



COMMONWEALTH
 **CORPORATION**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2024 **Senator Kenneth
J. Donnelly Grants**

RELEASED APRIL

FOR EXPANDED TRAINING CAPACITY AND
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE



Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Grants

FOR EXPANDED TRAINING CAPACITY AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE



APPLICATION

Click here to complete the first step of the application.



PRIMARY CONTACT

Adam Cutler, Director
Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund
Commonwealth Corporation
33 Harrison Avenue, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02111
Acutler@commcorp.org
(617) 717-6950



UPLOAD PROPOSAL

Click here to upload your electronic submission. This is the second step of the application process.



QUESTIONS

Bidders can submit questions and sign up for notifications. Click here to learn more.



WEBSITE

www.commcorp.org

CONTENTS

SECTION ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECTION TWO: ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

SECTION THREE: PROGRAM DESIGN

SECTION FOUR: ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

SECTION FIVE: AVAILABLE FUNDING & ALLOWABLE COSTS

SECTION SIX: SUBMISSION SCHEDULE & INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

SECTION SEVEN: PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

APPLICATION MATERIALS:

| | |
|--------|---|
| PART 1 | Application Summary |
| PART 2 | Program Narrative |
| PART 3 | Program Budget Summary Program Budget Summary, Grant Budget Request Narrative & Match Contribution Narrative Forms |
| PART 4 | Sample MOA |
| PART 5 | Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) |
| PART 6 | W-9 Form |



SECTION ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. About the Grant: The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) is a funding opportunity that is being made available to support the ongoing economic recovery and growth objectives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These strategic investments are part of the ongoing effort by the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) to align public and private resources across the system and scale effective career pathway programs that better position residents who want to be hired into jobs that businesses need filled.

This grant is administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the WSC.

As part of this strategic approach, this Request for Proposals (RFP) is designed to fund **training and placement programs**. The following are required [Program Design models](#):

| | |
|----------|---|
| Option A | Training and placement for unemployed and/or underemployed individuals |
| Option B | Training and advancement for incumbent workers |
| Option C | hybrid / combination model |

B. About the Funding Sources: This grant initiative is funded through appropriations in the Fiscal Years 2022, 2023, 2024 State Budget (line item 7002-1075) and funds appropriated through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021.

The WCTF was established through economic stimulus legislation passed by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2006. The Massachusetts Legislature established the WCTF with two goals in mind:

- *To improve the competitive stature of Massachusetts businesses by improving the skills of current and future workers, and*
- *To improve 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.*

The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) invests in demand-driven programs designed by industry sector partnerships that train and place unemployed and underemployed workers. The purpose of the Fund is to support the development and implementation of employer and worker-responsive programs to enhance worker skills, incomes, productivity, and retention, and to increase the quality and competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses. WCTF programs serve residents across the Commonwealth whose life experiences and circumstances make it difficult for them to succeed in employment without targeted support. They include individuals who are underemployed and rely on aid from public benefits to support their families, individuals who have been disconnected from the workforce for an extended period, and people who have not been able to obtain a credential or complete formal schooling. Other participants may face barriers to work due in part to not speaking English as their first language, past involvement with the criminal justice system, or health problems such as a disability or substance use history.

In 2018, the Massachusetts Legislature voted to rename grant awards from the WCTF in memory of the late Senator Kenneth Donnelly, who was a steadfast champion of promoting workforce opportunities in the Commonwealth, especially for people who might lack a pathway to economic stability. In this spirit, we seek to foster sector partnerships that are powered by local organizations who possess deep expertise and aim to uplift people of all backgrounds. The WCTF model enables community organizations to build and sustain effective partnerships with employers and the public workforce system while striving to incorporate more equitable and innovative practices that lead to increased economic mobility for more people in the Commonwealth.

- C. *Funding Availability:*** A combined ARPA State Budget funds totaling over \$20 million have been available for this grant program. Please see Section 5 on available funding for more information. Awards and schedule of application submissions are contingent upon funding availability.
- D. *Match Requirement:*** Awardees will be required to provide a 30% match of the total awarded funds. Match contributions may be cash or in-kind. Please see Section 5 for more information.
- E. *Duration of Contract(s):*** Contracts will be issued for up to three years.

