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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**  
**OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP AND WORK-BASED LEARNING**

**PRE-APPRENTICESHIP IN CAREER EDUCATION (PACE) Grant**  
**Program (Round 2 Funding)**

**NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY**  
**Fiscal Year 2026**

**Announcement Date: January 9, 2026**

**Technical Assistance Workshop: Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 1pm and  
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 1pm**

**Letter of Intent Due: No later than noon, Friday, March 6, 2026**

**Application Due: No later than noon Friday, March 13, 2026**

**Funding Amount: \$3,000,000**

**Robert Asaro-Angelo**  
**Commissioner**

**Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) Grant Program  
FY2026 Round 2 Notice of Grant Opportunity**

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## Notice of Availability of Grant Program Funds

**Take Notice** that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4 et seq., the Department of Labor and Workforce Development \*(hereinafter “the NJDOL”) regularly publishes on its website all notices of fund availability pertaining to Federal or State grant funds, which may be awarded by the Department. The notices of fund availability may be found on the Department’s website under the heading “Research & Information” and the subheading “Grant Opportunities” by hovering the computer mouse cursor over the hyperlink <https://www.nj.gov/labor/research-info/grants.shtml> and hitting Ctrl+Left Click.

### A. Name of Grant Program

Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) Program

The PACE Program is a competitive grant offered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL).

### Introduction

The main goal of this Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) is to promote equality of opportunity, upward mobility, and economic fairness. Due to the rise of globalization, international trade, advances in information technology, mechanical automation of production processes, and reductions in union membership over the past few decades, American workers have found themselves displaced by new technologies and in competition with overseas labor markets. Advances in technology have increased the use of mechanization in the production process and in professional spaces that are not often attributed to skill-biased technical change. These technological advances have increased demand for more technically advanced, high-skilled positions that require occupational training at the secondary, post-secondary, and adult education levels.

Upskilling and retooling have helped mitigate these labor market conditions. Apprenticeship programs are a tried-and-true method to increase lifetime earnings and provide a pathway to a sustainable career. According to the United States Department of Labor, “90 percent of apprentices who complete an apprenticeship retain employment, with an annual salary of \$80,000.”<sup>1</sup>

In August 2019, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development released a Notice of Grant Opportunity [Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors \(GAINS\)](#). The GAINS grant program was created to promote and expand the availability of Registered Apprenticeship programs in the state of New Jersey. With its inception, the need for a pre-apprenticeship grant program to work in conjunction with GAINS formed thus leading to the development of PACE. The PACE program is the logical predecessor component to developing a pipeline of qualified individuals seeking placement in an apprenticeship program, economically sustainable workplace, and/or post-secondary education.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/employers/explore-apprenticeship>

## **B. Purpose of the Grant**

The purpose of the PACE Program is to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in [Registered Apprenticeship](#) programs. In March of 2024, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) released a Training and Employment Notice (TEN 23-23<sup>2</sup>) to provide clarity and guidance on Quality Pre-Apprenticeship programs based on ruling from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). In alignment with the USDOL recommendations, the PACE grant requires that these pre-apprenticeship programs have a **documented partnership with at least one Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor that is committed to hiring from the pre-apprenticeship program within 18 months from the start of the contract period of performance**, and together, they expand the participant's career pathway opportunities with industry-based training coupled with classroom instruction. The program will drive economic development through skills and educational attainment and create pathways to better paying careers and advanced credentials.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning seeks to encourage the growth of career pathway opportunities for people disconnected from employment, training, and education. Within the workforce development system, pre-apprenticeships serve a critical role for people to acquire career-specific skills, advance work readiness, and connect them to longer-term career opportunities.

The PACE Program also seeks to eliminate economic barriers commonly associated with an individual's inability to invest in skills training and work readiness. In order to mitigate these barriers, the PACE Program encourages the use of stipend payments for all pre-apprenticeship program participants. This NGO provides funding for stipends for participants in the pre-apprenticeship training program.

Applications will be evaluated on the strength of the career pathway and partnerships proposed, the quality of programming proposed, and the lead applicant's organizational capacity to implement the proposal. As noted below, greater weight will be given to applications that build career pathways for individuals who did not receive a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) or who did not complete a secondary school education in a home-school setting. All applicants should demonstrate their ability to ensure participants are able to acquire measurable skill gains as verified through regular progress reports. **PACE funds can also be used to support the attainment of a high school equivalency diploma or GED.**

Organizations funded through, or work in partnership with, the [Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors \(GAINS\)](#) program grantees are strongly encouraged to apply for this NGO. The PACE program can provide a pipeline of candidates for those Registered Apprenticeship programs funded through GAINS. To learn more about these grantees, contact [apprenticeshipunit@dol.nj.gov](mailto:apprenticeshipunit@dol.nj.gov).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-23-23>

### C. Mission, Goals and Objectives

#### *Mission*

The mission of the PACE Program is to better align secondary, post-secondary, adult education, and occupational training to meet labor demands unique to New Jersey and develop career pathways that lead to economically sustainable wages. Pre-apprenticeship programs funded through the PACE Program will provide education and training that leads to one of the following outcomes:

- Admission into a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program with a starting wage of \$17 per hour or greater;
- Employment with a starting wage of not lower than \$17 per hour or greater;
- Admission into a post-secondary college or occupation-specific career training program.

#### *Goals*

This competitive NGO is being made available to accomplish any of the following primary goals:

- Create a pipeline of qualified individuals that move from pre-apprenticeship programs to Registered Apprenticeship, employment, or post-secondary career pathways;
- Expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities to New Jersey residents, including the underrepresented, disadvantaged, or low-skilled populations; and
- Increase the New Jersey labor supply with a larger pool of qualified workers who possesses the skills and qualifications necessary to receive and maintain employment.

#### *Objectives*

NJDOL has established the following objectives for the PACE Program:

##### Establish and expand Pre-Apprenticeship programs in targeted industry sectors:

Pre-apprenticeships that target high-growth, high-vacancy, or emerging regional industries are highly encouraged. Applications which contain pre-apprenticeship training within the following industry clusters will be viewed favorably in the proposal evaluation process:

Advanced Manufacturing	Bio Pharma/Life Sciences
Energy, Utilities and Infrastructure	Retail, Hospitality and Tourism
Financial Services/Insurance	Transportation, Logistics and Distribution
Information Technology/Cyber Security	Green Jobs/Renewable Energy
Healthcare	Other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) related sectors/occupations
Construction & Building Trades – including lead abatement occupations	Public Service
Educational Services	Early Childhood Education

**Applicants who do not meet the targeted population or industry cluster criteria are not precluded from applying for grant funding under this NGO.**

Long Term Objectives:

1. Increase the number of pre-apprenticeship programs in NJ.
2. Develop more pre-apprenticeships opportunities that target high-growth, high vacancy, or emerging regional sectors, industries, and occupations.
3. Increase the number of pre-apprentices in NJ.
4. Improve job prospects for all New Jersey residents.
5. Remove economic barriers to training and employment (childcare, transportation, etc.).
6. Provide training that leads to certifications, licenses and/or college credits.
7. Move workers from low skill entry-level positions or from industries directly affected by international trade or skill-biased technical change to full occupational proficiency.
8. Provide greater employment opportunities for members of underrepresented groups unemployed/dislocated workers, students.
9. Assist small businesses with developing quality training programs.
10. Develop a highly-skilled workforce that possesses the skills and qualifications demanded by businesses in NJ.
11. Increase the proficiency of NJ's labor supply with the goal of increasing wages in the state and making the state labor market an attractive option for out of state businesses to locate.
12. Increase the number of professional credentials for residents in NJ.
13. Increase employment opportunities for residents in existing or new apprenticeable industries.
14. Recognition of Registered Apprenticeship as a key component of New Jersey's Workforce Readiness System.

