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**Request for Proposals for the**

**Behavioral Health Partnership Expansion Grants**

**Funded through the**

**MassHealth Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Statewide Investments Program and**

**RIZE Massachusetts Foundation, Inc.**

**Issued by**

**Commonwealth Corporation**

**RESPONSES DUE:** Applications received through

October 27, 2021, at 5:00 PM EST

will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Please upload electronic submissions to the following link:

<https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328900>

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**Behavioral Health Partnership Expansion Grants**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

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**Behavioral Health Partnership Expansion Grants**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Section One: Overview of Grant Initiative Goals and Structure

1. ***Program Sponsors:*** Commonwealth Corporation is administering the MassHealth Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Statewide Investment program focused on frontline and extended healthcare workforce development on behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) Office of Medicaid (MassHealth). The Statewide Investments funding stream is one component of MassHealth’s $1.8 billion DSRIP program authorized under the Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver and comprises eight initiatives over the five-year DSRIP program. The Workforce Development Program will support the MassHealth Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), and Community Partners (CPs), by building and strengthening the state’s frontline and extended healthcare workforce, which is critical to their ability to improve health outcomes and reduce the total cost of care for MassHealth members.

RIZE Massachusetts Foundation, Inc. (RIZE) is an independent nonprofit foundation committed to ending the opioid epidemic and reducing its devastating impact on people, families, and communities. Funding contributed through RIZE is designated for projects seeking to address improve substance use disorder (SUD) and opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment and services.

1. ***Behavioral Health Background:*** During 2019, EOHHS invited public input, through eight listening sessions and a Request for Information, for designing a responsive, effective, and high-quality behavioral health ambulatory treatment system. Respondents identified, with overwhelming consistency, that workforce shortages challenge program operations and contribute to poor client outcomes on multiple levels. Participants of these listening sessions commonly discussed difficulty recruiting and retaining many types of providers, including behavioral health clinicians, peer supports, and other licensed/certified staff.

Community behavioral health organizations provide mental health and/or substance use disorder services to youth and adults in the community throughout Massachusetts. Some organizations provide services within a single level of treatment, such as helping youth in need of outpatient counseling; while others provide services to clients throughout the lifespan across multiple levels of treatment from prevention to residential treatment, to recovery support.

Historical separation of the delivery of behavioral health and primary care treatments results from inconsistent legislative, executive, and agency level policies; distinct payment streams; insufficient provider training and support; non-standardized information technology; barriers to information sharing; and different patient/client outcome measures. All these factors have inhibited integration of primary care and behavioral health within the healthcare field and to the community at large.

Currently, there are larger wage disparities for professionals with equivalent licensure working in a community behavioral health organization compared with those working in a primary care setting, such as a physician’s office or a hospital. This often results in a cycle where community behavioral health organizations dedicate limited resources to training and onboarding staff.

In response to these challenges and insights, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts/EOHHS is in the process of implementing several reforms to re-design the behavioral health delivery system such as:

* Creating a centralized, convenient “front door” to help people find the right treatment when and where they need it
* Making outpatient services more readily available, including community-based alternatives to the emergency department
* Expanding inpatient psychiatric beds to meet needs exacerbated by COVID-19
* Broadening insurance coverage and encouraging more providers to accept insurance, including MassHealth
* Implementing targeted interventions to strengthen workforce diversity and competency

This initiative aims primarily to address the fifth reform. Behavioral health employers across the state report persistent difficulty with hiring and retaining qualified staff. Efforts to expand access to available behavioral health services are inhibited by the already challenged workforce system and the aforementioned challenges of recruitment and retention. EOHHS is committed to targeting funding to help address these challenges and is seeking to build on a work stream previously launched by Commonwealth Corporation and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD).

Commonwealth Corporation administers the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) on behalf of EOLWD. The **Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grants** (Donnelly Grants) focus on training unemployed or underemployed people to fill in-demand regional jobs and support the advancement of entry-level workers within their current employer. The goals of the WCTF include improving the competitive stature of Massachusetts businesses by improving the skills of current and future workers and improving access to well-paying jobs and long-term career success for all Massachusetts residents, especially those who experience structural, social, and educational barriers to employment success.

In October 2020, CommCorp launched seven healthcare workforce planning grants, including five grants to single regions and two grants to regions comprised of combinations of multiple investment boards (now referred to as the “Healthcare Hubs”). The initial phase of the Healthcare Hubs activity launched in Spring 2021 and included a focus on a broad range of healthcare occupations. Commonwealth Corporation has partnered with MassHealth and RIZE to expand the reach of the HealthCare Hubs concept though a more targeted emphasis on critical needs in the **community-based mental health and SUD/OUD** workforce.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. ***About the Grant Initiative Goals:*** This Request for Proposals is administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of EOHHS through the DSRIP Statewide Investments program. This investment seeks to focus on high-priority workforce gaps and to promote health equity by leveraging efforts from the existing healthcare workforce hubs initiative launched in 2020 through The WCTF Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriation.

Awarded funds will support behavioral health workforce development in areas not already captured within the statewide investment portfolio (SWI), including designing and implementing the following primary goals:

1. Outreach and trainings capable of increasing the skills and number of individuals from underrepresented groups in the peer and entry- to mid-level community-based mental health and SUD/OUD workforce.
2. Resources to support clinical supervision time and mentorship strategies for master’s-prepared and bachelor’s-prepared clinicians in need of supervision hours as they work toward licensure.

In partnership with EOHHS and RIZE, Commonwealth Corporation seeks to fund proposals from qualified regional MassHire Healthcare Workforce Hub in partnership with community-based behavioral health employers that propose to implement solutions that result in additional **training and placement/advancement program capacity for behavioral health occupations** and to fund **capacity building and workforce planning** efforts within this sector. Specifically, we aim to address workforce gaps and to promote health equity through the following strategies:

* ***Training and Placement Programs [Option A]*:** For partnerships proposing to deliver occupationally focused job training and placement programs that recruit and train unemployed and/or underemployed individuals, with a priority on serving individuals from underrepresented groups among the behavioral health workforce, to prepare them for unsubsidized employment in targeted entry-to-mid-level behavioral health occupations upon completion of training.
* ***Training and Advancement Programs [Option B]:*** For partnerships proposing to deliver training and advancement programs to current employees in entry-to-mid-level roles (i.e., incumbent workers, those pursuing associates or bachelor’s degrees or certifications) that consist of training opportunities that result in clearly defined outcomes such as skill gains, wage gains, title changes, and/or promotions at their current employer.
* ***Clinical Supervision and Mentorship Programs [Option C]:*** For partnerships proposing to support licensed clinicians to offer appropriate mentorship and supervision of master’s-prepared staff or bachelor’s-prepared staff.
* ***Regional Workforce Capacity Building [Option D]:*** For partnerships proposing to use funds to support regional coordination that results in additional training program capacity in behavioral health occupations while promoting the strengthening of partnerships with workforce entities, education and training providers, and community-based behavioral health employers.

