

# Job Quality Academy

## Prospective Applicant Questions and Answers

### Eligibility

**1. Q: What is the difference between the lead organization and the core team?**

A: The lead organization is the convener of the team, bringing the partners together and ensuring that team efforts remain on point and focused. As funders of the public workforce development system, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) expects state or local workforce boards, state workforce agencies, and tribal entities to be the lead applicants—essentially entities that administer Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs. We encourage other organizations that are interested in participation and are not one of those previously mentioned entities to reach out to their state or local workforce board, state workforce agency, or the tribal entity responsible for administering public workforce funding to coordinate participation as part of a team.

**2. Q: Can your team include a college that offers apprenticeships?**

A: Yes. Any organizations that are committed to advancing job quality in their communities may be potential partners in a Job Quality Academy (JQA) team.

**3. Q: Will a national organization be able to apply as the lead applicant, or do they need to find a local partner?**

A: As funders of the public workforce development system, ETA expects state or local workforce boards, state workforce agencies, and tribal entities to be the lead applicants—essentially entities that administer WIOA programs. We encourage other organizations that are not any of those previously mentioned entities to reach out to a state or local workforce board, state workforce agency, or the tribal entity responsible for administering public workforce funding to see if they might be a good team member.

**4. Q: Can a tribal college program be the lead?**

A: The intent of the JQA is that the lead applicant is from an entity that administers the WIOA. This would include eligible entities under Section 166 of WIOA. Tribal colleges would be eligible partners on the team.

**5. Q: Does a team or community need to be able to display previous progress in pursuing job quality policies or initiatives?**

A: A team does not need to display previous progress toward pursuing job quality initiatives to be eligible. What is most important is that the team be able to demonstrate a commitment to undertaking the work to create steps to improve job quality in their community within the identified sector. At a minimum, we would anticipate that the team members can demonstrate in their application responses that they have begun considering the job quality issue and have an understanding of the current workforce issues that are limiting job quality, as well as having identified team members to participate that will be actively able to engage in the solutions developed.

**6. Q. My organization is already participating in the Good Jobs Challenge. Can we participate in the JQA as well?**

A: Yes. These are separate opportunities, though they are complementary.

**7. Q: Does a team need five members?**

A: A team must have at least five members but may have more than five members/partner organizations. However, the JQA will only cover travel costs for five team members to attend the in-person summits and cannot guarantee space for other team members to attend even if they pay their own way.

**8. Q: Is there a limit or recommendation on non-travel member count?**

A: No. Feel free to include any organizations on your team that are essential to advancing job quality work in your community.

**9. Q: Can team partners cover travel for more than the five core members if they want to attend?**

A: Teams may request additional team member attendance beyond the five core members; however, restrictions related to available conference space, lodging, or other logistics may limit additional team member attendance.

**10. Q: Is it expected that each team member be from a different organization or entity?**

A: Multiple team members may be from the same organization or entity to support the effort; however, each of the 5 members of the core team should represent a unique stakeholder organization. The only required core team partners are the lead partner representing a state workforce board or agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity, as well as a partner representing worker voice. It is expected that the team composition take into account the diverse organizations and partner roles that will be necessary to affect job quality improvements that are sustainable.

**11. Q: Can a group of local workforce development boards work as a consortium to be the single lead organization?**

A: Yes. A consortium of workforce boards may be a lead organization, but the application should be clear on which entity/person from the consortium is the primary lead. Additionally, the application must clearly identify the target community and sector within the region in which the consortium will focus.

**12. Q: What is the expected role of state workforce boards in moving this effort forward?**

A: The state workforce board may take on the role as lead applicant or, if not a lead applicant, it should be engaged with the local community effort to support the overall job quality approach. Additionally, state boards should support the work of other JQA teams in their state by playing a supportive role, encouraging the furtherance of the job quality work, and developing lessons learned to replicate and expand successful job quality activities in local communities.

**13. Q: We would love to support a lead organization's application, since we have a sector-specific job quality commitment. Does Jobs for the Future (JFF) have a list of lead organizations by region that are looking for partners?**

A: JFF does not have a formal list of potential lead applicants. We encourage you to reach out to any of the following eligible lead entities: state workforce board, state workforce agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity.