**Definitions**

**Apprenticeship** – A formal, on-the-job training program that typically has five components: 1) employer involvement; 2) on-the-job training; 3) related technical instruction; 4) paid work experience; and 5) award of a portable, nationally recognized industry credential.

**Apprenticeable Occupation** – An apprenticeable occupation is a skilled trade or craft that is recognized by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) as meeting the necessary criteria to adopt the Registered Apprenticeship training model. Per 29 CFR 29.4. For an occupation to be deemed apprenticeable it must(a) involve skills that are customarily learned in a practical way through a structured, systematic program of on-the-job supervised learning; (b) be clearly identified and commonly recognized throughout an industry; (c) involve the progressive attainment of manual, mechanical or technical skills and knowledge which, in accordance with the industry standard for the occupation, would require the completion of at least 2,000 hours of on-

the-job learning to attain; and (d) Require related instruction to supplement the on-the-job learning<sup>3</sup>. The list of apprenticeable occupations can be found [here](#).

**Career Pathway** – The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high- quality education, training, and other services that:

- A. Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- B. Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1927 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);
- C. Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
- D. Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- E. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- F. Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- G. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

**Registered Apprenticeship** – The term “Registered Apprenticeship,” means a program that contains national industry standards and is registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) (or a federally recognized state apprenticeship agency). Typically, these programs are at a minimum of one-year in duration, require 144 hours of related technical instruction (RTI) and 2,000 on-the-job training hours. At the completion of every USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program, the individual receives an industry informed and nationally recognized credential from USDOL. More information on Registered Apprenticeship can be found [here](#). **It is strongly encouraged that all applicants familiarize themselves with Registered Apprenticeship prior to developing their proposal.**

**Pre-apprenticeship** – per 29 CFR 30.2: Pre-apprenticeship program means a training model designed to assist individuals who do not currently possess the minimum requirements for selection into an apprenticeship program to meet the minimum selection criteria established in a program sponsor's apprenticeship standards required under part 29 of this chapter (29 CFR 29) and which maintains at least one documented partnership with a Registered Apprenticeship program. It involves a form of structured workplace education and training in which an employer, employer group, industry association, labor union, community-based organization, or educational institution collaborates to provide formal instruction that will introduce participants to the competencies,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-A/part-29>

skills, and materials used in one or more apprenticeable occupations.<sup>4</sup>

These programs or sets of strategies are designed to prepare individuals, in both youth (16 to 24 years of age) and adult populations, for entry into an apprenticeship program. Instruction may vary in length and scope, and may include basic skills training, academic skills remediation, or an introduction to the industry. Completers may be accorded preferential consideration for entry into a Registered Apprenticeship program and/or apply time served or credits earned toward fulfilling program requirements.

**Quality Placement** – A Quality Placement, for the purpose of this NGO is defined as a placement into one of the following outcomes:

- Placement into a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program (required for every grantee to place a minimum of 25% of program graduates) at a starting wage of \$17 per hour or greater;
- Job with an employer in an occupation that is related to the training received in the pre- apprenticeship training program that pays not less than \$17 per hour; or
- Admission into a post-secondary college or training program that is consistent with the learning acquired during the pre-apprenticeship program.

### **Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program Elements**

The following elements draw on evidence-based best practices in both high-quality pre-apprenticeships and broader career preparation interventions. All pre-apprenticeship proposals shall address the following elements where applicable:

1. **Partnerships with Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors.** Integral to the success of a pre-apprenticeship program is collaboration and support from Registered Apprenticeship Program Sponsors, employers, and where applicable post-secondary institutions. These partnerships ensure the subsequent components are achieved:
  - **Approved Training and Curriculum.** Training and curriculum developed based on industry standards and informed by the program's Registered Apprenticeship partner(s) that will prepare individuals with the skills and competencies needed to enter one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s), a job following the pre-apprenticeship program related to the training/learning obtained through the program paying at minimum \$17 an hour, or a related post-secondary career pathway;
  - **Facilitated Entry and/or Articulation.** When possible, formalized agreements exist with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors that enable individuals who have successfully completed the pre-apprenticeship

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-23-23>



program to enter directly into a Registered Apprenticeship program and/or include articulation agreements for earning advanced credit/placement for skills (on-the-job training) and competencies (related technical instruction) already acquired. This also includes, where applicable, articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions to award college credit for participation in pre-apprenticeship, and employer agreements for individuals who are hired at \$17/hour following completion of the program.

**2. Strategies for Long-Term Success.** Programs that increase Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, employment opportunities and post-secondary opportunities for underrepresented<sup>2</sup>, disadvantaged, or low-skilled individuals, such that, upon completion, they will meet the entry requirements, gain consideration, and are prepared for success in one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s), employment opportunities and postsecondary opportunities defined in this NGO as a *Quality Placement* and include the following:

- Strong recruitment strategies focused on outreach to populations underrepresented;
- Educational and workforce preparation activities that prepare individuals to meet the entry requisites of one or more Registered Apprenticeship programs (e.g. specific career and industry awareness workshops, job readiness courses, English for speakers of other languages, Adult Basic Education, financial literacy seminars, math tutoring, etc.); and in local, state, national Registered Apprenticeship programs, or other Quality Placement;
- Assists in exposing participants to local, state and national Registered Apprenticeship programs and provides direct assistance to participants applying to those programs.

**3. Access to Appropriate Support Services.** Facilitates access to appropriate support services during the pre-apprenticeship program and, if eligible, a significant portion of the Registered Apprenticeship program. Applicants should identify and justify any supportive services that the participant population needs. These services include *but are not limited to* the following:

- a. Childcare
- b. Transportation
- c. Obtaining driver's license
- d. Expungement programs
- e. Communicating criminal background to employers
- f. Housing services
- g. Counseling or Mentoring
- h. Financial literacy
- i. Tutoring and academic remediation
- j. Obtaining high school equivalency diploma or GED

Grantees are encouraged to provide a detailed description of all supportive services that will be offered through the PACE grant if funding should be awarded.

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) may be able to fund some of these supportive services to individuals who meet certain eligibility requirements. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with local WDBs to co-enroll eligible individuals in Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and leverage those funds. Applicants are also encouraged to ensure all PACE program participants are registered for One-Stop Career Center services by registering at <https://jobsourc.nj.gov/jz/views/jobzone/guest.jsf>. Organizations awarded will be responsible for ensuring all participants register through JobSource. Coordination with the Local One-Stop Centers may be necessary to obtain information pertaining to those registrations.

