



Workforce Innovation Grant Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document was revised March 28, 2022. The application deadline was updated to April 18, 2020; and questions #3, 4, 9 & 29 were added.

Key Dates & Deadlines

1. What is the deadline for application submission?

Applications must be submitted no later than 5PM CST on April 18, 2022.

2. When will the Round 2 grant awards be announced?

Grant announcements are expected in the summer of 2022

3. How will Applicants be notified of the award/non-award status of their applications?

Lead applicants will be notified by email with the award status of their application once the review process has been completed in the summer of 2022.

4. Is there a list and description of the programs that received grant awards in Round 1?

Round 1 awards totaling up to \$59.5 million were announced in December for 12 recipients. [Read more about the projects funded by the first round of grants.](#)

Project Eligibility

5. What projects are eligible for funding under the Workforce Innovation Grant Program?

The pandemic caused severe economic damage and, while the economy is on track to a strong recovery, much work remains to revitalize regional economies whose labor force challenges and workforce constraints persist. Just as Wisconsin's economy differs regionally, this grant program recognizes that the solutions to these challenges also differ regionally. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to propose innovative projects to tackle their region's most pressing workforce challenge(s) in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To demonstrate eligibility, applicants should (1) identify a specific workforce challenge that impacts a class of workers, households, businesses, or nonprofits in their region and (2) design a project that responds to that challenge. For example, many households experienced unemployment due to the pandemic. Projects that respond to this challenge may include job training, public jobs programs and fairs, support for childcare and transportation to and from a jobsite or interview, incentives for newly employed workers, assistance to unemployed

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



individuals to start small businesses and development of job and workforce training centers. Additional examples of potentially eligible projects are included in the grant announcement. None of these examples are meant to limit applicant's creativity in addressing specific regional workforce needs. The program is not limited to particular industries or business sectors. Projects can address workforce challenges in any segment of the Wisconsin economy.

6. Are general infrastructure projects permitted under the Workforce Innovation Grant Program?

No, general infrastructure projects, including roads, streets, surface transportation infrastructure, water, and sewer, generally are not eligible under the Workforce Innovation Grant Program, unless the applicant can show that the costs are essential to addressing the applicant's identified workforce need.

7. Is a talent attraction project eligible for grant funding?

Talent acquisition projects may be eligible for grant funding if the applicant can demonstrate eligibility. Please see FAQ #5 for more information about eligible projects.

8. Are transit-related projects eligible under the program?

Yes. Transit-related projects are eligible. Provided that the applicant can develop a robust and evidence-based application for the project, then a transit project can be considered alongside other projects addressing workforce challenges.

9. How do you define “Administrative” & “Operational” Presence in Wisconsin?

To meet these attestations, all applicants and sub-recipients must be registered and in good standing with the Wisconsin DFI by the time the application is submitted.

Cost Eligibility

10. Are capital expenditures permitted using Workforce Innovation Grant Program funds?

Yes, if the expenditures meet certain requirements. Capital expenditures are subject to the same eligibility standard as other costs – they must be related and reasonably proportional to the workforce challenge identified in the application and reasonably designed to benefit the impacted population or class.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury requires that applicants* provide additional justification for all capital expenditures over \$1 million. The written justification must include:

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



- An explanation of why a capital expenditure is appropriate to address the identified workforce need.
- A comparison of the proposed capital project against at least two alternative capital expenditures that could address the workforce need, and an explanation why the applicant's proposed capital expenditure is superior.

*Tribal governments are not required to provide this justification.

Capital expenditures are expenditures to acquire capital assets or expenditures to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life. Capital assets include lands, facilities, equipment (including information technology systems), and intellectual property.

11. What are ineligible project costs?

Funds may not be requested for expenses reimbursed from any other State or Federal program.

