

Competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity to deliver

Title II – Adult Education & Family Literacy Act Services

Updated on 8/12/2026 – No offerors applied for the Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals (CE) funding. This Competitive Notice is for the following:

- Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals (CE)
 - The CE Competitive Grant Award process will be awarded to one (1) Subrecipient to coordinate statewide services.

Schedule of Events

Event	Date
Competitive Grant Award Opportunity Issued	August 12, 2026
Deadline for Receipt of Written Questions	September 4, 2026, 5:00 p.m. (MST)
Deadline for Posting Written Responses	September 8, 2026, 5:00 p.m. (MST)
Responses Due	September 10, 2026, 11:59 p.m. (MST)
Anticipated Date for Award	October 1, 2026

Questions and Answers

MTDLI anticipates that potential applicants will have questions as they review the Competitive Grant Award process and is committed to providing answers to the best of their ability, as well as publishing these questions and answers for all potential applicants to review. The final day to submit questions is September 4, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. (MST). Questions received after that time will not receive a response. All questions and answers will be publicly posted on the [State Workforce Innovation Board](#) website.

E-mail questions to MTDLI_WIOA@mt.gov and label Title II – Adult Education & Family Literacy Act Services-I Corrections.

Submittal of Application

MTDLI must receive responses no later than **11:59 p.m. (MST) on September 10, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

To submit a response, click on this link: [Submittable](#)

Make sure to label all attachments correctly. If you have any questions, you can e-mail MTDLI_WIOA@mt.gov and label the subject line Title II – Adult Education & Family Literacy Act Services-Corrections.

I. INTRODUCTION

The STATE OF MONTANA, Data and Operations Bureau (DO) of Workforce Services Division (WSD) within Montana Department of Labor & Industry (MTDLI), in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is soliciting applications from experienced and qualified organizations to provide services through the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

The purpose of the Competitive Subrecipient Funding Opportunity is to award funds to support no-cost adult education services to eligible individuals aged 16 and older. Such services will include adult education and literacy [WIOA §463.30]; workplace preparation [WIOA §463.34]; English language acquisition [WIOA §463.31]; Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education [WIOA §463.33]; and Integrated Education and Training [WIOA §463.35].

The Department intends to award two-year subawards covering program years 2026 (October 1, 2026-June 30, 2027) and 2027 (July 1, 2027-June 30, 2028), subject to satisfactory performance and the availability of federal funds. At the conclusion of this period of performance, the Department anticipates issuing a new competitive funding opportunity for PY28 subawards. Prior participation does not guarantee future funding; however, subrecipients with strong performance in PY26–PY27 may receive competitive preference in the PY28 review process, as described in the future solicitation.

NOTE: The following application is a state funding application opportunity. Unless otherwise indicated as state requirements, all requirements are federal requirements. Federal requirements come from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 462 and 463, and the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200). Where there is a specific ‘State’ reference it will be marked with (State).

Montana Department Labor & Industry’s Workforce Services Division is the designated Administrative Entity for the WIOA Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program in the State of Montana. WSD staff are responsible for providing technical assistance and conducting oversight activities, including funding and program management, during the award period.

WSD’s mission is to provide innovative and cutting-edge training, monitoring and leadership activities while providing tools and strategies necessary for statewide program success to local adult education and family literacy programs. Applicants will collaborate with WSD to effectively and efficiently deliver quality, learner centered adult education services to qualified out-of-school youth and adults so that they possess the skills necessary to carry out their roles as employees, parents, citizens, and community participants.

Our vision is for every Montanan to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy, to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as community members, and to be involved in the lifelong learning process for themselves and family members.

The purpose of Adult Education (AE) is to create a partnership between the federal government, states, and localities to provide, on a voluntary basis, AE and literacy activities that:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for

- employment and economic self-sufficiency,
- Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family,
- Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to post-secondary education and training, including through career pathways, and
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their: reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English, and mathematical skills; and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

Funds will be allocated via a need/performance-based funding formula for multi-year grants. After the initial year of this multi-year grant award, subrecipients will be required to submit a non-competitive extension component. WIOA regulates the process that MTDLI, as the 'eligible applicant,' must follow in awarding grants to eligible subrecipients [§463.20]. The continuation of funding is not guaranteed if there is change in federal law, a reduction, or elimination in state or federal allocations.

Award renewals will be made on a program-by-program basis and will be contingent on the following:

- Funding availability,
- Successful implementation of the terms of the award,
- Meet both federal and state performance expectations, and
- Provide demonstrated value to the regional areas the program provides services.

Heavy emphasis on supporting learners (re)entering the workplace after increasing workplace skills with all WIOA title partners has made Integrated Education Training (IET) a focus in the future of Adult Education. MTDLI requires all WIOA Title II funded AE Subrecipients to be able to provide appropriate IET for eligible individuals, either on site, active coordination with other subrecipients, or utilizing statewide IET options.

MTDLI is committed to fostering a skilled and adaptable workforce that meets the needs of Montana's businesses and industries, with WIOA programs being a key component of these efforts. In implementing WIOA in Montana, MTDLI is seeking responses with strategies and framework in alignment with both federal and state workforce initiatives, America's Talent Strategy and 406 JOBS.

America's Talent Strategy (Federal and State)

America's Talent Strategy lays out a comprehensive plan to address the workforce needs of American companies, integrate existing workforce development systems to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, provide accountability for workforce training programs, upskill incumbent American workers, and develop alternatives to 4-year college degrees.

It rests on five strategic pillars:

- **Industry-Driven Strategies** – This pillar aims to align the workforce system with employer needs. To achieve this, programs will leverage high-quality work-based-learning models, including Registered Apprenticeship, and align training programs to career pathways to fill talent shortages in priority industries.
- **Worker Mobility** – Bringing more Americans into the labor force and helping them

advance based on demonstrated skills and attainment of credentials valued in the labor market. Programs will help eliminate barriers that prevent labor force participation and connect workers to training opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency.

- **Integrated Systems** – Operating programs in a streamlined, coordinated system that delivers unified workforce services and effectively leverages available resources. Programs will effectively refer between and leverage resources from partner programs and resources for effective service delivery.
- **Accountability** – Ensuring federally funded workforce programs deliver measurable results by linking investment to outcomes and delivering strong performance outcomes.
- **Flexibility & Innovation** – Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation.

To learn more about the five strategic pillars and read the entire strategy, view the full [America's Talent Strategy](#) plan.

406 JOBS: Modernizing Montana's Workforce (State)

On August 11, 2025, Governor Greg Gianforte announced the 406 JOBS initiative and signed [Executive Order 5-2025](#) founding the initiative. 406 JOBS is designed to modernize Montana's workforce, ensuring that every Montanan has a pathway to a career and a plan to achieve it.

Workforce goals:

- Ensure every Montanan has a clear and actionable career pathway.
- Reduce barriers for individuals who have exited the workforce.
- Achieve consistent quarterly growth in the labor force participation rate
- Increase the number of Montanans achieving financial self-sufficiency

To accomplish these goals, the 406 JOBS initiative incorporates initiatives to emphasize and expand apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship pathways, use local sector partnerships to engage employers and industry in the workforce pipeline and identify industry-demanded credentials and skills, and reduce barriers to employment for key populations including parents facing childcare shortages, veterans, and individuals reentering the labor market following incarceration.

Learn more about this exciting initiative:

- [406 JOBS Summary PDF](#)
- [Year One Work Plan One Pager PDF](#)
- [Year One Work Plan PDF](#)

MTDLI is committed to fostering a skilled and adaptable workforce that meets the needs of Montana's businesses and industries, with WIOA programs being a key component of these efforts. In implementing WIOA in Montana, MTDLI is seeking applications with strategies and frameworks in alignment with both federal and state workforce initiatives, America's Talent Strategy and 406 JOBS.

Types of Awards

1. Adult Education Grant (AEFLA)-WIOA Section 231 funding
2. Corrections Education Grant-WIOA Section 225 funding

All three grants will use the same application, with additional information required.

- Adult Education and/or English Language Acquisition Activities including Civics Education (Sec. 231) AEFLA – Adult Education Narrative and required forms.
- Corrections Education and Education for Other Institutionalized Individuals (Sec. 225) AEFLA - Adult Education AEFLA Narrative and required forms with specific references to a corrections population.

