



Grant Application Guidelines

STACKABLE CREDENTIALS IN UNIVERSITIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY TECHNICAL AND BUSINESS EDUCATION FUND

**Issued by the
Department of Economic Development and Commerce**

DDEC-Grant-Application-2023-02

Date Initial Grant Application Guidelines Issued: Tuesday, April 25, 2023

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. AST

Proposals Due Date: Monday, June 5, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. AST

Table of contents

1.	Program Overview	3
1.1	Background & Purpose	
1.2	Project Objectives & Outcomes	
1.3	Project Design & Roadmap	
2.	Application & Program Requirements	6
2.1	Respondent Eligibility	
2.2	Partnerships	
2.3	Key Individuals	
2.4	Performance Goals & Measurement	
2.5	Administrative Requirements	
3.	Application Package Instructions	8
4.	Funding & Budgetary Requirements	10
4.1	Available Funds	
4.2	Project Term	
4.4	Cost Sharing	
4.5	Allowable Uses of Funds	
4.6	Payment Terms & Method	
5.	Application Submission	12
5.1	Important Dates & Deadlines	
5.2	Registration	
5.3	Submission and Format	
5.4	Questions and Answers	
6.	Award & Contracting Process	14
6.1	Proposal Review, Scoring, & Evaluation	
6.2	Interview	
6.3	Selection	
7.	Appendix	15
7.1	Definitions	
7.2	Revisions to the Grant Application	
7.3	No Obligation to Contract	
7.4	Prohibited Communications, Non-Collusion, & Rejections	
7.5	Modification or Withdrawal of Proposal	
7.6	Most Favorable Terms	
7.7	Detailed Qualifications	
	Attachment A – Registration Form	
	Attachment B – Non-Conflict of Interest	
	Attachment C – Sworn Statement Act 2 of 2018	
	Attachment D – Priority Roles and High-Demand Skills within Priority Roles	
	Attachment E – Details on WIOA	

1.0 Program Overview

1.1 Background & Purpose

The Department of Economic Development and Commerce (“DDEC”, for its Spanish acronym) was created by the *Department of Economic Development and Commerce Reorganization Plan of 1994*, Plan No. 4 of June 22, 1994, as amended, and pursuant to the *Department of Economic Development and Commerce Reorganization Plan Implementation Act of 2018*, Act No. 141 of July 11, 2018. DDEC is responsible for implementing and supervising the execution of Puerto Rico's public policy for economic development in the different business sectors, as well as promoting the academic, professional, social, and entrepreneurial training and development of the country's citizens, to promote the active integration of young people in economic development initiatives and efforts.

The 2023 Fiscal Plan emphasizes the importance of investments to improve Puerto Ricans’ technical skills, close core skill gaps, and ensure that the people of Puerto Rico can compete and thrive in the global economy, with a labor force aligned with 21st century workforce needs. The 2022 Fiscal Plan allocated \$50 million for the “21st century Technical and Business Education Fund” or the “Fund” to make such investments.

DDEC developed a “Skills Development Assessment and Plan” in late 2022 through early 2023 to develop a plan for 21st century skills for the entire workforce in Puerto Rico. The assessment identified the gaps in the workforce and education/training providers, identified the priority areas and skills to focus on, and determined how to strengthen these skills for the Puerto Rican workforce. **The focus of this Grant is on increasing the availability and quality of “stackable credentials” in universities. This Grant is designed to support universities to create multiple short-form credentials that build on or supplement each other on the pathway to a bachelor’s degree. Computer science programs and/or similar technical programs are in-scope for this initiative.**

Short-form credentials have significant market value. Certificates and Associate’s degrees can validate an individual’s abilities in an array of important technical areas, such as cloud infrastructure, server administration, cyber security, business intelligence, AI, and machine learning. Employers are increasingly accepting – and even demanding – short-form credentials as certification of a candidate’s skills. According to a recent 2019 survey by Future Workforce, 90% of employers would hire candidates who validate their knowledge using a certification, digital badge, or coursework in lieu of a college degree. Short-form credentials allow individuals to fill gaps in training and skills at a lower cost than full degree programs. For instance, the Pathways to Credentials program spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Education aims to build capacity of community and technical colleges to embed stackable, industry-recognized credentials within technical associate degree programs. Similarly, Virginia’s Community Colleges

have designed a transferable and stackable credit program for post-high school students who are looking to upskill, reskill, or make career changes while employed full-time.

Today, 52% of students at Puerto Rican Universities drop out before graduating with their intended bachelor's degree, many dropping out after completing two years of study. Our vision is that these students earn a recognized credential at the end of each year of study (e.g., a computer programming certificate after the first year, an Associate's degree in Computer Science after the second year, and then a Bachelor's degree after 4 years) to enable employers to recognize the skills students have accrued over the course of their educational journeys, and to provide students that do not complete a full Bachelor's degree with more employment options. Over time, our vision is that new markets of students – intending to complete short-form courses rather than a full four-year degree will be attracted to and able to study at Puerto Rico's universities.

DDEC has the goal of increasing the number of people in Puerto Rico with short-form credentials by 575 graduates in 2024/2025, and at least 8,600 graduates by 2035 through this stackable credential program. The priority roles for this project are tech roles such as data scientists, AI/ML specialists, computer programmers and engineers, software and application developers, and network system administrators. Skills of focus include, but are not limited to, database management, cloud computing, cyber and information security, business intelligence, AI, machine learning, scripting languages, web design and development, UI/UX Design, software quality assurance, and software development. Industries of focus include all industries/career paths requiring technical skills (see Appendix I for priority roles and skills to develop).

DDEC seeks proposals from universities to design a model and curriculum for stackable credentials (e.g., built off Pathways to Credentials). DDEC encourages universities to be bold in their aspirations and to put forward a plan that would enable a “stackable credential” Computer Science pathway to be put in place as soon as possible. DDEC may adjust and/or increase total funding based on number of interested parties, quality of submissions, and projected performance.

