



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

**Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE)
Program**

**NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY
Fiscal Year 2021**

Announcement Date: February 16, 2021

Technical Assistance Workshop: March 9, 2021 or March 16, 2021

Letter of Intent Due Date: No later than 12 noon April 1, 2021

Application Due Date: No later than 12 noon April 9, 2021

Funding Amount: \$2,000,000

**Robert Asaro-Angelo
Commissioner**

Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) Program FY2021 Notice of Grant Opportunity

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- Attachment I – Sample Letter of Intent
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Notice of Availability of Grant Program Funds

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 at <http://NJDOL.dol.state.nj.us/labor> 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 “Public Notices” and the subheading “Notice of Grant Opportunity”.

A. Name of Grant Program

Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) Program

The PACE Program is a competitive grant offered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL).

Introduction

The main goal of this Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) is to promote equality of opportunity, upward mobility, and economic fairness. Due to the rise of globalization, international trade, advances in information technology, mechanical automation of production processes, and reductions in union membership over the past few decades, American workers have found themselves displaced by new technologies and in competition with overseas labor markets. Advances in technology have increased the use of mechanization in the production process and in professional spaces that are not often attributed to skill-biased technical change. These technological advances have increased demand for more technically advanced, high-skilled positions that require occupational training at the secondary, post-secondary, and adult education levels.

Upskilling and retooling have helped mitigate these labor market conditions. Apprenticeship programs are a tried and true method to increase lifetime earnings and provide a pathway to a sustainable career. According to a recent study, “[m]ore than 90 percent of those who complete apprenticeships land jobs with annual wages that exceed \$60,000. Apprenticeship graduates also finish their programs with zero student loan debt, compared to an average of just over \$30,000 for today’s college students.”¹

In August 2019, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development released a Notice of Grant Opportunity [Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors \(GAINS\)](#). The PACE program is the logical predecessor component to developing a pipeline of qualified individuals seeking placement in an apprenticeship program, economically sustainable workplace, and/or post-secondary education. This NGO seeks to build on the progress from that initial program release.

¹ <https://na-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Connecting-Apprenticeship-HigherEd.pdf>

B. Purpose of the Grant

Grant funds will be awarded to successful applicants responding to this competitive NGO. The purpose of the PACE Program is to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in [Registered Apprenticeship](#) programs. These pre-apprenticeship programs have a **documented partnership with at least one Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor** and together, they expand the participant's career pathway opportunities with industry-based training coupled with classroom instruction. The program will drive economic development through skills and educational attainment and create pathways to better-paying careers and advanced credentials.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Apprenticeship seeks to encourage the growth of career pathway opportunities for people disconnected from employment, training, and education. Within the workforce development system, pre-apprenticeships serve a critical role for people to acquire career-specific skills, advance work-readiness, and connect them to longer-term career opportunities.

The PACE Program also seeks to eliminate economic barriers commonly associated with an individual's inability to invest in skills training and work readiness. In order to mitigate these barriers, the PACE Program encourages the use of stipend payments for all pre-apprenticeship program participants. This NGO provides funding for stipends for participants in the pre-apprenticeship training program.

Applications will be evaluated on the strength of the career pathway and partnerships proposed, the quality of programming proposed, and the lead applicant's organizational capacity to implement the proposal. As noted below, greater weight will be given to applications that build career pathways for individuals who did not receive a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) or who did not complete a secondary school education in a home-school setting, through co-enrollment in adult basic skills education in concert with a pre-apprenticeship program as well as post-secondary education coursework that enables such individuals to be eligible to receive financial aid through the Ability to Benefit (ATB) provision of Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act (HEA). All applicants should demonstrate their ability to ensure participants are able to acquire measurable skill gains as verified through regular progress reports.

Greater weight will be given to applications that have a clear linkage to secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) [programs](#) and demonstrate a commitment to achieving *Quality Placements*, as defined in this NGO.

Organizations funded through, or work in partnership with, the [Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors \(GAINS\)](#) program grantees are strongly encouraged to apply for this NGO. The PACE program can provide a pipeline of candidates for those registered

apprenticeship programs funded through GAINS. To learn more about these grantees, contact apprenticeshipunit@dol.nj.gov.

C. Mission, Goals and Objectives

Mission

The mission of the PACE Program will be to better align secondary, post-secondary, adult education and occupational training to meet labor demands unique to New Jersey and develop career pathways that lead to economically sustainable wages. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded through the PACE Program will provide education and training that leads to one of the following outcomes:

- Admission into a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Employment with a starting wage of not lower than \$14 per hour
- Admission into a post-secondary college or occupation-specific career training program

Goals

This competitive NGO is being made available to accomplish any of the following primary goals:

- Create a pipeline of qualified individuals that move from pre-apprenticeship programs to Registered Apprenticeship, employment, or post-secondary career pathways;
- Expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities to New Jersey residents, including the underrepresented, disadvantaged, or low-skilled populations; and
- Increase the New Jersey labor supply with a larger pool of qualified workers who possesses the skills and qualifications necessary to receive and maintain employment

Objectives

NJDOL has established the following objectives for the PACE Program:

1. Increase the number of pre-apprenticeship programs in NJ;
2. Develop more pre-apprenticeships opportunities that target high-growth, high-vacancy, or emerging regional sectors, industries, and occupations;
3. Increase the number of pre-apprentices in NJ;
4. Improve job prospects for all New Jersey residents;
5. Remove economic barriers to training and employment (childcare, transportation, etc.)
6. Provide training that leads to certifications, licenses and/or college credits;
7. Move workers from low skill entry-level positions or from industries directly affected by international trade or skill-biased technical change to full occupational proficiency;
8. Provide greater employment opportunities for members of underrepresented groups unemployed/dislocated workers, students;
9. Assist small businesses with developing quality training programs;
10. Develop a highly-skilled workforce that possesses the skills and qualifications demanded by businesses in NJ;

11. Increase the proficiency of NJ's labor supply with the goal of increasing wages in the state and making the state labor market an attractive option for out of state businesses to locate;
12. Increase the number of professional credentials for residents in NJ.
13. Increase employment opportunities for residents in existing or new apprenticeable industries;
14. Recognition of Registered Apprenticeship as a key component of New Jersey's Workforce Readiness System.

