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**Transcript of Webinar**

**H1-B TechHire Partnership Grants**

**Jumpstarting your H-1B TechHire Grant Program:**

**New Grantee Orientation Webinar**

**Monday, August 15, 2016**

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LAURA CASERTANO: Now I'm going to turn things over to your moderator, Ayreen Cadwallader. She's a workforce analyst for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Ayreen?

AYREEN CADWALLADER: Great. Good afternoon, everyone; good morning to those of you calling in from the West Coast. We're all really very excited to have you here on today's webinar, "Jumpstarting your H-1B TechHire Grant Program," our new orientation webinar to introduce you to our team here at the national office and also our team from the regional office.

We have a large number of folks speaking to you today. Just to introduce to our small but mighty team that manages the H-1B family of grants, we do have Robin Fernkas, our division chief; we have Megan Baird, who's our program manager for the H-1B grants program; Caroline Hertel, who is also a workforce analyst on the H-1B grants including the TechHire; and I'm Ayreen Cadwallader, your moderator and program lead for the TechHire grant program.

Also on the call today is Melissa Abdullah, your grant officer, also from DOL; and also Aiyana Pucci, your grant specialist, whom you've heard from. Also from Region 3 is our federal project officer, Adrian Barrett. You'll be able to hear from them later today.

And with that I'd like to turn it over to Robin Fernkas who'll go over our agenda.

ROBIN FERNKAS: Great. Thanks, Ayreen. Hi everyone and welcome aboard. We're so excited that you're part of the TechHire Partnership grant initiative.

We do have a full agenda today and we want to encourage you throughout this presentation to please put all of your questions in the chat section. We really do want to answer as many questions that are on your mind right now and share a lot of introductory information with you.

So today's agenda includes, first, a welcome to the H-1B family of grants at the Employment and Training Administration. Second, we'll also do an introduction to your TechHire DOL team in the national and regional offices.

We're going to cover an overview of the TechHire grant program, which we're hoping many of you will know as well if not better than all of us. We want to share our vision for the grant program, though, and also talk about how this group of grantees really fits in to that vision and a little bit more about all of you.

We're going to review your grant communication plan. Communication is really a two-way street, and we'll look at first, how you communicate with us, who you contact when you have questions, and also how we'll be communicating with you throughout the grant period.

We're also going to touch briefly on reporting requirements and instructions in this webinar, but going to tell you really about a lot of technical assistance to come on that topic.

And then we're going to explore the grant package, taking a closer look at what it is, what's in it. We're also going to discuss the statement of work reviews included in your grant package and what that means for you and your project.

And finally, we'll discuss next steps, including what you should do after this call. So let's get started with some introductions.

Over the past few weeks, various members of the Department of Labor team have been in contact with you about your grant. So let's sort out who's who.

First, the Employment and Training Administration is one of several agencies in the Department of Labor. We're made up of staff in the national office, located in Washington, DC, and in six regional offices throughout the country.

So in the national office, the Division of Strategic Investments – which we refer to in shorthand as DSI – serves as the program office for the TechHire Partnership grant. The program office works together with the Office of Grants Management and the Chief Evaluation Office to support you in implementing various aspects of your projects.

As an extension of our program office team we work very closely with our regional office colleagues. Each of the ETA Regional Offices assigns a federal project officer, or what we call an FPO, to work with each grantee. Your FPO is the single most important person you will meet during your period of performance and plays a critical role in the success of your grant program. They're really your lifeline throughout this process.

The Division of Strategic Investments serves as the program office, as I mentioned. So really, what does a program office do and what are our functions? So let me go through some of those, because we're really here to support you and your FPO and really help ensure the success of your grant.

We support FPOs and all of the other ETA staff involved in your grant. We provide policy clarification and guidance on the TechHire grant program as well as technical assistance – or TA. We're throwing a lot of acronyms your way and I apologize for that, so we'll try to say the full words as we go.

This may be – our technical assistance is really to all grantees on universal topics such as performance reporting, recruiting long-term unemployed workers, or in your case for many of you, it's going to recruiting youth and young adults into these programs as well as individuals with other barriers to employment.

We also provide customized technical assistance to grantees to address specific aspects of your grant. Some of this technical assistance includes creating peer networking opportunities so that you can learn from one another.

Another key role for us is in performance management. We work with our office of information systems and technology to collect the performance data that you compile for your grants and track your overall progress. We're going to touch on the quarterly reporting requirements later in this presentation, but as I mentioned, you're going to be receiving a lot of technical assistance from us on the topic of performance reporting in the coming months.

So in coordination with the grant officer and regional offices, we review some grant modifications.

And finally, our role is to periodically request additional information about your grant outcomes for our quarterly reports to Congress. And we're often asked to report on grant outcomes by the White House, Office of Management and Budget, the Government Accountability Office and several other oversight bodies. We appreciate your timely response to these requests for information when received. We also, as we can, will try to share the final outcomes of those requests with all of you.

So in addition to the performance and grants management technical assistance provided to you by the national and regional offices, the department is also working to procure an external TA provider to complement our efforts, including specific expertise on the IT industry, more specifically technology skills, work-based training opportunities, employer engagement, and job training. So we welcome any ideas or input that you have as we go forward in this process to make sure that we're really providing technical assistance that's timely and relevant for you.

The functions of this provider will include general TA on topics appropriate to all grantees as well as customized TA to specific grantees in need of one-on-one technical assistance. So stay tuned for additional information on our TA efforts in the near future.

The Office of Grants Management runs the grant competition and makes selections for awards. After the grants are awarded all official grant documents are maintained in the grants office and modifications such as your statement of work changes, yourbudget realignments, administrative changes to your grant and equipment purchases over $5,000 are approved by the grant officer.

The grant officer for the TechHire grants is Melissa Abdullah and the grant specialist is Aiyana Pucci. You will meet them both of them in just a short time later in this presentation.

So others in the Office of Grants Management provide guidance on important policy issues and training on the fiscal and administrative requirements of the grant. You'll be learning more about those resources as we go forward and also through our community of practice.

