

# WORKFORCE<sup>3</sup>ONE

## TRANSCRIPT OF WEBINAR

### H-1B TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2011

#### Notes from ETA:

- 1) The language in the SGA stands. All questions should be directed to the grants specialist listed in the solicitation -- Jeannette Flowers ([flowers.jeannette@dol.gov](mailto:flowers.jeannette@dol.gov)) -- with a reference to SGA/DFA PY-10-13.
- 2) Edits and corrections are provided and noted in [**yellow highlighted brackets**].
- 3) Remember that this webinar does not take the place of the prospective applicant conference, which is available at [www.workforce3one.org](http://www.workforce3one.org).

*Transcript by  
Federal News Service  
Washington, D.C.*

GARY GONZALEZ: And our speakers for today are Jane Oates, assistant secretary for employment and training here at the Department of Labor; and also Amanda Ahlstrand, division chief at the Business Relations Group at the Office of Workforce Investment here at ETA.

I'd like to turn things over now to Amanda Ahlstrand. Amanda?

AMANDA AHLSTRAND: Hello, everybody. And welcome to today's live webinar event. Thank you for taking time to join us this morning. We're very lucky today to have Assistant Secretary Jane Oates with us to talk about this new funding opportunity which was just announced by Secretary Solis on Monday.

But before we get started, I would like to remind you that we're also hosting a recorded webinar that is the prospective applicant conference. Today's discussion does not take the place of that session, which will be available via our ETA website at [www.doleta.gov/grants](http://www.doleta.gov/grants).

Today we're going to take some time to give you some background on this funding opportunity, highlight its areas of emphasis, and provide some general questions and answers for you. This is only a brief summary of the solicitation. But if you take nothing else away from today's conversation, our best advice to you is to read the full solicitation and follow its instructions, should you decide to submit an application.

So now I have the honor of turning over to – the discussion to Assistant Secretary Jane Oates.

JANE OATES: Thanks, Amanda. And thank you to all of you who are joining us today. I'm sure nobody out there is going to ask me to speak up. But I am very excited to help Secretary Solis announce this new funding opportunity.

In December of last year, with the help of CompTIA, the secretary and I had the chance to meet with IT employers to hear about what they're using these H-1B visas for and what the skills needs are for the jobs that they're sitting in right now. That conversation had a direct impact on this solicitation. And I'm sure as those businesses work with you, they'll be able to tell you some of the things that they directly suggested to the secretary that day.

In response to the industry skill shortages in high-growth industries and occupations, Congress established the H-1B visa category for non-immigrants seeking work in high-skill or specialty occupations. They imposed a user fee on employers for H-1B applications, and set annual limits on the number of H-1B visas that they would grant.

The American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act, as amended, authorized the department to use a portion of those fees to finance an H-1B technical skills training grant program. This grant program is designed to provide education, training and job placement assistance in occupations and industries for which employers are currently using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers, and the related activities necessary to support such training.

This is the first time, by the way, that this administration has used the H-1B visa program, so we're very excited about this.

It's intended to raise the technical skill levels of American workers so they can obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries and occupations. Over time, these education and training programs will help businesses reduce their use of skilled foreign professionals permitted to work in the United States on a temporary basis currently under the H-1B visa program.

While the occupations of H-1B skill levels are generally defined as a bachelor's degree or comparable experience, education and training conducted through this program is not limited to high skill levels commensurate with the four-year undergraduate degrees, and can include the preparation of workers for employment along career pathways for a broad range of occupations and industries in which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers.

The H-1B skills training grants are not intended to address entry-level skill shortages, nor may they fund programs aimed at imparting basic educational skills. However, applicants may propose courses that support technical skill development at the postsecondary level – like math and science, or language courses, or computer courses – directly related to technical skills training.

The key here is going to be with – like it is with many of our other grants, you've got to talk to employers. Employers have to drive what the training is, because with this grant, as with all our grants, getting people into jobs is our primary objective.

So to meet the legislative intent of preparing American workers to reduce the need for foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their education and training programs to support industries and occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. According to recent data, a wide range of industries may meet these criteria in local and regional areas across the country.

The solicitation includes specific details and resources for identifying industries and occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas. ETA is particularly interested in training for occupations within the following industries: information technology, communications and broadband technology, advanced manufacturing, and health care.

Through this solicitation, ETA is making approximately \$240 million in funds available through two rounds of funding, and expects to fund 75 to 100 grants with individual grant amounts ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million. Any grant application with a proposed value greater than \$5 million will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be considered.