Eligible Funding Components

Program Development and Administration – Under the PACE Program, applicants will be able to submit a budget that outlines all costs associated with the pre-apprenticeship program. Costs may include, but are not limited to, personnel expenses, instructors, non-personnel costs, pre-apprentice training, supplies and materials, and other direct costs as defined on page 19. All programs must be created to achieve at a minimum one of three (3) Quality Placement outcomes:

A *Quality Placement*, for the purpose of this NGO is defined as a placement into one of the following outcomes:

- Placement into a USDOL registered apprenticeship program;
- Job with an employer in an occupation that is related to the training received in the pre-apprenticeship training program that pays not less than \$14 per hour; or
- Admission into a post-secondary college or occupation-specific career training program that is consistent with the learning acquired during the pre-apprenticeship program.

Pre-Apprentice Stipend for Participants – Applicants shall be eligible to include stipend funding within their PACE program budget. The stipends must be based on participants reaching program milestones not less than two-week completion increments. The stipend is not a wage; it is intended to cover incidental costs incurred while attending the pre-apprenticeship training program. All stipends funded under this program must be in connection with the participant's *Career Pathway*, and be geared towards achieving one of the *Quality Placement* outcomes, as defined in the subsequent section.

Definitions

Ability to Benefit – A provision in section 484(d)(2) of the federal Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, that allows a student who does not have a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent), or who did not complete a secondary school education in a homeschool setting, to be eligible for HEA Title IV student assistance (including federal Pell grants), but only if the student is enrolled in an "eligible career pathway program." An eligible career pathway program must include two components: a Title IV eligible postsecondary program component, and an adult basic skills education component that enables an individual to attain a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent. For more information on this federal law, please see U.S.

Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter GEN 2016-09 (<https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/05-09-2016-gen-16-09-subject-changes-title-iv-eligibility-students-without>).

Apprenticeship—A formal, on-the-job training program that typically has five components: 1) employer involvement; 2) on-the-job training; 3) related technical instruction; 4) paid work experience; and 5) award of a portable, nationally recognized industry credential.

Career Pathway – The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that

- A. Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- B. Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1927 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);
- C. Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
- D. Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- E. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- F. Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- G. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Registered Apprenticeship – The term “registered apprenticeship,” means a program that contains national industry standards and is registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) (or a federally recognized state apprenticeship agency). Typically, these programs are at a minimum of one-year in duration, require 144 hours of related technical instruction (RTI) and 2,000 on-the-job training hours. At the completion of every USDOL registered apprenticeship program, the individual receives an industry informed and nationally recognized credential from USDOL. More information on Registered Apprenticeship can be found [here](#). **It is strongly encouraged that all applicants familiarize themselves with Registered Apprenticeship prior to developing their proposal.**

Pre-apprenticeship – A program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals, in both youth (16 to 24 years of age) and adult populations, for entry into an apprenticeship program. Instruction may vary in length and scope, and may include basic skills training, academic skills remediation, or an introduction to the industry. Completers may be accorded preferential consideration for entry into a Registered Apprenticeship program and/or apply time served or credits earned toward fulfilling program requirements.

Quality Placement – A Quality Placement, for the purpose of this NGO is defined as a placement into one of the following outcomes:

- Placement into a USDOL registered apprenticeship program (required for every grantee to place a minimum of 25% of program graduates);
- Job with an employer in an occupation that is related to the training received in the pre-apprenticeship training program that pays not less than \$14 per hour; or
- Admission into a post-secondary college or training program that is consistent with the learning acquired during the pre-apprenticeship program.

Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program Elements

The following required elements draw on evidence-based best practices in both high-quality pre-apprenticeships and broader career preparation interventions. All pre-apprenticeship proposals shall address the following required elements:

1. **Approved Training and Curriculum.** Training and curriculum developed based on industry standards and informed by the program's Registered Apprenticeship partner(s) that will prepare individuals with the skills and competencies needed to enter one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s), a job following the pre-apprenticeship program related to the training/learning obtained through the program paying at minimum \$14 an hour, or a related post-secondary career pathway;
2. **Strategies for Long-Term Success.** Programs that increase Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, employment opportunities and post-secondary opportunities for under-represented², disadvantaged, or low-skilled individuals, such that, upon completion, they will meet the entry requirements, gain consideration, and are prepared for success in one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s), employment opportunities and post-secondary opportunities defined in this NGO as a *Quality Placement* and include the following:
 - Strong recruitment strategies focused on outreach to populations under-represented;
 - Educational and workforce preparation activities that prepare individuals to meet the entry requisites of one or more Registered Apprenticeship programs (e.g. specific career and industry awareness workshops, job readiness courses, English for speakers of other languages, Adult Basic Education, financial literacy seminars, math tutoring, etc.); and in local, state, national Registered Apprenticeship programs, or other Quality Placement;
 - Assists in exposing participants to local, state and national Registered Apprenticeship programs and provides direct assistance to participants applying to those programs;

² In the context of this definition, the term under-represented is intentionally broad. Generally, the term "under-represented" means a population that does not represent the majority, or a proportional share as indicated by appropriate data, of current participants in Registered Apprenticeship. For example, veterans may be an under-represented population in Registered Apprenticeship. Broadly, the intent of this term is to encourage pre-apprenticeship programs to be inclusive of all populations.

