**DONNELLY IMPLEMENTATION GRANT FAQ**



**APPLICATION PACKAGE/ GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

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| **QUESTION** | **ANSWER** |
| How does an organization schedule an appointment during office hours with Commonwealth Corporation staff? | Office hours are posted on the RFP page on our website; individuals requesting a Q&A session will be invited to schedule office hours from available time slots. |
| Is the information covered in the Pre-Application TA session available in the application documents? | All the information discussed in these sessions can be found in the RFP. |
| Is there a maximum grant award, regardless of the region or number of partners? | Yes, $500,000 is the maximum grant award. |
| How fast is the turnaround if a grant gets approved? | There are multiple steps in the approval process and multiple offices engaged in the process. Please plan for at least a 3-month turnaround time. |
| Is an MOA or MOU needed for the application, or can a Letter of Support work in place of an MOA or MOU? | Either can be submitted, but an MOU is considered best practice in a sector partnership application and therefore will carry more weight. |
| If a proposal is not funded, will the applicant be notified? | Yes, we will notify organizations that are not funded. |
| How soon can current Donnelly Grantees submit a new Donnelly application? | Current grantees can submit another application at any time but should consider timeline and capacity to manage additional grants. |
| Are there different Communities of Practice for the Program Design Grant and Donnelly Grants, or are they shared? | They will have separate Communities of Practice. |
| How do I determine the cost per enrollment and the cost per outcome? | Please refer to the notes in the budget excel spreadsheet for manual calculation. **For overall Cost Per Participant Served** (Enrollment) divide your total program budget (not including the match) by the number of enrollments.  **For the Overall Cost Per Employment Outcome** (Placement) divide your total program budget (not including match) by the number of successful job placements/advancements. |
| Is there a minimum number of trainees per cohort set as a standard? | No. |
| What is the data management system for WCTF reporting? | Commonwealth Corporation will require grantees to utilize Apricot by Social Solutions. |
| Does WCTF support 2-or-4-year educational programs that result in a degree? For example, will it support an accelerated post-bachelors clinical training program such as Medical Laboratory Science? | The WCTF does not have a primary goal to support 2-or-4-year degree programs. Accelerated curriculum may be considered on a case-by-case basis. The priority population to be served with WCTF funding is individuals with less than a bachelor’s degree so it is unlikely that the WCTF would fund a post-bachelor’s certification training. |
| What is the maximum timeframe for a WCTF contract? | The WCTF awards 2– 3-year contracts. |

**ELIGIBLE LEAD APPLICANTS AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

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| **QUESTION** | **ANSWER** |
| I have a technical training company.  Would I qualify as an eligible applicant? | Eligible applicants are as follows:   * Community-based organizations, including adult basic education providers * Employers with operations in Massachusetts and that employ Massachusetts residents in the proposed target occupation * Employer associations * Higher education institutions * Labor organizations * Local workforce development entities * Local workforce boards * Nonprofit education, training or other service providers * One-stop career centers * For Profit organizations * Vocational education institutions * Excluding Chapter 74 schools (if they are the only training provider in their proposed training delivery model) for manufacturing and construction/skilled trades pathways. Chapter 74 schools and other Perkins-funded career connections are encouraged to apply for funding through the Career Technical Initiative. |
| We are considering applying as a consortium of community colleges. After reading the RFP, we see that these partnerships are encouraged. Would we still need to assign one of the colleges as the lead entity? | Consortiums are welcome. One Community College would need to be named as the lead. However, the current funding cap is set at $500,000. |
| Do employer partners require separate FEINs to count as separate employers in the application? | Yes, employer partners need to have distinct FEIN numbers to serve as separate employers. |
| Can you work with multiple employers in different industries? For example, employers in hospitality and finance? | Yes, if those employers are hiring workers for the same target occupation. |
| If an employer partner is a lead applicant and is a large employer with multiple offices, can the application have only one employer partner? | Two employer partners are required, and they must have separate FEINs. |
| For a multi-region application, are two employers sufficient? | Two employers are the requirement; however, we will want to see employer demand for workers in the target occupation in all the regions that are included in the application. |
| Can our program support employer operations outside of Massachusetts? | No. The funding must serve businesses with operations in Massachusetts that employ Massachusetts residents in the target occupation. |
| For applications that include a lead applicant and other partners, are the partners considered sub-awardees or sub-contractors? | If a partner is being paid to deliver a service, the budget should include them and the cost as a sub-contractor in the GRANT BUDGET NARRATIVE section of the Contracted Services Sheet. |
| Can a Career Technical Initiative (CTI) grantee apply for WCTF grants? | CTI grantees can apply for WCTF funding as vocational education institutions, excluding Chapter 74 schools (if they are the only training provider in their proposed training delivery model) for manufacturing and construction/skilled trades pathways. Chapter 74 schools and other Perkins-funded career connections are encouraged to apply for funding through the Career Technical Initiative.  Active grantees should consider timeline and capacity to manage additional grants. |
| Must a community-based provider (non-profit) contribute to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund to qualify for a WCTF grant? | No, a non-profit provider does not have to contribute to the UI Trust Fund to qualify for a WCTF grant. |
| If you are in year 2 of a WCTF grant, can you submit a new application for different training? | Yes. |
| Can a municipality apply for WCTF funding? | Municipalities are not eligible for WCTF funding but can partner with an organization that meets the eligibility criteria for lead applicants. |

