**Option 3: Create Nationally-Recognized Competencies and Credentials**

Consortium and single institution applicants will present a strategy to develop their TAACCCT programs in coordination with national partners that will help scale these strategies to other regions of the country. Although all applicants will engage a comprehensive group of regional employers, applicants choosing this option will also engage relevant partners for the purpose of taking the strategy to scale. In many cases the natural partner would be a national industry association or another national employer association that may want to scale an effective training program to other regions where member businesses are looking to hire. In other cases, particularly where industry associations have been less active or have less capacity, these partners could be employer consortia (other than associations), so long as the competencies and credentials are built to be common across employers. These partners could also be philanthropic organizations or other non-profit organizations with strong relationships to businesses in the chosen sector.

These national industry partners or other organizations that will help scale the strategy should play an integral part in proposals submitted for this option. Applicants will:

(1) Develop or adapt and map industry competency frameworks for career pathways in high demand industries that are suited for TAA-eligible workers and other adults and that can be used to develop competency-based education programs within state and regional economies leading to an industry-recognized credential;

(2) Develop and coordinate outreach and educational materials for industry, labor organizations, and postsecondary education institutions about the value and benefits of the programs developed; and

(3) Demonstrate the adaptation and use of these competency-based frameworks and credentials beyond the applicant and any consortium members (if applicable)

Comprehensive plans will incorporate the following components:

* Assess the current level of credential attainment for individuals in education and training programs within a career pathway in an industry showing significant demand across the state.
* Assess the rate at which individuals in the training programs are being hired by businesses within the industry of interest. Business partners may help by using their own data to identify the credentials on which they have been most likely to hire as well as how individuals with specific credentials are performing in their companies. Applicants may also employ analyses of real-time labor market information to identify relevant credentials currently in demand in job postings and also information mined from resumes to identify patterns of previous jobs held and credentials earned by individuals currently working in occupations that are part of a targeted career pathway.
* Conduct a study to examine and compare: (a) the competencies required for existing credentials; (b) competencies required by industry employers; and (c) competencies covered in current program coursework and curricula. The purpose of this analysis is to first ensure alignment with existing competencies and to avoid duplication of effort, and second, to identify potential need for a new industry-recognized credential to address currently unmet employer needs.
* Identify several institutions within the state consortia (if applicable) that are committed to develop or modify a competency-based education and training program to improve TAA-eligible and other adult student outcomes or to address unmet industry requirements, and that is willing to collaborate to establish articulation agreements with the other institutions in the consortia. This may include the development of new assessment(s) or credential(s) as necessary and will include documentation of the approach used.
* Test and refine the competency-based program with students drawn from the TAACCCT grants, particularly TAA-eligible or other unemployed adults, making adjustments as necessary, such as the need to incorporate contextualized remediation.
* Once tested and refined, national industry representatives or other national partners will help to implement the competency based program(s) at other community colleges either within or outside of the state based on the needs of the college’s regional labor markets.
* Make available the model approach, competency framework and competency-based program(s) including accompanying assessment tool(s) and credentials produced, and widely disseminate information on the uses and benefits of this approach throughout the trade and industry association(s), education and training network, public workforce system, and other credentialing bodies. Set up a faculty training program during the grant period to engage additional educational institutions over time.

See Section V.B for more information on the additional requirements for applicants who wish to exceed the funding caps, including additional required attachments.

The period of performance is 48 months, with an anticipated start date of October 1, 2014. This performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities. Applicants must plan to fully expend grant funds during the period of performance while ensuring full transparency and accountability for all expenditures. Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.

All programs must be developed and offered within the first 36 months of the period of performance, with grant funds allocated for program development and delivery expended during that time. DOL expects that grantees will begin enrolling participants in education and training programs no later than 18 months after the date of grant award. The final 12 months of the period of performance is limited to gathering information and data for reporting outcome measures and completing the requirements for the third-party evaluation. During this timeframe grantees cannot incur costs for any other activities, including program development and instructor salaries.

