



→ BLUEPRINT FOR PROSPERITY

December 2014

High School Pupil Workforce Training Programs

Grants of up to \$150,000

Applications must be submitted no later than:
February 2, 2015 by 11:59 pm CT

Grant Program Announcement
GPA #BP151HSP

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WISCONSIN FAST FORWARD – BLUEPRINT FOR PROSPERITY

In March 2013, Governor Scott Walker signed 2013 Act 9, also known as Wisconsin Fast Forward, into law with strong bipartisan support from both houses of the Wisconsin Legislature. The original Wisconsin Fast Forward program included \$15 million to provide employer-focused worker training grants, enabled the creation of the Office of Skills Development (OSD) at the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to administer the grant program, and provided resources to expand the state's labor market information system.

In March 2014, Governor Walker signed legislation under his "Blueprint for Prosperity" initiative to invest an additional \$35.4 million into the Wisconsin Fast Forward program. The additional funds support training grants to technical colleges, grants for collaborative projects among school districts, technical colleges, and businesses, as well as grants to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

In May 2014, the first round of High School Pupil Workforce Training grants funded 30 projects designed to train 949 high school students with industry-recognized credentials in partnership with employers around the state.

As with the original Wisconsin Fast Forward worker training grant program, DWD is the lead state agency overseeing the Wisconsin Fast Forward–Blueprint for Prosperity initiative, and OSD and the Bureau of Workforce Training (BWT) are the points of contact for employers interested in the Wisconsin Fast Forward – Blueprint for Prosperity High School Pupil Program.

OSD administers and oversees both initiatives through a transparent and accountable process. Additionally, OSD and BWT work to encourage the development of innovative solutions at the local and regional level that bring together employers, educators, workforce development boards, and economic development organizations to meet area workforce demands.

The original Wisconsin Fast Forward program supports initiatives that provide sustainable short- and medium-term training and placement of workers in positions that offer trainees long-term professional growth and economic opportunity. Wisconsin Fast Forward - Blueprint for Prosperity further incentivizes employers to incorporate technical college pupils, high school pupils, and persons with disabilities into their workforce training strategies.

The long-term goal of Wisconsin Fast Forward is to encourage partnerships between businesses and local or regional economic development organizations, workforce development boards, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, private training providers, and other stakeholders. It is anticipated that the relationships developed through Wisconsin Fast Forward and Wisconsin Fast Forward - Blueprint for Prosperity will continue to flourish after the conclusion of each grant.

GRANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT (GPA) FOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Nationally, labor force participation by youth has reached its lowest levels since the Great Depression. Only about half of youth ages 16 - 24 held jobs in 2011. Furthermore, entry-level jobs for this generation are less available as older workers with more work experience and/or certifications fill these positions. As entry-level opportunities for work are filled by older workers, the tasks of transitioning into adulthood are delayed and development of the future workforce is slowed. The result of this delay equates to a waste of talent and earning potential which has dire consequences for this population in the development of job-readiness skills, life-long earning potential, and overall strength of our national economy.¹

Statistics show that employment for male youth (aged 16 - 19) decreased from 61% in 1980 to 35% in 2010; while female participation decreased from 53% to 35% for the same age and time period. Thirty-one percent of those unemployed were African-American youth, followed by Caucasian, Hispanic, and Asian youth (15 - 21%).²

Conversely, skills gap data demonstrates that many entry level jobs, accessible with some post-secondary training and education, remain unfilled in high need industries such as manufacturing. Specialized training for industry certifications in concurrence with the last year of high school can motivate youth and provide valuable work-based experience necessary to launch them into adulthood.

¹ Youth and Work: Restoring teen and young adult connections to opportunity. (2012). Kids Count Policy Report. Annie E. Casey Foundation. www.aecf.org

² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). America's Youth: Transitions to Adulthood. NCES 2012-026, December 2011. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012026.pdf>

Grant Program Announcement Summary

The OSD and BWT are seeking applications from Wisconsin businesses in collaboration with school districts, technical colleges and/or other educational and workforce partners to train and hire high school pupils. Successful graduates of the program should receive employment opportunities in recognized high-demand fields with industry-recognized certifications.

Funds available through this GPA will enable these collaborations to define employer-driven workforce programs to train and hire high school pupils. The workforce programs should provide high school pupils with market-relevant work readiness and technical skills, leading to an industry-recognized certification(s) in a recognized high-demand field per the Act 59 Career and Technical Education (CTE) **Incentive Grant Certifications List**.³ Projects must select certifications from the ACT 59 approved list only. See the High School Pupil Program website for the Act 59 CTE Certifications List at <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/prosperity/pupil/>.*

*Please note that the certifications highlighted in yellow on the CTE Incentive Grant Certifications List include only the name of the certifying area; therefore Applicants will be required to specify exactly which certification is to be attained. For example: Apple – [List which Apple Certification], *e.g., Apple-Certified MAC Technician*. Furthermore, the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Certifications must be “State-Approved” Career Pathways Certificates (CPCs) OR “State-Approved” Embedded Technical Diplomas (ETDs). The Applicant must provide proof that can be verified with the WTCS.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI), in consultation with the DWD and WTCS developed this industry-recognized certification list designed to mitigate workforce shortages in high demand industries or occupations.⁴

OSD and BWT will ensure accountability and transparency of program outcomes by partnering with the grantee in tracking program participants, training completions, certifications earned, job placements, and further enrollment in post-secondary training.