The application is comprised of two (2) Parts: Demonstrated Effectiveness and Grant Narrative with supporting documentation as outlined in this Competitive Grant Award process.

Grant Award Process and Cycle

Eligible, local Subrecipients are awarded funding through this Competitive Grant Award process. The two-year grant cycle for this competition will be:

- Year One: October 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027
- Year Two: July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028

Terms and Renewal of Awards

The Department intends to award two-year subawards covering program years 2026 (October 1, 2026-June 30, 2027) and 2027 (July 1, 2027-June 30, 2028), subject to satisfactory performance and the availability of federal funds. At the conclusion of this period of performance, the Department anticipates issuing a new competitive funding opportunity for PY28 subawards. Prior participation does not guarantee future funding; however, subrecipients with strong performance in PY26 and PY27 may receive competitive preference in the PY28 review process, as described in the future solicitation.

Renewal of funding is based upon the grant recipient's successful delivery of adult education services to the target populations and the achievement of annual performance targets. Grant recipients that do not meet grant requirements risk loss of funding at any point in the grant award period. The grant award may be terminated by either the Adult Education Subrecipient or MTDLI with a 30-day written notification.

Award renewals will be made on a program-by-program basis and will be contingent on the following:

- Funding availability,
- Successful implementation of the terms of the award,
- Meet both federal and state performance expectations, and
- Provide demonstrated value to the regional areas the program provides services.

Funds will be allocated via a need/performance-based funding formula. The continuation of funding is not guaranteed if there is change in federal law, a reduction, or elimination in state or federal allocations. MTDLI reserves the right to make grant awards under this appropriation without discussion with the bidders. Therefore, applicants should represent their best effort from both a technical and cost standpoint.

RIGHT TO RE-COMPETE

MTDLI reserves the right to hold a new competitive grant competition, if deemed necessary.

Non-Appropriation of Funds

All awards are subject to the availability of federal and state funds. Grants are not final until an award letter is executed by MDTLI.

Funding obligations of MTDLI shall cease immediately if there is a failure to legislatively appropriate at:

- Federal levels; and/or
- State levels should the Montana State Legislature or the Governor not approve the appropriation of funding to Adult Education.

Direct and Equitable Access

MTDLI is committed to conducting a competitive grant process that ensures direct and equitable access to all eligible applicants for the Montana Adult Education grant awards. Information regarding this application and its process is available broadly to potential applicants via the [MTDLI website](#).

The application process is designed to ensure that organizations, who have not previously received a Montana Adult Education grant, are provided with a fair and equitable opportunity to address the requirements of these applications. All applicants will be evaluated using the same criteria and process in accordance with federal and state requirements.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION-WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

It is the intention of WIOA to align the workforce system with education and workforce development in an effort to create a collective response to economic and labor market challenges on the national, state, and local levels. The Act emphasizes the importance of business collaboration and services to employers to ensure employment success. There are four **required** core partners under WIOA:

- Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, & Youth Programs
- Title II: Adult Education and Literacy Program
- Title III: Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation Program

In Montana, Titles I, II, and III are administered by the Department of Labor & Industry's Workforce Services Division. Title IV is under the administration of the Department of Health and Human Services. MTDLI and local subrecipients are required to work collaboratively with the core partners to address WIOA requirements and to ensure that adult education and literacy is an integral component of Montana's workforce system.

WIOA was created to provide state and local areas the flexibility to collaborate across systems in an effort to better address the employment and skills needs of current employees, job seekers, and employers. WIOA accomplishes this by prescribing:

- A stronger alignment of the workforce, education and economic development systems; and
- improving the structure and delivery in the system to assist American's workers in achieving a family-sustaining wage while providing America's employers with the skilled workers needed to compete on a global level.

Montana is considered a 'single area' State and is governed by a single workforce investment board, the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB). The SWIB is responsible for overseeing WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV and is the governing agency for all WIOA core partners in Montana.

One-Stop Centers and One-Stop Operator

WIOA One-Stop Centers and WIOA One-Stop Operators are two interconnected parts of Montana's workforce system, and cornerstones of the WIOA one-stop delivery system.

One-Stop Career Centers are physical locations (and virtual platforms) that bring together various workforce development programs and services under one roof (and online portals). These are "one-stop shops" for job seekers and employers seeking workforce solutions. Typical services found in a One-Stop Center include:

- Career Services such as job search assistance, resume writing workshops, and career counseling.
- Training Resources such as information on training programs, scholarships, and apprenticeships.
- Employment Services such as job listings, employer connections, and interview preparation support.
- Support Services such as referral to childcare assistance, transportation assistance, and financial aid resources.

The WIOA One-Stop Operator is the entity responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a WIOA One-Stop Center. Some key responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator include:

- Coordinating services by ensuring all the different programs and services offered at the One-Stop Center work together seamlessly.
- Managing resources by allocating staff, funding, and other resources effectively to deliver quality services.
- Maintaining partnerships by collaborating with various stakeholders like government agencies, community organizations, and employers to stay informed about local workforce needs.
- Performance measurement through tracking program outcomes and ensuring the One-Stop Center is meeting established goals for job placement and participant success.

In essence, the WIOA One-Stop Center provides a centralized location for workforce development resources, while the WIOA One-Stop Operator ensures its efficient and effective operation.

The Designated One-Stop Center in Montana is the Great Falls Job Service. The designated One-Stop Center, along with 17 additional Montana Job Service offices create the network of 18 American Job Centers as referenced in WIOA. Montana's One-Stop Operator is selected by the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB). Currently Montana's One-Stop Operator is the Job Service Bureau within the Montana Department of Labor & Industry.



Because WIOA requires partnership between Montana's One-Stop Center and WIOA core programs, MTDLI requires the Title II Adult Education subrecipients to work in partnership with the designated One-Stop Center (Great Falls Job Service-MACo District 5) and the other regional Job Service offices.

Because WIOA places great emphasis on aligning comprehensive adult education services with the integrated services of other core program partners, developing a seamless workforce system of integrated services is a primary focus in this application. Eligible subrecipients must demonstrate an ability to successfully participate in the local one-stop system as described in the Montana Combined State Plan.

WIOA Considerations Related to Local Plan

WIOA Section 231 requires alignment with the local plan. In the case of a single service area state, like Montana, the Combined State Plan is considered the local plan, and it outlines Montana's Vision, Mission, Goals, and Strategic Objectives. WIOA Sec. 231(e)(1)(A) and (B) states: "In awarding grants or contracts under this section, the eligible agency (MTDLI) shall consider:

- a) The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to:
 1. Regional needs as identified in the local plan under *section 108*; and
 2. Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals
 - i. Who have low levels of literacy skills; or
 - ii. Who are English language learners;
- b) WIOA Sec. 231 (e)(4) (4) the extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners."

All priority areas outlined in the Combined State Plan require program designs that are comprehensive and systemic, improve students' learning experiences, increase accessibility, enhance outreach and collaboration, promote diversity in the delivery of instruction and integrate the use of technology into instruction. Technology has become an increasingly important resource within the adult education classroom. When addressing priority areas, the

provider should consider how to:

- Incorporate technology into the everyday classroom experience;
- Provide instructional staff with the necessary professional development in the use of this technology; and
- Best structure system maintenance to ensure consistent delivery of instructional and data collection services.

General Requirements for all WIOA Adult Education Programs

The general requirements for all WIOA Adult Education programs are to include:

- Internal monitoring and data validation systems which evaluate data quality on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis
- The employment of high quality, professional Adult Education staff
- A Career Pathways system that allows for multiple on/off ramps and one that utilizes the 13 Considerations for Adult Education
- A standards-based educational system
- All other items identified throughout this Competitive Grant Award process or as identified through State supported/sponsored training

Programs Offered under Adult Education (AE)

An Applicant that receives an award shall use the funding to deliver the services described under each of the funding categories below:

1. Adult Education and Literacy Activities (WIOA §203(2))

Establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. These activities include the following:

- Adult Education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family literacy activities
- English language acquisition activities

2. Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals (CE) (WIOA §225)

Provide educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions with priority given to institutionalized individuals who are likely to leave the correctional facility within five years of participation in the program. Academic programs are to consist of:

- Adult education and literacy activities
- Special education
- Secondary school credit
- Integrated education and training
- Career pathways
- Concurrent enrollment
- Peer tutoring
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism

As a state requirement, responses are solicited from applicants who can provide the allowable services and activities which also incorporate digital literacy with workforce preparation activities to:

- Integrate career services through a career pathways system
 - Adult Education applicants, as one aspect of the integrated WIOA system for Montana, will need to effectively demonstrate their ability to implement a career pathways system that provides the aforementioned Adult Education services & activities.
- Concurrently enroll participants in core partner programs so that services complement the educational program of study and provide for full wrap-around services.

