



Digital Literacy Program Coordinator

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

Funded by BEAD (Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program)

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Introduction

The Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget ("OMB") through its Puerto Rico Broadband Program ("PRBP"), issues this Notice of Funding Availability ("NOFA") to obtain proposals for subgrantees as defined in this NOFA.

The PRBP was created in 2022 within the OMB to ensure all Puerto Ricans have access to fast and reliable internet service, using both local and federal funds. The PRBP, via its Executive Committee, coordinates, authorizes, and executes the disbursement of Puerto Rico's broadband funding, working with key stakeholders. The program is designed to increase digital equity by bringing essential broadband infrastructure to all residents over five years through the deployment of broadband infrastructure projects and digital equity programs.

The Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program, created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, is a pivotal initiative designed to extend high-speed internet access across the United States. BEAD is committed to closing the digital divide by providing funding for essential activities such as planning, infrastructure development, and broadband adoption efforts. As part of this mission, more than \$334 million has been allocated to Puerto Rico to improve its broadband infrastructure. These investments will help guarantee equal access to high-speed internet, stimulate economic growth, and strengthen community connectivity across the entire island.

To further the digital equity goals of the PRBP, five distinct programs will be launched, supported by BEAD funding. These initiatives include: an Open Access Underground Conduit System, Digital Navigators and Literacy Program, an Online Government Services Program, a Workforce Development Program, and an Affordable Devices Program. The goal is to create a comprehensive portfolio that target infrastructure and technical solutions gaps and builds the necessary connectivity and skills for digital participation by all.

The Digital Literacy Program Coordinator and Digital Navigator NOFAs will launch a coordinated effort to help close the digital divide in Puerto Rico. Through these initiatives, individuals will not only gain the basic digital competencies needed to access vital services but also unlock pathways to new employment opportunities and greater community and civic engagement. This effort is central to the PRBP's pillars of fostering digital inclusion and creating a future where every resident can thrive in the digital age. This is the **Digital Literacy Program Coordinator NOFA**, which includes defining and standardizing the digital literacy curriculum, coordinating and executing training of digital navigators from partner institutions, and gathering reporting from the digital navigator partner institutions to ensure overall program success. The selected subgrantee will be responsible for coordinating efforts with additional subgrantees selected for the Digital Navigator NOFA, another program being created that will work directly with community members to close the digital skills gap.

To address the digital skills gap, the PRBP has allocated funding for a comprehensive program that includes:

- Developing and scaling a standardized Literacy Curriculum to serve target communities across Puerto Rico. This will involve training Digital Navigators in both digital and social service skills, delivered in multiple formats (online and inperson).
- Managing community outreach and program development in coordination with Digital Navigator subgrantees. This includes ensuring long-term program sustainability, setting clear performance metrics, and continuously assessing program impact.

1. Scope of Work, Project Objectives & Outcomes

The Puerto Rico Broadband Program is issuing this NOFA to select one subgrantee to design and implement the Digital Literacy Program Coordinator project. It is critical for this project to consider implementation in coordination with Multiservice and Internet Centers (MIC). PRBP has a plan to deploy MICs through the whole island, with expected presence of these centers in all the 78 municipalities. Specific details will be provided as that project advances.

The role of the Digital Literacy Program Coordinator subgrantees will include the following responsibilities, but not limited to.

Project: Digital Literacy Program Coordinator

The Digital Literacy and Program Coordinator project aims to address the digital skills gap in Puerto Rico, particularly among underserved and disadvantaged communities. This program will provide residents with the essential skills needed to participate in the digital economy and improve access to essential services, employment, and education through digital channels. It includes developing and standardizing a digital literacy curriculum, training Digital Navigators, and managing community outreach and ongoing program evaluation.

The OMB through its PRBP will support selected Proponents in developing programs that equip Digital Navigators with the knowledge and tools to assist individuals in acquiring basic digital skills, as well as in leveraging digital services to enhance social and economic outcomes.

Scope of Work

Training and Curriculum

- o Develop and standardize Digital Literacy curriculum to serve target communities in PR, leveraging existing resources where applicable (sample resources provided in Section 3.1 Allowable Use of Funds).
- Develop plan to scale curriculum to meet more complex needs and integrate community feedback of target populations.