High school pupil training and hiring programs funded through this grant should include new programs that address opportunities for youth to engage in certification training in coordination with workplace experiences. Examples may include:

- Technical college/high school dual credit models;
- Workplace-based or high-school-based transcript credit and industry-recognized certification(s) that are part of an embedded diploma;
- Work-based learning programs;
- Apprenticeship-prep models that allow for seamless transition into Wisconsin’s registered apprenticeship programs; and
- Other skilled employment opportunities.

³ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division of Career and Technical Education. CTE Incentive Grant Certifications List. (2014). Refer to the following website for the Certifications List: <http://cte.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/cte/pdf/approvedcertlist.pdf>

⁴ Wisconsin State Legislature. 2013 Wisconsin Act 59. (2013). <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/related/acts/59>

Targeted Business Size: Any

Type of Trainees: Individuals who will be considered eligible for training and hiring under this grant should be high school pupils currently enrolled in a Wisconsin high school, be on-track to graduate with no more than three semesters of high school yet to complete. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

Duration of Training Courses: Typically a program/training should last no more than a 12-month period, with the completion of the training certification program and subsequent granting of the high school diploma. However, programs/training could last for a longer period as long as the high school pupil can earn a diploma with academic training and workforce experience leading to an employer commitment to hire program/training graduates. The entire project, to include post-program/training outcome reporting and close-out activities, must be completed by December 31, 2016.

Project Period: Recruitment and curriculum development may commence as soon as awards are granted in order to enroll interested pupils. As stated above, the entire project, to include post-program/training outcome reporting and close-out activities, must be completed by December 31, 2016.

Total Funds Allocated to the GPA: Up to \$3,000,000

Grant Amount: From \$5,000 to \$150,000 per grantee. Grant and match expenditures must be incurred during the project period.

Match/Cost Sharing Requirement: The grantee is required to provide matching funds equal to 50% of the grant amount awarded. Match may be any combination of cash and/or in-kind sources that are necessary and reasonable to operate the program related to budget categories and associated *eligible* expenses and may come from any participants in the collaboration.

Application Process: The department shall solicit applications for grants by preparing and publishing a notice of the availability of the GPA on the department's website, and distributing copies of the GPA on request. The GPA and application documents are found at <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/prosperity/pupil/>.

Opportunity Category: Competitive

Important Dates:

- Grant Application Due Date: **February 2, 2015 by 11:59 pm Central Time.**
- Anticipated award announcements: **No later than February 27, 2015.**

Eligible Applicants: The department will accept applications from legal entities comprised of employers or business organizations, in partnership with high schools, educational partners and/or technical colleges. Applications must identify the applicant and the fiscal manager.

- The Applicant refers to the one organization that will enter into the contract with DWD, receive the grant funds, and be responsible for project implementation, reporting, and funds management. Project Name is a title that you choose to use for your project.
- The Project Manager refers to the person who will serve as the primary contact and/or project director for the program and must be employed by the Applicant agency.
- The Fiscal Manager refers to the person who will be in charge of the financial portion of the grant. The person named as the Fiscal Manager on the application must be employed by the Applicant. This person will be responsible for handling the grant funds, keeping receipts and records, submitting reimbursements, preparing for financial audits and submitting the final financial report.

Grant Eligible Expenses:

- Curriculum development, instructional delivery, and related materials
- Costs associated with certification testing
- Supplies and materials for training and/or instruction (an item must be less than \$5,000 and have a lifespan of less than 1 year)
- Activities associated with overall project coordination, pupil recruitment, marketing to stakeholders, and mentor training
- General grant administration activities (not to exceed 5% of grant amount requested)

Grant Ineligible Expenses:

- Pupil wages, stipends, fringe benefits or incentives (allowed only for match)
- Tuition reimbursement for training and/or post-secondary programming (not allowed as part of this project)
- K-12 education (existing and/or general core curriculum)
- Travel, meals and lodging (see Budget Guidelines for travel exception)
- General office/classroom supplies (pencils, paper, ink, etc.)
- Construction or major remodeling
- Student insurance premiums
- General allocated operating expenses (indirect cost rates)
- Capital equipment (an item greater than \$5,000 and more than 1 year lifespan)

Outcomes: The department will work with the grantees to collect and monitor the number of high school pupils enrolled and completing training, certifications earned, job placements made upon completion of the workforce program/training, and any information reported regarding further enrollment in post-secondary education or training.