Additional ineligible uses include, but are not limited to:

- Fees incurred submitting an application.
- Administrative, personnel, and programmatic funding for existing operations of the lead applicant and sub-recipients. This prohibition includes an entity's federal indirect cost rate that may be used for other federal programs. Grant funds will only be awarded for the actual and direct costs of an applicant's proposal for a new and innovative program, which may include staff who are supporting the project award. Grant funds will not be used to fund the continuity of an organization's operations.
- Taxes (except sales taxes on eligible expenses).
- Funding advocacy or lobbying efforts.
- Other uses ineligible under the ARPA. References to ineligible uses are found throughout the [Final Rule](#).
- Programs that propose work stipends or wage subsidies.

12. Are funds used to pay students participating in an internship or apprenticeship program considered work stipends or wage subsidies?

Paying a student's wage or salary to participate in a training program is considered a wage subsidy. As a result, it is an ineligible cost under the program.

13. Can grant funds be used for scholarships?

With respect to scholarships, grant funds can be used to pay for tuition costs. However, the following clarification in the Application Guide on pp. 6 is important to note: "If tuition or training costs are part of a proposed application, the applicant may not pay those funds directly

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



to the individuals receiving the education or training; the funds must be paid to the organization providing the education or training.”

Funding: Limits on Amounts, Timeline for Use, Disbursement

14. What are the minimum and maximum amount of grant funds that an applicant can receive under Round 2?

Eligible applicants may apply for awards at a minimum of \$250,000 up to a maximum of \$10 million, subject to the cumulative award limitation described below in FAQ# 15.

15. What is the maximum amount of funds any single entity can receive through the Workforce Innovation Grant program?

An entity may receive funds under both Round 1 and Round 2 of the grant program; however, an entity may not receive more than \$10 million in total. The \$10 million limit is a cumulative total for both Round 1 and Round 2, and regardless of whether the entity is the applicant for one award and a sub-recipient for another.

16. What is the timeline for the use of award funds?

Awardees must obligate (i.e., enter into a contract for goods or services) all funds on or before December 31, 2024, and spend all funds within three years of the date of their grant award announcement.

17. How will grant funds be disbursed?

This is not a reimbursement-based program. Funds will be disbursed to grantees as advances on a periodic basis. Following the first advance of funds to start the project, subsequent advances will be released based on the applicant’s demonstration of adequate project progress.

Applicant Eligibility

18. Who is an eligible applicant?

Eligible applicants for these grant funds are non-profit organizations and governmental entities.

As part of the application, applicants must identify all organizations that will be supporting an applicant in carrying out the program. Eligible sub-recipients (partner organizations that will be receiving a portion of the grant funding being requested by the applicant) include any public, for profit, or non-profit entity who meets all listed requirements.

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



19. Who is an ineligible applicant?

Ineligible applicants include the following:

- Individuals.
- For profit organizations.
- Lobbying organizations as defined by the IRS.
- Political organizations subject to tax under IRC section 527 such as political parties; campaign committees for candidates for federal, state or local office; and political action committees.

20. Are public schools, including public charter schools, eligible to apply?

Yes. As governmental entities, public schools and public charter schools are eligible to apply.

21. Are religious organizations eligible to apply?

Provided that the religious organization is a registered non-profit, then it may apply as an applicant. However, if it is registered as a for-profit entity, then it can only participate as a partner or sub-recipient to an applicant.

Please note that a religious organization's proposed program must be made available to all individuals regardless of their religious affiliation.

22. Are Tribal nations and Tribally-owned businesses eligible to apply?

Yes. Tribal nations and Tribally-owned businesses are eligible to participate in the program as either an applicant, partner, or sub-recipient.

23. We received a Round 1 Workforce Innovation Grant. Are we eligible to be the applicant on a Round 2 application?

Yes, as long as the grant award would not result in the applicant receiving a cumulative total of more than \$10 million under the Program. In addition, the capacity of an organization to manage multiple grants will be considered as outlined in the rubric.

Application Scoring

24. How will the applications be scored?

Applications will be scored competitively by a scoring committee. Applications will be scored based solely on the information provided by the applicants in their written application materials. As a result, applications should include all information necessary to effectively communicate the applicant's proposed solution to the scoring committee.

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



25. A similar region, workforce challenge, or partner collaboration received a Round 1 Workforce Innovation Grant. Will our application receive a lower score as a result?