3. **Access to Appropriate Support Services.** Facilitates access to appropriate support services during the pre-apprenticeship program and, if eligible, a significant portion of the Registered Apprenticeship program. Applicants should identify and justify any supportive services that the participant population needs. These services include *but are not limited to* the following:
- a. Childcare
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Obtaining driver's license
 - d. Expungement programs
 - e. Communicating criminal background to employers
 - f. Housing services
 - g. Addressing substance abuse

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) may be able to fund some of these supportive services to individuals who meet certain eligibility requirements. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with local WDBs to co-enroll eligible individuals in Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and leverage those funds.

4. **Promotes Greater Use of Registered Apprenticeship to Increase Future Opportunities.** To support the ongoing sustainability of the partnership between pre-apprenticeship providers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, these efforts should collaboratively promote the use of Registered Apprenticeship as a preferred means for employers to develop a skilled workforce and to create career opportunities for individuals;
5. **Meaningful Hands-on Training that does not Displace Paid Employees.** Provides hands-on training to individuals in a simulated lab experience or through volunteer opportunities, when possible, neither of which supplants a paid employee but accurately simulates the industry and occupational conditions of the partnering Registered Apprenticeship sponsor(s) while observing proper supervision and safety protocols; and
6. **Facilitated Entry and/or Articulation.** When possible, formalized agreements exist with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors that enable individuals who have successfully completed the pre-apprenticeship program to enter directly into a Registered Apprenticeship program and/or include articulation agreements for earning advanced credit/placement for skills (on-the-job training) and competencies (related technical instruction) already acquired. This also includes, where applicable, articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions to award college credit for participation in pre-apprenticeship, and employer agreements for individuals who are hired at \$14/hour following completion of the program.

Targeted Industry Clusters

Pre-apprenticeships that target high-growth, high-vacancy, or emerging regional industries are highly encouraged. Applications which contain pre-apprenticeship training within the following industry clusters will be viewed favorably in the proposal evaluation process:

Advanced Manufacturing	Bio Pharma/Life Sciences
Energy, Utilities and Infrastructure	Retail, Hospitality and Tourism
Financial Services/Insurance	Transportation, Logistics and Distribution
Information Technology/Cyber Security	Renewable Energy
Health Care	Other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) related sectors/occupations
Public Service	Construction and Building Trades

Applicants who do not meet the targeted population or industry cluster criteria are not precluded from applying for grant funding under this NGO.

Targeted Populations

This funding opportunity seeks proposals for pre-apprenticeships that strengthen access to registered apprenticeships for individuals seeking career development leading to registered apprenticeship opportunities, including low-income and under-served individuals, 16 years of age or older, and not currently in full-time employment. Pre-apprenticeships that target high-growth, high-vacancy, or emerging regional industries are highly encouraged. This funding opportunity will result in a one-year contract with the possibility for extension.

The FY21 PACE NGO is part of a broader effort by NJDOL to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and applications that include pre-apprenticeship training and placement into employment in accordance with the NGO for residents impacted by COVID-19 will be given higher priority.

Greater weight will be given to applicants who demonstrate a viable strategy to recruit participants in one of the following targeted populations: women; member of a minority group; youth; individuals currently unemployed; county vocational school students; post-secondary students; ex-offenders; veterans; persons with disabilities; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible individuals; or other under-represented populations.

Applicants are required to submit within their application the expected outcomes for their pre-apprenticeship program. By the end of the contract period, at a minimum, applicants are expected to:

- Graduate at least 80% of pre-apprenticeship program graduates;
- Place a minimum of 80% of pre-apprenticeship program graduates into a Quality Placement, as defined in this NGO;
- Place a minimum of 25% of the pre-apprenticeship program graduates into Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

D. Availability and Awarding of Funding

Funding for this program is expected to be \$2,000,000 for FY2021, and is contingent upon the availability of funds. The anticipated length of the contract period is 18 months, unless otherwise extended or reduced at the discretion of the NJDOL. NJDOL seeks to fund multiple programs throughout the program year. NJDOL reserves the right to negotiate the costs of all training programs upon award selection. The payment structure for all contracts will be cost reimbursement.

Award amounts will vary based on proposals and will be carried out through an eighteen-month grant period with the possibility for extension. NJDOL will consider applications above or below the award range that contain a strong justification. The funding available for this pre-apprenticeship initiative may come from State Apprenticeship funds or other sources. Competitive proposals will have a cost per head range between \$4,000 and \$8,000 (divide total number served by the grant amount).

Awardees of these initial contracts may also be eligible for a one-year renewal (entire contract duration equal to two and a half years), based on program performance (Quality Placements achieved) and availability of funds. Program budgets submitted as part of the proposal are not final until contract execution.

All submissions must include the required documents and information as outlined in this NGO. Final determination for funding is contingent upon authorization and fund availability.

