



Maryland Offshore Wind Education and Workforce Training Program: Workforce Training AOI Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Fiscal Year 2024 Program

****THIS FOA IS FOR AREA OF INTEREST 2: WORKFORCE TRAINING UNDER THE Fiscal Year 2024 MARYLAND OFFSHORE WIND EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAM****

Area of Interest (AOI) Description : The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) is excited to announce AOI 2 of the Maryland Offshore Wind Education and Workforce Training Program: Workforce Training (“the Program”) for Fiscal Year 2024. The Program provides **grant funding** on a **competitive basis** to support new or existing workforce training centers offset costs associated with developing or expanding an offshore wind workforce training program.

Applications will be accepted until March 1, 2024 at 5:00 pm EST

Proposed projects must provide a direct benefit to Maryland’s offshore wind supply chain and workforce, through connecting individuals with certifications and employment, and have a direct benefit to surrounding communities through offshore wind industry education. Offshore wind is a growing clean-energy industry in Maryland, and proposed projects should provide the target population with offshore wind training and education that certifies them in the skills necessary for employment in the industry.

MEA highly encourages applications for new or existing workforce training centers owned and/or operated by emerging businesses, including minority-owned emerging businesses, nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, and academic institutions that are expanding their course offerings for the offshore wind industry.

MEA understands there are environmental impacts and climate risks that disproportionately impact historically disenfranchised groups and strongly encourages members of these groups to apply to the program.

Type of Program: Competitive

Application Deadline: Applications will be accepted on a first come-first serve until 5:00 P.M. EST, Friday, March 1, 2024 or until all program funding has been awarded, whichever occurs first.

Anticipated Funding: MEA anticipates \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000 for Fiscal Year 2024 is anticipated to be available for *AOI 2: Workforce Training* of the Program. The amount awarded may vary depending on the quantity and quality of applications received and MEA's available resources within the fiscal year. MEA will provide funding up to 75 percent of total project costs, not to exceed \$500,000 for applicants to develop and implement curriculum of new or existing offshore wind workforce training programs.

Eligible Applicants: The Program is open to new or existing workforce training centers owned and/or operated by emerging businesses, including minority-owned emerging businesses, nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, and academic institutions.

Business organizations eligible to apply under the Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce and Education Program must fit within the definition of an "Emerging Business." For purposes of this program, an "Emerging Business" is defined, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 9-20C-01(e), as "a business that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by an individual or individuals who are certified to have a personal net worth, as defined in §14-301 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, that does not exceed \$6,500,000 as adjusted each year for inflation according to the Consumer Price Index."

Business applicants that do not meet the Emerging Business definition are not eligible to receive grant funding from the Program.

Eligible Activities: Grant funds under AOI 2: Workforce Training are provided to awardees to offset the costs of developing or expanding a new or existing offshore wind workforce training program.

Evaluation Criteria: In accordance with the information in this funding announcement, applications and supporting information will be used to determine applicants' qualifications for available Program funds. All complete applications will be graded based on whether they met the required criteria. **Applications that comply with all rules, restrictions, and requirements described in this FOA will be competitively evaluated and those deemed qualifiable will be awarded funding until the Program budget is exhausted.**

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Description
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<p>Project Scope</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant’s goals and objectives of developing or expanding their offshore wind education program aligns with the Program goals of educating and engaging Marylanders in Maryland’s offshore wind industry and growing domestic offshore wind supply chain.
<p>Project Work Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant’s milestones and timelines are realistic and feasible for the project scope. • The applicant has provided a drafted marketing plan for how they intend to market the program to the target population, with special reference to how they intend to market towards members of historically marginalized communities, formerly incarcerated individuals, and people with disabilities. • The applicant has provided samples of course curricula or syllabi and modules for the educational program.
<p>Feasibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant demonstrates historic success with similar programming, including, but not limited to, past performances with MEA funds. • The applicant outlines potential challenges that may be faced and how these challenges will be overcome, including how the proposed investment will help overcome those challenges.
<p>Needs Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has conducted a preliminary needs assessment regarding their goods and services and the needs for those goods and services within the industry. • The proposed project justifies the needed capital or operating investment • There is preliminary indication that the businesses’ goods and services are needed within the industry.
<p>Budget and Available Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has provided sufficient financial evidence that the applicant will be able to implement the project with MEA funds and their required 25 percent cost share • The applicant has provided a total project budget breaking down the intended use of grant funds including but not limited to, relocation costs, renovations, equipment purchase and installation, labor and personnel, permitting and inspections, and

	administrative expenses.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has identified project partners that will be providing financial or other support services throughout the life of the project. • The applicant has provided letters of support indicating this partnership should the applicant receive funding.

