

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name(s):** Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce.
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Firms Program
- **Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.313, Economic Development – Trade Adjustment Assistance
- **Dates:** Proposals must be received by the EDA Office of Strategic Initiatives at the address below by July 15, 2004 at 4:00 p.m. (EDT). Proposals received after 4:00 p.m. (EDT) on July 15, 2004 will not be considered for funding. By August 15, 2004, EDA will notify applicants as to whether they will receive funding under this competition solicitation. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will be funded no later than September 30, 2004; however, there is no guarantee that the successful applicant will receive funding. Proposals that were not recommended for funding will be retained by EDA for one year, at which time such proposals will be destroyed.
- **Address:** Applications submitted under this competition solicitation must be mailed to the address below or hand-delivered to Room 1874 at the address below:

Anthony Meyer
Office of Strategic Initiatives
Economic Development Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 7812
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230
Telephone: 202-482-2127 (not a toll free call)

Facsimile or electronic submissions will not be accepted.

- **Funding Opportunity Description:** The TAA for Firms Program (the “Program”) provides cost-shared technical assistance to help manufacturing and production firms, which have a lost domestic sales and employment due to increased imports of similar or competitive goods, become more competitive in the global economy. EDA operates the Program through a national network of Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers (TAACs). EDA is soliciting competition proposals from organizations to deliver and administer the Program for the State of New Jersey. The applicant selected will operate a Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (TAAC) to serve the State of New Jersey for a twelve-month period encompassing the remainder of FY 2004 and a portion of FY 2005.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description.

A. Program Objective

The mission of EDA is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA will work towards fulfilling its mission by working in conjunction with the TAACs to provide technical assistance and funding to manufacturing and production firms, which have lost domestic sales and employment due to increased imports of similar or competitive goods (a “trade-impacted firm”), to help such trade-impacted firms become more competitive in the global economy. With funding from EDA, TAACs assist trade-impacted firms by (i) preparing and submitting petitions to EDA for certification of eligibility necessary to apply for assistance under the Program (a “certified firm”), (ii) assisting certified firms in developing and submitting for EDA approval adjustment proposals, and (iii) sharing in the cost of implementing (primarily through private sector consultants) the technical assistance tasks as set forth in approved adjustment proposals. 13 CFR §315(8)(c).

B. Program Priorities

EDA encourages the submission of proposals that will significantly benefit trade-impacted manufacturing and production firms. EDA expects to proposals to demonstrate familiarity or an ability to quickly become familiar with the core TAAC objectives and activities outlined in Section I.A. above.

C. Statutory and Program Authority

The Program is authorized by Chapters 3 and 5 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (Pub. L. 93-618, 19 U.S.C. §2341 *et seq.*), and as further amended by 97-35, 98-120, 98-369, 99-272, 99-514, 100-418, 103-66, 105-277 and 107-210. See also 13 CFR §315. The Trade Act authorizes the Secretary of Commerce (the “Secretary”) to establish TAACs to assist EDA in implementing the Program. The Secretary has delegated this authority to EDA.

EDA intends to transfer administrative responsibility for the Program to its regional offices during FY 2004. When the transfers occur, administrative responsibility for the New Jersey TAAC will be transferred to EDA’s Philadelphia Regional Office. Any future awards with respect to the operations of the New Jersey TAAC will likely be processed through EDA’s Philadelphia Regional Office.

II. Award Information.

A. Funding Availability

For FY 2004, EDA has a total of \$11,874,000 in appropriations available for the Program. EDA expects to allocate \$738,395 to the TAAC selected under this competition solicitation to serve the State of New Jersey.

B. TAAC Award Period

EDA typically awards funding to a TAAC for a twelve-month period. 13 CFR §315.7(a)(i). Assuming professional, effective performance that meet or exceeds program goals and the availability of funds, EDA may extend those awards. See 13 CFR §315.5.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The applicant selected to serve as the New Jersey TAAC will work closely with both EDA and trade-impacted firms. Specifically, the TAAC is expected to provide technical assistance to trade-impacted firms and help such firms in preparing petitions for certification of eligibility and adjustment proposals for EDA approval. The New Jersey TAAC will also assist firms with the implementation of approved adjustment proposals. EDA will work closely with the New Jersey TAAC in administering both the administrative and substantive aspects of the Program. As a result of this close working relationship, EDA will fund the New Jersey TAAC under a cooperative agreement.

