

Note: The questions and answers below have been pulled from the webinar transcripts. There may be a few grammatical errors remaining, but we have worked to limit them.

Q: In the goal, “recruit train in place workers in good jobs that enhance climate resilience,” could a qualified scenario be developing training that can be executed for current workers to increase their skill set or climate resilience, or does the training have to focus on those who are not working in will become future workers?

A: There is a scenario in which that would not be responsive to this NOFO, where you're providing training, and then you have an enhanced workforce, but you haven't hired them into a new job, they haven't gotten promoted, they're not on a different career path. And they've not essentially made a move, you are enhancing the workforce, I would agree. But to be responsive to this NOFO, we are looking to fill new jobs that are needed in the marketplace. Certainly, focusing on those who are not working is responsive. But for this to be successful, you do not have to only focus on people who are not working and bring them into the workforce. That would be a strong plus. But taking someone from a position that doesn't have a career pathway with advancement and putting them into one that does is responsive, or taking them from one job that is defined without a climate resilience component and now has an expanded set of responsibilities focused on climate resilience, and also has an opportunity for promotion that is responsive.

Q: How do we find out which organizations qualify as a NOAA-affiliated entity? This is a required component of the team. Correct?

A: It is required. We have provided a list of some of the NOAA-affiliated entities in the [Climate Resilience Toolkit](#). So I think to answer the question, first [go to the toolkit](#), look at those resources, but also attend the [webinar that my colleague Frank Niepold](#) is going to be leading that Amara is going to post a link to, which is coming up, I believe, next week. And if you have any questions, reach out to us. It includes any organization that is officially part of NOAA, any organization that is funded by NOAA that has an official NOAA affiliation. So within NOAA, you might reach out directly to Office of Coastal Management personnel who are working

on coastal resilience, and you might include them as subject matter experts. Or you might reach out to one of our funded programs in the National Integrated Drought Information System or the CAP/RISA program. However, note that NOAA-funded programs such as CAP/RISA may or may not have resources to support every project. Building an appropriate network of collaborators is an important criterion for successful applications.

Q: Is there a resource for tested approaches to assessing or monitoring resilience increases for some guidance on standardized approaches to monitoring or assessing outcomes for this NOFO?

A: NOAA has invested a fair amount of time and effort in addressing that question, but there is not one accepted way of monitoring and evaluating resilience. There are various toolkits, frameworks and approaches to doing that, and I provided a publication that goes through some of that material in this presentation, I would encourage the questioner to consult that document. But NOAA has invested in other projects that look at this question. Specifically, we're asking applicants to Climate-Ready Workforce to address this question, because there isn't one standard. So we are asking you to solve that problem in the context of your specific business or business sector.

Q: Does a successful applicant have to prove that trainees will start a new job or promotion during the time of the grant?

A: Priority will be given to projects that can demonstrate that job placement occurs within 12 to 24 months of the beginning of the project, it is a rather essential element that job placement occurs. If more time than that is needed, then there could probably be a successful application that makes a justification for a longer timeline. But priority will be given to projects that can demonstrably show job placement, definitely within the period or performance of the grant.

Q: Can a stipend be included to help offset the cost of initial job placement for the employer?

A: But there certainly is provision within this NOFO to support the workers having stipends to get trained. If while they're being trained, they're not being productive in the workforce, and they need support to do the training then a legitimate case can be made for requesting funds for that purpose.

Q: If a renewable energy company is interested in being an employer partner for the project, would they qualify if the committed roles that are focused on the resilience of the grid and power supply, for example, to reduce power outages in coastal communities, especially those most vulnerable?

A: That is very responsive to the objectives of this grant if they are specifically training people to address resilience to climate-related hazards within that renewable energy company that is responsive to this NOFO.

Q: Can you blend several scenarios together having different tracks to train people that say on track one, learn how to do the on the ground restoration in climate resilience, and in track two, would learn the skills to help towns or municipal partners build technical capacity for climate resilience?

A: You can I think the case would need to be made that the job placement for both sets of people fits logically within the partnership you're proposing. And that there's a coherence to the way together, those businesses are working towards a shared climate resilience goal.

Q: Within the NOFO, is their funding, excuse me within the Notice of Funding Opportunity? Is there funding to purchase the training curriculum for these new resilience jobs?

A: Yes, that is an acceptable use of funds.

Q: If the training will use novel computing cyberinfrastructure, such as new open source software in a cloud computing environment, can the bun be used to purchase or build the cyberinfrastructure?

A: if the proposal hinges on putting in place infrastructure, and you're hiring people to do that, that would be responsive. You couldn't build a building, but you could put in the necessary cyberinfrastructure, for example, networking and stuff to support computers for training, that sort of thing, that is allowable. So it depends on what you mean by infrastructure.

Q: Can an organization with presence in multiple states list scenarios for each state within the proposal or apply separately for each state?

A: So in this we do allow proposals of up to I believe, \$10 million, so they could have a multi-state proposal. And there's no reason not to if the logic of tying these together is strong.

