ESTEP Information Session:

May 9 & 30, 2018

This year the ministry has streamlined our application based on applicant feedback. We are looking to organizations to put forward initiatives to promote awareness and educate employees and employers on their rights and obligations under the _Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA)._

Reminders:

- The last day the ministry will be accepting questions is Thursday, May 31, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. Questions must be submitted to EOP@ontario.ca.
- The deadline to submit an application for ESTEP is Wednesday, June 20, 2018 by 4:00 p.m.
- We encourage applicants to submit their applications in advance of the deadline in order to avoid any potential technical delays.
- For help or any technical difficulties with Grants Ontario (GO), please contact the Grants Ontario Customer Service at (416) 325-6691 / 1-855-216-3090 or by email at GrantsOntarioCS@Ontario.ca.

Overview

The Employment Standards Training and Education Program (ESTEP) provides funding to eligible organizations for projects designed to promote awareness of and help educate employees and employers on their rights and obligations under the Employment Standards Act (ESA).

The program's focus is to help educate small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and vulnerable, non-unionized workers (including newcomers and young workers).

The total available funding for the ESTEP is $1,000,000. Individual grant amounts will vary depending on the type of project proposed, however the maximum funding available per project is $200,000.

A project may vary in length, but must conclude by December 31, 2019. Projects can be a maximum of 12 months in duration and are expected to begin in the fall of 2018.

Information Session: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q1. Who is eligible to apply?

A1. To be considered eligible, organizations must meet all of the criteria outlined in the ESTEP Application Guideline.

Q2. Can for-profit organizations apply for funding? If not, how can profit-based organizations be included or involved?

A2. For-profit organizations are not eligible for the ESTEP. However, profit-based organizations can participate by partnering with eligible non-profit organizations on their proposed projects. The eligible applicant would be the lead applicant and would accept any legal and financial responsibility for the approved grant.

Q3. How will the applicants be evaluated?

A3. The applicants must meet the eligibility requirements and submit their application and supporting documents by the deadline.

If eligibility requirements are met and the application is submitted by the deadline, applications will then be evaluated against the criteria outlined in the Guideline. The criteria consists of: Project Description / Objectives and Beneficiaries, Budget, Project Rationale, Organizational Capacity, Project Outcomes, Work Plan, Accountability and Networks.

Q4. How can I ensure that I am a successful applicant?

A4. The projects that most effectively demonstrate their ability to deliver based on the ministry's criteria outlined in the ESTEP Guideline and aligns with Ministry priorities will be selected for funding. It is important that:

- **Project Description, Objectives and Outcomes** - Project is well outlined and the deliverables & outcomes are well defined, tangible and quantifiable
- **Work Plan** – clearly outlines the steps required to execute the project
- **Rationale** – The rationale for the project is clearly outlined and demonstrates the need for the project.

- **Budget** – The budget is reasonable, well detailed and demonstrates effective use of government funds and value for money
- **Organizational Capacity** – The applicant clearly demonstrates that they have the organization capacity to deliver on the project, including all relevant resources and experience
- **Accountability** – The applicant demonstrates that they have appropriate accountability in place to administer, manage and oversee any funding received from the ministry.
- **Networks** – The applicant demonstrates how they will achieve their targets through their networks. For example, how will participants in classes/workshops be secured.

Q5. Is it a requirement for the project to educate both employers and employees?

A5. The proposed project may be a blend of either groups. Or the project may focus exclusively on employers or exclusively on employees. It is not a requirement that a project cover both audiences.

Q6. Is the content of a funding project or initiative subject to Ministry of Labour approval?

A6. The ministry will not be approving content, however we will fact check materials.

Q7. What are the Ministry's priorities?

A7. Key priorities for the Ministry of Labour is to advance fair and harmonious workplace practices and promote self-reliance in the workplace through education and awareness. Please refer to the 2017-18 Annual Report: Ministry of Labour. This is available on the Ministry of Labour (MOL) website.

Q8. Will there be restrictions on formats of how one would be educating or promoting awareness of employers and / or employees? For example: online, webinars or face-to-face, etc.?

A8. There are no restrictions on the format or method of delivery the applicant can use to educate employees and small and medium-sized enterprises on their rights and obligations under the *Employment Standards Act (ESA)*.

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate a variety of complimentary activities in their submissions that align with the key program objectives outlined in the ESTEP Guideline. For example, an organization offering training to its clients may also create resource materials to supplement the training, distribute information to make

clients aware and promote information and / or the training program through distribution lists, social media or other channels.

Q9. Is there restrictions on what can be included?

A9. The ministry will only provide funding for activities that align with the key ESTEP objective which is to promote awareness of and help educate employees and employers on their rights and obligations under the Employment Standards Act (ESA).

Other activities, e.g. Accessibility training, health and safety training, will be considered out of scope for funding. If you would like to include these types of activities, it needs to be clearly outlined in your application how these activities are to be funded separately from the requested ESTEP funding.

Q10. Are there specific initiatives that you are looking to have applicants include in their application?

A10. No, the ministry is not looking for a specific type of initiative, but is looking for initiatives that complement and not replicate the Ministry's existing activities.

For example, if an applicant is proposing the establishment of some type of call centre to provide information on the ESA. It is important for the applicant to clearly explain how this is different from the ministry's existing call centre and why it is needed.

Q11. Can an applicant partner or work with other organizations?

A11. Yes. It should be clearly outlined how this partnership will work and whether or not there is a commitment from the partnering organization to undertake the partnership should the ministry fund the project.

Q12. How much funding is available?

