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**Request for Proposals for the**

**Partnerships for Recovery**

**Rapid Reemployment Program**

**Administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Workforce Skills Cabinet**

**RESPONSES DUE:** Rolling Application Deadlines Through 9/30/2021

Upload electronic submission to the following link:

<https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328875>

**QUESTIONS:** [**RRP@commcorp.org**](mailto:RRP@commcorp.org)

Commonwealth Corporation

**WEBSITE:**  [www.commcorp.org](http://www.commcorp.org/)

**Partnerships for Recovery -** **RAPID REEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Section One: Overview of Grant Initiative Goals and Structure

1. ***About the Initiative:*** The Workforce Skills Cabinet is pleased to announce new investments to support our state’s recovery through the Partnerships for Recovery Plan announced by the Baker-Polito Administration in October 2020. The Baker-Polito Administration is making funds available to address the significant economic impact of COVID-19 on the more than 1.8 million Massachusetts residents who have experienced an employment interruption due to COVID. This Request for Proposals makes available up to $4.652M to fund the scale up of existing training vendors, partnering with employers, to train and place in employment, individuals impacted by COVID for priority occupations to meet post-COVID hiring demand.
2. ***Funding Source:*** On March 27, 2020, the President of the United States signed into law the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the “CARES” Act). This $2.2 trillion package created the Coronavirus Relief Fund, a $150 billion effort to provide state and local governments with resources to address the unexpected costs incurred due to COVID-19. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts received approximately $2.7 billion from this fund, a portion of which is being directed to this grant program. This grant initiative is administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Workforce Skills Cabinet.
3. ***Target Populations:*** An expenditure will be deemed an eligible use of funds where it is used to provide training and job placement to an individual who has experienced an employment interruption due to COVID as evidenced by meeting one of the eligibility criteria listed in Section 3B.
4. ***Funding Availability*:** Up to $4.652M is available for this training and placement programs. Please see Section 5 for more information.
5. ***Match Requirement*:** There are no matching funds required.
6. ***Duration of Contract(s)*:** Contracts will be issued for a period for a maximum period from April 1, 2021-December 30, 2021, depending on application submission and approval date. All training and placements must be completed by November 30, 2021 to allow 30 days to reach the final performance-based payment indicator of placement with 30 days retention.
7. ***Overview of Performance-Based Payments:*** Contracts issued through this solicitation for training and placement programs will be paid on a performance basis and must be shared locally between a training provider and their MassHire Career Center partner. Please see Section 4 for more information.
8. ***Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | March 3, 2021 |
| Proposals Due | Rolling Application Beginning March 3, 2021-September 30, 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date(s) | Projected to be awarded within 30 days of application receipt |
| Deadline For Training Completion & Placement | November 30, 2021 |
| Contract End Date- All Contracts | December 30, 2021 |

Section Two: Eligible Lead Applicants and Partners

1. ***Eligible Lead Applicants*:** Eligible lead applicants are Massachusetts based training providers with experience and existing training capacity to delivery occupational training to the target population for proposed targeted occupations. This may include:

Massachusetts Chapter 74 Programs

Massachusetts Community Colleges

Community Based Organizations

Non-Profit and For-Profit Training Organizations

Please see Section 7 for additional score criteria.

1. ***Lead Applicant Role:*** The lead applicant must:

* Have a commitment to work collaboratively with Commonwealth Corporation to ensure that the program meets participants’ needs and achieves planned outcomes.
* Collaborate with regional partners, including MassHire Workforce Boards and MassHire Career Centers, who are engaged in similar work to ensure alignment of program goals to labor market, ensure effective employer engagement and to develop a long-term strategy to support the needs of the target industry.
* Collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the program.
* Have operational and fiscal capacity to manage public funds.
* Agree to the performance-based payment terms described in Section 4A.
* Be in good standing in MA and demonstrate the capability and capacity to provide the training including meeting any state or federal regulatory requirements related to any component of the proposed training program.
* Be in good standing in MA and demonstrate the capability and capacity to provide the industry related credential identified by the applicants as a component of the training program including meeting accreditation and or certification required.
* Develop MOU with local MassHire Career Center, agree to share performance-based payments with MassHire Career Center as defined in Section 4A.
* Agree to schedule proposed training in order for training and placements to occur prior to November 30, 2021.

1. ***Required Partner: MassHire Career Center:*** Training providers must develop a MOU with a local MassHire Career Center, agreeing to share the performance-based payments and agreeing to an articulation of responsibilities each party will carry out in fulfilling their role to implement this program. A template is provided as Attachment 5. This template includes required responsibilities that all MassHire/training provider teams must adhere to and provides optional space to further articulate additional responsibilities and terms that local partnerships may determine. Applicants can access a list of MassHire Career Centers at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center>

The chart below summarizes the roles and responsibilities of the two primary partners.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Training Provider (Grant Applicant)  Roles & Responsibilities | MassHire Career Center  Roles & Responsibilities |
| * Contract with Commonwealth Corporation * Enter into MOU with MassHire Career Center * Communicate program entry requirements to MassHire Career Center and collaborate on screening process * Ultimately make enrollment decisions * Coordinate and provide all training, including didactic, hands-on, and work experience. * Contingency plans to provide all instruction in social distancing environment * Incorporate work readiness and job search prep skill building, in collaboration with the MassHire Career Center * Collect and report all participant data into Apricot * Prepare and place graduates in employment in partnership with MassHire Career Center * Submit invoices to Commonwealth Corporation and distribute specified share of payment to MassHire Career Centers and maintain documentation of payment. | * Conduct recruitment, assessment and screening of participants, aligned with program requirements * Maintain contact with participants while they are enrolled in training to ensure persistence * Make participant referrals to necessary support services (housing, childcare vouchers, etc.) * Prepare and place graduates in employment in partnership with the training program * Provide 3-months of post-placement support upon job placement |

