple applications for this opportunity.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

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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:

Ericka White
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
607 East Adams Street
Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: 1-800-252-2923
Email: CEO.EIT.CEJA@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 printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Mandatory Disclosures

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the submission of the following other programmatic-specific items:

- Executive Summary (one page): Provide a one-page summary that describes the:
 - Applicant team
 - Proposed region (Northern, Central, and Southern Illinois) to be served.
 - Partnerships including, but not limited to, Small Business Development Centers, APEX Accelerator Centers, community-based organizations, education and training agencies, one-stop partners, contractor associations, and others determined appropriate
 - Brief description of services to be provided and who will be served.
 - Anticipated goals and outcomes of this project based on Attachment 2: Proposed Work Plan
 - Grant amount requested
- Technical Proposal (not to exceed 20 pages): Provide a narrative proposal to describe the program activities and outcomes that will be supported by this grant. Note that each section of the technical proposal must correspond with the application review criteria in Part E of this NOFO.

Applicant Team Organization Capacity and Qualifications (approx. 4 pages)

- Provide high-level information regarding the lead applicant organization’s size, structure, history, and location within the proposed Program Delivery area. Describe any other organizations that will be partners, subcontractors or subrecipients for the project.
- Include a list of the key staff, including subcontractor personnel, to be assigned to the project. This must align with Attachment 1: Staffing Plan.
 - Describe the role each key staff person will fulfill and the percentage of time they will allot to the project.

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- Provide short bios of key staff that indicate, at a minimum, their positions and total years in the organization, education, and relevant work experience.
- Provide information demonstrating the experience and knowledge of the applicant team/key staff in:
 - Launching and administering business development assistance programs for business owners, including State and Federal business and entrepreneurial development programs.
 - Providing technical assistance, coaching and mentoring services to businesses.
 - Performing Program outreach and participant recruiting in equity eligible communities.
 - Leading a large contractor-based business in Illinois.
 - Developing relationships with equity investment eligible community members, organizations, and businesses.
 - Providing technical assistance and business coaching.
 - Investment eligible communities.
 - Training and education in entrepreneurship and business skills.
- Describe the applicant team's knowledge of the construction and clean energy trades and any experience providing business development services to contractors in these trades, including training and services for contractors that intend to become union signatories.
- Provide information demonstrating the applicant team's experience with and ability to center equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility in all program operations to ensure equitable program outcomes.
 - Describe the applicant team's experience delivering business development services to underserved and marginalized groups, such as persons with barriers due to their lack of education, job training, reliable housing and transportation, criminal history, communities of color (Black, Hispanic or Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color), members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.
 - Describe specific strategies your team has utilized in program operations that demonstrate your team's commitment to the equity values as defined in the Illinois Office of Equity "Illinois Toward Equity Action Framework" ([chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ooe.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ooe/documents/illinois-towards-equity/ite-action-framework-toolkit-3-13-23.pdf](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ooe.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ooe/documents/illinois-towards-equity/ite-action-framework-toolkit-3-13-23.pdf)).
 - Provided detailed information about the applicant team's experience developing relationships with equity investment eligible community members, organizations, and businesses.
 - Provide detailed information about members of the applicant team's leadership and/or staff that have lived in the community to be served or their work experience within the community and/or provide real-life situations or success stories showing how their roots within the community have helped guide the organization's work.
- Describe the applicant team's capacity to meet the proposed program outcomes. Describe how the team will hire, manage, and review the performance of Program staff (including consultants, volunteers, students, etc.). An organizational chart for the Program staff is required. Resumes should be submitted for all key Program staff (e.g., Program director, business advisor,

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office support, etc.) listing the specific duties and responsibilities of each person. Describe in detail how staff impacts the delivery of Program services.

- Identify and describe your organization's fiscal procedures and controls and responsible staff in the following areas:
 - Reconciliation of cash accounts, separation of Program income, maintenance of property control records, time and effort certification, bookkeeping procedures, and the maintenance of general ledgers.

