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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY**  
**State Fiscal Year 2025**

**Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative**  
**Connecting Adult Literacy to Workforce Development**

**Announcement Date:** August 30, 2024

**Application Due Date:** September 30, 2024

Robert Asaro-Angelo  
Commissioner

**Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative**  
**Notice of Grant Opportunity – FY 2025**

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**New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development**  
**Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative**  
**Notice of Grant Opportunity – FY 2025**

Take Notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4 et seq., the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (hereinafter “the Department” or “NJDOL”) regularly publishes on its website all notices of fund availability pertaining to federal or state grant funds, which may be awarded by the Department. The notices of fund availability may be found on the Department’s website under the heading “Research & Information” and the subheading “Grant Opportunities” - <https://www.nj.gov/labor/research-info/grants.shtml>.

**A. NAME OF GRANT PROGRAM**

Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative

**B. PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE FUNDS WILL BE USED**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development to fund innovative adult basic education centered programs developed in conjunction with local Workforce Development Boards, One Stop Career Centers where applicable, and qualified partners to connect New Jersey residents with programs and training embedded within Adult Literacy.

**Mission of the Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative**

NJDOL is proposing partnerships and workforce development activities statewide to assist youth and adults with adult literacy, digital literacy, family literacy, and building the skills, training, and work experience necessary to obtain and retain unsubsidized regular employment that leads them to self-sufficiency.

**Goals of Literacy Innovations Initiative**

- Facilitate community partnerships that are central to overcoming employment barriers of recipients with low literacy levels.
- Ensure participants are assessed and Individual Employment Plans (IEP) are developed for the timely delivery of appropriate and necessary education, career-training, and support activities to individuals.
- Design and provide educational programs for the targeted population to increase literacy and work towards unsubsidized employment opportunities and retention.
- Design career pathways to in demand professions, as well as develop ties to employers.

**C. AVAILABLE FUNDING**

The amount of funding available for this program in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) is estimated to be \$3,000,000 of through the New Jersey Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills (SWFBS), and is contingent upon the availability of funding. The grant period is estimated to begin November 1, 2024, and end September 30, 2026.

The chart below details the amount grantees can expend to service participants.

<b>GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATIONS</b>	<b>MAXIMUM FUNDING PER YEAR</b>	
<b>Administrative Costs</b>	\$ 50,000	10%
<b>Participant Training/Education</b>	\$ 300,000	60%
<b>Supportive Services</b>	\$ 60,000	10%
<b>Participant Career Services</b>	\$ 80,000	25%
<b>Outreach and Recruitment</b>	\$ 10,000	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 500,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

- Applicants may request up to \$500,000.
- Budgets must fully disclose purchases for hardware, software.
- Virtual or hybrid service delivery is encouraged.

The applicant’s budget must be well considered and necessary for the implementation of the program. Final amounts will be determined at the time of pre-contract revisions. Ineligible, inappropriate, or undocumented costs will be removed from the funding request.

**(See Attachment A)**

Funds may only be used to support services that are specific to this award; hence, this funding may not be used to supplant or duplicate existing funding streams. Actual funding levels will depend on the availability of funds and prior satisfactory performance.

**Failure to meet performance goals and expend funds will impact future grant opportunities.**

**NJDOL reserves the right to rescind any unspent funds. NJDOL also reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to extend contracts of successful applicants, contingent upon available funding.**

#### **D. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

New Jersey Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) must apply as the program lead and may propose to work in conjunction with the One Stop Career Center (OSCC) and local New Jersey partner agencies including non-profits, libraries, and educational institutions.

- All proposed partners must have demonstrated experience in serving the targeted population and this must be made evident within the NGO application.
- Co-enrollment across programs is expected and to be documented.

- WDBs are legally contracted entities and as such, are responsible for annual audits of the program and program year monitoring in conjunction with DOL. Program files should be available upon request to those requesting for review.
- WDBs must designate a Program Supervisor to oversee program development, policies, monitoring, communication, billing, and to attend quarterly meetings.