So now I'd like to introduce one of our federal project officers, Adrian Barrett. He's in the Region 3 office in Atlanta. Adrian?

ADRIAN BARRETT: Good morning and good afternoon. My name is Adrian Barrett and I'm an FPO in Region 3, which is in Atlanta. We handle the southeast region of the Department of Labor.

The map on this slide shows the configuration of the Department of Labor's six regions. Your federal project officer – or FPO – is based in one of these regional offices. The role of your FPO is to assist you and serve as a resource on all grant-related matters. Your FPO is a key part of the success of your grant.

Federal project officers are your primary point of contact for all technical matters and the person with whom you will have the most frequent and direct contact. FPOs are responsible for providing compliance assistance, conducting oversight and review of grant performance, and delivering or arranging technical assistance to assist you in reaching your outcome goals.

Your FPO should always be your first point of contact for any grant related questions or issues. How do you find out who your FPO is? He or she is identified in the back of your grant package.

Back to you, Robin.

MS. FERNKAS: Great. Thanks, Adrian.

So finally, as you know – or as you should know, if you've been reading our FOA – you're required to participate in a national evaluation of the TechHire program. The Department's chief evaluation office is responsible for conducting this national evaluation, and to do this, they have in the process of contracting with an evaluation contractor to conduct it.

So over the next few weeks, the Department's Chief Evaluation's Office will be working with the program office to provide you with more information on the scope of the evaluation and get information from you about your programs.

So I'm now going to turn things back over to Ayreen, who's going conduct one of the first of many polling questions to help us get to know one another.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thank you so much, Robin, for that information. And what we want to ask grantees now – and the polling question will come up – is, "Is this your first ETA grant with the Department of Labor?" And if you could select yes or no.

The second question up on this poll is also, "If this isn't your first ETA grant, what grant do you currently or have you previously managed before?" Again, this is just a way for us to get to know who is on the call as well as for your TechHire colleagues to know the depth of experience that you may have on our Department of Labor grants. (Pause, crosstalk.)

MS. CASERTANO: And we'll give you a couple more moments to answer those polling questions. Again, let us know if this is your first ETA grant; and if it's not, which grant do you manage or previously have managed? We'll give you a couple more seconds to answer those questions.

MS. FERNKAS: Perfect. And thank you so much for those of you who did select responses. Obviously we do have multiple responses to is this your first ETA grant. The majority of you specified no.

Also, looking at previous ETA grants that your TechHire grantees have managed before, it looks like we do have a strong representation from previous TAACCCT grantees that have managed previous DOL grants; also, previous Recovery Act grant and also that have managed an H-1B grant before. Certainly this is something for us to let you know, that each of these grant programs have very different approaches and outcomes and it's very important for us to really approach each new grant program as new and start from there.

And with that we can certainly close out these polling questions, and I will turn it over to Megan Baird who will go over your grant program.

MEGAN BAIRD: Thanks, Ayreen. And again, thank you to everyone joining us today. You are here today because your project was one of the proposals selected for this gran, so you are probably either the lead grantee or a partner in that grant.

The H-1B funded TechHire grant program is a key component of the president's TechHire Initiative, which is a bold multi-sector initiative and call to action to empower and train American workers in the information technology skills they need, and through high-quality online courses that can rapidly train workers for well-paying middle-and high-skilled and high-growth jobs across a diversity of industries.

The TechHire grants support and scale innovative collaborations between employers, nonprofit organizations and job training programs to help connect Americans with jobs that require technology-based skills.

These grants are going to pilot and scale public-private partnerships among the workforce investment system, education and training providers, and business-related nonprofits to address several goals, one of them being expanding access to accelerated learning options that provide the fastest paths to a good job; improving the likelihood that the population you are serving will complete training and enter employment; and connect those who receive training or who already have the skills to employment, paid internships, or registered apprenticeship opportunities.

Again, since you all are grant winners I'm sure you are aware that the Department of Labor awarded nearly $150 million in H-1B TechHire grants to 39 partnerships providing services in 25 states which will provide employment and training assistance to train workers with the skills required for well-paying middle- and high-skilled jobs across a diversity of industries. Your awards range from 2.1 million (dollars) to 5 million (dollars) for the individual grants.

And as a reminder the grant period of performance is 48 months – that is four years – and your start date is July 1, 2016 with a grant end date of June 30, 2020.

So some reference for you all. This map on the slide shows the locations of where your fellow TechHire grantees are located throughout the U.S. And make sure that you note that this map only shows the headquarters of where the grantees are located. There are at least four of you that are providing services in multi-state areas, which means that of the 39 grantees, that services are being provided in 25 states across the country.

And I mentioned earlier the President's TechHire Initiative and the relationships to the TechHire grants. This map shows the H-1B TechHire grantees – those are the red dots – and the President's TechHire Initiative communities, which are the blue dots on the map. And to date, 50 cities across the country are designated as a President's TechHire Initiative community. And the reason that we're showing you this map is because we really wanted to illustrate that the TechHire Partnership grants which you all received from the Department of Labor are part of a much larger initiative; and that communities across the country have demonstrated commitments to help ensure that people with barriers to training and employment have access to technology-based career paths.

And we know that many of you are currently part of the President's TechHire Initiative communities, and we've also noted that an additional number of you are based in areas where there are currently communities located of which you may not be partnered with.

And so for those of you that are located in some of these areas we hope that you will see an opportunity here to reach out to those communities and learn how you can share best practices and lessons learned.

OK. A little bit more about your grants. Collectively, you are providing training in a variety of high-growth sectors for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. Your grants in some instances are serving one industry or a combination of industries.

So 31 of you have identified occupations in information technology; 21 of you have identified occupations in advanced manufacturing; 10 for healthcare; 3 for financial services; and two of you have identified "other," such as biotechnology, professional and technical services, and educational services.

Of the 150 million (dollars) awarded, a total of 126 million (dollars) was awarded to projects that will serve youth and young adults, ages 17 to 29. So that's 33 grants have identified youth and young adults ages 17-29. And within this population many grantees have indicated that they will also provide services for individuals with criminal records, individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, underemployment, long-term unemployment, incumbent workers, veterans, women, black; and Latino populations.