Please see Section 3 for more information.

1. ***Eligible Lead Applicants:*** The lead applicant for a qualifying partnership must bea MassHire Workforce Board on behalf of their assigned region in the Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process.[[2]](#footnote-2) Only one application is permitted per region. Please see Section 2 for more information.
2. ***Target Populations:*** Grant funds may be used to train people who are unemployed, underemployed, current employees at Massachusetts employers or individuals otherwise seeking new employment or to gain clinical supervision hours toward licensure. There is an overall priority to serve underrepresented groups among the behavioral health workforce to prepare for entry-level and mid-level roles. Please see Section 3 for more information about the target population for each specific program option.
3. ***Funding Availability*:** up to$3.25 million is available for this grant program. Please see Section 5 for more information.
4. ***Match Requirement*:** Match will not be required for this funding. Please see Section 5 for more information.
5. ***Duration of Contract(s)*:** Contracts will be issued for a maximum duration of up to 15 months, through December 31, 2022, with the potential to extend. See Sections 4 and 5 for more information.
6. ***Payment:*** Funds will be disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis. We anticipate that lead applicants for each partnership will submit one invoice each month using the required invoice template provided by Commonwealth Corporation. Partnerships will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Lead applicants for each partnership will be required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for grant expenses. See Sections 4 and 5 for more information.
7. ***Application Deadline*:** Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis through October 27, 2021, by 5:00 PM EST. A letter of intent is not required to apply for the full funding; however, we will allow and encourage existing healthcare hubs partnerships to work with their Commonwealth Corporation program management team to support building partnerships in preparation for submitting a strong proposal. All existing healthcare hub contacts will be included on our mailing list and notified of relevant updates and clarifications. Please see Section 6 for more information.
8. ***Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | September 7, 2021 |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions | October 15, 2021 |
| All Answers to Questions Posted Online | October 22, 2021 |
| Responses (Proposals) Due | October 27, 2021, at 5PM |
| Applicants Notified of Status (Anticipated) | October 2021 – November 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date | October 2021 – November 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract End Date | December 31, 2022 |

Section Two: Eligible Lead Applicants and Partnership Members

1. ***Eligible Lead Applicants*:** This initiative seeks to facilitate the development of sustainable partnerships and strengthen the leadership role of regional MassHire Workforce Boards; submissions are invited from broad-based partnerships with workforce boards as the leads. Therefore, the lead applicant for a qualifying partnership must bea MassHire Workforce Board on behalf of their assigned region in the Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process. Our intent is that the existing lead workforce board will continue to serve in the lead capacity. If taking on the additional responsibilities of serving as lead presents a major challenge in implementing this expansion, we will accept proposals for an alternate lead workforce board that has been agreed upon by all participating workforce boards. *We request that each regional healthcare workforce hub submits only one application that encompasses all their proposed program options.*
2. ***Lead Applicant Responsibilities:*** Lead applicants must:

* Have a commitment to work collaboratively with regional partners and Commonwealth Corporation to ensure capacity building benchmarks are met and that funded training programs achieve planned outcomes and meet the needs of participants and employers.
* Convene regional partners to achieve the overall project goals, including, but not limited to, coordinating partnership development, developing an appropriate budget for all activities, negotiating agreement of accountability and performance management measures, developing, and overseeing the effective implementation of the training program and coordinating related program activities.
* Collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the programs.
* Have operational and fiscal capacity to manage public (state and federal) funds.

1. ***Required Partnership Members and Qualifications:*** Lead applicants must ensure they have all the partners needed to reach and support their target population in securing employment in their target occupation or advancing to their target occupation. Collectively, the members of the partnership must have demonstrated experience and success in providing the proposed education, training, and employment support services.

Each partner’s commitment, role, and anticipated activities must be demonstrated either through a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among all partners or through the submission of separate letters of commitment. We will not mandate a specific format; however, the strongest applications will include clear commitments, outline roles and responsibilities, and articulate a shared stake in the success of the program among partners. We are looking for meaningful language that is tailored to the details of the proposal and includes a sufficient level of detail as opposed to a generalizable statement.

* + ***MassHire:*** Partnerships **must include** all the [**MassHire Workforce Boards**](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board) in a given blueprint region, inclusive of their respective [**career centers**](https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center)**.** Local workforce boards should be engaged in a capacity that complements the overall structure and strategy of the proposed programs and partnership structure. This must be demonstrated by using the MOA to include these activities or through the submission of separate letters of commitment.[[3]](#footnote-3)
  + ***Employers: Each proposed project component*** **must include** a **minimum of one employer** that is defined as a community provider\* in behavioral health (i.e. mental health, SUD/OUD) with operations in Massachusetts and that employs Massachusetts residents in the target occupation(s)). Successful applicants will demonstrate that they have existing relationships and/or seek to build new relationships with local employers that are committed to providing professional opportunities for participants:
    1. **Option A:** Selected employer partners 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. ***These employers must submit a signed MOA or letter***.
    2. **Option B:** Selected employer partners need to have demonstrated vacancies and/or hiring needs for workers in the proposed target occupation and a commitment to identifying and supporting current employees to participate in training and secure advancement (including, but not limited to, wage growth) at the conclusion of the program. ***These employers must submit a signed MOA or letter***.
    3. **Option C:** Selected employer partners need to articulate their existing processes for supporting licensed clinicians such as by offering supervision and mentorship of master’s-prepared or bachelor’s-prepared staff and demonstrate how grant funds would go toward the associated costs and time allocations for providing such supports. ***These employers must submit a signed MOA or letter***.
    4. **Option D:** Selected employer partners need to demonstrate their commitment to participating in ongoing regional planning activities such as their willingness to participate in meetings, to contribute the appropriate staff time, and to share information to advance behavioral health workforce partnerships. ***These employers must submit a signed MOA or letter***.

***\*Prioritized Employer Partners:*** *Please note that given the community-provider-focused goals of this expansion, funding will prioritize partnerships with Community Health Centers (CHCs), Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs), and SUD/OUD community provider organizations. While only one employer is required, we have found that pipeline training and placement programs (Option A) that consist of multiple employers are more likely to yield a variety of job openings that may provide flexible options for program graduates. Although large hospital systems are not excluded from participating in the initiative, they cannot receive funding directly through this initiative because this expansion initiative is designed to target capacity building among CHCs and CMHCs who may not have previously accessed existing workforce development funds; our intention is to increase access to behavioral health supports and to promote overall health equity goals by meeting the diverse needs of individuals across the Commonwealth, in particular those who are systematically disadvantaged, such as Black, Indigenous, People of Color. Commonwealth Corporation anticipates releasing additional funding opportunities starting in fall 2021 through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) and related funding streams that will likely be accessible to employers who might not be the best match for this current RFP.*

***Unions:*** *Please note that if workers in the proposed target occupation at participating employers are covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the union that represents the workers must also demonstrate their participation in the MassHire Workforce Board-led partnership through either a signed Memorandum of Agreement or Letter of Commitment.*