There are two closing dates for applications: June 2nd, 2011; and November 17th, 2011.

DOL anticipates that additional funding will accrue for this grant training program between the first and second rounds of grants contained in this solicitation. Such additional funding may be made available for awards during the second round of the funding, depending on the quality of applications received. Grant awards will be made only to the extent that funds are available.

Between the two rounds of grants, DOL intends to award at least \$150 million to grantees that provide on-the-job training to all participants. The remaining funding will be awarded to applicants that provide other training strategies to participants.

Across the two types of grants awarded – OJT and other training strategies – DOL intends to award at least 45 million (dollars) to applicants proposing to provide training in the health care industry and 60 million (dollars) to applicants proposing to focus on the long-term unemployed.

These set-asides are not mutually exclusive. In other words, applicants can propose to provide OJT in the health care industry and, if successful, their funding amount will count toward both set-asides.

ETA reserves the right to change these amounts depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted under the SGA.

While grants will serve participants who may be currently employed or unemployed, the department is particularly focused on reaching those individuals who have been unemployed the longest, and will work to ensure that at least the \$60 million amount in grant awards goes to those applicants that focus on this population.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' December 2010 Employment Situation Summary, the long-term unemployed make up about 44 percent of all unemployed workers. These unemployed workers may be near or past the exhaustion of their unemployment benefits or may be discouraged from looking for work. They may need additional assistance to enhance their skills to become re-employed.

All applicants must clearly identify the lead organization that will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibilities for the grant, as well as each member of the partnership and the required partners. [The partnership must include at least two entities from among the following three groups:]

1) Business-related nonprofit organizations. Business-related nonprofit organizations, including trade or industry associations, such as local chambers of commerce and small business

federations, and labor organizations; and education and training providers and other community-based organizations.

2) For the purposes of this SGA, education and training providers are institutions of higher education as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965. These institutions of higher education include public or other nonprofit educational institutions. The SGA contains a link to a Department of Education-hosted website that we will use to determine an applicant's accrediting and eligibility. Generally, institutions of higher education include two- and four-year colleges and universities, historically black colleges and universities, tribal colleges and universities, and Hispanic-serving institutions, among others. Community-based organizations are key providers of basic skill training, technical skills training, supportive services and workforce development services in communities across the country. And therefore, they may be very valuable partners as you start to construct your grant.

3) The public workforce system entities are involved in administering the workforce investment system established under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act, and include state and local workforce investment boards and their One-Stop Career Center systems. State, regional, and local economic development agencies work closely with employers, understand regional economic needs, and are involved in activities that help to generate and retain existing jobs and stimulate industrial and commercial growth.

Applicants must work with at least one employer or consortium of employers that is engaged in the project in one or more of the following ways: defining the program goals and activities; identifying necessary skills and competencies; providing resources to support education and training, such as equipment, instructors, direct funding, internships or on-the-job training and other work-based learning activities; providing assistance with program design; and, where appropriate, hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs based on real job projections.

ETA particularly encourages partnerships that include multiple employers in an industry cluster, which is a concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, research and development, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are linked by common workforce needs.

Working with multiple businesses helps to ensure that training prepares workers for a range of employer needs in the target industry, making participants more employable and giving businesses a stronger employee pool.

The requirement for match is contingent on the activities proposed by the applicant. Applicants that propose incumbent worker training activities have to provide resources equivalent to 50 percent of the grant award amount as matching funds.

For applicants that do not include incumbent worker training activities, cost sharing or matching funds are not required as a condition for application.

For applicants proposing incumbent worker activities, the 50 percent matching funds may be provided in cash or in-kind; however, half of the total matching funds must be cash.

And now I'll turn it back over to Amanda.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Thank you, Jane. That definitely covers the key areas of emphasis and overall background. So we're going to turn now to some very common questions and answers that we here at ETA get and are already getting about this open solicitation.

So first, we often get this one: Can I apply for more than one grant? The answer there on the slide, you can submit one application for each closing date. And you'll only receive funding for one grant, if you are successful. Applicants that submit more than one application to a round of funding will be considered nonresponsive and neither [or a few] of their applications would [not] be considered for funding.