1.2 Project Objectives & Outcomes

Objectives:

- Transform bachelor's in computer science programs to have multiple off-ramps – giving students a chance to earn a certificate after first year, an Associate's degree after second year, and a Bachelor's degree after 4-years
- Expand the volume of students that enroll in computer science programs by enabling commitment to a one- or two-year program
- Increase the alignment of computer science courses and programs to employer needs

Outcomes:

- Expand number of high-quality computer science programs available in Puerto Rico
- Increase student enrollment in computer science

- Improve student placement/employment rates and placement outcomes in computer science and other tech-related fields
- Increase salary for individuals and/or improve promotion rates once stackable credential programs are completed
- Increase in number of partnerships between employers and universities offering short-form credentials to create more job opportunities for students
- Generate high quality education and career outcomes for students

1.3 Project Design & Roadmap

Executing institutions should develop a scope of work that includes:

- Partaking in sessions with other institutions and employers to agree on common skill taxonomy attached to different credential types
- (Re)designing course content and sequence in alignment with common taxonomy
- Creating model flexible enough to meet the needs of a wide range of students, creating attainable intermediate goals and providing exit points in the form of credentials with labor market value
- Engaging in curriculum revision based on the latest skills demanded in the labor market
- Commitment to actively engage employers and/or other members of your partner ecosystem in the process
- Leveraging Pathways to Credentials [playbook](#) – and other existing resources – to understand how other institutions have created stackable credential programs
- Hiring additional instructors or staff as needed

Below is an initial execution timeline we anticipated grantees to follow, as well as suggestions for convenings across selected higher education institutions:

- May 2023: Development of stackable credential project plan and curriculum strategic proposal including a selection of courses, certificates, and /or credentials that will be redesigned
- June 2023: Proposals evaluated, grantees selected, and implementation plans refined based on DDEC feedback
- Early July 2023: Leads from selected higher education institutions can align on meeting cadence, share initial implementation plans, and confirm common skill taxonomy and/or joint accreditation plans
- July to early September 2023: Detailed design work conducted to revise and evolve proposed stackable credential program
- Mid-September 2023: Leads from selected higher education institutions can share progress, best practices, and integrate short-form credential offerings into centralized stackable credential program
- Late-September 2023: Stackable credential programs finalized and launch plan developed for final DDEC readout
- Early October: DDEC final review, approval, and programmatic launch

- October 2023 – August 2024: Pilot stackable credential program launched. Program is operationalized (e.g., marketing of new programs, recruit potential students, enrollment of students, recruit and/or train faculty and teachers, etc.)
- August 2024: Programs expected to launch in the upcoming 2024/2025 academic year

2.0 Application & Program Requirements

2.1 Respondent Eligibility

Applicants to this Grant shall provide information in their proposals that demonstrates:

- Respondent offers accredited Bachelors of CS degree
- Respondent is able to sustain program over time and continue scaling
- Respondent’s leadership is committed to implementing and ensuring continuity. Please include a Letter of Commitment from the proponent’s Chancellor or equivalent to ensure continuity and investment.
- Respondents that are corporations, partnerships, or any other legal entity, U.S. or Puerto Rico based, shall be properly registered or capable to be registered to do business in Puerto Rico and the U.S. at the time of the submission of their Proposals, and comply with all applicable Puerto Rico or U.S. laws and/or requirements
- Respondent has adequate resources to perform the project, or the ability to obtain them
- Respondent has a satisfactory record of performance, integrity, and business ethics
- Respondent has the necessary organization, experience, and technical skills
- Neither Respondent nor any person or entity associated who is partnering with Respondent has been the subject of any adverse findings that would prevent DDEC from selecting Respondent. Respondents shall provide a listing and brief description of all legal actions for the past five years. See details in the “Detailed Qualifications” Section

2.2 Partnerships

Applicants will detail a plan for engagement with all required partners, including demonstrating any existing partner commitments, plans for obtaining commitments from other required partners, and planned roles and responsibilities for each proposed partner. **Partnership commitment letters will not be required at the time of application; however, proposals should demonstrate that Applicants have strong partner relationships, tight employer linkages, and/or robust plans for employer outreach and engagement for job placement.** While partnership commitment letters are not a requisite for submission, we would strongly appreciate submissions that do include them.

We would like Applicants to confirm [WIOA](#) eligibility and to register for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in order to be qualified for WIOA funds (see Appendix J for additional information). If you do begin the ETPL registration process, please include a confirmation as part of the submission (i.e., email, screenshot, etc.)

2.3 Key Individuals

Required: Program Coordinator(s)

- Will be committed to the project part time
- Responsible for the execution, reporting, and coordination
- Ideally has a minimum of 3-5 years of experience in executing relevant programs

Required: Engagement from faculty and employer partners

Note that grantees will also receive implementation assistance for intensive curriculum redesign.

2.4 Performance Goals & Measurement

The DDEC's performance goals are provided as a point of reference for applicants when determining their performance goals for the purposes of this application. Metrics will be measured periodically throughout the period of work. Additional metrics may be determined and required as the project develops.

Metrics include:

- Number of new short-form offerings developed
- Capacity of short-form credential programs (in terms of number of students)
- Student retention and graduation rates for short-form credential programs
- Student placement/employment rates following short-form credential programs
- Increase in salary for individuals once stackable credentials completed
- Size and growth of technical talent pool in Puerto Rico, including individuals re-skilled, over 5 years
- Number of partnerships between employers and universities offering short-form credentials
- Depth of industry alignment and partnership (i.e., number of employers interviewed to confirm alignment to industry demand, number of employers that confirm industry-recognition of short-form credentials)

2.5 Administrative Requirements

Successful Applicants must comply with all administrative and reporting requirements to remain eligible for awarded funds. DDEC reserves the right to re-bid the contract if the Selected Proponent fails to comply with the terms.

Grantees must report progress and outcome data to DDEC in a timely and accurate manner. Grantees will be required to submit regular financial and participant reports. Throughout the project, grantees and subrecipients must document lessons learned and effective practices

ascertained through this project in order to complete evaluation activities at the end of the project.

