

**Learn to Earn Initiative FY'19 RFQ
Questions & Answers (#3 - FINAL)**

Updated 2/8/19 - All New Questions & Answers in Red

Application Package / Budget and Grant Award

Q: Can you please clarify which documents / attachments need to be submitted to be eligible for Program Design?

A: Applicants must submit all attachments listed in Section 3C: Qualifications Submission Package Components. In addition to the instructions listed in the RFQ, please see the language below, which outlines how documents must be submitted through the online portal:

1. *Qualifications forms and charts must be submitted in the form of a single MS Word file (Attachments 1-3)*
2. *Signed MOAs and/or letters of commitment must be scanned and submitted in the form of a single PDF file (Attachment 4)*
3. *Budget forms must be submitted in the form of a single MS Excel file (Attachments 5a, 5b, and 5c)*
4. *C.O.G.S. must be submitted in the form of a single PDF file (Attachment 6) *Please note that community colleges, public vocational technical high schools, and public state universities serving as the lead applicant do not need to submit a Certificate of Good Standing.**

Q: Are there any limitations on potential sources of match other than what is listed in the RFQ? Are federal funds eligible to be used as match, for example?

A: All match contributions must be able to be categorized (cash and/or in-kind) in accordance with Attachment 5C. LTE is a state-funded program and federal funds ARE eligible to be used as match. Please refer to Section 1.I. and Attachment 5C for additional guidance on match requirements.

Q: In reference to the Program Design (i.e. "planning") budget, should the staff time expense for partner organizations be listed on the same forms as the lead applicant?

A: No. The "Salary and Fringe" line items on the budget narrative forms refer only to project costs related to staff that will be performing project-related functions and will be on the payroll of the lead applicant only. Relevant staff time and stipends for partner organizations must be listed under "Contracted Services." *Please refer to pages 28-30 of the RFQ for additional information.*

Q: What is the total dollar amount of the Learn to Earn grant award?

A: We anticipate awarding a maximum amount of \$325,000 each to up to two partnerships to engage in program design activities and subsequent program implementation. Of this amount, partnerships may request up to \$25,000 for program design activities. With this RFQ, applicants are only proposing to spend up to \$25,000 for program design activities. We will work with selected partnerships to develop a strategic implementation budget totaling \$300,000 plus any unspent program design funds.

Q: What is the timeline for submission?

A: Please refer to Section 3 on page 13 for the full submission schedule. Applications are due online by midnight (11:59 PM) on Wednesday, February 13, 2019. These proposals should include only responses pertaining to the program design (planning) phase. For selected applicants, we

anticipate that the full training implementation plan for the duration of the program implementation phase (including implementation budget) will be due approximately three months after the start of the program design phase. As noted on page 4 of the RFQ, there will be a series of smaller deliverables due periodically through the program design phase that will ultimately form the foundation of a strong implementation plan submission.

Q: Is there a limit for indirect costs?

A: There is not a limit on indirect costs. For the purposes of this grant program, indirect costs are defined as costs incurred for common or joint objectives that are not easily identifiable to a single grant and benefit multiple programs. Selected grantees will apply indirect costs through the use of an approved indirect cost rate or an approved cost allocation plan. A copy of the cost allocation plan will be requested during contract negotiations. Please refer to page 31 of Attachment 5 for additional information.

Partner Organizations

Q: Is the current RFQ intended to fund new pilot sites only, or are existing pilot sites eligible to apply for expansion of their current programs?

A: These grant funds are not intended to serve as expansion or continuation funding for existing Learn to Earn pilot programs. Current lead grantees are eligible to apply for funding; however, they must be able to articulate how their proposed program would be different and indicate how they would leverage the full Program Design Phase to develop a new program that addresses the needs of the intended target population in accordance with the parameters outlined within the RFQ.

Q: On page 12 it provides examples of possible partners. Is an MOU needed from these partners or only the business partners?

A: Each partner's commitments, roles and activities must be provided either through a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among partners OR through the submission of separate letters of commitment. This requirement pertains to all partners in addition to the required employer partners. All partners listed on the chart labeled: "PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION" (page 20 of RFQ) must have submitted an MOA or Letter of Commitment.

Q: For participants with documented disabilities, will the education partner be responsible for providing supportive services or are said services provided in partnership based on individual needs?

A: Supportive services will be provided in partnership based on the individual needs of participants and the strategic capacity of partnering organizations.