And a total of 24 million (dollars) was awarded to grants that will be serving special populations, which we define specifically as individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, or individuals with a criminal record.

So three grantees are specifically serving individuals with criminal records as their target population; two grantees identified that they would be serving individuals with limited English proficiency; and one grantee is serving individuals with disabilities, specifically individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

So a little bit of information about your peer grantees, to really see who's in your broader network that you'll be able to communicate with.

And just as a reminder, here's a breakdown of who can be served and the required percentage of the total population for the TechHire grants. It's a really helpful chart to keep with yourself as you're implementing and serving individuals for your grant.

And now I will turn things back over to Ayreen to ask another polling question.

MS. CALWALLADER: Great. So this polling question, again, just to hear from you. I know Megan just did the breakdown. But, "Who is the target population that you are serving?" Could be any one of these options here; youth and young adults; those special populations – individuals with limited English proficiency; special populations – individuals with disabilities; and individuals with prior criminal records.

Sounds good. And it looks like everyone here is mostly represented on the call. With that, we can go on to the next slide, to talk a little bit more about the training strategies for the TechHire grants. Megan?

MS. BAIRD: Great. So your grants will be providing a range of training interventions to lead to middle- to high-skilled employment.

Within this training strategy, all of the funded projects will incorporate some type of work-based training that enables learning while earning through models such as on-the-job training – which 19 grantees identified – paid work experience – in 22 of the projects – paid internships, and registered apprenticeship.

We have five grantees identified as registered apprenticeship training strategies; and additionally we have 19 grantees that have identified boot camps as a training strategy. I'm sure that you saw that was a keyword in this funding opportunity announcement. These boot camps includes a range of models, from basic skills training, entrepreneurships, career readiness and to more extensive math training boot camps; as well as industry-specific boot camps such as coding and web design and welding and other machine tool bootcamps.

Additionally, several grantees identified they would be serving a small portion of their target population from the incumbent worker population, that would require skills upgrades to advance along a career pathway.

And I'll turn it back to Ayreen for another polling question, I believe.

MS. CALWALLADER: Yeah. And this polling question asks who is your training provider? One, is that your community college or technical college partner; two, do you you have a tech industry-based training provider; or three, do you have a manufacturing industry-based training provider? Again, this is just something to help us and your colleagues see the range of training partners that we have with the TechHire grants.

And it does look like the majority are community college and technical college partners, which could certainly be you as the grantee or, again, some of your partners that you're working with.

And with that we'll move on to the next slide to talk more about our TechHire activities and service strategies.

MS. BAIRD: Great. So in addition to the training components of your program, another key component of these grants are supportive services, and are really viewed as critical in helping individuals with barriers to employment and training to really be successful in completing the program and moving on towards employment in middle- to high-skilled jobs.

And as a reminder, supportive services, which are activities that allow individuals to participate in the training provided through the grant, are capped at 10 percent of your total grant award; and specialized services, which are activities that facilitate successful completion of education and training activities and job placement are capped at 25 percent.

And we did notice that many grantees are planning to provide a combination of both of these types of support services to individuals served.

MS. CADWALLADER: And so not certainly our last polling question, but the last polling question for this section, "What do you feel is the most important service that you are providing to ensure that participants complete the training they need in order to achieve successful employment placement outcomes?"

And you can select as many of these services that you are providing that will ensure the success of your program here. And again, this is just our way for all of us to get to know the range of services being provided to these target populations. (Pause.)

And if you have any other supportive services that you're providing that's not listed here please feel free to type them into the chat function window. It looks like we do – the majority of services being provided are in the mentoring/job coaching/job search assistance; also networking and industry events, which is certainly essential in the technology industry; and then supportive services such as transportation, certainly something that we've seen before as a need; and then child care or dependent care, looks like it's ranking up there. Financial counseling is certainly something that we've seen before with our other H-1B grant programs. These are really great services that you're providing.

Again, please feel free to enter any questions or comments that you might have in the main chat window. And with that, actually we'll take a quick break for questions here, if folks want to type in their questions in the chat window.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. If you have any questions at all or have any comments, go ahead. Now's the time to let us know in that chat window and we'll get to as many of them as we can.

MS. CADWALLADER: All right. It looks like we do have one question coming in; we'll give it another minute for that. (Pause.)

Well, as questions do come in – yes, sounds like all participants are part of the evaluation.

MS. BAIRD: And we're still working on the scope of that evaluation, so please stay tuned for very specific and detailed information that will be shared from our chief evaluation office.

MS. CADWALLADER: OK. And with that we'll turn it over to the next section; actually turning it over to Melissa Abdullah, who is going to talk about your grant award package. Melissa?

MELISSA ABDULLAH: Thanks, Ayreen. Hi, everyone and congratulations again on receiving your award.

I'm Melissa Abdullah and I'm the grant officer for TechHire. By now you all should have received from our office your grant award package which consists of the grant award letter and the actual grant agreement.

The grant agreement includes the notice of award, or NOA, followed by the condition of award page; a table of contents of the grant terms, the grant terms and conditions; and attachments which include the application for federal assistance – also known as the SF-424 – the budget, which includes the SF-424A and budget narrative; the statement of work, and if applicable the indirect cost rate agreement.

You also should have received the grantee handbook, which is a general resource designed to orient grantees to the grant process in ETA and to make sure that you have resources and information at hand to help you succeed in implementing your grant. The handbook also contains pertinent information that you and your staff need to know about the goals and expectations for managing an ETA competitively awarded grant.

The grant award letter contains important information about the two systems that require a PIN and password. These systems require separate PINs and passwords. The first of these systems is the payment management system, which is how you access your grant funds. Information and forms can be found at www.doleta.gov/grants under "payment information."

The second system you will need access to is the online grantee fiscal reporting system and the ETA-9130. If you go to that same site under "financial reporting" you will find information on how to request a password and PIN. Your passwords and PINs are sent separately after you supply the necessary information. Once you receive your passwords and PINs please do not lose them.