1. ***Required Partner: Regional Hub/MassHire Workforce Board:*** All training providers funded through this program will be required to work collaboratively with their local MassHire Workforce Board and with the Regional Hub made up of all of the Workforce Boards in the region. The Workforce Skills Cabinet will be contracting separately with a lead Workforce Board in each of the seven WIOA Planning Regions to provide overall regional coordination and fund staff time to serve in the capacity of Market Maker. The Market Maker will assist all participating regional training providers and MassHire Career Centers conduct employer engagement in the targeted industries to develop job opportunities for graduates of programs funded through this RFP. Workforce board staff have substantial knowledge about business demand for workers in their region. Applicants do not need to complete a MOU with their MassHire Workforce Board, but we highly encourage applicants to notify the WB of their intent to apply. Applicants can access a list of MassHire Workforce Boards at the following link: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board
2. ***Required Partners: Employers:*** Partnerships **must include** a **minimum of one business** with operations in Massachusetts and that employ Massachusetts residents in the target occupation(s). Business partner(s) must sign a MOA or letter of commitment, agreeing to utilize the program as a pipeline to fill vacancies. Email communication is also acceptable but should detail the roles and evidence in the body of the email. We encourage training providers to conduct outreach to multiple businesses to identify more than one business partner, where applicable, to ensure sufficient placement opportunities for graduates. Selected business partner(s) need to have demonstrated vacancies and/or hiring needs for workers in the proposed target occupation and a commitment to a candidate-sourcing strategy that includes recruiting and training members of the proposed target population as a solution to meet this demand.
3. ***Other Partners:*** Training providers are encouraged to leverage existing and new partnerships to ensure success in recruitment, support, training and placement of individuals served through this program. There are a variety of federal and state investments being made to support families and individuals in the Commonwealth. Grantees are encouraged to leverage those resources to support participants. These partners do not need to be identified at the time of submission but should be part of the ongoing regional partnership building that collectively the training provider, MassHire Career Center and MassHire Workforce Board engage in facilitating. Examples of such partners include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations, local service offices of public agencies, employer associations, labor organizations, institutions of higher education and vocational technical education institutions, housing agencies, and non-profit education, training or other service providers.

For training providers focused on healthcare occupations, please be aware that there are Healthcare Hubs in each of the regional planning regions within the state focused on supporting the workforce needs of healthcare employers. Training providers are not required to contact these Healthcare Hubs in advance of submitting their application, however, Commonwealth Corporation will connect all funded Partnerships for Recovery Rapid Reemployment grants focused on healthcare occupations with their Healthcare Hub post award.

Section Three: Training Program Design Requirements

1. ***Target Sector / Occupation:*** Applicants must provide job training, placement, and support services that prepare the target population to meet business’ skill and work-readiness requirements for in-demand Healthcare, Information Technology, Financial Services or Transportation occupation(s) as detailed below. These occupations were identified by the Workforce Skills Cabinet through the [**Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process**](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-your-regions-blueprint)and confirmed in the summer of 2020 to still be in demand during the pandemic. Applicants who propose the **following occupations do not need to provide additional demand data**.
2. Applicants may propose an alternative occupation from those listed below, however, the target occupation must still be within one of the target sectors: Healthcare, Information Technology, Financial Services or Transportation or the Region’s Blueprint critical or priority occupations. Applicants choosing this alternative approach, must demonstrate that the proposed occupation is in-demand, by citing labor market data, supporting employer demand data, or other relevant indicators. **Applicants utilizing this approach must propose a cost per participant that is consistent with the allowable cost and training hours on the next page**.

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| ***Eligible Target Occupations*** | **Healthcare**   * Certified Nursing Assistant * Patient Care Technician * Home Health Aid * Pharmacy Tech * Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technician * Medical Records and Health Information Technician * Medical Assistant * Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselor | **Information Technology**   * Web Developer * Cyber Security * Computer User Support Specialist * Computer Network Support Administrator * Information Security Analyst |
| **Finance/Business**   * Customer Service Agent * Teller * Loan Servicing Specialist * Loan Servicing Clerk * Lending Processor * Mortgage Originator * Lending Officer * Commercial Loan Assistant * Credit Analyst | **Transportation**   * Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Healthcare** | **Advised Hours of Training** | **Total Funding Up To** |
| Certified Nursing Assistant | 150-200 hours | $ 4,500 |
| Patient Care Technician | 150-200 hours | $ 4,500 |
| Home Health Aid | 150-200 hours | $ 4,500 |
| Pharmacy Tech | 150-200 hours | $ 4,500 |
| Medical and Clinical Laboratory Assistant | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Medical Records and Health Information Technician | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Medical Assistant | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselor | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| **Information Technology** | **Advised Hours of Training** | **Total Funding Up To** |
| Web Developer | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Cyber Security Analyst | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Computer User Support Specialist | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Computer Network Support Administrator | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Information Security Analyst | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| **Financial Services** | **Advised Hours of Training** | **Total Funding Up To** |
| Customer Service Agent | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Teller | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Loan Servicing Specialist | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Loan Servicing Clerk | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Lending Processor | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Mortgage Originator | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Lending Officer | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Commercial Loan Assistant | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| Credit Analyst | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |
| **Transportation** | **Advised Hours of Training** | **Total Funding Up To** |
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver | 200-300 hours | $ 5,500 |