**BUDGET AND GRANT AWARD**

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| **QUESTIONS** | **ANSWER HERE** |
| What are some options we can use towards the 30% match requirement? | The match can be used for project staff directly working on the program, equipment, space rental, etc required for the program that are paid for through another funding source, employer in-kind and cash contributions to the program, and in-kind and cash contributions to the program from other partners.  Match detail must be provided in the budget narrative; there is no restriction on what can be covered by grant funds vs the match. |
| Can we use other state funding for the match? | Yes, you can use other state funding for the match. |
| Can we apply for more than $500,000? | No, $500,000 is the funding cap. |
| Can we use current WCTF grant funds to cover the match portion of another WCTF grant? | No, WCTF funds may not be used to match additional WCTF funds. |
| For the Donnelly Success Implementation grant, what types of transportation costs can be covered? | Examples of Participant Transportation costs that can be covered with WCTF/Donnelly Grant Implementation Funds are bus or T passes, ride-share costs, and gas costs.  In some instances, WCTF grantees have covered the costs of unexpected or emergency transportation issues a participant may experience, such as repairing a flat tire, to support them through completion of a training program.  Examples of Staff Travel costs that can be covered include travel of lead applicant staff required to achieve the project goals. The budget should include a description indicating the need for the proposed travel, destinations and mode of travel. |
| For the Donnelly Success Implementation Grant, what types of childcare costs can be covered? | Tuition to a childcare center, the costs of onsite childcare, or the cost of in-home services, when provided by a licensed childcare provider. |
| For the Donnelly Success Implementation Grant, are we able to build in case management to help participants connect to continued support services that will address barriers to maintaining employment? | For post-placement case management support, grantees may use implementation funds as long as these costs are incurred within the contracted grant period. |
| Is the $10,000 per employment outcome all-inclusive or is it in addition to funding for staffing positions and expenses? | The cost per employment outcome (placement or wage increase) should not exceed $10,000 unless the applicant demonstrates that the target population and/or target occupation requires a program design with more intensive services and/or a longer duration. Budget items across all categories are added to calculate the total budget amount and then divided by the number of projected participants who will be placed into a job or receive a wage increase.  The staffing costs and expenses are part of this total budget. |
| Can a portion of the per-participant costs be used for wages or staff development? | These grants will not cover participant wages, but they may fund participant stipends based on specific benchmarks. A line item for this purpose is provided in the Support Services section of the budget form. Wages for staff can be charged to the grant and should be included in the Salary & Fringe line items. However, we do not expect internal staff development costs to be charged to a WCTF grant. |
| Will lead applicants need to show proof of placement to be reimbursed for training expenditures? | Providing proof of placement is a requirement of the WCTF grant. We ask that grantees collect enrollment, completion and placement data. |
| Is there a limit on allowable overhead costs for the budget? | There is not a specific overhead limit. We ask that allocated costs and indirect costs be detailed in the budget. 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. We evaluate all budgets based on reasonableness, alignment to the proposed program design and a cost per employment outcome of approximately $10,000. Higher cost per outcomes may be requested with detailed explanation of the rationale. |
| Under what line items can materials be purchased? | Please refer to the budget excel form. Training Materials are a line item under the category of “Other Program Costs”. |
| Are the 30% match funds in “out of pocket expenditure” or “in-kind” costs? | Either is acceptable. |
| Is it possible to use a portion of the grant funding to support the costs associated with program/curriculum development, for example, hiring a consultant or industry expert to develop courses? | While program-specific external contractors are an allowable expense, please note that WCTF projects are intended to be ready for immediate implementation, with the curriculum already fully developed. Please see our available funding page for information about Program Design grants which supports activities such as training design. |
| Can WCTF funding be used for equipment? | It is anticipated that partnerships will utilize existing equipment to deliver training programs. If equipment required to continue or increase seat capacity is not available in the 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. The costs of large equipment or technology will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please bear in mind that these costs will count toward the maximum amount of funding of $500,000 per grant and toward the cost per enrollment and outcome. Any equipment or technology purchased with the grant must be used for the WCTF-funded program and must be essential to delivering the training. Amounts must be reasonable and a reasonable proportion of the proposed budget. |