We do want to note that if an applicant is not successful when submitting an application during round one, we cannot ensure that the applicant will receive a summary of the panel's comments on the original application, should they submit that one to the second closing date. Therefore, if an applicant chooses to submit a second application for the later closing date, absent receipt of the summary of the panel's comments, any changes to their original proposal will be made at their own discretion.

The next one is: How long are the grants active? The period of performance for these grant awards will be up to 48 months from the effective date of the grant. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

Then we have: What are some examples of activities that are allowable with this funding opportunity? Training strategies include, but are not limited to: on-the-job training – except that grantees must apply and choose to serve all participants with OJT or no participants with OJT – classroom and occupational training; contextualized learning; distance learning; and customized training, including incumbent worker training, for particular employers or groups of employers.

In implementing either type of training strategy – OJT or other training strategy – applicants may propose a wide range of activities that support the direct education and training of eligible participants, which is included but not limited to the following list.

Developing math, science or language courses at the postsecondary level that are integrated into the technical skills training; costs related to accrediting employer- and/or industry-recognized credentials; other costs of program development, such as using subject matter experts from industry, education and other areas to assist in curriculum design; developing and implementing articulation agreements with universities and other educational partners that allow for recognition of course credits in exchange for the education and/or training provided; initial assessments of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities and competencies; and job search and placement assistance, as well as career counseling.

I want to let everyone know that a list of allowable activities is included in the SGA.

So let's talk a little bit more about on-the-job training strategies.

As you know – and as Jane said – there's up to 150 million (dollars) set-aside across the grant for applicants that will provide OJT to all participants. This does not preclude the applicant from proposing and implementing other types of training strategies in support of OJT; however, OJT must be a component of each participant's training strategy.

OJT is distinguished from other types of workplace training, including customized training, by several factors listed here.

Participants are hired or employed and earn wages from employers during the training. Second, it's based on an individualized training plan that reflects the results of an individual skills assessment and an analysis of job requirements. Third, training is conducted in the work setting under the direction of one or more of the employer's supervisory personnel. And fourth, the employer is paid a reimbursement to cover the extraordinary costs of the training.

Again, there are specific details included in the SGA that will help address your questions about this topic.

And then I mentioned already, but just to go through some of the other allowable training strategies: classroom occupational training; contextualized learning; distance learning; and customized training, including incumbent worker training.

Under the second type of training strategy – which is essentially the non-OJT training – to be funded, applicants must not offer OJT to participants.

And now, what can you do to prepare for the solicitation? These are just a few of our recommendations. The first one, as we mentioned earlier, visit and read the solicitation. The link here is on the slide; it's available on the DOL and the ETA websites and grants.gov, so be sure to read it.

The next one is we provided a link to the Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center for the latest database of occupations approved under H-1B petitions. And you'll also note that there is an attachment to the SGA which has a summary of this information available for you.

We also have been hosting a grant applications 101, which is "A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants," available via the link there. And we certainly encourage you to review that, especially if you've never applied for one of our grants before.

I think this is the last and most common question that we all answer: What happens if you have questions while drafting your application? Again, this information is included in the solicitation, but all questions should be submitted to Jeannette Flowers, who is the grant specialist for this program. Her email address is listed there and her phone number is included in the solicitation.

Be sure to reference the solicitation number in your email subject line so that she can see right away this is a question about the H-1B technical skills grant training program. We will get back to you with a response in a timely manner.

We included here the information on how you can submit a proposal – regular mail, overnight mail, hand delivery or online via the grants.gov. Of course, reference the solicitation number.

Please note that regular mail coming to federal buildings is something still subject to decontamination, so sometimes delays are – occur via regular mail. So you may want to take that into consideration.

I guess here in closing I want to thank all of you who participated today. And special thanks to Assistant Secretary Jane Oates for your time in support of this program. And best wishes to everyone as you consider your applications.

MR. GONZALEZ: And now I want to take time to let you know a little bit about Workforce3One. If you have any programs that you'd like to feature, documents that you'd like to share or any news or information that you'd like to exchange with your colleagues, if you click the "share content" link on the home page, not only will you be able to upload a document, you'll also be able to upload a web resource, either a site or resource that lives on the web.

And as I noted at the beginning of today's session, we have been recording. To access the recording, all you need to do is log into your Workforce3One account. From there you'll automatically be taken to your dashboard page. And if you click the "attended" tab, you'll have access to the recording, the transcript and the PowerPoint. Just want to point out that the recording and transcript will be up in two business days.

