**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) Round Two Grantee Orientation**

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BRIAN KEATING: But for now I’m going to turn things over to our moderator today, Wendy Havenstrite. She is a workforce analyst with the Adult Policy Unit, Division of WIA Adult Services and Workforce System. So Wendy, take it away.

WENDY HAVENSTRITE: Thank you so much, Brian, and welcome to all of our new Workforce Innovation Fund grantees, round 2 grantees. We see some familiar faces, and we see some real (throes ?) in the field, so we’re delighted to have you in the second round.

Just going forward, these are going to be the ways you can get a hold of me if you need to through the Workforce Innovation Fund web mailbox or by direct – email address or my telephone line. We prefer the mailbox for Workforce Innovation simply because if I’m out for some reason, somebody else will be checking the box, and so we’ll get back to you a little bit sooner.

Here is what you can expect hopefully from today’s webinar. We want you at the end of this to understand the players and their roles and responsibilities. We want you to understand the administrative and fiscal grant requirements, not granularly but at least the 50,000 foot level and understand a little bit about the evaluation component, which is critical, as you know, because you have these wonderful proposals.

The agenda today, we’re going to overview the fund itself, the Workforce Innovation Fund. And we’ll lapse into colloquialisms here pretty soon, we’ll start – (inaudible) – WIF. So just stand by. I know it doesn’t sound very good, but that’s what we call it.

We’ll talk again about roles and responsibilities. We’ll have Sara Williams, our grant officer, go through the grants package, some administrative and fiscal requirements, the evaluation plan component. We have your national evaluation coordinator, who you’ll hear. I’ll call here either Eliza or the NEC. Again, I apologize in advance. And then we’ll talk a little bit about here do we go from here.

So two more of your presenters. Sara Williams I mentioned. She’s your grant officer. She is the head honcho and the one who knows all. We also have Eliza Kean, and when it comes to evaluation, she is the head honcho. She works for Abt Associates there, the national evaluation coordinator. And I suspect that most of you have heard from her or somebody on her staff already. They’re beginning to reach out I know to grantees and set up conversations.

We have a couple of special guests here today, Robert Kight – and I say that because he’s my boss. He the director of the division of WIA Adult – well, I’m just not going to say that again – in the Office of Workforce Investment. And Wayne Gordon is the director at the Division of Research and Evaluation, Office of Policy Development and Research. I’ve not given you their contact information; if you actually wanted it at some point, particularly to complain or say something wonderful, you should let me know, and I’ll get that to you. But they’re not your regular conduits.

Right now, I’d like to turn it over, though, to Robert for just a minute, and he’s going to tell you all the purpose of the Workforce Innovation Fund grants. Robert?

ROBERT KIGHT: Thanks, Wendy. Good afternoon to some, and good morning to others. It’s my pleasure to first congratulate you on being selected as a WIF grantee. I know that must mean an awful lot to you after going through this grueling process.

For my purposes here this afternoon, I want to just give a flight overview of what the WIF is and what it is not and also to just point out how the WIF, although it’s in a world of its own, it also aligns closely with the upcoming work in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The Workforce Innovation Funds are not the same as WIA funds. They are authorized by the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011.  They have their own appropriations and are only governed by WIA when we have chosen to align them with WIA.

I’d like for you to think that the work – and we think this way – that the work that the WIF grantees do have a much larger impact on the overall public workforce system. It supports those initiatives that deliver services more efficiently and achieve better outcomes for the dual customer, which is job seeker and the employer.

It supports initiatives that cross program – that support cross program cooperation and system reforms to deliver client-centered services. So you can think in terms of more integrated programs and service delivery as to how we better – the public workforce system better engages all populations and work with other agencies out at the state and local levels.

The WIF supports initiatives that develop education, employment and training services in partnership with specific employers or industry sectors. As we all know now with the passage of WIOA, industry sector partnerships, joint collaboration with other agencies is a major part of our work, so this WIF grant will afford you an opportunity to explore and to develop some of your innovative ideas that could eventually be enrolled into your integrated state plan.

