

RESTART Grant
Quick Start Guide

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RESTART Grant Quick Start Guide

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Purpose

Congratulations on receiving a Reentry Employment in Skilled Trades, Advanced Manufacturing, Registered Apprenticeships, and Training (RESTART) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA). This Quick Start Guide will help Project Directors and Project Managers access essential tools, federal resources, and processes during the grant planning period. In addition, this guide provides a 3-month start-up checklist that can be used during the planning period.

RESTART Planning Period

The RESTART Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) allows programs to have a planning period of 3 to 6 months; specific lengths are determined by your approved Statement of Work (SOW). The planning period is your opportunity to hire staff, implement partnerships, and develop program policies and procedures.

RESTART Program Requirements

Document name	Description
Notice of Award (NOA)	The NOA identifies the award amount, grant period of performance, key federal contacts, and federal administrative, financial, and compliance requirements that apply to your award.
Statement of Work (SOW)	The SOW (attached to the NOA) is your program's approved project design and grant commitments. It offers an implementation road map and should guide decisions around staffing, partnerships, timelines, participant services, and deliverables.
Approved Budget	The approved budget (attached to the NOA) provides the authorized expenditure and supports financial decision-making and monitoring.
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)	The FOA provides program requirements, participant eligibility, required partnerships, and administrative expectations.
Performance Goals Memo	The "Goals Memo" outlines the specific performance goals for your grant with details on how the goals are measured. It also describes reporting expectations, deadlines, and the required usage of the Grants Performance Management System (GPMS).

Project Director Tip: Save these documents in one shared electronic folder and encourage key staff to reference them before making implementation decisions or contacting the Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) program. If you do not have access to one of these documents, you can contact your Federal Project Officer (FPO).

Managing a Discretionary Grant

RESTART is a discretionary grant and has different responsibilities and flexibilities than traditional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formula grants. Discretionary grants require close alignment with the approved project design (SOW), strong documentation, regular communication with your FPO, and support from the REO National Office and Technical Assistance (TA) Coaches to strengthen performance. New grantees should familiarize themselves with the following grants management resources:

- The ETA Grantee Handbook
- SMART 4.0 Grants Management Training
- Core Monitoring Guide (2025)

Build Your Team Before You Build Your Program

A successful RESTART project depends upon collaboration among program, fiscal, performance, and leadership staff. During the first month, the Project Director should meet with each individual responsible for implementing the grant and establish a plan for regular communication. The most common staff roles include:

- Executive Sponsor, Organizational Leadership, or Authorized Representative
- Fiscal Lead or Grant Accountant
- Performance/Data Lead
- Program Manager(s) and Case Management Staff
- Employer Engagement/Business Engagement Lead
- Partnership Coordinator
- Communications Staff (if applicable)

Discuss decision-making authority, reporting expectations, procurement procedures, hiring needs and processes, communications channels, implementation meeting frequency and timelines, and how staff will coordinate throughout the grant's period of performance.

- Hiring and Retaining Qualified Staff

Managing Fiscal Responsibilities

Meet with your fiscal office during the first 2 weeks to review the approved budget, financial controls, procurement procedures, contracts, subawards, travel, equipment purchases, financial reporting processes, grant modification procedures, and conditions of award (if applicable). Use the SOW and Performance Goals Memo along with planned program activities and enrollment targets to develop an annual spending plan. It is critical to regularly review budget status and spending rates in relation to programming activities to ensure they remain aligned and to document significant implementation decisions. To ensure proper financial reporting and procedures for usage and access to funds, review the following key financial resources:

1. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200
2. DOL's adoption and approved exceptions of the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 2900
3. Additional resources:
    - Financial Reporting 9130 Forms and Instructions
    - Payment Management System (PMS) Account Management
    - Tailored Training on Fiscal Management
    - SMART 4.0 Grants Management Training

Formalizing Partnerships

Review the partnerships identified in your approved SOW and begin converting proposal commitments into active working relationships. Meet individually with partners to confirm roles, responsibilities, referral and data-sharing procedures, communication expectations, documentation requirements, and implementation timelines. Develop or update Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), data-sharing agreements, contracts, or subaward agreements as appropriate.

