

GRANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT (GPA): WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR CITY OF MILWAUKEE RESIDENTS

Economic and workforce development in the City Milwaukee and surrounding area is critical to the Wisconsin economy. Job Center of Wisconsin labor market data for the Milwaukee area shows there is high need for workers in all skill levels and occupational job sectors. Meanwhile, the unemployment rates for the city and county are higher than the state and national rate (not seasonally adjusted, July 2016). Governor Walker allocated \$1 Million in Wisconsin Fast Forward worker training grant funds to Employer-Based Job Training Programs to help City of Milwaukee residents develop skills that are in-demand by area employers.

Wisconsin Fast Forward Program:

Governor Scott Walker signed 2013 Act 9, also known as Wisconsin Fast Forward, into law in March 2013 with strong bipartisan support from both chambers of the Wisconsin Legislature. The Wisconsin Fast Forward program was allocated \$14.8 million in funding for the 2015-17 biennium to provide employer-focused worker training grants. The Office of Skills Development (OSD) at the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) administers the grant program.

The Office of Skills Development is the point of contact for employers who can demonstrate a critical need for skilled workers and are seeking Wisconsin Fast Forward training grants for a customized skills training program. The OSD administers and oversees the grant program through a transparent and accountable process. Additionally, OSD will work to encourage the development of innovative solutions at the local and regional level that bring together employers, educators, workforce development entities, and economic development organizations to meet area workforce demands.

The Wisconsin Fast Forward program will act as a catalyst, encouraging increased collaboration between Wisconsin's workforce trainers and employers to develop and execute business-led training programs. These training programs are designed to provide sustainable short- and medium-term training and placement of workers in positions that offer trainees long-term professional growth and economic opportunity. To maintain a strong environment for private-sector job creation, Wisconsin must train workers to fill the employment demands of growing and expanding employer(s).

The long-term goal of Wisconsin Fast Forward training programs is to encourage partnership between employer(s) and local or regional economic development organizations, workforce development boards, post-secondary institutions, and private training providers. It is anticipated that the relationships developed through Wisconsin Fast Forward funded training programs will continue to flourish after the Wisconsin Fast Forward grant has ended.

Grant Program Announcement Summary

Through this Grant Program Announcement (GPA), OSD is seeking grant applications that address a specific workforce need in the City of Milwaukee and surrounding area that is not met through another education or training program. The proposed training plan should focus on City of Milwaukee residents. The demand should be supported by localized labor market information. The grant funds may not be used to supplant existing, routine business training, but should focus on employers' skill

gaps. Eligible projects should demonstrate that funds will help to increase the number of City of Milwaukee residents employed in the City of Milwaukee and surrounding area. The grantee must describe how transportation will be provided for the City of Milwaukee trainees to and from the training worksite. Partnerships with community organizations are encouraged to meet transportation needs.

Funds available through this GPA will enable employer(s), in partnership with a workforce training provider or providers, to deliver customized training to City of Milwaukee residents. These grants provide a funding source to respond to the area's workforce needs by serving City of Milwaukee residents with customized training and employment opportunities. The OSD will ensure accountability and transparency of outcomes by tracking training completions, job placements, wage increases, and overall return on public investment.

Legislative Authority: Awarding of Wisconsin Fast Forward funding under this GPA is subject to spending authority for the FY15-FY17 fiscal biennium as defined in sec. 106.27 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Administrative Rules: The rules governing the Wisconsin Fast Forward program are included in [Chapter DWD 801](#).

Targeted Business Size: Any

Geographic Business Location: Must be in the City of Milwaukee or accessible through transportation as specified by the applicant. The grantee must describe how transportation will be provided for the City of Milwaukee trainees to and from the training worksite.

Type of Trainees: The trainees served must be City of Milwaukee residents. Particular emphasis should be given to serving employment populations such as: Unemployed, Underemployed, Ex-Offenders, and First Time Graduates. Funding may be used for Incumbent workers, New Hires, and Seasonal trainees if they are City of Milwaukee residents.

Employment categories defined below:

- Unemployed: Trainee not employed at the time of training.
- Underemployed: Trainee not with employer placement partner at the time of training.
- Ex-Offenders: Trainees who are ex-offenders reintegrating into communities when they are released after time served.
- First Time Graduates: Trainees who have completed a first degree or post-graduate degree within the last two years.
- New Hires: Trainee employed at employer placement partner after the GPA release date.
- Incumbent: Trainee employed at the employer placement partner before the GPA release date.

Duration of Training Courses: Short- to medium-term training with each course or module lasting no longer than 12 months.

Training Project Period: The training project period, including curriculum development, training, pre- and post-training activities, can be no longer than 2 years.

Grant Amount: From \$5,000 to \$200,000 per Grantee. Grant and match expenditures must be incurred during the training project period. All eligible grant expenditures will be reimbursed when grant and match expenses are documented by the Grantee and approved by OSD. If awarded, a percentage of the grant may be retained until Grantee is in compliance with all conditions of the grant as stipulated in the contract.

