

# Technical Assistance Program (TAP) 2023-2024 Frequently Asked Questions

The following Q&A information is specific to the TAP 2023-2024 program year. This document will be updated as questions continue to be submitted.

If you have a question that is not answered here, please submit your question to the CalOSBA Programs Team ([Click Here to Email](#)).

*(Questions noted with an asterisk (\*) were added following the July 11, 2023 webinar)*

## **General Program**

### **Q: Can organizations apply if they have not been a TAP grantee in the past?**

A: Yes. We encourage all organizations that meet the eligibility criteria to apply.

### **Q: Does my organization need to be physically located in California to apply for TAP?**

A: The applying organization must have an active contract, as described and required in the Program Announcement, to provide technical assistance services directly to small businesses and entrepreneurs that are located in the State of California. CalOSBA requires that there must be a physical location within the State of California to be eligible for award.

### **Q: What application type should my organization be applying as?**

A: The type of application depends on the number of centers included in the application and the match agreement being utilized. Please refer to the below table.

Application Type	Number of Centers	Number of Match Agreements
Individual	One (1)	One-Two (1-2)*
Group	Two or More (2+)	One-Two (1-2) per center**
Network	Two or More (2+)	One (1) ***

\* *Individual centers may combine up to two separate match agreements of the same type (federal or private) for the budget they are requesting.*

\*\* *Each center has its own individual match agreement. Each center in the Group-based Application must have a unique scope of work and metrics and will report individually throughout the program year, if awarded.*

\*\*\* *Network-based Applications have multiple centers that have a single/shared match agreement. A single scope of work and metrics will be submitted, and the centers will report in aggregate throughout the program year, if awarded.*

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**Q: What is the maximum amount an organization can apply for?**

A: The maximum amount is based on the amount of eligible match funding the organization has available to apply with during the duration of the program period. The minimum amount is \$25,000.00.

**Q: Who reviews applications for TAP? How are the reviewers chosen? Will reviewers have knowledge of programs like PTACs, WBCs, SBDCs, etc.?**

A: Applications for TAP are reviewed by a panel of CalOSBA and GO-Biz staff. The panel is selected of regional experts with knowledge and expertise of the California small business ecosystem.

**Q: Will TAP2023 be using the [grants.business.ca.gov](https://grants.business.ca.gov) online portal?**

A: No. CalOSBA will be rolling out a new application and reporting portal for TAP2023. The new application is now live and is available [here](#). The Pre-Bid Webinar scheduled for July 11 will include a walkthrough demonstration of the new application. For those unable to attend the scheduled webinar, the recording will be made available online.

**Q: Do the required documents need to be all be uploaded into a single file or will there be a place to upload each document separately?**

A: All files must be uploaded separately and according to the allowed file type (i.e., .PDF, .XLSX, etc.). A separate upload space will be available for each document.

**Q: Where can we get a list of communities that are "disaster-impacted"?**

A: Federal disaster declaration are available through FEMA ([here](#)) and State of California Emergency Proclamations are available through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) ([here](#)). For disaster specific questions, you may also contact [SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov) and copy CalOSBA Regional Lead Advisor, Clair Whitmer, [clair.whitmer@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:clair.whitmer@gobiz.ca.gov) ([Click Here to Email](#)).

**Q: How should the metric "Number of Training Hours" be defined?**

A: This metric is the number of hours spent conducting training. For example, a three-hour workshop would count as three training hours. This new metric allows us to see beyond the total number of training events conducted and rather the amount of time of training that was provided.

**Q: Does the TA provider need to be in the list of low-wealth areas to be eligible or is the list one of the priorities for the grant program not a requirement?**

A: The low-wealth areas list is provided for applicant consideration when determining metric proposals for the "Low-Wealth" demographic. Technical assistance providers not located within a low-wealth area are welcome and encouraged to apply.

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### **Q: I have a specific question pertaining to my organization or a question that isn't answered here; who can I contact for more information?**

A: Please contact the CalOSBA Programs Team at [SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov) with a copy to:

Grant Programs Supervisor, Shalawn Garcia, and Program Analyst, Joy Nordby: [shalawn.garcia@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:shalawn.garcia@gobiz.ca.gov), [joy.nordby@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:joy.nordby@gobiz.ca.gov) ([Click Here to Email](#))

### **\* Q: Are we able to use the funds to incentivize entrepreneurs to attend the free trainings and consulting?**

A: Funds for the Technical Assistance Program must be utilized according to allowed funding activities described in the Program Announcement (pages 6-7) TAP funds cannot be used to make financial disbursements to businesses to incentivize engagement.

### **\* Q: Does a nonprofit that provides technical assistance to small businesses have to be registered with and recognize by the SBA as a small business development center or just need to meet SBA guidelines as a small business TA provider?**

A: No. Small business technical assistance centers registered as a 501(c)3 nonprofit with a mission to promote the economic empowerment of underserved microbusinesses, small businesses, entrepreneurs, and small nonprofits are eligible to apply without official designation from the SBA.