And finally, the WIF supports initiatives that build knowledge about effective practices through rigorous evaluation and translating lessons learned into the formula-funded programs.

So we’re expecting a lot of you as we seek to transform the public workforce system. I’m quite sure you’re capable of doing it. And we look forward to working with you in the years to come.

So I’ll turn you over to Sara to give you more information about the specifics of your WIF grant. Sara?

SARA WILLIAMS: Thanks, Robert.

So I just – before I dive into the specifics of your grant, I just wanted to look over to my colleague, Janet Flowers (ph), who’s sitting right next to me. And she actually was the one who did all the work get you guys to the grants that you have. So she’ll be – yay, Janet – (applause) – and so is an incredible resource here in – on my team, and so you’ll probably be hearing from her and I and Wendy quite a bit. And then I also want to give a shout-out to our federal project officers on the call. I saw Levy (ph). I saw Tim Deverge (ph). There is a sign up front that says, you know, what region you’re in and talks about which federal project officer you have. So you should probably have already heard from our great FPO. And then going forward, Wayne is going to give you just a little bit of information about, you know – (inaudible) – as your point of contact.

But diving in, your period of performance is 60 months from the effective date of the grant, which was – what was that – (off mic)?

MS. : September 24th?

MS. WILLIAMS: Was it?

MS. : The award date – (inaudible).

MS. WILLIAMS: Hmm. No, I think it was – I think it was 10/1, right? So 10/1. So anyway, whatever it is. So we’re going to spend a year of this doing planning and startups. You have some very specific requirements that were in the solicitation around this phase one, and we’ll talk more about that in a second. But Eliza will be helping you through that process. You guys are going to be hitting the road running and lots of things upfront, lots of works. Then we have 36 months for your technical grant performance and then 12 months at the back end to do your evaluation activities. We – now, this is a quick five years, but can’t wait to see all the incredible work that happened that – by the end of this project.

We have 11 grantees here on the line. We have seven in our project type A. Those are the new and untested ideas of the smaller grants, where we’re dumping a little bit of money on you guys, and we’re going to do some exciting evaluations and do really innovative things.

We have three for project type B. Those are the promising ideas where they’re going to be doing a more rigorous evaluation, but these ideas might be new to them. And then we have one project type B, one big guy that’s – (inaudible) – really blow up a project that they’ve been working on and get some really strong evidence about what works in their project. And so you can see we’re funding across different amounts but also, like, different ideas and different sizes and really hoping to get some exciting evidence from you folks.

This is a list of the awardees. I’m going to turn over to Wayne, but in the meantime I want to make a shout-out to my friends in Utica, who are under seven feet of snow right now. My mother-in-law is there struggling – maybe not – maybe not Utica, maybe a little bit farther away. But anyway, we’re uber-excited about that in Utica. When I come up for Thanksgiving, I might stop by, so watch out. But in the meantime, Wayne?

MS. : Wow, the first – (inaudible) – visit.

WAYNE GORDON: Thank you, Sara, and congrats as well to the grantees for their recent awards. You’ll have to – I think you’re fortunate to have the benefit of a round going before you – you might be unfortunate to have a round going before you – but hopefully we’ve learned a few things from there. We have discovered some emerging themes, and we’d like to share those with you, what we see in the – in the round 1 grants.

What we see is improving training outcomes by developing sector strategies and career pathways, especially for youth; improving efficiency and efficacy of one-stop service delivery through enhanced online resources and innovative, virtual service delivery; and finally, the third point I’d like to make is we see there is a reduction in redundancies and improvement in participant outcomes by designing integrated management information systems and aligning policies and programs, and the MIS systems are so very important for evaluations to come.