Q: How will the priority of placement within 12 to 24 months affect design applications? Or is that prioritization only for implementation applications?

A: Yeah, specifically, if you're only doing a design project, there still needs to be a path to implementing that design. If it's not with our funding, it's with somebody's funding, so that there is still that commitment to hire, because part of design is securing those employer hiring commitments. And we will be tracking those commitments to hire as well as the follow-through on them as part of this program. So it is a strong firm priority that this funding lead to job placement, and enhancing career pathway opportunities for people.

Q: Will this funding enable expenses covered to expand or establish facilities that produce coastal resilience products and increase jobs and coastal resilience? For example, a marine manufacturing facility that produces breakwaters, sea walls, and restoration products, and hiring teams to run produce and implement projects.

A: You couldn't use these funds to expand the facility. You could use them to recruit, train, and place additional workers but expanding the facility for manufacturing would need to come from some other source of funding.

Q: If the facility building is not covered, could equipment be purchased?

A: If it is for purposes of training the workers yes it is not for expanding the business itself.

Q: The NOFO appears to require a plan for continuation after the funding period ends, does building the training program within academia and continuing the program as a continuing education program or academic certificate or degree program qualify for that requirement without specific employment guarantees moving forward?

A: The purpose of the NOFO is to have the program is to fund the projects that place people into jobs. If part of the sustainability plan is ongoing continuing education, after those commitments to hire have expired, a case can be made that that is project continuance. But that would probably not be weighted as highly as a project that showed there was an ongoing engagement with an industry or sector for placing people into jobs. So it's not entirely unresponsive, but this is not. This funding is not intended to support education, training, and hoping that people get hired. It's meant to support people getting hired.

Q: Can the backbone organization be the employer and the one providing training? For example, we are hiring and training?

A: Yes. The funding be used for the academic courses in renewable energy. Yes, as long as the other stipulations that we mentioned about resilience are being addressed.

Q: Are there any resources that do help fund expanding or scaling infrastructure for coastal resilience projects?

A: This funding for this is not for infrastructure, per se. There are some additional competitions that NOAA is holding right now. The one that is perhaps most relevant relevance would be the climate resilience accelerators. Those are focused on supporting innovative businesses related to climate and ocean resilience.

Q: Is renewable energy considered climate resilience for purposes of workforce development, training, and placement?

A: So if the renewable energy is focused on solving a problem of disruptions in energy supply, following climate-related hazards, then yes, that would be responsive. Renewable energy as a category is neutral. There must be a demonstration that there is resilience to climate-related hazards, specifically the components that we addressed in the webinar today. So, for example, maintaining energy supplies for communities that have been historically disadvantaged or subjected to disruptions in power supply, following flooding, thunderstorms fires that would be responsive.

Q: Is award size dependent on the number of good job commitments by project employer partners? For example, some funding opportunities use a pay-for-performance award model. Does the IRA Climate-Ready Workforce program similarly determine award amounts?

A: We do not have a criterion in the evaluation of the proposals that specifically names the ratio of dollars spent to jobs created. The criteria that Joshua laid out yesterday, are the criteria that will be used to weight proposals.

Q: Can funds be used to accommodate expenses to provide bilingual train eligible ready to work? I'm sorry, let me make sure that I'm getting this can funds be used to accommodate expenses to provide bilingual training for eligible ready-to-work individuals with English language skills deficiencies, so they can be successful once placed?

A: I think a case can be made as long as the other criteria we discussed are addressed and I see no reason not to.

Q: How do some of these program priorities extend to applications under the program design track, for example, recruiting and placing workers?

A: During the program design phase, you are still going to be looking for employer commitments to hire. We envision that this might be the sort of thing where you have an employer or a group of employers who are willing to fund the implementation, i.e., the actual training. But for whatever reason, you don't have the resources to design the program itself. And so, you would be able to say, we need 500 K to design this program. We have employer commitments to use. Or we have philanthropic support or or other elements that will allow us to fund the implementation and we expect from this design to be able to place workers going forward. So these do exist on that continuum, And, ah, you would, you would need to show that the program you're designing will lead to placements, even if you're only asking for the smaller amount.

Q: Please clarify the eligibility of applicants focused on inland areas within coastal states, territories, or tribal nations. Also, clarify whether or not it's acceptable to propose to do work that isn't explicitly set in marine settings.

A: The work is anywhere within coastal states, tribes, or territories, so it does not have to be marine. To be clearer, if you are any of the eligible applicant types located within an eligible geography, which is anywhere within a coastal state, tribe, or territory, including the Great Lakes. If you are in any of those geographies, not just a coastal zone area, you are eligible to apply. You must be one of these eligible organization types.

Q: Can you provide examples of how an inland city in a coastal state interests the Ocean Climate Action plan?

A: Even inland communities are connected to the ocean, directly or indirectly, and so you can take steps to improve the resiliency of rivers, lakes, streams, and potentially address agricultural, erosion, and runoff. All of these would be relevant to addressing some elements of the Ocean Climate Action Plan. And I would encourage folks to think expansively about how those inland communities can support work in inland communities can support these elements. But it's important to recognize that, that all these systems are interconnected.

