

New Jersey Economic Development Authority

Notice of Funding

For Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) will begin accepting applications for the Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge at 10:00 a.m. December 8, 2022 AND WILL CLOSE ON February 1, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. The application is open for 56 calendar days, including federal holidays. Due to the objective of this program, the standard \$1,000 application fee is waived. This is a competitive program. A total of \$3,725,000 will be available through this program, with minimum and maximum award amounts set at \$100,000 and \$1,000,000, respectively. The application can be accessed at: www.njeda.com/offshore-wind-workforce-and-skills-development-grant-challenge/

Purpose

This grant opportunity is issued by the NJEDA seeking applications from qualified applicants to launch or expand offshore wind workforce and skills development programs.

Overview

The Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge (Grant Challenge) is a competitive program that will award grants to selected applicants to launch or expand workforce training and skills programs focused on strengthening and diversifying the New Jersey offshore wind workforce. A total of \$3,725,000 will be available through this program, with minimum and maximum award amounts set at \$100,000 and \$1,000,000, respectively. Priority in this Grant Challenge will be given to applicants or applicant teams that propose initiatives supporting training and job access for residents of overburdened communities. Grants will be awarded to proposals that achieve the highest overall scores based on the scoring criteria set forth in the product specifications.

Eligibility

This Grant Challenge is open to public and non-profit entities that can design and execute workforce and skills training programs for the offshore wind industry. Such entities may include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations, workforce training organizations, labor unions, workforce placement intermediaries, technical high schools, community colleges, universities, non-profit organizations and regional workforce development boards. Private, for-profit entities cannot apply as the primary applicant but may be part of an applicant team as a collaborator.

NJEDA will enter into a grant agreement with each successful primary applicant, and the primary applicant will be held solely responsible for complying with the terms of the grant. However, applicants must collaborate with, and adhere to, the following guidance on collaboration with other entities to develop and support robust workforce training programs:

- Required: All applications must include at least one Community-Based Organization

(CBO) with demonstrated experience serving a New Jersey Overburdened Community, as defined by New Jersey’s Environmental Justice Law, N.J.S.A. 13:1D-157, et seq. The CBO must either be the primary applicant or a strategic collaborator with the primary applicant. All applications that include the CBO as a strategic collaborator must clearly define the CBO’s role, alignment with the CBO’s mission and/or services, and the amount of the grant request allocated to the CBO for the agreed upon role.

- For the purposes of this Grant Challenge, a Community-Based Organization is defined as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides direct services or supports to a specific geographic New Jersey community(ies) or specific segments of a New Jersey community(ies).¹ Government entities, K-12 schools, and institutions of higher learning do not qualify as CBOs. However, these entities may be the primary applicant or an additional collaborator on the applicant team.
- New Jersey’s Environmental Justice Law, defines “overburdened community” as any census block group, as determined in accordance with the most recent United States Census, in which: (1) at least 35 percent of the households qualify as low-income households; (2) at least 40 percent of residents identify as minority or as members of a State recognized tribal community; or (3) at least 40 percent of the households have limited English proficiency. N.J.S.A 13:1D-158.
- Encouraged: Applicants may collaborate with additional entities, including for-profit or non-profit entities, to design and implement the training program.
- In addition to the eligibility parameters already stated above, the primary applicant must also be in substantial good standing with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to participate in the program. The primary applicant must provide a current tax clearance certificate as part of the application from the New Jersey Division of Taxation. Certificates may be requested through the State of NJ Premier Business Services (PBS) portal online at:
https://www16.state.nj.us/NJ_PREMIER_EBIZ/jsp/home.jsp

Applicants must submit proposals that include:

- A compelling plan to develop or expand a program that will allow New Jerseyans to access workforce opportunities in the offshore wind industry by providing tangible skill development and/or job-readiness training. Components of programs must include direct workforce training/skill development, and, where relevant, support services such as: access to career services, mentorship, family services, counseling, transportation, etc. Proposed initiatives must focus on one or more of the following occupation areas as defined by the Standard Occupation Codes System (SOC):
 - Operations Specialties Managers (SOC 11-3000)
 - Construction Trade Workers (SOC 47-5000)
 - Extraction Workers (SOC 47-5000)

¹Per the New Jersey Division of Taxation, a 501(c)(3) Organization refers to a nonprofit organization that has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) stating that the organization is exempt from federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The term also may refer to a church or ministry that may qualify for an IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter, even though it does not intend to apply for an IRS determination. www.irs.gov/charities-and-nonprofits

