

New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL)

Apprenticeship Expansion Grant (AEG-4)

Request for Applications (RFA)

Questions and Answers Pertaining to the RFA

(Updated 12/04/23. New questions and answers are posted at the end of weeks that they are received and indicated below after each revision date.) The RFA is available on NYSDOL's [Funding Opportunities webpage](#).

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[FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#)

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

FAQ #1) I am an approved signatory employer to a New York State Registered Apprenticeship group program. Am I eligible to apply for funding under this RFA?

FAQ A#1) A signatory employer to an active or probationary New York State Registered Apprenticeship (NYS RA) group program may be eligible to apply for funding under this [RFA](#) to train registered apprentices who work exclusively for their business.

However, if apprentices rotate their work between multiple signatory employers, then only the lead applicant designated by the sponsor of the active or probationary NYS RA group program may be eligible to apply for funding under this RFA.

FAQ #2) Can grant funds be used to purchase items such as iPads or Chromebooks for the enrolled Apprentices?

FAQ A#2) As stated in Section II.B.1.d. of the AEG-4 RFA, any tools directly associated with On-the-Job Training (OJT) are allowable costs. iPads and Chromebooks are an allowable cost if they are directly related to the OJT, such as for completing forms or running calculations at job sites. Please note that only items with an acquisition cost of up to \$999 per device are allowed.

FAQ #3) What constitutes a "probationary NYS RA program"?

FAQ A#3) Newly approved NYS RA programs shall undergo a two-year probation beginning on the first apprentice's start date or the program approval date, whichever comes later. Programs are approved contingent upon successful completion of their probation. The specifics concerning Program Probation, Monitoring, Re-Certification and Performance are outlined in §601.8 (page 24) in the regulations governing the registration of apprenticeship programs and agreements (Part 601 of the Labor Law). See the following link on the NYSDOL website: <https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/laws-regulations>.

FAQ #4) Does OJT wage reimbursement cap policy apply to all trades (ex. Early Childhood Associate)?

FAQ A#4) Yes. NYSDOL has established an OJT wage reimbursement cap policy for AEG-4 that applies to all trades. The reimbursement level to a business may not exceed 50% of the wage rate of the apprentice for all businesses. Please note that all OJTs must pay at least the NYS minimum wage, which can be found here: <https://www.ny.gov/new-york-states-minimum-wage/new-york-states-minimum-wage>. Please refer to Section II.B.3 of the RFA for additional details.

FAQ #5) For the Work Plan, should we detail the objectives, tasks, and performance measures for the entire apprenticeship program, or just the time period covered by the grant? For example, the program for which we are applying is a four-year apprenticeship, but this grant will only cover year one. Should the Work Plan cover all four years, or just year one?

FAQ A#5) In their Work Plan, applicants are only expected to list the objectives, tasks, and performance measures that will detail training and service activities as identified in the program design, which in this case will take place only during the 12-month contract period.

FAQ #6) Are program sponsors able to use AEG-4 grant funds towards the reimbursement of wages for the Apprentices during OJT Hours? If so, please describe in depth the specifics of how the funds can be used for wages.

FAQ A#6) Yes, per Section II.B.3. of the RFA, NYSDOL has established an OJT wage reimbursement policy for AEG-4. The reimbursement level to a business may not exceed 50% of the wage rate of the apprentice for all businesses. Please note that all OJTs must pay at least the NYS minimum wage, which can be found here: <https://www.ny.gov/new-york-states-minimum-wage/new-york-states-minimum-wage>.

FAQ #7) I have questions about the process of registering our organization in the Grants Gateway so that we may apply for a program; where can questions about this process be directed?

FAQ A#7) The Grants Gateway is a Statewide contract management system that is not specific to NYSDOL. Please contact (518) 474-5595 or grantsgateway@its.ny.gov for technical assistance related to your registration.

FAQ #8) According to the RFA, "These apprentices will enter trades in high-demand occupations, with a focus on the emerging fields of Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, Hospitality, and Information Technology, as well as other in-demand occupations." How do I find out if my apprenticeship is in a "high-demand occupation"?

FAQ A#8) Priority industries vary by area. A list of these areas, their corresponding economic development plans, and the priority industries can be accessed at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> for Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and [Workforce Planning | Department of Labor \(ny.gov\)](http://www.ny.gov/workforce-planning) for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).

FAQ #9) What are the reporting requirements for the grants? What kind of information will you need from us and how often?

FAQ A#9) As a sponsor or signatory employer to a NYS RA program, there are routine reporting requirements for items such as OJT, task rotation, wage progression, and related instruction for all apprentices enrolled in the program. There are additional reporting requirements for this RFA, including fiscal reporting and reports as determined by the contracting process. Section II.D. of the RFA states that all awardees will be required to provide reports at intervals specified

by NYSDOL. Additionally, Sections VIII.B., IV.1.B., IV.2., and IV.3.e. indicate awardees will be required to submit additional information, such as OJT applications for each apprentice; Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Quarterly Compliance Reports; Workforce Utilization Reports; and monthly Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business *SDVOB Contractor Compliance Reports.

