

# Displaced Oil and Gas Workers Fund

# Solicitation for Proposals

# Program Year 2023-24

## Questions and Answers

1. **The SFP has conflicting start dates; what is the correct estimated project start date?**

Page #14 Figure 2: Application Timeline – Estimated project start date has a typo to the date:

* Original: January 2024
* New: June 2024\*

\***Please note that the project start date is an estimated date pending exhibit and contract approval that can take several months.**

1. **The SFP has a conflicting date for the award notification; what is the correct date?**

Page #17 –Section C. Award Notification has a typo in sentence number two:

Original: "Award decision notices are anticipated to be mailed by January 2023."

New: "Award decision notices are anticipated to be mailed by January 2024."

1. **The SFP outlines the six sections for Exhibit A: Project Narrative. However, Exhibit A only has four sections. Is there a revised Exhibit A?**

SFP Exhibit A-Project Narrative (DOCX) was missing sections of content:

Original: (1) Statement of Needs, (2) Target Group, (3) Project Plan, (4) Performance Goals.

New: (1) Statement of Needs, (2) Target Group, (3) Project Plan, (4) Performance Goals, (5) Partnership and Leveraged Resources, (6) Statement of Capabilities, and (7) Budget Summary Narrative and Plan. Exhibit A was replaced with a revised form dated 10/4/2023.

1. **How does EDD define "At-risk" and "soon-to-be-displaced" workers?**

Workers directly engaged in oil or gas extraction and refinement face imminent unemployment due to California's transition to clean energy. Also, workers who can reasonably justify being "at risk" should be eligible if they meet all other eligibility criteria.

1. **Can we include "at-risk" workers and "soon-to-be displaced" workers in the "Core" group?**

Yes. Assuming that "at-risk" and "soon-to-be displaced workers are directly engaged in oil or gas extraction and refinement.

1. **Should staffing and other operational costs of DOGWF programs be factored into the 15k per participant cap? Or is that cap intended to cover direct services to participants, e.g., tuition fees, stipends for childcare, etc.?**

The cost per participant (CPP) is inclusive of overhead costs. The CPP is based upon the average cost to serve participants; therefore, a participant receiving more intensive services at a higher cost could be balanced by a participant who receives lower-cost, basic services.

1. **How do you define "local workforce areas"?**

The Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) administers the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services as designated by the Governor. Factors considered in selecting these LWDAs include geographic location, population, and commonality of labor market areas. The LWDA aims to align workforce development activities and resources with larger regional economic development areas and available resources to provide coordinated and efficient services to job seekers and employers.

1. **Are workers in chemical facilities that exist alongside oil refineries solely to contribute to the refining process considered core?**

Yes, the DOGWF program grant services are primarily designed to support two groups: Core Workers, who are directly engaged in oil or gas extraction and refinement, and Core Adjacent Workers, who are in occupations that exist in the oil and gas industry but also have potential in other industries.

1. **Can frontline oil refinery workers who have been dislocated and currently employed in lower-paying jobs but aspire to return to higher pay be considered among the "Core" group described in the SFP?**

Yes, the DOGWF program grant services are primarily designed to support two groups: Core Workers, who are directly engaged in oil or gas extraction and refinement, and Core Adjacent Workers, who are in occupations that exist in the oil and gas industry but also have potential in other industries. Under-employed workers dislocated from the industry would also be eligible for the grant, assuming they meet all other eligibility requirements.

1. **Do local case managers have the discretion to recommend exceeding the encouraged $15,000 per worker level of support in the case of acute layoff impacts? And in such cases, can resources extend beyond those connected to training and job search support and include, for example, support for housing, medical care, childcare, etc.?**

Yes, a local determination can be made to exceed the CPP for an individual. However, approval from EDD would be necessary to exceed the average $15,000 CPP. Grantees must contact their EDD project manager for approval to exceed the $15,000 CPP average and provide thorough justification for the increased cost. EDD reserves the right to adjust this funding cap based on recruitment trends and the evolving needs of workers. This approach aligns with the program's overarching goals of delivering targeted, effective support to those most in need. For example, a participant who receives more intensive services and costs more is balanced by another who only needs basic services to become re-employed.

Financial stipends for living expenses may be provided to trainees while they are engaged in training programs, and incentive programs can be developed for job search activities, further facilitating participants' successful re-employment. Additional supportive services are allowable to support participants taking part in career and/or training services.

1. **Can you advise applicants about how to prepare proposals so they will have the flexibility to respond to future acute layoff events that are yet unknown but that may occur during the grant period?**

Proposals should demonstrate a need for grant funding to meet the current and/or anticipated demand to serve workers already displaced and/or projected to be displaced by California's transition to clean energy. A proposal can identify dislocations that have already occurred, as well as others that may take place within the period of performance.

1. **Is the limit of $15,000 per worker for budget development, or is there a reporting/accounting requirement?**

The applicant should use this limit to determine funding requests and for budget development that includes projected participants at a cost-per-participant cap of $15,000, other performance measures, and factors specific to the service area, target population, and reasonable costs for proposed services. Also, grant expenditures will be monitored throughout the period of performance (POP).

1. **What are the ramifications if an applicant is awarded money not spent at the end of 33 months? Anything other than returning unspent funds?**

Grantees should make every effort to spend awarded funds within the period of performance and serve their proposed number of participants. EDD reserves the right to reduce the award if all performance improvement efforts have been exhausted. Amendment extensions beyond December 31, 2026, are subject to DOGWF legislative changes and final approval from the EDD.

