

FY 2025 New Jersey Locally, Empowered, Accountable, and Determined (LEAD)
Category C: Innovative Reentry Cooperative Economic Empowerment
Question Period Ending May 7, 2025

Question: Should we go into the grant process having secured an LOI from a facility that would like to work with us or would DOC help facilitate introductions to a facility for our in-prison program, if we were awarded the grant?

Answer: A letter of interest is not required from any state correctional facility. NJLEAD arranges access to the incarcerated population upon being awarded.

Question: Is the "COVER PAGE" referenced on p. 10 of the NJ LEAD Category C NGO a requirement that is separate from, and in addition to, the Title Page referenced on p. 15 of the NGO and page 1 of the Application Checklist?

Answer: The COVER PAGE referenced on Page 10 is different and separate from the Title Page referenced on Page 15 of the NGO and Page 1 of the Application Checklist. The COVER PAGE is required as part of your Proposal Narrative and should include the information listed for the COVER PAGE on Page 10 of the NGO. The Title Page is a fillable pdf form and is required as a separate document per the NGO and Application Checklist.

Question: If a cover page is required, is the cover page excluded from the page maximum?

Answer: A Cover Page is required as part of the Proposal Narrative; however, it is not part of the 10 page maximum.

Question: Should all services start with individuals who are currently incarcerated and then transition when they are reentering, or can we also provide services to recently incarcerated individuals without first seeing them when they were still incarcerated?

Answer: It is preferred that services start with participants prior to release, but it is not mandatory.

Question: Are we required to have agreements in place with employers willing to hire formerly incarcerated individuals at the time of application?

Answer: It is preferred that agencies have agreements in place with employers willing to hire formerly incarcerated individuals at the time of application, but it is not mandatory.

Question: Does the budget narrative count towards our 10-page limit?

Answer: The Budget Narrative on Page 12 of the FY25 NJLEAD Category C NGO is separate from the Proposal Narrative, on Page 10 of the NGO, and does not count towards the Proposal Narrative 10 Page limit. The Budget Narrative is a separate required document that explains your required Budget Form.

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Question: Is there a specific format for the budget narrative?

Answer: The Budget Narrative should follow the format of the Budget Form in justifying the budget areas and explaining the calculations.

Question: If the proposed budget exceeds the maximum budget, will adjustments be allowed if considered for funding (up or down); or will our proposal be summarily rejected?

Answer: The application proposed budget must be submitted within the FY25 NJLEAD Category C maximum budget requirements as specified in the NGO.

Question: Under Subsection D. Scope of Work, enhance and improve the ability of formerly incarcerated individuals or incarcerated individuals within 364 days of release to achieve financial stability and independence. Is there a metric for determining whether someone has achieved “financial stability and independence”?

Answer: One of the metrics NJDOC considers is stable employment and/or the creation and operation of a business.

Question: Under Subsection D. Scope of Work, “Proposals may include assistance in starting a business..”, however the next sentence suggests that there are mandatory conditions in this regard.

Answer: Yes, as stated in the NGO.

Question: Under Subsection D. Scope of Work, “Proposals must explain how the organization will assist participants with the online submission of business proposals, virtual interviewing, and post-release support for launching a new business”?

Answer: Yes, as stated in the NGO.

Question: Online business proposal submissions: Unless seeking external funding, which would seem unlikely for a returning citizen, it seems most new entrepreneurial ventures would have no one to submit a business proposal to, please explain.

Answer: Seeking external funding for a business start-up is achievable post-release. Organizations assist with these services.

Question: Virtual Interviewing: Does virtual interviewing in this context refer to hiring employees, it looks as if the statement is referring to the participant launching a new business in which interviewing would seem unnecessary and their hiring unlikely at this early juncture, please explain.

Answer: Virtual interviewing would be for employment services and a crucial service for incarcerated persons within 60 days of release.

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Question: Post-release Support for launching new business – Returning citizens seem likely to have the financial ability to address many of the start-up required costs. Does the section include financial support for required business start-up expense, if so to what extent?

Answer: Applicants may include reasonable financial assistance for a new business start-up.

Question: What are the age ranges for each anticipated cohort group?

Answer: 18-70

Question: Are the groups co-ed or gender-specific?

Answer: Pre-release groups are gender specific. Post-release groups may be co-ed.

Question: Will the groups be facilitated virtually or in person? If in person, will the DOC provide meeting space and supervise the meetings?

Answer: Pre-release groups are in person. NJDOC will arrange the logistics.

Question: Is there a requirement for the groups to be 'open enrollment' by design?

Answer: It is preferred that groups be closed-ended to measure completion rates.

Question: What is the maximum size for each group, and what is the attrition cut-off number?

Answer: The maximum size for a group in most facilities is 15 individuals, excluding the facilitators. The groups may commence with a minimum of 7.

Question: Is there a maximum or minimum duration for each group cycle (in days, weeks, or months)?

Answer: For Pre-release services, most groups meet twice weekly for 60 minutes up to two hours per session in the morning or afternoon. However, the schedule is flexible based on the group being offered and the level of interest. Limited evening sessions may be considered between 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm based on the facility selected.

Question: If a person stops attending a session, will you send in another participant?

Answer: Pre-released closed-ended groups will not be backfilled with a new participant. A new participant would need to enroll in the next cohort.

Question: Scope of work says “formerly incarcerated individuals or incarcerated individuals within 364 days of release” and within several areas it mentions pre-release support, but under Priority Service Eligibility it mentions only recently released individuals. Can you clarify?

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Would the grant support a pre-release program that continues supporting individuals post-release?

Answer: The grant encourages and supports a pre-release program that continues supporting individuals post-release.

Question: What happens during the startup planning period? It is not a full month since notification of an award is on June 13?

Answer: The start-up period allows for the award process to be finalized and for the awardee to commence staffing and other operational considerations.

Question: Are we able to upload additional letters of support?

Answer: Additional letters of support may be uploaded/attached to your application as supporting documentation, but are not required.

Question: "... nor can partial payment of fringe benefits for full-time personnel assigned part-time to grant operations" - does this mean if a full-time staff member isn't 100% assigned to the grant, none of their fringe benefits can be charged? (all or nothing?)

Answer: Yes, a Full Time staff member must be 100% assigned to FY25 NJLEAD for their Fringe Benefits to be charged to the FY25 NJLEAD Grant Budget.