Q: Is it required for the business partners to be included in Attachment 3: Partnership Qualifications Chart, or rather, is the purpose of Attachment 3 to list out qualifications of community partners other than the business partners?

A: Attachment 3 is intended to be a space for applicants to demonstrate the capacity and qualifications of their partnership as a whole. There may be some areas that only a business would be able to contribute to inform the partnership, such as entry requirements, technical skills, etc. Each employer partner is ***not required*** to be listed here if you have other partners that contribute this capacity/expertise.

Q: What commitment, roles, activities, if any, must be included in the MOA or Letters of Commitment other than Demonstrated Demand and Expertise with Technical, Soft Skill and Work Readiness Requirements?

A: Please keep in mind that ALL partners are required to be included on an MOA or letter of commitment. For additional information, please see the question on which partners are required to submit an MOA or letter of commitment. As it relates to content, employer partners must demonstrate, in addition to their requisite expertise, their commitment to participating in the program design phase and any other contributions throughout the period of performance of the grant award.

Q: Are business partners eligible if they have operations in Massachusetts and employ Massachusetts residents in the proposed target occupation, but the training and job placement would occur at one of its locations in another state. (For example, Jane Doe is a person with a disability who resides in Springfield, MA and is referred to our program. XYZ Corporation has operations in multiple locations throughout Massachusetts and other states and has committed to being a business partner for the LTE initiative. Jane attends training at, and is eventually hired at, XYZ's location in Enfield, CT.)

A: A business partner would be considered eligible if they have operations in Massachusetts and employ Massachusetts residents in the proposed target occupation, but the training would occur at one of its locations in another state; HOWEVER, job placements would need to occur within Massachusetts in alignment with LTE's third impact goal of meeting demand for talent in Massachusetts.

Q: How can we get in touch with our local workforce board to discuss this RFQ and other initiatives?

A: MassHire Workforce Board staff have substantial knowledge about business demand for workers in their region. They can also identify opportunities to leverage local publicly-funded workforce development system capacity. Many MassHire Workforce Boards have staff with experience in designing and managing sector strategies initiatives and in convening and facilitating industry sector partnerships. Applicants can access a list of MassHire Workforce Boards at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board>

Target Occupation

Q: Can the Business Partner establish a minimum level of criteria for candidates in order to meet the Target Occupation roles and responsibilities?

A: Yes. The Regional Employer Demand Chart (Attachment 2, Question 4D) requires applicants to list the skills and credentials required for entry for a given target occupation based primarily on information shared by employer partners.

Q: What is the employment commitment of the Business Partner if it is determined that a hired individual is not a good fit for the occupation / company?

A: There is not a requirement for businesses / employer partners to hire program graduates during the Implementation Phase; however, employer partners must demonstrate a commitment to a candidate-sourcing strategy that includes recruiting and training members of the proposed target population as a solution to meet their occupational demand as well as dedicating time to work with the partnership in order to inform the program design solutions.

Q: Can the employment positions be part-time and full-time?

A: Yes, unsubsidized employment outcomes may be part-time or full-time. We intend to work with funded partnerships during the Program Design Phase to develop their job placement strategy to ensure that participants are prepared for an initial job as well as being supported to advance along a career pathway.

Target Population

Q: For Pilot Populations A and B, the participants must have all of the bulleted qualifications listed?

A: Yes, the participants must meet all of the criteria in the bulleted list. Regarding public assistance, please keep in mind that the requirement states “one or more of the following” *not* ALL.

Program Design Phase

Q: What is the commitment responsibility at the end of the Design Phase? For example, if the lead applicant awarded funding for program design decides at the end of the three/four month design period that they feel the implementation phase is not feasible (for a variety of reasons) may they terminate the relationship and choose not to enter the implementation phase?

A: Yes, it is possible that partnerships decide not to move forward; however, our intention is to fund partnerships who are committed to using the Program Design Phase to solidify their pipeline training program, submit a complete implementation plan at its conclusion, and move forward with the Implementation Phase.

General

Q: In reading through the referenced material there was a reference to continuing to deepen the impact of our current programming. Could you point me in the direction of a description of this programming?

A: Here’s a listing of the program design grants we made last year: <http://commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/WCTF-FY18-LTE-Grant-Summary.docx> (also on this [webpage](#)). Within a week, we aim to have the implementation information posted as well. Our current pilot programs are approximately 6 months into their implementation contracts.