

Expanded Wisconsin Fast Forward and WisDOT Grant Program

COMMUTE TO CAREERS

Employment Transit Assistance Grants for Wisconsin Business Flexible Transportation Solutions for Regional Workforce Advancement Grants

Grant Program Guidelines

BACKGROUND

This Grant Program Announcement is for **private employers or a consortium of area employers, non-profits, and organizations serving people with disabilities**, that can demonstrate a critical need to connect unemployed, low and moderate-income workers with employment opportunities. Flexible transportation refers to any demand-responsive mode of transportation that connects workers to employment opportunities that are currently not reliably accessible to them.

Commute to Careers is based on DWD's previous collaboration with the WisDOT in the Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP). WETAP represents an effort to enhance local transportation services. Many unemployed or low-income workers are not able to provide their own transportation from circumstances related to disability, age, or income level. Rural workers, living in areas where transportation options are more limited, are particularly likely to have issues finding reliable transportation when they are not able to provide their own and are also more likely to have to travel to another community for work.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used throughout the application:

Agency means the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

Applicant/Sub-Recipient/Organization means an entity submitting an application.

Contract means a legal document that defines the expectations and obligations of the parties to the contract.

Contractor means proposer awarded the contract.

DWD means Department of Workforce Development.

GPA means Grant Program Application.

Individual(s) with Disability(ies) means an individual—(i) Who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (ii) Who has a record of such an impairment; or (iii) Who is regarded as having such an impairment.

Local Public Body means any unit of government within a state including, but not limited to, a county, borough, municipality, city, town, township, parish, local public authority (including housing), special district, school district, intrastate district, council of governments, other agency or instrumentality of a multi-regional or intra-state or local government.

Low-Income Individual means at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (\$8.75/ hour, \$1,517.50 for 1 person or \$18,210 annually).

Non-Profit Organization means a corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 USC § 501 which is exempt from taxation under 26 USC 501(a).

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Program Grant means the grant program funded by DWD through the Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant Program.

State means State of Wisconsin.

Vehicle Grant means the grant program funded by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

WFF means the Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant Program.

WisDOT means the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

OBJECTIVES

The priority of the Commute to Careers grant opportunity is to establish **affordable, self-sustaining, flexible** transportation programs that can grow and adapt to meet the needs of the employees and the employers which it serves. Employers, through investment in the transportation program, will gain access to a larger pool of workers, have fewer absences and less turnover of their employees related to logistic issues associated with transportation.

Potential transportation projects could include:

- Vanpool Systems
- Ridesharing and Carpooling activities
- Shuttles connecting areas not currently serviced by public transit, or providing Late-Night and weekend service of areas with limited transportation options
- Deviated Fixed Route Service
- The expansion or supplementation of existing flexible employer-based transportation programs

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total funding available for Commute to Careers is \$8 million. The State does not guarantee to purchase any specific quantity or dollar amount; nor does the State guarantee the number of grants awarded. For additional details on this collaboration, please review the Grant Program Announcement at http://www.wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm

Employment Transit Assistance Grants for Wisconsin Business (Program Grants)

The Department of Workforce Development is making \$5 million available through its Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant Program (WFF) for the operational costs of running a transportation program. At least \$1,000,000 of DWD's funds is set aside for employment transportation services specific to workers with disabilities. For entities serving people with disabilities, transportation to employment-related training is an appropriate service to include in the grant proposal.

Flexible Transportation Solutions for Regional Workforce Advancement Grants (Vehicle Grants)

The Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is making \$3 million available¹ to meet evolving mobility needs in the form of Vehicle Grants for flexible transportation projects in addition to its traditional statewide WETAP program.

¹ \$1.0 million of WisDOT's \$3 million contribution will go to traditional WETAP projects statewide. An application for the CY2019 program cycle will be released in the fall of 2018 on the [WisDOT WETAP website](#)

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APPLICATION, SCHEDULE AND SUBMISSION

This guide is to assist in the completion of the application document and to provide additional information. Questions about this document or others concerning this grant opportunity can be directed to the Contacts listed at the end of this guide.

