



# **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) Informational Webinar – October 19, 2015**

**Federal Funding Opportunity:  
EDA-HDQ-TAAF-2016-2004559**

**U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)  
Economic Development Administration (EDA)  
Trade Adjustment Assistance Division (TAAD)**

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- **This webinar serves as a communication vehicle to provide an overview of the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms program and the funding opportunity.**
- **Please note that this guidance** does not constitute approval or endorsement of any webinar registrant's application or proposal.
- **Please submit your questions in writing and submit via e-mail to [TAAF2015@eda.gov](mailto:TAAF2015@eda.gov). This will -**
  - Provide for transparency, ensuring that all answers are documented.
  - Assures that questions and answers are handled consistently.
- **Questions and answers will be posted regularly at <http://eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>**



## ACRONYMS USED THROUGH THIS WEBINAR

- **DOC** = U.S. Department of Commerce
- **EDA** = Economic Development Administration
- **FFO** = Federal Funding Opportunity
- **FY** = Federal Fiscal Year
- **SAM** = System for Awards Management
- **TAA** = Trade Adjustment Assistance
- **TAAC** = Trade Adjustment Assistance Center
- **TAAD** = Trade Adjustment Assistance Division
- **TAAF** = Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms



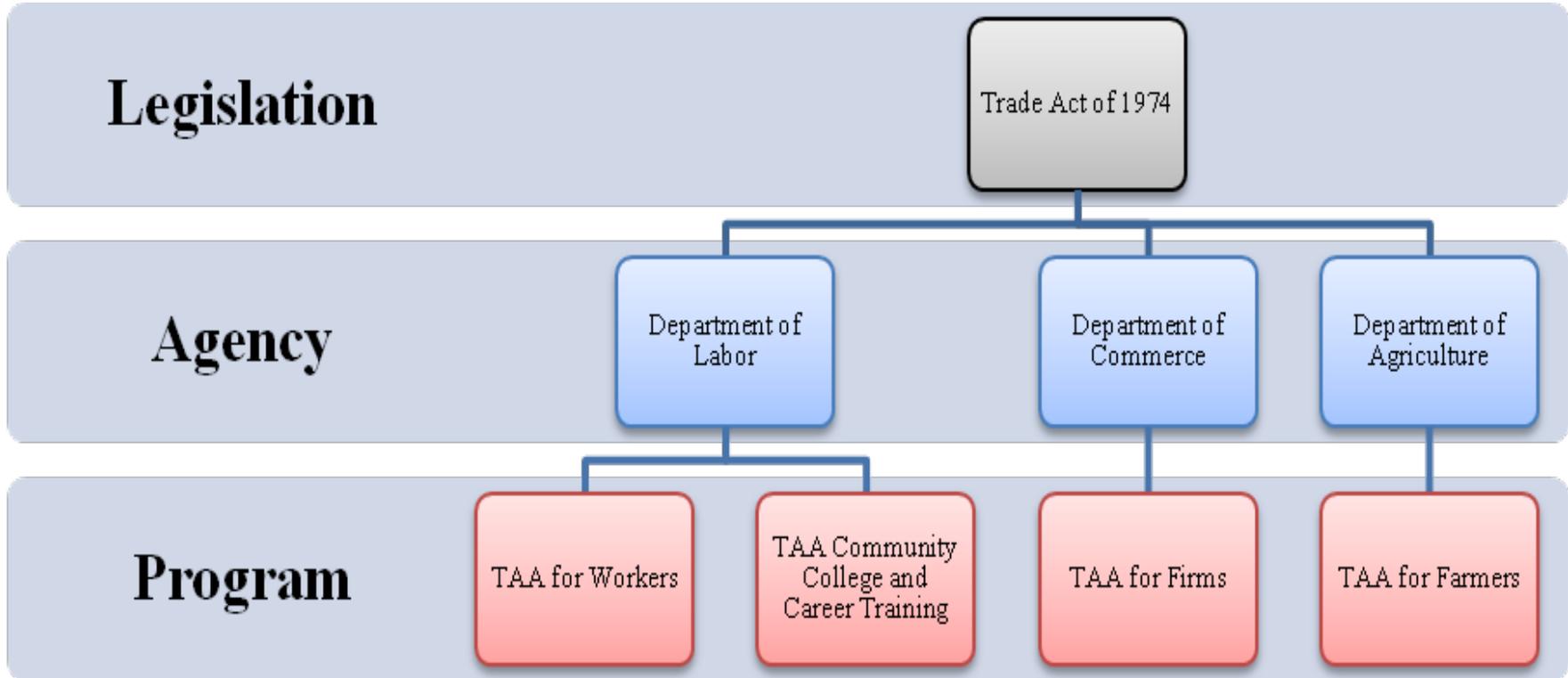
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Competition Goal**
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Overview**
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- **Eligibility and Cost Share**
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- **Applicant Requirements and Period of Performance**
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- **Application Review**
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- Through this competition, EDA aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the TAAF program through enhanced program performance measurement, decreased program administrative costs, closer alignment of geographic service areas of TAACs with the service areas of EDA's six regional offices, and a more equitable distribution of services across all U.S. states and territories.
- EDA encourages the submission of applications that will significantly benefit import-impacted manufacturing and production firms, as historical trends suggest that such firms make up the majority of import-impacted firms. EDA expects applications to demonstrate familiarity, or an ability to quickly become familiar with all aspects of TAAF (e.g. statutory, regulatory, and other requirements) along with the activities and services in which TAACs engage to assist firms as outlined in Appendix B to the TAAF FFO.