Review Process: Applications for Program funding will be evaluated on a competitive basis after the deadline of March 1, 2024 and will be evaluated competitively against the Evaluation Criteria listed in this Funding Announcement. Applicants will receive a notice of approval or denial within 90 days of the application deadline.

Award Formula: MEA calculates grant awards as 75 percent of total project costs. Grant awards shall not exceed \$500,000. Applicants must contribute at least 25 percent of the total project costs as matching funds or in-kind services. Matching funds may include, but are not limited to, a finance/loan agreement, cash on hand, a business line of credit, and/or other grant awards (state, federal, or private).

Partial Awards: Partial awards are possible under the Program. Full grant awards are made among approved projects from highest to lowest rank. If insufficient funds are available to fully fund a project, the applicant will be given the opportunity to fulfill the grant obligations with the remaining budgeted funding. If the applicant agrees, then the project will be funded with the remaining funds. If the applicant does not agree, then the offer is made to the next approved project in rank order until all funding has been expended or all remaining projects have rejected the offer.

Required Application Documents:

Applicants must complete a Maryland Offshore Wind Maryland Offshore Wind Education and Workforce Training Program Application Form via the online application portal JotForm. **The application package must include the following components:**

1.	Project Narrative
<p>The Project Narrative should provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed project and educational opportunities. Applicants should use the Project Narrative Template located on the Program’s webpage. The Project Narrative should be no more than 10 pages long and should include the following:</p>	

<p>Applicant Overview</p>	<p>The Applicant Overview should discuss the Applicant’s daily operations, their interest and plan for getting involved in the offshore wind industry.</p>
<p>Project Scope Statement</p>	<p>Applicants should provide a project scope statement that provides the project purpose, goals and objectives, and strategies for achieving those goals and objectives.</p> <p>The project scope should align with the Program’s goals of supporting Maryland’s offshore wind workforce.</p> <p>Applicants should provide details about the project location(s) and facility(s). Include a sitemap from Google Earth or another mapping service indicating location(s) of the proposed project.</p>
<p>Needs Assessment</p>	<p>Applicants should provide a high level Needs Assessment discussing the problem the proposed project aims to impact. The Needs Assessment should provide justification for grant funding for the project. It should address the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the problem/issue that the proposed project intends to impact? • How does the proposed project aim to address the identified problem/issue? • What is the anticipated impact of the proposed project on the identified problem/issue?
<p>Project Work Plan</p>	<p>Applicants should include a project work plan that includes:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed and realistic timeline of the key milestones of the project. • List of project partners providing support, including financial support, along with their roles and responsibilities. • Marketing and outreach plan for how the applicant intends to market the educational program to the target population. • Samples of course curricula, syllabi, and modules for the training course • Sample graduate placement plan for how the applicant intends to connect graduates with employment.
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List of Project Partners	Applicants should provide a list of project partners and training instructors who are expected to work on this project along with their defined roles and responsibilities.
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2. Budget Narrative

The Project Budget should include details on total anticipated project costs and how the applicant intends to use grant funds. It must include the following:

Total Project Budget	The total project budget should be a breakdown of intended use of grant funds, including, but not limited to relocation costs, renovations, equipment, installation, labor and personnel, permitting and inspections, and administrative expenses.
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3. Certificate of Status

Applicants must provide a certificate of status from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) showing the applicant is in good standing with the State of Maryland. Certificates of status can be ordered online from SDAT.

4.	Business Ownership Documents
Business applicants must provide documents that demonstrate which individual(s) own(s) and control(s) at least 51 percent of the business. These documents may include, but are not limited to, Articles of Incorporation, Corporate Charter, or Shareholder Reports.	
5.	Personal Net Worth Attestation
Business applicants must provide an attestation that they are an emerging business, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 9-20C-01(e).	
6.	IRS Form W-9
Applicants must provide an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W-9 for the Applicant Organization. The Applicant Organization name and address provided on the IRS Form W-9 must match the Applicant Organization name and address provided in the Application Form submitted through the online application portal. An IRS Form W-9 can be requested from the IRS.	
7.	Letters of Support
Applicants should provide a letter of support from each project partner which details the commitment(s) made by the project partner. Unsigned letters of support will not be accepted. Applicants may include additional letters of support from local businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, and government agencies.	

Submission Instructions: The Program uses an online application portal, JotForm, that all applicants must use to submit grant applications. The online application portal is accessible through MEA's website and here. MEA will not consider incomplete applications.

Questions: Interested applicants may submit questions, comments, concerns and/or suggestions to the following MEA staff members:

Primary

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