3.0 Application Package Instructions

All applications must adhere to Application Package requirements, use the required format, and include all the requested information. Only one Applicant Package will be accepted from each applicant. **A maximum of 30 slides in PowerPoint or 20 pages in Word will be accepted.** Applicants have the flexibility to decide how they want to distribute up to 30 slides or 20 pages. All applications must include a certification and signature that all the information submitted in the Proposal is true and accurate. Clearly identify one designated contact person for the Proposal engagement.

The Respondent's Proposal should include the following content:

- I. Key facts about the applicant's existing and relevant programming
 - Provide an overview of the existing certificates and/or Associate's degree programs offered in the relevant areas of study.
 - Describe the applicant's infrastructure and capacity for its computer science program and/or relevant technical program (e.g., size of faculty/staff, leadership, number of existing programs/classes, number of students).
 - Provide details on retention rate and graduation rate for the applicant's computer science program and/or other relevant programs.
 - Share information on relevant coursework taught and the sequence it is taught in.
 - Provide details on existing career placement services and/or connections to employers.
- II. Interest and anticipated project outcomes
 - Describe how the availability and quality of short-form credentials will be enhanced.
 - Share outcomes that can be achieved with a grant (e.g., number of students served, student demographics expanded into, improved employment rates, etc.).
 - Share forecasts or details on the impact this grant can have on recruitment and/or enrollment growth in computer science programs at the proponent's Institution.
 - Explain how the project will generate employment opportunities in computer science or other relevant technical fields and how existing skills gaps will be addressed.
 - Describe the approach the Institution will take to accredit a credential or certificate in this field of study.
 - Include a Letter of Commitment from the proponent's Chancellor or equivalent to ensure continuity and investment.
- III. Overview of existing curriculum and strategic roadmap
 - Share an initial proposal for course sequence for a credential program leveraging existing courses.

- Share an understanding of what courses would need to be added to complement the proponent's existing curriculum.
 - Quantify current (2023) and projected (2024, 2028) metrics with and without this grant:
 - i. Enrollment rates
 - ii. Retention rates after first and second year
 - iii. Graduation rates
 - Provide details on the proponent's ability for programs to be offered in multiple formats (online, campus, hybrid).
 - Describe the approach to ensure the credential program is focused on in-demand, industry-relevant skills.
 - Describe the proponent will generate industry-recognition for the credential program.
- IV. Project plan to develop stackable credentials.
- Include a detailed timeline of objectives, activities, and milestones that demonstrate how you will achieve the goal of the project.
 - Include proposal targets that are realistic and based on extensive quantitative analysis.
 - Develop a project timeline that is aligned with Fund requirements.
- V. Key stakeholders that would be engaged
- Dedicate accountable personnel of sufficient size that have experience in education, workforce development or comparable endeavors
 - Dedicate lead personnel that have experience in project management in projects of a comparable size
 - Describe any existing or anticipated partnerships, and explain how they will be used to coordinate, provide services, and ensure that students have access to high-quality employment options after completing the program.
- VI. Challenges they anticipate and how they plan to overcome them.
- Identify and describe the key project risks/barriers throughout the project timeline.
 - Describe possible solutions to address the risks.
- VII. Proposed budget and resourcing
- Describe where funds will be allocated and when costs are anticipated to be incurred, including justification of expenses.
 - Demonstrate how the program will plan for future sustainability beyond the life of the grant.

4.0 Funding & Budgetary Requirements

4.1 Available Funds

A total of \$1.5 million dollars are available through this Grant. Applicants may request awards up to \$400,000. The DDEC anticipates being able to fund approximately 5 awards. Final awards and participant counts may be adjusted depending on the number of successfully submitted proposals.

Grantees will also receive implementation assistance for intensive curriculum redesign.

Proposed funding and awarding decisions are based on the anticipated availability of relevant funds. Estimated amounts and dates are not final and are subject to change. DDEC may adjust and/or increase total funding based on number of interested parties, quality of submissions, and projected performance. DDEC reserves the right to modify the amount based on level of funding.

4.2 Project Term

The period of performance for this grant will be approximately 12 months, subject to possible extension to be agreed between the parties under the terms of the contract to be awarded. The anticipated start date is July 2023.

No obligation of funds will be allowed before or beyond the grant period of performance. Any grant funds not expended during the grant agreement period shall be returned to the DDEC.

4.4 Cost Sharing

There is no required match for this project. However, the applicant is encouraged to leverage other resources to maximize the impact of the project. Applicants are encouraged to braid funds, leverage human capital, and utilize other resources to maximize success for the project.

Applicants will be evaluated on the resources they are willing to commit to ensuring success and sustainability of this transformation.

4.5 Allowable Uses of Funds

The funds awarded in this Grant must be used to assist DDEC program awardees in the activities listed in Section 1.3.

In general, to be an allowable charge under the grant, a cost must meet the following criteria:

- Be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the award
- Be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles
- Be adequately documented

Grants can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including:

- Improving student and faculty recruitment and retention
 - Adjusting admissions criteria or tuition structures to account for different student pathways, where applicable
 - Marketing shorter-form programs to new student groups, to expand the number of students enrolling
 - Compensating faculty for time spent redesigning courses or course sequence to enable students to gain a certificate at the end of the first year of computer science study, and an Associate's degree after the second year of study
- Expanding curriculums and better integrating industry best practices
 - Investing in infrastructure or equipment to support expanded student population
 - Engaging with employers on course content and sequence to ensure alignment with highest priority skills needed in the labor force
 - Adjusting delivery model to offer more flexible online or hybrid education models

In addition to providing grants, DDEC will support institutions by:

- Providing implementation support to grant winners to support their business planning and execution
- Convening higher education partners to discuss on a common taxonomy and skill / course sequence as a basis for stackable credentials
- Engage employers for feedback on behalf of / in collaboration with higher education partners

Award of this Grant will be to the Proponent(s) or Respondent(s) whose Proposal(s) is most advantageous to developing 21st century skills for the workforce pipeline in Puerto Rico by increasing availability and quality of stackable technical credentials. DDEC may award this Grant to one, some, all, or none of the Proponents, and reserves the right to cancel this Application at any time.