* ***Additional Partnership Members:*** Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate their organization’s core competencies and identify areas in which they may leverage relationships with other organizations in their community or region to strengthen their programming and/or achieve regional efficiencies of scale. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional partners with experience and expertise related to their proposed target occupations or target populations that will add value to the partnership. Examples of such partners include, but are not limited to, 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. ***These partners must submit a signed MOA or letter***.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Blueprint Planning Region** | **MassHire Workforce Board Regions** |
| 1. **Berkshire** | * Berkshire |
| 1. **Pioneer Valley** | * Franklin/ Hampshire * Hampden |
| 1. **Central** | * Central Region * North Central |
| 1. **Northeast** | * Greater Lowell * Merrimack Valley * North Shore |
| 1. **Greater Boston** | * Boston * Metro North * Metro South/West |
| 1. **Southeast** | * Bristol * Brockton Area * Greater New Bedford * South Shore |
| 1. **Cape & Islands** | * Cape Cod and Islands |

Section Three: Training Program Design Requirements

**All applicants may propose a combination of the following program implementation and capacity building options:**

**Option A)** deliver a program to support the **training and placement** ofparticipants into new employment, [as outlined in this section](#_Option_A:_Training)

**Option B)** deliver a program to support the **training and advancement** of participants at their current employer, [as outlined in this section](#_Option_B:_Training)

**Option C)** deliver a program to support the **supervision** and **mentorship** of master’s-prepared staff or bachelor’s-prepared staff, [as outlined in this section](#_Option_C:_Clinical)

**Option D)** support regional **capacity building** and planning activities, [as outlined in this section](#_Option_D:_Capacity)

#### Option A: Training and Placement Program Design Requirements

1. ***Option A Target Sector / Occupation:*** Applicants must provide job training, placement, and support services that prepare individuals to meet business’ skill and work-readiness requirements for an in-demand behavioral health occupation(s). Applicants should identify a specific occupation to be targeted and design/deliver a training program that prepares individuals for this specific occupation:

* Occupations Requiring at least a high school diploma or equivalency such as HISET/GED:
  + Care Coordinator
  + Residential Counselor
  + Substance Use & Behavioral Disorder Counselor
  + Peer Roles
* Occupations Requiring at least an Associate’s (AA) or Bachelor’s (BA) degree:
  + Residential Rehabilitation Educator (BA preferred)
  + Respite Mental Health Worker (BA preferred)
  + Triage Clinician (BA)
  + Other Associates/BA level candidates

Applicants may propose an alternative occupation from those listed above; however, the target occupation must still be considered a behavioral health occupation. Applicants choosing this alternative approach must demonstrate that the proposed occupation is in demand by citing labor market data and supporting employer demand data such as current and projected vacancies and any projected increase in demand for the proposed targeted occupation and skills, as well as credentials required for entry, to demonstrate that the occupation is of critical importance to their employers in the region and that there is a need for a training and placement program.

*We recognize that there may be occupations with identical required skills and credentials for entry. Applicants may propose to train individuals for multiple target occupations through a single training program if the required occupational skills and credentials are the same. Otherwise, applicants should propose separate training program tracks.*

There is a growing body of research[[4]](#footnote-4) demonstrating that job seekers benefit from starting at a higher wage and by participating in programs that provide information and coaching on career continuums beyond the first entry-level job. Accordingly, we encourage applications that include target occupations with entry-level wages above the current Massachusetts minimum wage and/or intend to place participants in jobs in which the combination of wages, employer-supported benefits and upward mobility pathways are likely to support the goal of increased earned income and economic stability. Such evidence might include:

* the proposed target occupation has ample availability for full-time work[[5]](#footnote-5)
* the proposed target occupation has attainable opportunities for career advancement and wage progression within a reasonable time frame
* the employer partners invest in supporting entry-level employees’ career advancement

1. ***Option A Target Population:***Grant funds must be used to train individuals who are in one or more of the following categories and would be able to participate in and benefit from the proposed job training and placement services:

* Unemployed and/or underemployed individuals
* Individuals who are seeking to shift careers to another behavioral health occupation
* Current employees at Massachusetts employers
* Individuals from demographic groups that are underrepresented in the behavioral health workforce

For the purposes of this grant program option, unemployed and underemployed participants are included in the same target population category since the intended outcome for both types of participants is a job in the targeted occupation(s).

An unemployed individual is defined as an individual who is not currently employed.

An underemployed individual is defined as an individual who is earning less than a self-sustaining wage based on their regional cost of living. During start-up, grantees will be required to provide a written selection process that includes the steps they will take, and criteria individuals will have to meet to be selected to participate in the program.

1. ***Option A Program Design Requirements:*** Applicants should propose a set of services that are necessary for the target population to enter employment and succeed in the target occupation(s). Applicants should describe each service that will be provided and explain how it prepares the target population for employment. Applicants are required to address how their programs incorporate the following elements and services in their program design:

* Develop and implement a recruitment, assessment, and selection process that ensures:
  + Individuals selected to participate in the program are willing and able to work and view the program as a resource to prepare them for work in the target occupation(s).
  + 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 enrolled in and complete a program to attain these skills, prior to enrolling in the program.
* Provide contextualized education, skills, and work-readiness training that addresses the employers’ workforce needs, prepare participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), optimizes opportunities for participant learning and career development, and will support participants’ placement in the target occupation(s). This may include:
* Basic education, including ABE, GED/HiSET, ESOL, math, computers/technology contextualized to the industry and occupation(s)
* Vocational training
* Post-secondary education and credentialing
* In some instances, program elements such as apprenticeship pathways, on-the-job-training, and paid work experience may be appropriate, but not required.
* Engage employers in identifying job openings, participating in program design and/or delivery, and signing the Memorandum of Agreement committing to hiring a specific number of participants or, at a minimum commit to interviewing program completers.
* Assign a job developer who is responsible for active outreach to and engagement with employers to identify and secure unsubsidized job placements in the target occupation(s) for program participants, including, if relevant to the industry, unsubsidized jobs through employment agencies.
* Provide directly and/or refer participants to existing public and private resources to offer support services to participants, when needed, including transportation and childcare, to alleviate barriers to program participation, completion, and employment retention.
* Provide coordinated case management/transitional coaching and/or mentoring and maintain documentation for each participant to plot and support their trajectory into new employment and along a career pathway.

1. ***Option A Credential Attainment:*** If a credential is required for entry into the target occupation(s), applicants should specify this in their proposal and explain how they will ensure all program completers obtain requisite credentials prior to being placed into employment.
2. ***Option A Outcome Expectations:*** A strong proposal will have the components required to achieve the following rates for completion and job placement (measured at 30 days retention):

* At least 80% of enrolled participants will complete training.
* At least 70% of participants who enroll in training will be placed in an unsubsidized job measured at 30 days retention.

Applicants may propose performance rates that are higher or lower than those detailed above. Any applicant that proposes a lower set of performance rates must explain why the proposed lower rates are appropriate for the proposed target population and proposed program design. This explanation should cite specific performance rates documented for a similar program design serving a similar population that serves as the basis for the proposed performance rates.