Match/Cost Sharing Requirement: Cash or in-kind match equal to the amount of the grant is required. Letters of commitment from the employers, partners and/or applicant documenting match will be required in the application.

Description: Applications must include a training plan in the City Milwaukee or surrounding area to train and employ City of Milwaukee residents. Particular emphasis should be given to serving employment populations such as: Unemployed, Underemployed, Ex-Offenders, and First Time Graduates. Funding may be used for Incumbent workers, New Hires, and Seasonal trainees if they are City of Milwaukee residents. Grantees that choose to train an incumbent workforce must adhere to a worker wage increase, unless its union contract precludes it from doing so. Incumbent worker (City of Milwaukee residents) training programs should demonstrate that they will provide the education and skills determined necessary by the employer(s) to enhance the stability and growth of the business and provide opportunities for income and career growth for trainees.

Successful training applications will be defined by employers and may include partnerships with local or regional economic development organizations, workforce development boards, public or private post-secondary institutions and/or private training providers. *The OSD recommends that training focus on skills attainment and certifications.* Skills attainment develops skills that directly benefit the workers receiving the training by increasing their mastery of their occupation in their field of employment and/or provide new skills for new product lines or business expansion.

Examples of occupational sectors include but are not limited to the following:

Manufacturing:

- Standard Training Model (STM):
- Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other
- Production Workers, All Other
- STEM training

Examples of occupational sectors continued:

Distribution/Transportation:

- Distribution and logistics
- First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers
- Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other

Customer Service/Sales:

- Customer Service Representatives
- Driver/Sales Workers
- Computer User Support Specialists

Construction:

- Construction Laborers

Healthcare:

- Healthcare Support Workers, All Other
- Registered Nurses

Agriculture:

- Food and Feed Safety

Welding:

- Welding, Soldering, Brazing, etc.
- Blueprint reading for Welders
- Welders, Cutters, and Welder Fitters

Maintenance/Security:

- Building Cleaning Workers, All Other
- Security Guards

Application Forms, Instructions, Checklists, and Process: Applications must be submitted online. You can access the online application, along with the application instructions, informational webinars, related guidelines and checklists at: WisconsinFastForward.com.

Opportunity Category: Competitive

Important Dates:

- Grant Application Due Date: November 10, 2016 (5:00 PM CDT).
- Anticipated "Intent to Award" announcements: Within 60 days from Grant Application due date.

Eligibility: Each application must include an employer in the City Milwaukee or surrounding area with a plan to employ and train City of Milwaukee residents. The employer must have at least one area location and the trainees must be City of Milwaukee residents. Applications may include one or more partner(s), including local or regional economic development organizations, workforce development boards, and post-secondary educational institutions or private training providers. The applicant may be any one of the above listed organizations in this subsection and must designate a fiscal agent in the application.

Eligible Expenses: Wisconsin Fast Forward funds shall be used for training-related expenses, which may include instructor salaries and fringe benefits, consultant/contractual expenses, training materials and supplies. You can access the online application, along with the application instructions, informational webinars, related guidelines and checklists at WisconsinFastForward.com.

Supplement not Supplant: All expenses must be new and cannot replace existing federal, state or local government funding. Substituting existing funds with state grant funds will result in additional fiscal monitoring and may result in an audit. Violations of permissible expenses may result in suspension of current or future funds under this program, repayment of monies awarded under this grant and possible civil and/or criminal penalties.

Ineligible Expenses: Wisconsin Fast Forward funds may not be used for the purchase of real estate or other capital expenses, construction or remodeling, Kindergarten–12th grade education, tuition, or trainees' wages, stipends or fringe benefits. See the website at WisconsinFastForward.com for the application instructions, related guidelines, and rules in Chapter DWD 801 for details on ineligible expenses.

Outcomes: The training project should produce quantifiable outcomes and impacts for the employer, training participants and the state of Wisconsin. Successful training projects will result in addressing workforce needs in the City of Milwaukee and surrounding area by employing and training City of Milwaukee residents. The grantee should address projected outcomes for the purposed training plan such as; training new hires, incumbent workers retaining employment, earning higher wages, increasing their skill attainment, and/or receiving industry-recognized credentials. Wisconsin taxpayers should recognize the economic impact from Wisconsin Fast Forward, such as; higher state revenues from increased individual income, sales tax receipts, increased corporate income, and property tax receipts.

The Grantee will be responsible for tracking and monitoring individual workers receiving training under the grant through the completion of pre- and post-training reports and a final report on the net jobs; including type of trainee served as defined in the *Type of Trainees* section of this GPA and their related wages and/or wage increases. The anticipated result is a skilled workforce that is well-suited for employment and advancement opportunities in Wisconsin.