## **Match Requirements**

### **Q: Can an organization apply only if they have a federal contract?**

A: No. Organizations can have **either** a federal contract **or** a private contract to provide direct technical assistance, consulting, and training to small businesses in California.

### **Q: What is the percent of required match?**

A: Match of 100% the requested budget is required.

### **Q: My organization has a federal contract and a private contract; can I combine the contract amounts to request a larger budget?**

A: No. Applicants can combine up to two separate contracts, but those contracts must be of the **same type** (federal or private).

### **Q: If the federal contract is for technical assistance (TA) in one geography, can the TAP grant be used to do TA in that geography and other geographies nearby?**

A: Yes, this is an example of using TAP funding to expand existing technical assistance services to provide resources to other nearby and underserved communities. Please note that the match funding agreement must be specific to providing services within the State of California.

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### **Q: Can ARPA funds be used as matching funds? Can money from a county (using federal funds) be used as matching?**

A: Federal pass-through funds (such as ARPA) awarded through an agreement with a local entity (such as a city or county) is considered allowed matching funds for TAP2023.

### **Q: If you have a match eligible grant that ends prior to the end of the program year, and you don't expect a renewal (because it's not that type of grant), could you ask for the TAP just through that date?**

A: All TAP contracts are set with the same period of performance (Oct 1, 2023 – Sep 30, 2024) and the match agreement must begin on or before the TAP start date (October 1, 2023). If the match agreement expires before the program year concludes, the center will need to provide CalOSBA proof of continuing matching funds prior to the match expiration to carry out the term of the TAP agreement. Otherwise, the contract will be terminated, and the remaining unutilized funds will be liquidated back to state funds.

### **\* Q: Do TAP matching funds have to be new funds?**

A: If a federal or private award has already been used as match for a previous year of TAP, it cannot be used again. The exception would be a multi-year agreement where the full federal or private award amount dedicated to technical assistance was not utilized as match in a previous year.

## **Budget**

### **Q: Are administrative staff for program management eligible within the budget?**

A: New to TAP2023, Program Administrative costs can be included as part of the budget. A **combined maximum of 20%** of the total requested budget can be allocated toward Supplies, Research and Marketing, and Program Administration.

### **Q: Can 100% of an employee's time be charged to TAP?**

A: While these cases are rare, an employee that is 100% TAP dedicated can be fully budgeted within the proposal. This must be thoroughly described and justified within the itemized budget and narrative budget justification. If approved, CalOSBA may request backup documents throughout the program performance year to backup and support the work conducted by fully funded staff.

### **Q: Can indirect costs be included in the budget?**

A: No. Indirect and overhead costs are not allowable.

### **Q: Is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Budget being offered for TAP2023?**

A: No. A DEI budget carveout is not included in TAP2023. All centers are required to provide a narrative response specific to their planned Diversity, Equity, and

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Inclusion activities (see Narrative Proposal questions 6-8 in the Program Announcement). This can address all areas of inclusion to underserved business groups, including by geography, in-language services, and industry representation.

**Q: Should the itemized budget include individual staff or general all personnel?**

A: To the extent possible, include individual staff information (i.e., name, title, hourly rate). If the positions have not yet been filled, you may list them as "Vacant". It should be clear the hourly rate being proposed by personnel staff and contactors.

**Q: Travel is no longer listed as a budget category. Is travel still an allowable cost?**

A: Travel is still allowed in limited circumstances, such as to support geographical expansion to a new area or to serve clients in very rural areas. Any travel proposed must be included in the Program Admin budget category and must be indicated in the itemized budget and thoroughly described in the narrative budget justification.

### **Other Documents**

**\* Q: How many Letters of Support should a Network applicant submit? Is it 3-5 for the Network as a whole?**

A: That is correct. A network application would have 3-5 letters of support. A group application should have 3-5 letters for each center included in the proposal.

**\* Q: The deadline for the Letter of Intent has passed. We are a new applicant. Should we still notify Cal OSBA of our intent to be added to the list of expected applicants?**

A: Yes, please. Letters of Intent continue to allow us to anticipate the number of applications we will in-take.

### **Application Portal**

**\* Q: Are we able to have multiple logins/users for one grant application?**

A: Only a single login can be utilized for accessing a saved draft and submitting the application. CalOSBA is working with our portal development partners to see if an update can be made to accommodate. Our current recommendation is to prepare the drafted application using a single login credential that can be shared with your team.

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**\* Q: How do we handle multiple TAP applications under the same organization?**

A: Most application situations will not require multiple application submissions. If you are uncertain if you should be submitting multiple applications, please contact CalOSBA at [SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:SBTAEP@gobiz.ca.gov) in advance for guidance. In rare circumstances that do require multiple application submissions, CalOSBA is working with our portal development partners to deploy an update to accommodate.