

New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL)
DIRECT ENTRY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP (DEPA) PROGRAMS
Request for Applications (RFA)
Questions and Answers Pertaining to the RFA

(Updated 06/14/2024. New questions and answers are posted regularly and indicated below after each revision date.) The RFA is available on NYSDOL's [Funding Opportunities webpage](#).

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

FAQ #1) What is a pre-apprenticeship program?

FAQ A#1) Pre-apprenticeship is an apprenticeship preparation program that provides participants with training and exposure to various trades and offers opportunities for entry into Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs.

FAQ #2) What is a Direct Entry program?

FAQ A#2) Direct Entry may be used by sponsors of RA programs as another way to bring apprentices into their programs. It is a tool to help sponsors reach underrepresented populations and to better meet their Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) goals. Direct Entry provides the individuals who successfully complete a Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program, and who meet the minimum requirements for a NYS RA program, with the direct opportunity to interview with the sponsor of a RA program.

FAQ #3) How can DEPA funds be used?

FAQ A#3) Applicants may apply for a maximum funding amount of \$195,000, where up to \$6,500 per participant is allowed to cover the costs associated with participation throughout the duration of the DEPA program. The proposed number of participants identified in the RFA application must be served during the contract period and must include new Direct Entry program participants only.

Please note: Reimbursement for each participant will be made in two (2) separate payments based on achievements of two (2) milestones.

- Milestone #1: \$4,000 (flat fee) per participant upon their enrollment in the Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program; and
- Milestone #2: \$2,500 (flat fee) per participant when they complete their program.

FAQ #4) Who is eligible to apply for funding?

FAQ A#4) An eligible applicant must be a Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program that is recognized by NYSDOL. Direct Entry programs must have an agreement with at least one (1) sponsor of a NYS RA program as indicated on NYSDOL's Direct Entry webpage: dol.ny.gov/direct-entry.

FAQ #5) Can you please clarify whether I am supposed to submit my DEPA application in Grants Gateway or SFS?

FAQ A#5) For the DEPA Program, you will apply and we will process your application through the Grants Gateway system. If awarded, all contracting and vouchering will be done through the SFS system.

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General Questions

Q #1) Would a senior employment program that serves older adults (60+) be eligible to apply for this grant?

A #1) If the senior employment program is a Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program that is recognized by NYSDOL, has an agreement with at least one (1) sponsor of a NYS RA program, and meets all other eligibility requirements, then it would be eligible to apply.

Note: Minimum eligibility requirements for enrollment are determined by Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship programs.

Q #2) Would a NYS BOCES be an eligible applicant?

A #2) Please see the answer to General Questions Q #1.

Q #3) We are not a 501(c)(3) but we offer OSHA 10 and 30-hour courses for job readiness and safety. Would we be qualified to apply?

A #3) An eligible applicant is a duly incorporated for-profit or not-for-profit organization that is eligible to do business in NYS. If your organization is a Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program that is recognized by NYSDOL, has an agreement with at least one (1) sponsor of a NYS RA program, and meets all other eligibility requirements, then you would be eligible to apply.

Q #4) For organizations that already have direct entry status, can they access this support funding also?

A #4) Yes, if you are an existing Direct Entry provider and are looking to enroll new participants in your program, this funding can be utilized to support the new participants.

Q #5) The Arc Erie County has Direct Support Professional and the Direct Support Supervisor apprenticeships here. Would the Direct Entry program be for new employees, or could we include current employees as well?

Are there currently any Direct Entry programs for the DSP/Direct Support Supervisor in place?

A #5) DEPA program funding is for new employees and not current employees. Per Section III.B. of the RFA, eligible participants are "individuals newly enrolled in a NYS Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program no earlier than the DEPA contract start date, which may be as early as the date of the award

letter.”

To determine whether there are currently any Direct Entry programs for DSP/Direct Support Supervisors, please see a list of approved Direct Entry providers at: <https://dol.ny.gov/direct-entry>.