Now, let’s talk a little bit about everyone’s roles and responsibilities. In the national office leads, you’re already hearing from Sara Williams, Wendy Havenstrite and myself, and they’ll be coordinating TA evaluation and grants management – coordination with the FPOs, establishing policy guidance and concurrence on some modifications of statements of work. The FPOs, of course, though, are your first stop for all questions and concerns. Your FPOs will help guide you through the roughest water. So if you haven’t yet talked to yours, reach out and do so. I imagine they’ve already done – they are the experts. We rely on them, and you should, too.

Other supports that ETA plans to provide grantees are through contractor support. You’ll hear from Eliza soon. She represents the national evaluation coordinator, which is Abt Associates. There will be a technical assistance coordinator, and contractors submitted their bids November 14th with a new TA?

MS. : They did, and they’re in review.

MR. GORDON: Good. They have not been selected yet. Let me toss this back to Sarah now; she’s had a chance to take a drink of water, perhaps, and she’ll be moving on and taking it from here. Sarah?

MS. WILLIAMS: Thanks, Wayne. So a little more nuts and bolts about what I do. Jeannette (sp) and I, together, work on your grant modifications. So if you have any changes to your statement of work, you’ll be talking to your federal project officers, and then they might rise to the level to acquiring a modification to the terms of your awards, so we’ll be working on that.

We actually maintain the official grant file; if you have any questions about things related to your grant documents, definitely feel free to reach out to your FPOs, and we’ll get you the right things in your hands. I also do the equipment prior approvals; that’s a requirement in the – well, not OMB circulars anymore – whatever they’re called – the super circulars – the omnibus circular – but it’s a requirement that equipment purchases over $5,000 require prior approval as part of the terms and conditions of your award. So as you’re thinking about your purchases, you’ll be working with your federal project officers to follow the determinant rules that pertain to you, and then we’ll be issuing modifications as necessary.

So you folks – what do we expect from you? We expect you to provide exemplary customer service to your businesses, you know, to your participants; we expect incredible, incredible things about – from you guys, and getting the work done that you need. You have really created a project, and we know that the projects that you’re proposing are addressing the needs of people walking through your doors, and those are great needs, but they’re also addressing your own needs from a systemic place, so, you know, in – we know that you’re working through – lining your MIS systems. We know that you – we’ve done good work working with community colleges to do career pathways and projects like that. So we’re really looking for you guys to implement these program designs that were so exceptional.

Of course, you have to meet your federal law and regulation requirements, so that’s – part of that is looking at the SGA and making sure that your work aligns with the SGA and doesn’t break any of the activities that are required of the SGA. Again, just reiterating that not all of WIA – (inaudible) – applies, so where you have questions, where you have concerns about whether WIA pertains or does not, you look to the SGA. Of course, your federal project officers can help you with that, and any time you have questions, Jeannette (sp) and I are happy to jump in and opine.

Of course, it follows the OMB cost influence – the uniform (ministerial ?) requirements, generally accepted accounting principles – all of these things, which – general good grants management – we know that you guys can do it. You’re pretty much our grantees anyway; local WIFs, state workforce agencies. So keep doing it the way that you’re already doing it.

And then, finally – and for me, most importantly – and for (WIA ?) most importantly, we want a strong program, but we want a strong evaluation, so when you’re doing work, just be thinking that the dual focus of the WIF is about improving service design, but it’s also about getting a strong evaluation, so we can’t compromise either one of those things when we’re – when we’re creating and implementing these programs. It’s critical to the (big ?) idea of the WIF, that we have strong evaluations.

So quick and dirty on your grant award package – I guess if you can just write in the chat if you haven’t gotten your grant award package – it’s possible that you haven’t because of – maybe it’s unauthorized – (inaudible) – but say if you have not received your grant award package, and Jeannette (sp) and I will make a note of it. But you should have received it by email, or in some cases, when it was large, Jeannette (sp) mailed it through UPS.

And then – so just go ahead. It’s going to be sent to the grant signatory, who is the authorized rep on the SF-424A – excuse me, 424. So if you haven’t received it, you might want to also check with them. And then – so it consists of a grant award letter and the actual grant package. It includes the notification of award obligation and the terms and conditions of the award. And then it also includes the documents that you sent us – so the SF-424, 424A, budget narrative, the statement of work, which included your project narrative, your program evaluation plan and your evaluation budget narrative, and there might have been some additional sort of documents that you submitted along with the work plan and things like that. That all become part of your statement of work, and was returned to you with the terms and conditions of the award.