1. Strengthening Employer Partnerships
   - Developing a Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) Employer Engagement Framework
   - New Concepts in Employer Engagement
2. Managing Subawards: If your organization is issuing subawards, make sure to establish procedures for risk assessment, monitoring, TA, and corrective action before participant services begin.
   - State Monitoring Resources & Tools
   - SMART 4.0 Grants Management Training: Subrecipient Management
   - Framework for Monitoring & Oversight

Prioritizing Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship is a priority within the RESTART initiative. If your project includes apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship activities, meet with apprenticeship sponsors and your State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA), *where applicable,* early in the planning period to:

- Confirm referral procedures and participant eligibility
- Discuss employer expectations and communication
- Coordinate supportive services
- Clarify documentation and credential verification responsibilities
- Identify TA needs
- Additional resources:
  - ApprenticeshipUSA
  - Apprenticeship Opportunities for Individuals Reentering Their Communities Post-Incarceration

Designing the Participant Service Flow

A participant service flow describes the full experience a participant has within your program, from entry to exit. It includes recruitment, intake, assessment, service referrals and partners, the provision of education and/or training services, employment, exit, and follow-up. Each stage should be supported by clear procedures, standardized forms, and consistent data entry and documentation processes that align with organizational policies. Programs should map out this flow early to help identify and resolve any missing partnerships, procedures, or materials and to ensure that staff are prepared to deliver services consistently from Day 1.

The following worksheets, while designed for other REO programs, may assist you with brainstorming and mapping important components of your service flow.

- Adult Programs: Worksheet: Developing REO Service Delivery Strategies for Pathway Home Grantees
- Youth and Young Adult Programs: Worksheet: Developing REO Service Delivery Strategies for Growth Opportunities Grantees

RESTART Performance Starts on Day 1

Performance management begins before participant enrollment. Grantees must establish documentation standards, assign reporting responsibilities, develop participant file checklists, and schedule quarterly data quality reviews. Programs are also expected to develop processes to prepare and review quarterly performance and narrative reports internally before submission and to use performance data to improve operations throughout the grant.

RESTART grants are required to use the ETA-REO GPMS to collect performance data and facilitate reporting to the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). The REO Performance Checklist During Grant Planning Period provides instructions for setting up GPMS and WIPS access, along with related training materials.

- REO-GPMS – Reporting System (Training Page)
- REO Reporting Resources
- WIOA Performance Indicators E-Learning Series

Review the following performance guidance:

- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-16, Change 3: Performance accountability guidance for WIOA core programs
- TEGL 23-19, Change 3: Guidance for validating required performance data submitted by grant recipients of DOL workforce programs
- TEGL 14-18: Sub-regulatory guidance on reporting performance accountability; Attachment 8 focuses on REO programs

RESTART Grant Management Resources

Where Do I Find Answers?

The most successful Project Directors know where to find answers. First, begin with your program requirement documents, then consult federal guidance and TA before making significant implementation decisions. The following questions provide a starting point for Project Directors:

Question	Start here	For more details, refer to or contact…
What RESTART activities can my program do, and who can we serve?	Your approved SOW	Funding Opportunity Announcement
Can we change approved activities or budgets?	Your NOA with Grant Terms & Conditions	Your Federal Project Officer
How do we monitor subrecipients?	Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200)	SMART 4.0 resources: Subrecipient Management
How do we report participant data?	GPMS User Guide 7.3	Help Request (in REO GPMS) or REO-GPMS@dol.gov

Question	Start here	For more details, refer to or contact…
Where do I find webinars and tools related to my grant?	WorkforceGPS REO Community	REO-TA@manhattanstrategy.com
Where do I learn about apprenticeship?	Apprenticeship.gov	Your State Apprenticeship Agency

WorkforceGPS

WorkforceGPS is ETA's primary platform for TA, implementation tools, webinar recordings, resource libraries, and communities of practice. To get access:

1. Create a WorkforceGPS account
   - Join the Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) Community
   - Enable email notifications
2. Bookmark the Community Library, Events page, and relevant webinar recordings
   - Search WorkforceGPS Frequently Asked Questions before contacting your FPO
   - Finding Content on WorkforceGPS

Additional Assistance

Before seeking additional assistance, make sure you have reviewed your SOW, NOA, FOA, Grant Terms and Conditions, WorkforceGPS resources, and Uniform Guidance. If the publicly available resources are unable to address your question, reach out to your FPO, your first point of contact. Your FPO may suggest additional contacts, described below, and you should cc your FPO on any communication with additional contacts.