## Application

**14. Q: Does the JQA application define community? Or is that up to the applicant to define?**

A: The application does not define community. Applicants may define community as a neighborhood, a city or town, a regional economy, or a state, to name a few. It is up to the applicant to define community and have the core team of partners reflect that community.

**15. Q: Does the 5-page application limit include the Letters of Commitment or Intent?**

A: No. The required letters of commitment are not part of the five-page limit.

**16. Q: Will you be sending out a template for the Letter of Commitment?**

A: No. Letters should describe how the lead applicant and each core team partner member will contribute to the partnership. For example, the letters could include detailing past work on job quality projects, existing partnerships for other workforce initiatives or projects, or commitments from leaders and executives.

**17. Q: Is there a process in place by local workforce boards to provide an application process for community-based organizations (CBOs) interested in being on a JQA team?**

A: There is no defined process for CBOs to join their local WDB partners on this project. We encourage you to reach out to potential local board partners.

**18. Q: Are we required to identify a specific sector to focus on in our application, or can we present an initiative that focuses on improving employment opportunities across any sector?**

A: The application requires teams to identify a specific sector or sectors to target.

**19. Q. Is the JQA a grant?**

A: No. The JQA provides access to coaches and technical assistance that will assist teams from communities to develop approaches and plans to expand job quality. Teams selected for the JQA will receive reimbursement for travel and accommodations for two in-person summits.

## Selection Criteria

### **20. Q: What criteria will you be using to make your selection of the teams?**

A: Teams will be selected based on the quality of their application in response to elements identified in the [Invitation to Apply](#).

### **21. Q: Will diversity in geography and type of lead organization significantly impact selection of participating teams?**

A: Geography will not impact the selection of participating teams. While ETA wants a mix of geography, it will not be a focal point of the selection criteria. must represent one of the following types of organizations: state workforce board, state workforce agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity. Among the types of lead applicant organizations, one type is not favored above other types.

### **22.Q: Given the small number of proposals that will be selected, will state workforce boards be prioritized over local workforce boards? Is there a selection scoring rubric?**

A: We will not prioritize any type of lead applicant, as long as they represent a state workforce board, state workforce agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity. There will be a scoring rubric to rate responses to required elements identified in the [Invitation to Apply](#), but it will not be made public.

### **23.Q: Do you have any thoughts about whether an application is more likely to be viewed favorably if broad vs. specific?**

A: Concrete examples of how your partnership intends to pursue advancing job quality will be viewed more favorably.

## Logistics (dates/ timeline)

**24.Q: Knowing the dates for the Summits is critical in securing partners' commitment. When will dates be identified and how will they be shared with applicants prior to the application due date?**

A: At this time, ETA and JFF expect the first summit to occur June 27-29, 2023, in Washington D.C. The second summit will occur in late September 2023.

**25.Q: Are the Job Quality Academy summit sessions only going to be provided in person in Washington D.C., or will these sessions be provided in a hybrid format where participants can attend the summit virtually?**

A: The Summits are intended to be in-person in Washington D.C. to maximize the team engagement and time with coaches and subject matter experts; they are not designed for a hybrid experience. However, if accessibility is a concern, we can work with individuals for accommodation.

**26.Q: What does the schedule look like for the coaching/peer learning in between the summits?**

A: We will be scheduling two to three group check-ins between summits. The majority of 1-1 coaching will be on an as-needed basis.

## Budget

**27.Q: Marketing and technology is so important. Will there be a budget for any innovative new strategies related to Job Quality?**

A: There will not be any grant funding provided directly to teams through the Job Quality Academy. The contract supports travel and lodging for the Summits, as well as technical assistance staff during the JQA experience. However, you can look at the recently released [TEGL 07-22](#) to see how you can use existing WIOA funding to support job quality strategies.