F. Other Essential Requirements:

- a. Lead applicant with authorized [Department of Unemployment Assistance \(DUA\)](#).
- b. Lead applicant with authorized [Federal Employer Identification Number \(FEIN\)](#).
- c. <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-unemployment-assistance> Industry recognized credentials earned at completion of training.
- d. MOUs with at least 2 employer partners.
- e. Registration with the Department of Apprenticeship Standards (if applicable.)
- f. Partnership with MassHire-highly recommended.

G. Payment: Funds will be disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis. We anticipate that lead applicants for each partnership will report expenses each month using the required Fiscal Status Report (FSR) document provided by Commonwealth Corporation. The fiscal process is subject to change in 2024 as new software programs and scheduled to be incorporated. Partnerships will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the contract period. Lead applicants for each partnership will be required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for expenses and match contributions.

H. Application Deadline: Applications may be submitted at any time as the RFP is accepting applications on a rolling basis. We do not require a letter of intent to apply; however, we do encourage interested parties to sign up for the Q&A list to be notified of relevant updates and clarifications. Questions about this RFP will be accepted via the following [link](#). Please see Section 6 for more information.

I. Schedule: Applications will be reviewed 3 x times annually. While there is an eight-week review period following each application deadline, applicants are encouraged to plan for the possibility of an award notification date that may extend beyond the initial review period. The duration of review and approval process can vary depending on many factors. Please check with Commonwealth Corporation administrative staff for more information. Please see Section 6 for a detailed procurement schedule.

J. Key Elements Summary Chart: The following chart provides an overview of key elements.
Please see “SECTION THREE Program Design” for more information about training design requirements:

| Option A: Training and Placement and Option B: Training and Advancement Program | |
|---|--|
| Maximum Grant Award | The authorization legislation for WCTF limits grant awards to \$500,000. However, there are limited funding opportunities, while available to fund proposals over \$500,000 through the federal funding source, ARPA. |
| Grant Duration | Grant awards can be set for a maximum of 3 years. |
| Target Outcome | <p>(Option A) Training and Placement Program: To train and place unemployed and underemployed <u>Massachusetts residents</u> into new employment within occupations that are in-demand by employers in a specific region.</p> <p>Option B: Training and Advancement Program: To train and promote Massachusetts workers currently employed in the target sector into higher paying positions. in occupations that are in-demand by employers in a specific region. Eligible incumbent workers are currently employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Unlike Option A, Option B participants are not required to be Massachusetts residents.</p> <p>(Option C) Hybrid Program: To train and place unemployed and underemployed Massachusetts residents into new employment within occupations that are in-demand by employers in a specific region, <u>and</u> to train and promote Massachusetts workers who are currently employed in the target sector into higher paying positions in occupations that are in-demand by employers in a specific region. For incumbent participants, one of the following is required as an employment outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum increase of \$2 per hour wage gain. • Promotion. • Realistic-incremental wage gain-consistent and equitable with H.R. policies. <p><i>Applicants interested in designing a program for incumbent workers, please contact Director of WCTF, Adam Cutler.</i></p> |
| Target Population | <p>For the purposes of this RFP, an <u>unemployed individual</u> is defined as an individual who is not currently employed at the time of enrollment in the program.</p> <p>An <u>underemployed individual</u> is defined as an individual who is earning less than 60% of the Median Household Income (also referred to as Area Median Income) for the Workforce Area in</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| | <p>which they reside. The chart in Section Three provides the median income level for each Workforce Area.</p> <p><u>Incumbent workers: Grant funds may also be used to train a partnering employer's current (incumbent) workers if the program's objective is to promote workers into higher-paying positions with their current employer.</u> Eligible incumbent workers are currently employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Unlike Option A, Option B participants are not required to be Massachusetts residents. <i>Please note: this option is <u>not</u> intended to support advancement training for high-wage workers.</i> In keeping with the mission of WCTF, we strongly encourage lead applicants to collaborate with their local MassHire Career Centers to recruit candidates for and backfill the vacated positions with unemployed or underemployed Massachusetts residents.</p> |
| Target Occupation | An occupation within the Information Technology cluster, Healthcare, or another sector that is identified as critical or priority in the regional blueprint for the lead applicant's region. |