E. Eligible Entities/Applicants

To implement the PACE Program, NJDOL is seeking proposals from eligible entities with demonstrable capacity, experience, and history of success providing evidence-based career pathways. All respondents will be required to demonstrate that they have the fiscal and administrative capacity to manage a program at whatever scale they propose.

In soliciting proposals, NJDOL shall not discriminate against any person or organization submitting a proposal pursuant to this NGO because of ethnicity, color, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin or other basis prohibited by law.

This competitive grant opportunity is open to the following entities:

- Any employer;
- [Workforce Intermediary Sponsors](#);
- Employer / Trade Associations;
- Any labor organization which represents workers in the occupation for which the apprentices will be trained;
- Labor/Management Partnership (public or private);
- New Jersey Local Education Agency (LEA);
- Public vocational schools within New Jersey;
- Public high schools within New Jersey;
- Two- and four-year institutions of higher education;
- Public or private non-profit organizations (including Community Based Organizations);
- Business or trade organizations representing a particular trade, group of trades, contractors or employers;
- Community-based organizations;
- New Jersey local Workforce Development Boards;
- Economic development organizations;
- State, Local, County governments within New Jersey;
- Any other private educational or training entity that is on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

F. Evaluation Criteria

All applicants, regardless of whether they received grant funds from NJDOL in the past³, are considered new applicants for this funding cycle and will be evaluated on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of response to the NGO.

Applications that do not adhere to the required sections of this NGO will be viewed as incomplete and not be reviewed.

An independent review committee consisting of fair and impartial committee members will rate proposals based on a scoring rubric. The independent review committee reserves the right to request additional information and schedule interviews or site visits as appropriate. The evaluation team will initially evaluate submissions to determine compliance with the NGO requirements. Any submission failing to meet the compliance criteria will be deemed unresponsive, and may be excluded from further consideration.

³ Current providers will not be allowed to integrate new programming funded through this NGO with existing funded programs.

Proposals may be judged nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

- (1) the proposal is not received timely in accordance with the terms of this NGO;
- (2) the proposal does not follow the specified format; and/or
- (3) the proposal does not include all required information.

Greater weight will be given to applications that have a clear linkage to secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) [programs](#) (including career pathway linkages that leverage federal financial aid funding under Title IV of the HEA by co-enrolling individuals without a secondary school credential in compliance with the HEA’s Ability to Benefit provision), provide significant registered apprenticeship placement opportunities for program participants, and demonstrate a linkage to Targeted Populations and Targeted Industry Clusters, as defined in this NGO.

Organizations funded through, or work in partnership with, the [Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors \(GAINS\)](#) program grantees are strongly encouraged to apply for this NGO. The PACE Program can provide a pipeline of candidates for those registered apprenticeship programs funded through GAINS. To learn more about these grantees, contact ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov.

The independent reviewer(s) may not be familiar with your organization’s historical performance and will only evaluate the proposal based on information presented. Responses to the proposal narrative prompts will be evaluated by external reviewers using the following scoring guidance found below. The areas of evaluation, specific elements comprising these areas with definitions and scoring points are highlighted below. The maximum score to be received is 100.

	<i>Points</i>
Core Partnerships/Relationships Proposal demonstrates evidence of: ▪ <i>Connections to Registered Apprenticeship programs</i> ▪ <i>Connections to employers interested in hiring program participants (where applicable)</i> ▪ <i>Linkages to post-secondary education, including Ability to Benefit co-enrollment models that leverage federal HEA Title IV financial aid for individuals without a secondary school credential (where applicable)</i> ▪ <i>Connections to one or more CTE Programs</i> ▪ <i>Includes connections to appropriate services and the One-Stop system</i> ▪ <i>Connections to robust network of employment, education, and support opportunities</i>	40

Quality Program Experience Proposal demonstrates evidence of: ▪ <i>Program serves targeted populations</i> ▪ <i>Engagement in high quality hands-on instruction</i> ▪ <i>Engagement in high quality work-based learning opportunities</i> ▪ <i>Ongoing assessment activities to support program participant</i> ▪ <i>Access to career navigation services during and beyond completion of pre-apprenticeship program</i> ▪ <i>Physical environment supportive of learning</i>	25
Program Capacity Proposal demonstrates evidence of: ▪ <i>Reach to diverse and under-served populations</i> ▪ <i>Evidence of employment demand and career trajectory in pathway</i> ▪ <i>Processes in place for collaborative planning and decision-making with partners</i> ▪ <i>Staffing plans reflect multiple capacities required to support program</i> ▪ <i>Clear connections and opportunities for building on existing pre-apprenticeship program practice</i> ▪ <i>Realistic timeline for planning and implementing work outlined</i>	20
Appropriateness of Budget ▪ <i>Budget is reasonable</i> ▪ <i>Budget is within the cost guidelines of the NGO</i> ▪ <i>Innovative usage of other services funding</i> ▪ <i>Budget Summary aligns with Budget Narrative</i> ▪ <i>No calculation errors</i>	15
TOTAL POINTS	100

Explanation of Proposal Components

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary will provide a brief but comprehensive synopsis of the proposed pre-apprenticeship program application highlighting its key points in relationship to this NGO. Ensure to include the Projected Project Plan chart as described on Attachment III (page 28 of the NGO).

Program Narrative

The Program Narrative will provide details of your proposed pre-apprenticeship program and must include the following required components: Training, Work Experience, Connection to Registered Apprenticeship, Retention Support and Alternative Placements, Required Pre-

Apprenticeship Elements, Expected Outcomes, and Administrative Responsibilities. Each of the required components are explained in the following section:

Training

Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to train participants to meet or exceed the eligibility requirements and core competencies necessary for entry and success in the partnering apprenticeship(s), employment, or post-secondary, including 21st century work-readiness skills.