Q #6) My organization is a Direct Entry approved entity for a Pathways to Apprenticeship program. My colleagues who operate Pathways are talking with our partners about putting in an application. Would we, as the Direct Entry provider, need to be the applicant organization, or could one of the Pathways partners serve as applicant?

A #6) Per Section III.A. of the RFA, an eligible Applicant must be a Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program that is recognized by NYSDOL and that has an agreement with at least one (1) sponsor of a NYS RA program.

Q #7) We are a 501(c)(3), what is the process for pre-qualification?

A #7) With the transition of grantmaking activities from the Grants Gateway to the Statewide Financial System (SFS), as of January 16, 2024, organizations must prequalify in SFS. If an organization was prequalified in Grants Gateway as of December 15, 2023, their prequalification status will automatically move over to SFS. Additional information regarding prequalification can be found at <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/transition-SFS>.

Note: If any documents were submitted in the Grants Gateway system *after* December 15, 2023, they will not carry over to the SFS system and must be submitted in the SFS system.

We strongly suggest all potential applicants check their prequalification status in SFS to ensure required documents are there.

Q #8) If awarded funding, do the funds need to be spent within any specific time period or is it to reimburse the DEPA provider?

A #8) This is a performance-based contract; the first payment is \$4,000 upon participant enrollment and the final payment is \$2,500 at the participant’s completion of the program. Once a contract is developed and executed, funds will be released on a performance basis, meaning that payments will be based on the achievement of the proposed milestones as described in Section II.B.2. of the RFA, and not on the Contractor’s actual expenditures. The Contractor must provide documentation that each milestone was achieved.

Note: Per Section II.D. of the RFA, the 12-month contract term is the only timeframe in which you can earn and seek milestone payments.

New Questions as of 03/18/2024 start below:

Q #9) Is there any restriction on using a portion or all of the \$6,500 per participant as stipends for participants?

A #9) No, there are no restrictions in the RFA on how the applicant will use the awarded funds.

The funding is intended to defray the expenses awardees will assume through supporting the participants through the duration of their Direct Entry pre-apprenticeship program. The Applicant can determine how the money is best used to support the participant(s).

Q #10) Would we be able to use grant funds to support the participation of trainees over more than one cohort of the same training program as long as the cohorts all begin and end within the 12-month grant period?

A #10) There are no restrictions on supporting participants in more than one cohort as long as all

activities occur within the 12-month contract period.

New Questions as of 06/14/2024 start below:

Q #11) Is it possible for one organization to put in more than one request for DEPA funding? For example, if an applicant wants to run two programs can they apply with a separate application for each? Or is only one contract awarded per applicant?

A #11) Section VI.A. of the DEPA RFA states that, “Applicants that receive an award under this program, that have earned/received at least 80% of the awarded funds may apply for additional funds (if funding and time remain).” Therefore, if you submit an application for one of your programs you may submit a second application for another program after earning/receiving at least 80% of the awarded funds from the first application. Alternatively, you may submit one application to support apprentices in both programs, however, the maximum award amount may not exceed \$195,000 regardless of how many programs are included in the application.

Q #12) When completing the required Executive Order 16 attachment, if a company checkmark #3 as a response indicating they do conduct business operations in Russia, is this grounds for disqualification?

A #12) If an Applicant checkmark #3, it would be grounds for disqualification. However, if the Applicant can appropriately checkmark #2A on the attachment indicating they are taking actions to decrease/eliminate the need to conduct this business in Russia, they could be eligible to receive funds. Materials would need to be provided to NYSDOL explaining how operations in Russia are limited, including

- A description of the extent of the Applicant’s commercial dealings in Russia;
- How the material is being procured ethically and without contribution to the ongoing war in Ukraine;
- What specific steps the Applicant is taking to develop processes within the United States to create the raw material at the required specification and build a strategic stockpile;
- Whether if awarded, trainees funded under this grant would be working with the material procured from Russia;
- What the Applicant’s plans are for procuring this material outside Russia, regardless of whether the federal funding is awarded or not; and
- The timeline for ceasing operations in Russia.