

**Iowa Language Learners Job Training
Webinar Q&A
October 11, 2022**

1. Additional clarification regarding the “dual language” requirement listed in the program description section of the NOFO.

Answer: Applicants will be able to offer the instruction to be taught in English only or dual language. That way there’s flexibility in how each employer chooses to implement a program to suit the needs of their business.

2. Who are you getting the 50/50 match from?

Answer: The 50/50 match is coming from the applicant or consortium. The grant is funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds which are awarded to States in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act. Governor Reynolds has allocated a portion of these funds to provide for this program.

3. Are public employers (e.g., school districts, city/county/etc.) eligible?

Answer: Yes, as long as they meet the definition of an employer in the NOFO.

4. If the employer is paying the worker their seat time, and it’s part of their scheduled work day, couldn’t they require the worker to participate in the training?

Answer: The NOFO states the employee participation in the program shall be voluntary.

5. How do you define dual language?

Answer: Dual language refers to academic programs that are taught in two languages designed to simultaneously develop English fluency, content knowledge and academic language.

6. Will this be applicable to online language learning solutions as well as in-person?

Answer: Yes.

7. Could the training be more than 4 hours if the IWD money only reimburses for up to 4 hours per week and the company match is used for the other hours of instruction per week?

Answer: IWD will reimburse for up to 4 hours of instruction per week, up to 32 weeks per cohort. The company match may be used for additional training.

8. What kind of info about employees will need to be sent in at the end of the grant, if any?

Answer: See reporting requirements in NOFO (Section 7).

9. Does the incumbent worker training for native English speakers (language/culture training) training hours count in the cap of 4 hours per week? Or can this be in addition to the training hours set up for non-native English speakers?

Answer: Each cohort has a maximum of 4 hours per week, up to 32 weeks per cohort.

10. Please clarify the class/training time per week allowed. Is that flexible? We are partnering with a community college and the classes are 10 hours per week.

Answer: Hours of instruction can be more but only up to 4 hours per week are reimbursable.

11. Are farms and restaurants eligible to apply?

Answer: As long as they meet the definition of an employer in the NOFO.

12. Do recipients of services have to be Iowa residents? Some of the Tyson plants are on the Nebraska/Iowa border.

Answer: The business/applicant/consortium has to be located in the state of Iowa.

13. Does it have to be in person or can it be a zoom meeting?

Answer: Either.

14. Can part-time employees get 4 hours of language training per week?

Answer: The eligible participants of these programs are for full-time employees only but may be hourly or salaried employees.

15. Our community college partners with many businesses/industries. If we wanted to partner with local businesses to help with the training-identify training needs, hire/provide instructors, develop curriculum, could we do that? Could we apply and manage the funds on their behalf or do the businesses need to apply directly? We would have a consortium of employers but we would not be providing ELL training to our community college employees.

Answer: One of the employers would be the applicant and the community college would be a partner.

16. Can an applicant be an association that represents a collection of smaller employers who don't individually meet the 25 person FTE requirement?

Answer: Yes, consortiums are encouraged. The consortium needs to have a minimum of 25 full-time employees.

17. Would we need to provide information on the minimum of 25 employees? If so, what information would need to be provided?

Answer: There is a question listed within the application regarding the 25-employee requirement. Answering this question falsely would disqualify your application. Verification of eligibility may be requested.

18. Under the definition of on-site, does that mean live instruction or can we provide virtual instruction?

Answer: Either. Classes may be offered onsite with live instruction, provided virtually, or a combination of the two.

19. Do we have to offer English language instruction, or can it be only for employees to learn another language (i.e., Spanish)?

Answer: You can offer non-English speaking in addition to English language, but you cannot offer non-English only.

20. Did I catch that right, that employers can pay employees for their time in the English classes? So long as they use 50/50 funding (half paid through employer, half through grant funding)?

Answer: Employee wages are not eligible for award funds; however, employers may pay their employees for instruction and that goes toward the employer's 50% match, up to 4 hours per week.

21. Can you give a specific monetary example of how the 50% reimbursement will work?

Answer: Approved awardees will first submit proof that their private match has been expended on eligible items. After review and approval of the private spend, awardee may submit other eligible expenses related to the project and these will be reimbursed.