Data Privacy Requirements

Eligible subrecipients must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g; federal regulations 34 CFR Part 99), a federal privacy law administered by the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA protects the privacy of enrolled participants' education records and afford parents and eligible individuals certain rights to inspect and review education records, to seek to amend these records, and to consent to the disclosure of personal identifiable information (PII) from education records. The general rule under FERPA is that PII from education records cannot be disclosed without written consent.

Instructional Practices (Federal and State)

Rigorous educational standards have been instituted across the nation and Montana requires that eligible subrecipients demonstrate how programming will incorporate the following academic standards for Adult Education:

- College and Career Readiness Educational Standards for Adult Education;
- English Language Proficiency Standards for Non-native speakers of English;
- Social Capital Skill Standards; and
- Employability Skill Standards.

Programs are expected to provide a framework for instruction and assessing the competencies adults need in order to function effectively in society. Evidence and research-based instruction that embeds Montana Adult Education standards and college and career readiness standards are to be considered best practices, particularly when conducting classroom/instructor observations.

Curricula must be contextualized, when possible, for the sector industries identified in the Montana Combined State Plan and the 406 JOBS Plan. Instruction should be delivered using evidence-based strategies which incorporate the Essential Components of Reading and other best practices specifically identified for Adult Education.

Instructional delivery should be available through a variety of options including, but not limited to: structured classes, multi-level classrooms; small groups or workshops; off-site instruction; distance learning; and facilitated computer labs. Specific trained staff must also be available to coordinate and facilitate distance learning opportunities as a measure for participants unable to

attend a regular program and/or as an extension of classroom activities to increase practice and skill mastery.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Overview

MTDLI seeks applications from eligible subrecipients to deliver adult education services to **'eligible individuals'** who—

- Have attained 16 years of age;
- Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State laws; and
 - Are basic skills deficient.
 - Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
 - Are English Language learners.

The scope of the local Adult Education program activities must demonstrate success with all levels of students, including those with low levels of literacy, those with disabilities (including learning disabilities), and/or English language learners, in a career pathways system that allows for the development of the skills needed for successful transition to postsecondary education, training, and/or employment.

To be considered eligible for an award (34 CFR § 463.24), an applicant must prove Demonstrated Effectiveness in providing services to adults. Adult Education and literacy programs funded under this Subrecipient Award process are also required to contribute to the State-adjusted levels of performance for both the primary indicators and measurable skill gain in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and math. This includes following the Montana Assessment Policy with regards to pre- and post-testing, determining educational functioning levels, measuring performance and reporting.

Collaboration between eligible subrecipients and WIOA core partners, as well as other community organizations is essential:

- To ensure the non-duplication of services;
- To determine the capacity to serve the local need;
- To provide standardized and concurrent Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs across all regions of the State
- For the seamless transition of participants between educational levels; and
- For the transition of participants into postsecondary education, training and/or employment.

Local subrecipients will coordinate services over the course of this award period to meet regional needs through flexible delivery systems to include off-site instruction and distance learning options; services for all educational levels as defined in the National Reporting System.

Eligible Subrecipients

Per WIOA [§463.23], an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing AE and literacy activities is eligible to apply for grant funds. WIOA [§463.24] mandates that an agency must demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before that agency can be considered an eligible agency.

These organizations may include, but are not limited to:

- Local education agency (LEAs)
- Community-based organization or faith-based organization
- Volunteer literacy organization
- Institution of higher education
- Public or private non-profit Applicant
- Library
- Public housing authority
- Nonprofit institutions not described above which has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals
- A consortium* or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described above
- Tribal organization

* Any consortium applying for funds as part of this Competitive Subrecipient funding opportunity must complete and submit the template for each consortium member; this includes eligible subrecipients who plan to use subcontracted entities to provide WIOA Title II services to eligible individuals.

All applications will be pre-screened prior to review to determine if the applicant meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness to be considered eligible for an award. As part of the application documents submitted, all interested applicants must submit data covering a two-year period, which includes:

- The total number of individuals served; and
- Demonstrates the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities. Areas of demonstrated effectiveness should align as closely as possible with WIOA performance accountability measures. Data must demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services and include evidence of academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment outcomes, attainment of secondary credentials, and transitions to postsecondary education and training.

Applicants that have received WIOA Title II awards in previous grant competitions are not guaranteed funds in this Competitive Subrecipient funding opportunity.

Applicants not awarded funds in previous WIOA Title II grant competitions are not precluded from submitting applications as part of this competitive grant process. Applicants who are not awarded funds because of this Competitive Subrecipient funding opportunity will not be barred from applying for funds during future grant competitions.

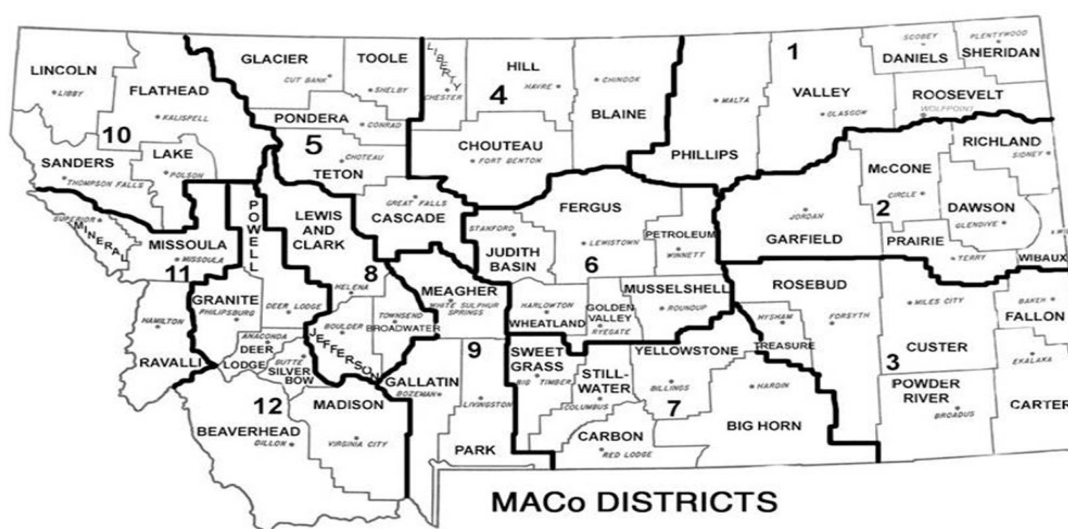
Geographic Coverage

1. Adult Education and Literacy Activities (WIOA §203(2))

Per Montana's Combined State Plan, the AE will be awarded to a maximum of 11 eligible subrecipients, who will be responsible for managing WIOA Title II Adult Education services. MACo districts 1 & 2 continue to be combined to create one service area (additionally, combining two or more MACo districts is allowable in a response). This scope of services is aimed at district-centralized administration to maximize funds and coordinate regional WIOA program objectives.

2. Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals (CE) (WIOA §225)

The CE Competitive Grant Award process will be awarded to one (1) Subrecipient to coordinate statewide services.



Purpose and Goals

The purpose of AEFLA (Section 202) is to create a partnership among federal, state and regional/local stakeholders to provide, on a voluntary basis, adult education and literacy activities in order to:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency.
- Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that:
 - Are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and
 - Lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
- Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, through career pathways; and
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their:
 - Reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English; and
 - Mathematics skills; and to

- Acquire an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

The [Montana State Plan](#), required under WIOA section 108, outlines the vision, priorities and goals for workforce development in the State. In addition to the collaborative goals, the adult education and literacy activities provided under the Adult Education & Family Literacy Act are detailed in this plan. All subrecipients funded through this competition are required to align local adult education and literacy activities with the State Plan and to coordinate with other local one-stop partners.