So now we're going to flip over to the feedback portion of today's webinar. You don't have to stay on for this; you can disconnect from the phone if you like, or even from the webinar room. But we're going to ask you a few questions.

Were you on a wait list for today's webinar? You'll be able to let us know through the yes-or-no poll at the top left hand of your monitor.

And then directly beneath that, did today's webinar meet your expectations? And it's a yes or no answer. And if you choose yes, let us know what you liked. If you choose no, tell us how we can improve.

And then to the far bottom right hand of your screen, how was the audio for today's webinar? Since we were pushing out audio for the bulk of you over VoIP today – or streaming audio – and about a hundred of you or so were actually listening in on the phone. So I want to get a sense of how the audio quality was for you, whether you were listening on the phone or even if you were listening through your computer.

And then you can provide us feedback or let us know what additional webinar topics you'd like to have us hold in the future.

And I think we might even be addressing – since we have a little bit of time left, we might even be addressing some of the questions that did come in from today’s session. So we’re going to briefly pause and take a look at some of those questions and we’ll be coming back on the line. So if you want to stay on for that portion, go ahead and stay on the line since we do have quite a bit of time left. But like I said, we’re going to go ahead and mute our line, read through the questions and then we’ll come back on. OK. Thanks for waiting.

And we’re back. Thank you for sticking with us. We’re going to go ahead and take some of the questions that were addressed. We have a lot of them filtering in as we speak. I’m going to turn things over now to Assistant Secretary Oates.

MS. OATES: OK. So the first question that they can see, Gary, right on their screen, is about the match. The match applies to the entire grant if your proposal includes training any incumbent workers. There is no match required if your proposal does not anticipate (sic) – anticipate training any incumbent workers. So I hope that’s clear.

But again, incumbent workers, even if they’re only a part of your grant, the – if you include any incumbent workers you have to do 50 percent match, cash or in-kind, of the entire total. So if you have a \$5 million grant application, that means the match is 50 percent in-kind or cash of the 5 million (dollars), even if you’re only using 1 million (dollars) of it for incumbent workers.

Second one I’m going to hand off to Amanda. She’ll read down the target industry list.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Yes. Thank you. So the question is, “Please repeat the target industry list.” The education and training needs to be designed to support industries and occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas.

The solicitation includes attachment A, which lists a number of industry areas that are included on the H-1B list. And then we are particularly interested from that list in information technology, community and broadband, advanced manufacturing, and health care.

And all of that is also in the solicitation. So you can just go back there and check it out too.

MS. OATES: The third question says, “[Can the lead applicant also partner in other grants?]” Yes. And then an organization can be partners on multiple applications, as long as they’re not the lead. So the clearest example is an employer. An employer can work on several applications with the local areas in which they have a job presence. Or a community college could work with several different partners, or a state university system could work on different grants in local areas across the state.

We skipped over four. Let me find four, Gary. Go back. They’re taking us – (pause).

OK. Oh, I answered that one already. “Can an employer with multiple locations participate in more than one grant application?” Absolutely. The answer is yes.

There will be – since many of you are aware of the paneling process, there would be no way that if you were involved in more than one grant that anyone would know that, so there would be no risk of jeopardizing the lead applicants. The only piece we will check on is that, remember, an entity can – an eligible entity can only be the lead on one application in each of the two deadlines. That’s the only piece that we’ll check on. The partners we will not go through and scrub before we panel the grants. So that will not jeopardize you in any way.

I think we’ve answered six. [If we want to do a few incumbents in the OJT mix, again, If the applicant is doing incumbent worker training, the 50 percent match applies to the entire amount that you’ve requested.]

Seven. Seven – (inaudible). We’re going to eight.

“Can a proposal combine incumbent worker training for highly technical skill upgrades needed for incumbents and also OJT training for unemployed individuals who will then (backfill ?)?” [CORRECTION: No. Incumbent workers are not eligible for OJT under this grant.]

You can serve both unemployed and incumbent workers in the same proposal [if you are doing training strategies other than OJT]. Remember, if you’re – the match, if you’re serving incumbent workers, even if you’re serving three – whatever number of incumbent workers – that means the match is 50 percent of the total amount.

You did hear multiple submission dates. The dates are in June and September and –

MS. AHLSTRAND: June and November.

MS. OATES: June and November. And Amanda’s going to –

MS. AHLSTRAND: And they –

MS. OATES: She has them.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Yep. The first round closes June 2nd, 2011. So you have a month. Or you can submit to the second one as well, which closes November 17th.