#### Option B: Training and Advancement Program Design Requirements

1. ***Option B Target Sector / Occupation:*** For partnerships proposing to deliver training and advancement programs to current employees in entry-to-mid-level roles (i.e., incumbent workers, those pursuing associates or bachelor’s degrees or certifications) that consist of training opportunities that result in clearly defined outcomes such as skill gains, wage gains, title changes, or promotions at their current employer.

This option seeks to provide opportunities for entry-level and mid-level employees to gain new skills and/or advance to a *new job within their current employer* that provides wage growth and career growth.

Applicants must work with regional employers to identify the demand for this program option. Employers must propose opportunities for skill gains, career advancement, and/or wage progression that are attainable within the time frame of the program.

1. ***Option B Target Population:***Grant funds may be used to provide training and professional learning opportunities for entry-level and mid-level staff (e.g., those pursuing certifications, associates or bachelor’s degrees, etc.) to enhance their skillset and/or pursue advancement opportunities at their community-based behavioral health employer. For the purposes of this grant program option, such individuals are considered “incumbent workers,” and are defined as an individual who is *working at their current employer* and intends to gain additional skills that may lead to advancement to a new job with the same employer. During start-up, grantees may be required to provide a written selection process that includes the steps they will take, and the criteria individuals will have to meet to be selected to participate in the program.

1. ***Option B Program Design Requirements:*** Applicants should propose a set of services that are necessary for the target population to advance within their current employer and succeed in the target occupation(s). Applicants should describe each service that will be provided and explain how it prepares the target population for advancement opportunities. Applicants are required to address how the following elements and services are incorporated within their program design:

* Engage employers in identifying job openings, participating in program design and/or delivery, and signing the Memorandum of Agreement committing to grow talent in house.
* Develop and implement a recruitment, assessment, and selection process that ensures:
  + 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 entering the program.
  + Supervisors are supportive of participation, which may include providing paid release time or flexible scheduling.
* Assign a career coach (e.g. may be an existing internal staff person such as HR staff) who is responsible for supporting participants throughout the program. This includes:
  + Development and tracking of individual participant career plans.
  + Providing participants with support in balancing work/life/school.
  + Serving as a liaison to supervisors or managers.
  + Assisting participants to apply for advanced positions and preparing them for interviews.
* Provide directly and/or refer participants to existing public and private resources to offer support services to participants, when needed, including transportation and childcare, to alleviate barriers to program participation, completion, and employment retention.
* 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 wage increases for participants. This *may* include:
* Basic education, including ABE, GED/HiSET, ESOL, math, computers/technology contextualized to the industry and occupation(s)
* Vocational training
* Post-secondary education and credentialing
* Apprenticeship
* Formal on-the-job training
* Work with business partners to identify the sequence of training that will result in a wage gain and the internal process to award wage gains.
* Document wage gains, promotions, and new employment retention at 30 days (at a minimum) after completion of training.
* We encourage applications seeking to leverage alternative delivery methods such as online/digital, hybrid, and competency-based modules in order to meet the unique needs of incumbent workers. To facilitate advancement opportunities, we encourage applicants to showcase creative ways of delivering training beyond in-person lecture-based modes that may not be conducive to the learning preferences or schedules of their target population.

1. ***Option B Credential Attainment:*** If a credential is required for advancement / wage progression applicants should specify this in their proposal and explain how they will ensure all program completers obtain requisite credentials prior to attaining a new position at their employers.
2. ***Option B Advancement Outcome Expectations:*** A strong proposal will have the components required to achieve the following rates for completion and job advancement (measured at 30 days retention):

* At least 85% of enrolled incumbent worker participants will complete training, and
* At least 75% of incumbent worker participants who enroll and complete training will receive a training-related wage gain or wage gain and retain new employment at their employer for at least 30 days, and/or
* At least 75% of incumbent worker participants who enroll in training will report growth in identified skill areas[[6]](#footnote-6)

Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to work with applicants to adjust outcomes expectations to ensure alignment with the goals of this initiative and to clarify intended program outcomes, if necessary. Additionally, applicants may propose performance rates that are higher or lower than those detailed above. Any applicant that proposes a lower set of performance rates must explain why the proposed lower rates are appropriate for the proposed target population and proposed program design. This explanation should cite specific performance rates documented for a similar program design serving a similar population that serves as the basis for the proposed performance rates.

#### Option C: Clinical Supervision and Mentorship Program Design Requirements

1. ***Option C Target Sector / Occupation:*** For partnerships proposing to support licensed clinicians to offer appropriate mentorship and supervision of master’s-prepared or bachelor’s prepared staff who need clinical supervision time to receive their clinical licensure within a behavioral health occupation (inclusive of community mental health and SUD / OUD employers).

Applicants must work with regional employers to identify the demand for this program option. Employers must articulate their existing processes for supporting licensed clinicians to offer mentorship and supervision of master’s-prepared or bachelor’s-prepared staff and demonstrate how grant funds would go toward the associated costs and time allocations for providing such supports within the time frame of the program.

1. ***Option C Target Population:***Grant funds may be used to cover the time and support for clinical supervisors as well as the staff receiving the supervision. An example of this position is a master’s prepared therapist who requires supervision for licensure. Job candidates (i.e., “participants”) in this program option may be individuals who are employees at Massachusetts-based employers and who are certified/licensed to practice in Massachusetts *regardless of residence*.

During start-up, grantees may be required to provide a written selection process that includes the steps they will take, and the criteria individuals will have to meet to be selected to participate in the program.

1. ***Option C Program Design Requirements:*** Applicants should propose the time allocations that are necessary for the target population to attain the supervisory hours required for licensure and succeed in the target occupation at their behavioral health employer. Applicants should leverage the expertise of their employer partners to determine the appropriate allocation of time and resources for this program option.We anticipate that key programmatic components of this option may include the following:

* Engage employers in program design and delivery and signing the Memorandum of Agreement committing to grow talent in house and to develop and implement a clear recruitment, assessment, and selection process to identify appropriate candidates.
* Ensure that participants have access to the appropriate supports to succeed.
* Ensure supervisors attain higher levels of cultural responsiveness and related skills to become better qualified as mentors and clinical supervisors, as appropriate.
* Document all necessary reporting associated with clinical supervision such as site location, hours, staffing ratios, and other relevant metrics.

1. ***Option C Credential Attainment:*** Applicants must work with employer partners to identify clear indicators for determining progress within this program option, including documenting completion or progress toward completion of licensure requirements.
2. ***Option C Outcome Expectations:*** We intend to track the following outcomes:
   * Number of employers engaged in this program option
   * Number of supervisors engaged in providing clinical supervision time
   * Demographic data of individuals receiving supervisory time
   * Increased access to supervision and mentorship by individuals who are underrepresented in behavioral health services such as those identifying as Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color.
   * Increased access to supervision and mentorship by individuals who speak a language other than English (e.g., Spanish, Haitian Creole)
   * Number of staff attaining licensure
   * Other employer-identified success metrics

Although we have not outlined specific completion rates, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to work with applicants to adjust outcomes expectations to ensure alignment with the goals of this initiative and to clarify intended program outcomes, if necessary.

