

Invitation to Apply: Job Quality Academy

Issuance Date: January 26, 2023

Closing Date and Time: Applications are due March 14, 2023.

Summary of Opportunity

Up to 16 teams will receive intensive technical assistance towards developing job quality action plans for their communities for a period of 4-5 months.

Eligibility: Lead organizations (primary applicant) must represent one of the following types of organizations: *state workforce board, state workforce agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity*. Required partner organizations must include an organization that represents *worker voice* such as a labor organization, a worker center, or another worker-focused organization. Other partners may include employer/industry partners, community-based organizations, American Job Centers and affiliates, or other similar organizations.

Submission Details: All applications must be submitted via the [electronic application tool](#) no later than 3/14/2023. All applications must have all sections of the application completed in accordance with the instructions provided. *Please contact [Ben Sommer](#) at JFF with any questions related to this opportunity.*

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I. Overview

Background

The U.S. Department of Labor's Job Quality Academy, designed and operated in partnership with Jobs for the Future (JFF) and other national partners, presents a unique opportunity to help the workforce system focus on enhancing good jobs and opportunities for workers. This may be achieved via new types of partnerships that support industry sectors that are challenged in the area of job quality. The Academy seeks to provide teams with the knowledge and expertise to build the principles of a good job into their policies and programs.

As discussed in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 07-22](#), *Increasing Employer and Workforce System Customer Access to Good Jobs*, good jobs are the foundation of an equitable economy that lifts workers and families and makes businesses more competitive. Improving the quality of job opportunities and increasing economic self-sufficiency calls for job seekers to be able to secure good jobs with family-sustaining wages and advancement opportunities. For too many Americans, their hard work does not provide them with family-sustaining wages, benefits, safety, or hours that allow them to take care of both their work and home responsibilities. Workers from historically underserved communities are more likely to face such challenges. If we want our middle class to thrive and grow, a focus on connecting people to good jobs, and not just any job, is a necessity.

Good jobs help workers to achieve economic stability and mobility, while prioritizing diversity and worker voice. To this end, the Departments of Commerce and Labor have jointly identified [eight key principles of a good job](#), as outlined in [TEGL 07-22](#). Those principles include:

- Equitable recruitment and hiring
- Benefits
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) as a key employer priority
- Empowerment and representation
- Job security and working conditions
- Organizational culture
- Pay
- Skills and career advancement

The Opportunity

The U.S. Department of Labor is launching its inaugural Job Quality Academy, designed to specifically help communities *take immediate action* on the guidance provided to the workforce system in [TEGL 07-22](#), as well as the [U.S. Department of Labor's Good Jobs Initiative](#). This opportunity invites teams representing states, tribes, and local workforce development boards and partners to develop strategies and action plans to address inequities through a focus on improving employment opportunities and job quality across industry sectors, communities, and stakeholders. Teams will identify and test job quality practices and forms of partnerships within their communities, with an eye toward increasing economic mobility and access.

The Job Quality Academy is a professional development and strategic planning experience. By the end of the Academy, participants will: 1) have a greater understanding of job quality principles, 2) know how to incorporate job quality into their policies and programs, and 3) be prepared to take immediate actions and next steps on where to begin for the most impact. Applicants can identify a specific sector they wish to focus on, whether that's in-demand and

growing sectors such as direct care or childcare, transportation and hospitality, manufacturing, broadband or others.

The Academy will begin in spring of 2023 and include two 3-day in-person summits in Washington, DC. The Academy summits will focus on helping teams define job quality within their communities; embed good jobs principles into policies, partnerships, and programs; develop localized frameworks for use by partners, including employers; and develop methods and tools for assessing progress.

The work will also happen with teams from participants' local communities. Between summits, teams will apply and test strategies that fit their communities, and have access to coaching, as well as opportunities to brainstorm with each other about what works, what doesn't, and what matters most when implementing job quality theories in practice.

II. Eligibility, Award Benefits, and Timeline

Eligibility

- Lead organizations (primary applicant) must represent one of the following types of organizations: state workforce board, state workforce agency, local workforce board, or tribal entity.
- Academy teams must be comprised of at least five core members, ideally representing multiple organizations and stakeholders such as employer/industry partners, community-based organizations, American Job Centers and affiliates, or other similar organizations, in addition to the primary applicant.
- One member of the core team must be from an organization that represents worker voice, such as a labor organization, a worker center, or another worker-focused organization. Applicants are also encouraged to include an employer or industry representative on the core team.
- While teams are likely to have more than five members, only the five core team members will be funded to attend the in-person summits.