Download Grant applications and documents from
http://www.wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm

Grants are due September 5, 2018 at 3 p.m. CDT. Submit complete applications and attachments via email to WisconsinFastForward@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Schedule	
GPA Released	August 1, 2018
Proposals accepted via email	Email complete applications and attachments to wisconsinfastforward@dwd.wisconsin.gov by 3 PM on Wednesday September 5, 2018
Projected Grant Awards Announcement	October 1, 2018
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 15, 2018
Funding Disbursement	On a rolling basis, upon verification and approval of submitted expenses for purchases of vehicles by WisDOT and/or for program operation expenses by WFF.
Contract End Date	October 14, 2020

GRANT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Commute to Careers has two funding opportunities:

- 1) Employment Transit Assistance Grants for Wisconsin Business ("Program Grants")
- 2) Flexible Transportation Solutions for Regional Workforce Advancement Grants ("Vehicle Grants")

Applicants can apply for one or both grants provided they meet the application requirements. Each application will be scored separately from the other if an applicant decides to apply for both grants.

Please indicate which grant (Program or Vehicle) the application documents belong to when submitting by including "Program Grant" and/or "Vehicle Grant" in the email subject line. If applying for both grants, applicants must submit complete application packets for each.

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Program Grants

<i>Grant Type</i>	Wisconsin Fast Forward awards funds for two-year grants supporting the development and operation of flexible transportation programs.
<i>Award Amount</i>	\$5,000 to \$400,000
<i>Eligible Applicants</i>	The Program Grant opportunity through WFF is open to applications from Wisconsin entities that can demonstrate a critical need to transport unemployed, low and moderate-income workers to employment opportunities in Wisconsin: private employers in good standing, non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, or consortiums comprised of employers, non-profits and organizations that serve people with disabilities. Organizations working with people with disabilities may also provide transportation for their patrons to access job training opportunities. Governmental entities are not eligible to apply for Program Grants.
<i>Use of Grant funds</i>	Establish a self-sustaining transportation program for low-income and other under-resourced workers that provides flexible, enhanced transportation solutions that can grow and can adapt to meet the needs of the employees and the employers which it serves. These funds are available to serve the needs of Wisconsin workers statewide.
<i>Goals</i>	The goal of the Flexible Transportation Solutions for Wisconsin Workers grant is to provide low-income and other under-resourced workers with enhanced transportation services to and from work and, if applicable, job training. Improving and providing flexible, enhanced transportation services can improve economic outcomes among these workers and increase employee retention for employers throughout the State of Wisconsin.
<i>Terms of Award</i>	Grants will be awarded as cost reimbursement contracts, with an anticipated contract start date of October 15, 2018. Upon contract execution, award recipients will be allowed to incur costs. Costs, including match, must be incurred between contract execution and end dates. All grant expenditures must be completed by October 14, 2020. The grant award is intended to support 24 months of activity. If additional time is needed to implement and execute the program, a timeline extension of one calendar quarter may be requested.
<i>Matching Funds</i>	In the proposal, applicants should detail their ability to leverage financial support for the transportation project as a demonstration of commitment. Match may be in-kind and/or cash match equal to 20 percent of the grant amount awarded (\$.20 grantee match for each \$1 of WFF award).

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Vehicle Grants

Grant Type	WisDOT awards capital funds for the purchase of vehicles to meet evolving workforce mobility needs.
Award Amount	\$3,000,000 is available
Eligible Applicants	Wisconsin-based non-profits or local public bodies (including tribes).
Use of Grant funds	Provide capital funds for the acquisition of vehicles to provide flexible, enhanced transportation services in Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, Waukesha, Washington, Ozaukee, Walworth, Sheboygan, Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Door counties for low-income and other under-resourced workers earning up to 150 percent of the federal poverty rate (FPL).
Goals	The goal of the Flexible Transportation Solutions for Regional Workforce Advancement Grant program is to connect low-income and other under-resourced workers with enhanced transportation services to and from their workplace. Improving and providing flexible, enhanced transportation services can improve the economic outcomes among these workers and increase employee retention for employers throughout the State of Wisconsin.
Terms of Award	Grants will be awarded as cost reimbursement contracts, with an anticipated contract start date October 15, 2018. Upon contract execution, award recipients will be allowed to begin the vehicle procurement process. Costs, including match, must be incurred between contract execution and end dates. All grant expenditures must be completed by October 14, 2020.
Matching Funds	In the proposal, applicants should detail their ability to leverage financial support for the transportation project as a demonstration of commitment. Match must be a cash match equal to 20 percent of the grant amount awarded (\$.20 grantee match for each \$1 of WisDOT award).