FAQ #10) Is the Lead Applicant Designation Form (LADF) form required if the organization is applying on its behalf? The form is shown as required, but it looks like it only applies to organizations with a fiscal sponsor.

FAQ A#10) The LADF is only applicable to sponsors of group RA programs that need to designate a lead applicant because the sponsor is not a legal entity with a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). Examples of lead applicants may be a labor union, an association, or any employer/signatory company serving as a member of a sponsor's JAC/JATC, Board of Directors, or other governing body.

Note: The use of this form does not apply to all applicants. If this is the case for your application, you can note "N/A" on the form and submit.

FAQ #11) Can RI-related instruction be provided (and reimbursed by AEG-4) by in-house existing staff to RA apprentices?

FAQ A#11) Yes. Per Section II.B.1.a of the AEG-4 RFA, "RI must be conducted by the RA sponsor's approved RI Provider (as indicated on the RI Availability Form AT- 8) to instruct topics listed in Appendix B of the trade's training outline." If your in-house existing staff are approved RI providers, this expense is reimbursable.

FAQ #12) I have questions about the AEG-4 RFA and possibly need some Technical Assistance (TA). Do you have TA available for non-profit applicants?

FAQ A#12) Yes. Per Section IV. A of the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant RFA, "Applicants may submit questions via electronic mail to WDTD.Onestop@labor.ny.gov. Questions regarding the RFA will be accepted on an ongoing basis until August 16, 2024. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. All inquiries should include the following reference in the Subject line: "AEG-4 Question". Answers to all questions will be posted on the NYSDOL website (<https://dol.ny.gov/funding-opportunities-0>) on an ongoing basis until August 23, 2024."

FAQ #13) Can AEG-4 be used for retaining existing employees through apprenticeship opportunities that promote from within, instead of recruiting from outside?

FAQ A#13) Yes, AEG-4 funds can be used for retaining existing employees through apprenticeship opportunities as long as they meet the Participant Requirements set forth in section III.B. of the RFA:

- Individuals not yet enrolled in a NYS RA Program who meet the minimum eligibility requirements for enrollment (Note, minimum eligibility requirements are determined by sponsors and indicated on the Apprentice Training Recruitment Notification and Minimum Qualifications Form);
- Apprentices enrolled in a NYS RA Program no more than six (6) months prior to the RFA application submission date; and
- Apprentices who were enrolled in a NYS RA Program under AEG-3 (See Section II.B.4. for additional information regarding the per participant cap for AEG-3 enrolled apprentices).

FAQ #14) How do we get approval for the in-house RI Instructors? Can this be done separately from the AEG-4 application? How so?

FAQ A#14) Yes, this is done separately from the application. All instruction providers must be approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Apprenticeship staff will help you meet the requirements when you are ready for that step.

FAQ #15) Must participants graduate from the apprenticeship program for all associated participant expenses to be reimbursed?

FAQ A#15) While the goal of the apprenticeship program is to graduate apprentices, it is not a requirement for participants to graduate or complete the apprenticeship program for expenses to be reimbursed. RI and OJT costs will be reimbursed based on the organization's executed contract as well as any other allowable costs delineated in the executed contract. In addition, costs associated with participating apprentices will only be reimbursed for apprentices who meet participant eligibility as outlined in the RFA.

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General Questions

Q #1) Our organization is extremely interested in applying for the RA expansion grant. We have one concern, if we answer "no" to this Minimum Eligibility question, does that disqualify our application?

"The applicant is a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, a signatory employer to an active or probationary NYS RA group program, or an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment."

A #1) If you answer "No" to the Minimum Eligibility Question referenced, unfortunately your application will be considered ineligible. Per Section III.A of the RFA "an eligible applicant must be a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, a signatory employer to an active or probationary NYS RA group program (please note that signatory and NYS RA group program awardees cannot serve the same apprentices), or be an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors-and-programs>). Sponsors include individual employers, groups of employers, or partnerships between an employer(s) and a labor union(s).

If you are interested in applying for a NYS RA program, please contact your local NYSDOL Apprenticeship office (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-contacts>) for guidance and support. Please note, awards for AEG-4 cannot be made until the applicant has a NYSDOL-approved NYS RA program.

New Questions as of 06/07/2023:

Q #2) The RFA requires at least 144 hours of Related Instruction (RI), which we assume to be classroom training covering the Work Processes embodied in Appendix A for a given Apprenticeship Trade Title. Our understanding is that, in addition, Competency-Based Apprenticeship programs must include at least 1,000 hours of on-the-job training and that both are requirements under the RFA. Please confirm that our understanding is correct or clarify the requirements.

