

# Tech Hire Baltimore

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

*BALTIMORE TECH HIRE GRANT COMMITTEE*

RFQ RELEASE DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2016.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 PM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2016 TO  
[CLAUDIA.FREELAND@BALTIMORECITY.GOV](mailto:CLAUDIA.FREELAND@BALTIMORECITY.GOV)

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## Summary

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) will be the Lead Applicant in the TechHire grant for the City of Baltimore in conjunction with Baltimore Tech Hire Grant Committee. MOED will apply for approximately \$4 million that will serve 400 people over a 48 month period that must begin in June 2016. US Department of Labor will select recipients in June 2016. If Baltimore wins this grant, the committee will be contracting the award to one or multiple providers based on this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) response. Budget should reflect a reasonable capacity and cost structure.

The purpose of the Tech Hire Initiative is to help participants begin careers in IT occupations and industries. On a limited basis, the grant targets increasing the skills of existing workers in lower-skilled jobs to move into more highly skilled positions. The grant seeks to fund pilot and scale public-private partnerships among the workforce investment system, education and training providers, and business-related nonprofit organizations to address five goals for target populations:

- expand access to accelerated options;
- improve the likelihood that training is completed;
- connect those with skills that are currently being overlooked for employment, internships or apprenticeship opportunities;
- demonstrate strong commitment to customer-centered design & excellence in customer experience; and
- ensure innovations form basis for broader change & sustainability, and that a strategy exists for adapting to rapidly changing market needs.

Please note that this RFQ is separate from the 1B4J Mayor's Office of Employment Development Request for Proposal regarding technical training. Both RFQ and RFP can be applied for separately.

## Background and Introduction

Tech Hire is a multi-sector initiative and call to action launched by President Obama in March 2015 to supply employers with the tech talent they critically need and empower Americans with the high-tech skills required to be competitive in the global economy.

In November 2015, Baltimore was designated as a Tech Hire city, joining over 30 communities across the US that have committed to take action. The Department of Labor recently announced a Tech Hire grant competition to support innovative approaches to training and employing low-skill individuals to fill in-demand tech jobs.

Key elements to fulfill the goals stated above include:

- actively involving employers;
- expanding innovative models for fast-track tech training;
- using data and innovative hiring practices to recruit and place job-seekers based on their actual skills; and

- providing local leadership to connect people to jobs with on-ramp hiring programs.

As of 2015, there are over half a million unfilled jobs in information technology across all sectors of the US economy. Non-IT industries currently employ two-thirds of these private sector IT workers.\* At least 20,000 of these jobs are in the Baltimore region. Hundreds of thousands of these jobs require skills that can be learned not only in universities, but also in community colleges, in industry-certified training programs, in “boot camps” or in high-quality online courses. The Tech Hire Baltimore grant intends to create bridges and pipelines to tech occupations and industries in Baltimore City. For more extensive information about the Department of Labor Tech Hire Grant visit [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) with search term: FOA-ETA-16-01.

## Application Process and Timeline

Applicants are asked to submit electronically by **5:00 pm EST, Thursday, February 18, 2016**. Qualifications will address the response elements detailed on in the Program Narrative. After an initial review, the Baltimore Tech Hire Grant Committee will select qualified applicants. A site visit or presentation may be scheduled with semi-finalists to promote understanding of the full details, competencies, scope, budget and impact. Semi-finalists may be asked to provide written answers to questions about their qualifications. Awardees will be notified by approximately May 2016 after the U.S. Department of Labor announces the award winners internationally. Awardees must be in good standing with the City of Baltimore. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email and provided with reviewers comments when available.

## Pre-Qualifications Information

Questions regarding this RFQ may be submitted to Claudia Freeland Jolin at [Claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov) until **5:00 pm Wednesday, February 9, 2016** for an email response. A list of received question and answers will be collected and distributed upon request. The Baltimore Tech Hire Grant Committee will be holding a conference call to address questions regarding the RFQ at **12:00 pm EST, Wednesday, February 10, 2016**. Please dial in at 866-740-1260 - Participant Code 2334489#.

