

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**  
**State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Round 2 (SAEF2)**  
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)  
FOA-ETA-24-03

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

**1) What organizations can apply for these grants?**

Eligible lead applicants are States, as defined at 29 CFR Section 29.2. The term “State” means any of the 50 States of the United States, District of Columbia, or any Territory or possession of the United States. For the purposes of this FOA, the eligible 54 U.S. States and territories include all 50 States of the United States, District of Columbia, and territories whose Active Apprentices exceeds 100 apprentices, i.e., Guam, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa. Only territories with more than 100 registered apprentices (as of FY 23 data) are eligible to apply for Base and Competitive funds. For those territories not eligible to apply under this FOA (have less than 100 active registered apprentices), the designated Regional Office will continue to provide technical assistance. To view the Office of Apprenticeship’s FY 2023 Data and Statistics, please visit <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics>

States (the Governor’s Office) must identify the State agency that will be the grant recipient (e.g., State Workforce Agency eligible for funding under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), State Educational Agency, or a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA)). This entity will have sole responsibility for administering the project and will serve as the grant’s fiscal agent. For States with federally recognized SAAs and where the SAA is not the State agency that will be the grant recipient, the SAA must be included as a partner. Each State is limited to one Base Formula Funding application and one Competitive Funding application (if not previously awarded Competitive Funding under the first round of SAEF (SAEF1) awarded in June 2023) for consideration under this opportunity.

A letter from the Governor (or chief elected official) must be included in both the Base Formula Funding application and the Competitive Funding application to designate the Agency authorized to submit the State’s application(s).

A State awarded Competitive Funding under SAEF1 is not eligible to apply for Competitive Funding under this announcement.

**AWARD INFORMATION**

**2) When are applications due?**

The closing date for receipt of applications under this Announcement is April 4, 2024. You must submit your application electronically on [grants.gov](https://grants.gov) **no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date to minimize the risk of late receipt. We will not review applications received after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date. We will not accept applications sent by hard-copy, e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX).

**3) How long is the grant period of performance?**

For SAEF2 funding, the period of performance (POP) for the Base Formula Funding option is 12 months. States that are awarded the Competitive Funding will receive a second grant that will have a grant POP of 36

months. States that are awarded both the Base and Competitive funding options will need to manage their grants to ensure that the Base Formula Funding is expended within 12 months of the award start date and the Competitive Funding is expended within 36 months of the award start date.

The anticipated start date for SAEF2 is 07/01/2024.

#### **4) Which funding options can applicants apply for under the SAEF2 FOA?**

The Department expects to award a total of \$100,000,000 to eligible States and territories to increase their ability to serve, improve, and strategically expand the National Apprenticeship system. Of the available funds, the Department intends to award as much as \$50,000,000 through 54 formula-funded base grants, also referred to as the Base Formula Funding in this FOA. The Department will also award an additional \$50,000,000 through competitive funds, also referred to as Competitive Funding in this FOA, to those eligible applicants seeking to receive a combination of both Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding. Competitive funds will be awarded through up to 10 grants, with individual grants ranging from \$1,000,000 up to \$6,000,000. **All applicants responding to this FOA are required, at minimum, to submit an application for the Base Formula Funding, and may choose to submit a separate and additional application for Competitive Funding.**

#### **5) What is the amount of grant funding an applicant may apply for?**

For SAEF2 funding, we expect availability of approximately \$100 million to award to States, as defined under 29 CFR 29.2, with Base Formula Funding described in Appendix B and up to 10 additional grants through the competitive portion of this announcement described above.

You may apply for:

- (1) an amount up to the Base Funding amount specified in Appendix B, or
- (2) the Base Funding amount specified in Appendix B plus a separate application for a ceiling amount of up to \$6 million for the competitive portion.

Awards made under this Announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds. If additional funds become available, we reserve the right to use such funds to select additional grantees from applications submitted in response to this Announcement. The Department reserves the right to change this amount depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted.

A State awarded Competitive Funding under SAEF1 is not eligible to apply for Competitive Funding under this announcement.