The following section provides guidelines for PACE participant eligibility. Eligible participants must provide documentation to verify that they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Are aged 16 years or older
- Are eligible to work in the United States
- Are out of school
- Are registered with Selective Service, if a male 18 years old or older
- Meet one or more of the following barriers at the time of registration:
 - High school dropout;
 - A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent completed school year calendar quarter;
 - Returning citizen/Re-Entry/Ex-Offender;
 - A homeless youth or runaway;
 - An individual in foster care/aged out;
 - Pregnant or parenting;
 - An individual with a disability;
 - A low-income youth who has a high school diploma or GED and who is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
 - A low-income youth who requires assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment;
 - Individuals currently unemployed/underemployed.

Applicants are required to ensure all program participants are registered at the local One-Stop Career Center and are aware of all services at the One-Stop. All successful applicants will be required to complete the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligibility determination form for all participants of the pre-apprenticeship program.

Applicants are expected to align program design and training content to the skills and knowledge needed for success that leads to a Quality Placement.

Successful applicants will be able to outline a training curriculum that addresses these requirements, as well as describe what evidence of learning is expected from their training, how individual learning needs will be addressed, and when and how training will be provided. Include the number of weeks of training, the number of pre-apprenticeship training hours per day, and the total number of pre-apprenticeship training hours each participant will receive.

Work Experience

Funded pre-apprenticeships should integrate paid work experiences (via stipend funding through this grant) into the program model. Work experiences are expected to provide participants with

the opportunity to practice and reinforce the skills and content learned through classroom-based and other formal training.

Successful applicants will be able to describe the pre-apprenticeship's corresponding work experience(s), how learning and content is connected from formal training to the work experience(s), and what percentage of the requested budget is designated for participant supportive services.

Connection to Registered Apprenticeship

Funded pre-apprenticeships must have an established connection to at least one registered apprenticeship. Additionally, the registered apprenticeship that the pre-apprenticeship program is targeting must be registered and approved with the USDOL.

Successful applicants will be able to provide a copy of letter of support between their organization and the registered apprenticeship program(s) that demonstrates their connection, any entry agreements established, collaboration on training alignment, and partnership in providing authentic career exposure and connection to industry employers. If the applicant is the registered apprenticeship provider, then a signed letter outlining the recruitment relationship between the pre-apprenticeship and the registered apprenticeship is expected in lieu of a letter of support.

For additional details and guidance on apprenticeship registration, please refer to the [USDOL Apprenticeship](https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/apprenticeship/index.shtml) website or NJDOL's website at <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/apprenticeship/index.shtml>. If you wish to be contacted by New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Office of Apprenticeship, complete an intake form on the website listed above.

Connection to Employment Opportunities (where applicable)

Funded pre-apprenticeships will be expected to describe connections any partner employers who intent on hiring pre-apprenticeship program graduates and provide a commitment of paying a minimum of \$14/hour.

Successful applicants will be able to provide a copy of letter of support between their organization and the employer(s) partners that demonstrates their connection to the grantees, collaboration on training alignment, and partnership in providing authentic career exposure and connection to industry employers.

Post-Secondary Placement after Pre-Apprenticeship Completion (where applicable)

Funded pre-apprenticeship programs will be expected to provide a narrative on the connection between the pre-apprenticeship program and specific post-secondary programs for which the participants will be prepared to enter of completion. This includes, but is not limited to: programs of study, partnerships with post-secondary institutions, and any established college credit articulation agreements between the pre-apprenticeship program and the partner institution. Additional weight will be given to applications that include co-enrollment of individuals who lack a secondary school credential in adult basic skills education in concert with a pre-apprenticeship together with post-secondary coursework in compliance with the Ability to Benefit provision of HEA Title IV, in order to leverage federal financial aid funding for which these individuals are eligible.

Retention Support and Alternative Placements

Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to provide follow-up services to participants that support retention and success in the partnering registered apprenticeship program or an alternative placement. These services are eligible for funding under this NGO. Follow-up services include, but are not limited to:

- Individual coaching and advising
- Employment
- Childcare Services
- Transportation
- Additional training.

Successful applicants will be able to describe the retention support services that will be provided, including how and for how long, as well as established connections or plans to connect with alternative placement opportunities. In addition, those selected for award will be required to submit a project schedule containing milestones and benchmarks before the contract will be executed.

Supportive Services

Supportive services reduce barriers to employment for participants and increase their success and retention within both the pre-apprenticeship and the registered apprenticeship or alternative placement. Applicants must indicate how the following optional and required supportive services will be made available to participants.

Quality Pre-apprenticeship program elements:

- Approved Training and Curriculum;
- Strategies for Long-Term Success;
- Access to Appropriate Support Services
 - Transportation services (One-Stop Career Centers)
 - Childcare Services (One-Stop Career Centers)
- Promotes Registered Apprenticeship;
- Meaningful hands-on training that does not displace paid employees;
- Facilitated entry and/or articulation (where applicable);
- Paid work experiences and/or job shadowing (via stipend funding through this NGO;
- Occupational skills training relating at a minimum of one of the following: Registered Apprenticeship Program(s), training for employment in a specific occupation, or a post-secondary program of study related to the pre-apprenticeship training;
- Ensure connection and registration to the One-Stop Career Center system;
- Counseling and referrals to appropriate agencies;
- Workforce Readiness Skills training;
- Career awareness and career exploration services.