So if you’re looking at your grant award letter, of course it acknowledges that you receive a reward. It points you to your – the payment management system and it gives you instructions about how to set up a PMS account; if you’re having problems with that, let us know. It also gives you instructions about how to setup your financial reporting for your 9130; those are quarterly financial reports that are really important to us and to your federal project officers. Once your PINs – your passwords and PINs are sent separately after you supply the necessary information – and once you receive the PINs, please don’t lose them. It creates a headache on our side. But if you do, we’ll figure it out, but just try to keep track them and get into those systems early and often.

So regarding the notification of award obligations – the first page is – that’s the notice of award obligation, and then it has the project title, which is, of course, the Workforce Innovation Fund; it has your DUNS, your EIN, your address. It contains your grant award number – your WIF grant award number, and that starts with an IF and the five-number sequence, and then additional numbers after it. But when you’re contacting your FPO or Wendy at the workforce (dot ?) innovation, definitely drop in your grant award number; that’ll help us figure out – you know, figure out who we’re talking to and make sure we get you the right information. So that’s the notice of obligation.

And then your terms and conditions – there’s some things that you really should be looking at when you’re looking at your terms and conditions of your award. It’s not a short document, but this is – the first few pages of it, there’s a table of contents first, and then, talking about the order of precedence. It includes the appropriation language, and then the SGA is incorporated by reference, so you can look through that – statement of work is incorporated as an attachment – (inaudible) – budget, but really, what we’re interested in – the first thing you should be looking at is your indirect cost rate.

If you came in for an indirect cost rate, it should be – it should be noted in there on the second page, and then some information. Your federal project officer wasn’t actually identified in your terms of award, but the region that your grant is associated with should be – should be in there. So if you have any questions, feel free to email them. And then, you’ll notice that there is a restrictions section, which talks about the percent of award that you can draw down. I’ll talk more about that in a second.

But then there’s some other things to pay attention is the budget line on flexibility, which is about 20 percent. You can read about how that works and when it requires a modification – what kind of lines – what kind of budget realignment is required. You also, as we mentioned before, have an equipment requirement – that equipment over $5,000 has prior approval – information about program income; if you’re actually going to be generating program income through your grant, there is a term that addresses how that those funds should be addressed. There’s intellectual property rights; there is, of course, the requirement for the evaluation and the requirement for the quarterly financial reports, as well as the narrative report that Wendy is very interested in – (inaudible).

OK. So then I mentioned about the (turn ?) that was related to 25 percent of your award and the restriction. So as the SGA mentioned, there are two phases of funding. We are making available 25 percent of your award to accomplish the work that’s required at phase one. So Eliza is going to talk about what actual deliverables you need in Phase 1 to release Phase 2 funding. The payment management system where you pull the money from actually has all of your money in it right now, but we have a – we have a restriction that once you hit that ceiling of 25 percent of your awards, you’re going to not be able to draw down.

We have some flexibility around that, so if there’s a compelling reason why you would need money above that 25 percent, you can talk to your federal project officer, and with my prior approval we would likely be able to release additional funds. But the idea with this is really that we protect the funds and ensure that the first steps to a successful grant – this is the evaluation piece – are met before we open up the full amount of the grant award. Again, just to be clear, Eliza is going to give really specific details about where and when those documents are there.

And then, of course, with the – one other piece about this is the redaction. I think that all of you have completed your redaction, so thanks for doing that.

(Cross talk.)

MS. : Thanks, everyone.

MS. WILLIAMS: It’s going to get on – it’s going to be put onto our website and you can see – the links are publicly viewed at whatever DOL/grants, and you can click through that. So at this point the abstracts are up, but your full proposal will be up there. And we’re excited about this because it really does let people know what an awesome grant proposal looks like and they can better understand – if we’re pressing somebody, they can better understand what is a compelling and strong application, and that is a great resource for them. So thank you for doing that.

