Workforce Innovation Grant
Frequently Asked Questions

Please note: New or updated questions can be found throughout the document highlighted in yellow.

The Application Process:

Q: Are there examples of successful Workforce Innovation Grant projects?

A: No. This is the first year that funding has been set aside for Workforce Innovation Grants, so there are no prior projects.

Q: How many applications may be submitted from one entity?

A: As explained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, page 2, an entity may submit as many applications as it wants; however, only one application from any single entity may be funded. For the purposes of this requirement, an "entity" is whichever organization will be the fiscal agent on the project. **Exception:** when an entity is applying on behalf of a consortium of entities, as may be the case with sector partnership related projects, that entity will not be precluded from receiving a separate grant.

Q: May an applicant propose to serve more than one workforce area through the same proposal?

A: Yes, an applicant may serve more than one workforce area through the same proposal; however, please note that all projects directly serving individuals must include the relevant Local Workforce Development Board as a partner. If you are serving multiple workforce areas, you must include all relevant Local Workforce Development Boards as a partner.

Q: How many applications may a Local Workforce Development Board serve as a partner on?

A: Local Workforce Development Boards may be included as a partner on multiple applications.

Q: Are Local Workforce Development Boards eligible to receive funding of their own if they have partnered with another applicant?

A: Yes. Projects providing direct services to individuals must partner with a Local Workforce Development Board. Because of this partnership requirement, Local Workforce Development Boards will not be prevented from receiving funding for their own, separate projects.

Q: How many proposals will be funded?

A: We are not planning on awarding any specific number of proposals. Grants will be awarded based on the competitiveness of applications received.

Q: What is the maximum amount an application can request?

A: As discussed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, page 2, $1.8 million dollars is available in funding for this project. There is no maximum amount an application may request; however, please note that the SWDB is not obligated to award the full amount requested by an applicant. The SWDB may elect to partially fund a proposal.

Q: What is a DUNS number?

A: A DUNS number is a unique, nine-digit identifier for businesses that is used to establish a business credit file. Before you can bid on Federally-funded projects, you must have a DUNS number. More information can be found here and you can obtain a DUNS number here.

Q: What information is needed in the summary of other Federally-funded grants?

A: The summaries should include information on past programmatic and fiscal performance, with enough detail to provide a clear picture of your experience working with other Federal grants.

Q: Should information on every Federally-funded grant received by an entity be included?

A: If an entity has a history of managing multiple Federally-funded grants (more than 5 grants in the entity's lifetime), information on just the entity's relevant Federally-funded grants is acceptable. Relevant Federally-funded grants would include any grants issued through the Department of Labor, or any grants for workforce development activities, or any grants for the provision of training and education to individuals.

Q: May programs currently receiving funds through the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) apply for this grant?

A: Yes, programs currently receiving funding through the SWDB may apply for the grant.

Q: Is there an application form?

A: No, there is no official application form. Those wishing to apply for funding should provide a written document that clearly and completely responds to the information requested in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Q: Are there other formatting requirements for the application?

A: Yes. We ask that all applications are legible, include page numbers and are double-spaced.

Q: Is there a page limit for the application?

A: Yes, applications must not exceed 25 pages, including attachments and letters of support.

Please note: we are unable to accept documents greater than 10MB. You should compress your application into a ZIP file if the file size is larger than 10MB.

Q: May we use our own budget template/recreate the budget template that is provided?

A: No, we request that all applicants use the template provided to complete their budget.

Q: Should programs cover a specific geographical area?

A: No, programs funded through the grant are not limited to a specific geographical area *within* the state

Partnerships and Collaboration:

Q: Should partnerships be established prior to applying for the grant?

A: Yes, partnerships are required. All partnerships should be established prior to application and documented with letters of support. Additional partnerships may also be established after the grant is awarded. Please see the Notice of Funding Opportunity, page 3, for more information.

Q: What is the Local Workforce Development Board's role in determining eligibility?

A: The LWDBs have many years of experience working with WIOA programs. Because of their expertise, they are required as a partner for all entities wishing to provide direct services to individuals. It is the responsibility of the entity and the LWDB to determine to what degree the LWDB will be involved in the project; however, at a minimum, the LWDB should assist with eligibility determinations.