Montana's Adult Education program purposes are to provide adult education and literacy services that align with goals outlined in the Montana Combined State Plan and to encourage the growth of educational opportunities and, where applicable, to ensure career, citizenship and college readiness for all Montana adults. The overarching goals of the Adult Education program in Montana are to:

- Increase accessibility to adult education services in areas of the state most in need of these services;
- Create a seamless transition to postsecondary education and training systems;
- Build an educated and competitive Montana workforce;
- Foster strong, self-sufficient, literate families in an effort to reduce the current student achievement gap;
- Align Adult Education programming to statewide economic initiatives; and
- Utilize a collaborative and efficient approach in the use of community resources to meet the needs of adults in our communities through a one-stop system.

Program Accountability and Data Measures of Performance

Primary Indicators of Performance

WIOA Title II (29 USC § 3141) states that programs receiving WIOA Title II funding will be measured for effectiveness and student achievement in the areas indicated below. Under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, there are six primary indicators of performance:

- Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit (ERQ2):** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit (ERQ4):** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit (MEQ2):** The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- Credential Attainment (CRED):** The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant is

also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

E. Measurable Skill Gains (MSG): The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, toward such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following measurable skill level gains.

- Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level as measured by:
 - Pre/post testing using an NRS approved assessment
 - Enrollment in a State-recognized postsecondary education or training program during the program year.
 - Successful completion of a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency examination.
- Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Secondary or post-secondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;
- Satisfactory or better progress report, toward established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training subrecipient who is providing training; or
- Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

F. Effectiveness in Serving Employers (ESE): The percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program who were employed by the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit. For the WIOA core programs, this indicator is a statewide indicator reported by one core program on behalf of all WIOA core partners.

The above performance accountability measures are used by Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to assess Montana's effectiveness in achieving positive adult learner outcomes. In addition, these metrics are used by MTDLI to assess the performance of individual WIOA Title II funded programs. OCTAE uses past performance, as measured by the above metrics, and continuous improvement requirements to negotiate Montana's performance accountability targets with MTDLI.

Indicator of Performance	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026	July 1, 2026 – Jun 30, 2027
Employment Rate (Q2)	52.0%	53.0%	54.0%
Employment Rate (Q4)	56.5%	57.0%	58.0%
Median Earning (Q2)	\$4,390	\$4,500	\$4,600

Credential Rate	59.0%	60.0%	61.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	54.0%	55.5%	56.0%

Educational Functioning Levels

The National Reporting System has established Educational Functioning Levels (EFL's) for adult education. The Educational Function Levels shown below are to be utilized in Montana's adult education programs.

ABE Level 1: Beginning Literacy	ESL Level 1: Beginning Literacy
ABE Level 2: Beginning Basic Education	ESL Level 2: Low Beginning
ABE Level 3: Low Intermediate	ESL Level 3: High Beginning
ABE Level 4: High Intermediate	ESL Level 4: Low Intermediate
ABE Level 5: Low Adult Secondary Education	ESL Level 5: High Intermediate
ABE Level 6: High Adult Secondary Education	ESL Level 6: Advanced

Exclusions to Performance

The following reasons for exit allow the exclusion of a participant from ALL performance measures:

- Participant becomes incarcerated or enters a 24-hour support facility such as a hospital or treatment center;
- Participant needs medical treatment that lasts more than 90 days;
- Participant is deceased; or
- Participant is called into active duty in the National Guard or other armed services for at least 90 days.

Measuring Performance

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally funded, state administered adult education program. Montana Adult Education utilizes a secure, web-based Adult Education Data Management System (LACES) that funded programs are required to use. LACES collects student demographics, co-enrollments, student participation, and post exit outcome measures, including performance results as identified in the National Reporting System (NRS) for the percentage of program participants:

- Who earn measurable skill gain (MSG);
- In unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program and the median earnings of program participants within this quarter.
- In unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
- Who receive a secondary school diploma or high school equivalency diploma during participation or within one year after exit; receipt of secondary diploma is only counted if the participant also enters postsecondary education or training, or employment within one year after exit.
- Who receive a recognized secondary/postsecondary credential during participation or within one year after exit.

Using the State Data Collection System for Reporting Purposes (State)

To support effective data management for Adult Education in Montana, the Office of Adult Education provides the web-based student management system, LACES, for data collection. As a state requirement, approved subrecipients are responsible for designating a specific staff person responsible for data entry and reporting. Collected data is used to inform program decisions and to plan for continuous program improvement. In addition to the data required under AEFLA, local programs must submit monthly and quarterly performance reports and an annual end-of-year report. Approved subrecipients are also required to undergo multiple levels of state and local program monitoring to demonstrate compliance with various federal and/or state initiatives. To meet state accountability requirements, eligible subrecipients must agree to implement the following accountability practices:

- Use the Montana data collection system, LACES by LiteracyPro Systems Inc. to collect data and report on:
 - Programmatic and student data, specifically the program's progress in performance levels for Primary Indicators of Performance, Measurable Skill Gain Indicators and the standardized use of state-approved assessments.
 - The qualifications of local director, instructors, tutors and volunteers who are associated with the local adult education program and professional development hours recorded by each program staff member.
 - Referrals, WIOA core program co-enrollments⁹ etc.
 - Surveying and data matching of students to capture post-exit outcome measures; and
 - Any other items as identified by MTDLI.
- Data is to be entered according to the MT Assessment and Guidelines Policy. Data quality begins at the initial data collection. Checks and diagnostics are to be performed after each batch of data is input into the LACES database with the goal of meeting the state target performance measures.
 - Data validation protocols as outlined in [OCTAE Program Memorandum 19-1](#) must be implemented.
 - Approved subrecipients are required to work with the MTDLI as needed to correct data anomalies identified in the LACES database.
- As a state requirement, each student will attend an orientation and receive student career services and be pretested to determine the educational functioning level for placement into the education program, and this data is to be entered into the LACES data collection system.
- Students are counted as a "participant" after 12 hours of attendance. Students attending less than 12 hours are counted as "reportable individuals." Participants who stop attending for 90 days or longer will begin a new period of participation if/when they return.

The data from each project subrecipient is aggregated into the state database. From this data the National Reporting System (NRS) reports are produced and reported to the U.S. Department of Education – Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). The data from the states and territories is condensed and reported to Congress.

It is the grantee's responsibility to ensure staff are fully trained in the implementation of the Montana Assessment Policy, all assessment instruments, and the National Reporting System policies, procedures, and requirements as outlined in the LiteracyPro training and online manuals. Site license, technical support, and training are provided by the Adult Education State Office. LACES is used to collect and submit program and student data.

Monitoring / Corrective Action / Sanctions

Risk Assessment

WSD will conduct a risk assessment on each grantee for financial capacity, program staff as well as prior performance each subsequent year for the duration of the lifetime cycle of the grant, in accordance with state policy.

WSD must conduct regular oversight and monitoring of WIOA Title II programs to ensure compliance with WIOA provisions, laws, and regulations. The monitoring and audits process also provides an opportunity to strengthen and continuously improve workforce development programs and processes.

If WSD finds fiscal or programmatic noncompliance, staff will recommend corrective action to secure prompt compliance. Corrective action is supported in two ways: technical assistance and the operator's timely follow-through. Montana's State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) bears the authority to determine if service subrecipient deficiencies warrant sanctions and impose them. **Attachment-SWIB Sanction Policy**

Assessment Policy and Distance Learning Protocols for Reporting

According to [NRS Guidelines](#), the state is required to establish standardized student assessment policies utilizing NRS approved assessments and other placement measures to identify the Educational Functioning Levels of enrolled participants and conform to standard psychometric criteria for validity and reliability as defined by OCTAE. Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations 34 CFR § 462.40 requires that the State submit its assessment policy for review and approval at the time the NRS statistical reports are submitted. This is done on a yearly basis.

Cost Guidelines

How Funding is Determined and Allocated

The estimated federal allocation for this Competitive Subrecipient funding opportunity is \$1,249,967 and the state allocation is \$525,000. For planning purposes, PY26 (October 1, 2026-July 30, 2027) allocations for WIOA Title II subrecipients are listed below. Awarded amounts for Sections 225, 231, and 243 will depend upon funding available through federal and state appropriations. Applicants should submit a detailed budget based on these estimated allocations.