- o Manage "train the trainer model", conducting training of 60-80+ designated Digital Navigators in multiple formats (e.g., online and inperson) for both digital and social service skills.
- Ensure Digital Navigators are trained to meet a minimum proficiency level to effectively serve their communities. Subgrantees will be responsible for implementing assessments to verify skills and equipping Digital Navigators to act as regional trainers.
- o Manage curriculum questions and integrate continuous staff support, ensuring trainers are available for follow-up and ongoing support.

Community Outreach

- o Ensure the program adequately serves all target communities across Puerto Rico, including all regions and specific populations (e.g., aging population, incarcerated persons, people with disabilities and others referenced in the Digital Equity Plan).
- Develop marketing strategies to support community outreach through Digital Navigator subgrantee, in alignment with PRBP.

- Program Management, Efficiency and Sustainability

- Set clear performance metrics for program evaluation, including tracking participant success and skills growth.
- Manage overall program development in coordination with partner Digital Navigator subgrantees.
- o Develop innovative strategies for program sustainability past initial funding period.
- o Implement system for collecting and analyzing data to assess program impact and provide continuous improvements.
- o Ensure the sustainability of the program over the long term.
- o Community program efficacy to relevant stakeholders and develop strategies to improve program effectiveness.

Objectives

- Develop and deliver a standardized Digital Literacy curriculum to serve target communities across Puerto Rico, ensuring it is adaptable to community needs and feedback.
- Train future Digital Navigators in both digital skills and social service skills, through a combination of online and in-person formats, enabling them to effectively assist residents with varying needs.
- Ensure all communities in Puerto Rico have the necessary digital literacy skills to effectively use broadband connection.
- Perform the different activities of this program in a sustainable manner, making sure that these funds can be complemented with other funding sources to continue with the program after current funds are exhausted in 2029.

Outcomes

- o Easily accessible, comprehensive Digital Literacy curriculum that is scalable and responsive to the needs of Puerto Rico's diverse communities.
- 60-80+ Digital Navigators trained (with recurrent sessions over the next 5 years) and fully equipped to service the digital needs of the people of Puerto Rico.
- o Increase in digital skills (tracked and measured) among residents, particularly from target populations, including increased engagement with online resources, access essential services, and improved employment opportunities.
- Fully developed Digital Navigator program, with collaboration across multiple partner institutions.

2. Funding Mechanism

Funding for this grant program comes from Puerto Rico's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. As part of this program, the PRBP has been selected as grantee to develop this Digital Literacy and Program Coordinator Project, among others. The PRBP is establishing this fair, open, and competitive process for selecting subgrantees.

The issuing agency reserves the right to make multiple awards under this NOFA, to allocate different phases or components of the project to different applicants, or to decline to fund any phase if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the agency. Funding decisions will be based on the applications submitted, the agency's evaluation of the proposed approaches, and evolving program needs and priorities. The agency may also adjust the scope of funding allocations as necessary to align with program goals and available resources.

3. Funding Disbursement & Allowable Use of Funds

3.1. Allowable Uses of Funds

The funds awarded in this NOFA must be used to assist PRBP program awardees in the activities listed in the Scope of Work.

If granted an award, Proponents may utilize grant funds to:

Training and Curriculum:

- Define and standardize preliminary digital literacy and digital navigator curriculums (curriculum standards further defined below in Additional Considerations).
- Create new curriculum content as the program develops, especially for target populations.

- Hiring and staffing costs of trainers needed for "train the trainer model" and ongoing technical support.
- Training events to ensure Digital Navigators are properly trained and equipped to serve their community.
- Expenses related to planning, resourcing and hosting in-person training events, including travel costs related to visiting regional digital hubs.

Community Outreach

- Promote the program and reach potential beneficiaries through marketing and outreach campaigns (on their own or via partners / third parties).
- Development of marketing materials needed to support outreach efforts of regional digital hubs.