And at this point I think it’s time for Eliza to talk about evaluations. So, Eliza?

ELIZA KEAN: Great. Thanks, Sara.

This is Eliza Kean with Abt Associates, representing the National Evaluation Coordinator, or NEC. As Wendy has pointed out, we use that acronym kind of jokingly but also affectionately.

So, turning to evaluation, you all understand, given your review of the SGA and response to the SGA, the importance of the evaluation component to WIF. We pulled this quote just to sort of show it at this – at this time, to reflect on it: A goal for WIF is that all the projects are to be rigorously evaluated in order to build a body of knowledge about what works in workforce development.

I just wanted to highlight that so that, you know, you can reflect on the idea that your work – that you’re evaluators and that you will be doing. At the end of the grant period we expect to have 11 robust and interesting evaluations that really share a lot of good information about your innovative projects.

But what does that mean for you? And you know from responding to the SGA that means a number of things. And here we list sort of how that goal is translated kind of into operations. It means that you have to perform an evaluation and that the evaluation type has to be appropriate to the innovation that you’re conducting. And the other requirement is that the evaluation design must be rigorous and that the evaluation must contribute to the same evidence base from which the innovation was designed.

And finally, you have to hire a third party evaluator. And we understand that some of you already have that process underway, which is terrific. You’re making great use of the time that you have available to you in this early part of Phase 1.

And then in terms of our role, the National Evaluation Coordinator, we are here to support and work with you so that – you know, to ensure that the evaluations that come out of WIF are consistently high-quality evaluations. And we’ve had the pleasure of getting on the phone with a number of you already, which is great, just to convey our role and the resources that we have available to you.

Just to go back to what Sara touched on in terms of the types – the evaluation types, the project types and the evaluation types that go along with them, as you know, WIF funds three levels of projects and these each have their own evaluation type. WIF is often described as a tiered evidence programs – program, which means that the various types of projects are defined by the evidence base from which they come. And these types have different evaluation requirements.

As you know, Type A’s, that are the new innovative ideas, never been tested before, they are required to have a pre/post outcome evaluation design as a minimal requirement. And then Type B’s and C’s, these are projects that are based on prior experience, and they require a random assignment design, or randomized control trial.

So moving on to what Sara alluded to about the Phase 1 requirements, you should be familiar with what was outlined in the SGA regarding this first 12 months and what the requirements are for you to be in compliance and then move on to Phase 2 and kind of unlock, as Sara termed it, the Phase 2 funding.

So the first is to have a third-party evaluator procured and to work with you. The requirement there is to submit a copy of your executed contract to the WIF email box, and we’ll give you the WIF email shortly – the Apt. I’m sorry. There are two WIF emails. Just to confuse you, there is a WIF mailbox on Apt’s server and then one through ETA. And you should also submit it to your FPO as well.

One thing we wanted to note, as you – if you are in the process of developing an RSP – and this is something that’s – that is also highlighted in the SGA so I’m assuming you should know it already but I just wanted to reflect on it again – is that coordination with the NEC should be a piece of the scope of work that you craft for your evaluator. We want them to know that they will need to work with us over the grant period. They’ll need to respond to our comments, which are given kind of on behalf of DOL to increase the level of rigor of those evaluations. So therefore the – you know, the evaluator will want to budget appropriately for their work.

And then the sort of deadlines to keep in mind, as noted in the SGA, the initial evaluation design report and the components of that are listed in the SGA. That needs to be submitted to the NEC really as early as possible, as early as it’s completed, but no later than on July 1st in 2015.

And then it is our rule to review those documents and to provide comments and suggestions for areas of improvement, if needed, to strengthen the evaluation design. And then, in turn, the evaluator and you will submit the final evaluation design report and also a final performance data template no later than September 1st, 2015. That’s 11 months after grant award. There is a slight discrepancy of dates that are listed in your terms and conditions, but the SGA prevails, so the SGA indicated a nine-month for the initial evaluation design report, which is July 1st, and 11 months for the final evaluation design report, which is September 1st.