In the grant agreement, the first page is the notice of award, or NOA. This page has the name of the grant program – which is the H-1B TechHire Partnership Grant – and it contains the grant recipient's identifying information, which is the name of your organization, address, and the EIN and DUNS number.

It also contains Department of Labor identifying information. This is the grant number, or the Federal Award ID Number, or FAIN. And all grant numbers should start with a "HG" and then a five-digit number, a "16-60-A" and then either a one or two-digit number. Please reference this number when you contact your FPO or national program office when you have questions about your grant.

The period of performance, award amount, pertinent regulations and cost principles and signatures are also included on this document. 51:46

The Office of Management and Budget recently completed the rulemaking process to combine the OMB cost principles and administrative guidance into one regulation called the Uniform Guidance. This can be found at 2 CFR 200 with the exceptions for DOL at 2 CFR 2900.

The cost principles are a set of government-wide rules that apply to all ETA grantees that define the conditions under which educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies may charge costs within federally funded grants. These regulations provide guidance to help you determine whether specific planned expenditures are allowable, unallowable, or allowable with conditions.

The Uniform Administrative Requirements set forth standards for obtaining consistency and uniformity across federal agencies in the administration of grants and agreements.

Other requirements included in your award are the conditions of award and the federal terms and conditions.

Right after the first page of the grant award you'll find the condition of award page. All grantees share the first condition, which is participate in the TechHire national evaluation. Most grantees will have additional conditions that address the compliance review and will need to provide clarification or submit a modification to their FPO.

Following this is the terms and conditions of your grant, starting with the order of precedence if there is any conflict in what federal laws require. This is followed by any other applicable federal statutes and their implementing regulations; and finally by the terms and conditions of award.

Next in the agreement is the reference to the FOA, followed by other terms and conditions of your award.

The other terms and conditions of your grant agreement include status of any indirect cost rates; your federal project officer contact information; equipment requirements for pre-approval; no approval to pay for pre-award costs; reporting requirements, consultant fee limit; publicity requirements; procurement requirements; audit requirements; and intellectual property requirements.

One of the terms and conditions of your grant deals with equipment purchases. ETA defines equipment as any tangible, personal property – including information technology systems – that has a useful life of more than one year, and a per unit acquisition cost of $5,000 or more.

Grantees must receive prior approval from the grant officer to purchase any equipment. Even if the request to purchase equipment is already specified in your statement of work and/or budget, prior approval is still required. You are to submit a detailed description list of equipment you plan to purchase for your program to your FPO for review. Failure to do so will necessitate approval of equipment purchases on an individual item basis.

Your FPO will review the items and submit the list for approval. A modification to your grant will be processed approving the equipment purchases.

I'm now going to turn it over to Aiyana, who will finish going over your grant agreement and also talk about modifications.

AIYANA PUCCI: Thank you, Melissa, and hello, everyone.

Continuing on, following the notice of award and terms and conditions are five attachments to the grant agreement. These are the SF-424, SF-424A, budget narrative, statement of work; and if applicable, the indirect cost rate agreement. These attachments were submitted as part of your grant proposal and incorporated into the grant package. (Pause.)

Attachments B and C of the grant agreement contain the SF-424A and budget narrative, respectively. These documents were taken from your proposal.

Attachment D is your respective statement of work, commonly known as the SOW. This also comes from your proposal and includes the technical proposal and all required attachments, such as the abstract, documentation of employer commitment, performance outcomes table, documentation of commitment to participate in an evaluation, organizational chart, an evidence of program design for those grants above $4 million; and a career pathways overview.

Attachment E included the indirect cost rate agreement for those applicants that submitted one. If you need to claim indirect costs and have not submitted an indirect cost rate agreement, please send it to your FPO as soon as possible in order for a modification to be made to the grant.

If you claimed indirect costs and did not provide an indirect cost rate, you were put on a 90-day temporary billing rate. If that is the case, please send your approved indirect cost rate agreement to your FPO. If you do not have an indirect cost rate agreement, you need to start negotiating one as soon as possible. Please note that until a negotiated agreement is received, spending on indirect costs will be limited to the lesser of 10 percent of the personnel budget line item or the total claimed indirect costs.

For organizations that have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs can be claimed. The definition for modified total direct costs can be found at 2 CFR 200.68.

ETA has reviewed TechHire grants' statements of work, budgets, and accompanying materials to identify potential allowable cost and compliance issues. The purpose of all of these reviews is to catch potentially problematic items up front so that they don't become bigger issues later on in your grants. We know there are a lot of rules and regulations to keep track of, so we want to do our best to help you make sure your projects are in compliance.

Included in the condition of award page that we mentioned earlier is detailed information on this review and a list of the items we have found that require clarification or potential modification. The review has focused on major potential cost and compliance items. You will have 45 days to work with your FPO to respond to these items.

In addition to the cost and compliance items, a separate review of your outcomes and performance measures was conducted. You will also have 45 days to respond to this.

Processing of grant modifications is vital in the grant process. During the next few slides, I will outline the modification process.

So, first of all, what is a modification? A modification is a tool used to make changes to your grant agreement. Grantees must request and obtain prior approval for most revisions to an original program plan or budget allocation.

Things that require a modification are a change to the statement of work, a budget realignment, a change in authorized signatory or address, changes to your indirect cost rate agreement or incorporating your indirect cost rate agreement, a period of performance extension; as well as the purchasing of any equipment above $5,000.

To submit a modification you should draft a letter of request addressed to your grant officer. The letter should be written on your organization's letterhead and include the modification type, grant name and number and justification for the requested modification. Your FPO will review the letter and provide feedback, if needed.

A final letter, signed by your signatory, should be submitted to your FPO who will then forward to the grant officer. There is more detailed information about submitting a modification in your grantee handbook, so please use that as a guide when submitting modifications.

Your FPO will be the first to review your modification request. They will provide feedback on your request letter and then submit it to the regional management team for approval. Once they provide approval, your FPO will send your request to the grant officer for final review and approval.