**28.Q: Will funds be provided to Lead Organizations or are travel and summit expenses paid for by DOLETA? Are narrative or financial progress reports expected?**

A: There are no reporting requirements associated with the JQA, since it is not a grant program but a professional development opportunity. Reimbursement for travel and lodging for the in-person summits will be arranged through JFF. Teams may be asked to share their experiences for peer learning among the wider workforce development system.

## Definitions

### **29.Q: Can you provide additional details or examples of the types of worker voice-centered organizations that are ideal?**

A: Organizations that represent worker voice can include but are not limited to: Labor unions, labor-management partnerships, workers centers, or others whose mission is to uplift and support workers in the workplace.

### **30. Q: Can you define "worker center"?**

A: A worker center is a community-based, non-profit organization that advocate and provide resources for workers, often organized around specific immigrant communities.

Here's some more information on worker centers [from the Economic Policy Institute](#), [AFL-CIO](#) and [The American Prospect](#).

### **31. Q: Could an American Job Center be considered a worker voice partner?**

A: ETA does not consider an American Job Center a worker voice partner. A worker voice partner's main role is that of advocating for workers. However, American Job Centers can be a vital partner in advancing job quality and are encouraged to reach out to prospective lead applicants to support the JQA work.

### **32.Q: What counts as an organization that represents employers?**

A: Organizations that represent employers can include but are not limited to: entities that employ individuals such as a business, chambers of commerce, main street organizations, business or trade associations, or industry groups.

## General

**33.Q: Does ETA expect that the Job Quality Academy (JQA) will be offered again in the future?**

A: Future technical assistance opportunities, like the Job Quality Academy, are determined by the availability of resources. At this time, the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) does not know if it will be able to offer JQA beyond the current opportunity.

**34.Q: Is there interest in the DOL in working to develop a workforce development system to create good jobs in the agriculture sector? Or does that fall more under other agencies?**

A: DOL is working to improve job quality across all industries and sectors. While the "[Invitation to Apply](#)" highlights certain sectors with known job quality challenges, the JQA is not limited to specific sectors.

**35.Q: In terms of evidence- based support for planning, what data sources will be available to the teams that participate in the JQA?**

A: The technical assistance providers will guide teams toward relevant data sources depending on teams' current data needs and capacities. Data will be a key module of the JQA summits.

**36.Q: For workforce boards or agencies that are not part of the JQA, is there a pathway that can be used to add to Local or Regional WIOA plans?**

A: The JQA is not the only avenue to advance job quality in your region. Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) [07-22](#) provides several resources and guidance for how to pursue job quality planning within your organizations and communities. Both states and local areas have discretion to include their job quality efforts within WIOA plans.

**37.Q: Will philanthropic groups be invited to join the JQA so they can see programs, progress, or burgeoning initiatives they may want to support with funding?**

A: The JQA technical assistance team will include many different organizations, outside of the participating teams, to contribute and participate in the JQA, including philanthropic partners.



**38.Q: Could we use private-public funding to support the initiative?**

A: Yes. Teams may bring any resources available to them to support their job quality advancement work.

**39.Q: If we currently have a program that is based on a job sector and with employers on our BAC (Business Advisory Council), could we look to this as a way to enhance the current program to meet the changing job market in our area?**

A: Yes. The goal of the JQA is to create sustainable improvements to job quality in the chosen sector. Drawing on the existing expertise and engagement of your BAC to support this work could be beneficial to support and continue meaningful impact.

**40. Q: Will those who are not chosen for the JQA have access to data and plans developed at the end of the academy?**

A: Yes. At the end of the Academy, JFF will be compiling lessons learned, and ETA will share a framework and key resources that other communities can use, adapt, and apply to their job quality efforts.

**41. Q. Do we need to participate in the JQA to qualify for ETA demonstration grants related to job quality that the Acting Assistant Secretary mentioned?**

A: No. The forthcoming Funding Opportunity Announcement for job quality demonstration grants will not require participation in the JQA as a pre-requisite for applying.

**42.Q: Will it be possible to obtain a copy of the list of attendees for the purpose of future partnerships?**

A: ETA and JFF do not intend to post a public list of JQA participants; however, teams may share their own contact information at their own choosing.