So again, we’re looking forward to working with your evaluators and receiving those EDRs, as we call them by acronym. And, you know, we just want to emphasize again, as soon as those documents can be – are ready to be submitted the better. It’s better not to wait until that last deadline date, just given that there is a review process and there may be a revision needed in order to finalize that document for that September 1st deadline.

One other requirement that I didn’t put on the slide but I do want to emphasize it – we’ve been mentioning it as we talk to you on the phone – is to please be in communication with the NEC and let us know the dates that you expect to submit your documents. This helps us on our side for planning and being as responsive and timely as possible.

And so we just want to talk a little bit about the NEC and what resources are available to you. The NEC, we have a large project team of folks who have deep evaluation experience and expertise in the methodologies that you’ll be undertaking, your evaluators will be undertaking, as well as the analytic techniques. So we want you to – and want your evaluators to see us as a resource. We are available to you to provide assistance and support. And you know, our end goal, like yours, is for the strongest evaluations possible to come out of WIF.

We want to point to a toolkit that was published. You may have seen it as you were preparing your grant application. It’s available on the ETA website, sort of in a resources area in conjunction with the SGA. If anyone has – wants to find it and has trouble, you know, you can send an email to the wif@abtassoc.com email address. We’re happy to share that with you. A companion toolkit that will be targeted for the evaluators will be available shortly for their use.

So just in general, our goal is to work with your third-party evaluators and the TA provider, once they’re on board, to communicate with you throughout the remainder of the grant. And I lift here just so you can note down and have for future reference our email address. You may have received – or a point person for your grant may have already received an email from us, so you have that, but that’s how to get in touch with us.

And then, I also want to mention, we have share-point site that – where we hold a lot of resources – a number of resources that we have developed and other resources that we’ve gathered from the round one grantees, still relevant and still very useful. We’ll be sharing with you the methods for accessing the share-point site very soon, probably next week. So I just wanted to mention that to you all.

So in terms of our immediate next steps, you all know we’ve been conducting just some initial introductory calls with you to sort of, you know, get to know one another, learn a little bit more about your project, learn, you know, where you are in the process of procuring your third-party evaluator and, you know, again, to let you know, you know, overall the evaluation process and the – (inaudible).

And where necessary we’ve been touching base on a couple of pieces of your evaluation plan, such as – you know, we’ve been talking to some about your logic model, your budget, and then also talking further about the schedule and the next steps. And I just want to mention that we’re here to work with your third-party evaluators, once they get on board.

And then for the longer next steps – sort of the, you know, looking to the next 12 months or, you know, the next – it’s actually, you know, a little bit less than 10 months between now and the end of the first year. We – you know, just want to empathize these longer-term action items. We want you to send any contact information for folks that – either on the grantee side and also, obviously, on the evaluator side – send information once your evaluator is on board and you have a contract.

And we also want to mention that there are some discussions around having an in-person grantee and evaluator meeting in – the dates currently being discussed are in March of 2015, but that’s to be decided and we’ll keep you posted on that. And again, can’t emphasize enough the deadlines in July and September 2015 for your two deliverables to be submitted. Hopefully I didn’t sound too much like a broken record. We just want to make sure that this information is really up front and central for you as you move forward with your grant.

So I think that is it for my portion. I think – Wendy, I turn it back over to you at this point.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Thank you so much, Eliza. That was really helpful and we appreciate it. I – and thank you, grantees, goodness sakes, for your rapt attention, I’m sure. I don’t even see any questions now. I will – I will say that we know that you’re experienced grantees. We were just commenting on that while we were on mute. So we know that you know an awful lot of this, and probably should be doing the webinars yourselves. But you’re not. So we’re almost done.