## Format

Applications should be prepared as Times New Roman 10 point or greater font with 1” page margins and single spaced up to 6 pages. The application should be submitted electronically in a PDF format to [claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov). The PDF file name should be the lead organization’s name. Qualifications must be received by 5:00 pm EST on Friday, February 12, 2016. Receipt of electronic qualifications will be acknowledged via return email; if you submit and do not receive a receipt acknowledgment, please contact Claudia immediately. In the event of transmission delays due to technology or email issues, the Baltimore Tech Hire Grant Committee reserves the right to accept qualifications delayed by such issues.

A submission checklist is given on page 4. **Please ensure all required documents are included. Incomplete applications may be considered nonresponsive.**

## Application Submission Checklist

The following items MUST accompany the qualifications cover sheet. This checklist is provided for your use and does not need to be submitted.

**ELECTRONIC COPY of the qualifications (Sections I through IV) as a single PDF file with the lead organization name as the file name to [claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov) 5:00 PM EST Thursday, February 18, 2016. Receipt will be acknowledged via return email.**

<b>CHECKLIST – Submit Items I. through IV. electronically</b>		<b>Included</b>
I.	Completed Qualifications Cover Sheet	<input type="checkbox"/>
II.	Program Narrative (6-page maximum in 10 pt Times New Roman font)	<input type="checkbox"/>
III.	Proposed Metrics and Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV.	Project line-item Budget and Budget Justification	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cover Page Template

PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY			
<b>Applicant Name:</b>			
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Executive Director / CEO:</b>			
<b>Project Contact Person:</b>			
<b>Project Contact Title:</b>			
<b>Telephone:</b>			
<b>Fax:</b>			
<b>E-mail:</b>			
<b>Web site:</b>			
<b>Project Name:</b>			
<b>Community Organizations:</b>			
<b>Employer Partners:</b>			
Applicant Type of Organization		Budget	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer	<b>Tech Funds Requested:</b>	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Government (specify):	<b>Leveraged Resources:</b>	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Based Organization	<b>Project Budget:</b>	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor Organization		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business & Trade Association		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education (specify):		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:		

## Program Narrative

	<b>TECH HIRE RFQ RESPONSE ELEMENTS (6 PAGES MAX.)</b>	<b>Suggested Page Limit</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide an executive summary briefly describing your program/services; the program/service goals, and the collaborative plan and/or partnerships.</li> </ul>	½ page
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Statement of Need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a <b>list of occupations</b> that will be used for entry-level jobs or upgrade skills training by position title and the expected entry wage after training.</li> <li>Describe opportunities for further career advancement and/or <b>career pathways</b> originating from the above list of occupations.</li> <li>Describe how your program will address barriers to employment (i.e., literacy, language barriers, technology, environmental, and access).</li> </ul>	1 page
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Targeted Population</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe your targeted populations (demographics, particular barriers to employment, income and employment status, areas of residency, program eligibility, etc.)</li> <li>Describe your outreach and recruitment strategies to recruit eligible participants, including individuals with low income or barriers to employment.</li> </ul>	½ page
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Program Description</b></p> <p>As described in the Application Guidelines, provide a description of your training programs/services including how your program will address both Tech Hire needs and the needs of your targeted population. Please include the following in your response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Objectives</b> of your strategy with regard to participants (for example, is this strategy designed to address entry-level job placement, to advance incumbent workers along career ladders, a combination of these?) and employers (what value will they receive from your intervention?)</li> <li>Description of occupational, soft skills and foundational skills (basic math, literacy and English-language skills) <b>training</b> to be provided including a summary of curriculum content, length, location, etc.</li> <li>Description of <b>case management and/or coaching</b> services including content and objectives of your model, frequency of planned one-on-one interactions, group/cohort activities, staffing, etc.</li> <li>Describe any specific type(s) of <b>additional supportive services</b> that you will provide to participants (such as tutoring, ESL, literacy training, GED, mentoring/coaching, childcare, transportation, housing, financial education, stipends). Will these be provided by referral or directly by program partners?</li> <li>Description of your <b>job search assistance, development and placement strategy</b> including any follow-up retention services you plan provide.</li> <li>Information about any <b>skills and aptitudes assessments</b> you plan to conduct.</li> <li>Information about any <b>certifications, college credits</b> (that contribute towards obtaining industry-valued credentials) or <b>licensing</b> that will be provided through your program.</li> <li>Description of any <b>work experience</b> components (internships, on-the-job training, apprenticeships) you plan to provide.</li> </ul>	2 pages
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Partnership and Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe your community outreach and recruitment strategy and organizations that you have partnered with.</li> <li>Describe your partners and how they will participate in the project, including the role that employers will play in program design, implementation, and oversight and with regard to hiring your participants.</li> <li><i>Note: Any in-kind or leveraged resources to support your project by these partners should be detailed in the Budget Justification, and letters of commitment from these identified partners must be submitted as attachments (no page limit).</i></li> </ul>	½ page
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Statement of Capabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how you are qualified to manage the proposed effort by commenting on demonstrated</li> </ul>	1 page