MACo Districts	Federal Allocation	State Allocation	*IELCE Funds	Total Award Amount	MOE/Local Match
District 1 & 2	\$33,558	\$14,206	-	\$47,764	\$19,349
District 3	\$33,627	\$14,037	-	\$47,664	\$19,119
District 4	\$34,862	\$14,605	-	\$49,467	\$19,893
District 5	\$257,751	\$107,701	\$6,140	\$371,592	\$146,696

District 6	\$21,224	\$8,815	-	\$30,039	\$12,007
District 7	\$208,816	\$137,367	-	\$346,186	\$139,913
District 8	\$54,829	\$23,140	-	\$77,969	\$31,519
District 9	\$41,579	\$17,243	-	\$58,822	\$23,487
District 10	\$116,454	\$48,895	\$8,787	\$174,136	\$66,599
District 11	\$284,393	\$119,229	\$42,073	\$445,695	\$162,398
District 12	\$46,792	\$19,762	-	\$46,554	\$26,917
Dept. of Corrections	\$116,082	-	-	\$116,082	\$47,188
Total	\$1,249,967	\$525,000	\$57,000	\$1,831,967	\$715,085

*IELCE funds listed in the table above reflect current contracts for those MACo Districts. For this Competitive Award, applicants may choose to bid on IELCE funding for any MACo District.

Actual available funding will be modified when MTDLI receives the final funding for program year 2026. (October 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027)

A performance-based funding (PBF) model will be utilized in the distribution of funds, although PBF may not be utilized in the initial year of the grant should new providers be identified. The formula uses census and State data for poverty, high school non-completers, and enrollment to establish the base funding. Performance-based funding is established on completions of Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) and target completions for high school equivalencies obtained, and entry into postsecondary education or skills training.

Funding Formula

Montana utilizes a state-imposed funding formula, consisting of need and performance-based measures, to allocate WIOA Title II funds. This funding formula currently includes components such as program enrollment, poverty, unemployment, dropout rate, educational functioning level gains, HSE attainment, and total measurable skills gained.

MTDLI reserves the right to evaluate and update the state-imposed funding formula.

Applicants must abide by CFRs [2 CFR 200 Subpart E](#) and [34 CFR 645 Subpart E](#) related to spending limitations and administrative costs.

- AEFLA funds may only be used to supplement and, to the extent practical, increase the level of funds that would, in the absence of AEFLA funds, be made available from nonfederal sources for the education of participating students. In no case may AEFLA funds *supplant* funds from nonfederal sources.

Montana Maintenance of Effort/Local Match Requirement

For MTDLI to maintain the federally required maintenance of effort (MOE), the state requires that WIOA funded AE subrecipients contribute a local match based on the percentage of total allocation received.

This match can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any non-federal or non-state dollars used to provide adult education and literacy activities;
- In-kind contributions to adult education and literacy activities such as:
 - Infrastructure and facilities costs
 - Utilities costs
 - Custodial services; Copying and printing costs
 - Phone, internet, or other technology costs
- The cost of staff time spent on providing adult education and literacy activities either:
 - Volunteered; or
 - Paid for by non-federal or non-state funds.

Match Requirement

Approved applicants must track cash and in-kind matches of **25%** of the approved grant award for each year in the cycle. These matches help to cover the maintenance of effort required for the State. The required **25%** local match may not come from federal funds of any source or earned income, such as fees collected.

Matching funds may include expenditures from state, local, and other non-federal sources for adult education programs, services and activities allowable under AEFLA. These matches may be in-kind and/or cash but must be clearly documented. The Projected Match Funding worksheet **Attachment-Projected Match Funding Worksheet (State)** is included with this application.

Examples: Classroom space must show actual cost for comparable space in the area, or a real estate appraisal, or cost of renting same space to other organizations; Volunteer's time must show value of a paid teacher's time in the same program

For subrecipients utilizing in-kind match dollars, documentation based on fair market analysis for an in-kind match is required. It is the responsibility of the subrecipients to create and house documents to support in-kind dollars. These documents can be requested by state or federal auditors.

IV. APPLICANT SUBMISSION

To enable MTDLI WSD to determine the capabilities of an applicant to perform the services specified in the Competitive Grant Award process, the applicant shall respond to the following regarding its ability to meet the State's requirements.

Each item must be thoroughly addressed. Applicants taking exception to any requirements listed in this section may be found to be nonresponsive or be subject to point deductions. To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet all mandatory requirements noted herein. The state will determine whether an applicant's response complies with the requirements. Applicants that fail to meet any mandatory requirements listed in this Competitive Grant Award process will be deemed non-responsive.

Applicants Must Include

1. Cover Sheet

Applicants must include **Attachment-Cover Sheet**.

2. Table of Contents

Include a clear identification of the material in the response by section and by page number.

3. Eligibility Certification

If a single Applicant is submitting a response to cover one or more MACo districts, the program must address the needs and services of all distinct MACo districts within the narrative.

Formatting Requirements

Applicants should adhere to the formatting requirements.

- a. Organize response into sections that follow the format of this Competitive Grant Award process
- b. Each response must begin with the heading, question number/letter and question followed by the Applicant's written response
- c. Font size: 11-point
- d. Font: Arial
- e. Margins: At least one inch
- f. Language: English
- g. All pages numbered
- h. All attachments labeled

The Completed Application Will Include

- a. Cover Sheet (Attachment)
- b. Table of Contents (create this attachment)
- c. Applicant Qualifications
 - o General Education Provision Act (Narrative)
 - o Demonstrated Effectiveness (Attachment)
- d. Consortium Application (Narrative and Attachment) (only needed if submitting as a Consortium)
- e. Program Introduction/Executive Summary (Narrative)
- f. Thirteen Considerations for Adult Education (Narrative & Attachment)
- g. Considerations for Corrections
 - o Consideration B: Corrections Consideration (Narrative)
- h. General Requirements
 - o Applicant's Financial Stability (Narrative/Provide Documentation)
 - o Applicant's Internal Control Assessment (Narrative/Provide Documentation)
- i. AE Partnership Worksheet (Attachment)
- j. Proposed Budget/Narrative Template (Attachment)
- k. Projected Match Funding Worksheet (Attachment)

IV. APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant Qualifications

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (Narrative)

Applicants requesting AEFLA/WIOA Title II funding as part of this Competitive Grant Award process are required to acknowledge their compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Failure to address the GEPA consideration and to submit a GEPA narrative will result in the non-consideration of the submitted application.

The Department of Education's [General Education Provisions Act \(GEPA\)](#) applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) includes in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, applicants should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent participants, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in the Federally funded project or activity. The description of steps to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; applicants should provide a clear and succinct description of how they plan to address those barriers that are applicable to program circumstances.

When addressing the GEPA consideration, submit a GEPA narrative addressing the following bullets:

- Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
- Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
- Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

2. Demonstrated Effectiveness (Attachment)

Only 'one' application for Demonstrated Effectiveness (DE) must be submitted by each potential subrecipient. Applicants applying for multiple grants under this Competitive Grant Award

process do not need to submit a DE application for each grant type. Federal regulations governing WIOA Title II (34 CFR § 463.24) clarify that only an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services is eligible to apply for AEFLA funds. Based on their records, applicants must provide performance data and the data source(s) demonstrating the skill improvement of eligible individuals with low levels of literacy in the following domains: reading, writing, mathematics, and English language proficiency.

Applicants must also provide performance data and the data source/s demonstrating outcomes for participants in employment, credential attainment, and transition to postsecondary education and/or training.

There are two ways in which an eligible subrecipient may meet the requirements of demonstrated effectiveness:

- An applicant that has been previously funded under WIOA must submit performance data required under section 116.
- An applicant that has not been previously funded under WIOA Title II must provide performance data to demonstrate its past effectiveness in serving eligible individuals who are basic skills deficient.

A state review committee will evaluate Demonstrated Effectiveness by reviewing two-year trends in performance data in each of the aforementioned categories. Applicants are required to complete this pre-screening process for all AEFLA funds. This process requires that eligible subrecipients submit data as outlined in **Attachment-Demonstrated Effectiveness**.