Q: Will you share the letters of intent with applicants in the same geographic area so that we can consider collaborating?

A: At this time, it is not our intent to do that.

Q: Is a coalition of local governments or regional partnerships an eligible applicant for this grant?

A: Yes.

Q: Will there be any weeding out through the Letters of Intent?

A: Letters of intent are intended strictly to allow us to gauge interest and select an appropriate reviewer pool.

Q: Can you expand on the concept regarding identifying sectors and how they connect to climate resilience? Do you have examples of that?

A: There are examples in the funding opportunity, and, for example, some sectors are perhaps obvious; it's obvious how they relate to climate resilience. We might think of coastal engineers and construction groups. They build things, they modify the landscape, and how they build and modify, has a direct impact on the resilience of communities to climate. However, other sectors that may have slightly less obvious connections, but are still profound, would be things like the healthcare sector. A particular example that we've thought about is the impacts of heat on health and what increasing heat, increasingly severe heat waves in communities mean. How that impacts the resilience of the whole community and in particular vulnerable segments there in others might be more or less obvious.

Again, agriculture is a key contributor to our resilience in terms of food production and also land use, and land erosion. Similarly, you might see things like fisheries and aquaculture as having resilience implications driven by climate change for the communities where those industries are based. Think broadly about how work and your workforce promote the resilience of your community to climate threats.

Q: Which states are considered coastal?

A: Coastal states are defined in the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1453[4]) as any state of the United States in, or bordering on, the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, Long Island Sound, or one or more of the Great Lakes. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and former Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Freely Associated States), including Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau is eligible.

Q: Do we need a SAM/UEI for the LOI?

A: No.

Q: Can this funding be used as an AmeriCorps match?

A: I don't believe so, but I will need to get back to you with the answer.

Q: What is the distinction between employer partnerships and strategic partnerships?

A: Strategic partnerships are people who are not hiring your trainees. The employer partnerships or people who are potentially going to hire your trainees. Fundamentally, your strategic partners are all the folks you need to be successful in training and placing people with employers who have committed to hiring them.

Q: Is actual job placement required for program design projects, or simply a plan for job placement?

A: The overall goal of this is to place people in jobs. If you're putting forward a program design project, you need to have a clear path with commitments for hiring. If you're designing it you're not implementing it, and you, you're not going to be placing people. But you need to have the commitments lined up where people could be placed once they go through an implemented training.

Q: I received notification that the grants.gov system is moving to a new system--GEMS eRA/DOC. Will that impact this?

A: That notification is related to the Department of Commerce's internal Grant System, which is currently Grants Online. It is moving to gems. Grants dot gov will remain unchanged and applications need to go through grants dot gov. The transition will impact folks who are funded. You'll, you'll need to have accounts with GEMS but that process will be complete. The transition should be fairly well done by the time the applications come in, but that does not impact your ability to apply because you are applying through grants dot gov.

Q: We have some international partners who need workers for coastal restoration, should we include those employers if they don't yet have a presence in the US?

A: The priority is for jobs that for projects that will place workers in the communities, they are, um, from the communities the jobs are in. So, if they do not yet have a presence in the United States, I would struggle to see how that meets that priority. You could write a really good proposal and persuade us.

Q: Does the employer have to be from the private sector, or can it be from governments, etcetera, can be from anyone willing to pay?

A: And address those good job principles, so the public and private sectors are appropriate.

Q: What are some examples of non-profit certifications that might be relevant?

A: In the funding opportunity, there are specific ones. They are, generally, it's certifications related to your non-profit status. These would be things like your organization's articles of incorporation or bylaws or a current certificate of good standing.

Q: Are school districts eligible to apply?

A: They fall under local governments generally, so I would say yes.

Q: Can you give examples of climate resilience jobs?

A: These are jobs that enhance climate resilience. So it could be any everything from an individual working with high-end architects or civil engineers. It could be landscapers. And Who are working with natural infrastructure, could be health workers who are addressing climates. Triggered health issues. It could be finance folks working in finance who need to understand the risks of investments that relate to the climate risks of investments they are considering making. There is a great deal of breadth for jobs that enhance climate resilience.

Q: In regards to working with diverse participants, if they're an area of diversity where you're focusing specifically?

A: The administration through Justice40 is particularly interested in climate and economic justice scenarios through the Climate Economic Justice Screening Tool. But we at NOAA take a holistic view of diversity recognizing that there are a range of communities and individuals who would be impacted, differentially impacted by climate and by workforce development efforts. We've tried to, in the funding opportunity give a a list of examples, but, uh, we are reasonably certain that we can't capture everything. And so, if there is a group that I would like to make a

specific case for, for their inclusion and, and why that is important, we would welcome that.

Q: Is the focus here, also on addressing poverty, equity, and environmental justice in developing this workforce? I represent the state of Mississippi and this would be an incredible opportunity to address additional socioeconomic issues. But is that a big focus for this cause?