4.6 Payment Terms & Method

Funding will be awarded in multiple payments (first funding batch when the Grant is awarded, additional installments at agreed upon later dates dependent on the proponent's anticipated expense timeline, timely/complete monthly reporting on progress/KPIs and on-track status with outlined workplan).

5.0 Application Submission

5.1 Important Dates & Deadlines

Target Date	Event
Tuesday, April 25, 2023	Publication of Grant Guidelines
Tuesday, May 2, 2023	Questions & Answers Submission Deadline
Monday, May 8, 2023	Submission of DDEC's Responses to Questions – 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 10, 2023	Registration Deadline – 4:30 p.m. Technical assistance will be provided to all proponents who register as potential Applicants to this Grant Application Guideline by the deadline.
Monday, June 5, 2023	Proposal Submission Deadline – 4:30 p.m.
Monday, June 19, 2023	Notice of Award Expected
Friday, June 30, 2023	Expected Program Start; First Round of Funding Expected to Be Awarded
Monday, January 8, 2024	6 Months into Program; Second Round of Funding Expected to Be Awarded (subject to agreement on specific timeline)
August 2024	Programs expected to launch in the upcoming 2024/2025 academic year

Please note that this timeline includes target dates and may change subject to the sole discretion of DDEC. It is the responsibility of Respondents to periodically review DDEC's website for regular updates to the Grant Application timeline and other important information.

5.2 Registration for technical assistance

To be considered a Registered Applicant and receive technical assistance on a proposal, the Proponent must complete and file the registration form attached hereto as [Attachment A](#) with the DDEC by **May 10th at 4:30 p.m.** Please note that each Registered Applicant agrees to and shall be bound by all the terms and conditions of this Grant.

Proponents that do not register by the deadline are still permitted to participate in the process but might not receive technical assistance during the process.

5.3 Submission & Format

Responses to the Grant Application submitted after the prescribed deadline will not be accepted. Proposals must include any exhibits, appendices and/or attachments to be deemed complete. All correspondence, documents and related information submitted by Respondents in connection

with this Grant shall be written in the English. If documents are submitted in a language other than English, a full English translation shall also be provided.

Respondents shall submit their Proposals via email to the DDEC email address provided:

Department of Economic Development and Commerce
PO Box 362350
San Juan, P.R. 00946-2350

Attention: Humberto Mercader
Senior Policy Advisor
Secretary's Office, 4th Floor

Email: 21stcentury@ddec.pr.gov

Physical Address:
F.D. Roosevelt Ave. 4th Floor
Hato Rey, P.R. 00918

Proponents shall identify any information submitted that is considered confidential or privileged, as appropriate.

5.4 Questions & Answers

Any questions regarding this Grant or the evaluation of Proposals shall be submitted in writing via electronic mail only to the following address: **21stcentury@ddec.pr.gov** and must reference this specific Grant Application (**DDEC-Grant-Application-2023-02**) in the subject line of the email. No telephone inquiries will be accepted. Answers will be posted on DDEC's website at **www.ddec.pr.gov**. All information posted on DDEC's website is deemed incorporated into this Grant.

6.0 Award & Contracting Process

6.1 Proposal Review, Scoring, & Evaluation

DDEC will examine all Proposals in a proper and timely manner to determine if they meet the proposal submission requirements. The final evaluation and selection will be based upon the criteria listed below:

Evaluation Criteria
1. Program Design Experience & Past Student Performance – Assesses whether the proponent has a track record of instituting innovative program design, has a plan to adjust courses and course sequences in collaboration with employers by 2024, and can pave the way on change management (e.g., institutional leadership and faculty, deep industry engagement). Assesses past student performance. General qualifications of the proponent to work on projects or activities similar to those described in the Grant Application Guidelines.
2. Commitment to Implement and Ensure Continuity – Evaluates leadership commitment/engagement, the ability to sustain program over time, and the ability to continue scaling
3. Estimated Capacity Increase & Expected Scale of Students Reached – Evaluates the impact in terms of number of stackable credentials to be offered, number of existing computer science students, and number of potential additional students
4. Proposed Resourcing / Co-investment – Is the planned dedication of resources sufficient to execute on the proposed approach and maintain momentum after conclusion of the funding? Does the proponent plan to co-invest in the program?

6.2 Interview

DDEC reserves the right, to invite Proponents to attend to an interview with the Evaluation Committee. If DDEC elects to conduct the interviews, Respondents will be required to give a 30-minute presentation. The Evaluation Committee may alter the scoring of Proposal based upon the presentation. Respondents are responsible for all costs incurred to attend such interview.

6.3 Selection

Following completion of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Committee will meet to choose the Selected Proponent. DDEC’s decision is final. DDEC will notify the Selected Proponent and the parties will proceed to negotiate such written agreements as may be required and mutually acceptable to the parties, subject to compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

7.0 Appendix

7.1 Definitions

“Applicable Law” means any law, statute, ordinance, code, rule, or regulation, federal or local, as well as any order, writ, injunction, decree, ruling, determination, award, permit or variance of any federal or local governmental body, in effect now or as it may become applicable in the future, or any binding agreement with any federal or local governmental body, including technical standards, codes and specifications.

“DDEC” refers to the Department of Economic Development and Commerce.

“Evaluation Committee” refers to a committee designated by DDEC, which will evaluate all complete Proposals pursuant to the criteria listed in these Grant Application Guidelines.

“Government” refers to the Government of Puerto Rico, or any Government Entity and/or municipalities.

“Government Entity” refers to any department, agency, board, commission, body, bureau, office, public corporation, or instrumentality of the Executive Branch, whether existing or to be created in the future.

“Key Individuals” means an individual who will play an important role in the engagement or contract on behalf of a Team Member resulting from this Grant Application.

“Leveraged funds” are a contribution of funds or resources made available to the subrecipient, to be used specifically for project activities and must be consistent with the allowable activities of the fund source. The awarded subrecipient has control over and disburses these funds. The definition of “in-kind resources” is a contribution of non-cash resources explicitly used for project activities. Examples include but are not limited to donated personnel, services, and use of equipment or space.