	<p>experience, providing evidence of outcomes achieved for participants in other past or ongoing programming, and existing infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation and Tracking: Please describe the proposed method and tool that will be used to track progress and measure success. Please also indicate your current ability to track against the measures noted in Appendix C. Provide examples of current tracking methods or reporting systems and the type of information tracked such as credentials, job placement, wages/wage increase, retention on the job.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your funding approach or plan to sustain your programs/services after seed monies provided through this grant are expended; include the projection of time needed to reach this goal.</li> </ul>	½ page

## Proposed Program Metrics and Outcomes

	Outcome Measure		
1	<b>Total Participants Served</b> Total number of all participants served (receiving a grant-funded service and/or grant-funded education/training).	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
1a	<b>Target Population</b> (please specify)	Sub-total	
1b	<b>Other Populations</b> (please specify)	Sub-total	
		<b>Targets for all Participants</b>	
2	<b>Total Participants Enrolled in Education/Training activities</b>	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
3	<b>Total Participants Completing Education/Training Activities</b>	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
4	<b>Total Participants Who Complete Education/Training Activities AND Receive a Degree or other Credential</b>	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
5	<b>Total Number of Unemployed Participants who Obtain Employment</b> Total number of all unemployed participants who obtain employment. Incumbent Workers should not be included in this outcome.	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:
6	<b>Total Number of Incumbent Worker Participants that Advanced into a New Position</b> This includes incumbent workers that advanced into a new position with their current employer or a new employer following the completion of a training program. Incumbent workers that did not advance into a new position (i.e. retained their existing position or layoff aversion) following the completion of a training program should not be included in this outcome.	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total
7	<b>Median Earnings</b>	Year 1: Year 2: Year 3: Year 4:	Total:

## Budget and Budget Justification

Applicants must provide a budget narrative based on the activities outlined in the project narrative. The budget narrative must have a clear description of how proposed expenditures will support service, training, and job placement for the targeted population of people with barriers to accessing training and employment, as well as other unemployed workers, underemployed workers, and incumbent workers, as applicable.

Applicants must provide a detailed description that indicates the project will leverage resources equal to at least 25 percent of the total requested funds to support grant activities, including a complete account of these leveraged resources, and demonstration of how these leveraged resources and grant funds will cover the cost per participant. Applicants will be scored based on the extent to which they fully demonstrate that 25 percent or more in leveraged resources will be provided.

Applicants must provide a full description of any leveraged funds and other resources that will be provided to support grant activities and how these funds and other resources will be used to contribute to the projected outcomes for the project, including any leveraged resources related to the provision of supportive services for program participants. This includes funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, and local government programs.

In separate columns, please estimate and itemize the source and value of any leveraged funds in the program by partners. Detailed description of which costs will be paid by the grant and which costs will be covered by leveraged resources. This includes cash or in-kind support (e.g., Pell/Title IV financial aid, federal work study, GI Bill benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education & training funds, WIOA, etc.), state and local funding, (e.g., on-the-job training funds, state workforce dollars, funding for participating community colleges, etc.), and private sector investment funds (e.g., training investment funds, social impact bonds, industry association or labor organization funds, etc.)

Applicants should submit a line-item program budget for each of the four years of the proposed grant. Budget categories may include, but are not limited to: personnel and fringe, consulting, instructional supplies and equipment, rent, utilities, technology, marketing, meeting expenses, printing, telephone, certifications/licenses, supportive services, internships/work experience, reporting/evaluation, travel, etc. Applicants should briefly describe the rationale behind the projected expenses in the budget categories in sufficient detail for reviewers to understand how the expenditures contribute to the overall program.