GENERAL CONTRACTING INFORMATION AND APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Program Administration

This program is offered by DWD in conjunction with WisDOT and funded by State of Wisconsin general program revenues and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. The grant application process will be administered by the DWD Division of Employment & Training, Office of Skills Development, under the WFF grant program. The Program Grants will be administered by WFF staff.

The Vehicle Grants will be administered by WisDOT staff through DWD. Applicants are obligated to follow FTA grant reporting and certification requirements if they receive capital funds.

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B. Grant Range and Matching Requirement

Program Grant applicants may request funding from \$5,000 to \$400,000 to develop and implement a flexible transportation project benefitting Wisconsin workers. Applicants must secure in-kind and/or cash match of 20 percent of the WFF grant award amount from employers or resources other than state funding.

Up to \$3,000,000 of federal funding is available to non-profit and local public bodies (including tribes) applying for Vehicle Grants. Vehicle Grant local match is 20 percent of the WisDOT award amount and must be cash (not in-kind).

C. Eligible Purchases

The intent of the program is award a grant to eligible entities for the development and implementation of a flexible transportation program. The proposed budget will be examined to determine the extent to which expense projections are reasonable, necessary and allowable for the operation of the project. Priority will be given to budgets that minimize administrative costs in favor of direct program costs.

Program Grants allowable costs include:

- Upkeep and maintenance of vehicles being used for employee transportation
- Vehicle insurance and driver liability insurance
- Training, development, and licensure for drivers and other staff employed by the transportation provider
- Marketing, expansion, and activities supporting the long-term sustainability of the transportation project
- Fuel and related expenses for project vehicles
- No more than five percent of the total project budget may be allocated to administrative expenses

Wisconsin Fast Forward funds may not be used for proposal development, the purchase of real estate or other capital assets/equipment, facility construction or remodeling, traditional public or private Kindergarten-12th grade education, tuition or trainee wages, stipends or fringe benefits.

Vehicle Grants allowable costs include:

- The purchase of a federally procured vehicle

D. Reimbursement Payments and Award

Both Program Grants and Vehicle Grants work on a reimbursement process, meaning the applicant will incur upfront costs and then submit supporting documentation and invoices for reimbursement using the State's COntact Management and Expenditure Tracking System (COMET) to WFF or WisDOT.

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Upon invoice and documentation approval, WFF payments will be disbursed via Automated Clearing House (ACH) transactions through COMET. WisDOT payments will be disbursed as checks.

Please note:

- In compliance with the Office of the State Comptroller rules and regulations, no grant recipient shall spend grant funds until a contract has been fully executed with DWD or WisDOT.
- Upon contract execution, recipients will be allowed to incur costs. Reimbursable costs may be incurred from the date of contract execution through October 14, 2020. Expenses incurred after October 14, 2020 will not be reimbursed by this program. Requests for reimbursement may be submitted no later than January 12, 2021.
- Grantees will forfeit any remaining funds that are unused after the contract expires. For Program Grants, WFF shall give due consideration to any extenuating circumstances presented in writing by the applicant and may waive this restriction at its discretion.
- As a condition of funding Program Grants, WFF requires that the awardee report data and information about participation, partnerships, supportive services, program referrals and placements for the next three fiscal years for both auditing and pilot evaluation purposes.
- As a condition of funding Vehicle Grants, WisDOT requires that the awardee report data and information about eligible riders, actual ridership, number of trips and one-way rides, vehicle mileage, and trip purpose for each vehicle for the next three fiscal years for both auditing and pilot evaluation purposes.