1. ***Target Population:***An expenditure will be deemed an eligible use of funds where it is used to provide training and job placement to an individual who has experienced an employment interruption due to COVID as evidenced by meeting one of the following eligibility criteria.  As part of recruitment and enrollment, MassHire Career Centers will review these criteria to determine eligibility and capture the COVID impact in the participant’s case record.  An individual is eligible to participate if they are unemployed due to COVID or experience reduced hours:
2. Experienced an employment interruption due to COVID-19 and can be documented in the following ways:
   1. Eligibility for unemployment insurance or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance or any special UI programs created by the CARES Act during the pandemic period (the Commonwealth will cross-check participants to the UI/PUA system following enrollment);
   2. Staff review and case note documentation of eligibility for the Rapid Reemployment program based for criteria established by CARES, including as set forth in Attachment III to UIPL No. 16-20, SEC. 2102(a)(3)(A)(ii)(I)(aa-kk).  These include where:

(aa) the individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(bb) a member of the individual's household has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(cc) the individual is providing care for a family member or a member of the individual's household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and therefore experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(dd) a child or other person in the household for which the individual has primary caregiving responsibility is unable to attend school or another facility that is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and such school or facility care is required for the individual to work and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(ee) the individual is unable to reach the place of employment because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(ff) the individual is unable to reach the place of employment because the individual has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(gg) the individual was scheduled to commence employment and does not have a job or is unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(hh) the individual has become the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19 and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(ii) the individual has to quit his or her job as a direct result of COVID-19 and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours;

(jj) the individual's place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID19 public health emergency and therefore the individual experienced unemployment or reduced hours

1. ***Program Requirements:*** Training providers will deliver occupational skills training to prepare the target population for new employment in one of the targeted in-demand occupations detailed in Section 3A. The proposed program must prepare individuals for employment, including all didactic, hands-on, and work experience requirements. Training providers must agree to the following training delivery services:

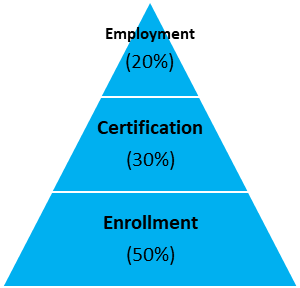
* Develop and implement a recruitment, assessment and selection process that ensures:
  + Individuals selected to participate in the program are willing and able to work
  + Individuals are aware of the target occupation(s)’ job description(s), duties, physical requirements, schedule and work environment(s) prior to applying to the program
  + Individuals have the pre-requisite skills, or can be referred to and complete a program to attain these skills, prior to enrolling in the program
  + Individuals selected to participate represent diverse backgrounds
* Provide training that addresses the employers’ workforce needs, prepare participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), optimize opportunities for participant learning and career development, and help to achieve placement for participants. This may include:
* Basic education, including ABE, GED, ESOL, math, computers/technology contextualized to the industry and occupation(s)
* Vocational training
* Post-secondary education and credentialing
* Offer training that results in an industry recognized credential required for entry into target occupation
* Engage employers in identifying job openings, participating in program design and/or delivery, and signing the Memorandum of Agreement committing to utilize the program as a pipeline for filling vacancies
* Assign a job developer who is responsible for active outreach to and engagement with employers to identify and secure unsubsidized job placements for program participants, including, if relevant to the industry, unsubsidized jobs through employment agencies
* Refer participants to existing public and private resources to provide support services to participants, when needed, including transportation and childcare, to alleviate barriers to participation
* Provide case management and maintain case notes for each participant
* Provide 90 day post-placement case management and support to participants, including but not limited to employment retention and re-employment assistance

Section Four: Administrative Requirements

1. ***Performance-Based Payment Structure:*** Contracts issued through this solicitation for training and placement programs will be paid on a performance basis and must be shared locally between a training provider and their MassHire Career Center partner. Payments will be made for the following activities:

* 50% will be paid to the training provider upon enrollment. This payment is intended to cover MassHire expenses to recruit and screen participants and training provider expenses associated with instruction, including instructors, materials and space. An individual must have attended a minimum of 75% of the scheduled class days for a two-week period in order to qualify the organization for an enrollment payment.
* 30% will be paid to the training provider upon completion and certification. This payment is intended to cover MassHire expenses associated with maintaining contact with participants and ensuring persistence in the program and to cover remaining instructional costs and cost associated with preparing participants to obtain certification, including licensing fees, exams, registration fees, etc.
* 20% will be paid to the grantee upon completing 30 days of employment after being placed in a full-time training related new job. This payment is intended to cover MassHire and training provider expenses to assist job seekers with resume development, coaching support, and direct outreach to businesses to place individuals. It is also intended to cover services to support participants for the first 3 months after placement. **Job placement is a joint effort between MassHire and training provider.**

This model is intended to pay all fees associated with participation, certification, job placement and retention support. Participants should not be charged additional fees.