“Proponent” or **“Respondent”** means a(n) (i) natural person, (ii) legal person, (iii) joint venture, or (iv) partnership, or (v) consortium of individuals, and/or partnerships, and/or companies or other entities that submit a response to this Grant that is not currently debarred.

“Proposal” means a formal offer submitted in response to this Grant.

“Grant” means this Grant Application and addenda issued by DDEC.

“Secretary” refers to the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development and Commerce of Puerto Rico.

“Selected Proponent” or “Selected Respondent” means the successful proponent to whom the Grant is awarded.

“Team Member” means a member of a Respondent. Team Members should be identified in Respondents’ submissions and not be changed without the consent of DDEC.

“Technical and Business Education Fund” means the allocation of around 50 million dollars to the Technical and Business Education Fund in Puerto Rico.

7.2 Revisions to the Grant Application

DDEC may issue addenda in the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this Grant Application. Additionally, the published questions and answers, and any other pertinent information will be provided by addenda to the Grant Application or official notice from the Grant coordinator, as authorized by the Secretary. Addenda will be published on DDEC’s website and shall be the sole responsibility of Respondents to periodically review that website for any revisions to the grant application and other important information.

7.3 No Obligation to Contract

Issuance of this Grant Application does not constitute a commitment by DDEC or the Government to award a contract. The execution of a contract will be subject to all approvals required by law, including the FOMB, if applicable. **DDEC will not have any binding obligation, duties, or commitments to the Selected Respondent(s) until and unless a contract has been duly executed and delivered by DDEC after approval by the appropriate governmental authorities. If DDEC is unable to negotiate a mutually satisfactory agreement with the Selected Respondent(s), it may, in its sole discretion, negotiate with the next highest-ranked Respondent(s) or cancel and reissue a new Grant Application Guidelines.**

DDEC reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, one, some, all or none of the Proposals submitted and/or cancel this Grant Application and/or reissue this Grant Application or another version of this application, at any time, prior to the execution of a contract, if it determines, in its absolute discretion, that doing so is in its best interests or the best interests of the impacted communities or the Government of Puerto Rico. If any or all proposals are rejected, DDEC reserves the right to re-solicit proposals.

7.4 Prohibited Communications, Non-Collusion, & Rejections

Except for questions submitted by interested parties on or before the date indicated in this document, communications with other representatives of DDEC or the Government regarding any matter related to the contents of this Grant Application are prohibited during the submission and selection processes. Failure to comply with these communications restrictions will result in rejection of the Proponent’s Proposal.

Proponents will be required to execute a Non-Disclosure Agreement hereby included as **Attachment B**, in order to prevent the disclosure of information provided as part of this application process.

Proponents will also be required to execute a Non-Collusive Affidavit hereby included as **Attachment C**.

DDEC and/or the Government reserve the right to reject all Proposals received in response to this Grant Application when determined to be in the Government's best interest, and to waive minor noncompliance in a Proposal. DDEC and/or the Government further reserve the right to make such investigations as they deem necessary as to the qualifications or perceived conflicts of interest of all firms submitting Proposals in response to this application. The mere appearance of a conflict of interest shall constitute sufficient cause for the outright rejection of a Proposal(s). If any or all Proposals are rejected, DDEC and/or the Government reserve the right to re-solicit Proposals.

It shall be noted that no public servant of the contracting entity is a party or has interest on the profits or benefits product from the contract, regarding the invoice and if it does have interest in some part on the profits or benefits of the contract it must specify that a waiver has been mediated.

7.5 Modification or Withdrawal of Proposal

A Proposal that is in possession of DDEC may be withdrawn or altered by the Proponent by letter including the signature and name of the person authorized to submit the Proposal, if it is received prior to the time and date of the Proposal submission deadlines. The withdrawal must be submitted in writing and directed to the Contact Person designated in this application guidelines prior the time and date established.

7.6 Most Favorable Terms

All Proposals shall be initially submitted including the most favorable terms that Proponents can present since DDEC may not provide further opportunities to Proponents to refine the Proposals. DDEC does reserve the right to contact a Proponent for clarification of its Proposal and/or to request a better definitive offer.

The terms of the selected Proposal may ultimately be incorporated, in whole or in part, into Definitive Agreements. The Proposal will become a part of DDEC official procurement file on this matter.

7.7 Detailed Qualifications

Respondents to this Grant shall provide information in their Proposals that demonstrates the following general qualifications:

- Respondent has adequate resources to perform the contract, or the ability to obtain them. Respondent shall provide financial statements for the past two (2) years, or equivalent financial records must be included in the Proposal.
- Respondent has a satisfactory performance record.
- Respondent has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.
- Respondent has the necessary organization, experience, and technical skills.
- Neither Respondent nor any person or entity associated who is partnering with Respondent has been the subject of any adverse findings that would prevent DDEC from selecting Respondent. Such adverse findings include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Negative findings from a Federal Inspector General or from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, or from an Inspector General in another state.
 - Pending or unresolved legal action from the U.S. Attorney General or from an attorney general in Puerto Rico or another state.
 - Pending litigation with the Government of Puerto Rico, or any other state.
 - Arson conviction or pending case.
 - Harassment conviction or pending case.
 - Puerto Rico and Federal or private mortgage arrears, default, or foreclosure proceedings.
 - In rem foreclosure.
 - Sale tax lien or substantial tax arrears.
 - Defaults under any Federal and Puerto Rico-sponsored program.
 - A record of substantial building code violations or litigation against properties owned and/or managed by Respondent or by any entity or individual that comprises Respondent.
 - Past or pending voluntary or involuntary bankruptcy proceeding.
 - Conviction for fraud, bribery, or grand larceny.