Program Management, Efficiency and Sustainability

- Tools or technological resources necessary to stand-up and sustain overall program.
- Tools or technological resources necessary to analyze results of program and assist in program improvement.
- People management tools or software necessary to coordinate program operating model, including scheduling of trainers and coordination with regional digital hubs.
- Hire program coordinator(s) responsible for supporting program development, aligning with community organizations, and coordinating with PRBP office.
- Personal technology or office equipment necessary for trainers and program coordinator(s) to facilitate program success.

In the proposed pricing, the Proponent should detail the pricing and budget for each item that they would require to execute the program.

According to the NTIA, federal grant regulations "flow through" to subrecipients (i.e., subgrantees), and subrecipients are responsible for adherence to applicable Federal program requirements specified in the Federal award¹.

Additional Considerations

The following guidelines should be considered when developing the proposed pricing and detailed budget.

It is expected that many of the readily available free resources will be leveraged to develop the Digital Literacy curriculum for the program. Thus, it will be encouraged that resources dedicated to curriculum development costs are efficient within the total budget (e.g., there are sample curriculums and digital literacy and navigator frameworks available online, which can be tailored to Puerto Rico's needs for this program).

¹ See, e.g., 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.101(b)(2); 200.331

The subgrantee has the liberty to design the curriculum for the program, but at a minimum, it should include the following:

- Content and instruction available in both English and Spanish.
- Digital Literacy Curriculum with coverage of basic computer skills and internet safety and security (please specify more advanced skills in proposed curriculum as well). Curriculum can be divided by levels.
 - o This is the curriculum that Digital Navigators (separate program) will be trained on and will then use to teach digital skills in their community.
- Coverage of social skills necessary to engage with the community as a Digital Navigator
 - This part of the curriculum will only be included for the "train the trainer" portion of the curriculum and not part of what Digital Navigators will use to teach in their communities.

Digital Navigator trainers should also be considered a full-time resource. Through the program, they should be available for ongoing questions and technical support, not just a one-time training session.

In addition, potential subgrantees are required to have a developed plan to ensure collection of feedback and measurement of program impact. While not required, any additional academic research or publications to measure impact (e.g., surveys, analysis, etc.) can be supported with program funds.

3.2. Payment Terms and Method

The Digital Literacy program will work on a payment schedule with the subgrantee(s), to disburse funds twice a year based on specific milestones.

Given that this program lasts until the end of 2029, the payment schedule will be distributed along the five years of duration of the program.

To help set up the operations at the beginning of the program, the PRBP may agree to make an initial upfront payment of up to 10% of the total cost of the project.

4. Work Plan

Under this Section Proponents must provide a detailed Work Plan indicating how they plan to execute the Scope of Work and meet the objectives of this NOFA, including a detailed proposed pricing proposal for the proposed Scope of Work. The PRBP will be evaluating responses based on the criteria described in the Response Evaluation section. Projects need to be holistic, end-to-end and provide confidence to PRBP that the Proponent will be able to manage the whole program independently in coordination with all relevant stakeholders.

The format and instructions for the Work Plan submission is contained in the Appendix 1 Form. Proponents must submit Appendix 1 filled out. Additional details could be included as appendix to the proposal.

5. Requirements

5.1. Key Requirements

Proponents must meet the following requirements:

- Proponents shall be companies properly accredited to provide services in the broadband value chain in Puerto Rico at the time of the submission of their Proposals and comply with all applicable Puerto Rico or U.S. laws and/or requirements.
- Proponents must have adequate resources to perform the project, or the ability to obtain them within the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico. It is critical that the proponents have proficient Spanish speakers for interacting with the public.
- Proponents must have a satisfactory record of performance, integrity, and business ethics.
- Proponents shall provide a listing and brief description of all legal actions for the past five years.
- Proponents must submit a complete Proposal covering all necessary topics outlined in this NOFA.
- Proponents must upload required documents as attachments with response as detailed in section 6 (Proposal Submission).
- If a selected proponent is not up-to-date and/or fails to diligently comply with Puerto Rico's contracting requirements, this will be cause to for-go any other contracting efforts and select the next qualified entity.