Documentation of Need (approx. 2 pages)

- Identify the region where this project will operate and any specific equity investment eligible communities or populations the project will target.
- Describe the barriers that contractors in these target communities or populations may face that may affect the growth of their businesses and how these barriers will be addressed. Describe how the social and economic conditions of these populations or communities may affect the growth of clean energy businesses in the region. Describe the needs of contractors in these communities to grow their clean energy businesses and how your Program will address these needs.
- Describe the expected impact of the project on the identified target populations, communities, and job growth in clean energy and related trades.
 - Describe how the proposed Program will help participating contractors to compete for jobs on projects/RFPs and to grow and sustain their businesses.
 - If applicable, describe how the work of the Program will result in creating or expanding clean energy businesses in areas where clean-energy contractor businesses are not robust or do not exist.
- Provide any additional contextual details that will strengthen the reviewers' understanding of the identified issues/problems, needs, and expansion opportunities.

Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program Plan (approx. 12 pages)

Provide a 3-year plan that describes the design and implementation of all elements of the Program, as defined in Section A. Program Description. The 3-year plan should, at minimum, include the following:

- A plan for outreach and recruitment strategies, including an overall diverse marketing strategy that outlines how programs and services will be marketed to the appropriate client base.
- A plan for how the Program services will be offered and the overall approach for delivering these services.
 - Describe the proposed Program structure (e.g., delivery through cohorts, frequency and timing of service delivery).
 - Briefly describe the Program tasks, deliverables, milestones, and Program timeline (must align with Attachment 2: Proposed Work Plan).
 - Describe how the mentorship program will be delivered, including how mentor businesses will be recruited and how you will facilitate and evaluate the success of the mentorship program.
 - Describe what the progressive course of one-on-one coaching will look like, including specific topic areas and a sample progression. Describe how the coaching will help participants in developing an achievable 5-year business plan.
 - Describe how you will conduct assessments with participants to help participants develop and measure progress towards their business goals.

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- This will include a monthly review of metrics and advice on achieving participant goals.
- Describe the services that will be offered, including:
 - Sample topics of training and networking events and who will provide them.
 - Types of consultation and technical assistance services and who will provide them.
 - Examples of resources and tools you will leverage to provide consultation services, training, and networking events.
 - The goals and anticipated outcomes of the proposed Program (must align with Attachment 2: Project Work Plan). Goals and outcomes should include:
 - The anticipated total number of participant contractors applying, accepted into, and graduating from the Program.
 - The anticipated number of services that the Program will provide (including training sessions attended, business coaching sessions, other technical assistance provided).
 - The anticipated outcomes, including the number of projects completed by participant contractors, the dollar amount of the projects, the number of new hires, the number of employees retained, the number of partnerships with participant contractors that are expected to result in contracts for work, number of certifications received, changes in business revenue, and number of grants or loans received.
 - A plan to create an equity-focused Program culture that incorporates the core values of diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and equity (as defined in the Illinois Office of Equity “Illinois Toward Equity Action Framework” [<https://ooe.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ooe/documents/illinois-towards-equity/ite-action-framework-toolkit-3-13-23.pdf>]) in all aspects of Program delivery. Equity-focused strategies may include but are not limited to:
 - Equity training for all staff.
 - Marketing and recruitment strategies that reach contractors equity-eligible investment communities and people with barriers to employment.
 - Accessible service delivery locations, including accessible online delivery.
 - Service delivery that identifies and leverages the strengths of diverse participant contractors.
 - Partnerships with organizations with ties to diverse participant contractors.
 - Plans to create an inclusive and welcoming environment.
 - A plan to coordinate Program activities with state, regional, and local partners, including but not limited to:
 - Other Primes Program Leads and Program Administrator;
 - Other CEJA workforce programs including the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, and Returning Residents Clean Energy Jobs Training Program;
 - Regional workforce, educational, economic development, and business development entities, including APEX Accelerators (formerly PTAC) and Small Business Development Centers.
 - Construction and clean energy employers, industry leaders, unions, and apprenticeship programs.
 - A plan to track participants and Program outcomes using the content management system provided by the Department, assess the Program, and use this information to improve Program delivery.

Budget Narrative (approx. 2 pages):

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- Provide a budget narrative that contains a detailed breakdown of budget expenses and a justification for their cost. Describe any subawardee or subcontractor budgets, including a breakdown of expenses and justification for their cost.
- Analyze the Program's cost efficiency in relation to the planned activities and outcomes.
- Describe any leveraged/matching funds from workforce partners, participating businesses, and others to improve cost-effectiveness, return on investment, and long-term Program sustainability.
- Allowable costs are those that are necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award. These include:
 - Personnel (salaries, wages, and fringe benefits)
 - Travel and supplies
 - Contractual services, subawards, and consultants
 - Miscellaneous Costs (including reasonable food costs for events)
- Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are unallowable as direct or indirect costs.
- Budgets should include operational support grants for participant contractors not to exceed 11.1% of total budget per award annually. Budgets should also include stipends for businesses providing mentorship for participant contractors.