#### Option D: Capacity Building Program Design Requirements

1. ***Option D Target Sector / Occupation:*** This program option seeks to provide resources to support the continued development of the existing MassHire seven-region blueprint planning team framework to support regional coordination that results in additional training program capacity in behavioral health occupations while promoting the strengthening of partnerships with workforce entities, education and training providers, and community-based behavioral health employers.
2. ***Option D Purpose:*** Grant funds may be used to support longer-term regional planning, capacity building or other system change activities designed to improve placement, advancement, and retention outcomes for the region’s residents within behavioral health / SUD. We anticipate these activities may vary across regions and may include, but are not limited to, supporting staff capacity, understanding employer demand, understanding target population skills, interests, and assets, exploring licensure requirements and policies, transitioning to digitally enabled / hybrid instructional delivery models, and coordinating recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.

1. ***Option D Capacity Building Requirements:*** Applicants should propose a set of activities that are relevant to their region and in accordance with the parameters described in Section 3DB above. Commonwealth Corporation understands that each region may be at different stages in the development of sector-based strategies and programming to address current and emerging workforce challenges within behavioral health / SUD. For this reason, we will be looking for applicants to articulate how a strategy that incorporates regional planning and capacity building resources might contribute to improving multiple aspects of the behavioral health / SUD workforce. Applicants must submit a detailed work plan and provide a reasonable case for their collective ability to attain the overall goals of this funding opportunity through their proposed capacity building activities. *Applicants are encouraged to leverage their existing healthcare workforce hub partnership infrastructure.*

The ideal use of funds for this program option will:

* Facilitate closer working relationships among the partners, and establish clear roles and responsibilities
* Develop or build upon mechanisms for regional information sharing and strategic workforce planning, based on identification of regional labor market supply and demand
* Involve employers in sharing real-time vacancy information, creating appropriate education and training programs and assessments, and placing pipeline training participants in jobs
* Engage employers in program design extensively enough that they will consider graduates of the program as one of their primary pipelines for new entrants to their workforce
* Work toward a longer-term vision for regional workforce development beyond the implementation of a single specific project or program
* Serve as a model for regional workforce development that can be applied to other sectors while also learning from existing sector partnership models

Funding should initially focus on supporting program implementation. Otherwise, partnerships may focus their design work on one or more areas within behavioral health, including but not limited to the following:

* Working with local partners to identify and develop additional adult pipeline and/or incumbent program pathways
* Improving recruitment strategies especially for traditionally underserved populations
* Developing referral strategies for participants not eligible for the proposed training programs
* Developing pre-training programs that prepare individuals for entry into existing programs with demonstrated past success as measured by certification, graduation, and placement rates
* Developing training programs that provide advancement opportunities within the proposed occupational training program’s target occupation(s)
* Providing professional development opportunities for staff and partners with an emphasis on remote learning and support options
* Identifying and/or creating stackable credentials
* Developing innovative responses to sector-based education, training, and employment programs in the post-pandemic “new normal” such as community resiliency and interactions between unsubsidized employment and public assistance
* Incorporating digitally enabled and/or tech-based solutions to existing or emerging workforce challenges
* Aligning coursework and certificates from one level to the next so that prior coursework, certificates, and/or work experience counts toward an associate’s degree
* Building in stepping-out points within a degree program at which students can obtain a certification leading to employment and then work while continuing their education toward the next certification or degree
* Offering flexible scheduling alternatives that accommodate working students and allow for multiple starting points during the year
* Integrating occupational and academic content
* Accelerating the transition to credit-bearing coursework for students placed in developmental classes

1. ***Option D Outcome Expectations:*** We intend to track each partnership’s progress towards their identified capacity building goals as described in their workplan. In addition to the activities and goals identified by each partnership, we seek to measure the following indicators:
   * Actions taken to increase diversity of behavioral health / SUD workers by profession and/or by culture, and/or race/ethnicity (e.g., community health workers (CHW), and licensed/certified clinicians, Latinx, and African American).
   * Increased number of training providers focused on behavioral health / SUD occupational pathways engaged by MassHire system.
   * Increased levels of employee engagement in meetings and training programs.
   * Behavioral Health Hubs holding meetings regularly or pursuing other workforce grants collectively.

Section Four: Administrative Requirements

1. ***Participant Level Data Reporting Requirements*:** Grantees will be required to collect and provide regional, programmatic, and participant-level data at different points throughout partnership development and program implementation. Upon initial grant award, Commonwealth Corporation will provide additional guidance regarding the types of data collection and specific forms required for each program option (e.g., participant demographics, selection/enrollment, completion, and employment data, etc.).

We have provided the following guidance below to illustrate the types of data grantees will be required to collect, as applicable to the specific program options:

Prior to enrollment: Commonwealth Corporation will work with grantees to design a strategy to collect these data, as applicable. Data may include, in aggregate, applicant basic demographic information, results of applicant screening process, and for non-enrollees, the reason(s) they were not enrolled in the program.

Upon enrollment: Participant demographics, participant social security numbers and participant employment status, including current hourly wage for incumbent workers.

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

Upon program completion: Outcomes data such as new position/employment information, wage gain information, skill attainment and/or employment retention information.

Grantees will be required to collect program enrollment data using a participant registration form provided by Commonwealth Corporation and, for program options A and B, to enter data on participants and training services in a participant-level database to be provided by Commonwealth Corporation, such as Apricot by Social Solutions. Commonwealth Corporation staff will work with funded partnerships to determine when alternative approaches to data collection are appropriate.

Commonwealth Corporation takes data security very seriously and 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:

Periodic Progress Reports: These reports will be due at least quarterly and will include updates on partnership development, training timelines, and other relevant reflections on grant activities, inclusive of successes and challenges. 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.

Please note that Commonwealth Corporation is working in partnership with EOHHS to evaluate this initiative and may use the data reporting described above to inform status updates with public and private partners. Commonwealth Corporation will use data from the internal database and information from the narrative reports as a primary source. All lead grantees and partners are expected to collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the funded programs.

1. ***Participant Eligibility & Documentation:*** Grantees must establish a selection and eligibility process to identify individuals appropriate to participate in the proposed workforce training options. In addition to the program specific eligibility criteria established by Commonwealth Corporation, the grantee and its industry partners may 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, or otherwise agreed upon
   * Documentation of training services received
   * Case management/coaching notes, as applicable
   * Documentation of new employment, wage gains, supervisory hours, and retention metrics
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.

To fulfill this responsibility, Commonwealth Corporation will periodically request and review documentation related to the grantee organization and grant expenses and activities. We anticipate conducting at least one in-person or remote fiscal review over the duration of the grant period. Additional information will be provided after a contract is awarded.