A: I hope that we've made clear through the webinar that this is a big focus. This is, is central to our efforts here because of communities. To be resilient, you need to have the capacity to address that and poverty and other elements. I received notification that the grants.gov system is moving to a new system--GEMS eRA/DOC. Will that impact this?

Q: How can the government assist the lower income owner, um, to benefit as a taxpayer and with deductions from tax law that's affecting small businesses?

A: That's a great question, and, unfortunately, it's not one that I am, I'm able to answer. That's the sort of question that probably needs to be addressed to the IRS or your local tax professional, Unfortunately. We do not give tax advice.

Q: How do you define a climate service practitioner?

A: We have a section in the funding opportunity that talks about it, but climate service practitioners have a range of experiences around climate. They are trained to evaluate climate risk and develop strategies responsive to at-risk and can help identify needed skills. They are often transdisciplinary individuals who can leverage a range of skills to translate climate science into practical applications.

Q: Can we show other federal funds as match?

A: There is no required match, but if there were, federal funding is not eligible, for the most part, to serve as match. And so, as written, you can demonstrate that as funds you are leveraging for the work, but it is not eligible to serve as formal match, but formal match is not required.

Q: what kind of evidence should be provided to present job placements expected, which is one of the application evaluation criteria?

A: So, you ideally would be able to provide the expected number of participants per cohort. So, you might say, we're going to be able, over four years to have five cohorts, each of 100. 100 workers, and we have employer commitments for 500 positions. That's the sort of thing we would be looking to see.

Q: Under the program parameters, would an application representing a cluster of coastal states in a single geographic region be considered

A: Yes.

Q: Will there be opportunities for applicants and similar sectors yet differing geographic regions, to be offered the opportunity to collaborate in the formulation of training materials, sharing resources, et cetera?

A: Yes. Certainly, we will not prevent you from reaching out to colleagues across geographies, and sectoral partnerships that span multiple geographies are certainly eligible. Um, additionally, selected applicants will be asked to participate in regular recipient meetings, where they can collaborate with other funded applicants.

Q: Can you only receive funding for one or the other priority?

A: You can fund, you could propose something that has program design and implementation.

Q: Is an applicant expected or encouraged to directly collaborate with their state Sea Grant Program in the application?

A: Sometimes applicants are required to apply with and through a Sea Grant program, that is not the case for this funding opportunity. I think Frank, your description of the many useful partners and climate experts around the country, many of whom are NOAA-affiliated, some of whom are Sea Grant, I think that's the direction we provide everyone and is consistent with the NOFO language.

Q: Can funding be used to purchase businesses to enable good job creation?

A: No, funds can't be used to purchase businesses.

Q: One challenge is always that many partners reference employers, but few have relationships for employers to commit.

A: The employer is the one that knows what kind of skills are needed, they know where they're having a hard time finding successful applicants for a particular part of a job, a project, and the related to resilience. The good news is that there is significant money, federal money moving from the national government to states and below on resilience right now. So there should be People who are starting to roll up their sleeves and get to the work of building resilience. But figuring out who's about to do what in the period that you need it, what are the roles that they are having a hard time with, that's going to be it's gonna, it's gonna take some time to figure out some projects that are going to be more advanced. But I think, as what I heard today from EDA was that sometimes employers don't realize that they're an active partner in the grant, which plays a critical role in helping the training programs, make sure that they're doing the work that is necessary to make the applicants really what they're looking to be able to do when they get hired. So I don't know if I've gotten that's the best, I got it on your question or your comment. But I think that that's a critical piece, as I'm thinking about how you would begin evaluating which projects and how you develop them for yourselves.

Q: Please elaborate on the different ways that an employer can commit to hiring trainees.

A: That is described in detail in the NOFO. And, you know, this is one of those times that I'm like, What's in the NOFO is important. But I think that the element you know, what, what a work an employer needs to commit to is, as described in the NOFO. I can't I can't cite you the exact page right now, because I'm talking to you. But I would read that carefully. If you don't if you still have a lingering question about that, then I would go to Sea Grant on that one, just because I don't want to give you counsel that, you know, is a little, little, little little off the mark. I think that in workforce programs it is common for the workforce to have this relationship where they're making commitments, on hiring relative to grant dollars for other activities. So this should not be a foreign thing. It might be foreign to programs that are working on climate resilience, businesses, consulting organizations, and sometimes county governments, where this is a new area for them. It's just not a

new area for workforce entities making commitments just might be for this particular area.

What was interesting about that last bullet post-training hire, whereby employers commit to hiring a specific number of workers who have successfully created the program, right, that is that's kind of the ideal one, this conditional hire is still a hire where they're in a kind of a temporary mode. But one thing that I heard today that was a little interesting was that if the employer, you complete the climate ready workforce program, you have, and then you go into an employee hire employer hired training program, you could be considered hired, but you're still in training. So some people are like, Oh, no, that counts. But the person is actually getting workforce employment hiring. That happens. And so you know, it's like, you could still be on that training continuum. But actually, you've met the criteria for being hired because your salary and your benefits are being provided by the employer that counts as hired in the reporting requirements.