- 4. Promotes Greater Use of Registered Apprenticeship to Increase Future Opportunities.** To support the ongoing sustainability of the partnership between pre-apprenticeship providers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, these efforts should collaboratively promote the use of Registered Apprenticeship as a preferred means for employers to develop a skilled workforce and to create career opportunities for individuals.
- 5. Meaningful Hands-on Training that does not Displace Paid Employees.** Provides hands-on training to individuals in a simulated lab experience or through volunteer opportunities, when possible, neither of which supplants a paid employee but accurately simulates the industry and occupational conditions of the partnering Registered Apprenticeship sponsor(s) while observing proper supervision and safety protocols.

### **Targeted Populations**

This funding opportunity seeks proposals for pre-apprenticeships that strengthen access to Registered Apprenticeships for individuals seeking career development leading to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, including low-income and under-served individuals, 16 years of age or older, and not currently in full-time employment. Pre-apprenticeships that target high- growth, high-vacancy, or emerging regional industries are highly encouraged. **Only New Jersey residents are eligible to participate in the PACE program.**

Greater weight will be given to applicants who demonstrate a viable strategy to recruit participants in one of the following targeted populations:

- DVRS qualified candidates (*Organizations interested in additional information pertaining to DVRS services can submit an email to [dvradmin@dol.nj.gov](mailto:dvradmin@dol.nj.gov) and a Business Outreach Team representative will respond*);
- Dislocated workers,
- Women;
- Member of a minority group;
- Youth;

- Out-of-school youth;
- Youth in the foster system;
- Youth aging-out of the foster system;
- County vocational school participants;
- K-12 public school students;
- Post-secondary students;
- Ex-offenders;
- Veterans;
- Persons with disabilities;
- Individuals currently unemployed;
- Long term unemployed;
- Displaced homemaker;
- Homeless individual;
- Single parent;
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible individuals
- Other under-represented populations<sup>5</sup>

#### **D. Availability and Awarding of Funding**

Funding for this program is expected to be up to \$3,000,000 for FY2026 Round 2 and is contingent upon the availability of funds. Funding available for this initiative will come from Workforce Development Partnership Fund. NJDOL reserves the right to utilize other state funds, including Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRs), or federal funds, such as the federal Apprenticeship State Expansion grant funding, if applicable. The anticipated length of the contract period is 18 months unless otherwise extended or reduced at the discretion of the NJDOL. The contract period is expected to be May 1, 2026 to October 31, 2027. NJDOL seeks to fund multiple programs throughout the program year. Competitive proposals will have a maximum cost per head of \$12,000 (divide total number served by the requested grant amount). Program budgets submitted as part of the proposal are not final until contract execution. NJDOL reserves the right to negotiate the costs of all training programs upon award selection. The payment structure for all contracts will be cost reimbursement. All participants as well as employer partners must be New Jersey residents or have a New Jersey presence.

**Note about Participant Eligibility:** In order to meet the objectives of this grant and ensure compliance with federal immigration laws, all participants must be New Jersey residents and have authorization for employment in the United States. Awardees are responsible for verifying employment authorization, gathering proof, and having on file such proof for each participant prior to acceptance into the grant program.

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<sup>5</sup> In the context of this definition, the term under-represented is intentionally broad. Generally, the term “under-represented” means a population that does not represent the majority, or a proportional share as indicated by appropriate data, of current participants in Registered Apprenticeship. For example, veterans may be an under-represented population in Registered Apprenticeship. Broadly, the intent of this term is to encourage pre-apprenticeship programs to be inclusive of all populations.

The purpose of this grant is to provide initial funding for programs that will not rely on state funding in perpetuity. Successful applicants may be eligible for subsequent funding based on the performance outcomes and measures following the grant award. Each applicant will be required to provide a program sustainability plan that describes the strategy to maintain solvency after state funds are no longer available, irrespective of funding cut-off year.

All submissions must include the required documents and information as outlined in this NGO. Determination for funding is contingent upon authorization and fund availability. Final award amounts will be determined by NJDOL.

NJDOL strongly encourages any organization applying for direct funding to **not** participate as a partner in another application. If an organization chooses to participate as a partner, NJDOL strongly encourages that agency not to participate in more than one application as such, unless a justification is provided indicating that the type of training, and individuals in that training are not overlapping with existing contracts issued by the New Jersey Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning.

### **Eligible Funding Components**

**Program Development and Administration** – Under the PACE Program, applicants will be able to submit a budget that outlines all costs associated with the pre-apprenticeship program. Costs may include, but are not limited to, personnel expenses, instructors, non-personnel costs, pre-apprentice training, supportive services, supplies and materials, and other direct costs. All programs must be created to achieve at a minimum one of three (3) Quality Placement outcomes.

**Pre-Apprentice Stipend for Participants** – Applicants shall be eligible to include stipend funding within their PACE program budget. The stipends must be based on participants reaching program milestones not less than two-week completion increments. The stipend is not a wage; it is intended to cover incidental costs incurred while attending the pre-apprenticeship training program. All stipends funded under this program must be in connection with the participant's *Career Pathway* and be geared towards achieving one of the *Quality Placement* outcomes, as defined in the subsequent section.

### **E. Eligible Entities/Applicants**

To implement the PACE Program, NJDOL is seeking proposals from eligible entities with demonstrable capacity, experience, and history of success providing evidence-based career pathways. All respondents will be required to demonstrate that they have the fiscal and administrative capacity to manage a program at whatever scale they propose.

In soliciting proposals, NJDOL shall not discriminate against any person or organization submitting a proposal pursuant to this NGO because of ethnicity, color, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, or other basis prohibited by law.

This competitive grant opportunity is open to the following entities:

- Any employer based in New Jersey or with a New Jersey presence;
- [Workforce Intermediary Sponsors](#);
- Employer / Trade Associations;
- Any labor organization which represents workers in the occupation for which the apprentices will be trained;
- Labor/Management Partnership (public or private);
- New Jersey Local Education Agency (LEA);
- Public vocational schools within New Jersey;
- Public high schools within New Jersey;
- Two- and four-year institutions of higher education;
- Public or private non-profit organizations;
- Business or trade organizations representing a particular trade, group of trades, contractors or employers;
- Community-based organizations;
- New Jersey local Workforce Development Boards;
- Economic development organizations;
- State, Local, County governments within New Jersey;
- Faith-based organizations; and
- Any other private educational or training entity that is on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

**NOTE: Organizations awarded FY2026 Round 1 PACE contracts are not eligible to apply for FY2026 Round 2 PACE funding. Round 2 applications are open to those not funded in FY2026 Round 1 as well as new applicants.**

#### **F . Evaluation Criteria**

All applicants, regardless of whether they received grant funds from NJDOL in the past<sup>6</sup>, are considered new applicants for this funding cycle and will be evaluated on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of response to the NGO.

Additionally, applications that do not adhere to the required sections of this NGO will be viewed as incomplete and not be reviewed.

An independent review committee consisting of fair and impartial committee members will rate proposals based on a scoring rubric. The independent review committee reserves the right to request additional information and schedule interviews or site visits as appropriate. The evaluation team will initially evaluate submissions to determine compliance with the NGO requirements. Any

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<sup>6</sup> Current providers will not be allowed to integrate new programming funded through this NGO with existing funded programs.

submission failing to meet the compliance criteria will be deemed unresponsive and may be excluded from further consideration. Independent reviewer(s) may not be familiar with your organization's historical performance and will only evaluate the proposal based on information presented. Responses to the proposal narrative prompts will be evaluated by external reviewers using the following scoring guidance found below. The areas of evaluation, specific elements comprising these areas with definitions, and scoring points are highlighted in the Evaluation Criteria chart. The maximum score to be received is 100.