5.2. Transparency, Accountability, And Oversight Required

Subgrantees each have a critical role to play in ensuring that the BEAD Program is implemented in a manner that ensures transparency, accountability, and oversight sufficient to, among other things:

- 1. Minimize the opportunity for waste, fraud, and abuse;
- 2. Ensure that recipients of grants under the Program use grant funds to further the overall purpose of the Program in compliance with the requirements of the Infrastructure Act, the NOFO, 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards)², the terms and conditions of the award, and other applicable law; and

² https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/BEAD%20NOFO.pdf

3. Allow the public to understand and monitor grants and subgrants awarded under the Program.

Subgrantees will also need to:

- 1. Comply with the reporting requirements set forth in Section I.E of the NOFO.
- 2. Comply with the obligations set forth in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.
- 3. Establish and widely publicize telephone numbers and email addresses for the subgrantees' internal ethics office (or comparable entity) for the purpose of reporting waste, fraud or abuse in the Program. Subgrantees shall produce copies of materials used for such purpose upon request of the Federal Program Officer.

The recipient of a subgrant shall submit a regular reporting, at least every three months, for the duration of the subgrant to track the effectiveness of the use of funds provided. Each report shall describe each type of project and/or other eligible activities carried out using the subgrant and the duration of the subgrant. That regular reporting should also include:

- Budget of expenses incurred since most recent report.
- Number of in-person training sessions provided, total training hours delivered, and number of Digital Navigators having completed the training.
- Consolidation of community impact from regional digital hubs including, number of people having attended an event or completed the digital literacy curriculum.
- Measurable KPIs to track curriculum and program effectiveness, overview of feedback received, and strategy to continuously improve program.

5.3. Project Term

PRBP will prioritize programs that start working on the Scope of Work under this Digital Literacy Program Coordinator project as soon as the subgrantee is selected and the grant agreement is signed and until the end of 2029.

6. Proposal Submission

Responses to the NOFA submitted after the prescribed deadline will not be accepted. The only required document in the Proposals is Appendix 1 Form filled out. It may include any exhibits, appendices and/or attachments to be deemed complete. All correspondence, documents and related information submitted by Proponents in connection with this NOFA would be preferred to be written in English (please contact the PRBP team for any exceptions / requests to do so in Spanish). All applications must adhere to Proposal Package requirements, use the required format, and include all the requested information. Only one Proposal Package will be accepted from each applicant. All applications must include a certification and signature that all the information submitted

in the Proposal is true and accurate. Clearly identify one designated contact person for the Proposal engagement.

Proponents should submit their responses to the smartisland.pr.gov website in a single PDF of maximum 10 MB.

Should a Proponent choose to amend its submitted proposal, it may only do so by submitting, before the submission deadline, an entire revised proposal marked as "Amended Proposal." The PRBP will consider submitted amended proposals to replace and supersede all earlier submissions.

6.1. Questions & Answers

Any questions regarding this NOFA or the evaluation shall be submitted in writing via electronic mail only to the following address: <u>FAQ@smartisland.pr.gov</u> and must reference this specific NOFA in the subject line of the email as "Q&A NOFA Digital Literacy". No telephone inquiries will be accepted. Answers will be posted on PRBP's website at https://www.smartisland.pr.gov.

Questions must be submitted by October 17, 2024, at 4.30 pm; answers will be provided by October 21, 2024, at 4.30 pm. The OMB reserves the right to extend this deadline based on the volume and timing of questions.

6.2. Expression of Interest

The PRBP will strongly appreciate it if potential Proponents could express their interest in this program by sending an email to <u>info@smartisland.pr.gov</u> by October 16, 2024, at 4.30pm. Please provide the following information in your email:

- Name of the Proponent Entity.
- Name of the Point of Contact, email, and phone number for contact.
- In the subject line, add "Digital Literacy NOFA | Interest from [name of your Proponent Entity]."

Please note that this Expression of Interest does not imply any commitment from the Proponents to present a proposal to this program.

6.3. Webinar

PRBP will conduct a Webinar to present the program and answer any question from interested entities. The Webinar will take place on October 17, 2024. A link will be posted in the PRBP website (https://www.smartisland.pr.gov/) and will be sent to all organizations that expressed their interest in the program in the form detailed in the previous sub-section. Answers to questions addressed in the Webinar will be incorporated to the Q&A document that will be published on October 21, 2024, to ensure transparency and equal access to information among Proponents.