K. Types of Partnerships/Partnership Requirements: This funding opportunity will support proposals from lead applicants on behalf of partnerships that commit to working together to provide an occupationally focused training and placement program for unemployed and underemployed Massachusetts' residents and/or a training and advancement program for Massachusetts' workers. Three types of partnerships are eligible for support through this funding opportunity:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Baseline Partnership Requirements | <p>A minimum of two employers that have operations in Massachusetts and demonstrated vacancies in the target occupation who are interested in using the program to fill vacancies either by hiring unemployed and underemployed individuals or by promoting their current employees into higher paying positions.</p> <p><i>We strongly encourage</i> proposals that include robust evidence of partnerships with their local MassHire Workforce Board and local MassHire Career Center(s) to support recruitment and well-aligned job matching. This includes the use of Upskilling Navigators that are co-located at local MassHire Career Center(s). As best practice, your proposal may reference the local Upskilling Navigator or plans to ensure the recruitment relationship is firmly established.</p> |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. Regional or Multiple Training Provider Partnership Requirements</p> | <p>Baseline Partnership Requirements and:</p> <p>Applicants proposing to provide services at a significant scale (volume of trainees) across an entire regional workforce skill planning area (<i>blueprint region</i>) may apply for funding for a two-year grant or three-year grant if their application meets all the following additional criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is evidence of engagement from multiple workforce and/or education entities in the region. For example, multiple community colleges or MassHire Workforce Boards in the <i>blueprint region</i> are participating in the proposed program. 2. The proposal submitted by the partnership represents a coordinated and integrated training and partnership strategy with an intent to attain scale (volume of individuals trained). A <i>blueprint region</i>-wide proposal that includes a separate program design for each participating workforce board will not meet the intentions of the RFP (and each workforce board should therefore apply individually). 3. The joint proposal includes a clear articulation of why the individuals and organizations participating in the partnership are the appropriate partners to develop and implement a comprehensive workforce development plan for the targeted industry and <i>blueprint region</i>. 4. The partnership includes evidence of sufficient employer partner engagement across the entire <i>blueprint region</i>, which will include more than the minimum requirement of two employer partners who have agreed to be a partner and have signed the MOA. |
| <p>3. Multi-Region or Statewide Partnerships</p> | <p>Baseline Partnership Requirements and:</p> <p>Applicants proposing to provide services across the entire state or multiple regional workforce skills planning areas (<i>blueprint regions</i>) may apply for funding for grants up to 3 years if their application meets all the following additional criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is evidence of engagement from multiple workforces and/or education entities in the targeted region(s). For example, multiple community colleges or MassHire Workforce |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Boards in the regions are participating in the proposed program.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. The proposal submitted by the partnership represents a coordinated and integrated training and partnership strategy with an intent to attain scale (volume of individuals trained). A <i>statewide</i> or multi-regional proposal that includes a separate program design for each participating region will not meet the intentions of the RFP (and each region should therefore apply individually).3. The joint proposal includes a clear articulation of why the individuals and organizations participating in the partnership are the appropriate partners to develop and implement a comprehensive workforce development plan for the targeted industry across the state or multiple regions.4. The partnership includes evidence of sufficient employer partner engagement across the entire <i>designated geographic area</i>, which will include more than the minimum requirement of two employer partners who have agreed to be a partner and have signed the MOA. |
|--|--|

SECTION TWO: ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- A. Eligible Applicants:** The following organizations are eligible to apply as “lead applicants” on behalf of a partnership:
- 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.

Lead Applicants-further guidance

An organization may be the lead applicant for more than one application. There is no limit on the number of proposals for which an organization may serve as a partner. Applications from entities not listed above but could potentially qualify for WCTF funding should seek out guidance from Commonwealth Cooperation Program staff.