- The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) program was established by Congress under the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. The Trade Act of 1974 (Trade Act), as amended, included an more extensive Trade Adjustment Assistance program for firms that expanded eligibility to services firms, increased authorized funding levels, and provided greater flexibility for a firm to demonstrate eligibility for assistance.
- EDA’s mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for economic growth and success in the worldwide economy.
- EDA fulfills this mission through strategic investments and partnerships that create the regional economic ecosystems required to foster globally competitive regions throughout the United States. The TAAF program is an important part of EDA’s investment portfolio as it supports direct technical assistance to import-impacted businesses to help strengthen their global competitiveness.





- While TAAF does not provide funding to businesses directly, direct technical assistance is provided by TAACs, which are generally non-profit organizations or university-affiliated entities.
- TAAF funds the TAACs to coordinate direct technical assistance to eligible businesses using industry consultants and experts. TAACs provide technical assistance to U.S. manufacturing, production, and service firms in all 50 States, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- EDA's partnership with the TAACs allows firms to receive customized assistance from industry experts knowledgeable about the unique needs, challenges and opportunities facing industries in their respective regions.
- Firms work with the TAACs to apply for certification of eligibility for TAAF assistance. TAACs work closely with company management to identify the firm's strengths and weaknesses, and develop a customized business recovery plan (Adjustment Proposal) designed to stimulate recovery and growth.



- TAAF assists firms that have lost domestic sales and employment due to increased imports of similar or competitive goods as global competition intensifies. TAAF accomplishes this through the national network of TAACs, which assist import-impacted firms in:
  - Preparing and submitting petitions to EDA for certification of eligibility necessary to apply for assistance under TAAF (i.e. to become a “certified firm”);
  - Developing and submitting Adjustment Proposals (business recovery plans) for EDA approval; and,
  - Implementing the technical assistance tasks as set forth in approved Adjustment Proposals, primarily through private sector consultants.



## **TAAF Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO)**

EDA-HDQ-TAAF-2016-2004559

### **Funding Opportunity Description:**

EDA is soliciting applications from organizations to operate as TAACs. A Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) has been published on Grants.gov on September 25, 2015.

Through this competition, EDA aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the TAAF program through enhanced program performance measurement, decreased program administrative costs, closer alignment of geographic service areas of TAACs with the service areas of EDA's six regional offices, and a more equitable distribution of services across all U.S. states and territories.



## **Eligibility:**

Pursuant to the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, eligible applicants for, and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance under this FFO include:

- 1. Universities or affiliated organizations;**
- 2. States or local governments; or**
- 3. Non-profit organizations**

Under the Trade Act of 1974, EDA is not authorized to provide grants to individuals or for-profit entities, and such requests will not be considered for funding.

## **Cost Share:**

There is no required match for the TAAF program. Applicants may submit proposals with matching shares to further leverage Federal funds and help ensure additional project impact.