Respondents shall provide a listing and brief description of all legal actions for the past five (5) years in which any firm that is part of the Respondent's team has been: (i) a debtor in bankruptcy; (ii) a defendant in a lawsuit for deficient performance under a contract or failure to comply with laws or regulation; (iii) a defendant in an administrative action for deficient performance on a project or failure to comply with laws or regulations; or (iv) a defendant in any criminal action.

Attachment A – [Registration Form](#)

Attachment B – Non-Conflict of Interest

Attachment C – Sworn Statement Act 2 of 2018

Attachment D – Priority Roles and High-Demand Skills within Priority Roles

Attachment E – Details on [WIOA](#)

Attachment B

NON-CONFLICT OF INTEREST CERTIFICATION

The Person/Entity interested in doing businesses, certify that:

1. No public official employee of the DEDC possesses any financial interest in this contract, or business transaction, and that, likewise, has had no direct or indirectly financial interest in this business transaction for the past four (4) years.
2. No public official or employee has solicited or accepted goods of any value, related to this transaction from any representative of the entity as a form of compensation for performing the duties and responsibilities of his or her position.
3. No public official or employee has accepted, or solicited from any person whatsoever directly or indirectly, either for himself (herself), for any member of his (hers) immediate family unit, or for any other person, business or entity, any asset whatsoever of monetary value, including gifts, loans, promises, favors, or services, in exchange for the actions of said public official or employee being of influence on behalf of my person or the entity.
4. There is no similar relationship within the fourth (4th) degree of consanguinity and second (2nd) degree of affinity with any public official or employee in position of influencing or participating in institutional decisions of the contracting agency.
5. The DEDC is a government instrumentality that is highly committed to management excellence and promotes the effective use of the government resources to benefit the people of Puerto Rico. We are committed to support and comply with Act 2-2018 "Anti-Corruption Code for the New Puerto Rico"
6. Agrees to bind by the provisions of Act 2-2018, "Anti-Corruption Code for the New Puerto Rico". Acceptance of the rules contained in such law is a vital essential condition so that transactions can be carried out or set up arrangements with the DEDC.

Signature of Authorized Representative of the Entity

[Date]

Attachment C

DECLARACIÓN JURADA
Ley 2-2018, Código Anti-Corrupción para el Nuevo Puerto Rico

[SWORN STATEMENT]
[Act 2-2018, Anti-Corruption Code for a New Puerto Rico]

Yo, _____, en mi carácter personal y en representación de _____ (“Proponente” o “Licitador”), con número de seguro social patronal _____, mayor de edad, de profesión: _____, con estado civil: _____ y vecino de _____ el más solemne juramento declaro como sigue:

[I, _____, in my personal capacity and in representation of _____ (“Respondent” or “Bidder”), Tax I.D. Number _____, of legal age, with profession: _____, marital status: _____ and resident of _____, do hereby solemnly swear as follows:]

1. Mi nombre y demás circunstancias personales son las anteriormente expresadas.

1. *[My name and personal circumstances are as stated above.]*

2. A la fecha en que suscribo esta declaración jurada, el suscribiente, el Proponente o Licitador, su presidente, vicepresidente, director, director ejecutivo, miembro junta de oficiales o directores y personas que desempeñen funciones equivalentes para el Proponente o Licitador **no ha sido convicto ni se ha declarado culpable en el foro estatal o federal**, o en cualquier otra jurisdicción de los Estados Unidos, por cualquiera de los siguientes delitos: (a) apropiación ilegal agravada; (b) extorsión; (c) sabotaje de servicios públicos esenciales; (d) falsificación de documentos; (e) fraude; (f) fraude por medio informático; (g) fraude en las construcciones; (h) uso, posesión o traspaso fraudulento de tarjetas con bandas electrónicas; (i) enriquecimiento ilícito; (j) enriquecimiento ilícito de funcionario público; (k) enriquecimiento injustificado; (l) aprovechamiento ilícito de trabajos o servicios públicos; (m) intervención indebida en las operaciones gubernamentales; (n) negociación incompatible con el ejercicio del cargo público; (o) alteración o mutilación de propiedad; (p) certificaciones falsas; (q) soborno, en todas sus modalidades; (r) influencia indebida; (s) malversación de fondos públicos; o (t) lavado de dinero.

2. *[As of the date of execution of this sworn statement, neither the undersigned nor the Respondent or Bidder, or its president, vice president, director, executive director, member of Board of officers or directors, or any persons performing equivalent functions on Respondent’s or Bidder’s behalf, has been convicted or has pleaded guilty in state or federal court, or in any other jurisdiction of the United States, for any of the following crimes: (a) aggravated misappropriation; (b) extortion; (c) sabotage of essential public services; (d) forgery of documents; (e) fraud; (f) electronic fraud; (g) construction fraud; (h) fraudulent use, possession or transfer of cards with electronic bands; (i) illicit enrichment; (j) illicit enrichment by public official; (k) unjustified enrichment; (l) illicit enrichment of public work or services; (m) improper intervention in government operations; (n) negotiation incompatible with the exercise of public office; (p) false*

certifications; (q) bribery, in all its modalities; (r) undue influence; (s) embezzlement of public funds; or (t) money laundering.]

3. A la fecha en que suscribo esta declaración jurada y **por los pasados veinte (20) años**, ni el suscribiente, ni el Proponente o Licitador, ni cualquiera de sus siguientes oficiales: presidente, vicepresidente, director, director ejecutivo o miembro junta de oficiales o directores o personas que desempeñen funciones equivalentes para el Proponente o Licitador, ha sido convicto o se ha declarado culpable en el foro estatal o federal, o en cualquier otra jurisdicción de los Estados Unidos, por cualquiera de los siguientes delitos: (a) daño agravado; (b) retención de propiedad; (c) alteración o mutilación de propiedad; (d) archivo de documentos o datos falsos; (e) posesión y uso ilegal de información, recibos y comprobantes de pago de contribuciones; (f) compra y venta ilegal de bienes en pago de contribuciones; (g) presentación de escritos falsos; (h) posesión ilegal de recibos de contribuciones; (i) falsificación de asientos en registros; (j) falsificación de sellos; (k) falsedad ideológica; (l) falsificación de licencia, certificado y otra documentación; (m) falsificación en el ejercicio de profesiones u ocupaciones; (n) posesión y traspaso de documentos falsificados; (o) posesión de instrumentos para falsificación; (p) preparación de escritos falsos.