30% payable *by WSC* upon successful program completion and **certification**

*$1350*

*$2250*

**Example Performance Based  
 Funding Model**

Payment is made to a training provider & MassHire upon **completion of milestones:**

50% payable by WSC  
 upon **enrollment**

20% payable *by WSC* upon completing 30 days of **employment**

*$4500K total*

*$900*

**Cost Per Trainee:** Training providers must propose a cost per individual, in accordance with the allowable cost per participant listed in the chart above, to provide recruitment, screening, training, work readiness, case management placement and 90 days post-placement support to enrolled individuals. These payments must be shared between the training provider and their MassHire Career Center partner based on the following fee schedule. There are a variety of federal and state investments being made to support families and individuals in the Commonwealth. Applicants are encouraged to leverage existing public and private resources to support additional costs associated with supporting the participant for more extensive needs.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Example of Funding Sharing Programs** | Total | Training Provider | MassHire  Career Center | % of Total |
| Employment/Retention | $900 | $400 | $500 | 20% |
| Certification | $1350 | $850 | $500 | 30% |
| Recruitment / Enrollment | $2250 | $1750 | $500 | 50% |
| Total | $4500 | $3000 | $1500 | 100% |

The grantee will regularly submit invoices using an agreed upon template provided by Commonwealth Corporation upon contract start-up. Grantees will only be paid for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Grantees will be required to submit documentation to demonstrate that the indicator has been met. Further information will be provided with the contract, but may include entering enrolments into participant database, submission of instructor attendance sheets, copies of certification/licenses, employer confirmation of placement and paystubs. Our intent is to balance out the verification documentation with feasible requirements that allow training providers and MassHire Career Centers to focus on the value-add work of supporting individuals in their participation journey.

1. ***Participant-Level Data Reporting Requirements*:** Grantees will be required to collect and provide the following types of data:

Upon enrollment: participant demographics, participant social security numbers and confirmation of participant employment status.

Throughout the program: services provided and participant progression through the program, including participant attendance, participation levels, and credentials attained.

Upon program completion: new employment and 3-month retention status.

Grantees will be required to collect enrollment data using a participant registration form provided by Commonwealth Corporation and enter data on participants and training services in a participant-level database to be provided by Commonwealth Corporation.

Commonwealth Corporation will not provide any party with the names of any participants or any other information that may be used to identify a participant unless the participant has provided prior permission.

1. ***Program Progress Reporting Requirements:*** Grantees will be required to submit the following narrative reports using templates supplied by Commonwealth Corporation:

Brief Monthly Reports: These reports will be due on the 15th of the month and will include just 3-4 basic survey responses to ensure communication on status, include progress in meeting performance measures and to identify any opportunities for assistance. The format for this report will be provided to grantees after a contract is awarded.

Final Report: This report will be submitted at the end of the contract period and will document what was achieved through the investment of these funds, inform future funding practices and provide information that could be used more generally among organizations doing similar work. The format for this report will be provided to grantees after a contract is awarded.

1. ***Participant Eligibility & Documentation:*** Grantees must establish a selection and eligibility process to identify individuals appropriate to participate in training. In addition to the program specific eligibility criteria established by Commonwealth Corporation, the grantee and its industry partners will be required to collect and maintain the following documentation for each participant:
   * Documentation of the participant’s employment status at the time of enrollment
   * Participant Registration Form, using a required form provided by Commonwealth Corporation
   * Documentation of training services received
   * Case management/coaching notes
   * Documentation of new employment, placement wages, and retention
2. ***Program & Fiscal Monitoring:*** Commonwealth Corporation is responsible for ensuring that organizations receiving grant funds:
3. have the fiscal and program systems needed to meet all relevant federal and state requirements;
4. meet the terms of the grant award outlined in the contract with Commonwealth Corporation;
5. provide quality services to program participants; and
6. expend grant funds only for allowable activities.

As referenced in Section Three, Commonwealth Corporation will fulfill this responsibility by reviewing participant-level documentation as back-up for the performance-based payment system. We are not seeking to track line item program expenses. Additional information will be provided after a contract is awarded.

1. ***Technical Assistance:*** Each applicant awarded funding will be assigned a Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager and must assign a main point of contact at their organization who is accountable for the grant. The Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager will be available to support grantees through the duration of the grant, answering questions about operational issues as well as providing technical assistance to ensure grantees meet their performance outcomes.
2. ***Project Terms and Conditions*:**  Grantees will be required to abide by Commonwealth Corporation’s Standard Contract Terms and Conditions, which will be provided during contract negotiation. Applicants may review these terms and conditions prior to submitting an application by contacting [RRP@commcorp.org](mailto:RRP@commcorp.org) to request a copy. Given the quick turn-around award and delivery there will not be sufficient time to review extensive questions or requested revisions to the Standard Contract Terms. Please ensure signatories within your organization have agreed to the terms prior to submitting an application. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.
3. ***Deliverables and Ownership:*** Grantees agree to license or otherwise make available to Commonwealth Corporation in perpetuity, without charge, all materials prepared and/or produced in whole or in part with these funds, for Commonwealth Corporation’s use and dissemination.