PROGRAM GRANT DETAILS

A. Eligibility

Wisconsin private businesses; consortia; or partnerships consisting of Wisconsin employers, non-profits and organizations working with people with disabilities, that target transportation to businesses employing Wisconsin workers, may apply. Applicant organizations may apply independently and can apply as the lead organization of a consortium of several local employers. Proposals submitted on behalf of a consortium of providers must include in the application a description of the roles and responsibilities of the lead applicant and each co-applicant. A signed memorandum of understanding defining the roles of all identified parties is required for any consortium-based application.

B. Review of Applications

WFF program staff and an impartial evaluation committee will evaluate grant applications for compliance with grant guidelines and specifications cited in this document and assign a score based on the selection criteria.

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C. Selection Criteria

Applications will be selected based on overall scores in the following areas, with a possible total of 100 base points and 10 bonus points:

Selection Criteria		Base Points	Bonus Points
1	Project Need	20	NA
2	Implementation, Project Design, and Deliverables	25	NA
3	Local Stakeholder Support	20	NA
4	Budget and Sustainability Model	15	Up to 5 additional points: Describe any existing program-related partnerships and roles with businesses, service or training providers in the region
5	Outreach and Marketing Plan	10	NA
6	Reporting and Evaluation	10	NA
TOTAL		100	

- Project Need:** Applicants should thoroughly establish the need for the specific type of transportation supportive services they are proposing to implement. Description should include how the program partners have estimated initial ridership as well as an analysis of the other available transportation alternatives that are currently available and how this program provides a significantly better or more accessible alternative for the target population. Applicants are also encouraged to include service and route maps when doing so will help to explain the program choices regarding service areas and times.
- Implementation, Project Design, and Deliverables:** Applicants must provide a timeline for all key project activities. Applicants are also expected to include a list of the key staff, a program budget, and any other information necessary to evaluate the overall design of the project.
- Local Stakeholder Support:** Applicants will include a letter of attestation regarding partnership expectations, role in the project, 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.
- Budget and Sustainability Model:** Applicants in addition to including the letters of attestation and documenting the 20 percent match in the program budget should discuss specific strategies for growing and sustaining the transportation program. Applicants should describe any program elements that will increase the likelihood of the project to be self-sustaining in the long-term.

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5. **Outreach and Marketing Plan:** Applicants should explain how employees and other potential clients in the service area will learn about, and participate in, the transportation program. Include relevant information on partnerships with social services organizations, local workforce development and economic development entities, employers, or any other strategic relationships that will help connect low income workers in need to the transportation services being offered.

6. **Reporting and Evaluation:** Applicants will include information on the reporting and evaluation methodology and strategy they will be using to gauge the impact and success of the transportation program.

VEHICLE GRANT DETAILS

A. Eligibility

- Non-profit organizations
- Local Public Bodies (including Tribes)

B. Review of Applications

WisDOT staff and an impartial evaluation committee will evaluate grant applications for compliance with grant guidelines and specifications cited in this document and assign a score based on the selection criteria.

C. Selection Criteria

Applications will be selected based on overall scores in the following areas, with a possible total of 100 base points and 10 bonus points.

Selection Criteria		Base Points
1	Project Need	20
2	Implementation, Project Design, and Deliverables	25
3	Local Stakeholder Support	20
4	Budget and Sustainability Model	15
5	Outreach and Marketing Plan	10
6	Reporting and Evaluation	10
	TOTAL	100

1. **Project Need:** Applicants should describe the need for the specific type of transportation supportive services they are proposing to implement. Description should include how their program has estimated initial ridership as well as an analysis of the other available transportation alternatives that are currently available and how this program provides a significantly better, fills gaps, and/or more accessible alternative for the target population.
 - i. Applicants may attach/include route maps or other visuals with the proposal.