[Consortium Applications for Demonstrated Effectiveness](#)

Each consortia member must demonstrate its effectiveness in order to be an eligible subrecipient and therefore part of an eligible consortium. Each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness in the areas they are seeking to subrecipient services for:

- Academic level gains in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language;
- Employment outcomes;
- Attainment of Secondary School Diploma; and
- Transitions to Post-secondary Education/Training

[Consortium Application](#)

Applications must identify one agency that will act as the lead agency for the consortium. The lead agency shall submit a single response on behalf of the consortium outlining a plan to provide adult education and literacy activities throughout the local workforce development area, explaining the roles and responsibilities of each member agency. The lead agency serves as the applicant agency of record, the legally recognized fiscal agent for the grant project, and the single point of contact. The lead agency is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all aspects of the grant, including project plan, grant project monitoring and data reporting, and fiscal management. All consortium members are subject to the terms and conditions of the grant award, federal requirements, and state policies.

When addressing the Consortium Application, submit a narrative (**Attachment-Consortium Application and Narrative**) addressing the following bullets:

- Explain how consortium partners will promote co-enrollment with core partners.
- Explain how data will be managed and validated by consortium partners.
- Identify which partnering agency will be responsible for submitting required reports. (As a state requirement, only one partner may submit reports on behalf of the consortium.)
- Attach to the Application and Narrative:
 - a. An organizational chart showing all recipients/partners
 - b. Current signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) from each member of the consortium detailing their responsibilities to the consortium

Each member of a consortium **must** provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness as outlined in **Attachment-Demonstrated Effectiveness Worksheet**. If one consortium member is unable to demonstrate effectiveness, the consortium is ineligible.

Program Introduction/Executive Summary (State) (Narrative):

All applicants must provide an introduction to, and description of, the eligible applicant seeking Title II funding under Section 231 of WIOA.

All applicants must describe how the funds awarded under WIOA Title II will be spent consistently with the requirements of AEFLA. If the application represents a consortium, identify the responsibilities and funding for each applicant.

- Detail the geographic area of service and population(s) to be served.
- Overview of current services, participants, initiatives and partnerships.
 - A description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible applicant has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;
 - A description of how the eligible applicant has provided services in alignment with the local workforce development plan, including how such applicant promotes concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under Title II of WIOA, as appropriate.
- Explain the reasons for **not** offering instruction during any period of time in excess of two weeks. Explain how students in the MACo will be served if there is a lapse in service.
- Validate the program's commitment to an instructional delivery model that can support high school equivalency attainment, as well as preparation for entrance into postsecondary, a training program, or employment for adults with, or without, a high school diploma.
 - Specify how this support prepares a participant for a career pathway, indicating how the need to increase knowledge and skills for their next career step will be met.
- Describe how the program ensures that teaching staff offer a variety of instructional strategies that engage students and promote retention

Thirteen Considerations for Adult Education

Applicants must respond to each of the 'Thirteen Considerations' below and, if applying for multiple grants, are required to use section subheadings to identify which population the

response pertains to.

For example: AEFLA (WIOA Sec. 231)
Corrections (WIOA Sec. 225)
IELCE (WIOA Sec. 243)

The following criteria are based on the thirteen considerations (34.CFR §463.20) MTDLI is required to consider when awarding AEFLA funds (WIOA Sec. 231). Each consideration is a part of the quality review. Please provide a detailed response for each Consideration.

Statutory considerations for awarding grants from the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, AEFLA, Section 231 (e) include:

Consideration 1:

- (1) The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to:
 - (A) Regional needs as identified in the [state plan and state workforce initiatives] and
 - (B) Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plans as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals-
 - i. who have low levels of literacy skills; or
 - ii. who are English language learners

Required Narrative:

- Detail location of site(s) in which program delivery will occur and anticipated service levels.
- Detail how the program will meet the needs of all learners throughout the entire MACo district(s) they are applying for. Be specific and discuss any demographic or data analysis utilized for this purpose.
- Describe how the program, and the services the program provides, align to the needs of the MACo district/local workforce development needs.
- Describe how the program will provide services in alignment with the local workforce development plan (i.e. the Combined State Plan), including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under Title II, as appropriate.
- Describe how the program is designed to serve individuals who have low levels of literacy skills.
- Describe how the program is designed to serve individuals who are English language learners.

Consideration 2:

- (2) The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the applicant will provide services to individuals with disabilities, including individuals with learning disabilities.

- Describe how the program will provide instructional strategies that address barriers to employment. Be sure to address how recognizing the student's current needs and abilities and creating a plan to move forward is the first step toward success.
- What collaborative agreements are in place to help individuals with disabilities? (State)

Consideration 3

- (3) Past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in *34 CFR §463.155*, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low level of literacy.

Required Narrative:

- History of Organization in Managing Grants (*State*): Applicants will be expected to provide information on the following:
 - Background and experience of the applicant, including services to target population(s) and area served;
 - Management of the project to ensure the attainment of successful outcomes;
 - Types of grants and grant sources administered in the past 4 years; and
- Detail the program's past effectiveness as it relates to the state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in *34 CFR §463.155*, especially with respect to how the program has worked to improve the literacy of eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy.
- Describe what the data indicates and how it demonstrates effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities.
 - Include a description of what the data shows in terms of the program does well as where it can focus on improving outcomes.
- Provide the steps the applicant intends take to meet all of Montana's annual performance targets in future program years.

Consideration 4

- (4) The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the [state plan and state workforce initiatives], as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the responsibility as a One-Stop partner will be fulfilled.
- Explain how local career pathways programming will be implemented at both the program level as well as the participant level to ensure alignment to the combined state plan, the 406 Jobs initiative, America's Talent Strategy and regional workforce needs (State)
- Describe how the program will demonstrate alignment between proposed Adult Education activities and services and the activity and services of the one-stop center.
- Discuss the plans for referral services and evolving partnerships in the proposed MACo district(s) served.

Consideration 5

(5) Whether the eligible subrecipients program:

- (A) Is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and
- (B) Uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction.

Required Narrative:

- Detail the program's approach to evaluating program quality.
- Detail the program's approach to overall enrollment process and class scheduling plans to maximize opportunities for adult learners to demonstrate progress.
- Describe how the program provides sufficient intensity and quality to allow students to make substantial learning gains.
- Summarize how the program design incorporates the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains, including the essential components of reading instruction.

Consideration 6

(6) Whether the eligible subrecipients activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider's, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the program's curriculum incorporates:
 - A balance of academic and real-life contexts;
 - A variety of special learning needs, including minimal literacy skills and learning disabilities;
 - Skills and knowledge learners need to transition successfully to career and post-secondary education; and
 - Contextualization of core program components.
- Reading, Writing, and Speaking Instruction
 - Describe how the program delivers reading, writing, and speaking instructions.
 - Describe how the program's instruction is based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous and appropriate research available.
 - Describe how the program incorporates scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.
- Mathematics Instruction
 - Describe how the program delivers mathematics instruction.
 - Describe how the program's instruction is based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous and appropriate research available.
 - Describe how the program incorporates scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.

- English Language Acquisition Instruction
 - Describe how the program delivers English language acquisition instruction.
 - Describe how the program's instruction is based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous and appropriate research available.
 - Describe how the program incorporates scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.

Consideration 7

- (7) Whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how much technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the program uses technology to enhance programming and increase the quality of learning.
 - Describe how the program's use of technology leads to improved performance.
 - Describe how the program is incorporating AI-skills development, for example using the USDOL AI Literacy Framework (State)
- Explain how the program uses distance education to enhance programming and increase the quality of learning.
- Report on how the program's use of distance education leads to improved performance.
- Describe how the program's activities effectively teach students the skills associated with the use of technology enabling the student to find, evaluate, organize, create and communicate information.

Consideration 8

- (8) Whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning and context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Required Narrative:

IET is a service approach providing three integrated components: adult education and literacy activities provided concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Integrated Education and Training models must have a single set of learning objectives and must be offered concurrently throughout a participant's enrollment in Adult Education.

MTDLI does not require all eligible subrecipients to provide IET. However, applicants should consider and begin planning for an IET. Through coordination with community partners and other training resources the applicant may design and fulfill the requirements of this model. Not all students are required to be involved in IET since this may not be appropriate for all types of students.

