



FEJA Solar Pipeline Training Program Request for Proposals

Questions & Answers from Respondents Webinar I on April 19, 2021

Question 1: Is the funding award level that we highlighted here, the 150,000 to one million meant to be spread across the four years, or is that per year?

Answer: The funding range of \$150,000 to \$1 Million is for the total award amount, spread across 4 years.

Question 2: Is there any limit on the percentage of indirect spent in the budget?

Answer: There RFP did not set a limit on the allowable percentage of indirect.

Question 3: Will you consider training programs that are construction focused? Or are you only considering programs that lead to roughly directly to solar jobs?

Answer: The purpose of the Program is to create a pipeline of qualified talent specifically for the solar energy industry. While skills learned are likely to be transferable, proposals should focus on job placements in the solar energy sector.

Question 4: Are the forms included in the in the 15 page limit or an addition to the 15 pages?

Answer: The required forms are in addition to the 15-page limit prescribed for the answers to the Program Narrative questions.

Question 5: Do you think limited English proficient individuals specifically from the refugee and immigrant communities can participate in this training?

Answer: It is up to Respondents to demonstrate how potential participants will be recruited and assessed for their likelihood of succeeding in the Program. It is also up to Respondents to demonstrate that sufficient support services will be provided to address any barriers participants may have. For specific participant eligibility requirements please refer to the RFP.

Question 6: What is the renewal process for those current grantees receiving training funds for the multicultural training program?

Answer: This RFP is seeking proposals only for the Solar Pipeline Training Program. The Partnership is not able to answer any questions about the Multicultural Job Training Program.

Question 7: How many grantees will there be per year? Does the specified funding range mean there will only be 5 grantees?

Answer: The number of grantees will depend on the nature of the proposals received. There is no predetermined number of grantees.

Question 8: How long is the training program?

Answer: The RFP does not specify the length of the training program. It is up to the Respondents to propose a training program that will sufficiently prepare participants for employment in the solar energy sector.

Question 9: Will the presentation be available to download afterwards?

Answer: Yes, the slides are posted to the RFP section of The Partnership's website.

Question 10: How will the funds be administered?

Answer: ComEd will administer the funds.

Question 11: To whom are reports being sent to if awarded?

Answer A: Grantees will report outcomes to ComEd throughout the life of the grant.

Answer B: Each Respondent must designate a contact person when submitting their application through the formsite. This contact person will be notified if the grant is awarded.

Questions submitted via FEJA.RFP@chicookworks.org prior to May 3rd, 2021

Question 12: May we use single-spacing or 10-point font for tables in the narrative? The RFP indicates that responses must be typed double-spaced in 12-point font.

Answer: Respondents may use single-spacing and 10-point font for any tables included in response to the Program Narrative Questions. The main response must be double-spaced in 12-point font as specified in the RFP.

Question 13: Is a budget narrative required for the application? If so, where should it be included?

Answer: No, a budget narrative is not required. Respondents may include relevant information about the budget in response to question 20 (Describe the basis upon which the requested amount was calculated. Identify an average unit cost per participant or program and provide an explanation to justify this unit cost.) while remaining within the page limit for the response to the Program Narrative Questions.

Question 14: Is there a process for small minority businesses who are interested in subcontracting opportunities to communicate interest to potential prime's who may be looking to outsource some of the components of the proposal?

Answer: No.

Question 15: Can we add a budget narrative page to accompany the budget form?

Answer: No, do not add a separate budget narrative page. Respondents may include relevant information about the budget in response to question 20 (Describe the basis upon which the requested amount was calculated. Identify an average unit cost per participant or program and provide an explanation to justify this unit cost) while remaining within the page limit for the response to the Program Narrative Questions.

Questions & Answers from Respondents Webinar II on May 19, 2021

Question 16: Is there an age cut off to enter the program?

Answer: Agencies can serve opportunity youth. It is highly recommended, however, for agencies to know the requirements of their employment partners so that it can meet the goal of placing its participants in employment or apprenticeship opportunities.

Question 17: So, non-documented immigrants are not eligible?

Answer: The goal of FEJA is to prepare job seekers for employment and contractors to compete for solar contracts. Participants must be eligible to legally work in the state of Illinois.

Question 18: Is military background okay?

Answer: Yes.

Question 19: Do you need to have 2 years of audited financial statements to be the primary? What if your sub partners can provide that?

