

U.S. Department of Labor Announced Availability of Nearly \$98.5 Million in Workforce Innovation Fund Grants

On Dec. 22, 2011, Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis [announced](#) the availability of approximately \$98.5 million through the Workforce Innovation Fund (the Fund) to support innovative approaches for the design and delivery of employment and training services. The fund invests in programs that support, evaluate and enhance workforce investment strategies, particularly for vulnerable populations. Approximately 20 to 30 grants ranging from \$1 million to \$12 million are expected to be funded. A solicitation for grant applications (SGA) was published in the Dec. 23, 2011 edition of the [Federal Register](#). Applications under this announcement must be received by no later than 4 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on March 22, 2012.

The Fund is one of several new federal grant programs (including the Department of Education's Investing in Innovation Fund [I3] and the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund) in which grantor agencies fund projects to use evidence to design program strategies. Grants made under the Fund will support state workforce agencies, local workforce investment boards, and entities eligible to apply for *WIA Section 166* grants, as well as consortia of each of these to a) retool service delivery strategies and/or policy and administrative systems and processes to improve outcomes for workforce system customers and b) evaluate the effectiveness of such activities. Through the Fund, the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) seeks to support changes in structures and policies that enable a closer alignment and integration of workforce development, education, human services, social insurance and economic development programs.

The grants will be administered by ETA, working closely with the U.S. departments of Education and Health and Human Services. In addition to providing technical assistance to grantees throughout the life of the grants, ETA will share program evaluation results with grantees as well as stakeholders in workforce, education and human services systems.

Interested parties focusing on adult education are encouraged to review [the full SGA](#)—particularly sections I. B and I. C. These sections detail strategies in which the funding opportunity is seeking to invest and provide examples of types of service delivery and system reform strategies that are considered innovative under the Fund, such as: 1) Implementing comprehensive career pathway approaches that align and bridge training, education, employment and supportive services at the local and state levels; partner with employers; and enable individuals to move beyond adult basic education and succeed in postsecondary education, earn industry-recognized credentials, and advance along a career path; 2) Integrating adult basic education and occupational skills training to enable individuals to increase their educational learning gains and earn industry-recognized credentials while completing basic skills training; 3) Connecting the multiple systems and structures that serve individuals with limited English proficiency through mechanisms such as coordinating *Workforce Investment Act* funding for Titles I and II to support effective contextualized programs that result in increased fluency in the English language and the attainment of credentials that are relevant to employers; and 4) Partnering with and leveraging resources from other federally funded programs, such as Adult Basic Education.

For detailed application information, eligibility requirements, review and selection procedures and other program requirements governing this solicitation, please review the full [SGA](#). Applicants are encouraged, but not required to view the [pre-recorded webinar](#). Interested parties also may wish to register for the [Administrative Flexibility Webinar](#), which details how applicants may explore the use of existing flexibilities that are embedded within several federal programs and explore waivers that may be needed to remove statutory and regulatory barriers that would enhance innovations applicants propose. Please continue to check the [Workforce Innovation Fund](#) site for news, information, and updates on the Fund.

Patricia S. Terry Is California's New Administrator for Adult Education

Patricia S. Terry has been appointed as administrator of the Adult Education Division of the California Department of Education. Terry previously served as the Administrator for the Educational Options Office in that department. During her nine-year tenure there, she also served as an education programs consultant in several divisions. Terry has been an educator since 1970, with over 27 years as a classroom science teacher, including teaching part-time for two years in adult education. Her district-level work includes curriculum development, professional development and providing technical assistance to teachers of science and mathematics under the National Science Foundation-funded Memphis Urban Systemic Initiative Program. She holds bachelor's and master's of science degrees in biology, and a Ph.D. in educational leadership.