6.4. Allowed and Prohibited Communications

Only questions and requests for clarifications on this NOFA submitted by Proponents as per the Questions and Answers section are allowed. Communications by prospective Proponents with officials and/or representatives of PRBP, PROMB, other government entities, the Government of Puerto Rico and any of its instrumentalities, or any other parties associated with the PRBP, regarding the contents of this NOFA or its qualification and selection process, are prohibited during the submission and selection processes. Failure to adhere to this requirement may result in the disqualification of submitted applications.

Verbal inquiries or emails sent to addresses not specified in this NOFA will not be addressed or considered by the PRBP.

7. Response Evaluation

The PRBP will examine all Proposals in a proper, objective and timely manner to determine if they meet the submission requirements. The final evaluation and selection will be based upon the criteria listed below:

Maximum points	Category	Description				
50	Curriculum & Training	 Relevance and quality of the Digital Literacy (DL) and Digital Navigator (DN) curricula to the target population in Puerto Rico. Experience and qualifications of training staff in delivering digital literacy programs. Ability to scale the curricula for future complex needs and the inclusion of social service skills in DN training. Delivery method (in-person, online, or hybrid) and selection of training locations to ensure accessibility. 				
15	Community Outreach	 Demonstrated experience in engaging community organizations, schools, CBOs, or nonprofits to reach the target population. Comprehensive marketing strategy to reach underserved and unserved populations, including plans to support DN program outreach. 				
35	Program Management, Efficiency & Sustainability	 Proven experience managing similar programs with measurable outcomes, including tools and processes for effective program management and fund usage. Commitment of resources and leadership team to Puerto Rico. 				

Maximum points	Category	Description
		 Metrics and processes for evaluating program success and collecting community feedback. Sustainability plan for scaling the program and maintaining impact beyond initial funding. Efficient use of funds, ensuring resources are allocated strategically to maximize program impact and minimize cost waste.

8. Selection Process

A committee of OMB staff and/or consultants will review the proposals and evaluate them based on the aforementioned criteria. The OMB staff and/or consultants reserve the right to request additional information from Proponents on an as-needed basis during the evaluation process. Following this, the OMB may enter negotiations with the Proponents to expand or contract the scope of work and adjust the grant amount accordingly.

9. Timeline: Important Dates & Deadlines

The following is the proposed timeline for this project:

Target Date	Event			
October 10, 2024	Publication of NOFA			
October 17, 2024	Questions & Answers Submission Deadline			
October 17, 2024	Webinar			
October 21, 2024	Submission of PRBP Responses to Questions			
November 10, 2024	Proposal Submission Deadline			
Dec' 24 – Jan' 25	Notice of Award Expected			
2025-2029	Program duration			

Please note that each deadline above is set by end-of-day at 4:30 pm (local Puerto Rico time).

Please note that the NOFA timeline includes target dates and may change subject to the sole discretion of PRBP. It is the responsibility of Proponents to periodically review PRBP's website for regular updates to the NOFA timeline and other important information.

Appendix 1. Work Plan

Notification of Funds' Availability for the Digital Literacy Program Coordinator NOFA by the Puerto Rico Broadband Program

General Information

Name of the organization	
Registration number of the organization (EIN)	
Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov	
Address of principal offices	
Name of the point of contact	
Email of the point of contact	
Phone of the point of contact	
Name of the legal representative ³	
Position of legal representative	
Legal status of legal representative	
City of residence of legal representative	
Email of the legal representative	
Phone of the legal representative	

1. Curriculum & Training

- 1A) Please describe your experience in **developing and executing on training programs**, particularly with a "train the trainer" approach.
 - Please include a list of any programs completed in the past 5 years, including locations, dates and number of people trained and served.
 - If any programs have been managed in Puerto Rico, please prioritize providing details on those.
 - [To be completed]
- 1B) Please describe what will be included in your proposed **initial Digital Literacy curriculum** and how it serves the needs of the target populations in Puerto Rico.