Q: May multiple businesses committed to the same activities sign the same letter of support?

A: Yes, multiple businesses committed to the same activities may sign one letter of support. Please note that the letter should accurately detail their roles and responsibilities.

Q: Should the partnership with the LWDB be represented through an MOU or through a letter of support?

A: Partnership with a LWDB may be demonstrated through either an MOU or letter of support for the purposes of the application; however, if awarded a grant, all partnerships must be demonstrated through an MOU prior to implementation of the grant project.

Budget and Costs

Q: Will incentives for participants be allowed?

A: For incentives to be allowable, participants must be in a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program and meet all requirements for the use of incentives as outlined in the regulations. Information on the use of incentives may be found in the WIOA regulations, 20 CFR 681.640.

Incentives are not allowed for WIOA Adult participants.

Q: If an entity is providing direct services to individuals, should local WIOA funds be used for tuition or supplies instead of grant funds?

A: Although an individual is participating in a grant program and is WIOA eligible, co-enrollment in a local WIOA program is not automatic. As a result, entities should budget for tuition, supplies, and any other costs for services you wish to provide through your project to participants. If an individual is co-enrolled, either the local program or the grant program would provide those services or items, but not both.

Q: If awarded, are grant funds disbursed on a reimbursement basis?

A: Yes, grant funds are awarded through a drawdown system. The requirements and structure of this system will be reviewed during the Grantee Orientation, after funding has been awarded.

Q: What is considered a grant administration cost?

A: As explained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, pages 2-3, grant administration includes all costs associated with performing overall general administrative functions, such as costs for financial, property and personnel management, costs for oversight and monitoring responsibilities, the cost of goods and services associated with administrative functions, travel costs associated with carrying out administrative functions, and costs associated with data entry.

Q: Are program administrator salaries and fringe considered an administrative cost? Are instructor salaries and fringe also considered administrative costs?

A: Yes, the salaries of staff conducting grant administration activities are considered an administrative cost. Instructor salaries and fringe are not considered administrator costs, so long as those roles are dedicated to providing instruction to participants.

Q: Is it possible for a staff member to have both administrative and programmatic functions, and, if so, how is that best represented in an application?

A: Yes, it is possible for a staff position to incur costs for both administrative and program functions. In this case, a clear explanation in the budget narrative of what percentage of the staff member's time would be spent on administrative vs. program functions should be included in the application.

Q: Are entities able to include indirect costs in their budget if they do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement?

A: Yes, entities are able to include indirect costs in their budget if they do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate. However, all entities incorporating indirect costs into their budget must identify the indirect cost rate used and provide a thorough description of how that indirect cost rate will be applied to their project budget.

Project Design

Q: What are priority populations?

A: WIOA provides a full definition of individuals with barriers to employment. From this list, the SWDB further narrowed down the list of characteristics to determine South Carolina's priority populations. They are:

1. Individuals with Disability
2. Veterans
3. Youth with Barriers
4. Long Term Unemployed
5. Ex-Offenders
6. Homeless Individuals

Q: What are South Carolina's high-impact, high-growth industry sectors?

A: The following industry sectors have been identified as high-impact, high-growth industries in South Carolina:

1. Healthcare
2. Business and Information Technology Services
3. Construction
4. Diversified Manufacturing
5. Transportation, Logistics and Wholesale Trades

Q: Are projects required to focus on the priority populations or a high-impact, high-growth industry sector?

A: No, projects are not required to focus on priority populations or high-impact, high-growth industry sectors. However, applications that do focus on either category may receive up to five points in the evaluation tool for doing so.

Q: What are the WIOA Eligibility requirements? Are all adults over age 18 eligible?

A: As discussed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, information on WIOA Eligibility requirements for both Youth and Adults can be found in Attachment C – WIOA Eligibility.

Q: Will priority of service apply to WIOA Adult eligible individuals served with grant funds?

A: No, priority of service does not apply to projects or programs funded by a Workforce Innovation Grant.

Q: Will performance under the grant be counted in local area WIOA performance?

A: No, performance under the grant will not be counted in local area WIOA performance unless a participant is co-enrolled in a local WIOA Youth or Adult program. However, if a participant is co-enrolled in a local WIOA program, then performance associated with this participant will be counted in the local area's performance calculations