1. ***Technical Assistance:*** Each grantee 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. ***Payment:*** Funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. Grantees will be required to submit invoices monthly using an invoice template supplied by Commonwealth Corporation. Grantees will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Grantees are required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for expenses.
3. ***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 Anthony Britt at [abritt@commcorp.org](mailto:abritt@commcorp.org) to request a copy. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.
4. ***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.
5. ***Equipment:*** It is anticipated that partnerships will utilize existing capacity to deliver training programs, including existing equipment that can be used to provide hands-on training to participants. If equipment required to continue or increase seat capacity is not available in a region, applicants may make a case to use grant funds for this purpose. A good case would include a summary of an inventory of current capacity and an analysis of the gap between current capacity and the capacity needed to meet projected enrollments.

Section Five: Available Funding & Allowable Costs

1. ***Funding Availability & Grant Award Amount:*** Up to ~$3.25 million is available for this expansion grant program. Lead applicants may request funds up to the following amounts based on their regional composition:

* Single Workforce Board Regions: up to $290,000, or up to $315,000 if at least one SUD-focused project is included within their proposal.
* Multiple Workforce Board Regions: up to $484,000, or up to $524,000 if at least one SUD-focused project is included within their proposal.

Upon making grant awards, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to reallocate public and private resources to maximize the use of grant funds towards this specific initiative through the end of the grant period.

1. ***Matching Funds:*** Awardees are not required to provide documented match contributions for this specific initiative.
2. ***Allowable Costs:*** 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, advancement, and retention for participants. Funds may be used to support the following:

* Staff time for partnership and program coordination, job development, case management and data entry
* Outreach, recruitment, assessment, and selection
* Support services needed to ensure participants’ success, such as transportation, child care, uniforms and tools
* Flexible funding: monies meant to address individual barriers to program or job retention that may not be uniform nor predictable in nature, such as car repairs or verifiable emergencies
* Training delivery, including classroom, online and formal on-the-job training
* Stipends for participating in training and work experience
* Costs of licenses associated with delivery of digitally enabled training
* Limited funds for marketing and research and evaluation
* Costs associated with providing appropriate clinical supervision and mentorship
* Capacity building funds may be used for costs associated with program design, regional partnership planning, and capacity building or systems change activities. Please refer to Section 3D-C for a detailed list of potential activities.

1. ***Cost per Outcome:*** Each training program proposal will be evaluated based on the cost per employment outcome, which includes the number of enrolled participants who attain a new unsubsidized job or wage gain measured at 30 days retention. As a benchmark, we have established a planned maximum investment target of **$7,500** **per employment outcome** (Option A-placement or Option B-advancement), on average. If an applicant proposes to serve a target population that requires more intensive and/or longer duration of services to be successful, applicants may propose a cost per outcome that exceeds this amount; however, this cost per outcome must be justified in the application narrative. Applicants should be thoughtful about what they propose to maximize public dollars. Historically, Donnelly grants have averaged a cost per employment outcome of approximately $7,000 - $8,000; this amount includes all expenses required to obtain an employment outcome, including recruitment, training, support, program design and program management. This amount does not include any leveraged resources. We encourage lead applicants to seek clarity with Commonwealth Corporation staff about their intended funding allocations as they complete their application.

For additional outcomes guidance, please refer to sections 3A-E, 3B-E, 3C-E, and 3D-D.

Section Six: Submission Schedule & Instructions for Submission

1. ***Submission Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | September 7, 2021 |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions | October 15, 2021 |
| All Answers to Questions Posted Online | October 22, 2021 |
| Responses (Proposals) Due | October 27, 2021, at 5PM |
| Applicants Notified of Status (Anticipated) | October 2021 – November 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date | October 2021 – November 2021 |
| Anticipated Contract End Date | December 31, 2022 |

1. ***Clarification Period*:** Questions about the RFP will be accepted in writing to Karen Shack at [kshack@commcorp.org](mailto:kshack@commcorp.org) from release through October 15, 2021 at 5:00 PM. Existing healthcare hub grantees will be able to work with Commonwealth Corporation and the Technical Assistance Team to get support in putting together their applications. Relevant questions that come up will be made available to all prospective applicants through a publicly posted questions and answers document on the following webpage: <https://commcorp.org/available-funding/>. This document will be updated periodically.
2. ***Application*** ***Submission Instructions*:** Grant Applications are due in an electronic format. We will begin formally reviewing applications starting October 1, 2021 and continue to accept applications through 5:00 PM EST on October 27, 2021. Please upload your submission electronically to the following link: <https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328900>. 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 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 Anthony Britt at [abritt@commcorp.org](mailto:abritt@commcorp.org) or 617-717-6909.

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

1. ***Training Program Grant 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. Please do not change the order of the questions/sections. You may adjust the spacing in each section to accommodate your answers.

**Part 1: Application Summary Form**

This form provides Commonwealth Corporation with summary level information about the proposed program. You may adjust the spacing as needed to accommodate your answers. This form will function as the title page of your Grant Application Package and some information may be required to be entered into the online application system.

**Part 2: Training Program 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 for each program proposed as part of your application. Each individual program for options A and B is required to have their own tab. Options C and D should be completed on the designated tab for each option.

**Part 3: Budget & Budget Narrative Forms**

Part 3a and 3b are the Budget and Budget Narrative Forms. These are included as a separate MS Excel Workbook labeled “BH Hubs 2021 Application Budget Forms.” You must submit a detailed budget request using the provided forms. The overall budget request form will become the financial basis for any grant award and for making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. This budget form should represent the overall allocation of funds toward your behavioral health expansion grant. The purple tab labeled "overall budget narrative" must include all line items for program options A, B, C, and D. This will provide the basis for your invoice template. The additional tabs are provided for review purposes but will not provide the basis for individual invoices submitted to CommCorp during implementation. 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). Each partner’s commitments, roles and anticipated activities must be provided either 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. This component pertains to all partnership members in addition to the required employer and MassHire partners.

**Part 5: Certification**

Must be attested to online by an individual who has signatory authority for the lead applicant upon submission.

Section Seven: Proposal Evaluation Process and Criteria

1. ***Proposal Evaluation Process***: Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be reviewed by Commonwealth Corporation. Representatives of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and other state agency partners may participate in this process.

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 laws. Lead applicants are encouraged to review these criteria and ensure they are in compliance prior to submitting an application. Commonwealth Corporation may conduct the following reviews to ensure compliance prior to the awarding of any grants:

* 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 consisting of members from Commonwealth Corporation/EOLWD, EOHHS/MassHealth, and RIZE will review all eligible submissions. 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.