No, applications will be evaluated independently based on the [Program Guide](#) and [Rubric](#) provided.

Specific Application Questions

26. Are there limits to the amount of content an applicant can include in their application?

Yes. Please consult the Department of Administration’s Application Instructions to review the word count and character limits for the DocuSign application and attachments. No additional items may be submitted beyond those required by the application.

27. Where can I find data to support my project? What evidence-based resources are available to me?

DWD offers many resources on the [Wisconomy website](#) including data on employment, wages, occupations, and more. On Wisconomy, you can also find the contact information for your regional economist who can assist you with data needs.

WEDC also offers the [Locate In Wisconsin](#) tool to assist in collecting data. You can find and compare data about communities, specific occupations, demographics, the labor force, consumer expenditures, wages, and businesses.

The data, research, and/or evidence to support your project need should be relevant to the populations and geographic extent of the workforce challenge.

28. Where does an applicant complete the attestation checklist?

The attestation is contained in Section 4 of the Department of Administration’s DocuSign application for the Program. The applicant must complete the attestation questions on behalf of itself. The applicant is also required to independently collect the same attestations from all proposed sub-recipients. The State may ask the applicant to submit the sub-recipient attestations at any point during the application review and scoring process. Please review the convenience copy of the Application on page 1 of the “Application Checklist and Instructions” document for a list of all attestations.



29. If we and our partners are re-applying in Round 2, do we need new Letters of Commitment from them, or can we simply re-use our letters from Round 1?

For Round 2, you must submit updated Letters of Recommendation from your partners – even if the scope of the project remains the same. This is to confirm that your partners remain committed to the responsibilities and success of the proposed project.

30. What does the State mean by sustainability in question 3.10 of the grant application?

Sustainability refers to the continuation of the project, program activities, outcomes and/or partnerships after the end of the Workforce Innovation Grant Program. Although many applicants focus on finding the resources to continue the project “as is” beyond the grant period, the State's overall goal is to ensure that the successful innovations created through applicants’ projects and the lessons applicants’ learn about how to address the identified workforce challenge continue after the end of the grant period, even if in modified forms that are consistent with the conditions and resources available. The applicant's primary focus in responding to this question should be on how it believes it will be able to meet this goal of the State after the end of the grant period.

31. If we submitted our application before the deadline and need to make a change, can we amend or supplement our application?

If you need to revise your application in any way prior to the April 18, 2022 application deadline, you will need to withdraw your existing application and submit a new application before the application deadline. Please send an email with the submitters name, email address, and submission date and time to withdraw an application to DOA at WorkforceInnovation@wisconsin.gov. Changes to the application are not allowed after the submission deadline.

Please refer to the “Application Checklist and Instructions” for additional information on how to effectively submit your application. The program strongly encourages you to review your application for any errors prior to submission.

32. After the application deadline, will there be an opportunity for applicants to cure inadvertent mistakes that lead to disqualification or other non-scoring of the application?

Yes, inadvertent errors that would cause an applicant to be disqualified before scoring begins may be provided an opportunity to correct the errors. If the applicant identifies such an error, it should notify the program immediately at WorkforceInnovation@wisconsin.gov. In addition, a dedicated team will be reviewing eligibility, the attestations, and application materials for completeness prior to scoring. If a disqualifying factor is identified in your application, you will be contacted to determine whether it was an error and, if so, provided a short timeframe in which to correct it.

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.



Terms of the Grant Award

33. What are the reporting requirements?

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to the Department of Administration on at least a quarterly basis. The reports are likely to include, at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) Narrative description of project progress
- 2) Itemization of expenditures
- 3) Number of project participants served
- 4) Demographic information regarding project participants served

Additional reporting requirements may be added to comply with Treasury Department requirements or to reflect individual aspects of the grantee's project.

Other Questions

34. We applied in Round 1 and were notified of our non-award. Is there feedback we can receive to improve our chances for a Round 2 award?

Specific feedback on your Round 1 application will not be provided. Applicants are encouraged to review the updated [Program Guide](#) and [Rubric](#) and consider ways to improve their applications to meet the purpose of the program and directly answer the application questions.