Section Five: Available Funding & Allowable Costs

1. ***Funding Availability & Grant Award Amount:*** Up to $4.652M is available for the Partnerships for Recovery Rapid Reemployment programs. Grant award requests may not exceed $500,000 and must be accompanied by a timeline and spending plan to support the grant request and demonstrate the completion of proposed activities and expenditures of funding by December 30, 2021. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to award less than the requested amount. We reserve the option to extend into future years pending availability of funding, consistent service delivery and program performance.
2. ***Matching Funds:*** There are no matching funds required. However, preference will be given to businesses that propose cost sharing, including contributing funds to cover a portion of tuition or agreeing to repay the funds upon successful retention of participants.
3. ***Allowable Costs:*** Funds will be paid based on performance and at the time specified indicators are met and in accordance with documentation guidance detailed in Section 4. Funds must be share with the local MassHire Career Center based on the fee schedule detailed in Section 4 and is subject to verification by CommCorp. While training providers and MassHire partners do not need to document how their portion of the payments are utilized, in general, the intent is that funds may be used for costs associated with delivering education and training activities, and/or other services to prepare participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), optimize opportunities for participant learning and career development, and help to achieve placement for participants.
4. ***Equipment:*** It is expected that partnerships will utilize existing capacity to deliver training programs, including existing equipment that can be used to provide virtual or hands-on training to participants.

Section Six: Submission Schedule & Instructions for Submission

1. ***Submission Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | March 3, 2021 |
| Proposals Due | Rolling Application Beginning March 3, 2021-September 30, 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date(s) | Projected to be awarded within 30 days of application receipt |
| Deadline For Training Completion & Placement | November 30, 2021 |
| Contract End Date- All Contracts | December 30, 2021 |

1. **Optional Pre-Recorded Bidders’ Webinar:** An optional pre-recorded Bidders’ Webinar will be posted as a resource at [www.commcorp.org](http://www.commcorp.org) to provide an overview of the opportunity.
2. ***Clarification Period*:** Questions about this grant program will be accepted in writing. Please submit all questions via email to [RRP@commcorp.org](mailto:RRP@commcorp.org). All questions will be responded to and posted on Commonwealth Corporation’s website at [www.commcorp.org](http://www.commcorp.org). Applicants can sign up at the following link to receive email notifications when new responses are posted: <https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328874>. However, all potential applicants and interested parties are advised to check the Commonwealth Corporation’s website periodically for additional information and updates through September 30, 2021, or until grant funds are exhausted.
3. ***Application*** ***Submission Instructions*:** Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received and in most cases an applicant will be notified of the outcome of their application within 30 days. Grant applications may be submitted starting March 3, 2021 through September 30, 2021, or until grant funds are exhausted. Please upload your submission electronically to the following link:<https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328875>. In order to upload your submission, you will need to complete an online form that provides the following information: (1) the **Name** of the lead applicant organization, (2) the lead applicant organization’s **Federal Employer ID Number**, (3) the lead applicant organization’s **Department of Unemployment Assistance ID Number**, (4) the **Total Program Funds Requested**, and (5) the lead applicant organization’s **Primary Contact Information** (to be notified upon decision of grant award).

Applicants should review all components prior to uploading in order to ensure they have completed all the required information. Should you encounter any submission issues, please contact [RRP@commcorp.org](mailto:RRP@commcorp.org).

* Narrative forms must be submitted in MS Word file format.
* Budgets must be submitted in MS Excel file format.
* Signed MOAs or letters of commitment must be scanned and submitted in the form of a single PDF file.

1. ***Application Package:*** The following parts make up the required components of the Grant Application Package. Failure to provide any of the documents or materials listed below may result in the disqualification of the application. You may adjust the spacing in each section to accommodate your answers. Do not use a font size smaller than size 11 nor margins less than one inch.

**Part 1: Application Summary Form (online submission form)**

This form must be completed **online** at the time of submission. The form provided in the RFP does not need to be uploaded to the online application and is provided as a guide of the information that must be completed at the time of submission.

**Part 2: Application Narrative Form**

This form provides a list of questions that you must address in your application. Answer all the questions included on the Narrative Form. The page limit for the Narrative Form is 5 pages.

**Part 3: Program, Track Record & Budget Form**

Complete the Program, Track Record & Budget Form to provide details about the proposed programs and requested funds. The file currently has three tabs 1) program details, 2) track record and 3) budget/timeline. Please create copies of the program tab if more than one proposed programs is included in your application. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to modify application budgets prior to and/or after grant award.

**Part 4: Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) / Letters of Commitment**

Part 4 is the sample Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). All required employer partners’ and optional partners’ commitments, roles and anticipated activities must be provided through a jointly signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among partners or through the submission of separate letters of commitment. Applicants should edit and make additions to the sample MOA as appropriate in order to indicate specific partner roles and responsibilities.

**Part 5: Certification (online submission form)**

Must be attested to **online** by an individual who has signatory authority for the lead applicant upon submission. Part 5 includes the following certifications:

**Statement of Tax Compliance:**  
Pursuant to M.G.L. c62C, s49A, I am signing on behalf of this Lead Applicant and certify that under the pains and penalties of perjury the aforementioned business organization has filed all state tax returns and paid all taxes as required by law.  
  
**Certification of Compliance with Filing Requirements:**  
On behalf of the aforementioned Lead Applicant, I certify that said Lead Applicant has filed with the appropriate town or city clerk; or officer of the Commonwealth, and paid any required fees pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws as regards partnerships and/or corporations doing business in the Commonwealth.  
  