Successful Applications Should Include the Following:

- Active participation of businesses in determining workplace training needs.
- Description of high school pupil recruitment methods including outreach to parents.
- Description of training certification program that includes how credits will be earned towards a high school diploma and certification/post-secondary credential.
- Certifications must be from the approved Act 59 CTE Incentive Grants Certifications List from the WDPI. See the High School Pupil Grant Program website for the Act 59 CTE Certifications List at <http://wisconsinfastforward.com/prosperity/pupil/>.
- Regional or local labor market data to support the selection of specific industry sectors or career pathways. (Data should include number of job openings expected for the occupational training certification.)
- **Planned Placements (80%):** The number of pupils served by the grant project and the number of placement commitments, as evidenced through letters of commitment from the employer, may not be more than a 20% difference. *[e.g. Applicant Ace Manufacturing applies for a grant to train 35 pupils for certification in NIMS-Machining Level 1. The number of planned placements supported by letters of commitment from employers must be at least 28 to stay within the 20% ratio of pupils trained to planned pupil placement.]*
- Sustainability plan for program continuation after the grant ends.
- Letters of commitment and/or support from all employers, partners, and other stakeholders participating in the project.

Grant Scoring and Evaluation:

Applications will be rated on a 100 point scale, based upon the following point values:

- Section 1: Project Overview and Need (up to 10 points)
- Section 2: Goal, Objectives, and Outcomes (up to 25 points)
- Section 3: Program Design and Implementation (up to 25 points)
- Section 4: Budget (up to 20 points)
- Section 5: Letters of commitment (up to 5 points)

***Bonus points (up to 15 points):** When assessing applications, 15 bonus points will be given for these additional considerations:

- First time applicant and/or New Occupational and certification area (10 points)
- Business partner led (5 points)

Grant applications will be scored by a Grant Evaluation Committee appointed by BWT and OSD. Other items that may receive consideration are strategic priorities, financial viability, underserved geographic areas, the potential to replicate the program, prior performance, and available funding. The applications will be presented to DWD leadership for final review and concurrence.

Employer Letters of Commitment:

Letters of commitment will be required from participating employers to indicate the planned number of job placements the employer anticipates having and the number of pupils the employer will interview and/or hire. The employer's letter should also include commitments to any match funding and/or participation in the planning and implementation of the training program.

Partner Letters of Commitment and Support:

Letters of commitment from school districts, technical colleges, and/or other educational partners should include an attestation regarding match resources that are available to contribute to the project.

Educational Partners may include but are not limited to:

- Workforce Development Boards;
- Intermediary educational and training organizations, such as a CESA;
- State recognized youth program providers, such as Youth Apprenticeship Consortiums, Boys and Girls Clubs, Fresh Start; or
- LVEC/CTE Coordinator [Licensed Vocational Education Coordinators (LVECs), Career and Technical Education Coordinators (CTE Coordinators)].

The WTCS, WDPI, and DWD are available to provide consultation services to:

- Connect business owners to local technical college career prep coordinators and embedded diploma programs developed in high-demand fields.
- Connect schools to local businesses and technical college resources for planning, delivery and implementation of programming directed at high school seniors.
- Provide information and consultation to schools and businesses in order to navigate instructing and mentoring youth.
- Support schools and businesses to recruit pupils for these experiences.
- Support businesses to build strategies to ensure quality youth programming and mentoring.
- Provide materials and training to assist in understanding child labor laws.

Post-Award Terms and Conditions/Reporting Requirements:

Grant applications that are funded under this announcement will be required to execute a binding contract with DWD. Grantees will also be required to submit documentation of match contributions, progress reports, and a final project report.

In addition to these conditions, please note the following:

1. All grant applications funded under this announcement will be subject to program evaluation and monitoring.
2. All grant funds will be disbursed through an Automatic Clearing House (ACH) payment (direct deposit). ACH payments will be deposited into the grantee's account. To begin receiving ACH payment, you will be required to complete an ACH set-up form which will be provided with your grant award materials.
3. All grant recipients are subject to audit of related expenditures by DWD staff and/or by an independent certified public accountant.
4. To the extent feasible and permissible by law, an applicant's request that trade secrets or other confidential information submitted remain confidential will be honored and the information will be treated as confidential only if: (i) the information is in fact protected confidential information such as trade secrets or privileged information, (ii) the information is specifically identified as confidential by the applicant, and (iii) no disclosure of the information is required by law or judicial order. If the application results in a grant, the honoring of confidentiality of identified information shall not limit the right to disclose the details and results of this award to the public.
5. Unless otherwise specified in the contract, the training curriculum developed with Wisconsin Fast Forward grant monies will become the property of the State of Wisconsin.
6. Grant awards shall be payable directly to grantees by DWD. Reimbursement requests may be made on a monthly basis. All requests for reimbursement via the Expenditure Report must be submitted online to the Department by the close of business (4:30 pm CT) on or before the 5th day of the month immediately following the expenditure period. Grantees will subsequently encumber the funds according to the program details identified in the application to ensure that all contractors, vendors, suppliers and employees are paid accurately and on time. Should any program plans or requirements change after the final application is approved and funds are disbursed by DWD, the grantee will return any remaining funds to DWD within 30 days of notification by the department.