Some SOW changes also require review by the program office. Your FPO will send these requests to the program office for review. The grant officer will review the request and may ask for additional information or revisions. If there are no additional questions the grant officer reviews and signs the modification. Both you and your FPO will receive a copy of the signed modification via email.

Before turning it back to Ayreen I would like to pause and open the floor up for any questions that we might have at this time.

MS. CADWALLADER: Yeah. And so we did have a question that came in on budget flexibility with the 10 percent. "Does this include the fringe benefits category? It looks like the personnel amount is excluded from the 10 percent flexibility." I can turn that over to Melissa or Aiyana. Melissa?

MS. ABDULLAH: Sure. The 10 percent budget flexibility is for all line items, and that is new in the Uniform Guidance. So if you've had a previous grant, the budget flexibility was probably a little bit different. But under the Uniform Guidance it's 10 percent of any line item, and it's cumulatively 10 percent.

So if a line item changes or cumulative changes of your whole award changes by 10 percent, that is the flexibility there.

MS. CADWALLADER: OK. And if you have follow-up questions to Melissa on this topic, please enter it in the chat window here.

MS. ABDULLAH: There is a question related to the statement of work review and the 45 days that you have to respond to it. It would be 45 days from when you first received the grant package. And so we're saying that the deadline to submit your responses to your compliance review is September 9th; and to please send those responses to – the statement of work review – your FPO with a CC to the TechHire mailbox, which we'll reference later in today's presentation.

And it looks like there's a couple questions coming in, so we'll give it another half-minute for those questions to come in and for us to review them. Just a second. (Pause.)

The question is, "To satisfy condition one in our statement of work review, to each of us need to send again documentation of our commitment to participate in the national evaluation since it applies to everyone?"

And to respond to that question, no, you do not need to send documentation again. It was just to clarify to all the grantees of the requirement to participate in the national evaluation. And again, we'll provide more detailed information about that as we learn more from our chief evaluator's office.

MS. CADWALLADER: All right. Glad the presenters reviewed the questions that came in. Just keep them coming. Type them into that main chat window, as many of you have done and are doing already. But definitely let us know any questions or any comments you have. Now's the time.

MS. BAIRD: And we have a question here on some items identified in the terms and conditions of your grant award. Please, if you've got any questions on the terms and conditions included in your package, share those with your federal project officer and they'll make sure that we route those to the appropriate person, which would not be us. But they'll make sure to get it to the appropriate person.

So any questions or comments on your terms and conditions, you can send those to your FPO and you're welcome to copy the TechHire mailbox and we'll make sure that gets to the right person to answer any questions.

(Cross talk.)

MS. CADWALLADER: And we have a question again on the 10 percent allowable variance. Melissa, if you could respond? "Is it for 10 percent of the total budget or for the single budget line item?"

MS. ABDULLAH: Yeah. It's 10 percent of the total budget. Again, that's cumulatively. So if any line item changes by 10 percent of the total budget that is when a modification will be needed.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thanks for that, Melissa.

There is a question that says, "Do you need documentation from each partner?" And I'm assuming that's in relation to the evaluation. And no, we do not need to see that documentation.

MS. BAIRD: You already provided as part of your grant application a signed documentation that the grantee and all partners would participate. You do not need to provide anything in addition to that unless there was something specifically listed in your compliance letter that had an action item.

All of you have the blanket condition one with just a reminder. That does not list any action item for you.

MS. CADWALLADER: There is another questions on the terms and conditions, which state that, "Personnel costs do not require modification but it is suggested that we ask our FPO to review them prior to implementation. Is this within our 10 percent flexibility? And why is this necessary?" Melissa?

MS. ABDULLAH: Yeah. The statement in your terms and conditions is talking about if you have costs within your personnel line item changing but the total cost of personnel line item doesn't change. That's one more thing that you would not need a modification.

And we're just suggesting if you have any changes to what you're doing, it's always good to talk to your FPO about them, whether you need a modification or not.

So if you have other questions about this you can send them to the TechHire mailbox or your FPO and we'll be happy to answer them there also.

MS. CADWALLADER: Including any specific examples that you want to include, to provide more information and background information.

OK. With that we're going to – one more question? (Pause.) Sorry. The last question is, "Should we have received information regarding our compliance review?" Again, we use the terms interchangeably, but that is the statement of work review that we discussed earlier, and it's the first page of your grant award package that has the different conditions that you should be responding to and working directly with your FPO on.

OK. So let's go ahead and move on to the next section of our presentation – which is my favorite – on performance reporting.

So before we go into details about what is required of you from a performance reporting standpoint, let's just really quickly go through the value of reporting your quarterly performance outcomes.

You may already know that quarterly reports are due each quarter and they usually contain detailed information about your grant activities, including partnership activities, timelines, grant outcomes, and promising approaches and success stories including career and technical assistance needs.

And so from the national office perspective, your performance data is used to help illustrate your success. What your quarterly reports allow us to is to share your success with national and local stakeholders. This includes Congress, DOL leadership, the Office of Management and Budget, the Government Accountability Office, as well as the media and other stakeholders in Washington, DC; and even local stakeholders across the county.

So again, this references what Robin had talked about, when we go to you and request additional information. It really is to talk about the success of your grant program.

Next, tracking performance data helps us to ensure the sustainability of your grant program and evaluate the effectiveness of future grants. It leads us to continuous improvement in the program to ensure that you're meeting the needs of your program participants and partners.

Performance data helps us identify areas of opportunity and technical assistance. Again, the TechHire grants are discretionary grant programs which allow the flexibility for you to propose and implement new strategies for training and employment; and therefore, having successful outcomes and identifying effective strategies that could be replicated across the country could certainly be among the shared practices that we could share with our varied stakeholders.

Lastly, again, it helps us identify areas for technical assistance, and this is where we can continue to support you in managing your grant programs. And really performance reporting ensures program activities are not just effective but have the greatest impact to improving the lives of many people across the country – those with barriers to employment who we're serving with the TechHire grants and really improving their skills to upskill their jobs.

And so just remember that with great programs plus great data plus great outcomes equals greater success for American workers.

