



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Innovation and Expansion Program

**The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended by the Workforce Innovation
and Opportunity Act of 2014**

Notice of Grant Opportunity

Federal Fiscal Year 2017

Announcement Date: June 1 , 2017

Application Deadline: June 30, 2017 - 4:00 PM

**Aaron R. Fichtner, PhD.
Commissioner**

INNOVATION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM
Notice of Grant Opportunity – Federal Fiscal Year 2017

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Take Notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4 et seq., the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (hereinafter “the Department” or the “LWD”) regularly publishes on its website at <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/> all notices of fund availability pertaining to federal or state grant funds that may be awarded by the Department. The notices of fund availability may be found on the Department’s website under the heading “Public Notices” and the subheading “Notice of Availability of Grant Program Funds.”

A. Name of Grant Title

Career Pathways Initiatives for Individuals with Significant Disabilities

B. Purpose of the Grant

Important federal policy changes and legal actions reinforce the importance of having a job in society and the multiple benefits gained by individuals and businesses when adults with disabilities are employed. In 2010, New Jersey became the 14th state to join the *Employment First* policy, recognizing the value of competitive, integrated employment as a preferred service option and optimal outcome for working age adults with disabilities. Being employed improves a person’s quality of life, in part by causing them to be perceived in a more positive light. Individuals with disabilities working in the community have increased self-confidence and a sense of pride. Working also allows them to contribute as a tax-paying citizens. In addition, businesses benefit by having a diverse workforce that meets specific employment needs and reflects the communities they serve.

People with disabilities are a multi-skilled workforce resource for employers. An inclusive workplace promotes diversity, expands the tax base and creates an expanded pool of qualified candidates for available jobs. *Employment First* is about creating an environment for individuals with disabilities that empowers them with choices for their future, reduces poverty, shrinks enrollment in entitlement programs, eases demand on state and community-based social service agencies and provides workers with a sense of achievement.

The purpose of the grant is to establish model demonstrations to expand or improve programs serving persons with the most significant disabilities who are currently in extended employment. Funding for this competitive grant is under the auspices of the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), which will serve as administrator and fiscal agent for the funds awarded. In particular, the DVRS is interested in proposals that develop, implement, and build upon **career pathway initiatives** that will lead to community based competitive integrated employment opportunities within the seven Talent Networks. The term “career pathway programs” means a clear sequence of education coursework and training credentials and should lead to the attainment of an industry-recognized degree or credential, which may include stackable credentials of value in the labor market and that articulate progressively to higher-level credentials or degrees.

The Talent Networks have been established to focus on the specific needs of key industries in the state in order to connect employers, job seekers, the state’s One-Stop Career Centers and educational institutions to achieve the common goal of helping current job seekers develop relevant skills that lead to job opportunities, helping employers find qualified employees, and to ensure that New Jerseyans have access to training and educational opportunities that lead to the

jobs of the future. For more information about the talent networks, please click on the following link: http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/partners/talent/talent_networks.shtml

The following service design elements should be included in each proposal:

- 1) Employer Consortiums: Identify Industry Sector and Engage Employers: Sector-based training strategies that include employers in the design of curricula have demonstrated better employment and earnings outcomes for participants than more traditional approaches.
- 2) Evidence of Cross-Agency Partnerships: Partnerships are at the heart of career pathways and are essential to making them successful. Key cross agency partners at the local and state levels. Include, but are not limited to, workforce investment boards, community colleges, adult basic education providers, human services, economic development and community-based organizations and workforce intermediaries.
- 3) Education and Training Programs: Career pathways provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that meet the skill needs of high-demand industries. Key program design features include basic education and occupational training, career counseling, support services, job coaching and vocational assessments.

C. Available Funding

This grant opportunity requires a 50 percent match pre-requisite, and the total amount of funding available for this program in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017 will be up to \$200,000 or no more than \$50,000 per contract and is contingent upon the availability of funding from the United States Department of Education (USDOE), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The contract period is expected to be for a 12-month period and is estimated to begin on or before September 1, 2017.

D. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this 12-month, competitively awarded grant must be agencies that provide Extended Employment Programs authorized and approved by the LWD. The organization must currently be using a center-based employment model and be interested in transitioning participants into competitive integrated employment.

E. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Standard Evaluation Criteria

The proposals submitted in response to this Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) will be reviewed by an impartial selection committee using a pre-established set of requirements which will include, but not be limited to, the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Total Points
1. A clearly defined work plan, including a timeline for achieving contract deliverables.	60
2. Costs identified in budget appear to be reasonable and well-defined; budget narrative supplied; no calculation errors.	10
3. Is the proposal clearly presented and complete with letters of support?	10
4. Is there sufficient staff resources, technical expertise, and experience to successfully manage this grant project.	10
5. A performance measurement system that provides measureable targets and evaluates contract deliverables, goals, and objectives.	10
Total	100

F. Program Narrative

Applicants will respond to this NGO by submitting a written narrative. The proposal must include all of the program components in the order outlined in this section. Applicants must follow the following format requirements:

- Font – Times New Roman, 12 point;
- Spacing – Double spaced;
- Margins – 1” top and bottom and 1” side margins;
- Pages must be numbered – 1 of X pages, centered at the bottom of the page;
- Charts and graphs are allowed but must be clearly labeled and described;
- Applicant/organization’s name must be listed on each page; and
- Binders shall not be utilized for application submissions.

