

# **EARN Maryland Winter 2023 Solicitation for Implementation Grants**

Pre-Proposal Conference  
*Thursday, December 14, 2023 | 1:00PM-2:00PM*

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**Mary Keller**

*Special Grants Administrator, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning  
Maryland Department of Labor*

# Agenda



- Housekeeping Items
- Overview of the EARN Maryland Program
- Grant Awards
- Characteristics of a Successful Workforce Training Plan
- Application Format and Submission
- Grant Evaluation and Selection
- Timeline
- Reporting Requirements
- Questions

# Housekeeping Items

- Please include your name, organization, and email address in the chat.
- You may type questions into the chat or use the hand raise function when we are ready to take questions.
- All questions and answers received today will be posted on the EARN Maryland website by Friday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Questions may be sent via email to Mary Keller through Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. An updated Q&A document will be posted on the website each Friday through January 26<sup>th</sup>.

# Housekeeping Items

- If your organization decides to move forward with developing a proposal, please submit an Intent to Apply notification to Mary Keller. An email notification is fine.
- If your organization chooses **not** to submit an application, please consider completing the **Prospective Applicant Feedback Form on Page 3 of the Solicitation**, which can be emailed to Mary Keller.
- This presentation will be shared with attendees via email after the conference and posted on the [EARN Maryland website](#).
- Contact information – please email Mary Keller by COB tomorrow, Friday 12/15 if you do **NOT** want your contact information shared with others on this call.

# EARN Maryland

EARN builds upon the Moore-Miller administration's priorities of connecting Marylanders to jobs while increasing the State's economic competitiveness.

Generally, EARN Maryland is designed to:

- Address business workforce needs by focusing on industry sector strategies that seek long-term solutions to sustained skills gaps and personnel shortages;
- Address the needs of workers by creating formal career paths to good jobs, and sustaining or growing middle class jobs;
- Encourage mobility for Maryland's most hard-to-serve jobseekers through targeted job readiness training; and
- Foster better coordination between the public, private, and non-profit sectors and the workforce, economic development, and education partners around the State.



# EARN Maryland

- Established in 2014, EARN is a **state-funded** program.
- EARN has been recognized as a **best practice** by organizations like the Urban Institute, National Skills Coalition, Deloitte, and Harvard Business Review.
- Since inception, nearly **9,300** individuals have obtained employment as a result of participating in EARN programming.
- More than **13,000** incumbent workers have participated in upskilling opportunities.
- For every \$1 of state funding invested into the EARN Maryland program, an additional **\$17.16** in economic impact is created.
- EARN currently funds more than **60** Strategic industry Partnerships, (SIPs).

# EARN Maryland

- Industry collaboration with critical and diverse partners to meet changing workforce needs and skills shortages.
- Targets low and no-skilled workers as well as incumbent workers to eliminate barriers and create responsive career pathways.
- Organizes formal sector partnerships in collaboration with the public workforce system, higher education, and community service organizations.
- State-funded grant program meant to be flexible and nimble to meet industry demand.

# Strategic Industry Partnerships

- SIPs must include:
  - *At least **five*** employer and industry partners
  - **Two** diverse entities
    - Higher Education, Non-Profit or Community Based Organization, Local Workforce Development Boards, Local Government
- Collaboration is key – each partner plays a unique role in program’s success.
- If an industry association or Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor is a member of your SIP, five employers must be identified.
- It is strongly encouraged that applicants include the Local Workforce Development Board in the target region.
- SIP must select a target industry and develop a Workforce Training Plan to meet common needs and shortages.



# Lead Applicant

- From the SIP, a Lead Applicant must be identified.
- The Lead Applicant **must** be the Fiscal Agent for the grant.
- The Lead Applicant will be responsible for managing the grant and all aspects of implementing the Workforce Training Plan.
  - Grant Management and Workforce Training Plan Implementation
  - Participant Management
  - Partnership Management
- If the Lead Applicant is not based in Maryland, the proposal must justify the choice of that entity for the role.

# Examples of Role of Employers

- Identify common workforce and skills needs and challenges, contribute to development of responsive curriculum.
- Participate in mock interviews, job shadowing, and provide tour of facilities.
- Commit to interviewing trainees or identifying current employees for training.
- Participate in regular SIP meetings.
- Provide regular feedback on continuing or additional workforce needs, success of participants, and value of training.

