

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION DWG
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OWI-DASG
	DATE May 5, 2023

**ADVISORY: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 2-22
CHANGE 2**

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
 STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
 STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS AND CHAIRS
 STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
 INDIAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAM GRANTEEES

FROM: BRENT PARTON 
 Acting Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: 2023 QUEST Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants Funding Announcement

1. **Purpose.** To announce the availability of funding for 2023 Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) and convey updated submission and project requirements.
2. **Action Requested.** ETA will award funds to responsive, high-quality applications on a first-come, first-served basis while funding remains available. Any eligible applicants should submit applications no later than August 4, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. EDT as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 2-22, section h., *Grants.gov Submission Process*. Please share with all staff who administer DWGs, Unemployment Insurance, and Employment Services to ensure high-quality applications. Please disseminate this guidance to all interested entities and potential partners.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. Summary – This Change 2 to TEGL 2-22 announces the availability of funding for 2023 Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) and conveys updated submission and project requirements. Award amounts for 2023 QUEST DWGs will be up to \$5 million for the grant period of performance. Updates to TEGL 2-22 are outlined in section 4 below.
 - b. Background – While the public health emergency declaration has been rescinded, the uneven health, employment, and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

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continue to create challenges for the nation's full recovery. Many of the workers most impacted by the resulting economic downturn were employed in the care economy, hospitality, and transportation and logistics sectors. These sectors are dominated by people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, individuals who were formerly incarcerated, women, and lower-wage workers. Furthermore, global supply chain disruptions caused the displacement of workers who would have been eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program services; however, this program is not accepting new participants. These conditions continue the need for 2023 QUEST DWG grants to support pandemic-impacted workers, industries, and communities now and for years to come.

Applicants may propose 2023 QUEST grant activities that address workforce needs in the following sectors:

- Infrastructure;
- Care Economy;
- Hospitality;
- Climate and Environment (such as climate change mitigation, clean energy transition efforts, construction, manufacturing, and technology); or
- Other industries or sectors relevant to their local economy.

4. 2023 QUEST DWG Funding Opportunity.

- a. **Applicant Eligibility.** Eligible applicants for all Disaster Recovery DWGs, including the 2023 QUEST DWGs, are:
- i. the state;
 - ii. an outlying area; or
 - iii. Indian tribal governments as defined by the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122(6).

DWG projects are funded by Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker Program and are therefore considered required partners in the American Job Center (AJC) network. Grant recipients that are not already AJC partners through the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program must engage with the local workforce development board within six months of the grant award to become a partner in the AJC network, which may include contributing to operating costs of the one-stop delivery system as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter no. 17-16...

In addition, applicants are strongly encouraged to review performance accountability and grant management requirements and technical assistance resources in the reference section below to understand performance reporting requirements for the DWG program.

- b. **Participant Eligibility.** Individuals who are eligible for WIOA Disaster Recovery DWGs are:
- i. individuals temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic disaster;
 - ii. long-term unemployed individuals, as defined by the applicant;
 - iii. dislocated workers as defined by WIOA Section 3(15); and,

- iv. self-employed individuals who became unemployed or significantly underemployed due to the disaster.

To maximize benefits to individuals and communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, ETA encourages grant recipients to strive to enroll the largest number of eligible participants possible under the 2023 QUEST DWG. The participant eligibility categories above provide grant recipients with substantial flexibility in how to apply them for purposes of a Disaster Recovery DWG.

For example, the "individuals temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the pandemic" group provides grantees with the flexibility to determine whether individuals who were working before but became unemployed because of the health or economic impacts of the pandemic may be eligible to participate in grant activities. This definition also notes that such a "layoff" may be temporary in nature, and grant recipients have the authority to determine how that term is interpreted for Disaster Recovery DWGs including 2023 QUEST DWGs.

Another definition that provides grant recipients a good deal of latitude to apply to individual eligibility determination is "long-term unemployed individuals." Under DWG guidance per TEGL 16-21, "long-term unemployed individual" is defined by the applicant and is not required to align with the Bureau of Labor Statistics definition. Grantee recipients may interpret this to include individuals who have no work history, have been incarcerated, have otherwise not worked for an extended period, or in other ways that ensure that they can enroll the largest number of participants.

In addition, grantee recipients are reminded that workers who became unemployed or are threatened with job loss because of foreign trade are, by definition, dislocated workers and therefore eligible to participate in a 2023 QUEST DWG. While not a replacement for the TAA program, 2023 QUEST DWG applicants may serve individuals who were certified or would have been eligible for TAA program services had the TAA Program not entered termination.

