

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
Demand Side Employment Initiative
(DSEI)



Request for Interest
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Business Contracts
RFI #DSEI-22-01

July 20, 2022

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Frequently Asked Questions

The Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) has collected questions received for the Demand Side Employment Initiative (DSEI) Request for Interest (RFI) #DSEI-22-01. If you have any additional questions, please email them to DSEI@dor.ca.gov.

You can access the RFI at the link below:

<https://www.dor.ca.gov/Content/DorIncludes/documents/ContractsGrants/DSEI%20RFI%20Final%205.24.2022.pdf>

General Topics

I would like to know the names of businesses who have successfully applied for this program in my area.

We have not awarded funding to businesses yet, however media marketing will focus on DSEI recipient businesses in the next year.

Is the Request for Interest available in Spanish?

The RFI has been translated into Spanish and is available on our website.

You can access the RFI translated into Spanish at the link below:

<https://www.dor.ca.gov/Content/DorIncludes/documents/ContractsGrants/DSEI%20RFI-SPANISH-FINAL.pdf>

Funding

Will all DOR awards come in the form of reimbursements?

Yes.

Is there a schedule for how funding will be dispersed? Will it be dispersed in increments or upfront? Is receiving funding contingent on any required criteria/actions/reporting of the business beyond the quarterly reports?

Each participating business will have a contract that will determine the schedule for funding reimbursement. Funding will be provided in compliance with the contract. Each participating business must adhere to the obligations related to the contract, including but not limited to quarterly reporting.

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Is this a one-time thing or does it run in cycles?

The DSEI is a one-time funding opportunity, meaning that DOR has been allocated to disperse funding through June 30, 2024. Each participating business will have a contract that will determine the schedule for funding reimbursement. Available funds per business range from \$20,000 to \$200,000, with the possibility of additional funding in the future.

Can these funds be used to strengthen reasonable accommodations and modifications for existing staff with disabilities?

The monies are intended to be used to establish new employees; however, contact us and we can schedule a meeting to discuss further to see if we can help.

Helpful resource:

- Have a question about workplace accommodations or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)? Check out the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) website link below.
 - o <https://askjan.org/>
- This federally funded organization is staffed with qualified people and you can talk to a representative any time.

Can these funds be used to raise wages for staff to provide them with a better “living” wage as they say?

The funds are to be used for new hire costs, including reimbursement for costs related to a specific candidate/position being hired and can include advertising, onboarding, training, and 1st month’s wages.

Can the funds be used to pay the entire wage of an employee?

The funds are to be used for new hire costs, including reimbursement for costs related to a specific candidate/position being hired and can include advertising, onboarding, training, and 1st month’s wages.

Timeline

If requested before the June 30th deadline, Will any extension/accommodations be given to gather in missing documents?

The 6/30/2022 deadline is only for gathering questions about the RFI so that we can provide a Frequently Asked Questions document for businesses. The RFI submission deadline is 12/31/2023, depending on funding availability.

When are RFI Response Packages due?

The RFI submission deadline is 12/31/2023, depending on funding availability.

Business Size

How many employees you define as small and medium-sized businesses? For example, is small 2-10 employees and medium-sized 11-50 employees?

Businesses are to determine, and self-report the size of their business as small or medium. Small and medium-sized businesses are both equally eligible for funding. Below are two resources for determining the size of your business.

To check the size standards for specific industries, you can reference the U.S. Small Business Administration's table of small business size standards at the following website: <https://www.sba.gov/document/support-table-size-standards>

You can find small business size regulations in CFR Title 13 Chapter I § 121.201 at the following website: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-13/chapter-I/part-121/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFRf12a11421b08a31/section-121.201>

Internal Revenue Service (IRS): The Large Business and International (LB&I) Division defines Large Businesses as having assets equal to and greater than \$10 million. All businesses under that mark for IRS purposes are small/medium in size. Small and Medium-sized businesses are eligible to apply for this funding.

Business Applicants

Can Centers for Independent Living apply for DSEI funds?

California small and medium-sized businesses are eligible to apply for DSEI funding.

Is this initiative solely aimed at private FOR PROFIT businesses? Or can non-profit organizations also apply?

Both for profit and non-profit California small and medium-sized businesses are eligible to apply for DSEI funding.

Is an employer required to be based in California to receive the grant?

DSEI funding will be distributed to California small and medium-sized businesses.

Are there any added accommodations or incentives for veteran-owned businesses?

Not currently. The DSEI funding is being awarded non-competitively.

Consulting Services

If our company wants to provide any of the following services (Consulting Services, Equipment Purchase, Hiring Cost Reimbursement, Training/Learning Program, Physical Location, Improvement Barrier) we would need to be an approved DOR Vendor?

Businesses are not required to become vendors with DOR to apply for or receive funding. We are hoping to reach businesses outside of our current DOR vendors.

Media Campaign & Advertising

On page 3 of the RFI, it indicates that there will be \$2M earmarked for targeted media and marketing campaigns, do all businesses that commit to this grant need to partake in media and marketing campaigns? How should an organization show that commitment and account for the time required to participate in the marketing campaign? Should it be shown as a marketing line item within an “all-inclusive budget total” similar to how it is illustrated in Attachment C (page 12)?

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DOR is working on a marketing campaign to highlight the businesses participating in the DSEI. The participating businesses are not obligated to cover any of this cost, include this cost in their RFI proposal, nor will they be committed to account for their time participating this marketing campaign. DOR is using this funding to promote the businesses working with the DSEI and DOR will pay for this marketing campaign cost.

If a business would like to include the cost for advertising as a part of the new hire process, that cost can be included in the RFI proposal.

- Reimbursement for costs related to a specific candidate/position being hired and can include advertising, onboarding, training, and 1st month's wages.

Will DOR advertise for the positions that the business awardees are seeking to fill?

DOR can provide funding for you to advertise for your available positions. DOR will have a social media campaign to highlight DSEI funding recipient businesses, but DOR is not directly going to advertise the positions available for each business.

Goal Commitment

How are employees defined for purposes of calculating the parity rate? Is it by individual or a full-time equivalent (FTE)? For example, if a company has ten employees total but two individuals work part-time (equivalent to 0.5 FTE each), would that company be treated as having ten employees or nine for purposes of calculating the parity rate?

Full-time and part-time employees would be counted as a whole. Each employee is included in the workforce parity rate, whether they are working full-time or part-time. Therefore, if a business has eight full-time employees and two part-time employees, the business has ten employees for the purposes of the workforce parity rate.

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How many staff with disabilities should a business have who is being funded?
DSEI funding recipients can commit to either hiring and employing a workforce with individuals with disabilities representing up to or exceeding the parity rate of 16.6% OR providing a full or part-time ongoing (rotating) internship experience position(s) where individuals with disabilities could gain work experience.

To reach or exceed a workforce parity rate of 16.6%, the number of staff with disabilities will depend on the size of your business. For example, if your business has 18 staff, your goal would be to employ 3 individuals with disabilities. If your business has 48 staff, your goal would be to employ 8 individuals with disabilities. Note: Internships do not affect a company's Workforce Parity Rate.

Support

Are you available for a live conversation regarding items that are not clear?
We would be happy to schedule a time to discuss the questions you have, or you can email us your questions. Our email address is DSEI@dor.ca.gov