# Role of Diverse Entities

- Participant Management
  - Recruitment to placement framework
    - Pipeline Development, Recruitment, Screening, Case Management, Wraparound Services and Barrier Removal, Job Coaching/Job Readiness, Essential Skills, Placement, Retention, and Advancement Strategies.
- Partnership Management
  - Entity/individual lead – credibility with industry, trust of diverse set of partners
  - Coordination and accountability among partners
  - Continuous feedback loop with employers
- Grant Management and Implementation
  - Direct grant management (preparing invoices, maintaining financial records, outcome reporting)
  - Training plan implementation (curriculum tracking and development, trainer selection, all logistics related to training implementation)
  - This person must be an employee of Lead Applicant

# Grant Awards - Funding

- There is no set number of awards that will be funded.
- Budget requests should **not** exceed \$150,000 over the grant period.
- Grant period is for up to two years (7/1/24-6/30/26) but applicants may write a budget to reflect a shorter time frame.
- The following are costs that shall **not** be covered by EARN Maryland funds:
  - Building Construction
  - Website development or maintenance
- Leveraged Resources (cash or in-kind) are required but there is no match requirement.
- Line items in Appendix D (Budget) are meant to be examples.
- Please do not remove formulas in Appendix D.

# Successful WTPs

- Successful WTPs will:
  - Demonstrate direct pathways to good jobs, credential or certification attainment, or advancement opportunities, with an emphasis on barrier removal and supportive services, particularly for Maryland's most hard-to-serve jobseekers.
  - For incumbent workers, the WTP will provide evidence of immediate or future career advancement in the form of a title promotion, wage increases, or similar evidence.
  - Demonstrate explicit commitments from all members of the SIP, evidenced in Letters of Support.
  - Be both data and experience-driven.
  - Seek to infuse and advance equity.
  - Braid other public or philanthropic funding streams or in-kind support.

# Application Format and Submission

Proposals must contain the following documents. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- A Letter of Application
- Application (**Appendix A**)
  - Cover Page
  - Executive Summary – should not exceed 400 words
  - Narrative
  - Assurances
  - Appendix A should not exceed 35 pages in length.
- Strategic Industry Partnership Submission Requirements (**Appendix B**)
  - Letter of Commitment from **EVERY** member of the SIP
  - Signed W9 Form for Lead Applicant
  - If Lead Applicant is tax exempt, a copy of official notice
  - Certificate of Good Standing - required for Lead Applicant **AND** any Subrecipient (screenshot is acceptable)

\*Government entities are not subject to obtaining a COGS.