**Certification:**  
I hereby certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and that I am duly authorized/empowered to sign contracts on behalf of this organization.  
  
**Program Requirements:**

* I understand that my organization will be paid only after reaching the outcomes detailed in the RFP
* I agree to share the performance-based payment with a partnering MassHire Career Center partner based on the fee schedule detailed in the RFP
* I agree to schedule proposed training in order for training and placements to occur prior to November 30, 2021.
* I understand that I must continue to measure 90 day retention beyond the final placement payment and report this data to Commonwealth Corporation.

Section Seven: Proposal Evaluation Process and Criteria

1. ***Proposal Evaluation Process***: Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be reviewed by Commonwealth Corporation and the Workforce Skills Cabinet.

The review process will consist of the following steps:

**Step 1: Threshold Criteria Screening**

Submissions will be screened for completeness, conformity to the program requirements and timeliness of response. Submissions that are incomplete, non-conforming, or late may not be considered.

**Step 2:** **Compliance Screening**

Commonwealth Corporation will conduct an analysis to ensure all lead applicants are in compliance with state and federal law. Lead applicants are encouraged to review these criteria and ensure they are in compliance prior to submitting an application. Commonwealth Corporation will conduct the following reviews to ensure compliance:

* Ensure applicants are in good standing with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.
* Ensure applicant is in full compliance with all obligations to the Department of Unemployment Assistance, Department of Industrial Accidents, and any other obligations to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Commonwealth Corporation will work with the Department of Unemployment Assistance to conduct this review.

**Step 3: Review Committee**

A review committee will review and score all eligible submissions based on whether they meet the required standards. Review results will be documented. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant to ensure that the review committee has a complete understanding of the proposed program and applicant qualifications.

Submitted proposals will be reviewed and scored to determine if they **Meets Standards** or **Does Not Meet Standards** based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Meets Standards or Does Not Meet Standards** |
| 1. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of lead applicant and partner organizations with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementing training and employment programs that successfully place individuals. |  |
| 1. Training Provider demonstrated history of providing adult workforce training programs that provide industry certification or licensure (in proposed programs or other programs). This may include:    1. a history of collaborating on workforce training programs with Community Colleges and/or community-based organizations    2. Approval as an Eligible Training Provider (ETPL) for the Workforce Individual Training Account provider    3. A Commonwealth Corporation Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grant awardee (or has been awarded a Commonwealth Corporation training grant in the last three years)    4. An EOHED Advanced Manufacturing Consortium Grant training partner    5. Independently accredited post-secondary accreditation program    6. Experience in awarding students Federal or State Financial Aid |  |
| 1. Training Provider demonstrates recent conversations with local MassHire Career Center, agreement to roles, expectations and resource sharing (MOU) and identification of action steps to be completed upon award of grant in order to recruit candidates, provide support, job placement and post-placement services. |  |
| 1. Strong evidence, including clearly articulated MOA/letters, of employer engagement and community partnerships, such as an overall job placement strategy that is likely to result in job placement and retention for program participants. |  |
| 1. Clear program model that addresses the required program design elements and services that are appropriate to prepare the proposed target population for employment in the target occupation. |  |
| 1. Capacity to deliver proposed programs and place graduates into jobs between March 3, 2021-November 30, 2021. |  |
| 1. If proposing an alternative target occupation, not included on the list in Section 3, the applicant sufficiently demonstrates that the occupation is in-demand. |  |

***Please note:*** Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to consider the applicant’s past performance in operating grants administered by Commonwealth Corporation and factor this performance into funding decisions. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to consider geographical distribution and occupation/program mix in final grant award decisions. **Commonwealth Corporation will give preference to applications that propose matching funds as described in Section 5B.**

**Step 4: Notification of Grant Award Status**

All applicants will be notified of their award status by email based on the schedule in Section 6A.

1. ***Additional Evaluation Notes:*** In addition to the scoring system outlined,Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to only consider submissions that, in our sole judgment, are complete and responsive to the solicitation’s requirements and include all required application components. Additionally, Commonwealth Corporation and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development reserve the right to consider other criteria in making competitive awards among comparably qualified applicants. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to accept any and all applications, in whole or in part, if deemed to be in the interest of the Commonwealth Corporation or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to do so. This RFP does not commit Commonwealth Corporation to award any contracts. Upon submission, all applications become the property of Commonwealth Corporation. Commonwealth Corporation is not responsible for electronic submissions that are not received by Commonwealth Corporation. We reserve the right to use sources of funding other than the previously described funding source to support proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. If applicants propose to use other funding sources to support the implementation of the proposed program, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to consult with the other funders to ensure appropriate alignment of resources. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to amend this RFP subsequent to the original posting.
2. ***Appeals:*** Appeals of the funding decision may be filed with Christine Abrams, President/CEO, Commonwealth Corporation, 2 Oliver Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02109. Appeals must be filed within fifteen (15) days of the date of Commonwealth Corporation’s notice to unsuccessful bidders. The President may decide to hold an informal review of the decision, and may decide to grant an appeal, deny an appeal, or modify an award based on information provided during the informal review.
3. ***Audited Financial Statements and Verification of Fiscal Management Capacity****:* All applicants that are selected for an award may be required to submit a copy of the organization’s most recent audited financial statement prior to the execution of a final contract.In addition, prior to the grant award, Commonwealth Corporation staff may review an organization’s fiscal systems and internal controls to verify that the organization has the capacity to manage public grant funds and administer the program.