Prior grantees funded through the Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, will be subject to a performance evaluation that could result in an increase or decrease of overall score for a maximum of 15 points. All evaluations will be based on the performance on the previous three fiscal years of data.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
<p><b><i>Program Narrative:</i></b>            Proposal demonstrates evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Executive Summary and Projected Project Plan provided.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Training curriculum that clearly demonstrates alignment with Registered Apprenticeship programs in the proposed apprenticeable occupational area and encompass Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Elements..</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Strategies for interviewing and screening interested participants.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Integration of paid work experience.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Expected outcomes that align with employer/sponsor partnerships.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Evidence of employment demand and career trajectory in pathway.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Provides access to supportive services like transportation or childcare (where applicable)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Past Performance details (where applicable).</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Administrative Responsibilities</i></li> </ul>	<b>30</b>

<p><b>Core Partnerships/Relationships</b></p> <p>Proposal demonstrates evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Connections to Registered Apprenticeship programs with projected hiring openings.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Connections to employers interested in hiring program participants (where applicable).</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Linkages to post-secondary education.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Includes connections to appropriate services and the One-Stop system.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Connections to robust network of employment, education, and support opportunities.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Processes in place for collaborative planning and decision-making with partners.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Staffing plans reflect multiple capacities required to support program.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Clear connections and opportunities for building on existing pre-apprenticeship program practice.</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>35</b></p>
<p><b>Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>Proposal demonstrates evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Training with engagement in high quality hands-on instruction and work-based learning opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Realistic Project schedule for implementing work outlined (recruiting, training, and placing participants).</i></li> <li>• <i>Retention strategy and ongoing assessment activities for program support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Access to career navigation services during and beyond completion of pre-apprenticeship program.</i></li> <li>• <i>Evidence of ability to reach to diverse and under-served populations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Outcome timeline with anticipated placement outcomes for participants completing the training.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sustainability plan describing budget strategy and options if grant funding is not available upon completion of the 18-month contract.</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>20</b></p>
<p><b>Budget Summary:</b></p> <p>Proposal demonstrates evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reasonable cost per participant trained (total budget divided by participants served)</i></li> <li>• <i>Overall Budget is reasonable</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget is within the cost guidelines of the NGO</i></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>15</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Innovative usage of ‘Other Services’ funding</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget summary aligns with Justifications</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget summary includes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Schedule A, Parts 1&amp;2: Personnel Costs</i></li> <li>• <i>Schedule B: Non-Personnel Costs</i></li> <li>• <i>Schedule C: Direct Student Services</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>No calculation errors</i></li> </ul>	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>

- *If any of these documents are not submitted, your proposal will be incomplete and therefore will not be considered.*

During the contract period, NJDOL will evaluate the grantee’s program to ensure that the grantee is satisfying the outlined mission, goals, objectives, and deliverables. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to, review and analysis of reports, on-site monitoring visits and attendance at consortium meetings.

### ***Explanation of Proposal Components***

PACE grants are projected to have an 18-month contract. All proposed grant activity should therefore align with and take place within the contract period. Successful applicants will structure their proposals with the following timelines envisioned for achievement:

- **Recruitment and Organization:** (months 1-3, 1-3 month timeframe): Applicants should focus this period on organizing their proposed programs, marketing, and recruiting participants in order to begin training. Strategies for achieving these goals must be provided in the program narrative.
- **Training and Support:** (months 4-15, 1-12 month timeframe): Applicants should use this timeframe to implement the proposed training and provide support to participants through means such as ongoing assessments to foster retention. All cycles of training, if applicable, should take place within this period. Specific details of the training and tactics for administering support services must be provided in the program narrative and implementation plan.
- **Placements:** (months 15-18, 1-3 month timeframe): The remainder of the contract period should focus on placing all program completers with a quality placement outcome as defined in this NGO. Placement activity can occur sooner than the period above, but all placements must be achieved by no later than the end of this period in order to remain in compliance with the PACE grant. **Applicants should provide tangible proof through commitment letters with Registered Apprenticeship and employer partners of openings for completers of the PACE training program in order for placement goals to be achieved.** Details regarding existing partnerships and plans for placements should be provided in the program narrative and implementation plan areas of your proposal.

***NOTE: The above outline provides a suggestion for structuring your proposal within the period of performance. Programs that do not adopt this structure are not precluded from funding.***



### **Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary (no more than 3 pages) will provide a brief but comprehensive synopsis of the proposed pre- apprenticeship program application highlighting its key points in relationship to this NGO. Ensure to include the Projected Project Plan chart as described on Attachment III of the NGO).

### **Program Narrative**

The Program Narrative (no more than 20 pages) will provide details of your proposed pre-apprenticeship program and must include the following required components: Recruitment Strategy, Training/Required Pre- Apprenticeship Elements, Work Experience, Core Partnerships/ Relationships, Retention Support and Alternative Placements, Expected Outcomes, Administrative Responsibilities, and where applicable, Past Performance. Each of the required components are explained in the following section:

- **Recruitment Strategy:** Funded pre-apprenticeships we be expected to provide details regarding strategy for recruiting participants in addition to describing interviewing and screening processes which will occur to accept eligible and interested participants into the PACE program.
- **Training:** Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to train participants to meet or exceed the eligibility requirements and core competencies necessary for entry and success in the partnering apprenticeship(s), employment, or post-secondary, including 21<sup>st</sup> century work-readiness skills. Proposed training should encompass the Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program Elements defined in section C of this NGO and applicants are expected to align program design and training content to the skills and knowledge needed for success that leads to a Quality Placement.

Applicants are required to conduct at least **120 hours** of occupation-specific related classroom training, **30 hours** of workforce readiness skill training, and a minimum of **15 hours** of job-shadowing experiences. Describe how all three training elements will occur including details on how participants will receive exposure to a variety of workplace environments through tours of training centers and/or employer work sites. Applicants are also encouraged to provide one-on-one mentoring and internship opportunities to participants through quality partners.

Successful applicants will be able to outline a training curriculum that addresses these requirements, as well as describe what evidence of learning is expected from their training, how individual learning needs will be addressed, and when and how training will be provided. Include the apprenticeable occupation, number of weeks of training, the number of pre-apprenticeship training hours per day, and the total number of pre-apprenticeship training hours each participant will receive. Employment demand and career trajectory information should also be included to illustrate the need for the pre-apprenticeship training.

Applicants with agreements in place to issue credit for pre-apprenticeship training toward Registered Apprenticeship program components, will be viewed favorably during panel review.

Applicants should also, where possible, coordinate their programs with the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) and their corresponding One-Stop Career Center. A list of One-Stop Career Centers and their contact information can be found [here](#). Applicants are encouraged to have program participants register for One-Stop Career Center services by registering at <https://jobsources.nj.gov/jz/views/jobzone/guest.jsf>. Unemployed applicants must receive a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligibility determination at a One-Stop Career Center.