- “[be] in good legal standing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and as a non- or for-profit entity and demonstrate the capability and capacity to provide the training including meeting any state and/or federal regulatory requirements related to any component of the proposed training program.”
 - Good standing may be determined by reviewing the COGS (Certificate of Good Standing) and verifying DUA compliance during the threshold criteria screening process.
 - The applicant’s capability and capacity to provide the training program and comply with state and/or federal regulatory requirements may be evaluated through our application review process using our scoring rubrics and any necessary follow-up communications to clarify questions about their submission.

- The organization must be prepared to fulfill all lead applicant responsibilities as outlined in the RFP in Section Two.
- The organization must propose a program design that meets the criteria outlined in Section Three of the RFP.
- The organization must be compliant and prepared to fulfill the administrative requirements as outlined in Section Four of the RFP.
- The organization must propose a use of funds that complies with the requirements and allowances as outlined in Section Five of the RFP.
- The organization must submit a complete application that includes all materials outlined in Section Six of the RFP.
- The applicant must be prepared to comply with all requirements and project terms and conditions referenced in Section Seven of the RFP.

B. Lead Applicant Responsibilities: Lead applicants must:

- **Work collaboratively with Commonwealth Corporation** to ensure that the program meets participants' needs and achieves planned outcomes.
- **Convene the partners** to achieve the overall project goals, including, but not limited to, coordinating the design of the program, developing an appropriate budget, negotiating agreement of the program performance management measures, developing, and overseeing the effective implementation of the training program, overall project management, and coordinating all program activities.
- Collect and report all required data and participate in the program's evaluation.
- **Be in good legal standing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and as a non- or for-profit entity and demonstrate the capability and capacity** to provide the training including meeting any state and/or federal regulatory requirements related to any component of the proposed training program.
- **Engage in open communication and information sharing about successes and challenges** related to the program with state agency stakeholders.

C. 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 occupationally focused training and placement or training and advancement programming for un/underemployed people and/or incumbent workers, including education, training, and employment support services.

CommCorp, on behalf of the Workforce Skills Cabinet, is interested in funding proposals that clearly outline each partner's commitment, role, and anticipated

activities. For the required partners listed below, these aspects must be demonstrated either through a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or through the submission of separate letters of commitment. We do 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 tailored to the details of the proposal and includes enough detail as opposed to a generalizable statement. *Demonstrated collaboration with regional stakeholders strengthens applications but is not required for submission.*

- ***Required – Two Employers:*** partnerships **must include a minimum of two businesses** with operations in Massachusetts and that employ Massachusetts residents in the target occupation(s). Successful applicants will demonstrate that they have relationships with local businesses committed to providing placements for unemployed or underemployed participants and/or promoting incumbent worker participants into higher paying positions. Selected business partners must have enough demonstrated vacancies and/or hiring needs for workers in the proposed target occupation to hire or promote the proposed number of program graduates. Selected business partners need to provide 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 businesses must sign an MOA or letter of commitment.*** *Please note that if workers in the proposed target occupation at participating businesses are covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the union that represents the workers must also demonstrate partnership through either a signed MOA or letters.*
- ***Recommended – MassHire Workforce Board:*** partnerships are encouraged to include their local workforce board(s) in a capacity that complements the overall structure and strategy of the proposed program. Workforce Board staff have substantial knowledge about business demand for workers in their region. They can also identify opportunities to leverage local publicly funded workforce system capacity. Many MassHire Workforce Boards have staff with experience in designing and managing strategic sector-based initiatives and in convening and facilitating industry sector partnerships. Additionally, [the Workforce Skills Cabinet has funded Market Maker positions at the lead Workforce Board in each of the regional workforce skills planning areas.](#) Market Makers engage employers, match them with training providers, and help them build pipelines of skilled employees. They build stronger connections between businesses, community-based organizations (CBOs), institutions, regional state partners¹, and the Workforce Skills Cabinet and its representatives. Applicants may locate their regional Market Maker [here](#). ***MassHire Workforce Board partners on WCTF***

funded programs are not required to sign an MOA or letter; however, applicants will be required to demonstrate alignment with the regional blueprint planning priorities. Applicants can access a list of MassHire Workforce Boards at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board>