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2. **Implementation, Project Design, and Deliverables:** Applicants must provide a timeline for all key project activities. Applicants are also expected to include a list of the key staff, a program budget, and any other information necessary to evaluate the overall design of the project.
 - i. Applicants should describe potential implementation obstacles and mitigation plans.
 - ii. Applicants will also have to describe how the organization will oversee vehicle and project administration for the lifetime of the vehicle.
3. **Local Stakeholder Support:** Applicants will include a letter of attestation regarding partnership expectations, role in the project, 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.
 - i. Applicants must also describe how they will work with existing transportation services.
4. **Budget and Sustainability Model:** Applicants, in addition to including letters of attestation and documenting 20 percent cash match in the program budget, should discuss specific strategies for growing and sustaining the transportation program. This could include ridership fares, advertisements, donations, etc.

Applicants should describe how grant funds (and vehicle) will be replaced and any program elements that will increase the likelihood of the project to be self-sustaining in the long-term.

5. **Outreach and Marketing Plan:** Applicants should explain how employees and other potential clients in the service area will learn about, and participate in, the transportation program. Include relevant information on partnerships with social services organizations, local workforce development and economic development entities, employers, or any other strategic relationships that will help connect low income workers in need to the transportation services being offered.
 - i. Applicants should include how their organization will target riders (with an emphasis on low-income workers) and employers to participate in services.
6. **Reporting and Evaluation:** Applicants will include information on the reporting and evaluation methodology and strategy they will be using to gauge the impact and success of the transportation program.
 - i. Organizations should describe how they will track one-way rides, mileage, and trip purpose for each vehicle awarded through this grant award.

D. Vehicle Types

Table 1, Vehicle Types, is an example of common vehicle types used in employment transportation services. Applicants may use this list to assist in completing the budget section of the application for Vehicle Grants.

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Table 1, Vehicle Types

Vehicle Type	Passengers (not including driver)	Total Estimated Cost	Total Estimated Local Share
Minivan	7 passengers	\$26,000	\$5,200
Minivan Accessible Side Load	3 passengers, 1 wheelchair position	\$37,357	\$7,471
Minivan Accessible Rear Load	3 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$37,000	\$7,400
Transit/Bariatric Vehicle Accessible Rear Load	3 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$45,700	\$9,140
Transit Wagon	15 passengers	\$40,000	\$8,000
Minibus	12 passengers	\$49,057	\$9,811
Minibus Accessible	6 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$52,274	\$10,455
Minibus Accessible Diesel	3 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$58,720	\$11,744
Minibus Accessible Single Rear Wheel	3 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$54,661	\$10,932
Medium Bus Accessible	10 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$56,872	\$11,374
Medium Bus Accessible Honeycomb Fiberglass	3 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$64,718	\$12,944
Large Cutaway Bus	21 passengers	\$65,000	\$13,000
Large Cutaway Bus Accessible	20 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$90,578	\$18,116
Large Cutaway Bus Accessible Honeycomb Fiberglass	20 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$98,984	\$19,797
Conventional Bus	26 passengers, 2 wheelchair positions	\$125,630	\$25,126
30' Heavy Duty Bus	27 passengers, ADA compliant	\$337,000	\$67,400
35' Heavy Duty Bus	30 passengers, ADA compliant	\$390,200	\$78,040

7. Federal Requirements

Any applicant applying for a Vehicle Grant, must download, complete, and submit ATTACHMENT 1 - FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS with their application. If the ATTACHMENT 1 - FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS document is not submitted or incomplete, the application will not be reviewed.

ATTACHMENT 1 - FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS is available for download at http://www.wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm

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CONTACTS

Grant Program Announcement

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Grant Administration

Program Grants

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Vehicle Grants

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SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Required Application Items	Checklist
All Applications	✓
1. Application Form	
2. Local Match and Support Documents	
3. Attachments (Service Maps, Data, Other)	
Program Grant Applications	✓
4. Program Budget	
Vehicle Grant Applications	✓
Vehicle Budget	
5. ATTACHMENT 1 - FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS	
6. Non-profit Designation (W-9 form) or Local Public Body certification/designation	
7. If applicant organization receives more than \$750,000 per year in federal funds (from any and all sources), please submit most recent audit	
Program and Vehicle Grant Applications	✓
Project applications requesting both Program and Vehicle funds must include Items 1-7.	