- **Work Experience:** Funded pre-apprenticeships should integrate paid work experience (via stipend funding through this grant) into the program model. Work experiences are expected to provide participants with the opportunity to practice and reinforce the skills and content learned through classroom-based and other formal training.

Successful applicants will be able to describe the pre-apprenticeship's corresponding work experience(s), how learning and content is connected from formal training to the work experience(s), and what percentage of the requested budget is designated for participant supportive services.

- **Core Partnerships/Relationships:**

- **Connection to Registered Apprenticeship:** Funded pre-apprenticeships must have an established connection to at least one Registered Apprenticeship. Additionally, the Registered Apprenticeship that the pre-apprenticeship program is targeting must be registered and approved with the USDOL.

Successful applicants will be able to provide a copy of a commitment letter between their organization and the Registered Apprenticeship program(s) that demonstrates their connection, any entry agreements established, collaboration on training alignment, and partnership in providing authentic career exposure and connection to industry employers. **If the applicant is the Registered Apprenticeship provider, then a signed letter outlining the recruitment relationship between the pre-apprenticeship and the Registered Apprenticeship is expected in lieu of a commitment letter.** Commitments from Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, employers, and/or post-secondary/vocational school partners should account for all expected placement outcomes outlined in the deliverables section of your application, thus ensuring your ability to meet the performance expectations of the grant.

For additional details and guidance on apprenticeship registration, please refer to the [USDOL Apprenticeship](#) website or NJDOL's website at <https://www.nj.gov/labor/careerservices/apprenticeship/index.shtml>. If you wish to be contacted by New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, complete an intake form on the website listed above.

- **Connection to Employment Opportunities (where applicable):** Funded pre-apprenticeships will be expected to describe connections any partner employers

who intend on hiring pre-apprenticeship program graduates and provide a commitment of paying a minimum of \$17/hour.

Successful applicants will be able to provide a copy of the commitment letter between their organization and the employer(s) partners that demonstrates their connection to the grantees, collaboration on training alignment, and partnership in providing authentic career exposure and connection to industry employers.

- **Post-Secondary Placement after Pre-Apprenticeship Completion (where applicable):** Funded pre-apprenticeship programs will be expected to provide a narrative on the connection between the pre-apprenticeship program and specific post-secondary programs for which the participants will be prepared to enter of completion. This includes, but is not limited to: programs of study, partnerships with post-secondary institutions, and any established college credit articulation agreements between the pre-apprenticeship program and the partner institution.
- **Supportive Services:** Supportive services reduce barriers to employment for participants and increase their success and retention within both the pre-apprenticeship and the Registered Apprenticeship or alternative placement.

Applicants are **highly encouraged** to include a plan to provide core supportive services and optional supportive services and how these services will be made available to participants.

Supportive services include *but are not limited to* the following:

- a. Childcare
  - b. Transportation
  - c. Obtaining driver's license
  - d. Expungement programs
  - e. Communicating criminal background to employers
  - f. Housing services
  - g. Counseling or Mentoring
  - h. Financial literacy
  - i. Tutoring and academic remediation
  - j. Obtaining high school equivalency diploma or GED.
- **Expected Outcomes:** Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to prepare participants for entry and success in Registered Apprenticeship programs and longer-term career opportunities. Successful applicants will include the following expected outcomes (as outlined on page 28):
    - Proposed expected outcomes, including the total number to be enrolled in the pre- apprenticeship program;
    - Number of anticipated participants to complete the program;
    - Number of placements into a *Quality Placement*, as defined by this NGO.
  - **Administrative Responsibilities:** Each applicant must agree to the following administrative responsibilities with the PACE Program. Your application must include how

your organization will comply with the following administrative responsibilities:

1. **File Maintenance:** Respondent is responsible to maintain all program related files accurately and completely. Such maintenance includes retaining a hard copy file of all documents pertaining to program enrollment, eligibility, participation, progress reports, services provided or other participant activities during program participation. Grantees will be responsible for inputting required data through the IGX system.
2. **Confidentiality:** Respondent will secure participant information in a location that is accessible only to authorized employees of the respondent and ensure that all participant information is kept confidential at all times, as required by the law.
3. **Archiving of Files:** Respondent will maintain a list of all participants of the pre-apprenticeship program and maintain a copy of participant's files for its records for seven years.
4. **Performance Reviews:** Respondent understands that NJDOL maintains the right to conduct random and scheduled programmatic and fiscal performance reviews.
5. **Trainings and Meetings:** Respondent is responsible for attending relevant meetings and trainings offered by NJDOL as well as those required by the State of New Jersey as part of the continuous improvement strategy for professional development and grant administration.
6. **Communication:** Respondent is responsible for maintaining regular communication and informing NJDOL of any issues that arise that might impact the respondent's ability to successfully meet the requirements of the scope of work.

Grantees are expected to keep records on all individuals that participate in the PACE program and provide updates on placement activity that occurs after the period of performance for the contract, upon request of the Department.

- **Past Performance:** Lastly, applicants who received prior state funding, or operated a similar program, must submit description of their performance, including outcome data for the most recent year documenting the program's effectiveness and success in meeting the goals and objectives of the previous state grant that was received. This extends to organizations other than the applying entity that may have received grant funding in the past from NJDOL. In cases where the goals and objectives of the grant were not met, the applicant must submit a narrative describing why those goals were not met and address any future corrective action that would need to be taken in order to ensure future success of a new grant. Applicants who had prior unsatisfactory performance may not be funded with FY2026 funding.

### **Implementation Plan**

The implementation plan (no more than 10 pages) must include the following components:

- **Training Plan:** Applicants must include a training plan detailing how the applicant will meet stated objectives of the program as described within the program narrative. Greatest weight will be given to details regarding how the applicant will partner with Registered Apprenticeship programs or employers leading pre-apprentices to a pathway to continued career opportunities.
- **Project Schedule:** A realistic timeline for planning and implementing the work outlined within the Training Plan must be provided. This should breakdown the customer flow for the program along with providing details on outcome attainment.
- **Retention Support Strategy and Alternative Placements:** Funded pre-apprenticeships are expected to provide follow-up services to participants that support retention and success in the partnering Registered Apprenticeship program or an alternative placements. These services are eligible for funding under this NGO. Follow-up services include, but are not limited to:
  - Individual coaching and advising
  - Employment
  - Childcare Services
  - Transportation
  - Additional training.

Applicants must include the strategy they will utilize to ensure retention of pre-apprentices through the entirety of the project schedule as well as a strategy to ensure proper connections are made to Registered Apprenticeship for each pre-apprentice. Successful applicants will also be able to detail the services that will be provided, including how and for how long, as well as established connections or plans to connect with alternative placement opportunities. In addition, those selected for award will be required to submit a project schedule containing milestones and benchmarks before the contract will be executed.

- **Outcome Timeline:** The outcome timeline should describe anticipated outcomes for all participants. Greatest weight will be given to applications that will lead to Registered Apprenticeship as the primary outcome.
- **Program Sustainability Plan:** Applicants will be required to provide a Program Sustainability Plan. This plan should outline the applicant's strategy for sustainability if/when state grant funding is no longer available. Based on the current structure of the PACE program, grantee's may be eligible for subsequent funding based on performance. It is important for the applicant to demonstrate alternative funding sources and/or strategies to continue funded activities beyond the contract period of performance, and in the event that state funds are no longer available.