Attachments: Applicants are required to complete and submit the attachments listed below which are available in the Appendix of this NOFO and on the NOFO website.

Attachment 1: Staffing Plan: Applicants will utilize this attachment to outline how Program services will be delivered, who will deliver services, and organizational capacity. Resumes, credentials, partnership agreements, or MOUs should be included in this attachment. Refer to Attachment 1 of this NOFO.

- Resumes and Credentials of Program Staff: Grant applications must include the resumes of key Program staff and instructors demonstrating the capacity to complete the work outlined in the application.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Grant applications should include MOUs and Partnership Agreements (as opposed to Letters of Support) with all key partners detailing the entity's information, key staff information, roles and responsibilities associated with this project, and dollar amounts for specific services to be rendered.

Attachment 2: Proposed Work Plan: Grant applications must include a work plan that describes outcomes, tasks, deliverables, milestones, and project timeline. Refer to Attachment 2 of this NOFO.

Application Format Requirements: All applicants must meet the following submission requirements: Applications must be formatted to an 8 1/2 x 11-inch page size, using 11-point type and at 100% magnification. Tables may be used to present information with a 10-point type. The Executive Summary and Technical Proposal must be typed single-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. The entire application, including appendices, must be sequentially page-numbered (hand-written page numbers are acceptable). Items included in the attachments are NOT included in the page limitations.

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:

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- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. 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](#). Please note, making SAM.gov registrations “public” will expedite the GATA Grantee Portal pre-qualification process.
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in its application, which matches the UEI number used in both the applicant entity’s SAM registration and 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 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 by Tuesday, July 2, 2024 at 5:00PM CST.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/00682e6380ab4285b464bbb43d62a0fe>

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 does not 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. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. The following criteria will be used as part of the merit review of applications: Documentation of Need, Applicant Qualifications & Capacity, Project Quality and

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Integration, and Cost-Effectiveness/Return on Investments. Cost sharing will not be considered in the evaluation.

Documentation of Need (15%)	
The focus on equity investment eligible communities or populations; identification of barriers that contractors in these target communities or populations may face; and how these barriers will be addressed through the Program services.	5
The identification of the clean energy workforce and economic development needs in the proposed areas and how these needs will be addressed through the Program services.	5
Expected impact of proposed Program on the identified target communities, populations, and target trades.	5
Applicant Qualifications & Capacity (35%)	
Applicant’s qualifications and capacity to administer the Program and meet the proposed Program outcomes.	10
Related experience and qualifications of the applicant team’s staff to be assigned to recruit, enroll, train, and provide business development assistance to contractor businesses.	10
The quality of applicant’s experience with and ability to use an equity lens for Program operations.	10
Demonstrated knowledge of and experience working with construction and clean energy trades.	5
Project Quality and Integration (35%)	
Quality of plan to recruit eligible participant contractors and assist with enrollment.	5
Quality of Program design (including tasks, deliverables and milestones), types of services, approach and methods of service delivery.	10
Quality and feasibility of Program goals and outcomes.	5
Quality of plan to address equity in Program design, recruitment, supports and other services.	5
Quality of plan to coordinate with other workforce, economic development, and contractor development programs.	5
Quality of plan to track Program outcomes, assess the Program, and use this information to improve Program delivery.	5
Cost Effectiveness/Return on Investments (15%)	
Quality of budget and budget justification, including the cost efficiency and effectiveness of the planned activities and projected outcomes.	10
Ability to leverage existing programs, services, and partnerships to improve cost-effectiveness, return on investment, and long-term sustainability of the Program. Special consideration will be given to those applications that best demonstrate cost-sharing, cooperation, coordination, and consolidation within their respective regions.	5

2. Review and Selection Process.

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded according to the following process:

All applications will be sorted by proposed region. The highest-scoring applications per region will be prioritized for funding. The final grants will be negotiated by the Department based on the applications' alignment with the requirements of this NOFO. 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 Merit Based 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-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappreview.html>.