3. *[As of the date of execution of this sworn statement and **for the twenty (20) years** prior, neither the undersigned nor the Respondent or Bidder, or any of its officers, including its president, vice president, director, executive director, member of board of officers or directors, or any person performing equivalent functions on Respondent's or Bidder's behalf, has been convicted or has pleaded guilty in the state or federal forum, or in any other jurisdiction of the United States, for any of the following crimes: (a) aggravated damage; (b) property retention; (c) alteration or mutilation of property; (d) filing of false documents or data; (e) illegal possession and use of tax information, receipts and payment vouchers; (f) illegal purchase and sale of goods for the payment of taxes; (g) filing false writings; (h) illegal possession of tax receipts; (i) falsification of entries in registers; (j) forgery of stamps; (k) ideological falsehood; (l) forgery of license, certificates and other documents; (m) forgery in the exercise of professions or occupations; (n) possession and transfer of forged documents; (o) possession of counterfeit instruments; (p) preparation of false writings.]*

4. A la fecha en que suscribo esta declaración jurada y **por los pasados ocho (8) años**, ni el suscribiente, ni el Proponente o Licitador, ni cualquiera de sus siguientes oficiales: presidente, vicepresidente, director, director ejecutivo o miembro junta de oficiales o directores o personas que desempeñen funciones equivalentes para el Proponente o Licitador, ha sido convicto o se ha declarado culpable en el foro estatal o federal, o en cualquier otra jurisdicción de los Estados Unidos, por cualquiera de los siguientes delitos: (a) omisión en el cumplimiento del deber; (b) venta ilegal de bienes; (c) incumplimiento del deber; (d) negligencia en el cumplimiento del deber; (e) usurpación de cargo público; o (f) impedir la inspección de libros y documentos.

4. *[As of the date of execution of this sworn statement and **for the eight (8) years** prior, neither the undersigned nor the Respondent or Bidder, or any of its officers, including its president, vice president, director, executive director, member of board officers or directors, or any person performing equivalent functions on Respondent's or Bidder's behalf, has been convicted or has pleaded guilty in the state or federal forum, or in any other jurisdiction of the United States, for any of the following crimes: (a) omission in the fulfillment of duty; (b) illegal sale of goods; (c) breach of duty; (d) negligence in the fulfillment of duty; (e) usurpation of public office; or (f) preventing the inspection of records and documents.]*

5. A la fecha en que suscribo esta declaración jurada y **por los pasados diez (10) años**, ni el suscribiente, ni el Proponente o Licitador, ni cualquiera de sus siguientes oficiales: presidente, vicepresidente, director, director ejecutivo o miembro junta de oficiales o directores o personas que desempeñen funciones equivalentes para el Proponente o Licitador, ha sido convicto o se ha declarado culpable en el foro estatal o federal, o en cualquier otra jurisdicción de los Estados Unidos, por delitos graves contra el ejercicio del cargo público o contra fondos públicos codificados en el Código Penal de Puerto Rico; la Ley Núm. 1-2012, según enmendada, la "Ley Orgánica de la Oficina de Ética Gubernamental"; o cualquier otro según dispuesto en la Ley 2-2018.

5. *[As of the date of execution of this sworn statement and **for the ten (10) years** prior, neither the undersigned nor the Respondent or Bidder, or any of its officers, including its president, vice president, director, executive director, member of board officers or directors, or any person performing equivalent*

functions on Respondent's or Bidder's behalf, has been convicted or has pleaded guilty in the state or federal forum, or in any other jurisdiction of the United States, for crimes against the exercise of public office or public funds as defined in the Puerto Rico Penal Code, ; Law No. 1-2012, as amended, the Government Ethics Office Enabling Act; or any other crime defined in Law 2-2018.]

6. Entiendo y acepto el deber de informar cualquier cambio al contenido de esta declaración durante el proceso de contratación o la vigencia del contrato, ya sea por alegación de culpabilidad o convicción por cualquiera de los delitos antes mencionados, o cualquier otra conducta proscrita en el "Código de Ética para Contratistas, Suplidores y Solicitantes de Incentivos Económicos de las Agencias Ejecutivas del Gobierno de Puerto Rico", Código Anticorrupción para el Nuevo Puerto Rico, Título III, Ley 2-2018.

6. [I accept and acknowledge my obligation to inform of any change or modification to this statement during the contracting process or the term of the contract, as the result of a guilty plea or conviction for any of the above-mentioned crimes or any other conduct prohibited by the "Code of Ethics for Contractors, Suppliers of Goods and Services and Applicants for Economics Incentives of the Executive Agencies of the Government of Puerto Rico", Title III, Law 2-2018.]

7. Entiendo y acepto que la convicción posterior a esta declaración por cualquiera de los delitos enumerados en cualquiera de los incisos anteriores conllevará, además de cualquiera otra penalidad, la rescisión automática de cualquier contrato entre el suscribiente, el Proponente o el Licitador, y cualquier entidad gubernamental, corporación pública o municipio.

7. [I accept and acknowledge that a conviction for any of the crimes specified in the above paragraphs will result, in addition to any other penalties, in the immediate termination of any contract in force at the time of conviction, between the undersigned, the Bidder or Respondent, and any government entity, public corporation or municipality at the date of conviction or guilty plea.]

8. El suscribiente, el Proponente o el Licitador, según sea el caso, se compromete a cumplir con lo dispuesto en el Código de Ética para Contratistas, Suplidores y Solicitantes de Incentivos Económicos de las Agencias Ejecutivas del Gobierno de Puerto Rico", Código Anticorrupción para el Nuevo Puerto Rico, Título III, Ley 2-2018.

8. [The undersigned and/or the Bidder or Respondent, as the case may be, commits to complying with the "Code of Ethics for Contractors, Suppliers of Goods and Services and Applicants for Economics Incentives of the Executive Agencies of the Government of Puerto Rico", Title III, Law 2-2018.]