Section Eight: Summary of Attachments

**GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE:**

The following attachments must be completed and submitted by all lead applicants:

* Part 1: Application Summary Form (online submission form)
* Part 2: Application Narrative Form
* Part 3: Program, Track Record & Budget Form (Excel)
* Part 4: Sample Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
* Part 5: Certification (online submission form)

Part 1: Application Summary Form- TO BE COMPLETED ONLINE

The following must be completed during the online submission. It is provided here as a preview to prepare for your submission. Please note the submission must be completed in one session so please have this information available before starting your application.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. PROGRAM PROFILE** | | | | | | | |
| **Name of Lead Applicant Organization^:** | |  | | | | | |
| **Department of Unemployment Assistance ID Number^:** | |  | | **Federal Employer ID Number (FEIN)^:** | | |  |
| **Target Occupation^:** | | **See Section 3A for eligible list.** | | | | | |
| **MassHire Career Center Partner & Name of Primary Contact**  **(Please Attach MOU)** | |  | | | | | |
| **Total Program Funds Requested^:** | | **$** | | **Proposed # of Cohorts^:** | | |  |
| **Proposed # Enrollments^:** | | |  |
| **3. LEAD APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION** | | | | | | | |
| **Role** | **Name and Title** | | **Address** | | **Phone** | **Email** | |
| **Primary Contact Person^:** (notified upon decision of grant award) |  | |  | |  |  | |
| **Authorized Signatory^:** (authorized to commit organization) |  | |  | |  |  | |
| **Fiscal Contact^:**  (fiscally responsible for project funds and submitting invoices) |  | |  | |  |  | |
| **Project Manager^:**  *(if known -* contact over the course of the project) |  | |  | |  |  | |

Part 2: Application Narrative Form

Please describe your project by responding to the questions below. Please do not use a font size smaller than size 11 and margins less than one inch. The page limit for the Narrative Form is 5 pages. Tables, charts, figures, and appendices are included in the page limit. The page limit does not include the other required Parts of the Grant Application Package. Applicants may delete the questions, but are encouraged to leave section/sentence headers to orient the reviewers.

1. There are no matching funds required. However, preference will be given to businesses that propose cost sharing, including contributing funds to cover a portion of tuition or agreeing to repay the funds upon successful retention of participants. Are you proposing any match as defined above? Please include amount and purpose.
2. Training Provider demonstrates recent conversations with local MassHire Career Center, agreement to roles, expectations and resource sharing (MOU) and identification of action steps to be completed upon award of grant.
   * Please briefly describe your history of collaborating with MassHire Workforce Board and MassHire Career Centers.
   * Please confirm that you have recently discussed this opportunity with a MassHire Career Center, including name(s) and organization(s) of who you met with, any concerns raised and confirmation that both parties agreed to work together on this program.
   * Who (name, title) will be responsible for providing recruitment, assessment, case management and placement support to participants at the MassHire Career Center?
3. Strong evidence, including clearly articulated MOA/letters, of employer engagement and identification of roles and responsibilities with employer partners.

* Applicants choosing to propose a target occupation not included in Section 3 of the RFP, must demonstrate that the proposed occupation is in-demand, by citing labor market data, supporting employer demand data, or other relevant indicators. Applicants who propose a target occupation from Section 3 do not need to provide additional demand data.
* Describe how employer partners were involved in designing the specifications of the proposed program.
* Using the table below, provide evidence that there will be sufficient job vacancies in the targeted occupation(s) among partner employer(s) between now and December 30, 2021.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Regional Employer Demand Chart** | | | | | |
| **Employer** | **Target Occupation Title** | **Number of Current Vacancies in Occupation** | **Skills Required for Entry** | **Credentials Required for Entry** | **Average Hourly Wage**  **At Entry** |
| **Name of Employer Partner:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Name of Employer Partner:** |  |  |  |  |  |

1. ***Training and Placement Program Design:*** This section asks for more detail about the program design that will be implemented to serve the specific target populations you are proposing to serve. Please answer all questions regarding the program.
2. ***Recruitment, Assessment & Selection***

* Who is the target population?
* What methods (e.g. open houses, orientation, referrals, etc.) will be used to recruit participants? Why do you believe this will be an effective strategy to recruit a sufficient number of qualified program candidates from your target population? Please provide your current list of partners or organizations that will be sources for referrals.
* Please describe a relevant strategy and/or innovation in workforce development that you have pursued or will seek to incorporate into your program to more effectively reach and serve more people from diverse backgrounds.
* Describe the selection and assessment process. What criteria will be used to determine candidates’ readiness and fit with the proposed program and target occupation? What process and tools will be used to determine whether prospective participants meet these criteria?
* Describe how employers will be involved in designing and/or implementing the assessment and selection processes to ensure that they are aligned with the requirements of the targeted occupation.

1. ***Participant Supportive Services and Case Management/Transitional Coaching***

* What applicable supports will the partnership provide to participants to help them overcome personal barriers to successful completion and employment?
* What existing partnerships will be leveraged to make referrals for participants to in order to support attainment of these supports?

