STATE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (STEP)
REQUEST FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS (RGA)
STEP NON-RESPONSIVE GUIDE
PROGRAM YEAR 2027

Purpose

This guide summarizes common reasons applications may be deemed non-responsive under the STEP Request for Grant Applications (RGA).

The purpose of this guide is to promote transparency and reduce avoidable submission errors.
This document is informational only. The STEP RGA governs in the event of any inconsistency.

Applications deemed non-responsive are not reviewed or scored.

Applications May Be Deemed Non-Responsive If Any of the Following Occur:

Missing Required Components

Required EGrAMS Sections Not Completed

Applications may be deemed non-responsive if required sections within EGrAMS are incomplete, including:

- Required narrative responses
- Required training and credential entries
- Required program design information

Required Attachments Not Uploaded

Applicants must upload all required attachments at the time of submission.
Required attachments include:

- Appendix A – Budget Narrative Template
- Appendix A – Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet (Excel)
- Appendix C – Performance Projection Table (Excel)
- Letters of support (if referenced in the narrative)
- Key staff resumes and organizational chart

Submission of incomplete or missing required attachments may result in non-responsiveness.

Failure to Follow Required Formats

Applications may be deemed non-responsive if the required formats are not followed.
Examples include:

- Required templates altered from the provided format
- Appendix C Performance Projection Table submitted in a format other than Excel
- Required fields removed from the Budget Narrative Template
- Required tabs in the Participant Services Validation Workbook are missing or incomplete
- Required attachments uploaded in incorrect EGrAMS fields
- Required files corrupted, unreadable, or password-protected

Appendix B (Eligible Training & Credential List) and Appendix D (Definitions and Key Terms) are reference documents and are not submitted as attachments.

Participant Services and Budget Issues

Applications may be deemed non-responsive if budget requirements are not met, including:

- Failure to demonstrate at least 50% of STEP funds allocated to eligible Participant Services
- Participant Services incorrectly calculated
- Indirect costs improperly included in the 50% calculation
- Budget totals are inconsistent between EGrAMS and Appendix A
- Budget structure inconsistent with projected program scale
- Budget Narrative does not align with proposed services
- Costs appear unallowable under STEP requirements or applicable cost principles

Failure to meet the 50% Participant Services requirement may result in disqualification or required revision, as permitted under the RGA.

Internal Inconsistencies

Applications must present a coherent and internally consistent proposal.

Applications may be deemed non-responsive if significant inconsistencies exist between required application components, including:

- Mismatch between EGrAMS narrative responses and Appendix A (Budget Narrative)
- Mismatch between EGrAMS narrative responses and Appendix C (Performance Projections)
- Training entered in EGrAMS does not align with Appendix B and lacks the required employer demand or labor-market justification
- Performance projections inconsistent with staffing capacity or budget scale
- Participant numbers inconsistent across application components
- Lack of proportional alignment between narrative responses, budget structure, and projected outcomes

Submission Errors

Applications may be deemed non-responsive if submission requirements are not met.

Examples include:

- Application submitted after the published deadline
- Required attachments omitted
- Incorrect files uploaded
- Multiple conflicting versions uploaded without clear identification
- Missing required signatures (if applicable)

Applicants are responsible for ensuring all required materials are uploaded before submission.

Clarifications

AWIB may request clarifications for minor administrative issues at its discretion.

Clarifications are limited to resolving minor administrative issues and do not permit:

- Submission of missing required components
- Replacement of incomplete required templates
- Substantial revisions to narrative responses
- Budget restructuring that changes the scope of the proposal

Non-responsive applications are not scored and are removed from further consideration.

Key Reminder to Applicants

Before submission, applicants should confirm the following:

- [ ] All required EGrAMS sections completed
- [ ] Appendix A uploaded (Budget Narrative + 50% Validation Worksheet)
- [ ] Appendix C uploaded (Performance Projection Table)
- [ ] Participant Services ≥ 50%
- [ ] Training aligns with Appendix B or includes justification
- [ ] Narrative, budget, and projections are internally consistent