



American Apprenticeship Initiative Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How much funding is available through the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI)?

There is an approximately \$100 million available that will be parsed out in about 25 awards ranging between \$2.5 million and \$5 million.

How will the funding levels be decided?

It depends on the number of apprentices served.

Apprentices Served	Funding Request
300	\$2.5 million - \$3 million
600	\$3 million - \$4 million
1000	\$4 million - \$5 million

When is the AAI grant application due?

The closing date for the receipt of applications under this announcement is **April 30, 2015**. Applications must be received no later than 4 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications can be submitted electronically, hand delivered or mailed to the Department of Labor. DOL stresses last minute submissions may be difficult due to web traffic and mail screening requirements. Plan ahead.

What is the AAI's funding source?

These grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to hire foreign workers into the United States under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program.

How long is the grant's funding period?

This is a five-year program (60 months). This includes all necessary implementation and start-up time. The Department of Labor expects that Registered Apprenticeship program development will occur quickly. **"The process for program development and registration should begin immediately and apprenticeship enrollments should be expedited, with the expectation of apprentice enrollments to begin in the first 12 months of the grant."**

What industries does the AAI target?

The funding is meant to support high-job-growth industries and occupations that: 1) are projected to hire substantial numbers of new workers; 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.

The Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) cites the Information Technology, Business Services and Healthcare sectors, and to some, extent, the Advanced Manufacturing sector, as areas of focus.

What occupational skill levels does the AAI target?

The AAI will fund apprenticeship program development for middle- and upper-skill level occupations – particularly for underrepresented populations (see below). Projects should integrate apprenticeship programs into a comprehensive career pathway leading to upper-skill level jobs.

While the occupations at H-1B skill levels are generally defined as commensurate with a bachelor's degree or comparable experience, education, and training, American Apprenticeship is not limited to 4-year degree skill levels and can include the preparation of workers at various points along a career pathway.

Can AAI-funded programs focus on incumbent workers, or must applicants target non-incumbent workers (e.g., the long-term unemployed or first-time workers?)

Either approach is acceptable. AAI-funded programs may serve non-incumbent workers, such as the long-term unemployed or those entering the workforce for the first time. Programs that propose to serve incumbent workers must include a clear human capital plan to significantly upskill these individuals. The Department of Labor is less interested in proposals that seek to utilize apprenticeship models that make only modest improvements in the skills of the current workforce.

Will funding be awarded for projects that work strictly on a local level?

No. Projects must clearly demonstrate potential to scale programs at a statewide, multi-state, regional or national level.

What programing will the AAI support?

The AAI will fund Public/Private partnerships that:

- Expand programs with apprentices going into high-growth occupations and industries, particularly those for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers, and the related activities necessary to support such programs;
- Use strategies to significantly increase apprenticeship opportunities for job seekers and workers (**particularly for women and other underrepresented populations in apprenticeship, including young men and women of color, people with disabilities; low-skilled populations; and veterans, including transitioning service members**);
- Develop pre-apprenticeships, to be used for accelerating underrepresented populations into apprenticeship programs;
- Create career pathways that include Registered Apprenticeships and align with other post-secondary educational offerings; and
- Leverage and develop public policies that increase demand for American Apprenticeship and support sustainability.

What types of entities are required to be part of the Public/Private Partnership?

The primary partnership MUST include at least one Public and one Private sector entity:

- A business, a consortium of businesses, business-related nonprofit organization, or a private organization functioning as a workforce intermediary for the express purpose of serving the needs of businesses;
- At least one representative from one of the following three types of entities: 1) the workforce investment system; 2) public or non-profit education or training provider; or 3) DOL-recognized State Apprenticeship Agency (note: State Apprenticeship Agencies do not exist in Connecticut, Delaware, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands nor Vermont).

What other types of partners are allowed?

- Businesses/employers (**At least three business/employers are required partners and must demonstrate commitment to registering Apprenticeship programs with the Department of Labor and taking on apprentices**);
- Business intermediaries;
- Workforce intermediaries;
- Intergovernmental organizations;
- Economic development agencies;
- State and local governments;
- Foundations and philanthropic organizations;
- Partnering with and leveraging resources from other Federally-funded programs, where allowed by the law that authorizes the grant; such grants may include other DOL grants, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Social Security disability benefits, Small Business Development Centers, federal financial aid such as Pell Grants and Federal Work Study, GI Bill Benefits for veterans, as well as other programs administered by Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Commerce, Transportation, Energy, etc.
- Community-based, faith-based, or advocacy organizations with proven capacity to reach and engage individuals from under-served populations (including women, young men and women of color, persons with disabilities, veterans, including transitioning service members, among others), as they are key providers of basic skills training, technical skills training, supportive services, and workforce development services in communities across the country. Examples include national disability organizations, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) organizations, organizations dedicated to supporting people of color, etc.
- Other providers of supportive and specialized services, such as financial counseling and behavioral health.

Will the leveraging of existing funds and resources be beneficial to an application?

Yes.

Any existing money or programs dedicated to helping fund applicants' programs will be taken into consideration as a leveraging of resources. This can encompass state or local workforce funding streams, subsidies and federal aid such as education loans or grants for apprentices' Related Technical Instruction, private sector investment, and in-kind support, such as donated space. The more leveraged resources the Partnership can cite, the greater commitment is demonstrated to the

project.

Will extra funding be available to cover the cost of programs serving underrepresented populations, as described above?

No, but:

“The DOL recognizes that underrepresented or harder-to-serve populations may require more expensive service delivery strategies to create greater access to quality apprenticeships. In addition, apprenticeship training strategies frequently have higher upfront costs compared to less intensive training options. This grant investment is intended to offset costs of training and to play a catalytic role in American Apprenticeship expansion, but it will be essential that applicants acquire adequate leveraged resources to accomplish the project’s overall goals and milestones. Public and private leveraged resources must be sufficient to allow all apprentices to successfully complete training.”

The FOA requires that applicants estimate the percentage of underrepresented participants served by the proposed program.

Is cost sharing or matching funds required?

No, but leveraged funds and resources will be looked upon favorably in application scoring.

Can a Lead Applicant be included in other applications for this Funding Opportunity?

Yes. A lead applicant can be included as a non-lead applicant in one or more other applications. An entity is may only act as a lead applicant in one application.

What are the required elements of the proposal design?

- Statement of Need
- Expected Outcomes and Outputs
- Project Design
- Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity
- Budget and Budget Justification
- Attachments

For more on the specifics of what is required for the grant application, contact TPMA Senior Project Consultant Abby Kelly-Smith, 317-517-9191 or akellysmith@tpma-inc.com.