***Option 3: Supplementary Documents - Proposal and Budget Narrative***

Applications with funding requests that exceed the award amount ceiling and focus on one of the three options will be subject to an additional review a panel consisting of a mix of experts in education and training. The expert review panel will review the applicant’s proposal to exceed the cap as described below.

1. **Content and Form of Supplementary Application Materials**

Applicants must provide the supplementary materials described in this section to be eligible to exceed the award amount ceiling by $2 million for Tier 1 consortium applicants and $5 million for Tier 2 consortium applicants and $750,000 for single institution applicants. These supplementary materials consist of three separate and distinct parts: (I) budget narrative; (II) factors for consideration; and (III) attachments to the supplementary materials. All supplementary materials must be included as separate documents, along with the other items that are submitted in the proposal. Applications that fail to adhere to the instructions in this section will not be eligible to exceed the award amount ceiling and will only be eligible for funding at their base-level funding request.

If using grants.gov for submission, these documents must be attached under the Mandatory Other Attachment section and labeled “Supplementary Materials for Requesting Additional Funding Budget Narrative,” “Supplementary Materials for Requesting Additional Funding Factors for Consideration,” and “Supplementary Materials for Requesting Additional Funding Attachments.” Please note that applicants will be held to outcomes provided and failure to meet those outcomes may have a significant impact on future grants with ETA.

1. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative must provide a description of the additional costs for addressing one of the options above. All costs included in the supplementary budget narrative must be reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline and deliverables. The budget narrative should not exceed 2 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins

1. Factors for Consideration

The factors for consideration must demonstrate the applicant’s capability to implement one of the options described in detail in Section II.A.3. The factors for consideration are limited to 8 double-spaced, single-sided, 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 12 point text font and 1 inch margins. Any materials beyond this specified page limit will not be read.

All applicants seeking to exceed the ceiling must address factors (1) – (5) below. In addition, applicants addressing options 1 and 2 must also address factor (6); applicants addressing option 2 must also address factor (7), and applicants addressing option 3 must also address factor (8), as noted below:

(1) The applicant has provided a complete, detailed description of the option which it will address, fully addressing the parameters outlined in Section II.A.3;

(2) The applicant has provided a comprehensive workplan that outlines the key activities that will take place during the grant period, including the entities that will be responsible for those activities, a timeline for completing these activities, and when specific deliverables will be completed.

(3) The applicant has included the key stakeholders needed to successfully complete this project, including employers, public workforce system partners, regional industry organizations, national industry organizations (if applicable), and other subject matter experts.

(4) The applicant has identified the specific outcomes and deliverables that will be achieved if it receives this additional funding. For participant-related outcomes, applicants should identify the impact of additional funding on the nine outcome measures cited in section IV.B.3 and VI.B.4, including projected increases for each relevant outcome measure. For deliverables, applicant must identify each specific deliverable that it will complete with grant funds.

(5) Applicants will demonstrate that the proposed projects will lead to sustained enhancements to college programming in one or more regions (for option 3) or across the state (for option 1 and 2). Applicants will describe how all consortium members (if applicable) and participating colleges that are not receiving funding will implement the proposed activities during the grant period. Applicants will also describe how these colleges will institutionalize these activities into their overall, non-grant funded education and training activities, enabling them to continue providing similar activities with non-grant resources when the grant ends. Applicants will describe the sustainability planning that participating colleges will complete throughout the grant period to help develop a strategy for the institutionalization of these activities.

(6) Applicants will demonstrate the commitment of their national partner to the successful implementation of the proposed competencies and credentials, as well as to helping implement the program at other colleges, and disseminating information about the new or enhanced program nationally. Applicants will include a letter from the national partner that defines their roles and provides evidence of their commitment.

1. Attachments to the Supplementary Materials

Applicants proposing to replicate, at multiple sites or with multiple populations, strategies that have been shown by prior research to have strong or moderate evidence of a positive impact on education and/or employment outcomes must provide copies of the specific evidence (e.g., research and studies) cited in their proposal. Applicants that cite copyrighted work must follow appropriate laws for use of such materials.