For questions related to…	Contact:
Understanding grant terms and conditions, modifying your SOW or budget	Your Federal Project Officer (FPO)
Strategies or ideas to improve grant activities	Your TA Coach REO-TA@manhattanstrategy.com
National Office support	REO-RESTART@dol.gov
GPMS support, quarterly reporting, WIPS	Use Help Request (REO GPMS) or REO-GPMS@dol.gov

RESTART Grant 3-Month Start-up Checklist

Month 1 – Build the Foundation

Award & Compliance

- [ ] Read the NOA, SOW, approved budget, and grant terms.
- [ ] Review RESTART FOA requirements, Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), and relevant TEGLs.
- [ ] Respond to any special award conditions.
- [ ] Create a grant implementation and compliance calendar with key milestones and reporting dates.
- [ ] Review internal organizational policies and procedures (P&P) and determine additional P&P needed to support federal grant requirements. See Developing Policies and Procedures for REO Grants for assistance.

Project Team Structure

- [ ] Identify fiscal, performance, and program staff.
- [ ] Post-job announcements for vacant staff positions.
- [ ] Clarify roles, decision-making authority, and reporting responsibilities.
- [ ] Establish recurring project implementation meetings.
- [ ] Confirm how executive leadership will be involved in decision-making.

Federal Resources

- [ ] Meet with your FPO and identify TA needs.
- [ ] Prepare questions for the New Grantee Orientation.
- [ ] Register on WorkforceGPS and join the REO Community of Practice.

Performance & Planning

- [ ] Review participant enrollment and outcome targets.
- [ ] Review WIOA Performance Indicators, RESTART performance goals, and SOW commitments described in your Performance Goals Memo. Determine how you will you measure and document progress.

Month 2 – Build the Program

Partnership Development

- [ ] Meet with workforce system, corrections, probation/parole, behavioral health, housing, and community partners to clarify referral systems, eligibility requirements, and data-sharing protocols.
- [ ] Meet with apprenticeship sponsors, employers, training providers, and education partners to clarify the services and costs associated with training and education services to determine structure and alignment with participant needs and to establish communication protocols.
- [ ] Review existing MOUs and develop or update agreements as needed.

Program Design

- [ ] Finalize participant eligibility and enrollment procedures and intake/assessment forms.
- [ ] Confirm participant documentation requirements and source documentation to be collected.
- [ ] Finalize assessment, case management, supportive service, exit, and follow-up processes.
- [ ] Develop the participant service flow and referral system.

Fiscal Systems

- [ ] Review procurement and subaward plans.
- [ ] Confirm financial approval and invoice processes.
- [ ] Conduct a financial risk assessment and monitoring process for subawards.

Performance & Planning

- [ ] Determine who will be the GPMS Grant Administrators.
- [ ] Obtain access to GPMS and the GPMS Sandbox (REO Performance Checklist During Grant Planning Period).
- [ ] Complete GPMS Trainings.
- [ ] Obtain access to WIPS.

Month 3 – Prepare for Participant Enrollment

Operations

- [ ] Complete staff training on participant eligibility, documentation, case management, and data entry.
- [ ] Conduct mock participant enrollments and file reviews.
- [ ] Create a participant outreach and recruitment plan with benchmarks and responsible staff.
- [ ] Develop any marketing materials.
- [ ] Design the participant orientation.

Performance System

- [ ] Establish performance dashboards and monthly reporting procedures.
- [ ] Develop data validation and quality assurance processes.
- [ ] Review participant files for compliance and documentation quality.
- [ ] Train subawards on data entry expectations and requirements.

Communications

- [ ] Establish recurring project meetings to evaluate progress.
- [ ] Establish quarterly fiscal reviews to evaluate spending against progress.
- [ ] Schedule regular partner coordination meetings and/or individual partner check-ins.
- [ ] Schedule regular FPO meetings and/or TA coaching.