Q: Would Terracorps, an AmeriCorps model program be eligible as a partner?

A: I would be hard-pressed to say why they would not be if they are in the geography. They are serving, you know, members or communities that are in Justice 40 spaces inside those states and territories and tribal nations that are eligible and territories. Don't forget about the territories. I don't see why they wouldn't be eligible. I don't know that particular program or model. But I think that that the eligibility requirements have more to do with geography who has been served and things of that nature, then? And what role they're playing? Are they a circle? Are they a triangle? Are they a star? You know, I think the stars are the ones who are submitting and managing the federal award. So you know that has certain requirements associated with it as well. Not everybody can do that.

Q: Are there any successful pilot programs for this? Or are we the pilot project?

A: So if you go to EDA, Good Jobs Challenge. You can see successful applicants. And I believe Calif- they're in let's let's be clear here. There was a program that was funded by EDA, Good Jobs Challenge called Wind for Maryland, I think it was. That would not- it's a good model because of who is involved. However, the focus of the grant would not be eligible because it was a climate mitigation and carbon

reduction strategy. Clean energy is not eligible directly. If the clean energy work was helping build energy resilience, to ensure communities had, you know, access to energy, at times of challenge, whether it's wildfire or cold, you name it. That's moving more onto the resilient side. If I remember right, there was a California model that had to do with wildfire. That one I think is probably the most eligible because it's the same program model. EDA Good Jobs Challenge is the basis for a Climate Resilience or Climate Ready Workforce. So I would look at that one, specifically the California one if I remember, right, you can look at any of the EDA Good Jobs Challenges and see how they put together that strategic partnership set, which, who played the circles, who played the triangles, who played the star? There are different models of their two models over there, and EDA, we just used one of them the simpler one. So I think that anywhere in there, I would look at those to be as exemplars, they're training people, and they're getting placed into jobs as we speak. I can't even give you the numbers if you want it, but you know, that's what I would do. So you're not the first it's just the first one only focused on climate resilience.

Q: Can an academic such as a professor-type person, be the applicant and add the state Sea Grant office as a partner or a NOAA lab as a partner?

A: If somebody's working in higher education, they should have a Grants office. So could they be a PI? I don't see any reason why not. Could they add different partners to that? Absolutely. Obviously, who is paying? And who's receiving money and things of that nature? There are some rules and stipulations. I don't believe any. I don't- I have to check on this one. But no funds from this can go to federal civil servants. I have seen places where money and NOAA grants have gone to other NOAA entities, but I don't know exactly what the limitations are. This is a special challenge there, and you have to be careful. Like, for me, I'm fully paid for. I don't, I can't, nor should I receive any dollars from a grant. I'm- my assistance to you is already paid for. But you know, other entities might require a partnership cost. But I think you know, I don't see any reason why you have to have a Grants Office, you have to be able to administer and submit the grant. And then there are a lot of rules about that and capabilities. So that would be the easy way to think about it. As you talk with NOAA-affiliated programs, such as Sea Grant CAP/RISA, etc. And as you talk with NOAA offices, such as a NOAA lab, I think that

was the reference given. They will know their funding structure capabilities and limitations in terms of receiving federal funds. So you don't have to write- know grants law.

Q: Can the funds be used for employers as incentives?

A: I don't know. That's a good question. Meaning that some portion of the money would move from the grant to the employer to then use as an incentive to get people to take. I don't know. That's a Sea Grant question.

Q: Will there be cost share requirements? With this award?

A: I believe we successfully removed that cost share requirement. It was a negotiated point in the process. I do believe there is no cost-share requirement. Brooke, since you have that in there. I imagine that's pretty easy to find. But that is my recollection of this program. No match is required, but showing other people's support and money is helpful.

Q: From the state of California, we found that apprenticeship programs work well with companies in the hiring process. If you'd like to comment on that.

A: I think the the, as we've thought about this apprenticeship programs can play a role. It depends on the employer what kind of job the employer is trying to find, to fill to hire. Right apprenticeship programs can play a key role in certain positions. I think that the one thing I saw from EDA's data was the length of training for an enrollee potentially right? differed, and there's a range of them. The way I interpreted that data was, if you are looking at a relatively lower skill set, remember in the scenarios, we spent a lot of time on the scenarios, single skill, single job, single skill, multiple jobs, multiple jobs, single skill, multiple skills, multiple jobs, depending on what you're doing inside this grant, based on what the employer is looking for the length and the architecture of the program are going to change. You know, environmental engineers, is I don't think something you're gonna be able to create within 12 to 24 months. I could be wrong. But I just think that requires which workforce program elements are going to be needed in the context of which job is needed. So I'm saying yes, but it depends on what job it is that you're trying to supplement and create and grow the number of. Which

combination of known tools and program interventions you would use to be successful in that job? So you know, yes, but.

Q: How are you thinking about including unions in the partnerships?

