



April 25, 2019

Expanded Wisconsin Fast Forward Program

**Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment
Grant Program Announcement**

Award Amount \$5,000 to \$50,000
((\$500,000 available))

Office of Skills Development
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
201 E. Washington Ave, G100
P.O. Box 7946
Madison, WI 53707-7946
WisconsinFastForward.com

Grant Program Announcements: Rita Atkinson, Director, 608-266-2721
Rita.atkinson@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Grant Administration: Andy Heidt, 608-266-0174
Andrew.heidt@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Tracy La Haise, 608-267-7889
Tracy.LaHaise@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Andrew Wusler, 608-266-0689
Andrew.wusler@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment Grant Program Announcement

Wisconsin Fast Forward program: The Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) program is a state funded grant program to provide employer-focused worker training grants. The Office of Skills Development (OSD) at the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) administers the grant program. Additionally, OSD works to encourage the development of innovative solutions at the local and regional level that bring together employers, educators, workforce development entities and economic development organizations to meet area workforce demands.

Grants are intended to address Wisconsin's skilled worker shortage by increasing the number of high school students trained in advanced manufacturing fields, to accelerate student entry into the workforce, and to prepare students for stable careers and success in a modern, global, and competitive economy. By receiving work skills education in high school, students and their families receive a strategic opportunity to reduce the cost of higher education through dual enrollment credits, industry-endorsed certificates and technical endorsements on high school diplomas.

Legislative Authority: Find statutory authority for the WFF program in state statutes at: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/budget/2017_19_biennial_budget/045_comparative_summary_of_budget_recommendations_governor_and_joint_committee_on_finance_by_agency/workforce_development.pdf

While the program is accepting and evaluating proposals, award of the grant funds is contingent upon availability of funding.

Grant Program Announcement Summary: This Grant Program Announcement (GPA) is **only available to Wisconsin school districts** for reimbursement of the purchase and installation costs of advanced manufacturing equipment used in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Eligible expenses for reimbursement also include the cost of software and instructional materials necessary to train pupils in equipment operation. Funds may also be used to reimburse school districts for the cost of minor technical education building modifications made to accommodate the installation and use of the equipment.

School district applications must demonstrate that the program for which they will be purchasing and installing equipment meets the needs of employers in their region; leverages partnerships and matching funds (including a required 200 percent of the awarded grant amount cash match); optimizes regional training capacity; significantly increases supply of skilled workers in advanced manufacturing fields; builds on proven programs and demonstrates sustainability. Grant proposals that leverage partnerships with employers and/or non-state matching funds are eligible to receive bonus points during evaluation. Recipients of previous awards from this program must demonstrate how the proposed project differs from the project funded by the first award.

School districts are required to track outcomes related to the vocational and technical education programs for grant supported equipment purchases and to file a report with DWD by September 1 of each of the three fiscal years after receipt of the grant.

Application Forms, Instructions, Checklists, and Process:

Access the application, along with the application instructions, informational webinars, related guidelines, and checklists at: http://wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm

Email complete applications and attachments to: wisconsinfastforward@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Important Dates:

GPA Released	April 25, 2019
Proposals accepted via email	Email complete application and all attachments to wisconsinfastforward@dwd.wisconsin.gov by 3 p.m. on Friday, May 31, 2019
Projected Grant Awards Announcement	June 10, 2019
Anticipated Contract Start Date	June 30, 2019
Funding Disbursement	On a rolling basis, upon verification of approved submitted purchases, purchase orders, invoices, and related installation costs. Funding contingent upon availability of funds.
Contract End Date	June 30, 2021

Project Period: The project period for this GPA is June 30, 2019 through June 30, 2021.

Grant Amount: From \$5,000 to \$50,000 is available per grantee. Grant expenditures must be incurred during the Project Period. All eligible grant expenses will be reimbursed, per individual contract specifications when expenses are:

- Included in the award application,
- Supported by 200 percent Match,
- Paid and documented by the grantee, and
- Approved by OSD

Disbursement of grant funding will be made on a rolling basis when the grantee complies with all conditions of the grant as stipulated in the contract. Reimbursements may be pro-rated or withheld based on the extent to which contract conditions are met.