A12. The total available funding for the ESTEP is $1,000,000. Individual grant amounts will vary depending on the type of project proposed, however the maximum funding available per project is $200,000.

Q13. Is there partial funding available? If the applicant is asking for $200,000 will the ministry only be willing to provide a lower funding amount?

A13. Yes, the ministry may offer an applicant funding at an amount less than proposed.

Q14. This year, the ministry has increased the funding to $1,000,000. Has the ministry determined how many projects will be funded?

A14. The ministry has not determined how many projects will be funded. This will be based on the applications the ministry receives.

Q15. What are the two categories of funding that applicants can apply for this year?

A15. Applicants may apply in one of two ESTEP categories for 2018-19. Applicants may wish to promote awareness and focus their educational efforts on either:

  a) Category #1 - General Overview of the ESA; or
  b) Category #2 - Focus Areas of the ESA (applicants may wish to focus on one or more of the standards below):
    - Focus 2A - Personal Emergency Leave;
    - Focus 2B - Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave;
    - Focus 2C - Equal Pay for Equal Work.

Q16. How are the two categories different?

A16. Category #1 allows the applicant to provide education and awareness on the ESA. This may include a specific standard or a general overview of the ESA.

Category #2 focuses your efforts on one or more of the three areas of the ESA identified by the ministry (Personal Emergency Leave, Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave, Equal Pay for Equal Work.)

Q17. Why did the ministry select these particular focus areas?

A17. These areas represent substantial change in the ESA. To support compliance and self-reliance in workplaces, the ministry sees value in focusing on education and awareness on these standards.

Q18. Has the ministry determined the funding distribution between Category 1 - General Overview of the ESA and Category 2 - Focus Areas of the ESA (Personal Emergency Leave, Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave and Equal Pay for Equal Work)?

A18. The ministry has not determined how much of the $1,000,000 will be distributed across the two categories. This will be based on the applications the ministry receives.

Q19. How long is funding available?

A19. Projects can start as early as the fall of 2018. A project may vary in length, but cannot exceed 12 months in duration. All projects must conclude by December 31, 2019.

Q20. Are there existing training materials and a specific curriculum or course outline that a successful applicant will use or is the applicant responsible for developing these materials?

A20. The key objective of the program is to fund external organizations to develop initiatives aimed at educating employees (non-unionized employees) and SMEs on their rights and obligations under the ESA. Accordingly, applicants are responsible for developing their own materials and carrying out deliverables.

Q21. Will the Ministry of Labour provide training or presenters for the approved community Trainers employed by successful agencies? (Train-the-Trainer).

A21. The ministry will not be providing training and presenters. It is the responsibility of the successful applicants to deliver on their initiative.

Q22. Will the ministry be providing any support to the successful applicant?

A22. The Ministry of Labour reserves the right to fact check the materials and resources developed using the grant funds.

Q23. Can an organization submit multiple applications?

A23. Applicants may submit two applications if they would like to request for funding under both categories. The Ministry of Labour will consider a maximum of two applications per organization. You will have to submit one application at a time.

Q24. Can an organization receive funding for more than one project/applications?

A24. Organizations may receive funding for up to two projects/applications.

Q25. Why is the ministry only focusing only on educating non-unionized employees?

A25. A key priority for the ministry is supporting vulnerable employees and ensuring compliance with minimum standards under the ESA. Under their collective agreements, unionized employees generally have rights that meet or exceed minimum standards.

Q26. What is the character limit in the Project Financial Information justification and comments for the expense line items?

A26. In these sections the character limit is 28. Any additional information can be provided in the general comments box in the Project Financial Information Section.

Q27. Will the ministry issue another similar Call for Proposals next year?

A27. The Ministry of Labour anticipates issuing another call for proposals for the 2019-20 fiscal year. Additional details about the ESTEP will be communicated at a later date.

Q28. When will the successful applicants be announced?

A28. The successful applicants will be announced in late 2018.

Q29. Will the unsuccessful applicants be notified?

A29. The Ministry of Labour will notify the unsuccessful applicants in writing.

Q30. Who were the successful applicants and what projects were funded for the 2017-18 Employment Standards Training Education Program?

A30. A list of the grant recipients and funded projects for the 2017-18 ESTEP is available through our news release, issued on April 25, 2018.

Q31. In evaluating performance metrics, can job seekers be included?

A31. The objective of the ESTEP Grant is to raise awareness among the employers and employees of the province. Yes, as job seekers are potential employees of the province, they can be included. It is recommended that a breakdown is provided to show the components of the total metrics.

Q32. Are previous successful Grant Recipients eligible for 2018-19 ESTEP Grants?

A32. The Ministry of Labour will provide same consideration to all applicants irrespective of whether they have received prior grant funds. However, funding will not be provided for the same project/initiative.

Q33. Does Ministry of Labour need partnership agreement from the partnering organization as part of the application process?

A33. List of required documentation is provided in the ESTEP Guideline. However to support your application, the applicant may wish to provide additional information to demonstrate the benefits of the partnership to ensure the success of the project.

Q34. May we submit answers for the questions as a separate document vs. online application?

A34. Please complete all the questions on the application form. Do not leave any fields blank as each field is mandatory and must contain a response. A complete application consists of the following:

- All questions in the online application form are completed as instructed.
- Online application form is electronically signed by the applicant's signing authority(ies).
- Application form is submitted electronically through the online Grants Ontario system.
- All required attachments are also submitted electronically through the Grants Ontario system. A list of the required attachments appears on the application form.

For the most up-to-date information, please visit the ESTEP Grants Ontario portal page.