A: I don't see that there's anything in there that says unions can't play a role in this partnership model. I don't even know if there's anything in there that would say that unions couldn't be a backbone. The geography of this grant is going to have community states where unions are not as robust or maybe really challenging to work in other states where unions are incredibly powerful parts of the employment process. So I think it depends on the geographic context, the state context, that's the law architecture, of where you are. But, you know, it is the case that unions play a critical role in training and growing the skills for specific jobs. And there are already unions that are very advanced in certain aspects of climate-related jobs. And they're doing in like, I know, New Jersey Carpenters Union is training people to become offshore wind professionals. Carpenters there. So there's, there's some, you know, even though they're named carpenters, they're, I mean, I would imagine other unions are doing some things that are very interesting in here, that you would not expect to be resilience related jobs. So I think, you know, digging in and really kind of taking any creative interpretive read as you scan for partnerships would be an important part of that. But I don't there's I don't believe there's anything prohibiting union participation in this at all.

Q: Are we able to put our contact info on here for anyone in our region who might be interested in forming a think group?

A: Oh, you know, that's a really interesting question. I got this. People have been reaching out to me. And since I'm not in the Sea Grant, I can have side conversations I'm available if you have follow-up conversations, like you know, I really want to dig into these CAP/RISAs, can you help me get connected? I'm very happy to take that call and set up a meeting to help you, as you're thinking this through. What I said was, like everybody who's showing up at these, you don't know who else is here. If people wanted to know who else could we talk to in a state to maybe work collaboratively? I don't believe I definitely can't share that information. Because I don't even have it. But who gets to share it and who gets to ask?

Q: Is the process of securing employer commitment described anywhere? I'm familiar- unfamiliar with the entry points for securing such commitments.

A: Yeah, so we- it can look like a lot of different things. There is no one process to secure those. It can be as simple as you working with a business and getting a letter from them that says, "If the training program produces people with these three skills, they are able- we are able and willing to- we commit to hire 25 of them." It can be even more formal than that. But at a basic level, it can be as simple as them making a written statement to that effect.

Q: Is it possible for someone to serve as co-PI on more than one proposal?

A: Yes. The only limitation is that the federal government doesn't think you should work more than 40 hours a week. And so we don't like to fund people to work more than 40 hours a week. And so if you already have a full-time job, and are requesting salary support, we will be concerned about that. But certainly, you can use- you can buy out some of your time, or- or if you are not working full time, for example, many university staff have nine-month jobs, and they need to come up with the other three months of their salary. That's something you can do through a grant. But yes, you can be a co-PI on more than one award.

Q: Is the ERA Commons registration due before the letter of intent is submitted or before the full proposal is submitted?

A: Before the full proposal.

Q: What is the latest project end date? And what is the award notification date?

A: The latest- when- these can be up to four-year awards. So the latest project end date would be July 31, 2028? I think. Math is not my strong point here. But they can be up to four years. The award notification date, I would- will be hopefully before the start date. Ideally, we would let you know by June of 2024. Some bureaucratic things may delay that a little bit but we at least like to informally let you know you've been recommended for funding. So I would expect June-ish. But we've- we've had some some things delay stuff this past year. So I would- I would ask for a little bit of grace and understanding that there'll be a little flex on that.

Q: For this particular funding opportunity, can you clarify whether you provide any feedback on the letter of intent beyond confirming receipt?

A: We at this stage do not plan on providing any feedback on the letter of intent.

Q: You mentioned barriers to submission. Could you give some insight on overcoming those key barriers?

A: Yeah, so- so from our perspective, barriers to submission are things like not having the appropriate registrations. So before you can submit to grants.gov, you need to be registered in grants.gov. That can take six weeks, I think to register for grants.gov, you need to be registered in SAM. And so you're already looking at a two to three-month window in advance of submission that you need to be working on it and if you're not already in that process, honestly, by the time you submit the letters of intent, you may not be able to make- especially because of holidays, you may not be able to get your grants.gov registration in place that would prevent you from applying.

Similarly, not being familiar, you know getting all the parts and pieces together, knowing who in your organization needs to be able to sign certain documents can be a barrier. And it's not a barrier that we at NOAA can address. It's one that you- but that you need to be aware of. And so, I tried to highlight in- in these slides, some of those barriers, around registration, missing deadlines, around sending things to the wrong place. Those are often the barriers to submission.

And then barriers to success are things around the format of the application, missing key parts, or not having your proposal target the evaluation criteria in a way that allows reviewers to give you an appropriate rating. These are the things that folks who do a lot of grants know, but that they are not necessarily completely obvious. And, and so laying- you know, that's our goal with this is to give you just- just to try and highlight some of those barriers and help you at least think about how you're going to overcome them.

Q: If the region is applying for both a regional challenge grant and this grant, with different partners taking the lead on each one, is that a conflict?

A: No. I say no. 99% of the time, probably not. If you have a very specific example, please reach out to either me or the leads on the resilience regional challenge. And we can talk through it but 99% of the time that shouldn't be a conflict.

Q: Is there a degree-level requirement for the PI on these?

A: No. They need to demonstrate that they are qualified to lead the work. That could come in a range of forms and certainly doesn't need an advanced degree, or any degree specifically.