## **Available Funding:**

- \$12.5 million was appropriated for the TAAF program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015. The TAAF program has not yet received appropriations for FY 2016.
- EDA expects investments in TAACs for the first year of the five year period of performance to range from \$1 million to \$1.5 million, depending on the total number of TAACs selected through this FFO, the service area of each TAAC that is selected, and the availability of appropriations.
- The funding periods and amounts referenced in the TAAF FFO are subject to the availability of funds, as well as to DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award.
- Neither DOC nor EDA will be held responsible for application preparation costs.
- **Publication of this FFO does not obligate DOC or EDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.**



## **Applicant Requirements:**

- An applicant obtain the appropriate application package electronically at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov). Applicants may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Funding Opportunity Number EDA-HDQ-TAAF-2016-2004559.
- ***Applicants are advised that they must complete the registration process prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov; however, please note that registration is not required for an applicant to access, view, or download the application package.***
- Even though an applicant may be able to view and download an application, **if the applicant has not correctly completed the Grants.gov registration process, the applicant will not be able to submit the application for EDA’s review.**



## **Applicant Requirements:**

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), **must**:

- Be registered in the **System for Awards Management (SAM)** ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) before submitting an application
- Provide a valid unique identifier in its application
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award, application, or plan under consideration by EDA

**If the applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time EDA is ready to make a Federal award, EDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.**



## **Period of Performance:**

- The anticipated award will have an initial funding period of twelve months (as part of a five-year period of performance) with an estimated start date on or about 120 days after the closing date of this FFO. **See section VI.A. of this FFO for award notification information.**
- For the purpose of application, April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017, would represent the first year of the five year period.
- The funding periods and amounts referenced in this notice are subject to the availability of funds, as well as DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award.



## **Required Forms:**

**Applicants must** complete and submit **ALL** the requested components of an application package. **An application that does not have all of the required components may be considered incomplete and not receive further consideration.**

One of each of the following forms is required:

- Form SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance.
- Form SF-424A - Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs.
- Form SF-424B - Assurances—Non-Construction Programs.
- Form CD-511 - Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- Form SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. If not applicable, return the form signed with N/A marked across it.



## **Application/Proposal Requirements:**

**Applicants must** complete and submit **ALL** the requested components of an application package. **An application that does not have all of the required components may be considered incomplete and not receive further consideration.**

- **Required Forms.** All forms listed in the TAAF FFO are required.
- **Required Project Narrative.** The applicant must submit a Project Narrative in a separate attachment that references and responds to the following questions, to ensure that its application includes a clear and compelling justification for the project. Since the goal of TAAF is to address the existing conditions of import-impacted firms, applications must contain the most recent available data. **The use of data that are not the most recently available may result in an application being considered non-responsive and EDA may reject the application.**



## **Application/Proposal Requirements (continued):**

- **Form Budget, Budget Narrative and Staffing Plan.** Applicants must submit a separate budget (Form SF-424A) and a budget narrative **for each year of the five-year period of performance.**
- **Facilities and Administrative Costs.** Through this FFO, EDA aims to improve efficiency of TAAC operations in part through minimizing overhead or administrative costs and maximizing the use of funds to provide direct services to client firms. Applicants with indirect or facilities and administrative cost rates of 20 percent or lower will be more competitive than those with higher rates within the “Financial and management capability of the applicant” component of the merit review process of this competition.
- **Organizational Summary and Résumés of Key Project Staff.** The applicant must attach the résumés of key project staff, which should generally not exceed two pages in length (per résumé) describing each employee’s specific role with reference to the proposed TAAC operations, and provide a brief overview of their most pertinent experience.



## **Special Instructions if the Applicant is a Consortium**

Applicants may wish to apply as a consortium composed of, for example –

- Multiple current TAACs
- New organizations, or
- A current TAAC and new organizations.

**Please note that although there must be one lead member if the applicant is a consortium, each member institution of the consortium must submit the following forms - SF-424, SF-424B, CD-511, and SF-LLL.** For example, if a consortium of three universities submitted an application package, a complete application package would consist of:

- Three Forms SF-424 (one for each consortium member);
- One Form SF-424A;
- Three Forms SF-424B (one for each consortium member);
- Three Forms CD-511 (one for each consortium member);
- Three Forms SF-LLL (one for each consortium member that has or plans to use non-Federal funds for lobbying in connection with this competitive solicitation. If not applicable, return the form signed with N/A marked across it.); and,
- One Project Narrative and other required attachments.