- ***Recommended - MassHire Career Center:*** partnerships are encouraged to include their local career center(s) in a capacity that complements the overall structure and strategy of the proposed program. MassHire Career Centers provide job search assistance to large numbers of job seekers each year and may be able to assist with participant recruitment and selection as well as job search preparation. They also have relationships with regional employers and may be a resource for supporting job development and placement activities. Additionally, most MassHire Career Centers have ***Upskilling Navigators*** co-located at their sites. The Upskilling Navigators maintain subject matter expertise on area training and upskilling opportunities and streamline recruitment for state-funded training programs such as WCTF. ***MassHire Career Center partners are not required to sign an MOA or letter.*** Applicants can access a list of MassHire Career Centers at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center>
- ***Recommended - Community Based Organization:*** partnerships are encouraged to include local organizations that support community members in areas of Education, Housing, Energy, social assistance and beyond.

SECTION THREE: PROGRAM DESIGN

A. Target Sector / Occupation(s):

Partnerships must provide job training, placement, and support services that prepare individuals to meet business' skill and work-readiness requirements for an in-demand occupation(s). Partnerships should propose to train individuals for an occupation in a single industry sector. Partnerships may submit a proposal to provide multiple different training pathways/occupations within the same industry. For example, a health care sector partnership could submit a proposal that has two training programs - one for pharmacy technicians and one for certified nursing assistants. However, partnerships must show the staffing capacity to manage the multiple programs over the grant period. Additionally, partnerships are strongly encouraged to provide a delineation and clear description of the different pathways and their targeted outcomes.

Commonwealth Corporation has found that the most successful programs offer multiple cohorts of the same occupational pathway over the duration of grant periods up to 3 years. This allows for data-driven continuous program improvement, momentum and trust building with employer partners, and sufficient resourcing for on-going recruitment cycles over time. Applicants must identify a target region or regions and include information about unmet demand for workers for the proposed target occupation. This information must come from regional employers and must include 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 employers in the region and that there is a need for a training and placement or training and advancement program.

Partnerships should identify one of the following as the target occupation:

- an occupation within the **Healthcare sector or Information Technology cluster** and/or identified in the regional blueprint for the lead applicant's region, or
- an occupation in another sector identified as "prioritized" or "critical but not prioritized" in the regional blueprint for the lead applicant's region.
- Manufacturing occupations are permissible to WCTF funding with specific exclusions of funding training for unemployed and underemployed workers for the following occupations which are currently included under funding opportunities with WCTF's partner organizations. Please note that funding training for incumbent workers for the occupations below is permissible for WCTF. For further guidance, please reach out to WCTF.

| Program | Funding | Focus Occupations |
|--|---|--|
| MassTech Collaborative | \$2.4M (\$600k cap per award) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation Technician CNC Machine Operator Electromechanical Technician Maintenance Technician Photonics Technician Robotics Technician |
| Career Technical Initiative (CTI) Restricted to Chapter 74 vocational schools | \$6-8M (est.) (\$8k per participant) will be awarded through Round 9 RFP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CNC Machine Operators Machine Operators Metal Fabricators Welding |
| Mass. Life Sciences Center (MLSC) Pathmakers | Up to \$750,000 per project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance Tech Manufacturing Tech Biomanufacturing Associate |

- Proposals from applicants that meet the funding criteria and contain one or more of the following elements will be prioritized for funding. Applicants are highly encouraged to include one or more of the following elements in their proposals:
 - Focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**
 - Programs that focus on populations traditionally less represented to create upskilling opportunities for individuals and families that it most.
 - Example populations.
 - Immigrants and New Arrivals.
 - Individuals are categorized as low income and/or receiving public benefits.
 - Veteran's.
 - Persons with disabilities or accessibility challenges.
 - Older populations with limited professional work experience.

- **Adult Education**
 - ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
 - GED/HiSet support services

- **Work-Based Learning components.**
 - High quality work experience programs that contain one or more of the following options as detailed in these publications are encouraged:
 - [WBL_Principles_Paper_062416.pdf \(jff.org\)](#)
 - [JFF-Framework-HighQuality-PreApp-07232019.pdf](#)
 - Support entry and advancement in a career track.
 - Provide meaningful job tasks that build career skills and knowledge.
 - Offer compensation (for example, internships that are paid.)
 - Identify target skills and how gains will be validated.
 - Reward skill development.
 - Provide comprehensive student support.

