**INNOVATION WORKFORCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

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**Overview**

The Innovation Workforce Program (IWP) has been established by the Office of Community Development’s Disaster Recovery Unit (OCD) and will provide funding to training facilities (sub-recipients) to create sector strategies, or sector-based initiativesto address the need for trained workers, and to support recovery and rebuilding of the areas impacted by hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike, as well as the long-term recovery of the State’s overall economy. The current recovery economy requires a highly skilled and well-trained workforce to meet the immediate needs of sectors critical to the physical rebuilding and economic recovery of the regions impacted by the hurricanes. Some of the sectors identified as critical are: Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Cultural Economy, Healthcare, Oil and Gas, and Transportation. The targeted industries within each of these sectors are identified in Appendix A by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes.

Proposals are chosen based on the current capacity and intention of the sub-recipient to implement a training program that will augment the State’s current workforce training efforts with demand-driven, sector-based training. These selected programs include comprehensive strategies for recruiting, training, and placing in employment a skilled and productive workforce tailored to the needs of the impacted regions and the recovery sectors.

**Demand-driven, sector-based training**

A sector strategy, or sector-based initiative,is a collaborative approach that brings together local education and training, business and industry, and social service infrastructures in order to respond effectively to the workforce needs of an industry. They target a specific industry, and engage employers within that industry in order to strengthen the industry’s competitive edge in the global economy, to advance low-income workers, and to leverage and align public and private resources that mutually benefit workers and employers. They are typically based on regional economies made up of clusters of industries and occupations that drive a geographic region and are, therefore regional in nature. Sector initiatives are intended to promote system change, especially removing bottlenecks that inhibit recruitment, hiring, training, or worker placement in an industry.

**The program is centered on three inter-related factors:**

* the employment of the workforce affected by hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike;
* the retention of the existing workforce; and
* a concerted effort to increase skills development for new jobs in sectors related to recovery efforts and a future growth economy.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Roles can be strategic, advisory, or operational in nature. If the sub-recipient requires operational service support from another organization that involves the exchange of CDBG funds, these services will have to follow proper procurement procedures, and therefore they will not be identified prior to award. In order to ensure compliance and completeness, after a sub-recipient award is made and the agreement is signed, the sub-recipient should send all Requests for Proposals to OCD for review prior to releasing them for bid for contractors.

* **The Workforce Sub-recipient** – The sub-recipient is the recipient of the Innovation Workforce Program award and plays the key operational role in that it designs and coordinates the service delivery of the training program. The sub-recipient is the strategic leader of the system and works closely with employers to assess and meet the industry’s workforce needs. The sub-recipient assists the industry to develop strategies that improve recruitment, training, and retention. The sub-recipient should convene and communicate with all parties involved in program implementation on a regular basis. AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE GRANT, THE SUB-RECIPIENT SHOULD HAVE THE CURRENT INTERNAL CAPACITY TO ADMINISTER AND IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSED PROGRAM. THIS GRANT IS INTENDED TO DIRECTLY FUND AND ENHANCE TRAINING PROGRAMS. NO OVERHEAD OR INDIRECT COSTS WILL BE CHARGED TO THE IWP. ADDITIONALLY, THE CORE PROGRAM SERVICES SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE SUB-RECIPIENT.
* **Employers and Industry Partners** – The employer role is primarily advisory and strategic in nature. The employer works with the sub-recipient to develop strategies and design the system, and should work, either through the sub-recipient or directly, with the training providers, instructors, and support service providers. Employers ultimately may hire the participants of the program or offer guidance to the instructors and participants on the industry’s workforce needs. It is in their best interest to provide the strategic guidance and advice to develop the most effective system.
* **Support Service Providers** – An operational role in providing support services to participants. Support services may include case management. The sub-recipient may have a referral plan for participants to existing support services, or they may procure support services for participants in order to secure the success of the program. If CDBG funds will be used to offer support services to participants, these services will need to be properly procured.
* **Other Operational Service Providers** – Provides support to the program in the form of operational duties not covered by training providers or support service providers such as recruitment, intake, job placement, etc. If CDBG funds will be used to offer other operational services to participants, these services will need to be properly procured.

Each agent has specific responsibilities tied to its role. The sub-recipient is responsible for reporting to OCD. If the other agents are in contract with the sub-recipient, they have responsibilities for reporting to the sub-recipient, and it is the sub-recipient’s responsibility to communicate with all the agents about each of their responsibilities. The sub-recipient should have executed contracts with all the funded agents explaining the responsibilities and expected deliverables of each party.