## **E. TARGETED POPULATION**

In accordance with program requirements, Adult Literacy Innovations applicants must fully design and disclose the type(s) of programs proposed, fully describe the role of any partner programs involved, and the intended clients, if funded. Additional considerations for clients served under this grant include:

- Must be legally eligible to work in the United States.
- Must be a resident of New Jersey.
- Must demonstrate a need for basic skills enhancement or training/education connected to career obtainment.
- Must identify an attainable goal and/or outcome.
- Must be able to communicate/comprehend English at a Low Intermediate level if enrolled in a credential bearing program.
- Must be at least 16 years of age, not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school and have a *signed* Consent of Non-Enrollment (ages 16-21).

## **F. GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The grantee will be the lead agency and overall coordinator of the grant. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- Recruit and enroll participants in the Literacy Innovations program.
- Ensure all participants are registered in AOSOS with their local One-Stop Career Center.
- Maintain and update participant files with individualized employment plans if applicable, case notes, pre and posttest, training start/end dates, credentials/certifications.
- Participant files must be secured in a locked case if being transported to other sites.
- Provide curricula upon request to DOL staff for review.
- Participants must be assessed and/ or pre-tested to identify needs and barriers that would prohibit them from being successful in the program.
- Ensure all participants are provided with ongoing case management and Career Services.
- Conduct an orientation for all participants to ensure program requirements are met, training requirements are understood, and participant rights and responsibilities are reviewed.

- Ensure all Occupational training vendors and services are on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
- Provide marketable job skills training for participants that leads to long-term career pathways, pre-apprenticeships, job retention, and industry recognized credentials.
- Administer mentorship and/or job coaching services to all participants.
- Track program participation and activities.
- Report performance and outcomes to State agency.

## G. PROCEDURES TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS

The grantee serves as the applicant agency of record, the legally recognized fiscal agent for the grant project, and the single point of contact for NJDOL. The grantee is expected to coordinate all aspects of the grant, e.g., project spending plan, grant project monitoring and reporting, outreach, and recruitment, and grant fiscal management. evaluation criteria will be used to review and select applications.

It is essential that the applicant carefully construct result-oriented goals and objectives, together with the program description and budget, providing a comprehensive plan for the successful accomplishment of the program.

All applicants are considered new applicants for this funding cycle, and will be evaluated based on quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of response to the NGO.

The standard evaluation criteria will be used to review and select applications.

Applicants under this grant program must provide a narrative describing their organizational capacity, resources, commitment, and any demonstrated employment, retention, and employer relationship successes in working with the targeted population of this grant. Such information is to be included as part of the applicant’s “Narrative” section of the application.

## H. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The complete, signed application must be received via email submission only by 3:00 pm on September 30, 2024.

All completed applications must be electronically submitted via email to [adulthood@dol.nj.gov](mailto:adulthood@dol.nj.gov)

- All applications must utilize MS Word, MS Excel, and/or PDF only.
- Include a read receipt.

### **Mandatory Technical Assistance Session**

NJDOL will provide a **mandatory** technical assistance (TA) session via Microsoft Teams. It is important that the Workforce Board Director, Program Director, and Fiscal Officer attend this session.

**To register for the mandatory technical assistance session, email your request with the names/emails of staff (limited to three) who shall attend to [Jonathan.Cohen@dol.nj.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Cohen@dol.nj.gov) and [adulthood@dol.nj.gov](mailto:adulthood@dol.nj.gov) no later than Friday, September 6, 2024 @ 3 pm.**

**Proposal Deadline**

<b>Technical Assistance Session</b>	<b>Application Due</b>	<b>Panel Review</b>
Monday, September 9, 2024 @ 11 am	Monday, September 30, 2024 @ 3 pm	October 8-12, 2024

**I. AWARD PROCESS**

To be eligible for funding, the applicant must have satisfactorily completed the required elements of the NGO. NJDOL reserves the right to reject any and all applications when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so. NJDOL’s best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, loss of funding; inability of the applicant to provide adequate services; indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with State and Federal laws and regulations; and/or any existing NJDOL contracts and procedures.