 - **Apprenticeships:** Registered and Pre-Apprenticeship are encouraged
 - **Internships**-preference given to paid Internship opportunities.
 - **Registration with the [Department of Apprenticeship Standards](#)** as applicable.

We have outlined the above criteria for target occupations to facilitate statewide alignment with the WSC and the [Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process](#) and the collaborative efforts of Governor Healey’s Workforce Skills Cabinet. The following table is a helpful resource: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/blueprint-update-summary-matrix/download>.

The Workforce Skills Cabinet and Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund Advisory Board are interested in investing in partnerships focused on job quality. One essential aspect of a quality job is compensation – wages, benefits and earning potential.

Some areas for discussion and job design/redesign are:

- The proposed target occupation provides compensation (wages, benefits, hours of work) that meet living wage standards for the region.
- The proposed target occupation has ample availability for full-time work.
- The employer partners provide sufficient benefits to support a transition from reliance on public benefits in preparing for advancement.
- The employer partners provide stable hours and scheduling.
- The proposed target occupation has attainable opportunities for career advancement and wage progression within a reasonable period.
- the employer partners invest in supporting entry-level employees' career advancement.
- The employer partners have a stated commitment to increasing gender or racial diversity, equity, and inclusion in their workplace.
- The employer partners' supervisors have been trained in and are supported in practicing respectful supervision and incorporating a coaching perspective.
- The employer partners have explicit mechanisms and a culture that supports employee engagement, voice, and agency.
- The employer partners demonstrate in their MOA or support letter the organization's commitment to re-design entry-level target occupations with improved wages, benefits, worker flexibility to improve overall job quality through innovative practices.
- Lead applicants are encouraged to include a visual flow chart of the training program and operations.

B. Program Design Requirements: Commonwealth Corporation seeks to fund proposals from qualified partnerships that propose to implement one of the following options:

- **(Option A) Training and Placement Program:** Partnerships proposing to deliver occupationally focused training and placement programs to unemployed and/or underemployed individuals working outside the target industry, with the goal of placing them in unsubsidized employment in the target occupation upon completion of training. For the purposes of this grant, unemployed and underemployed individuals are defined as follows:
 - An **unemployed** individual is defined as an individual who is not currently employed at the time of enrollment in the program.
 - An **underemployed** individual is defined as an individual who is earning less than 60% of the Median Household Income (also referred to as Area Median Income) for the Workforce Area in which they reside. The chart below provides the median income level for each Workforce Area.

Please note: Grantees should consider an individual’s income for eligibility, not that of their household. Grantees may use either the annual MHI or hourly wage that is most advantageous to the training applicant.

| 60% of USDA/SAIPE County Median Household Income 2022 | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Workforce Area | 60% MHI | Hourly Wage |
| Berkshire | \$42,700 | \$20.50 |
| Boston | \$50,700 | \$24.40 |
| Bristol | \$48,400 | \$23.30 |
| Cape and Islands | \$53,900 | \$25.90 |
| Central Region | \$51,600 | \$24.80 |
| Franklin Hampshire | \$49,100 | \$23.60 |
| Greater Brockton | \$61,600 | \$29.60 |
| Greater Lowell | \$71,700 | \$34.20 |
| Greater New Bedford | \$48,400 | \$23.30 |
| Hampden County | \$38,400 | \$18.50 |
| Merrimack Valley | \$55,300 | \$26.60 |
| Metro North | \$71,100 | \$34.20 |
| Metro South/West | \$71,100 | \$34.20 |
| North Central | \$51,600 | \$24.80 |
| North Shore | \$55,300 | \$26.60 |
| South Shore | \$69,500 | \$33.40 |
| State | \$56,700 | \$27.30 |

Source: US Dept of Agriculture Economic Research Service (usda.gov), based on Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program of the U.S. Census Bureau. Not broken out by size of family/household. MA 2022 Median Household Income (MHI) - published Dec. 2023. Based on 60% MHI for county with the most workers in the region.

Every year the median household income standards and data may be updated. Please check with [Adam Cutler](#), Director of WCTF at Commonwealth Cooperation for the most up to date information and guidance.