As an example, if a business is awarded \$10,000 for their project, the awardee would be required to spend and submit \$10,000 of their own funds on eligible items first. Then the awardee would provide related eligible expenses and these expenses would be reimbursed to the awardee. Essentially, in this example, the awardee would need to provide documentation/proof of spend for \$20,000 total (\$10k private spend + \$10k reimbursed).

22. Under reporting requirements #3: # of new language learning programs established for employees. Can you please define this more. Does this mean the number of cohorts run, or the number of specific courses developed. Would it also include the training for incumbent, native English-speaking workers who may be trained through this program? When it lists “participant” through those reporting requirements (4-7), who are the participants? The English language learners or the native English speakers who are taking language/culture training or both?

Answer: The number of new language learning programs established means the number of new programs created, not the number of cohorts. As an example, if there is a new English language program established and offered between four different cohorts, this is 1 program established. Participants are defined in the NOFO as a reportable individual who has received grant-assisted services.

22. Are there any concerns or issues we should be aware of for companies who are already doing this type of program (typically more than 4 hours per week though) through a partnership with their local community college using Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program (IELCE)? Can they use the IELCE funds to cover hours above the 4-hour cap?

Answer: The purpose of this opportunity is to support the expansion or creation of new dual-language programs for employees within the workplace. IWD does not administer funds related to the IELCE program mentioned above nor do they provide guidance on how to use those funds. SLFRF guidelines do allow for braided funding provided the costs are eligible expenses under each source program and are compliant with all other requirements.

23. Can employers contract with trainers rather than employing them themselves?

Answer: Yes – this would be considered a partnership and they would explain the partnership in their application.

24. Can you please clarify the employee wage component. For example, if we pay our employees while they are taking a language class, is that reimbursed at 50/50?

Answer: Employee wages are not eligible for award funds; however, Employers may pay their employees for instruction and that goes toward the Employer's 50% match, up to 4 hours per week.

25. Can grant funds be used for program development/planning time? Or just instruction time?

Answer: Eligible grant funds may be used for instructor wages for up to four hours per week, up to 32 weeks per cohort.

26. Is there a resource for businesses to learn about how to select an appropriate pre and post screening assessment, as well as how to appropriately level students for the training program the business develops? Is the Iowa Dept of Education available to support with some of this technical assistance or to connect with local English language learner programs available through community colleges?

Answer: This pre/post assessment and evaluation metrics is part of the application process provided by the employer.

27. Can fringe be a portion of match?

Answer: No. Fringe benefits are listed as an ineligible expense. Only net pay for employees may be considered toward the 50% employer match.

28. Will the grant cover the cost of having an interpreter in orientation each week?

Answer: An instructor providing the dual-language instruction is an eligible expense for up to four hours per week, up to 32 weeks per cohort. The instructor should be proficient to also serve as the interpreter.

29. Would translation software be reimbursed at 50/50. For example, if we ran our policies through a translation program, is this covered?

Answer: The use of translation software for the purpose of curriculum instruction, as well as policy translation, would be an eligible expense.

30. Does Iowa Workforce intend on providing resources or partnering with community colleges (DMACC, etc.) for services? We have had difficulty finding resources and teachers for smaller groups.

Answer: IWD will not be partnering with community colleges but we would encourage applicants to reach out to community colleges for partnership opportunities.

31. If our college wanted to apply for funding for our employees, to provide them training in a second language that will assist in their ability to communicate with non-English speaking students and families that visit the campus, is that a possibility? The funding is not necessarily to support communication among employee groups.

Answer: No. The purpose of this award is to reduce language related barriers within the workplace as it relates to work-related tasks, policies and procedures. This purpose does not include customer service as a direct outcome.

32. What are the measures of language proficiency or evaluation tools that would be required for reporting purposes?

Answer: The applicant should include this information in their application as a performance measure. Applicants should work directly with the instructor/partner to obtain this information and develop the evaluation tool.

33. Does lead employer of consortium have to proof match for entirety of the consortium?

Answer: Consortium support letters will specify how much each employer of the consortium is providing and each employer will have to provide proof of their piece of the financial match.