Optional Supportive Services (include but not limited to):

- Training for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized post-secondary credential;

- Paid work experiences;
- Leadership development opportunities;
- Adult mentoring;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
- Financial Literacy;
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Activities that help participants prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

Expected Outcomes

Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to prepare participants for entry and success in registered apprenticeship programs and longer-term career opportunities. Successful applicants will include the following expected outcomes (as outlined on page 10):

- Proposed expected outcomes, including the total number to be enrolled in the pre-apprenticeship program;
- Number of anticipated participants to complete the program,
- Number of placements into a *Quality Placement*, as defined by this NGO.

Administrative Responsibilities

Each applicant must agree to the following administrative responsibilities with the PACE Program. Your application must include how your organization will comply with the following administrative responsibilities:

1. **File Maintenance:** Respondent is responsible to maintain all program related files accurately and completely. Such maintenance includes retaining a hard copy file of all documents pertaining to program enrollment, eligibility, participation, progress reports, services provided or other participant activities during program participation. Grantees will be responsible for inputting required data through the SAGE (System for Administering Grants Electronically) system.
2. **Confidentiality:** Respondent will secure participant information in a location that is accessible only to authorized employees of the respondent and ensure that all participant information is kept confidential at all times, as required by the law.
3. **Archiving of Files:** Respondent will maintain a list of all participants of the pre-apprenticeship program and maintain a copy of participant's files for its records for seven years.
4. **Performance Reviews:** Respondent understands that NJDOL maintains the right to conduct random and scheduled programmatic and fiscal performance reviews.
5. **Trainings and Meetings:** Respondent is responsible for attending relevant meetings and trainings offered by NJDOL as well as those required by the

State of New Jersey as part of the continuous improvement strategy for professional development and grant administration.

6. Communication: Respondent is responsible for maintaining regular communication and informing NJDOL of any issues that arise that might impact the respondent's ability to successfully meet the requirements of the scope of work.

Budget Summary

Applicants are required to submit an eighteen-month budget in the SAGE system. Program implementation should be inclusive within the eighteen-month contract period with *retention activities* during the 12 months following the end of the contract period.

The budget submitted should reflect the reasonable costs of running the proposed program and include all proposed program and operating expenses, including all expenses associated with payments that would be made to participants via stipend funding, both those leveraged and those funds requested of NJDOL.

The budget contains line items for administrative and programmatic costs. All costs associated with direct delivery of services to participants are considered programmatic costs, including instruction. Administrative costs are costs not directly associated with service delivery and cannot exceed 10% of the total budget. Successful applicants may be required to submit more detailed budget information at the time of contract negotiations.

Stipend Funding

To enable participation, grantees shall include within their budget an allocation for needs-based payments and stipends. These payments can be paid to the participants of the program every two weeks and cannot exceed \$250 per week for their participation in the pre-apprenticeship training program. These payments may be used to reward pre-apprentices who complete incremental benchmarks in their program (not less than one-week) or provide needs-based payments for costs associated with attending the pre-apprenticeship program. The program grantee will also be required to describe the mechanisms it will use to track program progress/benchmarks and disburse stipend payments.

Grant funds provided through this NGO may not be expended for the following:

- Indirect costs (e.g. travel, meals, lodging);
- Pension and/or health benefits for part-time staff;
- Mileage and toll expenses for out-of-state travel;
- Overnight accommodations;
- Capital construction or renovation;
- Costs associated with preparing the grant application; and
- Costs of memberships in associations or organizations.

Key components of the budget summary are listed below:

- Budget is reasonable

- Budget is within the cost guidelines of the NGO
- Innovative usage of other services and funding
- Budget Summary aligns with Budget Narrative
- No calculation errors

Miscellaneous Attachments

Miscellaneous attachments are optional, and not required to be completed. In this section, you can submit any additional information or documents that will support your grant application.

G. Qualifications of Applicants

The lead agency 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 lead agency is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all aspects of the grant, including, but not limited to, pre-apprenticeship training program design, administration of the grant, budgeting & fiscal management and monthly reporting. It is essential that the applicant carefully construct result-oriented goals and objectives that support the program's stated goals and objectives, together with the program description and budget, providing a comprehensive plan for the successful accomplishment of the program.

H. Application Process

Successful proposals must be responsive to the NGO and meet all technical capacity and fiscal viability requirements as described. Applications are submitted and awards are managed through NJDOL's online grant system, the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE).

Applications are submitted online, via SAGE at www.sage.nj.gov. Applicants must determine who will serve as the Authorized Official (AO) for this grant application. The AO must:

- be authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the company.
- read and understand the FY2021 NGO.
- register (create an account) in SAGE and submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for a FY2021 PACE grant.

The AO may delegate completion of the application to others by giving access in SAGE, but should be aware that responsibility for the contract remains with the AO for the life of the grant.

Applicants interested in applying for the PACE grant must first submit a LOI to express interest in the grant opportunity. This notification allows NJDOL to have sufficient resources in place to carefully review each proposal and to provide access to the application in SAGE. Applicants must complete, sign and submit a letter of intent as soon as the applicant is interested in applying for the grant opportunity. A sample LOI can be found in Attachment I. The completed and signed LOI must be emailed as an attachment to ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov and received no later than noon on Thursday, April 1, 2021.