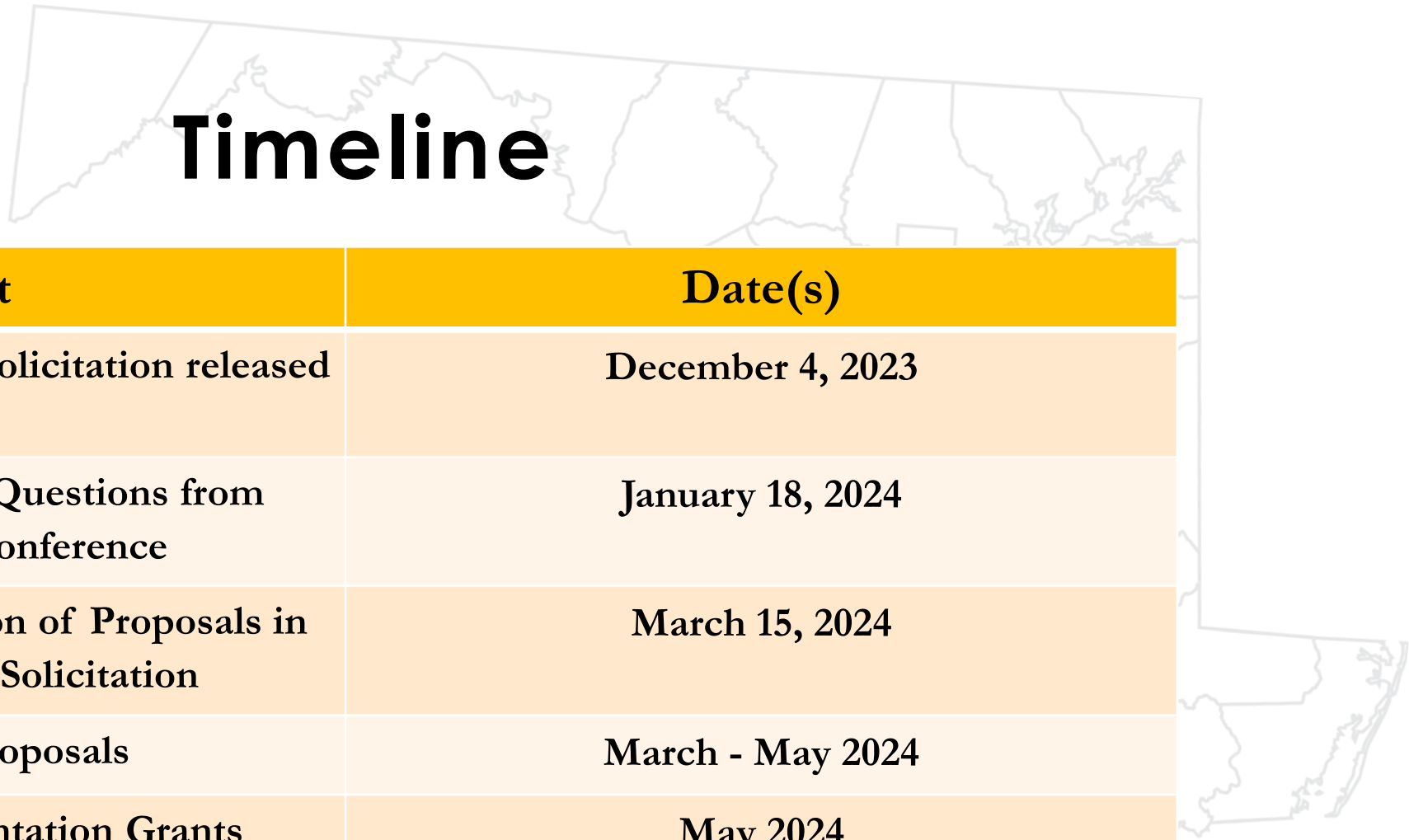
# Application Format and Submission

- The most recent two years' Audited, Reviewed, or Compiled Financial Statements for the Lead Applicant (**Appendix C**)
  - Community College or State Agency may submit a web link in lieu of a hard copy
- Budget (**Appendix D**)
- **Complete applications should be submitted to Mary Keller at [mary.keller@maryland.gov](mailto:mary.keller@maryland.gov) by 11:59 PM on March 15, 2024, and include all required documents in a single email.**
  - Submissions should be combined into one PDF in the order listed in **Section 4.1** of the Solicitation.
  - In addition to being included in the PDF, Appendix D should also be included as a standalone Excel Sheet (.xlsx). Each submission should have two attachments.
  - Applicants received after the due date will not be considered.

# Grant Evaluation and Selection

- All proposals will undergo an initial screening to ensure that submission requirements were met, and all required sections were included. Proposals that do not meet the initial screening requirements will not be read.
- Proposals will be evaluated by a Review Committee established by Labor. The Review Committee will be composed of representatives from Labor, other State agencies, Philanthropy organizations, as well as several other organizations.
- Final approval for awards will be determined by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, based on the recommendations of the Review Committee and taking into account other factors, such as geographic distribution and industry diversity.





<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Implementation Grant Solicitation released	December 4, 2023
Deadline to Submit Questions from Pre-proposal Conference	January 18, 2024
Deadline for Submission of Proposals in Response to this Solicitation	March 15, 2024
Review of Proposals	March - May 2024
Award of Implementation Grants	May 2024
Period of Performance	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026

# Reporting Requirements



- Quarterly Reporting includes:
  - Invoice + Expenditure Report
  - Program Narrative
  - Participant Metrics
    - Demographic Data – Race, Sex, Date of Birth, National Origin, County of Residence, Educational Attainment, pre-training employment status, wages.
    - Exit Data – outcome data including certification, credential, or skill attainment, post-training employment status, wages
- The SIP will be responsible for all data collection and follow-up.



# Questions!

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*All questions and answers received during this conference will be posted on the EARN Maryland's website by **December 22, 2023**: <https://labor.maryland.gov/earn/>*

*Questions about the Solicitation will be accepted via email through **January 18, 2024**.*

*Please remember to let Mary Keller know if you do not want your contact information shared with the attendees of the pre-proposal conference by **December 15, 2023**.*



# Thank you!

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*For questions on today's presentation, contact:*

**Mary Keller**

[mary.keller@maryland.gov](mailto:mary.keller@maryland.gov)