#### **6) What information should be provided by applicants for the Base Formula Funding option?**

In addition to the applicable required documents listed under III.C.1 Application Screening Criteria, all applicants must provide in their Base Formula Funding application, a project narrative in response to Appendix A, with no minimum page limit:

1. A description of the activities you intend to implement,
2. A description of your efforts in the community(ies) you intend to reach,
3. Success benchmarks and measures,
4. A description of the specific population(s) you intend to impact,
5. The names of the organizations with whom you will form partnerships, and, if applicable,
6. The description of SAEF1 activities, completed and in progress, and the goals you have met for your SAEF1 project.

This description should also include how the applicant has expended SAEF1 grant moneys up to the SAEF2 application deadline and demonstrate how they will expend the combined remaining SAEF1, if applicable, and SAEF2 to meet their project goals. Your project narrative should detail your plan to expand Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeships leading to RAPs, and/or developing strategies to align or incorporate Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs with RAPs, in your State.

Please ensure that your Abstract and Project Narrative clearly address the guidelines and required activities in this section. The Department reserves the right to change this amount depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted. The Base Formula Funding has a Period of Performance (POP) of one year. Subject to available funds, the Department is committed to awarding annual Base Formula Funding (based on a formula specified in each annual FOA). Continuation of funding to grantees is subject to the discretion of DOL and contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee's project, and adequate stewardship of federal funds. Specifically, States will be considered for funding in future years based on how they utilize funding based on previous year(s) of SAEF Base Formula Funding and the level of implementation of their proposed project activities. Each year, DOL will look at applicant's level of expenditure of this grant's funds and level of implementation of their proposed project activities to award additional Base Formula Funding in subsequent years.

If the applicant received an SAEF1 grant and is applying for SAEF2 grant funding, the applicant must show how they have expended SAEF1 grant moneys up to the SAEF2 application deadline. The applicant must also demonstrate how they will expend the combined remaining SAEF1, if applicable, and SAEF2 to meet their project goals.

**7) How do applicants indicate they are applying for the Base Formula Funding or the Base and Competitive Funding options?**

States that wish to only apply for the Base Formula Funding should refer to Appendices A and B for additional information on the Project Narrative requirements, allowable activities, and the Base Formula Funding amounts. Section IV.B.3. Project Narrative is only applicable to applicants wishing to apply for the Competitive Funding. States must submit separate applications (SF-424, SF-424A, Abstract, Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, and any other relevant application materials) for the Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding, if applicable. For Base Formula Funding applicants, if the applicant received a SAEF1 grant and is applying for SAEF2 grant funding, the applicant must show how they have expended SAEF1 grant funding up to the SAEF2 application deadline. The applicant must also demonstrate how they will expend the combined remaining SAEF1, if applicable, and SAEF2 funding to meet their project goals.

**8) What if a State only wants the Base Formula Funding? Is this allowable?**

Yes, it is allowable for a State applicant to apply only for the Base Formula Funding option. Applicants may choose to apply for only the Base Formula Funding, as described in Appendix A. Base Formula Funding amounts are specified in Appendix B.

**9) Can a State applying for the Base Formula Funding request a lower amount than what is published in Appendix B?**

Yes, applicants may apply for an amount up to the Base Funding amount published in Appendix B to expend during the 12-month POP.

**10) What if a State only wants the Competitive Funding? Is that allowable?**

No, it is not allowable for a State applicant to apply only for the Competitive Funding option. To receive Competitive Funding, applicants must submit applications for both Base Formula Funding and Competitive Funding. All applicants responding to this SAEF2 FOA are required, at minimum, to apply for the Base Formula Funding and may choose to submit a separate and additional application for Competitive Funding.

**11) Under Base Formula Funding, are grantees required to use grant funds to provide services to participants?**

No, while States that receive Base Formula Funding may use these funds to provide grant-funded services to participants, it is not required. Further, States that receive Base Funding are not required to provide outcome goals for the number of participants to be served (receive grant-funded services). However, if States do provide grant-funded services to participants, they would report on these outcomes as part of quarterly reporting requirements.

