

## Workforce Development Proponent Q&A – English Version

#	Question	PRBP <sup>1</sup> Answer
1	Does each initiative within this NOFA have different budget limits?	<p>The NOFA specifies that the PRBP reserves the right to allocate specific quotas of funds for each of the three initiatives proposed, to ensure a balance between the different proposals selected.</p> <p>However, there is no pre-determined budget limit per se for each of the possible initiatives.</p> <p>In addition, if an organization submits several proposals to more than one NOFA initiative, each will be independently evaluated.</p>
2	What are “Companies properly accredited to provide services in the broadband value chain in Puerto Rico”?	<p>Proponents must be companies properly accredited to provide services in Puerto Rico and/or the United States. As an applicant, you do not need to provide the documentation at the time of your NOFA submission. Detailed documentation required will be provided after subgrantees are selected. For future reference and need for contracting, proof of accreditation may include certifications issued by relevant Puerto Rican or U.S. authorities (e.g., Company Social Security Number, Registry of Professional Services Providers of the General Services Administration - (Registro Único de Proveedores [RUP]), professional or industry-specific licenses, and any other documentation demonstrating</p>

<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico Broadband Program

		compliance with applicable local, state, or federal regulatory requirements.
3	In the questions in the NOFA in which you are asking proponents to explain how we have developed proposals jointly with companies from the industry, are you asking what are the specific companies? There is also a professional association that unites some of them	<p>There is not a specific requirement in this regard, but it is up to proponents to prove and justify how the proposal has been jointly built with the industry.</p> <p>We have included this as part of our evaluation criteria given the importance to ensure alignment of workforce development programs with industry needs. We invite proponents to include and list any partnerships with specific industry players and/or associations.</p>
4	Are there any cost parameters? Suggest a better translation Cost per participant? By initiative / program?	<p>In addition to asking proponents for an economic proposal, they are asked to explain how they are developing a proposal that makes efficient use of the funds.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no specific cost parameter, but we recommend that you include estimated numbers of participants in your proposals to review the efficiency of requested costs/resources.</p> <p>For example, for training centers for certifications or apprenticeships, we expect to see information on the capacity, and for the training programs, the expected number of students benefited.</p>
5	What is the extension of the responses to the questions in the document you provided?	In order to consider a properly delivered proposal, proponents will need to submit the duly completed Appendix 2, along with an economic proposal that includes cost breakdown for each of the years of the program. They will also be able to

		<p>attach other files to your application as specified in the NOFA.</p> <p>Please limit your proposals to a maximum of 30 pages for Appendix 2 for each of the initiatives you propose.</p>
6	Is there a page limit?	Yes. Please limit your proposals to a maximum of 30 pages for Appendix 2 for each of the initiatives you propose.
7	As mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, UPR Rio Piedras is a recipient of NOFA Training Providers. Could a proposal be submitted to this other opportunity?	<p>The NOFA referred to is the NOFA “Increasing and Retaining the Broadband Workforce” that occurred in the first half of 2024 and whose call is already closed.</p> <p>Having received funds in a previous call will not penalize them in this NOFA provided they make proposals with new and non-duplicative content. Therefore, they could submit a new proposal for this NOFA.</p>
8	Five years is a lot to guarantee having a contract with a fixed employer, can these change? Adding more companies for example?	It is not necessary for the programs to be linked to (a) particular employer(s). If you have already identified or are working with some employers, we invite you to listen to them in your proposal, although we understand that this list may increase and change over the next few years.
9	Can the applicant be the University?	Yes.
10	In the last funding round we talked about \$7.000 per participant, is there any average cost parameter?	<p>This reference does not apply to this NOFA. It is from a previous call for funds and referred to costs that would be covered by the apprenticeship training program under the Registered Apprenticeship Programs.</p> <p>In this new NOFA, for the initiative of centers of excellence in training, we</p>

		are focused on the training centers and facilities to give those trainings required by the industry.
11	We are interested in submitting an application for special training to navigators. Can we submit the application even though it is very specific and tied to facilitate telehealth?	<p>In parallel to this NOFA for Workforce Development, in the Smart Island website there is an open NOFA on Digital Literacy Program Coordinator and an open NOFA on Digital Navigators.</p> <p>We would suggest that you read through those NOFAs for Digital Navigators and Digital Literacy Program Coordinator, and the relevant Q&amp;As, to determine if you should apply to any of those in addition to this Workforce Development NOFA.</p> <p>Find them here: <a href="https://www.smartisland.pr.gov/nofas">https://www.smartisland.pr.gov/nofas</a></p>
12	The Allowable Use of Funds section does not mention paid work experience, but one of the evaluation criteria includes it. Can we use the funds to pay for participants' work experience?	<p>Part of the allowable uses of funds in the NOFA are: "For Program A: Design, implement and manage Ambassador Programs for targeted age groups at low or no cost to students, including subsidies for students and/or companies or other types of organizations (inc. program management)."</p> <p>Moreover, as stated in the NOFA, one of the priorities of the K12 and internships initiatives is to ensure that work experiences such as internships are paid, always making sure that the regulations of the US Department of Labor are observed (i.e., maximum hours, minimum payment, etc.). The program will be evaluating those elements as part of your proposals.</p>
13	"Puerto Rico's highest-demand broadband industry occupations	In Appendix 1 you will find a list of priority roles that have been identified