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

The Department anticipates sending Notices of State Award (NOSA) 20 weeks after the application period is closed.

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-based 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).

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)

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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 shall apply (See 30 ILCS 708/65(c)).

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 to pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant's beginning date.

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.

NOFO Technical Assistance: DCEO will provide Technical Assistance (TA) throughout the application process in the form of an information session webinar, one-on-one technical assistance, and a Question and Answer page.

To learn more about the program and the application process, please attend an Information Session April 10, 2024 at 3pm. Register here:
<https://illinois.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcpdeurrz8jGtMM10knGvs3d6Umxl7CTXhB#/registration>

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Submit questions to ceo.eit.ceja@illinois.gov. Answers will be posted on the funding opportunity webpage.

Extensions and Grant Modifications: The Department may authorize the extension of projects awarded under this NOFO. The initial period of performance is expected to be 12 months. The Department intends to offer up to two (2) twelve (12) month extensions for each award based on the performance of the grantee as well as the availability of funds under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. The extension, if granted, would occur after a review of programmatic performance and an evaluation of services and outcomes.

Technical Assistance and Professional Development: Grantees are required to attend on-boarding activities; group or individual technical assistance and/or training sessions throughout the year with designated DCEO Program staff. Applicants should budget for attendance to training and relevant certifications necessary in delivering the Program. Depending on the grantee's needs and capacity, the Department may require grantees to meet with the Program Administrator or designated Program coach on a regular basis or may assign an experienced organization to partner with the grantee to provide assistance.

ATTACHMENT 1: STAFFING PLAN

As part of the Illinois Clean Energy Primes Accelerator Program, the Department requires a staffing plan with roles defined and fulfilled.

Applicants are required to identify a **Program lead** who will devote 100% of their time to managing the Program. If the position will be filled by a new hire, applicants should attach a job description for the role. The Program lead will be responsible for Program compliance and ensuring that performance metrics are met and required reporting is done, overseeing program operations, onboarding staff, and monitoring the performance of other Program roles.

Next applicants will need to identify multiple full time and part time **staff** to deliver various Program elements including but not limited to:

- program administration,
- outreach, recruitment, and participant intake,
- business coaching services,
- business technical assistance and training,
- mentorship coordination,
- business development advising,
- business professional networking support.

These areas can be staffed by **full-time or part-time employees of the organization, contractors, or sub-contractor partner organizations.**

Fill out the table below with the names of key staff, organizational affiliation, the percentage of FTE they will spend on the Program, and the Program elements they will be responsible for. Where appropriate, indicate if the position will be filled by a new hire.

Resumes, partnership agreements, job descriptions for new hires, and Memorandums of Understanding should be attached to this plan for all staff members, contractors, and sub-contractor partner organizations listed in Table A below.

Table A: Staff Role Assignments

Name of personnel (or indicate if the position is to be filled by a new-hire)	Role in Program	Organizational affiliation	% FTE for project

ATTACHMENT 2: PROPOSED WORK PLAN

Provide a detailed workplan attachment as described below. The workplan attachment does not count toward the page limit of the Technical Proposal.

1. Complete the table below to summarize anticipated annual participation and outcomes.

Table B: Total Participation, Service, and Outcome Metrics

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Total Participants			
Total number participant contractor businesses			
Total Services Provided			
Number of training sessions provided			
Number of networking events provided			
Number of participant contractors who attend a training session			
Number of consultation/coaching hours			
Number of mentorship hours provided by mentors selected through the Program.			
Outcomes			
Number of contracts secured by participant contractors, alone or in partnership			
Anticipated total dollar value of contracts secured			
Number of bids submitted by participant contractors			
Number of jobs created by participant contractors			
Number of jobs retained by participant contractors			
Number of certifications received by participant contractors ¹			
Number of grants or low-interest loans received by participant contractors			
Percent increase in participant contractors' business revenue			

2. **Tasks, Deliverables, and Milestones:** Provide a detailed description of the proposed Program and approach. The description should define Program tasks, deliverables, and major milestones.
3. **Timeline:** Provide a timeline table or Gantt chart of major activities for the 3-year Program plan, including the anticipated timing of key tasks, deliverables, and milestones.

¹ Including registration under the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act program and other programs intended to certify BIPOC entities