I just want to thank Eliza and Robert, Sara and Wayne. And a special shout-out thank you to the FBOs who were able to join us. And it looks to me like almost all of you were. And I’m worry I erased over the top of your slide. I just got – (inaudible). The slide that you see in front of you right now with resources will be a really good reference to important information going forward. So if you don’t have this in one place, save it. It sure saves me a lot of grief.

This concludes the formal part of the presentation. And we can now take some time to address some of the questions we’ve received, which is none. In case we’re not able to answer any today, we’ll collect them and we’ll send responses out to the grantees. But I think that the other thing that we can do – we’ve really done this efficiently, and hopefully it’s been a good use of your time. But I think that we can probably open up for some phone comments as well.

And – no.

MS. : No, I’m joking.

MS. : She saying, what a crazy idea.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: No, believe me I think – I look at Sara Williams and I know that she is the goddess of all things. So, Sara, if she can’t answer – if she and Jeannette (sp) can’t answer them, we’ll take them under advisement, yeah.

So umute your phone lines. Brian, can you do that?

MR. KEATING: All right. Well, I can certainly advise people how to do that. (Gives queuing instructions.) So please go ahead and if you’d like to chime in over the phone. We see Rebecca (sp) and Diane (sp), a couple people typing in as well. So type away. We can also receive your comments and questions that way. But star-six will unmute your line. So I heard, I think, somebody do that. Would someone like to go ahead and chime in over the phone?

If so, now is the time. Please feel free. We will take questions coming in over the chat, but we also want to invite you to please go ahead and feel free to chime in right now over the phone. Just star-six on your phone will unmute your line, and then you’re welcome to certainly chime right in. So we’re going to invite you to do that. Meanwhile, we’ll take any questions that come in nonverbally as well. But as you can hear, we are standing by to take your questions or comments.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: OK, Eliza, there’s a question for you that you might want to take. It says: If you plan on having meetings with the national evaluation coordinator, how many do you anticipate over the five years? Where would they be? How long will they be? We need the information as we procure our evaluator.

MS. KEAN: Sure. So the meeting that I mentioned is a meeting for grantees and evaluators. It’s sort of an all-grantee, all-evaluators meeting. It’s – I think we’re planning to have one, perhaps a second one. I’m not entirely sure. I think the – it’s really just in discussion stages at this – at this point. I can tell you that there was a meeting this past March – at the end of March for round one grantees. And grantees could bring I think it was three or four folks from the grantee side and one person from the evaluator. And that was a two-day meeting. It took place in Washington, D.C. at Department of Labor.

Now that the group of grantees is much larger, with the 26 from round one and the 11 from round two, it’s not likely that we’d be able to use the Department of Labor facilities. But I think that we’re considering other locations in and around Washington, D.C., if I’m not mistaken. Wendy, you might have a little bit more updated information about that.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: I would give it you if I had it. But thanks, Eliza. Great job on that. The SGA said that you need to plan and budget to have at least two meetings with – I can’t remember, is it two or more staff or something – appropriate staff during the life of the grant. And I can tell you that right now, tentatively we’re looking at Washington, D.C, Atlanta or Dallas. We have absolutely no idea.

And the reason we’re so vague on this, I’m sure being experienced grantees you’re familiar, we’ve just gone through a five-year hiatus when there was no traveling whatsoever. And so we’re just really unsure how that’s going to play out. It does say in the SGA, just so you know, all grantees must participate in an in-person, intensive orientation and training event sponsored by ETA and at least one additional national meeting and both meetings will be held in Washington, D.C. And I will say that I don’t know that for sure. So that was our best guess.

If we have it and if it’s in D.C., our current plans are March. I see there’s a question up there. We think that it’s March. We were really sold on D.C. until we realize March and April, you absolutely can’t get a room here – Cherry Blossom Festival. We’ve been down this road before. So that was the first plan. I think we’re looking at some place less expensive. But again, it’s going to be dependent on a number of things.

As you might know, we’re also rolling out this brand-new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which has taken up an awful lot of everyone’s time. And it has a whole rollout of its own. And so I think that we’re somewhat the stepchild to that process, although you and your work itself are very fundamental to how we proceed.