Panel Review Process - All applications are subject to a department panel review and final approval by the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor. The panel review date is expected to occur per chart above. Within 10 business days following the panel review date, applicants will be notified of the status of their application and any requested revisions. Upon completion of all requested revisions and re-submission of completed applications with the required timelines, applicants will be notified of the final determination of their application.

**J. REPORTING AND ON-SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE VISITS**

Grant recipients are required to maintain progress data and submit monthly program and fiscal reports documenting grant-related activities by the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

The reports will be reviewed to ascertain the grantee’s progress within the scope of work and its conformance with program regulations and enabling legislation.

The format of the monthly reports is determined by NJDOL, and the report form will be provided with the contract in dashboard format.

Monthly financial reports must be submitted in SAGE/IGX as required in the contract and are due no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month unless prior approval is provided.

In addition to the above monthly reports, a final performance report is required.

All programs will receive a minimum of one on-site technical assistance visit and monthly desk monitoring. The purpose of the visit will be to assess progress toward the program goals and objectives, and integrity of the program model. Grantees may be required to submit additional reports as requested by NJDOL.

**K. PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

Grantees are expected to attain the following outcomes during the funding period:

- All participants enrolled in the program per year must be provided:

- Assessments where applicable/Registration
- Case Management
- Individualized employment plan/Career Services
- 70% of clients enrolled the Literacy Innovations program must demonstrate growth by way of one of the following:
  - Measurable Skills Gain (For adult education programs, participants can demonstrate MSG in two ways: educational functioning level gain through an approved pre and posttest and receipt of a secondary credential)
  - Industry recognized credential
  - Passing the High School Equivalency (GED) Exam
  - Obtaining a job and/or an internal promotion because of training (please have evidence in client file)

## **L. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND CHECKLIST**

To ensure consistency and fairness of evaluation, NJDOL requires that each applicant seeking 50% reimbursement funding under this grant program submit an application that includes, at a minimum, the components listed below. It is important to note that failure to upload the required documentation may result in the application being removed from consideration for funding. Standard Assurances and Certification and General Provisions – By submitting the application, the applicant implicitly agrees to the terms and conditions as outlined in the “Standard Assurances and Certification and General Provisions”.

The Program Narrative must be produced using the following formatting requirements:

- Font – Times New Roman, 12 point.
- Spacing – double spaced.
- Margins – 1” top and bottom and 1” side margins.
- Pages must be numbered – X of X pages centered at the bottom of the page.
- Charts and graphs are allowed but must be clearly labeled and described.
- Applicant/Organization’s name must be listed on each page.
- Proposals including attachments should not exceed 20 pages.



<i>Required</i>	<i>Form</i>
✓	Applicant Title Page
✓	Letter(s) of Commitment from Partner(s)
✓	Statement of Need
✓	Narrative
✓	Organizational Commitment and Capacity
✓	Training Curriculum, Schedule, and Credentials obtained from the Training
✓	Budget

**Explanation of Proposal Components**

1. Applicant Title Page – Complete all sections and ensure all information is accurate on the form.
2. Letter(s) of Commitment from Partner(s) –Letters of commitment from other partners such as training providers, supportive service providers, and employers are encouraged. The letter(s) should indicate the specific activities in which the partner(s) will be involved.
3. Statement of Need – Demonstrate the need for the project in relation to the NGO.

A need is defined as the difference between the current status and the outcomes that the applicant would like to achieve. Documentation may include a demographic description of your targeted area, including employers, jobs, and research specifically relating to the literacy needs of the population.