So let me clarify. You can submit to both. If you receive a grant in the first round, you would not receive a grant in the second. And we cannot guarantee that if you don’t receive a grant in the first round that we will be able to give you feedback on your application, should you choose to submit it again for November 17th.

MS. OATES: Eleven and 12 are really looking at current H-1B visa holders [and whether applicants must work with only those employers that have H-1B visas.] We have not just – like as we did with the TAA community college capacity building – said there had to be one-to-one alignment with existing H-1B visa holders in your region. It’s the jobs. So you could have – there are lots of H-1B holders in job categories that are related to IT. So if you have an IT company in your local area that’s not using H-1B visa holders today, but H-1B visas are given in

other parts of the country for that data analyst or that network analyst, we want to make sure that your local employer doesn't need to turn to H-1B visa holders as long as they have job openings in that area.

So the only connection with H-1B visas would be looking at the chart for jobs that exist under H-1B right now. The match in your local area is not going to be something that we look at. If we did that, we'd have all the grants going to five or six locations across the country where there's a high density, and that is not – not – what we want to have happen.

Question 13: Do we imagine that the long-term unemployed will be highly skilled? I think that in this recession and recovery we are seeing a lot of people who are across the skill matrix in terms of being long-term unemployed.

We've heard lots of stories about people with Ph.D.s that have been searching actively for more than 26 weeks. And to identify them, actually, that could be a way that your local One-Stop could help or your states could be a resource to tell you where those folks are. Unfortunately, they exist in large supply in too many of our communities.

Gary, there's a technical question for you. How soon will this be up so that somebody can listen to it again?

MR. GONZALEZ: Good question. We're [planning to post] this recording in two business days to Workforce3One. If you simply log into your account, you'll be taken to your dashboard and you can access all of today's materials directly from your dashboard.

MS. OATES: The next two questions – 15 and 16 – refer to many – to the deadline question. The first deadline is so short, quite frankly, because the need is so great, particularly because we had to rescind our Career Pathways application. We think there are many folks out there who really did the hard work of getting an application that with some re-engineering could fit this competition quite nicely.

And we have heard from everyone that as the ARRA funds are gone, the needs at our training providers and, quite frankly, for our businesses to find the right workers is so great that we wanted to try to get this money out as quickly as possible.

And that answers the question as to the multiple submission dates. We wanted to make sure that we didn't impede anyone who needed more time so that we have two dates that – and you and your local partners can figure out which one best meets your needs.

[There is a question about where to get demographic information on long-term unemployed.]

The demographic information about long-term unemployed. Again, if you work with your local workforce investment board or you work with your state, you can get that information.

And if you're having difficulty getting it, we can certainly make sure that we put information on our website that tells you a little bit about where the long-term unemployed are. We won't have the specific demographics that your local One-Stop would have about their educational levels

and occupational skills. That's why I think again this is an area where local information is going to give you the richest data on the folks that you could recruit for this program.

OJT can be combined with other pieces of training. We surely think that there could be examples where people would need certain kinds of occupational classroom training before they go on the job. We think there could be other things that could be supportive of on-the-job training.

The reason we include that with such emphasis is because as states change their – and the situations change with unemployment insurance, we're going to have people who are not going to be able to engage in training unless they're earning a salary while they're getting that training. So we think that OJT is going to become more important in the future even than it has been in the past.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Can I just add one thing to that, Jane? For those projects that are doing OJT, all participants need to be participating in OJT. So other types of training can support it and go along with it, but everyone's got to have that. So –

MS. OATES: That's right.

MS. AHLSTRAND: – (inaudible) – requirement – (inaudible).

MS. OATES: Very good point. The more we can make sure we're drilling into things that are important on this and the match, I think the better it is for those folks that aren't participating today that will be listening to this and may only be listening to portions of it. So thank you for bringing that up.

[There is a question about whether projects can cross state boundaries.] Yes, projects can cross state boundaries. We encourage that. We encourage regional partnerships that – where the economy works in a regional way, that crosses state lines. That makes total sense. Where an employer has presence in multiple states, really makes terrific sense. So we – if that makes sense for you, we hope you go after it.

The 240 million (dollars) across the two deadlines actually will be based on the quantity and quality of grants we receive. We will not fund low-quality grants just because they came in by the June deadline. We will certainly look for high-quality grants in both. And we feel that people that weren't able to win in the first round making the June deadline will be able to take their grant back and rework it again.