**12) Under Competitive Funding, are grantees required to use grant funds to provide services to participants?**

In addition to the five-year plan, applicants for the Competitive Funding option must plan a project that involves a minimum of two activities. If applicants select required activities that serves participants, then applicants must set targets for Participant and Apprentice Outcomes and Expanding Registered Apprenticeship Program Outputs for the Competitive Funding option. Please see Section IV.B.3.b Expected Outcomes and Outputs and Appendix D Suggested Performance Outcomes and Outputs Table. If applicants select activities that do not directly result in Participant Outcomes or Program Outputs, they must propose targets related to their proposed activities.

**13) Is there an expectation for a certain number of apprentices enrolled relative to the amount of funding requested?**

There is no minimum enrollment requirement. Instead, applicants should draw on their own experiences and calculation of costs to propose to serve the maximum feasible number of participants.

**ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES**

**14) What is the geographic scope applicants can propose?**

Applicants must serve a statewide geographic scope. The geographic scope is the physical service area in which awarded applicants will serve participants.

**15) What are required grant activities?**

A five-year plan is a required activity for **all applicants**. Please ensure that your five-year plan for the Competitive Funding option builds upon the five-year plan for the Base Formula Funding option. Please refer to the guidelines below for more details on the five-year plan.

The five-year plan must include the following:

1. Be designed to include elements that address DEIA, workforce system alignment, and RAP and/or pre-apprenticeship leading to enrollment in a RAP. This includes plans to meet Utilization Goals for individuals with Disabilities under 29 C.F.R. 30.7.
2. Consider the State population distribution and how the State can better serve its underrepresented populations and communities.

3. Describe how pipelines to opportunities across industries will be built and how the State intends to reach new and emerging industries and occupational sectors, and how States will build buy-in from stakeholders.
4. For applicants who were not awarded SAEF1 funding, they must still submit a plan that outlines five years of activities. The plan must include a detailed description of the first year of activity, charting out quarterly milestones. Subsequent years (i.e., years two through five) can be less detailed, providing bi-annual milestones. When an applicant applies for subsequent rounds of funding in later years, they will expand on the details of that specific year in their plan. Additionally, applicants who are applying for a second round of SAEF funding must also include updates on SAEF1 implementation in their five-year plan and adjust, accordingly, years two through five of their five-year plan.

Applicants for the **Base Formula Funding** option, in addition to the five-year plan, must also do the following, at a minimum:

1. Build statewide capacity to increase the number and quality of RAPs through stronger alignment with the education and workforce systems, particularly as it relates to connections to the State's CTE system.
2. For SAAs, implement data sharing, system change, and governance requirements to comply with 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30 and ensure a strong and modernized Registered Apprenticeship system by promoting the standardization of RAPs and committing to building a unified National Apprenticeship system. This includes sharing of data and ensuring that quality programs are registered within the State and align with the five key areas of RAPs: on the job learning (OJL), related instruction (RI), progressive wages, mentoring, and industry-recognized credential attainment to ensure reciprocity across the National Apprenticeship system.
3. For SAAs, utilize funds to adopt and fully integrate RAPIDS.

In addition to the five-year plan, applicants for the **Competitive Funding** option must plan a project that involves a minimum of two activities from a list provided under Program Activities in Section I.A.:

1. Provide a range of training services that support individuals, particularly from underrepresented populations and underserved communities, enrolled in a RAP, that may include: RI reimbursement; OJL reimbursement; development of curricula and standards for apprenticeship; online and technology-based learning; accelerated and competency-based training that integrates academic and occupational skills training; and apprenticeship training costs and other supportive services.
2. Provide incentive funding to employers to support new or expand existing RAPs in targeted industries in which they are serving.
3. Establish statewide intermediaries or hubs to facilitate industry adoption of RAPs.
4. Provide direct funding for a range of pre-apprenticeship programs that lead directly to enrollment in a RAP. Includes pre-apprenticeship activities that support underrepresented populations and underserved communities and increase opportunities to create career pathways for youth and adults.
5. Expand RAP opportunities for youth (between the ages of 16 and 24). Includes establishing and expanding partnerships that commit to expanding RAPs and/or pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to RAP enrollment for youth through coordination with industry, workforce intermediaries, labor organization, State Educational Agencies (SEAs) and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), community colleges, youth-serving and community-based organizations, CTE programs, and other stakeholders.
6. Assist industries in creating RAPs in lower wage, entry level occupations across industries that are

critical to the nation, but currently do not provide strong career pathways or credentials that encourage people to stay and grow.