And so with that, as part of your grant agreement, all TechHire grantees are required to submit quarterly progress reports to ETA. These reports must be submitted on time on a quarterly basis in order to comply with the reporting and recordkeeping requirements of the grant. These reports are due no later than 45 days after the end of the calendar quarter. We'll go over that in just a second.

TechHire grantees are required to submit two reports on a quarterly basis. The first is the quarterly financial report that Melissa talked about, that you'll submit through the ETA-9130 form. For your financial quarterly reports, we will provide links to webinar trainings later on in this presentation as well that will cover all aspects of fiscal reporting. And again, if you have any questions on fiscal reporting, please reach out to your FPO.

The second report is the quarterly progress report. And this includes a quarterly performance report, or a QPR form; and a quarterly narrative report, or QNR form. We'll also go over these in a little bit more detail later in this presentation.

The QPR will be submitted using an electronic reporting system that the Department of Labor will develop and put together. A separate system, which Melissa referenced earlier in her presentation, will be used to submit your financial reports.

Lastly, TechHire grantees are required to submit a final report, which is due at the end your grant program. And again, it's your last quarterly progress report that you submit that will serve as the final performance report.

In the next slide, for those of you planners out there, here's a chart that lists the four quarterly end dates and when your progress reports are due. Your first quarterly progress report for the quarter ending 9/30/2016 is due no later than November 14th. This will cover activities from the start of your grant award – which was July 1st – to September 30th.

And it looks like we do have some questions coming in for performance and we'll answer that towards the end of this section. And I'll turn it over to Megan, who will talk about the process for submitting your reports to ETA.

MS. BAIRD: Thanks, Ayreen.

So you may be wondering how you'll be submitting quarterly progress reports, or QPRs, to ETA. Again, they'll be submitted through a web-based reporting system which is currently in development. And for those of you – hopefully all of you are aware; it was referenced in the FOA – that you'll reporting in accordance with the WIOA performance reporting requirements, which means you will be using the same system as the WIOA grants, which is currently in development.

For existing H-1B grantees you will not be using HUB for this grant. You'll be using the WIOA performance system. We do expect that system to become available sometime in October or November, and I'll talk a little bit about that in a moment.

This system is not a case management system. It is a file upload and you will be uploading participant-level data in a CSV format; file upload into a system that will produce edit checks and report error reports if you have errors. And once you submit a clean file it will produce a QPR – quarterly progress report – aggregating your data. And you will also be eventually uploading a narrative report into the same system. So again, you will be uploading participant-level data.

And please, in preparation for this system, make sure that you are collecting and tracking participant-level data on demographics, on any services and training received, credential outcomes, and employment outcomes. We really encourage you when you're collecting this information to make sure you're collecting a start date and end date, not just a yes or a no.

And also note that you are required to collect Social Security numbers, which will be used by the department to track and report the long-term employment outcome measures – which used to be called the ETA common measures, and under the WIOA reporting requirements are now called the common performance indicators. Those are the longer-term employment rates that we'll be tracking on your behalf with the Social Security numbers that you provide.

Also, please, please, please as always ensure that you follow PII – personably identifiable information – protocol, and that this information is stored securely.

And just as some comments coming in, knowing we've got some TAACCCT grantees, you do not submit annual reports to the department. You submit reports every quarter, and that report includes data and narrative information. Again, we will not be using HUB system for any of those existing H-1B grantees.

And the third question I saw was this is not an MIS system. This is a file upload system.

And for PII protocol we have a great TEGL, I believe, that we will make sure to share with you all that walks through some guidance and advice on PII protocol. So that is a great question.

And just as a reminder, you only report outcomes that occurred during the life of your grant. That means July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2020. So nothing before and nothing after should be reported.

So you might have noticed that I said the system is still in development, and you're wondering how you're submitting your very first quarterly progress report, which covers July 1 through September 30th, and it is due no later than November 14th. Until the ETA reporting system is completed you will be following an interim reporting process.

Again, we anticipate the reporting system will be available for you to begin submitting data for the quarter that is October 1 through December 31st. For your very first quarterly progress report, grantees will not be submitting participant data to ETA. You will not be giving us data no later than November 14th.

However, please ensure that you are still collecting participant-level data as aligned with the required reporting elements that we'll talk about in a minute for all participant served, and you are collecting that information to have it ready once the system is available. Once the system is available you will be uploading that information cumulative to date. You need to track it even though you're not giving it to ETA for this very first quarter.

What you will be submitting for your very first quarterly report is a narrative report only, or sometimes called the QNR. Again, since this system is not yet functional you'll be submitting that quarterly narrative report no later than November 14th to your federal project officer with a copy to the TechHire email address.

And over the next several months we will be providing very detailed training and guidance on the performance reporting requirements, including the data elements, the definitions, and training on the system; and we'll go over some helpful things in a minute. We'll also be following up with this webinar with written guidance on the interim reporting progress so you don't need to be writing those notes down right now. But we will send out detailed information on the process for submitting your very first quarterly progress report.

MS. CADWALLADER: And with that, these are some of the links that you could start to review. The Department of Labor's performance reporting website link is provided here for your reference, along with the Department of Labor PERL, which is the participant individual record layout.

There was a question here on which demographic fields you're be looking for. The PERL, the link here to the PDF of the PERL is a great start for you to identify which data elements that H-1B TechHire grantees will be required to collect and track for performance reporting.

And again, as Megan said, we will have a more detailed interim reporting guidance as well as what a template QNR will look like that you'll be submitting. And we will be providing really some in-depth performance reporting technical assistance; one, on how to use the system; two, on how to collect and report your participant-level data; and three, ensuring that the outcomes that you are recording is in line with the outcomes that occurred in that reporting quarter.

So again, performance reporting is something that we really take to heart because the outcomes are what we use to illustrate your success, and we do want to ensure that you are successful in submitting your performance reports.

And there's some questions that came in and we'll answer that towards the end, but here are links to just a quick overview again of your requirements for the quarterly financial reporting. Again, all ETA grant recipients are required to use the ETA-9130 quarterly financial report form. They also are due along the same time as your performance report, which is 45 days after the end of the grant quarter.