## **Budget Summary**

Applicants are required to submit an eighteen-month budget within Schedules A, B, and C in the IGX system. Program implementation should be within the eighteen-month contract period and should reflect reasonable costs for operating the proposed program. Budget items include but are not limited to personnel costs, non-personnel costs, related technical instruction (RTI) costs, stipends, supportive services, curriculum development costs, and consultant fees. Amounts reported on the budget schedules must be fully supported by information provided in the description. If any cost is unusual, provide documentation or an explanation to support your estimate. NJDOL refrains from funding items such as laptops, tablets, and machinery as these items typically do not follow the participants of the program at the conclusion of training. *In rare occasions, exceptions to this policy can be taken under consideration if a strong justification for the cost is provided.* Administrative costs, as defined in 20 CFR 683.215, are costs not directly associated with service delivery and shall not exceed 10% of total award. Successful applicants may be required to submit more detailed budget information at the time of contract negotiations.

NJDOL has limited the cost categories to the following areas:

### ***Personnel Costs***

This budget category may include salaries for staff working on the PACE program. Costs can include salaries and fringe benefits for full-time staff. All information on Schedule A is required to be completed. Administrative costs for staff in-directly associated with the grant can also be requested in this budget schedule providing the requested amount, in total with any other administrative line items, does not exceed 10% of the total award. Verification of the overall administrative costs can be found on the cost summary.

### ***Non-Personnel Costs***

This budget category may include non-personnel costs on Schedule B (costs other than Personnel Costs and Direct Student Services). Examples of allowable costs include marketing materials, promotional items, conference registration, mileage, and general office supplies. Any request to use PACE grant funds to attend a conference will require prior approval by NJDOL. Mileage for grant-related travel will be reimbursed at the New Jersey state-approved rate of \$.47 per mile. Mileage and toll expenses can only be provided for travel within New Jersey. The maximum amount for promotional items such as key chains, pens and pencils is \$1,000. Administrative costs in-directly associated with the grant can also be requested in this budget schedule providing the requested amount, in total with any other administrative line items, does not exceed 10% of the total award. Verification of the overall administrative costs can be found on the cost summary.

### ***Direct Student Services***

This budget category may include costs associated with training, site visits, student transportation to events/activities, and supportive services for PACE participants such as childcare. This category also may include driver's education, curriculum development, skills, and aptitude testing such as TABE and WorkKeys, and tutoring. Applicants proposing a budget comprised of costs focused on a direct benefit to participants will be viewed favorable during panel review evaluation.

### ***Stipend Funding***

To enable participation, grantees shall include within their budget an allocation for needs-based payments and stipends. These payments can be paid to the participants of the program every week or every two weeks and cannot exceed \$250 per week for their participation in the pre-apprenticeship training program. These payments may be used to reward pre-apprentices who complete incremental benchmarks in their program (not less than one-week) or provide needs-based payments for costs associated with attending the pre-apprenticeship program. The program grantee will also be required to describe the mechanisms it will use to track program progress/benchmarks and disburse stipend payments. Applicants proposing a budget comprised of costs focused on a direct benefit to participants will be viewed favorable during panel review evaluation.

**Cost per participant (total budget request divided by number of apprentices served) will be a significant factor for the panel when determining the reasonableness of the applicant's budget.**

**The maximum allowable cost per head will be \$12,000 per apprentice.**

**Additionally, programs that utilize in-kind, philanthropic, cash, federal funding (e.g. Individual Training Accounts, WIOA Title 1 etc.), and/or other leveraged funds to support the apprenticeship program will be viewed positively during panel review.**

Applicants should also demonstrate any/all financial commitments separate from any award received from the PACE program. Applicants who adequately address their cost structure and indicate the level of non-state funded investments, including other sources of funding, will be viewed positively during the panel review.

Grant funds provided through this NGO may not be expended for the following:

- Indirect costs (e.g. travel, meals, lodging);
- Pension and/or health benefits for part-time staff;
- Mileage and toll expenses for out-of-state travel;
- Overnight accommodations;
- Capital construction or renovation;
- Costs associated with preparing the grant application; and
- Costs of memberships in associations or organizations.

Key components of the budget summary are listed below:

- Budget is reasonable
- Budget is within the cost guidelines of the NGO
- Innovative usage of other services and funding
- Budget Summary aligns with Justifications.
- Budget summary includes:
  - Schedule A Parts 1&2: Personnel Costs
  - Schedule B: Non-Personnel Costs

- Scheduled C: Direct Student Services Costs
- No calculation errors

***All of the aforementioned proposal components are to be uploaded/added to the electronic grant application in IGX. See section I for more information.***

### **G. Qualifications of Applicants**

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 for NJDOL. The lead agency is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all aspects of the grant, including, but not limited to, pre-apprenticeship training program design, administration of the grant, budgeting & fiscal management and monthly reporting. It is essential that the applicant carefully construct result-oriented goals and objectives that support the program's stated goals and objectives, together with the program description and budget, providing a comprehensive plan for the successful accomplishment of the program.

In addition, as a precondition to any award of grant funds under this NGO, the applicant must be in full compliance with all laws enforced by NJDOL. Specifically, the applicant must not have *any* outstanding unpaid liabilities to NJDOL, including but not limited to, for unpaid contributions to the unemployment compensation fund or the State disability benefits fund or for any other worker wage tax collection; to any individual on whose behalf the Department has issued a final order for the payment of wages or benefits; or for any penalties, fees or interest due to the Department pursuant to a final order issued under any of the statutes or rules that NJDOL enforces. Further, the applicant must not be on a debarment list, or any other list that prohibits them from public contracting, administered by NJDOL and the applicant must not be serving a suspension or revocation of their license, certificate, or registration issued by the NJDOL. Please be aware that under N.J.S.A. 34:15-34D and N.J.A.C. 12:9-1.3., NJDOL will be crosschecking applicants against NJDOL records for any of these issues as part of the evaluation process. If applicants are aware of any outstanding liabilities they may owe NJDOL, or of any of the above issues that could impact ability to do business with NJDOL, they are advised to reach out to NJDOL or relevant Division thereof to resolve such issues promptly prior to submitting their application to avoid delay.

All applications will be evaluated on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of response to the NGO.

### **H. Application Process**

Successful proposals must be responsive to the NGO and meet all technical capacity and fiscal viability requirements as described. Applications are submitted and awards are managed through NJDOL's online grant system IGX. Applications are submitted online, via IGX at <https://njdol.intelligrants.com/IGXLogin>.

Applicants must determine who will serve as the Authorized Official (AO) for this grant application. The AO must:



- be authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the company.
- read and understand the FY2026 Round 2 NGO.
- register (create an account) in IGX and submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for a FY2026 Round 2 PACE grant.

***Please Note: A new Letter of Intent is required for all new grant applications.***

The AO may delegate completion of the application to others by giving access in IGX; but should be aware that responsibility for the contract remains with the AO for the life of the grant.

Applicants interested in applying for the PACE grant must first submit a LOI to express interest in the grant opportunity. This notification allows NJDOL to have sufficient resources in place to carefully review each proposal and to provide access to the application in IGX.