In a sense of fairness, they'll be doing that without our comments, which is unusual for us. We usually give – let the comments on your grant be yours in as quick a turnaround as we can. But because there's two deadlines on this one, we won't be giving any feedback on that until after the November slate is done, so that we don't give anyone any kind of priority in this.

But we do – we are not cutting it in half. And all of our points on this, in terms of our targets for OJT and the long-term unemployed and the health care, will be done across both. So we won't

be walling off money on June 3rd to make sure that we reach a certain status in health care. If it ends up that we have a lot of high-quality health care, we may fund more of those. The same thing if we have a number of high-quality broadband or anything else.

So we'll be – and we will hopefully be able to give some indication of how much – you'll know when we announce the winners how much of the money we've awarded. So you'll know what's available for the November date.

If you are developing curricula, [please see the information on intellectual property in the solicitation.] ~~that is our intellectual property and that's important for people to know.~~

MS. AHLSTRAND: And just so you know, there is specific information on the intellectual property rights in the solicitation. It's part [four], section D, number 4. It is there. But the federal government does reserve a paid-up, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use for federal purposes the products that result from this grant. [...Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise.] So be sure to look at the solicitation for that information.

MS. OATES: Twenty-four asks if the employer can be the applicant. Laura, want to take that one? Can the employer be the direct applicant as well as they're in partnership with others?

MS. WATSON: [No.]

MS. AHLSTRAND: The eligible applicants are, again, in the slides. But it's a partnership of at least two entities from the following groups: business-related nonprofits, such as trade associations; and the second group is education and training providers, including community colleges or community-based organizations; and the third group is entities administering the workforce investment system and economic development agencies.

So for-profit businesses cannot be direct eligible applicants. They are not the fiscal agent for the grant. So they are required – employers are required partners in the grant, but that – they are not the eligible applicant.

MS. OATES: Twenty-five asks us about what's meant by career pathing but not entry-level job skills. Many of our grants encourage people training and placing for entry-level jobs. Because this grant is funded using H-1B visa fees, that is not the level that we're looking at right now. What we are looking at are things that move people in a pathway for the incumbent worker training.

So for instance, you may have people with an RN that you move up to a BSN in your local area because those are the only people who can work in operating rooms or in certain positions in the hospital. You may look at someone who right now is a very low level IT person existing in a job, or was dislocated from an IT job, and you want to give her or him the opportunity to move up into a higher-skilled IT job.

This would not be the grant to get someone into their first job into either the health care sector or their first job into the IT sector at that low rate. We think that other grants that we have, have demonstrated that our universe does a great job at that. This particular grant is looking at moving those folks along.

There certainly is nothing improper about looking at past grant recipients that got people those entry-level jobs, to use this grant to move them up further in that sector or across sectors.

Again, 26 I think we may have answered and we may have passed in cyberspace. The only alignment with H-1B is not certifications in your area. The alignment is with H-1B jobs in the list provided in the SGA.

So if you're an area that only has two H-1B workers for miles and miles, that means that you don't have to worry that you're not going to be competitive. But you have to look at the list of jobs in the SGA that qualify for H-1B visas or have been covered by H-1B visas, and employers in your area that may have those jobs open right now that you can train people to fill.

MS. AHLSTRAND: There are a number of detailed questions on the details of on-the-job training. And I'd like to suggest that taking some time to look at the complete information in the solicitation and that we would be able to provide more specific responses to folks via Jeannette Flowers on those ins and outs. Because sometimes getting into the details in a room full of people on that particular strategy will create challenges for folks trying to envision how it would fit in their own program.

So there's a number of questions there we wanted to acknowledge and just ask that you submit them to the grant specialist.

MS. OATES: I think we answered 33. There are two rounds of funding, but the amount we give out in round one will be totally dependent on the quantity and quality of the applications.

Thirty-four –

MS. AHLSTRAND: Oh.

MS. OATES: Oh, I'm sorry. Thirty we skipped over. National nonprofit organizations are eligible to be the lead applicants on this proposal. So that's a yes.

Thirty-four, bachelor degree, comparable experience for those of us at community colleges. I think what we're talking about is when you look at some of the job classifications referenced in the SGA, the entry-level requirement might be above an associate's degree. So therefore, in this grant – **unlike in TAACC** – local areas may choose to partner with a four-year college because that's what the degree requirement is to fill the jobs in their local area.