A #2) The RFA requires at least 144 hours per year of RI, which is outlined in Appendix B of the training outline for any Apprenticeship Trade. As part of a NYS RA program, in addition to RI requirements, apprentices must also participate in OJT as outlined in Appendix A of the training outline. Apprentices registered in a time-based RA program must complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of OJT and 144 hours minimum RI per year. Apprentices registered in a competency-based RA program must complete at least 1,000 hours of OJT and they must register for at least 144 hours of RI per year but may test out earlier.

Q #3) Should we use the date we send the application in as the contract start date and the approximate finish date of our apprenticeship program as the end date?

A #3) The contract start and end dates required in Grants Gateway are really just arbitrary dates you select because the true start and end dates will not be finalized until a contract is executed, which can take as long as 90 days.

Q #4) For future candidates for the apprenticeship program we can't apply for funding, realistically, before we have the candidates for apprenticeship (because we don't know when we will have these candidates), and we can't access funding until after we have started the training process. How do other industries handle the contract start and end dates? Do they know they will have a certain number of apprenticeship candidates before applying for funding?

A #4) Applicants do typically have their candidates for the apprenticeship prior to submitting the application as they need to include the specific names of the apprentices on the Detailed Budget Attachment (DBA). If an award is made, the Contract Manager will reach out and begin contract negotiations. At that time, the number of apprentices may have changed, which can be worked out during contracting and through updates to the DBA. However, please note that an award amount may not increase from the amount in the award letter.

Q #5) We would like to begin work on a new RA Program. Is this something we can request funding for as it is being developed?

A #5) In order to include any trade in your AEG application, you must submit an application for that trade to NYSDOL prior to AEG application submission. Once, and if, the new program is approved, you can be awarded for AEG pending any other eligibility criteria.

Per Section III.A. of the AEG [RFA](#), "an eligible applicant must be a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, a signatory employer to an active or probationary NYS RA group program (please note that signatory and NYS RA group program awardees cannot serve the same apprentices), or be an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors-and-programs>). Sponsors include individual employers, groups of employers, or partnerships between an employer(s) and a labor union(s). To apply for a NYS RA program, contact your local NYSDOL Apprenticeship office (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-contacts>). Please note, awards cannot be made until the applicant has a NYSDOL-approved NYS RA program."

New Questions as of 12/04/2023:

Q #6) We are in the process of submitting our application to Grants Gateway for the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. Are we to submit one application for all programs and apprenticeships at once or does each individual program need its own application? We have two active programs and one future program coming September 2024.

A #6) One application can be submitted for multiple registered apprenticeship programs.

Please note that Section III.A. of the RFA states, “An eligible applicant must be a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, a signatory employer to an active or probationary NYS RA group program, or be an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors-and-programs>). Please note, awards cannot be made until the applicant has a NYSDOL-approved NYS RA program.” Therefore, an award could not be made for the future program until the application for the program has been received by NYSDOL, posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment, and approved as an RA program.

Q #7) Upon careful review, we observed that the entire budget of \$300,000 we entered has been allocated to the "Operating Expenses" section. However, when we click on the "Expenditure Summary," we notice that there are multiple areas of budget costs, and interestingly, everything has been listed under "Operating Expenses," with all other categories showing zero. We want to ensure that our budget allocation is accurately reflected in the system and aligns with the intended distribution across the expenditure categories.

A #7) The expenditure budget in Grants Gateway is set up to allocate all expenses under the “Operating Expenses” category. You are able to provide more specific details on the required Budget Worksheet (BW) and Detailed Budget Attachment (DBA) as outlined in Sections V.B.4.1. and V.B.4.2. of the RFA.

Q #8) We're a Sponsor with client-participant employers. If we're awarded \$300k for these programs, can additional employers be added to our program later and utilize the same funds we were awarded?

A #8) If a group sponsor is awarded grant funding, any apprentice working directly for them or one of their signatory employers can be used to receive the funding, as long as it is during the contract period.

Q #9) Can *new* clients of ours on our sponsored program apply for this grant separately, or will they be considered part of our original grant?

A #9) Yes, a sponsor and a signatory can both apply for the grant. However, a sponsor and a signatory cannot serve the same apprentice(s). Section III.A. of the [RFA](#) states, “An eligible applicant must be a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA program, a lead applicant designated by a sponsor of an active or probationary NYS RA group program, a signatory employer to an active or probationary NYS RA group program (please note that signatory and NYS RA group program awardees cannot serve the same apprentices), or be an applicant for a NYS RA program whose application has been received by NYSDOL and posted on the NYSDOL website for public comment (<https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors-and-programs>).”