Applicants must complete, sign and submit a letter of intent as soon as the applicant is interested in applying for the grant opportunity. A sample LOI can be found in Attachment I. The completed and signed LOI must be emailed as an attachment to [ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov](mailto:ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov) and received no later than noon on Friday, March 6, 2026.

Before submitting the LOI to NJDOL, the AO must register in IGX as a new user. Incorrect or missing information or failure to register in IGX will delay the processing of the LOI, which will delay access to the online application. Once the Authorized Official is registered and approved in IGX, applicants can then proceed to enter the required information and documentation in the IGX system. If the organization is already registered in IGX, please include that information on your LOI.

### Technical Assistance Workshop

NJDOL will provide technical assistance sessions via tele-conference to potential applicants. General guidance on completing the required documents, budget forms and an overview of IGX will be provided. It is important that both the Program Director and Fiscal Officer attend this session. It is strongly suggested that applicants attend the technical assistance workshop.

The technical assistance workshops will be held:

**Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 1pm or Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 1pm**

The technical assistance workshops will be conducted electronically through virtual sessions. Pre-registration is required at least three business days prior to the date of the technical assistance workshop. The following links will bring you to the workshop registration to participate:

Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 1pm: [1/22-FY26 PACE R2 Technical Assistance Workshop](#)

Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 1pm: [2/18- FY26 PACE R2 Technical Assistance Workshop](#)

Virtual meeting log-in information will be provided only to those who have registered through the above links.

### **Proposal Deadline**

Applicants interested in applying for the FY2026 Round 2 PACE grant must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to express interest in the grant opportunity. NJDOL will provide IGX access for the completion of the application upon receipt of the LOI. The LOI should be submitted as soon as an organization decides to apply for the grant opportunity. The LOI must be submitted no later than noon on Friday, March 6, 2026.

Final award decisions will be contingent upon the availability of funds and awards will be communicated approximately forty-five (45) days following the panel review date.

The FY2026 Round 2 schedule for submission of complete applications and the panel review dates are as follows:

<b><u>FY2026 Round #</u></b>	<b><u>Letter of Intent (LOI) Deadline: LOIs must be received no later:</u></b>	<b><u>Application Deadline Applications must be submitted in IGX no Later than:</u></b>	<b><u>Expected Panel Review Begins:</u></b>
2	12 noon, March 6, 2026	12 noon, March 13, 2026	Week of March 30, 2026

We anticipate having a panel review approximately the week of March 30, 2026. To avoid any technical issues, applicants are encouraged to submit applications early. Applications for FY2026 Round 2 funds will not be accepted after **12 noon on March 13, 2026**.

### **I. Application Requirements**

Applicants are required to submit their application through the IGX system and will consist of the following components.

<b>Required</b>	<b>Form</b>
✓	<a href="#">Standard Assurances and Certifications and General Provisions</a>
✓	Applicant Information
✓	Counties to Serve
✓	Quality Placement Partners
✓	Previous Funding
✓	Required Documents (Executive Summary, Program Narrative, Implementation Plan, and Tax Clearance Certificate)
✓	PACE Deliverables
✓	Budget Details (Schedules A, B, and C)
✓	Budget Cost Summary
✓	Miscellaneous Attachments

The following information must be included in your application in IGX:

♦ **Applicant Information**

Complete all the required information about your organization.

♦ **Counties to Serve**

Indicate the counties your project will include or if the program is statewide.

♦ **Quality Placement Partners**

Include information for each partner in your proposed application. The required information includes: name of employer/sponsor/organization, FEIN number, and address. Additional partners can be added during the contract period for applicants who are funded through this program.

**As a requirement of this grant, applicants must illustrate a direct link to a Registered Apprenticeship program by identifying at least one affiliated Registered Apprenticeship employer/sponsor partner.** Applicants are also required to complete and upload a “PACE Commitment Letter/Quality Partner Form” (Attachment IV) for each Registered Apprenticeship organization and any employer supporting the proposed program. The commitment letters should clearly outline the role of each partner in assisting with quality placement outcomes as defined in this NGO, specifically the numeral projected openings available to aid in accomplishing the proposed deliverables.

♦ **Previous Funding**

Indicate if the applying organization or any other organization you are affiliated with has received funding from the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development within the last three years.

♦ **Required Documents**

The following required documents, which must include all required components as outlined within this NGO, must be uploaded:

- Executive Summary (maximum 3 pages)
- Program Narrative (maximum 20 pages)
- Implementation Plan (maximum 10 pages)
- Tax Clearance Certificate

Public Law 2007, c. 101 requires that as a precondition to the award of business assistance or incentive or as a component of the application for business assistance or incentive, a person or business seeking a grant, loan, loan guarantee, or other monetary or financial benefit from a department or agency of state government shall obtain a [Tax Clearance Certificate](#) from the director of the New Jersey Division of Taxation prior to the issuance of the grant, incentive or assistance. Please see Attachment II for additional information. To avoid any delay in submitting your application, applicants are encouraged to obtain the tax clearance certificate once an organization makes the decision to apply.

◆ **PACE Deliverables**

Identify the expected number of individuals to be served and provide details regarding program length, apprenticeable occupational area, projected program dates, and target populations to serve (where applicable).

Additionally, applicants are required to submit within their application the expected outcomes for their pre- apprenticeship program. By the end of the contract period, at a minimum, applicants are expected to:

- Graduate at least 80% of pre-apprenticeship training program completers;
- Place a minimum of 80% of pre-apprenticeship program graduates into a Quality Placement, as defined in this NGO;
- Place a minimum of 25% of the pre-apprenticeship program graduates into Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

◆ **Budget Detail and Budget Cost Summary**

Provide a detailed budget by entering applicable, required information on Schedules A (Personnel Costs), Schedule B (Non-Personnel Costs), and Schedule C (Direct Student Services). All costs must include a breakdown of the cost along with a justification. The cost summary page will summarize all the details entered on the budget schedules. **Be sure to review the budget cost summary page for accuracy before submitting your application in IGX.**

This grant opportunity prohibits the use of grant funds for activities that:

- “Induce, encourage or assist any displacement of currently employed workers by trainees, including partial displacement by means such as reduced hours of currently employed workers; any replacement of laid off workers by trainees; or any relocation of operations resulting in a loss of employment at a previous workplace”;
- “Replace, supplant, compete with or duplicate in any way existing approved Registered Apprenticeship programs”; or
- “Impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements, except that activities which would be inconsistent with the terms of a collective bargaining agreement may be undertaken with the written concurrence of the collective bargaining unit and employer who are parties to the agreement.”

Budget amendments must have the approval of NJDOL.

◆ **Miscellaneous Attachments**

The miscellaneous attachments page is optional, and not required to be completed. Utilize this section to submit any additional information or documents that will support your grant application.

## **J. Required Reports/Documents**

Grantees will be required to complete monthly activity and expenditure reports, due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. The reports must list all of the activities of the program, including placement activities and credentialing information when applicable.