**FUNDING PRIORITIES / TARGET OCCUPATION(S)**

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| **QUESTIONS** | **ANSWER HERE** |
| Will Commonwealth Corporation identify any occupations as statewide priority occupations? Specifically, will Commonwealth Corporation identify Early Education Teachers and Commercial Drivers (truckers) as priority occupations irrespective of regionally identified occupations? | Commonwealth Corporation does not identify statewide priority occupations. The Governor’s Workforce Skills Cabinet may identify statewide priorities. For the current RFP, the Skills Cabinet has identified Healthcare and Information Technology as statewide priorities. Applicants are encouraged to review their Regional Blueprint to identify occupations listed as “prioritized” or “critical but not prioritized” in their respective region(s).  <https://www.mass.gov/lists/regional-workforce-blueprints> |
| Are there specific priorities for target occupations in the healthcare sector? | Healthcare in general is a statewide priority sector. We encourage you to consider the needs of your employer partners and documented demand for the target occupation as you develop your application. |
| Can we propose more than one target industry per proposal? | No. You can have more than one target occupation within an industry. but not more than one industry. |

**TARGET POPULATION**

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| **QUESTION** | **ANSWER** |
| Is it possible for any of the same program participants to be enrolled in multiple WCTF grants? | A participant can be enrolled in multiple WCTF programs if one of the programs is focused on advancement after the initial training program and if their participation in the programs is not concurrent. |
| If we have students already enrolled in an Occupational Therapy program, could WCTF be an opportunity for additional field work experience/training in their final year? | No. WCTF does not support funding for the last year(s) of a degree program. |
| How do you define unemployed and underemployed? | Unemployed: not having a job  Underemployed: Please reference the RFP to see table of 60% of the median household income by county. If an individual is employed and making less than 60% MHI in their county they are considered to be underemployed. |
| Is training for individuals required to already have a bachelor’s degree eligible? | The WCTF prioritizes serving individuals without a bachelor’s degree. |
| For grants that are predominantly working with underserved populations (for example, individuals experiencing homelessness) would it be acceptable to offer initial placement in more accessible entry-level occupations? | Entry-level occupation options are acceptable. |

**TRAINING PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

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| **QUESTION** | **ANSWER** |
| How do you define employment outcomes? | Employment outcomes are defined as training-related placements retained at least 30 days and occurring within the contract period. |
| What are some specific examples of what would constitute an equivalent to the $2 wage increase requirement? | Alternatives could be receiving a promotion, or an incremental wage increase. If there is not an immediate wage increase, please demonstrate how the training could lead to advancement in the near future. |
| The $2 an hour wage increase is in what amount of time? | All contracted outcomes should be attainable within the grant period. |
| For participants who are already employed, how do we measure and track successful outcomes? | Incumbent participants are expected to receive a $2+ hour wage gain as a result of completing the training program. If that is not a possible outcome, we will review alternative proposals and allow for some flexibility under certain circumstances in which participants may receive the non-monetary equivalent of this targeted outcome such as a promotion, or an incremental wage increase, or a combination of a wage gain and other additional benefits. |
| If a participant starts their own business following the training, can that be considered an acceptable or positive outcome? | Historically, this has not been counted as a successful outcome of the training program. We are open to an exploratory discussion around the parameters and documentation requirements to measure self-employment as a successful outcome. |

**TRAINING / PROGRAM DESIGN**

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| **QUESTION** | **ANSWER** |
| Must the proposed program be cohort-based, or can it support a flow of individual starts with a remote/online delivery? | Commonwealth Corporation will accept applications for either cohort-based programs or individual start/slot-based programs, with a preference for cohort programs. |
| How would you suggest a program include ESOL in a training planning or implementation grant? | Commonwealth Corporation cannot fund a standalone ESOL program with WCTF funds but encourages grantees to include ESOL programming into the program design which may take the form of contextualized ESOL, integrating ESOL into occupational skills training, providing ESOL as a feeder to occupational skills training, and co-teaching content with an instructor with expertise in the technical and occupational skills and an instructor with expertise in ESOL. |
| For the WCTF, for pipeline training and incumbent worker training, would a Train the Trainer model be accepted? As we know, finding qualified instructors for hands-on technical training has been a challenge across regions and a Train the Trainer model could help address that. | Train the trainer models incorporated in a program are certainly welcome. However, it cannot be a stand-alone program. A WCTF funded program must result in a job placement for under/unemployed workers and a wage increase or relevant advancement for incumbent workers. Additionally, MOUs with at least 2 employer partners would need to be in place demonstrating job vacancies for graduates of the training program. |