Sub-recipient’s responsibilities:

* establishing the main point of contact with the Office of Community Development for the programmatic functions of the program
* communicating with all contractors about programmatic, administrative and fiduciary requirements
* monitoring funded contractors for programmatic and financial compliance
* measuring the impact of the effort to ensure the success of the program
* reporting performance measures to the Office of Community Development
* coordinating the collection of data for the purposes of reporting
* conducting the fiduciary transactions of the IWP sub-recipient agreement
* accounting for the expenditure of funds
* requesting payment for expenditures
* receiving payments and accounting for revenues
* procuring financial audits according to federal and state requirements
* procuring contractors and monitoring their expenditures
* when approved by the Office of Community Development, designating sub-grantees to carry out additional service tasks and monitoring sub-grantees for program and financial compliance. For-profit entities cannot qualify as sub-grantees.

**National Objective and Eligible Activities**

The national objective to be met by the Innovation Workforce Program is benefit to low to moderate income households, and the eligible activities to be carried out with funds granted to sub-recipients are those located in the Housing and Community Development Act 1974 Sections 105 (a) 8 and 17.

**General Eligibility**

In order to be able to qualify as a sub-recipient under the Innovation Workforce Program, the applicant must be one of the following:

1. a governmental or educational entity that is a budget unit of the State of Louisiana;
2. a parish or municipal government, or local educational entity who is already providing training services; or
3. a non-profit entity with tax exempt status.
4. have the current fiscal and management capacity to carry out the proposed program; and
5. already be directly training students as part of the organization’s core activities.

**Program Criteria**

Program applications must include:

1. A Project Application that outlines:

* the proposed number of participants who will enter training, complete training, and be placed in employment;
* the sector and geographic location in which the training will occur;
* the specific training programs, courses, and certifications that will be offered to participants;
* the recruitment, assessment, screening, and job placement plans for the program;
* a program timeline. Programs must cease operation no later one year after the sub-recipient agreement is executed and costs from programs that started before the agreement is signed will not be reimbursed;
* the additional services that will be provided by third parties. Clearly state whether or not those services will be funded through the Innovation Workforce Program;

1. A completed Application Budget Form (form that justifies the program budget and all proposed expenditures. An Application Budget Form that breaks out administrative and program task costs (recruitment, assessment/screening, training, and job placement) by budget category (salaries, benefits, travel, supplies, and training materials) is provided;
2. A signed and executed board resolution from the sub-recipient, confirming signatory authority. A board resolution template is provided;
3. Standard certificate of assurances including all federal and state assurances; and
4. A copy of the sub-recipient’s fiscal audit or audited financial statements from the past three (3) years

Additional consideration will be given to programs that include a plan for serving individuals from underserved populations, including, but not limited to high school students not planning to attend a four year college, out-of-school youth, offenders, low-literate adults, pregnant teens, adjudicated youth, single parents and displaced homemakers, adults with limited English proficiency and homeless youth. Describe the population(s) to be served and how recruitment plans will include target population(s). Describe how including this population will help meet the worker demand in the identified sector, and the outcome of the proposed project. Include hard data on how many participants from the target group(s) will be recruited, trained, and placed. Provide the source of the data and relevant research. Additional consideration will also be given to applicants who have experience in managing federal grant awards.

**Use of funds**

Grants will be awarded through a solicitation process to sub-recipients for high quality proposals that demonstrate a demand-driven, sector-based training program that includes comprehensive strategies for recruiting, training, and placing in employment a skilled and productive workforce tailored to the needs of the impacted regions and the recovery sectors. As a guideline, sub-recipients may use funds for the following activities/expenses:

* Recruitment activity costs that are allowable under federal cost principals and are approved by the Office of Community Development;
* Screening and skills assessment of participants;
* Training, instruction, and certification of participants;
* Software and instructional materials for training and educational purposes. All purchased materials and supplies will need to be acquired through proper procurement procedures;
* Tuition, books, supplies, and other materials necessary for participants to complete their training;
* Job placement activities
* Rent and utilities that are directly related to executing a training program
* Sub-recipient staff salaries, benefits, supplies and travel costs that are directly associated with implementing the training programs funded through the Innovation Workforce Program. Travel costs will be reimbursed in compliance with State Travel PPM 49.

**The sub-recipient shall NOT use Innovation Workforce Program funds for the following:**

* Entertainment, including amusement, diversion and social activities; food and alcohol associated with parties or socials, meals, lodging, transportation and gratuities associated with entertainment;
* Purchase of land and buildings and costs of new construction, renovation or capital improvements to existing facilities;
* Pre-award costs, including preparation of the grant proposal;
* Donations and contributions, including cash, services or property;
* Fundraising activities;
* Lobbying;
* Stipends for participants
* Supplanting Federal and State Funds
* Indirect costs
* Any other items unallowable under federal cost principals as stated in applicable OMB Circulars A-21 (for Educational Institutions), A-87 (for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments) and A-122 (for Non-Profit Organizations);

The Office of Community Development shall make no payments to sub-recipients for services that may be rendered until the sub-recipient agreements have been signed by all parties and approved by the Office of Community Development and the Office of Contractual Review.