There are also lots of people who have a bachelor's degree already who may need to get an additional credential to qualify for the job. Whether that's post-baccalaureate or could be done at

a community college as an industry-recognized credential is something that you would have to determine at the local level.

But this is not a grant competition open only to community college as the institute of higher education. [~~So unlike TAACC, where it was two-year degree-granting institutions, this is not.~~] This is a grant solicitation that's open to all IHEs under the definition in the higher ed act, 101(a).

MS. AHLSTRAND: 101(a), exactly.

MS. OATES: Thirty-five we've answered.

Thirty-six, no. What we – so the question is, “Did you say that to be eligible for the grant an employer had to be working or have hired foreign workers?” [What we're saying is that [applicants must design their education and training programs to support industries and occupations for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire workers. ~~an employer that you work with has to have job titles open that would be qualified under existing H-1B.~~]

So that, for instance, there are no H-1B holders, to my knowledge, that are doing fast food. So you couldn't have McDonald's as a partner in this to train for those jobs because they wouldn't currently be H-1B visa holders.

I'm not sure what 38 is. If they could – “How will you handle applications if the 45 million (dollars) and 60 million (dollars) caps have been reached?” I'm –

MS. AHLSTRAND: I think there's probably a question – those caps are not hard caps, per se. So –

MS. OATES: It's a floor.

MS. AHLSTRAND: – if we have a lot of excellent health care applications, we may go above the cap. However, we need to balance the applications that come in. And, as Jane has mentioned a couple times, the quantity and quality is a factor here. But they're not hard caps. So I think that's probably what they're getting at.

MS. OATES: Thirty-nine, again, the number of H-1B visa holders in your area has nothing to do with the strength or weakness of your application. Again, it's the job titles that currently are under H-1B allowable job titles that are open in your area. And that means you have to talk to your local employers. If we – if this grant application makes sure that your local employers don't have to be dependent on H-1B visas, that's great news for us.

I think extraordinary OJT costs –

MS. AHLSTRAND: They should go to the –

MS. OATES: – should go to – because again, it’s very – I don’t want to say things that could be – that could put someone off on OJT. I’d rather you talk to grant officer Flowers specifically about what your questions are.

Forty-three, “If the H-1B are bachelor-level positions, how can the community college participate?” Again, that’s dependent on what the jobs are in your area. I think anecdotally we know that many bachelor degree holders have come back to community colleges during the recession and the recovery to get occupational certificates to qualify them for jobs.

Although I want to be clear, there are probably some job descriptions where a four-year college could be the only person who could offer that degree. People who are looking for certain things like that in your area, it’s going to be important that the community college figure out what their role can be in that – in supplying a supply chain, a pipeline to the four-year college program.

But there’s clearly anecdotal evidence to show us that community colleges have not only today but in the past served people with a bachelor’s degree, especially in the areas of IT, where people have a bachelor’s degree in liberal arts and have come back to a community college to get the certification they need to qualify for IT jobs.

I’m sure there are lots of bachelor degree workers who are dislocated who fit that category. I’m sure there are incumbent workers who fit that category. So I think that’s where you really need to look at your local employers and see what the response would be there.

[Also note: Applicants must cite evidence that the industry and/or occupation is one that employers currently seek H-1B visas for and/or is an occupation(s) along the career pathway to the occupation or in the relevant industry. Applicants must also cite evidence that the industry and/or occupation is high-growth according to one or more of the following factors: 1) projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy; 2) are being transformed by technology and innovation requiring new skill sets for workers; 3) are new and emerging businesses that are projected to grow; or 4) have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations.]

Forty-five, again, employers don’t need to demonstrate that they’ve hired H-1B workers in the past. They need to demonstrate that they have jobs available in the categories that have been filled nationally by H-1B workers.

MS. AHLSTRAND: And there’s a question again about entities providing a combination of OJT and classroom or distance education. Yes, you can do that. The key thing is that all participants need to receive the OJT, which then, remember, has those four specific requirements, the first one being that they are actually on the job and earning a wage.

So again, be sure to look at those requirements. It doesn’t prohibit complementing the OJT with other strategies, but OJT has to be given to all participants.

MS. OATES: Forty-eight is one where I think we’d need to look at the details of what you were proposing. [Incumbent workers are not removed from the — from OJT because they could be

getting OJT in a higher level job.} But again, I think the devil's in the details there and whoever wrote in that question should talk to Ms. Flowers.