- Describe the processes used to identify the IET(s) as most in-demand, local training provider collaborations, and needs assessments done.
- Describe the applicant's activities to provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training will be aligned to meet the most in-demand industries in the state.
- Describe how the activities will provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training utilizing a single set of learning objectives, career pathways and occupational clusters.
- Describe how students will acquire the skills necessary to transition to and complete postsecondary education, training programs, obtain and advance in employment learning to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Consideration 9

- (9) Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, through electronic means.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the qualifications of staff contribute toward program capacity to improve the skills and knowledge of Adult Education learners.
- How do you ensure that instruction is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education?
- Describe how your program's new instructor onboarding process, including pre-service, policy training and mentoring services.
- Describe specific efforts to recruit and retain qualified staff.
- Describe your process for evaluating instructors and other program staff. Explain how evaluations are used to determine professional development needs and promote program improvement.
- Describe any face-to-face and electronic professional development available to the staff, or which they currently participate in.

Consideration 10

- (10) Whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the program coordinates the development of career pathways with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with:
 - Elementary and secondary schools;
 - Postsecondary educational institutions;
 - Institutions of higher education;
 - Local workforce development boards;
 - One-stop centers;
 - Job training programs, including registered apprenticeships;
 - Social services agencies;
 - Business and industry;
 - Labor organizations;
 - Community-based organizations; and
 - Nonprofit organizations.
- Describe how the program will expand the coordinated efforts and collaboration for developing Career Pathways with the above entities.
- Present the support services the program plans to offer, to help individuals meet employment goals so that they are on pathways to sustainable wages.
- Describe how the applicant will individualize a participant's career pathways development plan by utilizing career planning tools, career counseling, labor market information, and other relevant data.
- Complete the AE Partnership worksheet.
 - Applicants must complete the entire **Attachment-AE Partnership Worksheet**, Including the following information:
 - A brief description of each partnership.
 - Outcomes of successful partnership activities.
 - Potential partnering activities that will aid individuals.

Consideration 11

(11) Whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with federal, state, and local support services (such as childcare, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the program offers flexible schedules, distance learning and coordination of support services, necessary to enable individuals to attend and complete programs and achieve learning goals.
- Describe how the program offers flexible schedules necessary to enable individuals with disabilities or other special needs to attend and complete programs and achieve learning goals.

- Detail how the program coordinates with federal, state, and local entities to minimize barriers and provide the following services necessary to enable individuals to attend and complete programs:
 - Childcare;
 - Transportation;
 - Mental health services;
 - Career planning; and
 - Other federal, state, or local support services the program coordinates.
- Describe any support services to be offered to program participants, including those made through a referral process.
- Explain the process the program intends to utilize to make consistent referrals to community services providers so that participants are provided with full wrap-around services.

Consideration 12

- (12) Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system with the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and monitor program performance;

Required Narrative:

Funded programs must commit to using Montana's Adult Education Student Information System (LACES) to allow for the recording, monitoring, and reporting of measurable participant outcomes (State)

Applicants will be expected to:

- Provide a brief statement of assurance that the program will be able to comply with the minimum requirements needed to access and use the state data collection system.
- Describe the data collection process, quality controls and review of data procedures.
- Describe what quality controls are used, what data is shared with instructors, and what triggers adjustments to instruction and assessments. (State)
- Describe the program director's role in ensuring accurate data collection, data entry, and how data-related tasks are assigned to appropriate staff. (State)
- Detail the processes in place to ensure the accurate collecting, recording and securing of student information including, but not limited to, demographics, testing, attendance, and outcome data.

Consideration 13

- (13) Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

Required Narrative:

- Provide information on the need for English language acquisition and civics education programs in the area(s) in which the program is located.
 - What data sources indicate the need?
 - If the agency intends to provide English language acquisition services, describe how the applicant will provide ELL services (assessment, instructional services, civics education, integrated employment, and training).

- If the agency does not provide and does not intend to provide English language acquisition services, describe how the agency uses or plans to use partnerships to ensure those services are provided to eligible individuals in need in the MACo district.

In order to receive funding, programs must satisfactorily address all thirteen considerations and be aligned to the local plan and at least one of the statewide initiatives. All questions must be addressed and answered for grant consideration.

Additional Considerations for Corrections

Consideration B: Corrections Consideration

NOTE: Complete this section if your program intends to service the target populations as listed and defined in Section 225.

The law states:

Section 221(a)(1): shall use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 and to carry out section 225, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225.

Section 225(b): The funds described in subsection (a) shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for-

- Adult Education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiative and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

To support the reporting requirements of Section 225(d) each program will report out annually the activities carried out under this section.

Applicants will be expected to:

- Respond to the 13 considerations for Adult Education
- Respond to the additional questions in the Subrecipient Award process application for corrections (directly below). **Include in narrative labeled as a separate section.**
- Provide budgets and other forms as directed

Required Narrative:

- Describe how the program will carry out corrections education and education for other institutional individuals. Address each sanctioned program activity the program will provide (listed again below); how it will be provided; and where/to whom:
 - Adult Education and literacy activities;
 - Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;

- c. Secondary school credit;
 - d. Integrated education and training;
 - e. Career pathways;
 - f. Concurrent enrollment;
 - g. Peer tutoring; and
 - h. Transition to re-entry initiative and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.
- Describe how the applicant will establish priority of services in the program.
 - Describe the educational programs to be offered for transition to re-entry and other post-release service with the goals of reducing recidivism.
 - Describe any integrated education and training, apprenticeships and/or postsecondary level programs that are available to eligible individuals.

General Requirements

1. Applicant's Financial Stability (Combination of Narrative/Provide Documentation)

Applicants shall demonstrate their financial stability to provide services as described in this Competitive Grant Award process by:

- a. Providing financial statements, preferably audited, for the two (2) consecutive years immediately preceding the issuance of this Competitive Grant Award process.
- b. Providing copies of any quarterly financial statements that have been prepared since the end of the period reported by its most recent annual report.
- c. Describe offeror's federal grant management experience.
- d. Describe offeror's Financial Management System.
- e. Describe the offeror's ability to produce required reports including information pertaining to contract award management, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, and income.
- f. Describe the offeror's ability to compare actual expenditures to budgeted amounts.
- g. Describe the offeror's process to secure supporting source documentation for accounting records.
- h. Describe the offeror's ability to ensure accurate charging of costs to appropriate program funds, as well as the allocation methodology used when charging costs against multiple program funds.

2. Applicants' Internal Control Assessment (Combination of Narrative/Provide Documentation)

Applicants shall provide:

- a. A copy of the most recent internal control assessment conducted independently. This assessment should include review of accounting systems, IT security systems, and other transaction-based processes.
- b. An internal policy for ensuring that these reviews are conducted on a regular schedule.
- c. A description of the applicant's ability to fiscally manage and administer programs in compliance with federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- d. Disclosure of any audit and/or fiscal compliance problems identified during monitoring that led to formal corrective action within the past five years and their resolutions.

AE Partnership Worksheet (Attachment)

This worksheet is designed for each adult education program to document the partners they currently collaborate with or plan to collaborate with to support WIOA Title II participants. Applicants need to provide essential contact information for each partner and to outline the specific wrap-around services that strengthen participant success. Applicants should briefly note what has been accomplished or what is planned. **Attachment-AE Partnership Worksheet Template**

Proposed Budget Template (Attachment)

Submit a budget template outlining how funds will be spent. One overall budget will be submitted on a single initial budget form (**Budget/ Narrative_Corrections Template**). The amounts shown on this budget must match what is discussed in the Budget Narrative. The Projected Match Funding worksheet (**Attachment-Projected Match Funding** (State) should also be included.

V. EVALUATION

Part I. Review Committees

1. Demonstrated Effectiveness Committee

MTDLI utilizes a 'Demonstrated Effectiveness' review to determine whether the application has met the requirements outlined in the subrecipient application process. Applications which meet this screening requirement will have full grant applications advanced to the Scoring Committee for consideration in funding. Demonstrated Effectiveness applications which do not meet requirements outlined in the Subrecipient Award process will not have full grant applications advanced to the Scoring Committee for funding consideration.

