

Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants Questions and Answers

1. Is the grant for training private businesses? I recently started in Real Estate and wanted to know if it is available to help with full-time training costs for a new realtor to be able to learn full-time by a trainer at the facility?

The objective of the Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) standard grant program is to award funds to businesses from all Wisconsin industry sectors that reimburse the costs of customized occupational training for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. Please visit the WFF website for additional information including the Grant Program Announcement which provides extensive information regarding eligible expenses and the application process. <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/> and <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/pdf/industry-sector-gpa-20201020.pdf>.

2. As a prospective applicant, I am writing to ask for clarification concerning the Industry Sectors Worker Training Grant. More specifically, my question pertains to the Financial Information/Match Requirements section. There's a statement in the grant that says, "Cash or in-kind match equal to 50% of the amount of the grant award is required" (p.7). Thus, my question is, given that applicants will not know the exact amount they'll be required to match until they receive notice from DWD they've been awarded funding, is it at that point you'll request evidence from applicants showing their ability to match the award?

Applicants are required to create a budget for their project. In the budget line for each activity, applicants will insert the dollar figure requested for WFF funds and cash or in-kind Match. Applicants are expected to provide Match as required, and need to submit documentation that demonstrates the ability to provide the required Match with their application.

If the grant is awarded, for whatever amount, a contract is executed between the Grantee and DWD. In this contract, a final budget – including the final Match amount required, based upon the amount awarded – is included.

3. Can an applicant submit requests to fund several different training courses in the same application?

The application can include multiple courses as part of the same training project.

4. Would a UW College be considered an eligible applicant for the Industry Sectors Worker Training Grant GPA? In the past we have worked with some schools on a WFF grant to provide training for future teachers and we just want to make sure this is still the case.

Eligible applicants include the following:

- A public agency;
- A private organization;
- A coalition or partnership of entities under the auspices of a public agency or a private organization; or
- The tribal governing body of a federally recognized tribe or band of Indians, or an organization appointed by the tribal governing body.

The current GPA, Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants GPA, is targeted to employers which can demonstrate a critical need for skilled workers for developing and implementing a business-led skills training program. This GPA has different eligibility and required training outcomes than the Expanded WFF Teacher Training and Development program. Please review the GPA posted

on the WFF website to determine if your project is a good fit for the Industry Sectors Worker Training Grant GPA.

5. I am in the process of determining if we should apply for the Fast Forward Grant. The one question I was hoping you could help me with is how this grant may, or may not, impact our application for other grants. We are in the process of building a new plant and may be interested in pursuing a grant related to training or hiring of folks for that site. Can you tell me if we apply and are approved for the Fast Forward grant, if that would pre-empt us from being eligible for other grants of a similar nature?

Each economic development or workforce development program will have its own eligibility requirements for funding. Please check with each specific program to get guidance on their eligibility requirements. Wisconsin Fast Forward funds can't be used to supplant other funding, please see Wis. Admin. Code § DWD 801.07(3) and 801.08, which is referenced on page 8 of the GPA.

6. I am filling out the Fast Forward grant application and have a question about the budget tab. Our equipment manufacturers are going to be providing the major portion of training for our project. They are adding training as a single line item on their quotes. With that said, I'm not able to separate the cost for materials, training hours, curriculums, ect. Is this going to be an issue? If so, how have other organizations worked through this with multiple equipment providers?

Most training providers like the Technical Colleges break out the cost of instruction, instruction materials and supplies separately on their invoices. The invoices from the manufacturing equipment providers should detail the cost of purchasing the instruction for each training course that will be offered. When you start to complete the curriculum statements in the application, you will need to provide detail on the number of course hours per trainee and the total trainee hours for all trainees.

7. Employee turnover is becoming more and more of a problem with the tight work force in manufacturing. We continue to train, but would like to expand our training program to improve their skills. We are looking at a couple of programs, but would like to know if there are any grants or assistance available to us. We are a union shop of about 150 employees.

OSD currently has an open GPA for the Industry Sectors Worker Training Grant program. This training grant program is for employers that can demonstrate a critical need for skilled workers for developing and implementing a business-led training program. The GPA documents can be found at the Wisconsin Fast Forward website at: <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/pdf/industry-sector-gpa-20201020.pdf>.

8. If UW – Green Bay is working with an employer that meets this criteria and UW is going to do the training, can UW be the entity that writes the grant?

