



➔ BLUEPRINT FOR PROSPERITY

APRIL 2014

High School Pupil Workforce Training Programs

Grants of up to \$150,000

Applications must be submitted no later than:
April 21, 2014

Grant Program Announcement
GPA #BP142HSP



Contact Information

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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 will 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.

As with the original Wisconsin Fast Forward worker training grant program, DWD will be the lead state agency overseeing the Wisconsin Fast Forward–Blueprint for Prosperity initiative, and OSD will remain the point of contact for employers interested in Wisconsin Fast Forward and Wisconsin Fast Forward – Blueprint for Prosperity. OSD administers and oversees the grant program through a transparent and accountable process. Additionally, OSD works 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 which 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.

Department of Workforce Development → Office of Skills Development

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

Nationally, labor force participation by youth has reached levels not seen 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 credentials 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; 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 Office of Skills Development (OSD) is seeking applications from Wisconsin businesses in collaboration with school districts, educational partners and/or technical colleges 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, optimally leading to an industry-recognized certification(s) in a recognized high-demand field.

OSD 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 programs that address opportunities for youth to engage in certification training in coordination with workplace experiences. Some examples are:

- Technical college/high school dual credit academies
- Workplace-based or high-school-based transcribed credit and industry-recognized certifications that are part of an embedded diploma
- Work-based learning programs
- Pre-apprenticeship models that allow for seamless transition into Wisconsin's registered apprenticeship programs
- Other skilled employment opportunities



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. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Department of Workforce Development.

Duration of Training Courses: Typically a program should last no more than a 12 month period, ending in June 2015, with the completion of the training certification program and subsequent granting of the high school diploma. However, programs could last for a longer period so long as the high school pupil can earn a diploma with academic training and workforce experience leading to an employer commitment to hire program graduates.

Project Period: Recruitment and curriculum development may begin as soon as awards are granted in order to enroll interested pupils. The entire project, to include post-program outcome reporting and close-out activities, cannot exceed 2 years.

Total Funds Allocated to the GPA: Up to \$1,500,000

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 can be any combination of cash and/or in-kind sources that are necessary and reasonable to operate the program 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 can be found at WisconsinFastForward.com.

Opportunity Category: Competitive

Important Dates:

Grant Application Due Date: **April 21, 2014**

Anticipated award announcements: **No later than April 30, 2014**

Eligibility: OSD will accept applications from legal entities comprised of employers or business organizations, in partnership with high schools, educational partners and/or technical colleges.

Grant Eligible Expenses:

- Curriculum development
- Instructional delivery and related materials
- Costs associated with certification testing
- Equipment for training and/or instruction that is less than \$5,000 and has a lifespan of less than 1 year
- Recruitment, coordination and marketing to stakeholders
- Mentor training

Grant Ineligible Expenses:

- Pupil wages
- Tuition reimbursement for training and/or post-secondary programming, unless previously approved by OSD.
- Travel, meals and lodging

Outcomes: OSD 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, and any information reported regarding further enrollment in post-secondary education or training.

Successful Applications Should Include the Following:

- Engagement 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.
- 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.
- A clear statement of placement goals with an 85% percent or higher placement rate in jobs at minimum wage or higher within six months of training completion and supported by a written commitment from participating businesses.

Grant Scoring and Evaluation:

OSD will rate applications on a 50 point scale, based upon the following point values:

- Project Need (up to 15 points)
- Training Program Design, Cost and Implementation (up to 20 points)
- Goal and Objectives (up to 15 points)

When assessing each application, bonus points will be given for these additional considerations:

- Description of support for continuing the career pathway or additional training opportunities available upon high school graduation.
- Provision of supportive services, such as tutoring, work readiness development, job placement services, etc.
- Recruitment and training provided to minority pupils, pupils with disabilities, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, etc.

Grant applications will be scored by a Grant Evaluation Committee appointed by OSD. Other items that may receive consideration are underserved populations, strategic priorities, financial viability, past performance, underserved geographic areas, the potential to replicate the program, 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 extent of job placements. 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, educational partners and/or technical colleges should include an attestation regarding match resources that are available to contribute to the project. In addition, employers or partners who are not willing to commit to job placements or match funding, but support the training model, may submit a letter of support for the project.

Educational Partners may include:

- 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
- Licensed Vocational Education Coordinators (LVECs)

The Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development 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 may be required to execute a binding contract with DWD. Grantees may 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 no later than June 30, 2014. 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 completion of the program(s).