Academy Benefits

- Intensive professional development for four to five months on cutting-edge job quality practices tailored to a workforce audience.
- One-on-one technical assistance and coaching from national subject matter experts to support strategic planning around job quality.
- Community engagement with like-minded, leading-edge organizations committed to creating good jobs in their communities.
- Support in developing strategic plans focusing on job quality.
- Travel expenses to DC paid for five team members for both Academy summits.

Timeline

- January 26, 2023: Applications open
 - Submit your application [here](#)
- March 14, 2023: Applications close
- April 14, 2023: Academy teams are selected
- May/June, 2023: Summit I
- May through September, 2023: Independent team planning period
- September, 2023: Summit II
- September through December, 2023: Implementation period

III. Key Responsibilities

Academy teams participating in this opportunity will be required to:

- Submit all application materials on time and in accordance with provided instructions.
- Ensure all members of your core team can commit to attending both Academy summit sessions.
- Show commitments from relevant organizational and community stakeholders to actively participate in action plan development and implementation work.
- Be willing to share lessons learned with Job Quality Academy partners and participant peers.

IV. Application Requirements

The application process will be completed using Google Forms. You may [access the application here](#). **The tool does not allow users to save their progress and return.** Therefore, it is highly recommended that you prepare all responses in advance and copy and paste them into the proper fields once you are ready to submit.

Applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of ETA and JFF staff. Criteria will include team commitment to enhancing job quality in defined sectors, experience with underserved workers, inclusion of required partnerships, and a demonstration of commitment among all partners to achieving a shared goal.

To complete your submission, please be prepared to provide the following information and brief narratives.

Part I: Basic Information

Name of Lead Organization:

Mailing Address:

Lead Organization Contact:

- a. Full Name:
- b. Title:
- c. Email Address:
- d. Phone Number:
- e. Organization Type: (e.g. CBO, workforce board, labor union, industry sector, worker center, etc.)

Core Team Member 2

- a. Full Name:
- b. Organization Name:
- c. Organization Type:
- d. Mailing Address:

Core Team Member 3

- a. Full Name:
- b. Organization Name:
- c. Organization Type:
- d. Mailing Address:

Core Team Member 4

- a. Full Name:
- b. Organization Name:
- c. Organization Type:
- d. Mailing Address:

Core Team Member 5

- a. Full Name:
- b. Organization Name:
- c. Organization Type:
- d. Mailing Address:

Additional, Non-Travel Team Members: (List organizations and individual contact names)

Part II: Narrative (5-page limit)

1. Describe how the lead organization and partners currently define job quality.
2. Describe, in detail, a specific opportunity in your community that can be maximized or expanded upon with the supports provided through the Job Quality Academy.

3. Identify specific sectors or employers on which you intend to focus to improve job quality within your community. Why has your team chosen this sector? If not currently engaged, how will you plan on engaging them through the Academy experience?
4. How might the Job Quality Academy provide a forum for improvement in the sector(s) described above? ETA's TEGE 07-22, provided as part of the application background, described several areas that workforce partners could focus their efforts.
5. Describe the lead organization's and partners' experience with advancing job quality generally or related initiatives and, more specifically, for historically underserved communities to date.
6. How will your team approach putting worker voice and worker experience at the center of your job quality efforts through the course of the Academy?
7. Describe any anticipated barriers to adoption or implementation of your job quality initiatives, mentioned above.
8. What do you hope to achieve by participating in the Job Quality Academy?
9. Where did you hear about this opportunity (optional)?

Part III: Submission Checklist

All state workforce boards, state workforce agencies, local workforce boards, and tribal entities are eligible to apply as the lead applicant.

Submission checklist - Please be sure you have the following prepared prior to accessing the online application form. This will streamline the application submission process.

Required:

- ✓ Complete responses to all questions listed above in Part II.
- ✓ Letter from the Lead Organization expressing commitment to participate in the Job Quality Academy and describing how it will contribute to the team.
- ✓ Letter from each partner organization expressing commitment to participate in the Job Quality Academy and describing how it will contribute to the team.