4. Narrative – Provide an overview of how the services detailed in the scope of work will be implemented and the timeframes involved, specifically addressing the following:
  - a. How the applicant's approach satisfies the requirements as stated in the NGO. Describe the program(s) proposed and those served with intended outcomes.
  - b. The applicant’s understanding of the program expectations and outcomes as stated in the NGO.
  - c. All anticipated collaboration with other entities while fulfilling the requirements of the contract resulting from this NGO.
  - d. If partnering, share name of proposed partner agencies, describe the role of the WDB in relation to the partner agency, the services offered, and location where services will be administered. Share statistics for the number of clients the partner has served the past 2 program years (July 1, 2022- June 30, 2024), including client outcomes.
  - e. Describe how the program will be marketed to the community.

- f. Resolutions to anticipated barriers and potential problems the applicant foresees itself and/or the State encountering in the successful realization of the initiative described herein.
5. Organizational Commitment and Capacity – Applicants need to describe their commitment to addressing the conditions and/or needs identified in this NGO, including the organizational support that exists for implementing the proposed project. Please include charts of staff names, titles, duties/responsibilities, and allocation of time related to this grant. The applicant must also state they have the management information system (MIS), equipment and capacity needed to properly track and report participant demographic and performance data to NJDOL and demonstrate the ability to complete all required monthly reports and requests for information in accordance with protocol and timelines established by NJDOL. The applicant should focus on how previous experience will be applied to ensure successful implementation of the proposed project. The applicant should describe how they will establish networking, mentoring, and leadership opportunities during and after the project particularly, creating a workforce development infrastructure and possible continued employment for recipients.
6. Training Curriculum and Schedule – It is required that each applicant submit with this proposal a curriculum outlining the components within this section of the NGO and the associated hours for completion of each component. The training curriculum should be focused on basic skills instruction, workforce readiness instruction and occupation-specific training. The curriculum must list the specific occupation(s) individuals will enter once they complete the training. CASAS or TABE testing must take place for all students prior to acceptance into the training program and at the conclusion of instruction.
7. Budget – This section must be completed, and Narrative must also include all monetary funding sources or resources within the budget. Amounts reported in the budget must be fully supported by information provided in the budget narrative. Budgets will be reviewed using the State of New Jersey policies and regulations as a guideline.

**Note: The following are not allowable**

- Participant Stipends
- Fee for Service

**Note: The following are allowable**

- Participant Transportation. The policy should be submitted to DOL if the applicant is awarded.
- Laptop Loan Program, Hotspots. The policy should be submitted to DOL if applicant is awarded.
- Purchase of software (Grantee is fully responsible for install, training for staff, and oversight)

Miscellaneous Attachments – The miscellaneous attachment is optional, and not required to be completed. In this section, you can submit any additional information or documents that will support your grant application.

Standard Assurances and Certification and General Provisions – By submitting the application, the applicant implicitly agrees to the terms and conditions as outlined in the [Standard Assurances and Certification and General Provisions](#)

**M. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

This NGO is competitive and will be reviewed by a selection committee using a pre-established set of requirements, which will include, but not be limited to the following:

<i>Evaluation Criteria</i>	<i>Total Points</i>
<p><b>Program Narrative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses all narrative summary items.</li> <li>• Compelling statement of need.</li> <li>• Summary of training curriculum and alignment with the NGO.</li> <li>• Strategy to ensure participant program completion, and attendance tracking procedure/policy.</li> </ul>	50
<p><b>Applicant Requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational commitment and capacity describe experience and includes information about their MIS system.</li> <li>• Letters of support. AN MOU or MOA with partners is required.</li> </ul>	20
<p><b>Budget and Budget Narrative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget is completed.</li> <li>• Budget is reasonable.</li> <li>• Budget is within the cost guidelines of the NGO.</li> <li>• Budget aligns with Budget Narrative.</li> <li>• No calculation errors.</li> </ul>	30

**ATTACHMENT A – BUDGET TEMPLATE  
LITERACY INNOVATIONS GRANT**

Cost Categories	Total Funds Requested
<b>Administrative Cost</b>	
Administrative Cost 10%	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>Participant Training Services</b>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>Participant Support Services</b>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>Participant Career Services</b>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>Outreach and Recruitment</b>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	\$