In addition, the monthly report and monthly expenditure report must include the following documentation:

- Name, address, date of birth, education level, and demographic information for each participant.
- Name, address, FEIN number, and contact information of each quality partner.
- Type of business and NAICS code (to ensure it falls into one of the targeted industries)
- Apprenticeship Occupation/trade related area.
- Program participant enrollment, drop-out, and completion data.
- Status updates on the performance of the program participants.
- Wage data, when applicable to a quality placement outcome.
- Any credentials that will be attained and/or are currently being pursued, and completion dates.
- Stipend tracking and payment information.

A closeout report, due within 60 days from the end of the grant period, must be submitted via IGX. Final reimbursement is subject to submission and acceptance of the final report to NJDOL.

Additionally, all recipients of state and/or federal grant funds in excess of \$100,000 must have a CPA prepared annual audit report completed as required by the State of New Jersey General Provisions document which is attached to this NGO on page 26.

## **K. Award Process**

NJDOL will review each completed application on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, appropriateness, demonstrated need, and adherence to application guidelines. Applicants are reminded that the grants will be awarded through a competitive process. NJDOL cannot fund all applications submitted; therefore, only those applications that meet the highest standards will be awarded.

The final contract amount and contract period will be stipulated in the executed contract between the approved applicant and NJDOL. Reimbursement will be given on a cost reimbursement basis for actual expenses incurred during the contract/grant period. The Division of Workforce Development will closely monitor the grants.

### **For information, contact:**

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning  
1 John Fitch Plaza

PO Box 055, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0055

Contact: Bill Sarboukh, Chief, Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning  
Email: [William.Sarboukh@dol.nj.gov](mailto:William.Sarboukh@dol.nj.gov)

**L. Date by which Applicants shall be notified**

NJDOL's review team will evaluate the application on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness to the guidelines and requirements of this NGO. Final decisions on award will be communicated to the applicant no later than forty-five (45) business days following the panel review date. NJDOL reserves the right to exceed the forty-five (45) day award notice deadline should the application be deemed as incomplete.

Applications for FY2026 Round 2 funds will not be accepted in IGX after **12 noon on Friday, March 13, 2026.**

Notice that an organization has been selected as a grant recipient does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant award is made, NJDOL will enter into negotiations concerning items such as program components, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems. If subsequent negotiations do not result in an agreement between the applicant and NJDOL, NJDOL reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the proposal.

Upon the review and approval of an application for funding, a signed contract will be sent to the grantee via the IGX system. This contract will provide the grantee with spending authority for the term of the contract. Grantees are not authorized to expend funds before or after the contract period, as shown on the contract.

**\*Dates may be subject to change. Any changes will be posted on NJDOL website.**

**Attachment I.**

**Letter of Intent**

**(NOTE: the AO must also register in IGX as a new user)**

**(On your organization's letterhead)**

Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning  
[ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov](mailto:ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov)

RE: FY2026 Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) – Round 2

Please accept this letter as notice of my intention to apply for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development fiscal year 2026 PACE Round 2 grant program. I have completed registration in the IGX system, read and understand the FY2026 PACE Round 2 Notice of Grant Opportunity, and am aware of my responsibilities as the Authorized Official.

Legal business name:  
Industry/Occupational area of Training:  
Federal Employee Identification # (FEIN):  
Unique Entity Identifier # (UEI):  
NJ business address:  
County of NJ business:  
Business web address:  
Name of Authorized Official (Person Legally Authorized to Sign Contracts):  
Title of Authorized Official:  
Direct phone # and email address of Authorized Official:  
Main point of contact for the PACE application:  
Direct phone # and email address of main point of contact:

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Signature of Authorized Official

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Date

Email this completed form as an attachment to: [ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov](mailto:ApprenticeshipUnit@dol.nj.gov)

## Attachment II.

### Tax Clearance Certificate

Public Law 2007, c. 101 requires that as a precondition to the award of business assistance or incentive or as a component of the application for business assistance or incentive, a person or business seeking a grant, loan, loan guarantee, or other monetary or financial benefit from a department or agency of state government shall obtain a [Tax Clearance Certificate](#) from the director of the New Jersey Division of Taxation prior to the issuance of the grant, incentive or assistance. Tax Clearance certificates may be requested through the State of New Jersey's [Premier Business Services \(PBS\) portal](#) online. The use of the [portal](#) replaces the need for the [paper application](#) submission to the Division of Taxation; [the processing fee is also waived with the use of the portal](#). Each applicant will be able to print the necessary clearance certificate through their business's portal account. **It is strongly suggested to apply for the Tax Clearance certificate once an organization makes the decision to apply for funding to avoid any delay in submitted your application. Failure to acquire the necessary Tax Clearance form will result in a delay or cancellation of funding.**

**Please Note:** All entities regardless of the type of organization or tax exemption status, are able to request and obtain a tax clearance certificate, as this document is tied to registration with the NJ Division of Revenue. More information about this requirement and particular document can be found [here](#).

### State of New Jersey W-9 Form

A completed State of New Jersey W-9 form must be on file with the New Jersey Department of Treasury. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure this step is completed. Applicants may register with the New Jersey Department of the Treasury online at: [www.njstart.gov](http://www.njstart.gov). Failure to complete this step can delay or forfeit a grant award. *(Reimbursement checks are linked with the FEIN that is on file with the New Jersey Department of Treasury. As a result, reimbursement checks are mailed to this associated address.)*

### Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability Act

[The Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability Act](#): Public Law 2007, c.200 requires that all applicants awarded a grant in excess of \$25,000 complete the [Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability form](#). This form must be completed within 30 days after the State's fiscal year for a period of five years after the grant is awarded.

*The law requires that if the company receiving financial assistance for training services relocates jobs out of state or outsources employee positions within three years following the ending date of the P A C E Program contract, the company must return all monies provided by the state for customized training services.*



### Attachment III.

#### *Projected Project Plan*

**You must include the chart below within your Executive Summary.** For each Quarter of the grant, enter the following information:

**Participants to be Enrolled** – The TOTAL number of PACE participants enrolled (both new and previously enrolled)

**Expenditures** – Please provide the estimated expenditure of PACE grant funds for each quarter of the grant in each of the following categories:

**Personnel** – Salaries and fringe benefits

**Non-Personnel** – Marketing Materials, Office Supplies

**Direct Student Costs** – Books, Instructional Materials and Supplies; Stipends, Safety Equipment

<b>Anticipated Activity</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q5</b>	<b>Q6</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Participants to be enrolled							
<b>Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q5</b>	<b>Q6</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Personnel Costs							
Non-Personnel Costs							
Direct Student Costs							

**Attachment IV**

**PRE-APPRENTICESHIP IN CAREER EDUCATION (PACE) PROGRAM  
Commitment Letter/ Quality Placement Partner Form  
Fiscal Year \_\_\_\_\_**

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Name of PACE Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**

*Complete the form below. A separate form must be completed for each partner and uploaded into IGX.*

**Type of Quality Placement Partner:** Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor: ☐

Employer paying \$17/hour or more: ☐      Secondary or Vocational Training Partner: ☐

Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of anticipated job openings for the contract period: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of PACE completers your organization is willing to hire/enroll: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational title (s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
List the role/responsibilities of the partner and the frequency in which communication about grant progress with this partner will occur.:

List the specific agreed upon activities to be accomplished by the partner:

I/We certify that the information is correct and both parties understand the roles, responsibilities and activities for each partner.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Applicant*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Partner*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*