- EDA expects applicants to complete and include all required forms and documentation.
- EDA staff will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review of all applications received by November 24, 2015, 11:59 pm, EST.
- EDA will reject any documentation of eligibility that the agency determines is inaccurate or incomplete, which may cause the application to be rejected.
- In cases where EDA receives an application six months or more before the time of award, EDA will re-evaluate the project to determine continued eligibility for investment assistance before making an award.

**Applications that do not contain all forms and required documentation listed in section IV.A. of this announcement may be deemed non-responsive and excluded from further consideration.**



- A panel comprised of at least three Federal employees will be formed to review each application.
- The panel will only consider applications that are determined to be eligible and technically complete, as outlined in section V.A. of the TAAF FFO.
- The review panel will evaluate and rank applications using the following equally weighted criteria for a total possible score of 100 points:
  - Ability to develop a service delivery model and manage an organization;
  - Demonstrated competence in administering business assistance programs;
  - Background and experience of staff;
  - Proposed scope of work; and
  - Feasibility of the proposed project budget.



- Per the TAAF FFO, Page 2. (Award Notification), the anticipated award will have an initial funding period of twelve months (as part of a five-year period of performance) with an estimated start date on or about 120 days after the closing date of this FFO. See section VI.A. of this FFO for award notification information.
- For the purpose of application, April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017, would represent the first year of the five year period.
- Reminder: Applicants must submit a separate budget (Form SF-424A) and a budget narrative for each year of the five-year period of performance.



- Specific regulations, administrative requirements, and cost principles govern the use of EDA funds.
- The general and administrative requirements for EDA awards are set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R) 13 C.F.R. parts 300–302.
- Specific application and award requirements for the TAAF program are set out at 13 C.F.R. Part 315.
- EDA funds may not be used directly or indirectly to reimburse any attorneys’ or consultants’ fees incurred in connection with obtaining investment assistance pursuant to this competitive solicitation. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 302.10.
- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, effective December 26, 2014.



## Register and Submit Early

- To avoid delays, EDA strongly recommends that applicants start early and not wait until an approaching funding cycle deadline date before logging in, registering, reviewing the application instructions, and applying.
- In order to submit an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) ([Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov)), an applicant **must** register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. This process can take between **three to five business days or as long as four weeks** if all steps are not completed correctly.
- Please review Section IX. of the TAAF FFO - Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov



## **Grants.gov Systems Issues**

If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the application deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov.

Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.”



## **Authorized Organizations Representative (AOR) Requirement**

- **Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals.** As part of the registration process, you will register at least one AOR for your organization. **AORs registered at Grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications at Grants.gov** so please ensure that your organization's application is submitted by an AOR.
- If the application is submitted by anyone other than your organization's AOR, it will be rejected by the Grants.gov system and cannot be considered by EDA.
- **EDA will not accept late submissions caused by Grants.gov registration issues, including SAM and AOR issues.**



## **Verify submission was successful**

Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. Since email communication can be unreliable, applicants must proactively check on the status of their application if they do not receive email notifications within a day of submission.

EDA requests that applicants kindly refrain from submitting multiple copies of the same application package. Applicants should save and print both the confirmation screen provided on the Grants.gov website after the applicant has submitted an application, and the confirmation email sent by Grants.gov when the application has been successfully received and validated in the system.



## **Appendix B. TAAF Eligibility and Program Requirements for TAACs**

- Each TAAC is expected to provide technical assistance to import-impacted firms in preparing petitions for certification of eligibility under the program, and in developing and implementing Adjustment Proposals for such firms.
- EDA encourages the submission of applications that will significantly benefit import-impacted manufacturing and production firms, as historical trends suggest that such firms make up the majority of import-impacted firms.
- EDA expects applications to demonstrate familiarity or an ability to quickly become familiar with all aspects of TAAF (e.g. statutory, regulatory, and other requirements) along with the activities and services in which TAACs engage to assist firms as outlined in Appendix B of the TAAF FFO.



## **EDA/TAAD Points of Contact Regarding this Funding Opportunity**

**Miriam Kearse, Lead Program Analyst, TAAD  
(202) 482-0556**

**Questions? Please submit questions in writing via e-mail to [TAAF2015@eda.gov](mailto:TAAF2015@eda.gov)**

**All questions and answers will be posted to EDA's public website on an ongoing basis: <http://eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>**