So your first quarterly progress report and your first financial report is due November 14th, covering activities between July 1st and September 30th. Again, you submit this information in a separate reporting system that Melissa referenced during her presentation, and we will also provide you links to financial training tutorials that you can access. There's more information here on these links to financial reporting resources and definitely familiarize yourself with the information that's provided here.

Some key dates. Again, your grant start date was July 1st; your first quarterly performance report is due November 14th as well as your financial report is due November 14th; and your grant end date will be June 30th, 2020.

And with that we'll just take a minute to review the questions that have come in. Please enter in any additional questions that you might have regarding financial reporting and performance reporting.

MS. CASERTANO: And just a reminder that a copy of today's PowerPoint can be downloaded from the file share window on the bottom left-hand corner of your screen. Also, the recording of today's presentation as well as the PowerPoint will be uploaded to WorkforceGPS in about two business days. You can download them and review today's presentation on WorkforceGPS. (Pause.)

MS. CADWALLADER: We're going to start going through and answering questions.

"Just to confirm, compliance review results in the conditions we received" – yes. Compliance reviews are the list of conditions, and if you had anything flagged that had an action item – and having an action item would say – in blue text – please provide clarification, or this requires a mod. That is due by September 9 to your federal project officer with a copy to TechHire@dol.gov.

Some great questions coming in about using SSNs and how we protect that information. Again, it is a requirement of the grant. It's necessary to track long-term outcomes. And certainly we'll be sharing the PII protocol document to all of the grantees as a good resource on ensuring that you are protecting this information.

MS. BAIRD: A lot of questions in and around how to report leveraged resources. We will absolutely make sure that we give you access to a financial training on leveraged resources, what they are and how you report them and where you report them. I see a lot of questions about that coming in, so we've taken that note to make sure that you have access to that training in the near future as well, so we will get that out to you. It will include questions about what is leveraged resources, what can be reported.

Some questions on specific data elements. The answer is yes, there are specific data elements and they're included in the WIOA PERL, which stands for participant individual record layout. That has been OMB-approved. On one of the previous slides Ayreen referenced some resources that does link to that PERL. It lists all of the data elements under WIOA and it lists definitions and the codes you would use to report against that.

You will not be reporting against all of the WIOA data elements. You're only reporting against some of them that are applicable to our program, and that is what we'll be providing very specific training on, which is of the data elements are applicable to the TechHire grants program. (Pause.)

MS. CADWALLADER: And any questions that you have – there's some very specific ones coming in that we won't answer – (inaudible) – example, we definitely encourage you to email your FPO and copy TechHire to make sure that we can put into context and give you an answer.

Some questions about co-enrolling into more than one DOL grant program. Certainly email your federal project officer. We encourage you to be very specific and clear about the scenario you're thinking about and to identify the grant programs and what you are planning to do. Send it to your FPO and copy TechHire. As much information as possible really helps us start to answer and address questions.

And with any question you send in, please make sure you put your grant number and the name of the lead grantee organization. It helps us look you up and know which grant we are looking at specifically.

And again, questions on the evaluation. We promise you that when that information rolls out, that you will receive very detailed and very specific information on the evaluation that will be overseen by our chief evaluation office; who, unlike us, are really the experts in talking about things like disclosure agreements and things like that, and will give you very detailed technical assistance for any evaluation that is conducted. So definitely more to come on that. (Pause.)

And Melissa, I think there's a question here – I hope there's enough information for you to answer this. "Are there any restrictions on carrying forward unspent funds from year to year?"

MS. ABDULLAH: Well, you'll receive access to your grant award, so it's not like you're getting it by year.

So do you spend as much as you can during the year and report on it? I think it's performance-related that you spend all your funds by the end of the grant, but other than that I don't think there's any restrictions on carrying over from year to year your grant award.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thank you so much for that last question, Melissa. And other questions are coming in. We're getting toward the last 15 minutes of our presentation, so please continue to enter your questions and we'll make sure to respond to them offline.

With that we'd like to turn it over to our colleague, Caroline Hertel, who's going to talk about our communication plan and how we'd like to communicate with you next. Caroline?

CAROLINE HERTEL: Yeah. Thanks, Ayreen. I think this is the perfect segue into talking about the communication plan. It's clear that a lot of you have specific questions that you want to address and we've already talked about the role that your federal project officer plays, so now we'll talk about how you can relay your questions through your FPO to the national office and have them answered with as much detail as we possibly can. So that said, let's talk about our communication plan.

So at ETA, we want to keep in close contact with you throughout the entire period of your grant. Typically we'll contact you through your FPO and using the TechHire@dol.gov mailbox for specific requests and information. In addition we'll share information on the grantee community of practice and the ETA website, which again is listed on this slide, www.doleta.gov/TechHire.

FPOs and the national office regularly send out email blasts to you, so please make sure your email system does not confuse our communication as spam. Just a quick note.

As the grantee, if you need to contact ETA – which is our national office, our team here – you should, again, copy your FPO and the

TechHire mailbox. Remember to include your grant number and lead grantee organization name. Describe your questions in detail and be patient. As you can tell, we get a lot of questions.

Grantee team communications and support. As you begin to hire staff it's important to provide contact information for these individuals to us as soon as possible. We recommend that you have at least one primary program point of contact, and please be sure to update this information should it change by notifying both the national office and your FPO.

One of the most important members of your team is the individual who you designate as your primary point of contact. That's because they'll receive all of the communications regarding training webinars, policy guidance, and other important information that relates to your program. As soon as this information becomes available, please send an email to the TechHire mailbox.

And again, this is just a reminder that we have the TechHire webpage at doleta.gov/TechHire. Here we're going to have the FOA, any amendments; your abstracts are posted; and any additional resources we'll include there as well. This is a great way for you to know who the other grantees are, connect with others who are doing similar work or are in your area.

Now we'll talk about the WorkforceGPS collection site. This will be the community of practice. It will provide an opportunity and a platform for you all to share with each other and also for us to share resources for operating your grant; technical assistance materials; training – including this one – and any FAQs.