1. Organization

Provide the name, address, telephone number, email address, employer identification number or federal employer identification number and point of contact for this NGO.

2. Mission of Organization

Include a brief description of the organization's mission, major activities, and relevant historical dates.

3. Participants to be Provided Services

Briefly describe the target population to be served with these funds. Include any information on the specific employment and training needs of the clients to be addressed by this program. All clients must be eligible for DVRS services.

4. Services and Activities

Describe the services and activities to be conducted. If applicable, include the sequence of activities to be provided to the clients. If this program is to be coordinated with any other projects, indicate that in this section. Be as specific as possible in describing all the programs.

5. Goals and Objectives

Specify the major goals and objectives of this program. Indicate the projected outcomes or contract deliverables by numbers.

6. Time Projection

Give specific dates of operation for the activities in the project. If there is a sequence of activities, indicate that in this section by showing the dates for each of the major activities.

7. Staff Responsibilities

List the staff responsible for performing each activity and service. In cases where outside groups/agencies are responsible, indicate the name of the group/agency.

- a. Title of position.
- b. Number of persons in this title.
- c. Statement of responsibilities and functions. Also indicate the reporting structure and identify who the title supervises and who they are supervised by.
- d. A comprehensive listing of specific tasks performed by persons in this title as they relate to this project.
- e. Percentage of total work time that each person in this title will devote to the project funded under this contract.

8. Evaluation

All applications must contain a plan for project evaluation which is based on an objective and quantifiable methodology to evaluate progress toward and achievement of project objectives.

9. Reporting

All applications must contain a plan for reporting on a quarterly basis the services and outcomes of the grant. This information will be used to monitor and evaluate achievement of the contract deliverables. This report will be due to the Program Planning and Development Specialist in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation no later than 10 working days after the end of the quarter.

10. Budget/Financial

Applicants are required to submit a line item budget and written narrative for costs identified in the budget. The written narrative should describe in detail how the line item cost were developed. For example, rent should be described as \$24,000 per year or \$2,000 per month for 500 square feet of space.

G. Application Process

To ensure consistency and fairness of evaluation, the LWD requires that each applicant seeking funding under this grant program submit an application that includes, at a minimum, the components listed below.

<i>Required</i>	<i>Checklist</i>	<i>Included</i>
✓	Applicant Title Page (Attachment A)	
✓	Written Program Narrative	
✓	Budget Summary (Attachment B)	
✓	Written Budget Narrative	
✓	<u>Standards Assurances and General Provisions (Attachment C)</u>	

H. Address to which proposals must be submitted

The responsibility for a timely submission rests with the applicant. The LWD must receive one original and four copies of the completed application no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 30, 2017. The LWD will not accept and cannot evaluate for funding consideration an application received after this deadline. Proposals must be sent to:

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Attention: Karen Carroll
1 John Fitch Way
12th Floor, PO Box 398
Trenton, NJ 08625-0398

Postmarks are not acceptable evidence of timely submission; receipt by the due date and time is required. Applicants are encouraged to either hand-deliver the application to the address above, or to send the application by certified mail return receipt requested or arrange for delivery by an overnight delivery service to ensure timely delivery and receipt of the application.

I. Date of Applicant Notification

All applications are subject to the LWD review and final approval by the Acting Commissioner of the LWD. It is anticipated that the successful proposal will be notified by July 31, 2017.

Appendix Proposal Forms

ATTACHMENT A

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
(Attach this form to the front of your proposal)

NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY - TITLE PAGE

SECTION I:

TITLE OF NGO: Innovation and Expansion Grant Program
DEPARTMENT: New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

SECTION II: FEIN/EIN _____ NAICS Number _____
DUNS Number: _____

APPLICANT AGENCY

ADDRESS

CITY /STATE /ZIP /COUNTY

PRIMARY CONTACT (Please print or type name): _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (____) _____ FAX#: (____) _____

E-MAIL _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF FUNDS REQUESTED: \$ _____

APPLICATION CERTIFICATION: To the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained in the application is true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of this agency, and we will comply with the attached assurances if funding is awarded.

SIGNATURE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF APPLICANT OR EQUIVALENT OFFICER TITLE

(Please print or type name)

***FAILURE TO INCLUDE A REQUIRED APPLICATION COMPONENT RENDERS THE APPLICATION INCOMPLETE AND WILL RESULT IN THE APPLIATION BEING ELIMINATED FROM CONSIDERATION.**

SECTION III:

SEND OR DELIVER PROPOSALS TO: **APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY: June 30, 2017**
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
ATTN: KAREN CARROLL
1 JOHN FITCH WAY, 12TH FLOOR, P.O. BOX 398
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0398

NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED REGARDLESS OF THE DATE POSTMARKED.
NO ADDITIONAL MATERIALS CAN BE SUBMITTED AFTER RECEIPT OF THIS PPLICATION.

ATTACHMENT B

**New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Budget Summary**

Grantee Name

Address

City State Zip

Contract Period:

Career Pathways

From: _____ **To:** _____

Grant Title

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Budget/In Kind	Total Budget
<i>A. Personnel Cost</i>		
Total	\$ -	\$ -
<i>B. Non-Personnel</i>		
Total	\$ -	\$ -
<i>C. Other</i>		
Total	\$ -	\$ -
Net Total Cost	\$ -	\$ -