9. Suscribo esta declaración jurada de conformidad con las disposiciones de la Ley 2-2018, y los requisitos de esta [Subasta, Solicitud de Cualificaciones o Solicitud de Propuestas.].

9. [I execute this sworn statement pursuant to Law 2-2018, and the terms and provisions of this IFB, RFQ or RFP.]

10. Hago la presente declaración jurada para que cualquier entidad gubernamental, corporación pública o municipio, tenga conocimiento de lo aquí declarado para cualquier propósito administrativo y/o legal.

10. [I execute this sworn statement so that any government entity, public corporation or municipality has knowledge of what is herewith declared and for any administrative and/or legal purpose in relation thereto.]

Firma del Declarante [*Signature of Declarant*]

Afidávit Núm. _____
[Affidavit No.]

Jurado y suscrito ante mí en la ciudad de _____, _____, hoy día _____
de _____ de 20____, por _____, mayor de
edad, _____ (estado civil), _____ (ocupación)
y vecino de _____, _____, en su capacidad
como _____ del Proponente, a quien doy fe de conocer personalmente o
a quien he identificado mediante su _____.

*[Subscribed and sworn to before me in the city of _____, _____, this _____ day
of _____, 20____, by _____ of legal age, _____
(civil status), _____ (occupation) and resident of _____,
_____, in his/ her capacity as _____ of Proponent, who I
personally known or have identified by his/her _____.*

[Public Notary] Notario Público

Attachment D

Priority Roles to Develop

Tech-Oriented Engineering Talent

- Aerospace Engineers
- Aircraft Mechanics & Service Technicians
- Avionics Technicians
- Chemical Engineers
- Civil Engineers
- Computer Hardware Engineers
- Electronics Engineers
- Health and Safety Engineers
- Industrial Engineers
- Mechanical Engineering Technicians
- Mechanical Engineers
- Robotics Specialists

College Educated Computer Scientists

- Computer Network Architects
- Computer Systems Analysts
- Information Security Analysts
- Software Developers
- Web & Digital Interface Designers (UI/UX)

Certification-Based Technical Workers

- Database Administrators
- Network & Computer Systems Admins
- Digital Design
- Digital Marketing & Communication
- Network & Computer Systems Admins

High-Demand Skills within Priority Roles

- Full Stack Development
- Cyber & Information Security
- Cloud Computing
- Database Management
- Object-Oriented Software
- AI / Machine Learning Algorithms
- Agile Software Development
- Scripting Languages
- Project Management
- System Design and Implementation
- Web Design and Development
- Software Quality Assurance
- UI/UX Design
- Digital content creator

Attachment E

Detalles sobre elegibilidad para los fondos del Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Requisitos para los interesados candidatos:

Para los participantes elegibles dentro de los fondos WIOA, se cubre el 100% de matrícula y otros gastos. Los requisitos para cualificar para los fondos WIOA son los siguientes:

- Ser ciudadanos americanos
- Tener (18) años o más
- Para los varones que nacieron el 1 de enero de 1960 y después, estar registrado en el servicio selectivo.

De no cumplir con los requisitos, el participante puede solicitar costeadando el adiestramiento por su cuenta.

Requisitos para los proveedores elegibles:

Para los proveedores solicitar una Determinación de Elegibilidad Inicial o Continua para proveer servicios de adiestramiento bajo la Ley WIOA deben de ser uno de las siguientes:

- Instituciones de educación superior que ofrecen un programa que conduce a una credencial postsecundario reconocido.
- Instituciones que ofrecen programas de adiestramiento registrados bajo el National Apprenticeship Act (NAA).
- Proveedores elegibles de actividades de educación de adultos y alfabetización bajo el Título II, si estas actividades son provistas concurrentemente o en combinación con ciertos servicios de adiestramiento.
- Cualquier otra institución pública o privada con programas de adiestramiento, que puede incluir lo siguiente:
 - Organizaciones de base comunitaria de demostrada efectividad ofreciendo adiestramientos.
 - Organizaciones conjuntas obrero-patronal ("joint labor-management organization").

Adiestramientos elegibles para empleadores

Cualquier patrono que no administre cannabis en su negocio/empresa puede participar de los siguientes adiestramientos

Customized Training:

- Reembolsa el 50% del costo del adiestramiento.
- No requiere que esté en el Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) en cuanto a patronos

On-the-Job Training (OJT):

- Al patrono se le reembolsa el 50% del salario mientras está tomando el adiestramiento.
- No requiere que esté en el Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) en cuanto a patronos.

Apprenticeship

- Al patrono se le reembolsa el 50% del salario mientras está tomando el adiestramiento.
- Requiere que esté en el Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) en cuanto a patronos.
- Los patrocinadores de Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) son automáticamente elegibles para estar en la ETPL. Sin embargo, el Programa de Desarrollo Laboral no añadirá patrocinadores a la ETPL sin que el patrocinador presente dicha solicitud, ya sea directamente a través del PDL o a través de la Oficina de Aprendizaje del Departamento del Trabajo de los Estados Unidos (si está registrado según las directrices del programa nacional).

Proceso para ingresar en la ETPL:

1. Si son programas en demanda en cada área local el proveedor solicita a través del módulo electrónico ETPL en el sistema Participant Record Information System (PRIS) una cuenta.
2. El PDL les invitación y la institución crea la cuenta
3. Entra la elegibilidad como institución y la elegibilidad de los programas de estudio de acuerdo con la demanda ocupación. Tiene hacer este proceso por cada AL a la que interese ingresar
4. La Junta Local valida toda la información y los documentos ingresados en el módulo.
5. La Junta Local nos envían la lista de los programas recomendados firmado por el presidente de la Junta Local
6. El PDL valida que la información sea correcta.

El flujo de todos los procesos de aprobación varía según la demanda del área local.

Lo que estamos tratando de mejorar es unificar más las áreas locales. La meta es que cualquier participante pueda asociar a cada área local como un solo programa laboral: Conexión Laboral.