Biotech does fit manufacturing, as long as the biotechnology that we're doing is making a product, and most of them do. I never want to say all.

Again, OJT questions – I think as you think out your idea you need to talk to the project officer because what you were proposing as OJT for incumbent worker, that's a detail that's very hard to get into in generalities rather than specifics. So we'll leave that.

Long-term unemployed is any person who's been unemployed – we're at 52 now – for more – for 26 weeks or longer.

The applicants webinar – do we have a date, Amanda, for that yet?

MS. AHLSTRAND: It will be available by Friday. And again, it will be available next to the link to the solicitation, as well as on your WorkforceOne (sic) page. So –

MS. OATES: Fifty-four, “Are the reporting requirements for obtaining reimbursements (conflicts ?) or demanding?” I would say that whoever asked that question should talk to other DOL grantees. Some think they're complicated and demanding and some think they're easy. We will, as always, be trying to make things as easy for our applicants – for our grantees as possible. But remember, we have to comply with all federal rules and regulations and all transparency iterations. So nothing is as easy as it seems.

We have no idea how much more – question 55 – how much more in additional funds we expect to have for the second round. We certainly will, if it's a sizable amount, make sure people are aware of that. As you know, this is dependent on how many people apply in that timeframe for H-1B visas and how quickly the money gets processed.

Proposals – I'm looking at 58. I'm sorry. I skipped 57. Proposal can focus on more than one industry. We don't want people to be limited, especially in certain areas where there may be considerable jobs available in both.

Fifty-seven we'll go back to. We are saying definitively that no one in the June submission will get feedback from their grant in time for the November submission. We think, in a sense of fairness, that people who couldn't make the June timeline aren't going to – they won't get any feedback on their ideas and we think that would establish an unlevel playing field.

Fifty-nine, the large gap of entry-level and H-1B skills will prioritize – I think we always want people – again, our hard-to-serve population in this grant is really the long-term unemployed. Clearly some of them may just be in areas where jobs are scarce. Others may face multiple barriers. We think that that's why we are telling you that you can do support services, why we're encouraging you to use community-based organizations as a resource.

So we think that – (inaudible) – multiple – sixty, I think we just answered.

Sixty-one, we do not have a specific cost [per participant]— we're not establishing a limit. Although clearly, as people read these grants, remember, if it's costing \$100,000 to train one recipient, we can never be sure that that wouldn't make a panelist nervous. So you want to make sure, if your training is going to be particularly expensive because of the nature of the training, you adequately explain why that training is so expensive in your application.

Sixty-three is about an indirect cost rate.

MS. WATSON: No. They can get – if you do not have a federally approved indirect cost rate, you can submit a cost rate that you have support for. And you will have 90 days to submit if you are selected as a grantee and negotiate a federal indirect cost rate.

MS. OATES: Sixty-five I think we've answered. A national nonprofit can be the lead. I'm looking at my thing here. I think we answered that question earlier but let's say it again. A national nonprofit can be the lead, as long as they have the required partners necessary for an application.

MR. GONZALEZ: And we're back. Thanks for sticking with us. I'll turn things back over to Assistant Secretary Oates.

MS. OATES: I'm sorry. We've just about run out of time. We just – we put you on mute for a few minutes so we could go through the rest of the questions. I don't think there's anything in the questions that's not explained in the SGA.

Again, if you do think that you need more clarification than what's in the SGA, by the end of this week the applicant webinar will be up next the application on the website. And you can always use the opportunity to contact the grant officer, Ms. Flowers. All of her information is in the SGA.

With that, Amanda – I had a team here; I want to thank them. Laura Watson (sp) from the grants office, Amanda Ahlstrand from OWI, the rest of the team and the ever-wonderful Gary, who will then close us out.

MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you. I just want to point out again, be looking for today's recording. If you have a colleague that wasn't able to attend – since I know we had a lot of people on our wait list. If you have a colleague that wants to go back and visit the recording, or if you need further clarification about something we said, an answer that we gave you, the transcript of everything that was said over the phone will be posted with the recording in two business days. Just log into your Workforce3One account and you'll have that – those resources available to you at your fingertips.

So were' going to go ahead and flip over to this feedback session. If you want to let us know what additional topics you'd like us to cover or any feedback about today's webinar, you can do so.

And we're going to wrap up today's session by hoping you visit the communities of practice on Workforce3One and Workforce3One itself.

Have a great day, everyone. And we hope to see you on future webinars. Bye, now.

(END)