- Other Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations (SOC 49-9000)
 - Assemblers and Fabricators (SOC 51-2000)
 - Metal Workers and Plastic Workers (SOC 51-4000)
 - Plant and System Operators (SOC 51-8000)
 - Other Production Occupations (SOC 51-9000)
 - Water Transportation Workers (SOC 53-5000)
 - Material Moving Workers (SOC 53-7000).
- A compelling plan to engage with industry and other stakeholders to design and implement a program that prepares and/or connects participants with job opportunities in offshore wind.
 - A compelling plan to develop and/or utilize outreach; recruitment practices; program design approaches; and wraparound supports, as needed, such as mentorship, transportation, and childcare that target and support a diverse and inclusive pool of training participants to successfully complete the program.
 - A compelling plan to execute the project efficiently and on schedule, achieving well-defined milestones to complete the proposed initiative.
 - Program budget using NJEDA’s template (the template is available on the program website), that clearly lists the requested grant amount, other sources of funding if applicable, and itemized costs to develop and deliver the program.
 - A signed letter from the applicant’s CBO collaborator confirming their role in the proposed initiative, or if applicable, a signed letter from the primary applicant confirming their status as a Community-Based Organization.

Application Process

Applications will be accepted during a competitive application round, after which all complete applications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee. NJEDA staff will review all applications for completeness. The application portal will be open from December 8, 2022 at 10 a.m. to February 1, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. All interested applicants must complete and submit their applications online through the portal by the deadline to be considered for the Grant Challenge. The application can be found at: www.njeda.com/offshore-wind-workforce-and-skills-development-grant-challenge/

Following the completeness review, applicants with missing documentation will receive an email notification from NJEDA and will have five business days to submit any missing or incomplete documentation. NJEDA staff may also request clarifying information from applicants and such information must also be received within five business days of the date of request or the response may be rejected. Applicants should submit missing documentation electronically to WindInstitute@njeda.com with the email subject line “*Offshore Wind Workforce Challenge – Missing Documentation Submission [APPLICANT NAME]*”.

After the five business days, any application that is not complete will not be evaluated. **Only complete applications will be evaluated and scored.**

Applications will be evaluated by an evaluation committee comprised of staff from NJEDA. Staff from the DLWD and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education will serve as subject matter experts (SMEs) and advise the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee will

evaluate, score and rank applications received based on five primary criteria:

1. Ability to meet the needs of the offshore wind industry (up to 35 points);
2. Ability to serve NJ's Overburdened Communities (up to 10 points);
3. Ability to provide wraparound supports and affordable training (up to 15 points);
4. Prior experience and ability to implement the program (up to 30 points); and
5. Resources required (up to 10 points)

To be considered for an award, an application must receive a minimum score of 80 points.

Grant Amounts

Eligible applicants can propose an initiative with required funding of no less than \$100,000 and no more than \$1,000,000. NJEDA anticipates making multiple awards through this challenge. NJEDA may opt to request revisions to the proposed budgets or scopes accordingly. The protocol will be as follows: NJEDA will allocate funding to the top scoring proposals within the funding cap of \$3,725,000. If the next highest scoring proposal over 80 points has a budget request that brings the total allocation higher than the funding cap, NJEDA may request that next highest scoring applicant to revise their budget and/or scope to fit within the funding cap.

Eligible Uses

Grant funds will be disbursed to the winning applicants to support planning and implementation. Eligible uses of grant funding include costs associated with planning (e.g., staff costs for program development), soft launch (e.g., outreach and recruitment materials and related costs), capital costs (e.g., procurement, construction or renovation of program space, equipment, and material purchases), and/or implementation costs (e.g., instructor time, facility fees, participant equipment or materials, delivery of support services). No more than ten percent of the grant amount may be used on indirect costs such as general administration and other general operating expenses. Applicants must provide a detailed budget that demonstrates how the grant will be used to cover all costs.

Disbursement

The grant will be disbursed according to the following milestones:

- 50 percent of the grant will be disbursed upon execution of a grant agreement between NJEDA and the selected applicant.
- 25 percent of the grant will be disbursed upon the applicant's submission of the mid-program report, the exact timing to be determined based on the grantee's implementation plan and reflected in the grant agreement.
- 25 percent of the grant amount will be disbursed upon the launch of the program (for applicants seeking funds for program design) or completion of the grant period, which is expected to be no later than two years following the date of the grant agreement execution (for applicants seeking funds for program implementation).

Additional Information

Entities interested in collaborating on an applicant team may submit an optional Potential Collaborator Form by December 14, 2022 at 5:00PM to windinstitute@njeda.com. All completed forms will be shared with all entities that submit such forms.

Questions regarding the Grant Challenge may be submitted via email to windinstitute@njeda.com by January 11, 2023 at 5:00 PM with the subject line “Questions – NJ Offshore Wind Workforce Grant Challenge”. Answers will be posted on the Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge website on a rolling basis.

Comprehensive information about the Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge is available at <https://www.njeda.com/offshore-wind-workforce-and-skills-development-grant-challenge/>