**Option A – Training and Placement Programs:** Requests for these funds will be reviewed and scored based on the following baseline criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Meets Standards /**  **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| A. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of lead applicant and partner organizations with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementation of proposed program design |  |
| B. Clearly identified and articulated target occupation, target population, and need for project |  |
| C. Strong evidence of engagement from community-based behavioral health employers in partnership and program design, including job placement strategy that is likely to result in placement and retention for a majority of program completers |  |
| D. Clear program design that addresses the required program design elements and services for specified program option, including relevance to proposed target population and occupations targeted for job placement |  |
| E. Strong MOA/letters that include an articulation of shared goals and roles, responsibilities, and commitments of each partner, including strong commitments from employers that indicate a strong likelihood that employers will hire program completers |  |
| F. Budget accuracy and reasonableness |  |
| G. Outcomes meet the specified rate guidance or applicant provides sufficient evidence demonstrating the case for setting a lower benchmark goal; Outcomes seem attainable in context of the proposed population and program design |  |

**Option B – Training and Advancement Programs:** Requests for these funds will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Meets Standards /**  **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| A. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of lead applicant and partner organizations with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementation of proposed program design |  |
| B. Clearly identified and articulated target occupation, target population, and need for project |  |
| C. Strong evidence of engagement from community-based behavioral health employers in program design, including strategies that are likely to result in advancement and relevant metrics for a majority of program completers |  |
| D. Clear program design that addresses the required program design elements and services for specified program option, including relevance to proposed target population and occupations targeted for job advancement for incumbent workers |  |
| E. Strong MOA/letters that include an articulation of shared goals and roles, responsibilities, and commitments of each partner, including strong commitments from employers that indicating commitment form employers to source employees and support their participation in programming |  |
| F. Budget accuracy and reasonableness |  |
| G. Outcomes meet the specified rate guidance or applicant provides sufficient evidence demonstrating the case for setting a lower benchmark goal; Outcomes seem attainable in context of the proposed population and program design. Outcomes related to skill gain are clearly articulated and measurable. |  |

**Option C – Clinical Supervision and Mentorship Programs:** Requests for these funds will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Meets Standards /**  **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| A. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of applicant and partners with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementation of proposed activities |  |
| B. Clear commitment engagement from community-based behavioral health employers to participate in the design and implementation of subsidized clinical supervision and mentorship programming. |  |
| C. Participating employers, specific activities, timelines, roles, and responsibilities are clearly outlined through work plan and MOAs/Letters |  |
| D. Budget that is accurate and consistent with the proposed description of need and work plan – clearly specifies the hourly rates and effort required to fulfill goals and parameters of funding |  |

**Option D – Capacity Building Activities:** Requests for these funds will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Meets Standards /**  **Does Not Meet Standards** |
| A. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of applicant and partners with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementation of proposed activities |  |
| B. Clear evidence of relevance to behavioral health labor market and workforce strategies such as training programs and clear alignment to regional planning process |  |
| C. Work plan with specific activities, timelines, roles, and responsibilities clearly outlined |  |
| D. Budget that is accurate and consistent with the proposed description of need and work plan |  |

***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.

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

All applicants will be notified of their award status by email.

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 reserve the right to consider other criteria in making 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 DSRIP and RIZE contributions 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.
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) via email cabrams@commcorp.org. 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.
4. ***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 Anthony Britt at [abritt@commcorp.org](mailto:abritt@commcorp.org) to request a copy. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.

Section Eight: Summary of Attachments

**APPENDICES:**

The following documents are included for your reference:

* Appendix A: Target Occupation Reference Charts

**GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE:**

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

* Part 1: Application Summary Form
* Part 2: Training Program Application Narrative Form
  + 2a: Form for Option A – Training and Placement
  + 2b: Form for Option B – Training and Advancement
  + 2c: Form for Option C – Clinical Supervision and Mentorship
  + 2d: Form for Option D – Capacity Building
* Part 3a and 3b: Program Budget and Budget Narrative Forms
* Part 4: Sample Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
* Part 5: Certification

# Appendix A: Target Occupation Charts





Part 1: Application Summary Form

Please complete each question on the Program Profile and Contact Information forms in the accompanying Excel Workbook. These questions are shown below for illustrative purposes only and must be completed using the provided format in Excel. *Please note: This symbol* **^** *identifies information which you will also need to enter on the online submission form (see Section 6C Submission Instructions).*





Part 2: Program Narrative Forms

Please describe your project by responding to the questions outlined in the accompanying Excel Workbook. These questions are shown below for illustrative purposes only and must be completed using the provided format in Excel.



















Part 3a, 3b: Budget and Budget Narrative Forms

**General Instructions:** The proposed budget must be submitted using the following attachments provided in MS Excel file format:

1. Budget Form (Part 3a)
2. Budget Request Narrative Form (Part 3b)

***Budget Form (Part 3a):*** serves as a cover sheet to the Budget Request Narrative Forms. While it is formatted with formulas, please check all amounts for accuracy prior to submission. The Budget Form will provide the basis for a cost analysis to calculate the cost per outcome and the annualized wages associated with placement/advancement into a new job. Reviewers will use these calculations in conducting a cost benefit analysis.

***Budget Request Narrative Form (Part 3b):*** outlines all of the project costs for which you are requesting grant funds. This budget should be based upon the entire requested grant duration. *Please use the duplicate budget forms to plan out the individual costs of each proposed program option.*

Each line-item amount should have clear and sufficient cost rationale. Applicants must complete the following columns for each line item for which they are requesting funds.

* ***Actual Cost (AC) or Cost Allocation (CA):*** Please identify whether these expenses will be charged based upon actual costs or a cost allocation plan.

**Please note:** Applicants awarded funding may be required to provide a copy of their cost allocation plan during contract negotiations. If the cost allocation plan does not include sufficient detail or is updated on a monthly or ongoing basis, this updated information must be included along with other required back-up during specified monthly invoices. Any changes to this plan must be submitted to Commonwealth Corporation for the duration of the grant.

* ***Description of use of funds:*** Please include a description to explain how funds will be used.
* ***Calculations:*** To reduce calculation errors, please use these two columns to include the rate and unit of measurement used to calculate each line item. Instructions for specific line items are included below in the Category Instructions. Applicants may include additional detail in the ***description of use of funds*** column to explain any expenses that do not conform to the standard unit of measurement @ rate calculation format.

Please follow the Category Instructions below for completing the Budget Request Narrative and remember to *check all amounts* and formulas for accuracy prior to submission.

**Category Instructions**: Budget Request Narrative Form

**A. Salary & Fringe**

Salary: This category is for project costs related to staff that will be performing project-related functions and will be on the payroll of the lead applicant only.

The budget should include:

* each staff person (name, if known and job title) on a separate line
* actual rates of pay each staff person will receive for compensation in the column labeled “Rate/hour”
* the quantity of hours each staff person will work on this grant in the column labeled “hours”

Grantees may not invoice Commonwealth Corporation for staff roles that are not included on the budget in the contract. Grantees may charge a higher hourly rate than the rates listed in the budget in the contract. However, grantees are responsible for ensuring that the staffing structure outlined in the contract is maintained. Commonwealth Corporation will not approve a modification to add additional funds to staffing in order for the grantee to maintain the staffing structure included in the contract. Therefore, we encourage all grantees to review any significant staff changes with Commonwealth Corporation prior to making the change to ensure an adequate staffing structure is maintained. Applicants should factor in any proposed increases over the grant period into the average hourly rate.