III. Eligibility Information.

A. Eligible Applicants

A university affiliate, state or local government affiliate, or a nonprofit organization is an eligible TAAC applicant and may submit a proposal pursuant to this competitive solicitation. 13 CFR §315.4(a).

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

A matching share is not required for certification assistance provided by TAACs to certified firms or for administrative expenses of the TAAC. Note that certain income will likely be generated by the TAAC since a certified firm must, to the extent practicable, pay the TAAC at least 25 percent of the costs of preparing the certified firm's adjustment proposal. 13 CFR §315.7(b)(1), (2). The TAAC will retain such funds and use them to support its Program activities.

It is EDA's policy that certified firms pay part of the costs incurred to hire consultants to assist in implementing the technical assistance tasks set forth in the certified firm's approved adjustment proposals. If the total amount of technical assistance requested is \$30,000 or less, the certified firm is generally required to pay at least 25 percent of the consultant costs. If the total amount of technical assistance requested is above \$30,000, the certified firm is generally required pay at least 50 percent of the consultant costs. The TAAC's total share of consultant costs for technical assistance is generally limited to \$75,000 for any one certified firm.

C. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted under the Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

IV. Application and Submission Information.

A. Application Forms and Submission Address

1. Obtaining Application Forms

The SF forms referred to in Section IV.B. are available on the Office of Management and Budget’s website at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_forms.html. The CD forms referred to in Section IV.B. are available at EDA’s web site at <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/NewApplication.xml>. Paper copies of the requisite forms may be obtained from the Office of Strategic Initiatives, Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 7812, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230; telephone 202-482-2127 (not a toll free call).

2. Submission Address

Proposals submitted under this competition must be mailed to the address below or hand-delivered to Room 1874 at the address below no later than the deadline set forth in Section IV.C.:

Anthony Meyer
Office of Strategic Initiatives
Economic Development Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 7812
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230
Telephone: 202-482-2127 (not a toll free call).

Facsimile or electronic submissions will not be accepted.

B. Content & Form of Application Package

An applicant must submit page 3 of the Form ED-900P (OMB Approval No. 0610-0094), as well as the proposal narrative referred to on page 5 of the Form ED-900P. The proposal narrative should be limited to a maximum of 15 pages, including any and all attachments and supporting documentation, and must be in the following format (applicants should not use the narrative format referred to on page 5 of Form ED-900P or provide the additional information requested by the Form ED-900P):

Section 1. Provide a historical and operational background of the applicant organization.

- Section 2. Describe the applicant organization's links to local, state and private economic development activities, especially those providing technical assistance to manufacturing and production firms.
- Section 3. Describe and provide examples of the applicant organization's experience and understanding of the challenges faced by manufacturing and production firms negatively impacted by imported goods, as well as the organization's experience in providing these types of firms with technical assistance.
- Section 4. Provide a proposed work program specifically addressing the applicant organization's (a) outreach efforts in making manufacturing and producing firms aware of the Program, (b) certification efforts in assisting firms in preparing the petition for certification of eligibility to apply for assistance under the Program (including assembling the required supporting documentation), (c) preparation of adjustment proposals summarizing the recovery prospects of certified firms and outlining the technical assistance needs that will aide in such recovery, and (d) efforts to assist in implementing technical assistance tasks in approved adjustment proposals.
- Section 5. Describe the relevant work experience and proposed salaries of the TAAC staff.
- Section 6. Describe the relevant background and experience of any advisory board for the proposed TAAC.
- Section 7. Identify the anticipated impacts and benefits of the proposed TAAC. EDA is particularly interested in well-reasoned estimates of (a) private sector jobs that will be retained or created and funds that will be invested as a result of the activities of the TAAC, (b) the percentage of TAAC clients that will initiate action as a result of the assistance provided by the TAAC, and (c) the percentage of those clients who will achieve the anticipated results.

In addition to submitting page 3 of the Form ED-900P and the narrative referred to on page 5 of the Form ED-900P in the format discussed above, applicants must submit the SF-424A "Budget Information Non-construction" (OMB Approval No. 0348-0044), SF-424B "Assurances Non-construction" (OMB Approval No. 0348-0040) and CD-511 "Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying."