7. Assist employers in creating a forward-thinking, specialized RAP that embraces available technology, targeted at addressing people with disabilities.
8. Build stronger partnerships with the State and local workforce system. Additionally, consider ways to align and support the jobs required to implement President Biden's Investing in America Agenda. This can include working with employers to increase their awareness of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in the State and identify opportunities for them to join existing RAPs and/or starting new RAPs.

**16) Can applicants propose projects that include pre-apprenticeships that do not lead to RAP enrollment?**

No. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded through this grant must directly lead to enrollment in a RAP during the grant period of performance. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded under this grant should ensure that the skills and competencies being developed align with industry needs. It is allowable and encouraged for pre-apprenticeship completers to receive grant-funded services in a RAP so they may be a grant participant.

**17) How can applicants consider ways to align and support President Biden's Investing in America Agenda?**

This can include working with employers to increase their awareness of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in the State and identify opportunities for them to join existing RAPs and/or starting new RAPs.

**MISC.**

**18) Who can I contact for further questions about the SAEF2 FOA?**

For further information about this FOA, please contact Bria Wearren, Grants Management Specialist, Office of Grants Management, at [SAEF2\\_FOA-ETA-24-03@dol.gov](mailto:SAEF2_FOA-ETA-24-03@dol.gov). Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to [SAEF2\\_FOA-ETA-24-03@dol.gov](mailto:SAEF2_FOA-ETA-24-03@dol.gov) and must specifically reference FOA-ETA-24-03, and along with question(s), include a contact name, and phone number. This Announcement is available on the ETA website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants> and at <https://www.grants.gov>.

**19) What data is included on [Apprenticeship.gov's Data and Statistics dashboard](#)?**

There are three sources of data the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) uses: RAPIDS, SAA Portal upload, and stick counts. If RAPIDS is a State's primary case management system, then the data in the Data and Statistics dashboard is current as of September 30, 2023. Those States that upload to the SAA Portal, the data in the Data and Statistics dashboard is a quarter behind, e.g., the dashboard was refreshed September 30, 2023, so the SAA Portal uploads are from FY23 Q3. Lastly, stick counts were not in the dashboard.

**20) What are the reporting requirements for SAEF2 grantees?**

Applicants must agree to meet DOL reporting requirements and provide individual record-level data that would be made available for evaluation and national reporting purposes.

Please refer to Section VI.C. Applicants must provide a comprehensive description of the existing or planned systems and processes that the applicant will use to provide timely and accurate financial and participant-level performance reporting, including the process for tracking participant-level data on participant

characteristics, services, activities, and employment outcomes of registered apprentices served through the project to report to the Department during the life of the grant. In addition, the description must detail how these systems will be used to regularly assess progress towards the identified performance goals and that rigorous performance reporting will be taken into account in staffing and budgeting plans.

Additionally, grant recipients are required to participate in all ETA training activities related to grantee orientation, financial management and reporting, performance reporting, product dissemination, and other technical assistance training as appropriate during the grant period. These sessions may occur via conference calls, virtual events such as webinars, and in-person meetings.

Grant recipients must submit Quarterly Financial Reports, Quarterly Performance Reports, and Quarterly Narrative Performance Reports as detailed in Section VI.C. Reporting.

For reporting purposes, participants, as well as reportable individuals, are reported into WIPS.

**21) Are grantees required to participate in a DOL-funded evaluation?**

As a condition of grant award, grantees are required to participate in an evaluation, if undertaken by DOL. The evaluation may include an implementation assessment across grantees, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grantees, and a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. Conducting an impact analysis could involve random assignment (which involves random assignment of eligible participants into a treatment group that would receive program services or enhanced program services, or into control group(s) that would receive no program services or program services that are not enhanced). We may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grantees must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor on participants, employers, and funding; (2) provide access to program operating personnel, participants, and operational and financial records, and any other relevant documents to calculate program costs and benefits; and (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the assignment by lottery of participants to program services, including the possible increased recruitment of potential participants; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of DOL.