Q: Roughly, how long should the letters of intent be?

A: For this one, we limit it to three pages. The layout is, is pretty straightforward. They were going to be two pages, but we asked you to include a table of potential partners. So we gave you a third page to make that work. They don't need to be long. They just need to be enough that I can know that you're going to submit, roughly the kinds of topics you're using, and so that I can make sure I'm not asking people to review it, who are potentially going to be partners on your project.

Q: What happens if the applicant exceeds the page limits? Will the materials still be reviewed?

A: So on the letter of intent, again, because there's no feedback, if you exceed the page limit, I will shake my head and be sad. So please don't exceed the page limit. On a full proposal, we will redact anything after the page limit and allow it to be reviewed. But often that is not to your benefit, because you know, reviewers will see a stop-in-mid-sentence kind of thing. So please be aware of those page limits. We do take them seriously.

Q: If there is more than one proposal from the same higher education institution are they reviewed independently or in comparison to one another?

A: All proposals are reviewed independently. So whether they come from the same place or different places, they are reviewed against the evaluation criteria. Yeah, they're not reviewed against each other.

Q: If we propose a four-year award period, do we have the entire four years for achieving employers' commitment to hire, and or promote a certain number of trained people?

A: I think the answer to that is yes. So, I will give an example. And if I get it wrong, then you can let us know in the chat. But let's say you have employers committed to hiring 1000 workers over four years, you have the full four years to do that. And maybe in the first year, they're only hiring 100. If it increases over time, that would be fine. However, we do prioritize projects that can start placing workers quickly. So in the first one to two years, but you do have the the whole period of the award to achieve the milestones you laid out.

Q: Are there instructions in the application for registering on sam- and grants.gov?

A: We included a section with a rough overview at the end of the Notice of Funding Opportunity to help. However, those would be superseded by anything that you find on sam and grants.gov. If they've updated their instructions since we wrote those, you know, follow the directions on their websites, and they do have those directions. But we did give you a very rough overview of what is involved. Just-just to try and give you as much help as we could provide.

Q: Is the evaluation criteria document available to applicants?

A: Yes, it is in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, there is a section titled Evaluation Criteria, those are spelled out and they will not change. So you know, as you are applying what you will be evaluated against.

Q: Is there a minimum number of trainees or hires that will be considered?

A: We're, I think we put in the funding opportunity 50+, so we're looking for at least 50 throughout the award. I believe one of the evaluation criteria reflects, you know, the number of potential trainees and placements. So that is a factor. But, 50 is kind of the floor.

Q: Is worker placement a requirement of the proposed project, for example, does a termed apprenticeship qualify?

A: Worker placement is required. And so I think a termed apprenticeship would constitute the training. We would be looking for hires following the end of the term of the apprenticeship, so commitments to hire after that.

Q: What role can Cooperative Extension faculty and staff/Sea Grant play in grants?

A: For a climate-ready workforce we see extension, Cooperative Extension, Sea Grant, and others as key partners. They may serve as backbone organizations, they may be the convening organizations, and they may also be strategic partners who provide important scientific or social knowledge. They may bring folks to the table, they may help employers understand what's involved. There is, I think, a really important role for extension in this space. Because it crosses so many boundaries. And at the end of the day, the goal for this is to build a transboundary, I guess that's a multidisciplinary sort of partnership. It's going to cross sectors potentially, it's going to cross expertise lines, and extension generally has a real skill at doing that. So I think there are several roles I could imagine.

Q: For a smaller planning proposal, do we need to have formal commitments for job placement or just a defined pathway for job placement?

A: You will be evaluated on the strength of your commitments even in the planning stage. So it is in your- it's probably in your best interest to have as much employer buy-in as possible even at the planning stage.

Q: Are there examples of public and private sector partners who are legally able to commit to something like this? I can see them making loose commitments to hire individuals who possess certain skills. However, it seems much more challenging to commit to hiring X number of trainees who completed a training program.

A: Well, private sector organizations are perfectly able to commit themselves. Correct? They can, according to whatever rules of their company or organization make commitments to the extent that they are able. Public sector, I think is-

maybe a little more nuanced, but we are aware of examples. For example, EDA's good jobs challenge, where public and private sector organizations made appropriate commitments and carried through with them.

Q: Is it correct that the promotion of a trainee from their current hired position can count as part of the 50 or more minimum for persons trained and hired?

A: If it is a promotion from their current position to a new position? Yes.

Q: Do contract jobs work for job placement? For example, can trainees be hired for a one-year contract?

A: So we will be tracking, in terms of success, worker placements after one year and after five years. So ideally, a good job if you go back to the good jobs principles we talked about in previous webinars, a good job includes some stability. I would leave it to the reviewers to determine whether a contract placement represented a good job consistent with those principles. I won't make that determination right now.

Q: Please elaborate on tracking for us hiring for how long?

A: We have been- we have been committed- we are- have committed to tracking for at least five years. So you- workers placed after one year and after five years is- is the numbers I think we're currently working with. And we will be working with recipients to make sure that whatever tracking we do makes sense for them.