Nonprofit organizations must also submit CD-346 "Applicant for Funding Assistance" (OMB Approval No. 0605-0001), a copy of its Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, including all amendments thereto, and a Certificate of Good Standing issued by the state in which the

nonprofit organization is incorporated no more than 60 days prior to the date that EDA receives the organization's application.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals submitted under this competition solicitation must be received by the Office of Strategic Initiatives, at the address in Section IV.A., by July 15, 2004 at 4:00 p.m. Proposals received after 4:00 p.m. (EDT) on July 15, 2004 will not be considered for funding. EDA will determine when a proposal package has been submitted by date and time stamping proposal packages as they are physically received in the Office of Strategic Initiatives. Applicants are advised that mail security measures may delay receipt of U.S.P.S. mail for up to two weeks. Applicants are advised to consider the use of a guaranteed overnight delivery service.

D. Funding Restrictions

Allowable costs are determined by reference to the following Office of Management and Budget Circulars: (i) A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions;"(ii) A-83, "Cost Principles for State and Local Governments;" and (iii) A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations." Generally, allowable costs include salaries, supplies, and other expenses that are "reasonable and necessary" for the successful completion of the TAAC's mission.

E. Other Submission Requirements

None.

V. **Evaluative Criteria and Selection Procedures.**

A. Evaluative Criteria

Applications will be competitively evaluated on their ability to meet or exceed the following investment policy guidelines (each criterion will be given roughly equivalent weight):

1. ***Be market-based and results driven.*** A successful TAAC proposal will capitalize on the organization's strengths and will bolster the competitiveness of trade-impacted firms, resulting in tangible and quantifiable improvements in the firm's economic health, such as retained or increased numbers of jobs, increased sales, or increased private sector investment.
2. ***Have strong organizational leadership.*** A successful TAAC proposal will demonstrate strong leadership, relevant project management experience, and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure a high-performing TAAC. EDA will specifically evaluate (a) the extent to which the proposed TAAC will maximize coordination with other relevant organizations (e.g., the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships and private industry groups) to foster collaboration and to avoid duplication of services offered by other organizations,

and (b) the sponsoring organization's degree of support and commitment to the proposed TAAC's mission.

3. ***Advance productivity, innovation and entrepreneurship.*** A successful TAAC proposal will embrace the principles of entrepreneurship and focus on improving the stability of trade-impacted firms through productivity improvements and innovative solutions to the challenges facing their industries.
4. ***Look beyond the immediate economic horizon and anticipate economic changes.*** A successful TAAC proposal will describe and set forth a comprehensive strategy for assisting trade-impacted firms in identifying and addressing both current and probable future problems.

Applicants are encouraged to link their responses directly to the content and form requirements listed in Sections 1 through 7 of Part IV.B above.

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Evaluation

The Office of Strategic Initiatives will conduct an initial administrative review of each proposal package to determine its completeness and compliance with the requirements set forth in this competition solicitation. Incomplete proposals or proposals received after the July 15, 2004 filing deadline will not be considered.

2. Review Panel and Selection

The Office of Strategic Initiatives will conduct a technical review of each proposal meeting the requirements of this competition solicitation. The technical review will be conducted by a minimum of three full-time EDA staff members using the criteria provided in Section V.A. above. The review panel will evaluate each proposal and make its recommendation to the Selecting Official. The Chief of Staff, Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce, is the Selecting Official. Upon receiving the review panel's recommendation, the Selecting Official may (i) choose not to make any selection, (ii) follow the recommendation of the review panel, or (iii) substitute one of the lower ranking proposals. The Selecting Official may select a lower ranking proposal for several reasons based on the Program priorities and the investment policy factors set forth in Sections I and V.A. and the applicant's performance under previous awards.

VI. **Award Administration Information.**

A. Award Notice

By August 15, 2004, EDA will notify applicants whether they will receive funding under this competition solicitation. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will be funded no later than September 30, 2004; however, there is no guarantee that the successful applicant will

receive funding. Proposals that were not recommended for funding will be retained by EDA for one year, at which time such proposals will be destroyed.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, published in the Federal Register on October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the Federal Register notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109). These notices may be accessed by entering the Federal Register volumes and page numbers noted in the previous sentence at the following GPO website: www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html.

C. Reporting

All recipients are required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. All financial reports must be submitted in triplicate (one original and two copies) to the EDA Program Officer. Progress reports are due on a monthly schedule and must be submitted no later than the 15th day of the month following the month of the report. Final reports are due no later than 90 days after the award expiration date.

VII. Agency Information and Contact.

EDA's web site, <http://www.eda.gov>, contains additional information on EDA and its programs. You may also address questions regarding this competitive solicitation to Anthony Meyer, EDA Office of Strategic Initiatives, at (202) 482-2127 (not a toll free call).