1. **Does the program allow for retroactive pay for staffing if an applicant were to start 60-90 days before the estimated project start date of June 2024? Or would an applicant need to find additional funding if staff were brought on before June?**

No expenditures made before or beyond the grant period of performance will not be allowed. The POP for projects funded under this SFP will be up to 33 months, with an anticipated start date of June 2024. This POP includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

1. **Can the following critical populations be considered in the "core group"?**
* **At Risk Workers**
* **Soon-to-be displaced workers**
* **Underemployed oil refinery workers**
* **Workers in ancillary facilities, such as chemical production, whose company is fully integrated into the oil refinery**

Yes, assuming those workers are directly engaged in oil or gas extraction and refinement.

1. **Do case managers have the discretion to exceed the encouraged $15,000 per worker level of support in necessary cases? In such cases, can resources extend beyond those connected to workforce development, such as direct bill pay for housing, medical care, childcare, etc.?**

Yes, a local determination can be made to exceed the CPP for an individual. However, approval from EDD would be necessary to exceed the average $15,000 CPP. Grantees must contact their EDD project manager for approval to exceed the $15,000 CPP average and provide thorough justification for the increased cost. EDD reserves the right to adjust this funding cap based on recruitment trends and the evolving needs of workers. This approach aligns with the program's overarching goals of delivering targeted, effective support to those most in need.

No, financial stipends for living expenses may be provided to trainees while they are engaged in training programs, and incentive programs can be developed for job search activities, further facilitating participants' successful re-employment. Additional supportive services are allowable to support participants taking part in career and/or training services.

1. **Are administration and operational costs expected to be factored into the $15,000 per participant cap recommended in the RFP, or is the cap solely for direct services to participants?**

The cost per participant (CPP) is inclusive of overhead costs. The CPP is based upon the average cost to serve participants; therefore, a participant receiving more intensive services at a higher cost could be balanced by a participant who receives lower-cost, basic services. The cap is solely for direct services to participants.

1. **Can the program front money for expenses like childcare or educational costs with documentation for the anticipated expense? Or do eligible participants need to be reimbursed with receipts?**

Supportive Services must support eligible training, career service, or employment activities. The grantee must have or develop an internal policy for Supportive Services and follow its guidance when providing these services, which may make the advancement allowable, depending on the procedures outlined in the policy.

1. **Can you distinguish between Letters of Commitment and Partnership Agreement Letters?**

A Commitment Letter commits an organization to work with the applicant in some capacity that contributes to the program's success through cash or in-kind contributions. A Commitment Letter differs from a Partnership Agreement Letter required from any partnerships established in the proposal. These letters should, at a minimum, contain the name and signature of the committing/partner organization, describe their commitment/partnership to the project, and detail the roles and responsibilities of the committing/partnering organization. Commitment Letters should include the amount of leveraged funds through cash or services the organization will provide to the project.

Note that Partnership Agreement Letters already developed may be submitted at the time of application but are required within 90 days of contract execution. Leveraged funds are unnecessary for the grant. However, an applicant or awarded grantee may submit Commitment Letters at any time.

1. **Are former oil and gas workers who have found new work but are underemployed eligible for training and job search support and considered a high-priority audience?**

Yes, based on the research shared in the webinar, a large target population of gas and oil workers is underemployed and looking to advance into higher-paying jobs, so they are eligible to receive service under this funding.

1. **Is bridge funding allowable in the grant?**

Financial stipends will only be available to trainees participating in designated training programs, and incentive programs can be developed to encourage specific job search activities to support their participation and successful outcomes.

1. **Is it a successful placement if we help the worker move out of CA to another state with oil-related jobs?**

The grant aims for applicants to identify regionally in-demand jobs and career pathways, developing programs to bridge the skill gaps between displaced oil and gas workers and new industries within California. However, out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance is an allowable activity. Reference Appendix D for allowable activities.

1. **Can a county that is not one of the three prioritized can they still apply?**

Workers in counties other than those specifically targeted by the grant can be deemed eligible to receive services when a need for DOGWF support can be substantiated.

1. **The webinar stated that only one award was anticipated. However, on page 12 of the SFP, there are expected to be 3-5 awards from $2M to 12M. Please clarify.**

We apologize for the misinformation in the presentation. The EDD does anticipate funding approximately three to five awards, with individual grant amounts ranging from a minimum of $2 million to a maximum of $12 million. The determination of funding requests should include projected participants at a cost-per-participant average of $15,000, other performance measures, and factors specific to the service area, target population, and reasonable costs for proposed services.

1. **Are there other options for older employees besides receiving training and then retiring?**

The DOGWF Grant is committed to facilitating a just and sustainable shift for workers displaced from the oil and gas industry. This initiative's primary focus is to enhance these individuals' prospects by offering targeted education, training, and re-employment opportunities before considering retirement.

1. **Are there any ineligible costs within the potential cash assistance/job training packages?**

Financial stipends will only be available to trainees participating in designated training programs, and incentive programs can be developed to encourage specific job search activities to support their participation and successful outcomes. Optional training programs that lead to employer-recognized certifications with subsidized wages are also allowable and can include on-the-job training, work-based learning programs, registered apprenticeship programs, and pre-apprenticeship programs. Partnerships with Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) approved apprenticeships are encouraged.

1. **Can a joint labor-management team apply?**

Yes, but the DOGWF awardees will act as lead organizations if proposals include consortia or multiple partnerships. Awardees will assist with disseminating funds to partner programs, ensure program goals, work closely with EDD project managers, and provide program updates as needed.