## General Notices

All documents submitted as part of the application are considered public records and will be made available to the public upon request with the exception of personal financial statements, private corporate financial statements, and other confidential commercial information. The City of Baltimore reserves the right to post summary information about all submissions, including those awarded financial or programmatic support.

The City of Baltimore reserves the right to suspend, amend, or modify the provisions of this RFQ, to waive any or all of the requirements or limitations herein, to reject all qualifications, to negotiate modifications of qualifications, or to award less than the full amount of the funding available, all in its sole discretion.

In the event that an Applicant is contracted with the Tech Hire Grant, the Applicant will be required to execute a grant agreement with the City of Baltimore in the form required by Mayor's Office of Employment Development to be approved by the Board of Estimates.

Evaluation Criteria	Points (maximum)
<b>(1) Statement of Need</b>	<b>18</b>
(a) Targeted Industries and Occupations	4
(b) Career Pathways and Advancement	8
(c) Address Barriers to Employment	6
<b>(2) Targeted Population</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) Identify Targeted Populations	2
(b) Outreach and Recruitment	8
<b>(3) Project Description</b>	<b>46</b>
(a) Objectives	8
(b) Assessment Strategy	6
(c) Employment and Training Strategy	12
(d) Supportive Services and Specialized Participant Services Strategies	8
(e) Job Placement Strategies	6
(f) Work Experience Strategies	6
<b>(4) Partnership and Collaboration</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) Community Outreach	4
(b) Employer Collaboration	6
<b>(5) Statement of Capabilities</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) Programmatic Capability - Funding Assistance Management or Past Accomplishments	4
(b) Experience with the Target Population or Proposed Program Design	2
(c) Evaluation and Tracking	2
(d) Sustainability	2
<b>(6) Budget and Budget Justification</b>	<b>6</b>
(a) Budget Narrative	2
(b) Leveraged Resources	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## Appendix A: H-1B Industries

TechHire grants will fund projects that support well-paying, middle- and high-skilled, and high-growth jobs across a diversity of H-1B industries. To meet the legislative intent of positioning American workers to reduce the need for skilled foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their programs to support occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified, or other occupations in industries in which a significant number of H-1B visas are certified. A list of these industries is below. To view specific occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified, visit the Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site ([http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/performance\\_data.cfm](http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/performance_data.cfm)) for the latest database of occupations approved under H-1B petitions.

According to recent data, a wide range of industries may meet these criteria in local and regional areas across the country, such as Information Technology (IT), Cyber Security, and Broadband, as well as a variety of non-IT industries and occupations that require technology skills, including but not limited to advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and financial services. In fact, more than two-thirds of technology jobs are outside of the technology sector.

Applicants should review below the list of industries that are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers to assist your program alignment.

H-1B Industries that are using a significant number of visas to hire foreign workers include:

- IT and IT related industries such as Cyber Security and Broadband
- Healthcare
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Financial Services
- Educational Services

These are the H-1B industries that we have identified as permissible for applicants to target under this grant competition. Applications that propose to train participants in occupations that do not fall within these industries must show that they are occupations for which H-1B visas have been certified. This may be shown by using the data provided on DOL's Foreign Labor Certification Data Center Web site.

If you have any questions on H-1B industries and occupations, please contact Claudia at [Claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Claudia.freeland@baltimorecity.gov)

## Appendix B: Target Populations

Qualifications must target one or both of the following target populations:

### Youth and Young Adults with Barriers to Training and Employment Opportunities

For the purpose of the Tech Hire Grant, “youth and young adults with barriers to training and employment” as individuals who are out-of-secondary school and between the ages of 17 and 29 who lack the educational attainment, work experiences, and/or skill-level necessary to secure full-time employment in middle or high-skill jobs. These individuals are unemployed or underemployed where access to training, education, and supportive services is essential to acquire the skills necessary for better paying and higher skilled jobs.

### Special Populations with Barriers to Training and Employment Opportunities

For the purpose of the Tech Hire Grant, “special populations with barriers to training and employment” as an individual with disabilities, an individual with Limited English Proficiency, or an individual with a criminal record. Special populations must also be at least 17 years of age and out-of-secondary school. These individuals may have limited skills, lack work experience, and/or face other barriers to economic success. Individuals within these populations must be unemployed, dislocated, or underemployed in part-time or full-time low-wage, low-skilled jobs, where access to training, education, and support services is essential to acquire the skills necessary for better paying and higher skilled jobs.