MR. : And we’ll be more nimble.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: We’ll be more nimble. That’s the word I was looking for, nimble.

OK. Is there a – is there an admin cost limit for the SGA? So we have a question with regards to the administrative cost. Is there any administrative cost limit for the round two WIF grant award?

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I’m looking at –

MS. HAVENSTRITE: There usually is.

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, but I think we took it out, remember –

MS. HAVENSTRITE: And we may have deliberately taken it out because there were some things about streamlining and combining and we knew that setting up systems of various kinds will cost more.

MS. WILLIAMS: Right. So it’s not in the SGA. And I’m trying to determine if it’s in here.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Clauses and conditions. If you plan to go over 10 percent –

MS. WILLIAMS: I think we took it out. No, I think it’s – no, I think it’s. I don’t think there’s an admin cost. Of course, you have to – please – you know, that doesn’t mean just – that it’s just, like, all admin money. That – you know, of course, reasonable, necessary, allocable – like, those cost principle ideas, please adhere to them. They need to benefit the government. It needs to benefit the grant. So this isn’t carte blanche to just spend money on admin stuff, not that you would. But yes, there is no admin cap for round two of the WIF.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: OK. Good work.

Q: Hi. This is Andy Hall (sp) from the San Diego Workforce Partnership. Can you hear me?

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Hi, Andy (sp). We sure can. Thank you. We can hear you loud and clear and thanks for being on the call and thanks for asking a question.

Q: No problem. So our – and I think this applies to some other grantees as well – but we have – we need to get approval of our evaluation research design report from an institutional review board as well. Is that approval required for the July 1st deadline or the September 1st deadline, or another point in time in addition to DOL approval?

MS. HAVENSTRITE: I think I’m going to boot that to Eliza.

MS. KEAN: Sure. Ideally, we’d like it for the – for the July 1st. If that’s not possible – and we know that, you know, IRBs often meet, you know, at various time and the timing may not work out – we’d like all good indication that that process is underway. It would definitely be needed by the September 1st deadline.

Q: Great. Thank you.

MS. KEAN: Mmm hmm.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Thanks for the question. Good one. Anybody else out there? I do not believe we have ever had this efficient a webinar. And I can credit it to the fact that you are all experienced grantees and the fact that Sara talks extremely fast.

MS. KEAN: Hey, Wendy? Can I ask a question? This is Eliza.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Hello, Eliza. I’m sorry. Yes, indeed. Please do.

MS. KEAN: (Laughs.) Just on behalf of – a topic that – you know, that’s come up with some of our initial conversations with grantees, and I think it was somewhat addressed in Sara’s – one of Sara’s slides. But if a grantee is able to suffice all state one requirements in terms of the deliverables and everything that’s required, are they able to, you know, move into phase two earlier than October 1, 2015, or is it just a process of sort of – you know, they might be able to access a little bit additional funds with special request until that October 1st date?

MS. WILLIAMS: So that’s a great question, Eliza. Thank you. I think that what we are looking at is, the language says no later than – as early as possible, but no later than. And that certainly is to facilitate getting off the ground and running. And I’m looking at my grant officer and she is – she is nodding her head in a wise way. So, yeah, I think – the whole point here, we are trying to be innovative too; it doesn’t come easily but we’re doing it. We’re nimble.

MS. HAVENSTRITE: Thanks, Eliza. Great question.

All right, grantees. Show’s almost over. It’s really been great for you to join us. I really appreciate it. The attendance is fantastic. I appreciate the FPOs putting in their time. Heaven knows that they too have a lot on their plates, or maybe they really, really have a lot on their plates. So appreciate that. If you have any questions you’ve got the phone numbers and you’ve got the email addresses. Please feel free to use them early and often. And we’ll get back to you just as quickly as we can. And if that’s it, we’re going to call it a day.

Thanks, everybody. Happy Thanksgiving.

(END)