Eligibility will be based upon a 'yes'/'no' determination where:

Yes indicates the applicant has submitted data in the areas shown below across a two-year period. To successfully demonstrate effectiveness, applications will need to demonstrate effectiveness as shown below:

1) Overall academic level gains

- **All applicants** must demonstrate a minimum success rate of a two-year average of 35% for overall academic level gains.

2) Employment outcomes:

- **All applicants (except applicants solely applying for section 225 funds)** must demonstrate minimum success rates as follows:
 - i. 2nd quarter after exit: a two-year average of 10%
 - ii. Median income in 2nd quarter after exit: a two-year average of \$1
 - iii. 4th quarter after exit: a two-year average of 10%

3) Credential Attainment

- **All applicants (except applicants solely applying for section 225 funds)** must demonstrate a minimum success rate of a two-year average of 10% for overall credential attainment.

4) Transition to Postsecondary Education/Training (**except applicants solely applying for section 225 funds**)

- Applicants applying for 231 funds only may demonstrate a minimum success rate of a two-year average of 10% for transitions to post-secondary/training
- Applicants applying for 243 funds only may demonstrate a minimum success rate of a two-year average of 10% for transitions to post-secondary/training
- Applicants applying for multiple funding streams may demonstrate a minimum success rate of a two-year average of 10% for transitions to post-secondary/training

Applications which meet the above criteria for demonstrated effectiveness will pass the pre-screening process.

No indicates the applicant has not demonstrated effectiveness in serving eligible individuals. Grant application will not be forwarded to committees for consideration in funding.

2. SWIB Alignment Committee

WIOA mandates that Montana's State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) coordinate activities with education and training providers within the designated regional service areas. In accordance with WIOA Title II (34 CFR §463.21), the Montana AEFLA grant solicitation requires that the SWIB be given the opportunity to review all AEFLA applications submitted.

The SWIB will review the application materials of eligible providers to determine whether the applications are consistent with Montana's Combined State Plan. Upon completion of this review, the SWIB will submit a formal recommendation to MTDLI.

Prior to awarding, SWIB and MTDLI may require applicants to revise submitted applications, including changes that would better align services with Montana's WIOA State Plan and state workforce needs.

An Alignment Committee consisting of three members from the Montana SWIB will be reviewing for alignment of the application to the Montana Combined State Plan as well as alignment to Statewide Initiatives. Four questions have been embedded in the application under Considerations 1, 4, 6, and 10, which will be read by the Alignment Committee as designated by the MT SWIB.

This committee will be instructed to read the applications and make recommendations to improve the alignment of the goals and objectives outlined in the Combined State Plan. (34 CFR § 463.21(b)(2)). SWIB board members will not have a conflict of interest in this process. Recommendations from the SWIB Alignment Committee will then be considered by MTDLI when determining the extent to which the application addresses the required considerations (34 CFR§463.21(b)(2)).

SWIB Alignment Committee Scoring

There are no points associated with the SWIB Alignment Committee review; however, scoring from the committee is based upon:

- Application has **not passed**. If the application receives non-passing levels from the Committee, the MTDLI will recompet the area **or** award the proposed area to a provider approved for the area in which the failed application was submitted.
- Application has passed but **needs improvement**. Applications at this level will be

- expected to revise and resubmit the narrative.
- Application has **passed**.
- Application has passed as **exemplary**.

3. Scoring Committee

The Scoring Committee will consist of an independent panel of readers. They will review the application for compliance with the state's Competitive Grant Award process and WIOA requirements, completeness, and inclusion of all requested forms and budgets. This team will score and rank the applications. Members will not have a conflict of interest in this process.

Basis of Evaluation

The maximum number of points that an application from the Scoring Committee can receive for an AEFLA application is 400 based on the distribution table shown below. 20 points are awarded for Corrections applications and 20 points for IELCE applications.

Applications which receive a 'Fail' on Pass/Fail items may be expected to resubmit the 'Failed' documentation.

Any response that fails to achieve at least 60% of the total points available or receives a "fail" for any individual evaluation criteria, may result in disqualification at the discretion of the procurement officer.

Scoring Guide

The criteria used in the scoring rubrics are based upon the Thirteen Considerations required by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Section 231(e)). Although there are multiple attachments that do not have points, these items must be completed, or the application will not be read and scored. Applications for Corrections and IELCE will also be scored on additional questions as outlined in their respective documents.

Evaluated Section	Point Values
Cover Sheet	Pass/Fail
Table of Contents	Pass/Fail
Applicant Certification	
1. General Education Provision Act (GEPA) Narrative	Pass/Fail
2. Demonstrated Effectiveness	Pass/Fail
Program Introduction/Executive Summary	Pass/Fail
Thirteen Considerations for Adult Education	85% of points possible
1. Responsiveness to Regional Needs	60 points
2. Serve Eligible Individuals with Disabilities/Learning Disabilities	15 points
3. Demonstration of Past Performance	20 points
4. Alignment between Activities/Services and Goals Workforce Plan	40 points
5. Intensity and Quality of Instruction	20 points
6. Instructional Best Practices	40 points
7. Effective Use Technology, Services, and Delivery Systems	10 points

8. Activities to Provide Learning and Context	15 points
9. Qualified and Well-Trained Instructors and Staff	25 points
10. Coordination with other Service Subrecipients	50 points
11. Flexible Schedules and Provide Support Services	20 points
12. High Quality Data Collection Process	15 points
13. Demonstrated need for additional ELA and Civics Programs	10 points
Considerations for Corrections or IELCE	
Consideration B: Corrections Consideration Narrative	20 points
Consideration C: IELCE Consideration Narrative	20 points
General Requirements	
1. Financial Stability	
a. Federal grant experience	Pass/Fail
b. Audited financial statement	Pass/Fail
c. Quarterly financial statements	Pass/Fail
d. Financial management system	Pass/Fail
e. Ability to produce reports	Pass/Fail
f. Ability to compare actual expenditures to budgeted amounts	Pass/Fail
g. Ability to secure supporting source documentation	Pass/Fail
h. Ability to ensure accurate charging of costs	Pass/Fail
2. Internal Control Assessment	
a. Internal control assessment	Pass/Fail
b. Internal policy	Pass/Fail
c. Fiscally manage and administer programs	Pass/Fail
d. Audit/monitoring compliance	Pass/Fail
AE Partnership Worksheet	Pass/Fail
Cost Proposal	15% of points possible
1. Proposed Budget/Narrative Template	30 points
2. Projected Match Funding Worksheet	30 points
Equal Pay for Montana Women EO 12-2016 Applicants who agree and certify compliance to Executive Order No. 12-2016, Equal Pay for Montana Women, will receive a bonus of 5% of the total points available. Select 'Yes' in Submittable to agree and certify compliance.	5% total points possible

Part II: The Selection Process

The following steps will be taken in the selection process in awarding grants:

- Applications will be ranked and committee recommendations will be reviewed by MTDLI.
- Notification of provider selection or non-selection will be made in writing by MTDLI.
- Issuance of this Subrecipient Award in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Montana to award funding, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel, or any other costs incurred by the applicant.

- MTDLI reserves the right to reject all applications or to offer multiple awards.
- Grant formula funding will be applied and funding levels established. Performance-based funding (PBF) may not be applicable in the initial grant year if new providers are identified through the competitive process. The final decision as to whether PBF is to be utilized will rest with MTDLI.
- Awards announcements with any required revisions are to be determined by MTDLI.

VI. RESOURCES

- [Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act](#)
 - Section 231: Adult Education
 - Section 225: Corrections Education
- [Montana State Plan](#)
- [State Workforce Innovation Board](#)
- [Montana Department of Labor & Industry Workforce Services Division](#)
- [Montana Vocational Rehabilitation](#)

VII. REFERENCED ATTACHMENTS

Appendix – WIOA Related Definitions
 Appendix – MT Assessment Standards and Guidelines 2025-2026
 Attachment – SWIB Sanction Policy
 Attachment – Cover Sheet
 Attachment – Demonstrated Effectiveness Worksheet
 Attachment – Consortium Application and Narrative
 Attachment – AE Partnership Worksheet
 Attachment – Proposed Budget/Narrative Template_Corrections
 Attachment – Projected Match Funding Worksheet
 Attachment – Federal Terms and Conditions
 Attachment – General Requirements