Q: For further clarification is that five years after the grant ends or after the grant begins?

A: I will say that my understanding is after the end of the award. So, we are still in discussions about how we can best do that. So put that at a 75% certainty.

Q: As we are developing the regional partnership and beginning meetings to identify roles and responsibilities, can the backbone organization change after the letter of intent has been submitted?

A: Yes. If that happens, please send us an email noting that to sg.grants@noaa.gov so that we don't kick out the application, because it's

coming from a different place. So you are allowed to do that. It does lead a little to potential confusion on our end. So we just make sure we know that that is what happened. Otherwise, when I look at my spreadsheet of who's submitted letters of intent, and who submitted proposals, I might say, Oh, these folks aren't there.

Q: How does quality control of software tools- how is it maintained (the end product to be used in NOAA day-to-day activities)?

A: We have a team of folks that work on that. We will work with anyone who submits that to make sure that it is QA/QC'd, upon submission. But it is the submitters' responsibility to make sure it's in good shape.

Q: Can a program applicant have other grants operating while they're applying or accepting this grant program? Especially from NOAA or NSF?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there any flexibility to modify budget line items or the scope of work throughout the project performance period?

A: There is- there is some flexibility and you know, with it- with appropriate justifications.

Q: Is there a percentage that the employer must hire after the training is done?

A: Ideally, that percentage is 100 you would have positions for everyone who successfully completes the training

Q: How does the requirement that projects be employer-led intersect with the eligibility categories that are quite broad and the references to a backbone organization?

A: So ideally, the eligible applicants are those who can submit the application. They represent the backbone of the partnership as it were, they represent groups that can convene employers and other partners. By employer lead, we mean, it's employer needs-driven. So you're looking for what jobs exist or will exist, because some climate resilience jobs may not exist yet. We may need to you may be designing something to come up with a new type of job that none of us have thought of, but that an employer says we need this. And we'll hire them. So it's led

by WHO, WHAT needs employers have. But the organization that is applying and managing is not necessarily the employer that's that backbone organization that fits one of those eligible types.

Q: Can economic development nonprofit 501 C. Six qualify for funding?

A: Nonprofit organizations are eligible.

Q: Are there requirements for the employer partners in local governments to be in the same geographic area?

A: It is a priority that jobs. They place workers in jobs within appropriate geographies with a focus on training workers from the community where the jobs are located. So I guess the answer to that is maybe I think I would need more details to provide an effective answer.

Q: So you say you can take steps to improve rivers, streams, and other connections to the ocean for inland communities? Do you mean to take steps to train people to be employed and do the work after the fact? Or is this funding opportunity funding these types of habitat restoration and enhancement projects?

A: My apologies, yes, it is to train workers to carry out the work. If you would like to find funding for doing that work. There are the climate resilience regional challenges run by our colleagues at the National Ocean Service Office for Coastal Management. But now this is for workers to carry out that work.

Q: If the main applicant is a minority, serving a higher education institution, and wishes to partner with a local tribe that isn't federally recognized, will such a partnership still be viewed as beneficial for improving access and equity? Yes, Do the good jobs need to be new jobs? Or can they be enhancements to existing jobs to incorporate climate-related skills in various functions?

A: They need to be new, that you can train and recruit from within, but they need to be new positions. It doesn't reflect it shouldn't reflect an accretion of duties. It should be a new, new position, though, you could certainly retrain workers from within your existing workforce to include the climate resilience components. But

we wouldn't want to say, you know, Joshua, you now also have climate resilience on top of all your other requirements, it needs to be a new position.

Q: Can an eligible applicant submit multiple applications?

A: There is no limit on the number of applications that we have in post.

Q: Match isn't required for this opportunity. You mentioned that leveraged funds would make a proposal more competitive. Whereas this being considered in the application evaluation, the CO investment and sustainability section?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you please review the types of jobs that are applicable for workforce training?

A: I am not sure that we gave a definitive list that would need to be reviewed. It is jobs that incorporate certain skills that are climate resilience, climate climate-informed skills. And these are the relevant skills those jobs have so this could be any job that applies one or more of these could be eligible

Q: Is a for-profit corporation with a public benefit with an explicitly defined and measurable climate resiliency positive externality eligible for this grant?

A: The eligibility criteria for applicant type are set by the Inflation Reduction Act statute that these funds are under. For-profit organizations of any type are not on that list. We would encourage such an organization to identify an eligible partner. But that's what was set for us. Sounds like a cool group. And I'd love to learn more. But the eligibility type applicant type jumping are as follows. And these were given directly to us in statute. So that's who's eligible.

Q: How do we include employers from for-profit and public benefit companies in the proposal? For example, can they be unfunded collaborators if they are not eligible to apply?

A: So there's only going to be a single applicant that's, that's from one of these types. For-profit companies and so forth can be unfunded or funded collaborators. If they are unfunded in donating time, that could count, or other

materials that could count as leverage support. They should be included, wherever it makes sense. And if they are providing support, you know, we encourage that to be documented through letters of support and such.