2023 QUEST DWG grantee policies should include, define, and describe all participant eligibility criteria.

Lastly, in 2022, the Departments of Labor and Commerce published The Good Jobs Principles, a shared federal vision of job quality describing the core elements of a good job. ETA recommends each applicant frame their project's job quality components using these Principles.

- c. **Required Grant Activities.** The 2023 QUEST DWG required activities are the same as those described in TEGL 2-22. However, the Department emphasizes the importance of providing comprehensive, necessary supportive services, including childcare, transportation, housing, mental health supports, and other allowable services, to program

participants to enable them to successfully complete grant activities and meet their planned employment and training goals.

- d. **Availability of Funds and Application Review and Award.** The period of performance for the 2023 QUEST DWG grants is 36 months. Grants will start on October 1, 2023, and conclude on September 30, 2026.
- e. **Attachment A, QUEST DWG Terminology.** The 2023 QUEST DWG replaces the term “High-quality jobs” in TEGL No. 2-22 Attachment A with the definition of Good Jobs provided in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 7-22. The characteristics of good jobs and the importance of integrating good job strategies in the public workforce development system are incorporated into this Change 2 by reference. These characteristics align with The Good Jobs Principles, a shared federal vision of job quality published in 2022 by the Departments of Labor and Commerce. ETA recommends each applicant frame their project’s job quality components using these Principles.
- f. **Application Requirements.** This Change 2 clarifies that the information requested in Attachment 1, the 2023 QUEST DWG Suggested Grant Application, replaces Attachment B QUEST DWG Project Synopsis form that was published in TEGL 2-22. The following four items must be submitted through grants.gov at www.grants.gov:
 - i. An electronically signed copy of an SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance (OMB Control No. 4040-0004);
 - ii. An SF-424A - Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (OMB Control No. 4040-0006);
 - iii. A Budget Narrative to explain the projected costs reflected in each line item of the SF-424A demonstrating how grant funds will be used. See Attachment 2 for instructions on completing the budget narrative; and
 - iv. A completed 2023 QUEST DWG Suggested Application (Attachment 1) or another file format with the information requested in Attachment 1.
- g. **Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Information Collection**

OMB Information Collection No 1225-0086, Expires July 31, 2025.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Send comments about the burden estimated or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, to the attention of the Departmental Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-1301, Washington, D.C. 20210. Comments may also be emailed to: DOL_PRA_PUBLIC@dol.gov.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND ONLY COMMENTS ABOUT THE BURDEN CAUSED BY THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND YOUR GRANT APPLICATION TO THE SPONSORING AGENCY AS SPECIFIED EARLIER IN THIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

The information being collected through this Training and Employment Guidance Letter is for the purpose of awarding a grant. This information is required to be considered for this grant.

5. **Inquiries.** Questions regarding this guidance should be directed to the Grant Specialist, Ms. Diane Easterling, at DOL-ETA-DWG@dol.gov with 2023 QUEST DWG in the subject line.

6. **References.**

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), sec. 170, Pub. L. No. 113-128, 128 STAT. 1425, 1573-1576 (July 22, 2014);
- 20 CFR pt. 687;
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 7-22, *Increasing Employer and Workforce System Customer Access to Good Jobs* (January 18, 2023);
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 2-22, *QUEST Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants Funding Announcement* (July 5, 2022);
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 16-21, *Updated National Dislocated Worker Grant Program Guidance* (June 16, 2022);
- TEGL No. 14-18 – *Aligning Performance Accountability Reporting, Definitions, and Policies Across Workforce Employment and Training Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)* (March 25, 2019);
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 19-16 – *Guidance on Services Provided through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for the implementation of the WIOA Final Rules* (March 1, 2017);
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 17-16 – *Infrastructure Funding of the One-Stop Delivery System* (January 18, 2017);
- Department of Commerce and Department of Labor Good Jobs Principles site <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/principles>;
- Employment and Training Administration Performance site <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance>;
- National Dislocated Worker Grant WorkforceGPS Community of Practice, Performance Reporting Resources

<https://dwg.workforcegps.org/resources/2022/05/18/13/44/DWG-Performance-Reporting-Resources>; and

- Employment and Training Administration Grants site
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/management>

7. Attachments.

- Attachment I - 2023 QUEST DWG Suggested Application Form
- Attachment II - Instruction Sheet for Completing the Budget Narrative