Cost-Sharing: Grant proposals that leverage partnerships with employers and/or non-state matching funds are eligible to receive bonus points in the grant evaluation rubric. Documentation of the leveraged funds is required in the application.

Grant Evaluation Rubric and Scoring: WFF is a competitive grant program. All applications are reviewed by internal and external reviewers and rated on a 100-point scale, based upon the following categories and related point values:

- Demand-Driven, based on labor market data and employer partnerships (up to 20 points)
- Leverages Partnerships with Employers and Non-State Matching Funds (up to 20 points, with up to 5 additional points)
- Optimizes Regional Training Capacity and the Number of Skilled Workers, as validated by relevant employers (up to 20 points, with up to 5 additional points)
- Builds on Proven Programs (up to 20 points)
- Demonstrates Sustainability (up to 20 points)

The Grant Evaluation Rubric and Scoresheet is available online at:

http://wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm

Application Deadline: Grants are due by Friday, May 31, 2019 at 3 p.m. Email complete applications and any attachments to: wisconsinfastforward@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Eligibility: For an application to be considered for funding, the following conditions must be met:

- The Applicant is a Wisconsin school district
- Applicants may apply for no more than one grant for this round of grant funding
- Applicants must limit their funding request to one Advanced Manufacturing field
- Applicants must include a plan to secure match from employers or other resources equal to 200 percent of the grant amount awarded
- Matching dollars must be in the form of money or the monetary value of new equipment contributed from the school district, private sources, or both

Eligible Expenses: Expanded WFF funds shall be used to reimburse expenses related to the purchase of advanced manufacturing training equipment, related software and instructional supplies. One-time installation costs may be included in the request, as well as requests for minor facilities renovations necessary for the successful installation and use of the equipment. Facility renovations are limited to a maximum of twenty percent of requested WFF funds.

Ineligible Expenses: WFF funds may not be used for the purchase of real estate, facility construction or substantial remodeling, traditional public or private Kindergarten–12th grade education, trainee wages, or fringe benefits.

Supplement not Supplant: All funding identified as "leveraged" or "in-kind" must be new funds and cannot replace existing federal, state, or local government funding. Substituting existing funds with state grant funds will result in additional fiscal monitoring and may result in an audit. Violations of permissible expenses may result in suspension of current or future funds under this program, repayment of monies awarded under this grant, and possible civil and/or criminal penalties.

Letters of Commitment: Partner Letters of Commitment or Support must be on letterhead and include attestation regarding partnership expectations, the need for employees trained in advanced manufacturing, and any other elements that inform the program. Any source of leveraged funds must also clearly indicate the source of the funding and describe how it supplements the project.

Contract: The expanded WFF Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment Grant applications that are funded under this GPA are required to execute a binding contract with DWD **before any expenses are incurred** for which reimbursement is expected.

Grant Reporting Requirement: The grantee is responsible for tracking and monitoring enrollment counts, partnering counts, awarded credentials counts, budget and any other required information related to the vocational and technical education programs for which the grant supported the purchase of equipment.

School districts are required to file a report with DWD by September 1 of each of the three fiscal years after receipt of the grant that describes how the grant moneys were used; describes the outcomes achieved as a result of receiving the grant; shares the best practices employed by the school district regarding the training of pupils in the use of the equipment acquired (including a plan for the sustainability of the training) and other information as required.

Additionally, school districts may be subject to program and fiscal audits by DWD as defined in the contract. Reports should justify quantifiable outcomes and impacts for the school district, training participants, employers and the State of Wisconsin, including progress towards addressing two of the three grant program goals below:

1. Increase the count of students able to participate in an existing program
2. Create a new program to meet a demonstrated employer demand, as supported by labor market data and partnerships with employers
3. If no increase in the number of participating students is projected, the applicant must demonstrate a significant improvement in the skills of the students who are able to participate in the program because existing equipment will be replaced or updated, as validated by relevant employers