Fringe: This line item is for fringe benefits for internal staff. The budget should include the percentage used to calculate the actual budgeted dollar amount. The budget should also include details about the benefits included in rate and the rate associated with each benefit.

**B.** **Other Program Costs**

Travel:This category is forlead applicantstaff travel required to achieve the project goals. The budget should include a description indicating the need for the proposed travel, destinations, and mode of travel. The budget should include the mileage rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of miles in the column labeled “unit.” Mileage will not be reimbursed beyond the current federally approved rates.

Space Rental**:** This category is for space rental related to project activity. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis the actual monthly cost of rent should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Telephone & Communications**:** This category is for telephone and other communication costs related to project activity. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis the budget should include the actual monthly cost of telephone & communications in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Equipment Rental & Lease**:** This category is for rental or lease of office equipment necessary for implementation of the project. The budget should include a list of items to be leased. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis include the actual monthly cost of equipment rentals in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Equipment Purchase**:** This category is for equipment purchases. The budget should include a list of items to be purchased. The budget should include the cost of the item in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of units that will be purchased in the column labeled “unit.”

Postage & Mailings**:** This category is for postage and mailing related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the budget should include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, the budget should include the total cost of postage in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Publication/Print/Copying**:** This category is for publication, printing and copying related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be allocated on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, include the total cost of publication, printing and copying in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Meeting Expenses**:** This category is for meeting expenses related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. The budget should include a meeting cost rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of meetings that will be held over the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Office Supplies & Materials**:** This category is for office supplies related to project activity. The budget should include a description of use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the budget should include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, the budget should include the total cost of office supplies & materials in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Marketing & Advertising**:** This category is for marketing and advertising related to project activity.

The budget should include a description of use of these funds. The budget should include the cost of the advertisement in the column labeled “rate” and the number of times you plan to run the advertisement in the column labeled “unit.”

Training Materials**:** This category is for expenses related to the purchase of training materials related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the training materials. The budget should include the cost per unit of the training materials in the column labeled “rate” and the cost per unit in the column labeled “unit.”

**C. Support Services**

Training Stipend: This category is for stipends paid to participants during their participation in training activities. The budget should include the amount of the stipend in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of participants anticipated to receive the stipend in the column labeled “unit.”

Work Experience: This category is for wages and stipends paid to participants or wage subsidies paid to employers during work experience, including on-the-job training. The budget should include a description of the type of compensation (stipend, hourly wage for internship, wages for on-the-job training) and the number of weeks of employment. The budget should include the total maximum compensation that will be paid to or in the case of a wage subsidy, on behalf of each participant under the column labeled “rate” and the total number of participants anticipated to receive the stipend in the column labeled “unit.”

Transportation**:** This category is for transportation expenses related to the support of participants during training. The budget should include a description of the use of funds. The budget should include the average amount that will be provided per participant in the column labeled “rate” and the total participants in the column labeled “unit.”

Participant Tuition & Fees**:** This category is for tuition and fees associated with training slots for one or more participants. The budget should include the cost per participant in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of participants in the column labeled “unit.” Any costs that the applicant will contractually agree to pay a training provider for group instruction should not be included in this line item and should be included in the training contractors’ line item.

Flexible Funding / Other: This category is for other expenses related to the support of participants during training such as flexible funding to cover participant emergencies and other barriers to program and job retention. The budget should include a description of the use of funds. The budget should include the average cost per participant in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of participants in the column labeled “unit.”

**D. Contracted Services**

Training Contractors: This category is for project costs related to training services provided to the grantee on a contract basis by individuals, organizations or companies that are subcontractors or consultants to the grantee.

If the cost of the course is negotiated at an hourly rate, the budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of instructional and preparation hours in the column labeled “unit.” If the cost of the course is negotiated at a course-based rate, the budget should include the total cost of the course in the column labeled “unit” and the number of times the course will be offered in the column labeled “rate.” If rates vary by course, each course should be listed in a separate row. At a minimum each training provider should be listed on a separate line.

Curriculum Development Contractors: This category is for project costs related to the development of curricula. The budget should include a description of the use of funds including the name of the organization or individual that will be contracted to develop the curricula and the new courses that will be developed. The budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the number of hours that will be spent developing the curricula in the column labeled “unit.”

Other Contractors:This category is for expenses related to other contracted services, including any contracted services to fulfill required staffing roles. The budget should include a description of the use of funds including the name of the organization or individual that will be contracted to perform this service. The budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the quantity of hours each task will require in the column labeled “unit.” Each contractor should be listed on a separate line.

**E. Indirect Costs** This category is for indirect costs. Indirect costs are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that are not easily identifiable to a single grant and benefit multiple programs. Grantees must apply indirect costs through the use of an approved indirect cost rate or an approved cost allocation plan. A copy of the cost allocation plan must be supplied during contract negotiations. Any changes to this plan must be submitted to Commonwealth Corporation for the duration of the grant.

Part 4: Sample Memorandum of Agreement

**(*NAME of Partnership*)**

**I. Purpose of This Memorandum**

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlines the agreement among the partners listed below. 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 participants find and remain in jobs after completing the training program;
* Strategies that address enrollment, occupational and academic skills instructions, job development, and job placement for the specific identified target population and target occupation(s); and
* Hiring/wage increase commitments (not required)

**II. Term**

This MOA shall be in effect from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and shall end on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 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 Industry Cluster 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. 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 provides an outline of what a detailed commitment might look like)***

*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 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).

*For programs proposing to prepare participants for advancement with their current employer:*

(business name) agrees to participate in the design of assessment/screening protocols and training program curriculum to ensure graduates of the program meet criteria to be eligible for advancement.

(business name) agrees to provide a wage increase to (number of graduates to receive wage increase) at an average hourly increase of (average amount of hourly increase in dollars). This wage increase will occur (specific point in time or benchmark-such as the attainment of a credential-when the wage increase will be awarded).

**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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Part 5: Certification

***^This form is required to be attested to digitally on application portal upon submission****.*

|  |
| --- |
| **Statement of Tax Compliance:**  Pursuant to M.G.L., c62C, s.49A, I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, signing on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , certify that under the pains and penalties of perjury that the aforementioned business organization has filed all state tax returns and paid all taxes as required by law.  **Certification of Compliance with Filing Requirements:**  I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ aforementioned Lead Applicant, 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.  FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

1. Throughout this document, we use the term “behavioral health” as an umbrella term to encompass mental health, substance use disorder (SUD), and opioid use disorder (OUD), except in places where using the specific terms provide additional clarity. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-your-regions-blueprint> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board>, <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/implementing-workadvance-model> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. We recognize that some roles, such as peer roles, may be designed to accommodate work that is not full time. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For example, skill gains may include demonstrated increases in clinical competence including but not limited to the following examples: electronic health record documentation, employee supervision strategies, understanding recovery health principles, or trauma-informed practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)