Answer: Respondents applying as a partnership are encouraged to select an organization capable of providing 2 years of financial statements as the primary Respondent. Include Single Audit (if applicable), management letter, and federal and state tax returns (Form 990 / Form AG990-IL informational returns). Entities whose total public contributions (fundraising activities) in a single year are below the State of Illinois audit threshold should provide their most recent 2-year comparative financial statements (e.g., statements of financial position, statements of activities, statements of cash flows, and statements of functional expenses), if applicable.

Question 20: Is there a way to find out who is submitting if you think you would be a good partner to an organization? As my organization focuses on career prep and coaching?

Answer: Organizations are welcome to make connections with other attendees to the webinar, but The Partnership does not know who is applying until we have received all proposals. There is no formal way to find out who is applying.

Question 21: Can 990's be submitted in lieu of audited financials if org has not been required to audit in the past?

Answer: Include Single Audit (if applicable), management letter, and federal and state tax returns (Form 990 / Form AG990-IL informational returns). Entities whose total public contributions (fundraising activities) in a single year are below the State of Illinois audit threshold should provide their most recent

2-year comparative financial statements (e.g., statements of financial position, statements of activities, statements of cash flows, and statements of functional expenses), if applicable.

Question 22: What if you have a disability?

Answer: Grantees are expected to understand the needs of their local solar sector employers. Individuals with a disability who are able to perform the duties of the jobs for which they are being trained are eligible to participate.

Question 23: Can training be hybrid? 50% online 50% hands on training?

Answer: Yes, training can be hybrid. Training should include a balance of job readiness, or soft-skills training, and technical, hands-on training, sufficient to qualify participants to install solar panels. It is up to Respondents to show that any proposed training model will sufficiently prepare participants for employment.

Question 24: Can you clarify "unduplicated" participants for outcomes?

Answer: The number of unduplicated participants means the total number of participants served. On the Planned Outcomes Form one participant could be a member of multiple groups and counted twice (duplicated) e.g. as a woman and a person of color.

Question 25: Must 50% of our participants come from the Environmental Justice Community?

Answer: No. One of the goals in FEJA is that the total number of participants served across all grantees in the Solar Pipeline Training Program will come from Environmental Justice Communities. It is possible that certain grantees will have fewer than 50% of their participants coming from Environmental Justice Communities while other shave more than 50%.

Question 26: For financial statements do you need: Balance sheet, Income statement. Cash flow statement. Financial statements you require or more?

Answer: : Include Single Audit (if applicable), management letter, and federal and state tax returns (Form 990 / Form AG990-IL informational returns). Entities whose total public contributions (fundraising activities) in a single year are below the State of Illinois audit threshold should provide their most recent 2-year comparative financial statements (e.g., statements of financial position, statements of activities, statements of cash flows, and statements of functional expenses), if applicable.

Question 27: Can you dual enroll a participant in WIOA for placement?

Answer: Yes, participants also eligible for WIOA could be co-enrolled.

Question 28: Will a recording of this meeting be provided to attendees today?

Answer: Yes. A link to the recording of the webinar is posted on The Partnership's website in the Request for Proposals section.

Question 29: How will the participants find out when training will start?

Answer: Grantees will be in control of the training schedule, and it will be up to them to determine start dates and conduct the necessary outreach to recruit participants into the program.

Question 30: In building the budget should costs be distributed equally over four years or can they vary depending on the project design?

Answer: Costs do not need to be distributed equally over four years. Respondents can submit a budget with varying costs, that align with the program design, across years.

Question 31: If we are hosting both a multicultural program and a solar program, can a participant from multi later enroll in solar if the material and certifications are different?

Answer: If the agency offered a multi-cultural training program that prepared a job seeker with the education and skills needed to meet the requirements of the solar training program. (e.g., bridge program), the agency could enroll the participant in the solar training program following their graduation. This would need to be clearly noted within its reports.

Question 32: Can grantees use grant to build classroom?

Answer: Awards are restricted to the program. Agencies are allowed to use grant dollars to support all programmatic expenses. This includes any overhead costs. Agencies will need to clearly note expenses on their quarterly budget submissions and may be asked to provide written justification of an expense.

Additional Questions submitted to FEJA.RFP@chicookworks.org

Question 33: I am sending this email to find out if there is an attachment I should use for the Work Plan and the Proposed Outcomes Form responses to the FEJA RFP? I have not been able to identify a Work Plan template or Proposed Outcomes Template to be used.

Answer: The links to all required forms can be found at <https://chicookworks.org/request-for-proposals-extended-illinois-future-energy-jobs-act-solar-training-pipeline-program/>. See "Links to required Forms".