WorkforceGPS is an online platform that provides the public workforce system with a place to find resources and take advantage of many online learning opportunities.

And again, just a quick note as we wrap up. Again, if you are the lead grantee, contact your FPO. If you're the member of a grant project, contact the lead for your grant.

If you have any questions or difficulty accessing the financial reporting system, contact the EBSS helpdesk and copy your FPO. And if you have any questions about the evaluation – which it sounds like a number of you do – go ahead and send that to the TechHire@dol.gov mailbox and copy your FPO.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. And thank you so for that, Caroline. We'll turn it over to Megan, who's just going to quickly go over the immediate next steps for what you should do next.

MS. BAIRD: Thanks, Ayreen. So to just to review, and I'll be quick so we can make sure to leave time for questions.

You may recall from the FOA that the department is committed to conducting a transparency of all grant award processes, and part of this is redacting technical proposals. All of you would have received notice of this in your welcome letter, and many of you may have spoken to Danielle on our team. But we are collecting, at the TechHire email address, responses to redacted proposals.

(They ?) should include redacting information or submitting a waiver. So please make sure to get that submitted to the department so we can post it publicly.

Also, please be sure to respond to any parts of the conditions of award, statement of work, and budget conditions that were included in your grant award package. Your actual package says that it's due within 30 days of the receipt of grant award. We were feeling very generous and have extended that to 45 days. You are welcome to meet the 30-day deadline but we are letting you know that you do actually have until September 9th if you need 45 days to submit a response to conditions of award to your FPO with a copy to TechHire.

MS. CADWALLADER: And similar to that, there is a question from Mary that says they received their package at a different date. So yes, it's 45 days. We're using July 25th as the final date, that all grantees should have received your grant award package, which is why we're using September 9th as the 45-day deadline.

MS. BAIRD: The packages went out over a few days; we're using the last date just to ensure that everyone fairly has 45 days. So congratulations on the extra time.

In addition please do not forget, if you have updated program contact information, whether you've already submitted it or you have new or changed, please, please, please send that to TechHire@dol.gov as soon as possible. Also make sure your FPO, most importantly, has this information. Again, the only way we can reach you and share information is if we have the right contact.

And finally, get started on fiscal administrative training series and reviewing the DOL performance reporting materials we've previously shared.

And here's some reminders. Save the date, there will be a live training on September 15th on the revised ETA-9130 financial reports for discretionary grantees. All of you will be following the basic 9130 form. An email will come from WorkforceGPS. We will also send that to you to make sure you do not miss this live webinar event.

Stay tuned for performance reporting, which is coming in the next several months, as well as training on the evaluation and more information on programmatic technical assistance and a grantee convening. We typically do do a convening within the first year of the grant towards the end of year one. As soon as we have any information on that we will share that.

And you have a homework assignment, so get started. This is training – our pre-recorded tutorials. You can watch them at your leisure. And we're asking that you review them all by December (sic) 15th; that is when your homework is due. That will prepare you nicely for the live training on September 15th, which is on the ETA-9130 financial form.

All of the links are on this slide, several of the topics we referenced. And we will certainly make sure, if it's not already included in one of these trainings, that we do also provide you with a link to the leveraged resources training as well. So that will come soon.

MS. CADWALLADER: And so related to this slide is an attachment in the file share window; it says "TechHire grantee webinar series." You can download this PDF, which has the links to the tutorials listed on this slide here.

MS. BAIRD: And please – that training plan is a living, breathing document. We will continue to update it throughout the grant. So certainly if you've got staff not yet hired, you need a refresher, or staff changes, this will be one document that provides the links to all of the events which are always recorded. So at-a-glance you can see all of the trainings that we have provided.

And I believe we'll turn it over for one more polling question.

MS. CADWALLADER: Yep. Here's our last poll, really want to get a sense of how you feel after today's webinar. Option number one, Geronimo, we are ready to launch; the second, ready to TechHire – what; and the last is, we're a little overwhelmed but certainly very excited.

So sounds like there's several of you that are feeling very confident about being able to get our TechHire programs off and running, and definitely we do share your excitement in getting your programs off the ground.

The last – these slides that we have here are just a link to the resources that was referenced during today's webinar. Again I want to highlight the grantee orientation handbook that Melissa referenced in her presentation. This is your handbook on how to manage a Department of Labor grant program – highlight that resource.

In addition, final reminder of how to reach us, at TechHire@dol.gov. And this is a quick way to reach your federal project officer, our H-1B team here at the national office, and when we have our technical assistance providers identified you'll be able to reach them here as well.

Any further questions? Let's take another minute to review anything else that comes in.

MS. BAIRD: So quite a few questions in here asking about the demographic fields and the specific data elements. Again, if you want a sneak peek you can click on the PERL link that was on the performance reporting slide. It identifies all of the data elements that we'll be collecting.

And we'll also follow up in the email with interim reporting guidance written up. We'll include those links as well so you have them. But we will be providing which of those very specific data elements, demographic training, service, employment, and others that you will be recording for this grant.

And as you prepare yourself, just ensure that you are collecting information on all activities, services, and demographics for each participant served.

MS. CADWALLADER: OK. And it looks like we have about four minutes left. Again, any comments or questions that you might have please enter it in the chat window. We'll be happy to address them. Again, we're all really very excited to have you on board. We had a really competitive grant award process and the applications that we received were really top-notch and a very exciting program that we're looking forward to seeing.

MS. BAIRD: Over the next four years.

MS. CADWALLADER: Yeah. Sounds like no questions are coming in. Our last slide again – oh, maybe there's one. Let's see. It's just a quick thank-you and a quote here that we've received. These partnerships – the TechHire partnerships – are clearing important pathways for communities to develop talent and facilitate growth; and it is especially heartening to see that these resources being leveraged to create opportunities for at-risk and disadvantaged youth and other special populations.

So that was a quote that we had received from the president about the TechHire grant program. So certainly wanted to leave you on that positive note.

And I'll turn it over to Laura who has some follow-up questions to help rate today's webinar. We appreciate your comments for sure and feedback to how we can continue to improve our presentation and continue to support you.

(END)