Before submitting the LOI to NJDOL, the AO must register in SAGE as a new user. Incorrect or missing information or failure to register in SAGE will delay the processing of the LOI, which will delay access to the online application. Once the Authorized Official is registered and

approved in SAGE, applicants can then proceed to enter the required information and documentation in the SAGE system.

Technical Assistance Workshop

NJDOL will provide two technical assistance sessions via tele-conference to potential applicants. General guidance on completing the required documents, budget forms and an overview of the PACE program will be provided. It is important that both the Program Director and Fiscal Officer attend this session. It is strongly suggested that applicants attend the technical assistance workshop. The technical assistance workshops will be held:

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 2pm.

OR

Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 2pm.

The technical assistance workshops will be conducted electronically through GoTo Meeting sessions. Pre-registration is required at least three business days prior to the date of the technical assistance workshop [here](#).

GoTo Meeting log-in information will be provided only to those who registered through Eventbrite.

Proposal Deadline

Applicants interested in applying for the PACE grant must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to express interest in the grant opportunity. It is suggested the organization submit the letter once they determine they plan on applying for the grant opportunity, but the latest LOIs can be submitted is 12:00 noon on Thursday, March 25, 2021.

Applications for FY21 PACE funds will not be accepted after 12:00 noon on Thursday, April 1, 2021. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early.

Final award decisions will be contingent upon the availability of funds and awards will be communicated approximately forty-five (45) days following the panel review date.

The FY21 schedule for submission of complete applications and the panel review dates are as follows:

<u>FY2021</u>	<u>Letter of Intent (LOI)</u> LOIs must be received no later:	<u>Application Acceptances</u> Applications must be submitted in SAGE no later than:	<u>Panel Review Begins:</u>
1	12 noon 4/1/2021	12 noon 4/9/2021	Week of 4/19/2021

I. Application Requirements

Applicants are required to submit their application through the SAGE system and will consist of the following components.

Required	Form
✓	Applicant Information
✓	Project Location
✓	Consortium Partners
✓	Previous Funding
✓	Required Documents (Executive Summary, Program Narrative, Implementation Plan, Program Sustainability Plan, and Tax Clearance Certificate)
✓	PACE Deliverables
✓	Budget Details (Schedules A, B, and C)
✓	Budget Cost Summary
✓	Miscellaneous Attachments

The following information must be included in your application in SAGE:

◆ **Applicant Information**

Applicants must complete all the required information for the organization.

◆ **Project Location**

Indicate the counties your project will include or if the program is statewide.

◆ **Consortium Partners**

Applicants must include information for each partner in your proposed application. The required information includes: name of employer/sponsor/organization, FEIN number, and address. Additional partners can be added during the contract period for applicants who are funded through this program.

As a requirement of this grant, applicants must illustrate a direct link to a Registered Apprenticeship program by identifying at least one affiliated registered apprenticeship employer/sponsor partner.

◆ **Previous Funding**

Indicate if your organization was the recipient of any funding from NJDOL within the last three years.

◆ **Required Documents**

The following required documents, which must include all required components as outlined within this NGO, must be uploaded:

- Executive Summary (maximum 3 pages)
- Program Narrative (maximum 20 pages)
- Implementation Plan (maximum 4 pages)
- Program Sustainability Plan (maximum 3 pages)
- Tax Clearance Certificate

Public Law 2007, c. 101 requires that as a precondition to the award of business assistance or incentive or as a component of the application for business assistance or incentive, a person or business seeking a grant, loan, loan guarantee, or other monetary or financial benefit from a department or agency of state government shall obtain a [Tax Clearance Certificate](#) from the director of the New Jersey Division of Taxation prior to the issuance of the grant, incentive or assistance. Applicants are encouraged to request this certificate as soon as a decision to apply is made by the organization. Please see Attachment II for additional information.

◆ **PACE Deliverables**

Applicants must identify the expected number of individuals to be served as well as the quality placement outcomes anticipated by the conclusion of the grant period.

Additionally, this section will require details regarding program length, occupational area, and projected program dates.

◆ **Budget Detail and Budget Cost Summary**

Applicants must provide a detailed budget by entering the required information on Schedules A (Personnel Costs), Schedule B (Non-Personnel Costs), and Schedule C (Direct Student Services). All costs must include a breakdown of the cost along with a justification. The cost summary page will summarize all the details entered on the budget schedules. Be sure to review the budget cost summary page for accuracy before submitting your application in SAGE.

This grant opportunity prohibits the use of grant funds for activities that:

- “Induce, encourage or assist any displacement of currently employed workers by trainees, including partial displacement by means such as reduced hours of currently employed workers; any replacement of laid off workers by trainees; or any relocation of operations resulting in a loss of employment at a previous workplace”;
- “Replace, supplant, compete with or duplicate in any way existing approved registered apprenticeship programs”; or
- “Impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements, except that activities which would be inconsistent with the terms of a collective bargaining agreement may be undertaken with the written concurrence of the collective bargaining unit and employer who are parties to the agreement.”

Budget amendments must have the approval of NJDOL.

◆ **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.

J. Required Reports/Documents

Grantees will be required to complete a monthly activity report, due by the 15th of each month. The report must list all of the activities of the program, including placement activities and credentialing information when applicable.

In addition, the monthly report and monthly expenditure report must include the following documentation:

- Name, address, date of birth, education level, and demographic information for each participant.
- Name, address, FEIN number, and contact information of each quality partner.
- Type of business and NAICS code (to ensure it falls into one of the targeted industries)
- Occupation/trade related area.
- Program participant enrollment, drop-out, and completion data.
- Status updates on the performance of the program participants.
- Wage data, when applicable to a quality placement outcome.
- Any credentials that will be attained and/or are currently being pursued, and completion dates.
- Stipend tracking and payment information.