## Appendix C: Project Narrative

### Expected Competencies

Baltimore Tech Hire Grant Committee is seeking qualifications from education and training providers that will, over the period of four years, create innovative solutions that facilitate job placement and career advancement opportunities for entry-level workers within the tech sector. Applicants must demonstrate the following competencies in their qualifications:

- An understanding of the types of jobs available to trainees including employment processes and policies (education, work experience, certification/licensing and other requirements); and an ability to refine and expand labor market knowledge.
- Knowledge of career advancement pathways that lead to high wages in the sector.
- An understanding of the issues and barriers that target populations are expected to face and a track record in delivering and/or brokering related services.
- Experience in providing contextualized, job-related industry sector education and training that also embeds wrap-around support services and is responsive to employer needs and skill standards.
- Proven track record of placing individuals into employment.
- Strategic thinking about how the activities of the partnership can lead to wage increases, job retention and longer-term career advancement.
- Significant leveraged funds to support applicant as well as an ability to raise funds to sustain the program after initial seed monies (available through this grant) have been expended.
- Ability and willingness to develop and manage partnerships with a variety of types of actors and institutions (such as public workforce and human services agencies, other community- and faith-based organizations, employers and employer associations, organized labor, civic groups and donors.)
- Ability to collect, track and report participant level outcome data on program completion, job placement, wage gains, retention and advancement.

### Partnership and Collaboration

#### Community Engagement:

Applications must demonstrate a cohesive community outreach strategy focused on engaging and partnering with community stakeholders such as community development corporations, community associations, and other business and community development organizations and institutions in order to be inclusive to all populations in Baltimore City.

Applicants must provide a comprehensive description of the participant outreach and recruitment plan for engaging the targeted population of individuals with barriers to training and employment opportunities, as well as other populations to be served, including unemployed, dislocated, underemployed, and incumbent workers, as applicable. Clear identification of outreach partners and the process to ensure collaboration between the applicant, applicant's outreach partners, and other relevant partners in these activities.

Applicants must complete description of the types of strategy(ies) to reach the targeted population and other population(s) you propose to serve (such as partnering with the public workforce system, job clubs, community organizations, faith-based organizations, business entities, or using online social media).

#### Employers:

Applications must demonstrate strong relationships with Baltimore employers representing H-1B occupations and industries and service areas that have committed to internships, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships or hiring of successful trainees. Applications must include letters of commitment between the training provider and employers.

Applicants must provide a description of the specific role(s) of each employer, and how these roles support the goals of the project, including identifying their involvement with the following activities, as applicable: OJT, paid-work experience, paid internships, Registered Apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, or other training opportunities to be provided through these partnerships; providing assistance with program design; prioritizing job openings to consider hiring qualified participants who complete grant-funded education and training programs; plans to work with the program to up skill front-line incumbent workers and other incumbent workers; and plans to work with the program to hire unemployed participants to backfill job vacancies left by incumbent worker participants who move into higher-skill jobs.

Applicants must provide a clear description and feasible qualifications for how the applicant will leverage existing partnerships and develop new partnerships with independent employers, consortia of employers, and regional industry associations throughout the life of the grant.

#### Statement of Capabilities

##### Evaluation and Tracking

Please describe the proposed method and tool that will be used to track progress and measure success. Provide examples of current tracking methods or reporting systems and the type of information tracked such as credentials, job placement, wages/wage increase, retention on the job. Describe ability to track both participant level data and aggregated data. Please indicate current ability to collect/track demographics at enrollment as well as data on enrollment in education/training, completion of activities, receipt of college credits and degrees and industry-recognized credentials/certifications, placement into employment, advancement of incumbent workers, median earnings and job retention.

##### Reporting and Evaluation Requirements

Applicant will be required to participate with the evaluation, data collection and assessment activities by MOED. As a condition of funding, the applicant will be required to:

- Collect organizational and participant-level data,
- Submit quarterly and annual quantitative and qualitative performance reports,
- Attend quarterly meetings, and
- Cooperate with local and national evaluation requirements and site visits.

The Awardee will be required to collect and track individual participant data and outcomes, and report on individual and aggregated outcomes.