1. ***Job Development and Placement/ Advancement***

* Who (names and organizations) are the hiring managers responsible for making decisions about which candidates are interviewed and hired? How will they be engaged throughout the design and implementation of the program, including the job placement phase?
* Describe your planned job search, job development and job placement activities. What will be the responsibilities of participants and of staff in these services? What activities will the job developer conduct to develop unsubsidized jobs and place participants who complete training into them?
* What services will be available to participants after they have been hired?
* What supports will be available to employers after they have hired a participant?
* Based on your engagement with employers, how will your program work with participants to ensure they can take advantage of specific opportunities for advancement within this occupational track?

Part 4: Sample Memorandum of Agreement

**Instructions:** This sample is provided to help start the conversation. Please ensure required roles & responsibilities as outlined in Section 2 are maintained in this document. However, other additions and clarifications are encouraged to ensure a successful partnership between the training provider, MassHire Career Centers, business partners and other partners.

**I. Purpose of This Memorandum**

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlines the agreement among the partners listed below to implement the proposed Partnerships for Recovery Rapid Reemployment Program. Partners are committed to implementing a program design that includes the following features:

* Involvement of business partners in designing assessment/screening protocols and in developing training program curricula to ensure that they are aligned with entry requirements for jobs;
* Case management to ensure participant persistence in training, successful transition to employment, and if time allows, retention support.
* Strategies that address occupational and academic skills instructions, job development, and job placement for the specific identified target population and target occupation(s); and
* Commitment to utilize the proposed program as a pipeline to fill business vacancies

**II. Term**

This MOA shall be in effect from April 1, 2021 and shall end on December 30, 2021. This MOA may be terminated prior to the effective end date upon the full written approval of all the partners.

**III. Partners**

List the names of each partner participating in your partnership.

**IV. Common Roles & Expectations of Partners**

**All Parties agree to (examples):**

1. Have a representative attend and participate in Advisory Board meetings.
2. Communicate consistently through e-mail and phone calls, reading all relevant e-mails, listening to voice mail messages and responding in a timely manner.
3. Work together to solve problems, make decisions, create opportunities for program participants, and support participants’ success.
4. Hold participants to program standards
5. Deliver consistent messages, and provide a structured, safe learning environment.

**V. Training Provider Roles & Expectations-(FILL IN NAME OF Training Provider)**

1. Contract with Commonwealth Corporation, and manage all reporting, including, participant level data tracking in Apricot database and monthly status reports.
2. Submit invoices to Commonwealth Corporation and distribute specified share of payment to MassHire Career Centers and maintain documentation of payment.
3. Communicate program entry requirements to MassHire Career Center and collaborate on screening process
4. Ultimately make enrollment decisions to fill cohort
5. Coordinate and provide all training, including didactic hands-on and work experience.
6. Incorporate work readiness and job search prep skill building, in collaboration with the MassHire Career Center
7. Collect and report all participant data into Apricot
8. Prepare and place graduates in employment in partnership with MassHire Career Center

**VI. MassHire Career Center Roles & Expectations-(FILL IN NAME OF MASSHIRE CAREER CENTER)**

1. Conduct recruitment, assessment and screening of participants, aligned with program requirements
2. Maintain contact with participants while they are enrolled in training to ensure persistence
3. Make participant referrals to necessary support services (housing, childcare vouchers, housing, etc)
4. Prepare and place graduates in employment in partnership with training provider
5. Provide 3-months of post-placement support upon job placement

**VI. Payment Terms**

The lead applicant/training provider agrees to share the performance-based payments with MassHire Career Centers based on the following fee schedule.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Example of Funding Sharing Programs** | Total | Training Provider | MassHire  Career Center | % of Total |
| Employment/Retention | $900 | $400 | $500 | 20% |
| Certification | $1350 | $850 | $500 | 30% |
| Recruitment / Enrollment | $2250 | $1750 | $500 | 50% |
| Total | $4500 | $3000 | $1500 | 100% |

**VII. Individual Partner Roles & Expectations**

Outline the specific roles and expectations of each partner, which may include:

* Coordinate program logistics and oversee day-to-day operations.
* Provide career readiness training and ensure completion of all work readiness.
* Handle all fiscal and data requirements for the grant.
* Help recruit individuals who are a good fit for the program
* Support participants in addressing challenges outside of the program that might interfere with their success in the program.
* Provide teachers, space and equipment for teaching occupational skills.
* Provide paid work experience.
* Evaluate participants and provide honest feedback to and all partners about participants’ progress.
* Participate in the design of assessment/screening protocols and training program curriculum to ensure graduates of the program meet hiring standards.
* Provide participant level data to the lead applicant
* Provide the talents and support of hiring managers to design a program that will meet their workforce needs and lead to job placements and advancements

***(The following is not required from businesses, but 1-2 of the following commitments are strongly encouraged)***

*For programs proposing to place participants into a job:*

(business name) agrees to identify hiring managers to participate in the design of assessment/screening protocols and training program curriculum to ensure graduates of the program meet hiring standards.

(business name) agrees to utilize the proposed program as a talent pipeline to fill vacancies at their organization.

(business name) agrees to interview (number of graduates to be interviewed) graduates within two weeks of program graduation for open positions as (target occupation title) at our (location) location.

(business name) agrees to hire (number of graduates to be hired) graduates at an average starting hourly wage of (average starting hourly wage).

**V. Signatures**

Have each partner’s representative sign and date the MOA. Make sure the signatories have contractual authority for their organization.

**Partner Organization Name**

**Signatory Name**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Partner Organization Name**

**Signatory Name**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**