A closeout report, due within 30 days from the end of the grant period, must be submitted via SAGE. Final reimbursement is subject to submission and acceptance of the final report to NJDOL.

K. Award Process:

NJDOL will review each completed application on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, appropriateness, demonstrated need, and adherence to application guidelines. Applicants are reminded that the grants will be awarded through a competitive process. NJDOL cannot fund all applications submitted; therefore, only those applications that meet the highest standards will be awarded.

The final contract amount and contract period will be stipulated in the executed contract between the approved applicant and NJDOL. Reimbursement will be given on a cost reimbursement basis for actual expenses incurred during the contract/grant period. The Division of Workforce Development will closely monitor the grants.

For information, contact:

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Office of Apprenticeship
1 John Fitch Plaza
PO Box 055, 5th Floor
Trenton, NJ 08625-0055
Contact: James Manning, Chief, Contracts and Programs Unit
Telephone: (609) 633-6438
Email: james.manning@dol.nj.gov

L. Date by which Applicants shall be notified

NJDOL's review team will evaluate the application on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness to the guidelines and requirements of this NGO.

Final decisions on award will be communicated to the applicant no later than forty-five (45) business days following the panel review date. NJDOL reserves the right to exceed the forty-five (45) day award notice deadline should the application be deemed as incomplete.

Applications for FY21 funds will not be accepted after 12 noon on Friday, April 9, 2021.

Notice that an organization has been selected as a grant recipient does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant award is made, NJDOL will enter into negotiations concerning items such as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems. If subsequent negotiations do not result in an agreement between the applicant and NJDOL, NJDOL reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the proposal.

Upon the review and approval of an application for funding, a signed contract will be sent to the grantee via the SAGE system. This contract will provide the grantee with spending authority for the term of the contract. Grantees are not authorized to expend funds before or after the contract period, as shown on the contract.

***Dates may be subject to change. Any changes will be posted on NJDOL website.**

Attachment I. Letter of Intent

(NOTE: the AO must also register in SAGE as a new user)

(On your organization's letterhead)

Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Office of Apprenticeship
ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov

RE: FY2021 Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE)

Please accept this letter as notice of my intention to apply for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development fiscal year 2021 PACE grant program. I have completed registration (created an account) in the System to Administer Grants Electronically (SAGE), and did read and do understand the FY2021 PACE Grant Opportunity, and am aware of my responsibilities as the Authorized Official.

(Organization's Name) proposes to request funding to administer a pre-apprenticeship program focused on training for the following registered apprenticeship occupation(s) (industry/occupation area).

Legal business name:
Federal Employee Identification # (FEIN):
Dun and Bradstreet # (DUNS):
NJ business address:
County of NJ business:
Business web address:
Name of Authorized Official:
Title of Authorized Official:
Direct phone # and email address of Authorized Official:
Main point of contract for the PACE application:
Direct phone # and email address of main point of contact:

Signature of Authorized Official

Date

Email this completed form as an attachment to: ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov

Attachment II.

Tax Clearance Certificate

Public Law 2007, c. 101 requires that as a precondition to the award of business assistance or incentive or as a component of the application for business assistance or incentive, a person or business seeking a grant, loan, loan guarantee, or other monetary or financial benefit from a department or agency of state government shall obtain a [Tax Clearance Certificate](#) from the director of the New Jersey Division of Taxation prior to the issuance of the grant, incentive or assistance. Tax Clearance certificates may be requested through the State of New Jersey's [Premier Business Services \(PBS\) portal](#) online. The use of the portal replaces the need for the paper application submission to the Division of Taxation; the processing fee is also waived with the use of the portal. Each applicant will be able to print the necessary clearance certificate through their business's portal account. The Tax Clearance is a required document in the application, so an organization should request the Tax Clearance Certificate once a decision has been made to apply for the grant opportunity.

State of New Jersey W-9 Form

A completed State of New Jersey W-9 form must be on file with the New Jersey Department of Treasury. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure this step is completed. Applicants may register with the New Jersey Department of the Treasury online at: www.njstart.gov. Failure to complete this step can delay or forfeit a grant award. *(Reimbursement checks are linked with the FEIN that is on file with the New Jersey Department of Treasury. As a result, reimbursement checks are mailed to this associated address.)*

Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability Act

[The Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability Act](#): Public Law 2007, c.200 requires that all applicants awarded a grant in excess of \$25,000 complete the [Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability form](#). This form must be completed within 30 days after the State's fiscal year for a period of five years after the grant is awarded.

The law requires that if the company receiving financial assistance for training services relocates jobs out of state or outsources employee positions within three years following the ending date of the PACE Program contract, the company must return all monies provided by the state for customized training services.

Attachment III

Projected Project Plan

Please include the chart below within your Executive Summary. For each Quarter of the grant, enter the following information:

Participants to be Enrolled – The TOTAL number of PACE participants enrolled (both new and previously enrolled)

Expenditures – Please provide the estimated expenditure of PACE grant funds for each quarter of the grant in each of the following categories

Personnel – Salaries and fringe benefits

Non-Personnel – Marketing Materials, Office Supplies

Direct Student Costs – Books, Instructional Materials and Supplies; Stipends, Safety Equipment

Anticipated Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Participants to be enrolled						
Estimated Expenditures	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Personnel Costs						
Non-Personnel Costs						
Direct Student Costs						