Components of a Successful Application:

- The employer must be in the city of Milwaukee and/or surrounding area with a plan to employ and train City of Milwaukee residents.
- Grant applications should outline a training program that supports City of Milwaukee residents finding and retaining employment and/or incumbent workers earning higher wages.
- The application must include an appropriate training provider. Factors to consider in selecting an appropriate training provider include a demonstrated history of:
 - Successful training through its placement, retention, and evaluation rates.
 - Collaboration with the targeted industry in the development of the training program curriculum.
 - Use of current industry standards as the basis for programs utilized to train students in the targeted industry.
- The grantee must describe how transportation will be provided for the City of Milwaukee trainees to and from the training worksite. Partnerships with community organizations is encouraged to meet transportation needs.
- Applicants should consider consulting with local or regional economic or workforce development organizations to assess current skill deficits in the local labor market area, the potential impact of the proposed skill training in alleviating that deficit and the potential for other employer(s) within the region to benefit from the up-skilled workforce.
- Applicants should also consider inclusion of a performance-based assessment of the trainees' skills, competencies and trainability to measure the training impact.
- Applications should include quantitative method(s) to collect and report data regarding the individuals selected to participate in the training, both pre- and post-training, and the provision of any business information necessary for program evaluation.

Additional Considerations:

- Special consideration may be given to grantees whose training program targets emphasized employment groups as identified in *Type of Trainees* section of this GPA (i.e. Unemployed, Underemployed, Ex-Offenders, and First Time Graduates).
- Trainee testing and assessment is provided to ensure training and employability plans are in place prior to instruction.
- Special consideration given to employers located in the City of Milwaukee.
- Instruction is task-specific and designed to prepare City of Milwaukee residents for employment within the City of Milwaukee and/or surrounding area in the shortest time possible.
- Instruction is based on job task analysis and is performance-based.
- Specific employers and related available jobs are identified in the application.
- Certificates of proficiency or industry-recognized credentials are provided to all trainees completing training and demonstrating the required competency(s).
- The applicant will provide trainee follow-up to determine success and placement after training.
- Provide a clear statement of placement goals that are supported by commitment letters from the employer(s). In general, OSD recommends that organizations strive for 85% placement in unemployed projects when competencies are demonstrated, that pay at least 200% of individual federal poverty level (\$11.25) wages. Applications that do not meet these goals should provide support as to why this goal cannot be met. Special consideration may be given to grantees whose training program targets emphasized employment groups as identified in *Type of Trainees* section of this GPA (i.e. Unemployed, Underemployed, Ex-Offenders, and First Time Graduates).

Consortium applicants:

Employer Letters of Commitment: The objective of the Milwaukee economic and workforce development Wisconsin Fast Forward GPA is to address a workforce need in the City of Milwaukee and/or surrounding area and address unemployment within the City of Milwaukee. Letters of commitment to hire trainees from the purposed training plan or raise wages will be required from the participating employers to indicate the extent of job placements or incumbent worker wage increases. The employer's letter should also include commitment to any match funding and/or participation in the planning and implementation of the training program.

Partner Letters of Commitment and Support: Partner letters of commitment 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, wage increases, or match funding, but support the training model, may submit a letter of support for the project.

Grant Evaluation Rubric and Scoring:

OSD will rate applications on a 100 point scale, based upon the following point values:

- Project Need (up to 20 points)
- Training Program Design, Cost and Implementation (up to 20 points)
- Training Objectives and Outcomes (up to 20 points)
- Economic Impact (up to 15 points)
- Capacity Building (up to 10 points)
- Economic Opportunity Enhancements (up to 15 points)

The detailed Grant Evaluation Rubric and Score Sheet is available on our website at WisconsinFastForward.com.

The OSD will review each application submitted to ensure compliance with application instructions and relevant state and federal regulations. Each grant application must satisfy basic criteria as set out in the application instructions to be considered. All compliant grant applications will be scored. Applicants will be required to attend the Grant Evaluation Committee meeting to allow committee members to ask questions prior to completing their evaluation. In addition to the scores and Evaluation Committee Recommendations, OSD may consider 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. In summary, each grant application will be evaluated on the merits of the training program and the intent to hire Unemployed, Underemployed, Ex-Offenders, and First Time Graduates, along with overall economic impact specific to the City of Milwaukee and surrounding area.

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 regular project updates with reimbursement requests, documentation of match contributions, progress reports, pre- and post-training reports, and a final project report.

The schedule for reporting will be included in the grant award materials or contract. Grantees are responsible to review all grant award special conditions and reporting requirements. In addition to any special conditions described in the award documents and reporting requirements, please note the following:

1. All grant applications funded under this announcement will be subject to program evaluation by OSD. Grantees must comply with all reporting, data collection, and evaluation requirements, as determined by OSD.
2. All grant funds will be reimbursed 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. Grant expenditures will be reimbursed at 95 percent of the total amount claimed. After the applicant has achieved their contracted performance objectives, the remaining 5 percent of the grant award will be made available for reimbursement.
3. All grant recipients are subject to audit of related expenditures by DWD staff and/or by an independent qualified firm acceptable to OSD.
4. To the extent feasible and permissible by law, OSD will honor an applicant's request that trade secrets or other confidential information submitted to OSD remain confidential. The OSD will treat the information 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 OSD's 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.