**Q&A Session for PON 3981: Energy Efficiency and Clean Technology Training – Overview and Updates**

Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2022

(*Questions have been lightly edited for grammar*)

Q: ­Can a grant include both existing workers who need additional training and new workers on a pathway into a trade, or does it have to be one or the other?­

A: ­Projects can include both categories; however, the project plan needs to clearly delineate the different audiences and associated activities for each.

Q: ­If a union training program has both categories in its proposal, would it qualify for the 10% cost share?­

A: ­Under the newly revised PON, unions qualify for the reduced 10% cost share regardless of whether trainees are new workers, existing workers, or both.

Q: ­Pre-apprenticeship trainings place people in the green energy economy via union placements, but don't directly train in skills as this is the purview of the apprenticeship programs. Would mentorship and a broad training of “green energy” qualify? ­

A: Training funded under PON 3981 must include a technical component. To review funding eligibility for a particular pre-apprenticeship program, please reach out to the designated contact for PON 3981.

Q: ­Is the funding under PON 3981 considered federal or state funding?­

A: ­PON 3981 funding originates from the New York State Clean Energy Fund (CEF) / System Benefits Charge (SBC). More information on the CEF/SBC can be found at the following link and in the PON Summary: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/Funding>­.

Q: ­How does NYSERDA define "Industry Partnerships?”­

A: ­Generally speaking, industry partnerships are defined as partnerships or relationships with businesses working in the clean energy industry. These relationships are needed to demonstrate business demand for the training and ensure that industry has an active role in the training program, e.g., by interviewing or hiring program graduates­, providing internships, etc.

Q: ­What happens if the placement criteria are not met, as it is a factor that is ultimately out of the hands of the training entity?­

A: The 80% placement requirement is critical to ensuring program graduates have a career path to clean energy. Therefore, applicants are required to demonstrate industry commitments along with a plan for job placement as part of their proposal. If a project substantially misses the placement target, NYSERDA reserves the right to reduce the funding award.

Q: ­ What is the PON number that helps with on-the-job training?­

A: ­PON 3982 is the On-the-Job Training Program. PON 4000 is the Clean Energy Internship Program­.

Q: ­Do we have to include letters of support with the Concept Paper? ­

A: Letters of support are not required at the Concept Paper submission stage; however, if you have established commitments with businesses at that time, please describe those in the Concept Paper.

Q: ­Would the PON pay for things like solar racking system equipment or electric vehicle (EV) station set-ups for workers to train on?

A: For solar, the training equipment would only be eligible if it is for a project that meets the large-scale, land-based renewable energy generation requirements and if the target energy generation system is supported through the New York State Clean Energy Standard. If that is the case, then training equipment is eligible for funding if it is directly related to the training.

Q: ­Can funding be used to purchase a vehicle if that vehicle is going to be used exclusively for training purposes? For example, a hybrid or EV or electric truck to learn EV maintenance?

A: No, vehicles are not eligible for funding under PON 3981, even for training purposes.

Q: ­For NYSERDA’s Pay for Success Clean Energy Training project, what kind of data is the evaluator looking for?

A: The data that our evaluation partner collects is generally similar to what NYSERDA collects as part of reporting for all projects, with some additional data collected in collaboration with the New York State Department of Labor. The additional requirements can be discussed with eligible candidates in more detail once funding is awarded under the standard PON 3981 funding opportunity.

Q: Does PON 3981 cover the cost of rent?

A: The program can provide funding for rent as long as it is a demonstrated need for the project and the time covered by the rent is commensurate with the scope and duration of training (e.g., a month’s rent for a 1-day training would not be commensurate).

Q: ­Is there a placement rate requirement for trainees?­

A: Under Category 2 (Career Pathways Projects for New Workers), projects must place 80% of trainees. Qualifying placements may include internships, apprenticeships, advanced formal training, or full-time jobs.

Q: ­How long does the trainee need to be in the job/internship to qualify for placement?­

A: Per NYSERDA’s internship program, internships must be a minimum of 8 weeks and 80 hours in duration, so this is the minimum required duration for an internship placement. Full-time jobs are expected to be permanent jobs.