Potentially yes, but the trainee data entry will need to be coordinated with the employee placement partner or partners. The applicant would be required to meet all the training deliverables of the contract.

9. Can you please provide a definition of 'placement into employment'? Would movement into a new position such as a promotion count under this measure?

Unemployed individuals would need to be hired to fill vacant or new positions. Underemployed individuals would need to gain new or better employment, higher wages, more hours, and/or more permanent employment. Incumbent trainees would need to receive increased compensation, more hours, or new credentials or increased functionality. A new position or improvement of employment circumstance, such as a promotion, would be considered a placement for all three employment types.

10. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a federal program, Social Security Numbers are not required to be collected. Is there an exemption under WFF for the collection of Social Security Numbers? If not, what is the process for if an individual does not want to disclose their Social Security Numbers?

Mandatory reporting includes the number of trainees, identified by social security number, that successfully complete the training. See Wis. Admin. Code § DWD 801.11(3)(f) and GPA page 7.

11. Can you please provide a definition of 'curriculum'? What would count as curriculum? Would an in-house employer developed or designed training count as curriculum?

Curriculum are the content which will be taught in a training program that is funded by Wisconsin Fast Forward. It includes instructional materials, software, and equipment developed for a grant funded project. See Wis. Admin. Code § DWD 801.09(4). It is the total package of learning activities designed to achieve the objectives of the training program. Designed or in-house training would count. Curriculum will be designed or customized to meet the needs of a specific employer and training regimen or goals. If WFF funds pay for curriculum development, the curriculum developed would be owned by the State of Wisconsin and as such may be made available for other organizations to use.

12. I am reviewing the Grant Proposal Announcement and have a question on Incumbent Worker Training. In hiring new Technicians that are recent trade school graduates or have minimal experience, we offer training that we have always funded privately as a company. Successful passing of these courses does result in higher level technician classifications as well as salary increases. Would this be eligible or since we already offer these classes at company expense, they would be excluded from consideration?

The training must be new, not an ongoing training or routine business training that has been previously funded by other sources. If training modalities have changed, please describe in the application how the training is different.

13. For applications with multiple employers addressing a skill set that does not have access to local technical college programs, can the partner companies attest that the skills learned provide an industry recognized credential?

Yes. The term credential encompasses educational certificates, degrees, certifications, and government-issued licenses. These are not tied to a specific educational program but are typically awarded through assessment and validation of skills in cooperation with a business, trade association or other industry group.

14. Can final grant reports be submitted within 30 days of the project period?

All work and required compliance on the grant must be completed by the end of the grant period. The final report needs to be submitted within the two-year grant period.

15. Will WFF confirm receipt of applications?

The WFF system will send an email after the grant application has been submitted. If you do not receive an email, double check your application for any missing items and try to submit again.

16. How detailed do you expect the match by each partner/employer to be? Is this a statement in the letter of commitment or does a detailed budget with each partner need to be submitted?

The letter of commitment should detail the type of match, cash or In-kind, and the amount of funding provided by budget category. A sample Letter of Commitment can be referenced on page 17 of the application instructions which can be accessed by clicking on the help button or can be downloaded from the Wisconsin Fast Forward website under Program Resources at http://wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm.

17. It appears there is a significant amount of interest in these grants to be targeting underserved populations. For companies that will send incumbent workers (and, some training will take place a year and a half from now so those workers might not even be hired yet), how does WFF recommend we speak to those priority populations?

Individual grantees can define their recruitment plan and timeline for the training program within the training project period. The grant contract cannot exceed two years and all training activities, reimbursements, and reports need to be completed within that time frame.

18. (p.11) in Section 6, it requests a “break out of match by each partner/employer.” Are material contributions (e.g., a forklift to be used as part of the training) considered financial contributions (matches)?

A forklift used in the training would not be considered match unless it was leased and paid for by a grant partner during the training. WFF would not pay for the use of an existing piece of equipment. If the leased equipment was donated and the training was in donated educational space, these items could be an in-kind match. For additional detail on eligible budget expenses by budget category, please review the Application Instructions that are accessible by clicking on the help button or can be downloaded from the Wisconsin Fast Forward website under Program Resources at http://wisconsinfastforward.com/wff_standard.htm .

19. For the deliverable percentages, are the percentages applicable to the total original group of trainees or, for example, does the 65% placed into employment only pertain to those who completed training?

The 65% placement rate is based upon the original contracted number of trainees.