³ Person that would eventually sign the Grant Agreement if selected

1. C	urriculum & Training
	Also, discuss how you will update the curriculum as needed over the course of the program.
	Please also complete the additional curriculum table below (Curriculum and Training template).
	• [To be completed]
1C)	Please describe what will be included in your proposed initial Digital Navigator curriculum focusing on social and teaching skills, and how you will use assessments to ensure to ensure Digital Navigators meet a minimum proficiency are equipped to serve their communities.
	• [To be completed]
1D)	Please describe your plan for hiring and/or staffing trainers for the program. E.g., What experience will trainers have?
	How many trainers will be supporting the program as a full-time dedicated resource over the 5 years?
	How will the trainers be available after completion of initial training material for further support?
	• [To be completed]
1E)	Please detail your proposed approach for delivery of trainings and how you will ensure Digital Navigators are adequately trained. E.g., conducting in person / remote sessions, locations for trainings for accessibility for Digital Navigators.
	• [To be completed]
1F)	Please describe other initiatives you will include as part of the program, including research projects (e.g., on digital literacy access).
	• [To be completed]

Please complete the table to signify which components will be part of your digital literacy curriculum, the expected hours of content, and any additional notes. If the component will not be included in the original curriculum, please input a 0 in the expected hours column. Also, please feel free to include additional information as needed.

Component	Description (examples)	Expected Hours	Additional Notes
Basic Computer Skills	Understand basic hardware/software components of a computer, file management, email usage, navigating the internet safely		
Online Safety & Security	Cybersecurity, privacy management, recognizing scams, and protecting personal data		
Digital Communicati on	Email set-up, social media basics, video conferencing, VoIP applications		
Digital Productivity Tools & Employable Skills	Basic office software, cloud storage, online forms, file sharing, Job search skills, resume building, and professional networking		
Digital Social Change Skills	Digital support to enable holistic life outcomes such as applying to benefits programs, making a telehealth appointment, etc.		
Other			

2. C	2. Community Outreach				
2A)	What are your plans to ensure the program you develop will benefit all communities in Puerto Rico?				
	 Do you have any established relationships with community organizations such as schools, CBOs or NGOs that can help with outreach of the program? 				
	• [To be completed]				
2B)	Please describe your intended marketing strategy to ensure the programs resources are fully utilized.				

2. Community Outreach

• [To be completed]

3. Program Management, Efficiency & Sustainability

- 3A) Please describe your **experience in managing similar programs**.
 - Please include a list of any programs completed in the past 5 years, including locations, dates, number of organizations you managed / partnered with, and number of people served.
 - Please list any **differentiating capabilities** your organization has in regard to program management, and any tools or resources you plan to use to stand-up the program and ensure efficient management.
 - [To be completed]
- 3B) How many **program coordinator(s) and additional resources** will be hired / designated to manage the program?
 - Will there be a full-time dedicated team or individual in Puerto Rico?
 - Please also describe how senior leadership at your organization will be involved in this program?
 - [To be completed]
- 3C) Please describe your intended **strategy to evaluate and report the success of the program**.
 - What will you measure as the KPIs?
 - How will you ensure data is collected and analyzed? How will community feedback be collected and integrated to improve the program?
 - [To be completed]
- 3D) What is your strategy to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the program past the initial funding period?
 - What innovative approaches can be used to sustain the program?
 - Do you plan to make any co-investments or catalyze any other funding sources?

3. P	3. Program Management, Efficiency & Sustainability					
	• [To be completed]					
3E)	Please describe what efforts you will take to minimize / find efficiencies in managing costs and ensure programs funds are used efficiently. Please also fill out the budget template below.					
	• [To be completed]					

Proposed Program Pricing and Total Outcomes – please fill out and provide detail via attachment

Instructions: The below table is just one way in which you can submit the Program Pricing. Proponents can submit their Proposed Pricing in the format and way the deem more appropriate. However, the Proposed Pricing should have a split per year and a proposed disbursement schedule.

Please include the total expected program cost and requested funding by year.

Overall Program Cost:

Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total
\$					

Item	Cost by item	Quantity	Total	Note / Explanation
Curriculum & Training				
E.g., cost of training session for (XX participants)	50,000	4	200,000	E.g., cost of staffing and deploying trainers
Community Outreach				
Program Management				
# dedicated resources				E.g., compensation for planned staff hired

Item	Cost by item	Quantity	Total	Note / Explanation