	<p>are broadband technicians, construction workers, and customer representatives, among other positions.” I don’t see any construction-related Priority Roles in the List of Priority Roles. Can we include construction roles for all three programs, or are only the Broadband Technicians included in the NOFA eligible?</p>	<p>by the Puerto Rico Broadband Program, in collaboration with broadband industry leaders. This is meant to provide a reference list, but it is not exhaustive of potential roles.</p> <p>If proponents identify and justify (in their application) that there are other roles that would require a specific program given the difficulty in recruiting, training and retaining for broadband companies, the program is open to considering those roles for funding.</p>
14	<p>Will we submit only one document with all appendices for each program we are applying to, or does each program's appendix require a separate document?</p>	<p>We recommend you submit all your proposals under a single document.</p>
15	<p>Does the use of funds for the Training Centers of Excellence for certifications and apprenticeships include purchasing, remodeling, and furnishing one or more buildings?</p>	<p>See the Allowable Uses of Funds section in the NOFA: “Set up Training Centers of Excellence with specialized training tracks and best-in-class equipment and facilities.”</p> <p>This includes, if the need is justified, costs related to required changes/ adjustments facilities that will be used specifically towards the proposed initiatives.</p> <p>Please note that cost efficiency will be one of the evaluation criteria to select proposals when making proposals about facilities.</p>
16	<p>If we are submitting applications for all the programs, can the Career Explorations (K-12), internships (higher education), non-degree, and innovative workforce programs utilize the Training Centers of Excellence for certifications and apprenticeships?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>However, please note that each proposal will be assessed independently. Each proposal should be built independently and not dependent upon the selection of other proposals, as PRBP reserves the</p>



		right to only select some initiatives for a selected subgrantee.
17	Could you share the locations of the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that the PRBP's apprenticeship programs partner with to ensure that the Training Centers of Excellence are close to them?	All local companies can develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and we aspire to have as many ISPs in Puerto Rico join those programs as possible. Please note that these programs should only be targeting the workforce development locally in the island.
18	Could you clarify if the key difference between the Non-Degree and Innovative Workforce Programs and the Training Centers of Excellence for Certifications is that the latter requires a physical location, provides apprenticeships, and offers certifications, while the Non-Degree and Innovative Workforce Programs can be delivered online, offer certifications and do not offer apprenticeships?	<p>The NOFA provides potential models for each initiative. However, that is not an exhaustive list, and we encourage applicants to propose creative solutions that align with our goals.</p> <p>The described interpretation provided in the question regarding the differences between the initiatives is aligned with the program's vision.</p> <p>Please see the description, objectives and outcomes of each of initiatives in Section 1.1 of the NOFA from page 4 to page 9.</p>
19	Will this NOFA result in a subgrant recipient award or contract?	Yes, this NOFA is aimed at selecting several subgrantees. Once subgrantees are selected, a subgrant agreement will need to be signed between the subgrantees and the PRBP.
20	If PRBP intends to award this on the basis of a contract, what is the intended contract type?	A (sub)grant agreement.
21	What is the overall budget for Development of Workforce Trainings and Explorations for Broadband Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)?	Please refer to the answer given in Question #1. The budget for this program is not disclosed in the NOFA.
22	What is the maximum individual award for Program B to establish non-degree and innovative workforce programs?	Please refer to the answer given in Question #1.



23	What is the maximum individual award for Program C to establish Training Centers of Excellence for Certifications and Apprenticeships?	Please refer to the answer given in Question #1.
24	Page 10 of the NOFA states that PRBP may make an upfront payment to fund standing up awarded projects. What is the envisioned level of funding?	<p>The NOFA states: “To help set up the operations at the beginning of the program, the PRBP may agree to make an initial upfront payment.”</p> <p>Moreover, it also states that in the Pricing Proposal, proponents should suggest a disbursement schedule. If proponents consider that they would require an upfront payment, we invite them to include it in their Pricing Proposal.</p>
25	Can PRBP confirm that there is no page limitation for the response?	Please refer to the answer given in Question #6.
26	May subgrantees request a payment schedule in excess of two times per year?	<p>Section 3.2 of the NOFA states: “PRBP will work on a payment schedule with the selected subgrantee(s), to disburse funds twice a year based on specific milestones.”</p> <p>The program will favor payment schedules that happen twice a year. However, any proposed payment schedule in excess of two times per year will be studied by the program given that they provide a clear justification for that exception.</p>