- **(Option B) Training and Advancement Program:** Partnerships proposing to deliver occupationally focused training and advancement programs to individuals currently working in the target sector (**incumbent workers**) with the goal of preparing them for advancement within their employer into a target occupation. *Please note: this option is not intended to support*

advancement training for high-wage workers. Applicants interested in designing a program for incumbent workers, please contact Director of WCTF, [Adam Cutler](#) for further guidance. Eligible incumbent workers are currently employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Unlike Option A, Option B participants are not required to be Massachusetts residents. We encourage applications seeking to leverage alternative delivery methods such as online/digital, hybrid, and competency-based modules to meet the unique needs of incumbent workers. We encourage applications from partnerships proposing to support advancement of human service workers along a career pathway (e.g., home health aides and early childhood educators).

- **(Option C) Hybrid Program:** Partnerships proposing a hybrid version of Options A and B which include a combination of unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. For each set of targeted workers, the accompanying outcome goals apply. Applicants must be prepared to demonstrate how they will track and achieve different outcome goals for the different populations in accordance with the guidance provided.

In keeping with the mission of WCTF, we strongly encourage lead applicants to collaborate with their local MassHire Career Centers to recruit candidates for and backfill the vacated positions with unemployed or underemployed Massachusetts residents.

Commonwealth Cooperation highly encourages proposals that will directly benefit low income, newcomers to the Commonwealth, and non-English speaking populations. While proposals serving all kinds of diverse populations are welcomed and encouraged, we emphasize proposals that include training in the following areas: ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), HiSet/GED, and Experiential Education/Work-based Learning. These trainings and programs should result in an employment outcome.

Applicants should propose a set of services necessary for the target population to enter employment or advance to a higher-paying position 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 or advancement. **Applicants are required to include 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 engage in the program and view the program as a resource to prepare them for work in or advancement to 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 to succeed in the program or can be enrolled in and complete a program to attain these skills before enrolling.
- Utilization of partnerships, including MassHire Career Centers, to support recruitment efforts that are strong, streamlined, and leveraged to meet the needs of the program.
- Provide contextualized education, skills, and work-readiness training that addresses the employers' workforce needs, prepares participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), optimizes opportunities for participant learning and career development, and will support participants' placement in or promotion to the target occupation(s). This may include:
 - Basic education, including ABE (Adult Basic Education), GED/HiSET, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), math, computers/technology contextualized to the industry and occupation(s)
 - Vocational training
 - Post-secondary education and credentialing
 - Apprenticeship
 - On-the-job training
 - Paid work experience
- Engage employers in identifying job openings, participating in program design and/or delivery, and signing the Memorandum of Agreement committing to hiring or advancing a specific number of participants or, at a minimum commit to interviewing program completers.
- For Option A programs - 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. For Option B programs - assign an internal HR specialist or department manager responsible for working with participants to support them in applying for and securing internal advancement to higher-paying positions.
- Provide support services to participants including transportation, childcare, and other flexible funding to help alleviate barriers to program completion and employment retention.
- Provide coordinated career/transitional coaching and/or mentoring and maintain documentation for each participant to plot their trajectory along a career pathway based on an individualized and comprehensive assessment of education and work history, strengths, and barriers to employment or advancement.

C. Additional Program Design Requirements for Individuals Receiving Public Assistance:

we are interested in funding partnerships that are explicitly prioritizing serving individuals who receive public assistance and are likely to experience or expect to experience repercussions on public benefits because of an increase in earned income, such as “cliff issues.”¹ In addition to the program design elements referenced above, applicants proposing to serve this population should offer the following additional elements:

1. Coordinated transitional coaching, individualized financial coaching, and mentoring to address barriers to employment.
2. Benefits counseling to help navigate public benefit systems and understand impacts of work on receipt of those benefits.
3. Family-focused, trauma-informed support and services, where applicable.
4. Up to a year of post-placement support.
5. Other family-focused support, as appropriate.
6. Staff leads agree to participate in learning community of grantees and key state agency staff to share effective practices and troubleshoot emerging barriers. Participation will include the following responsibilities:
 - i. Engage with the WCTF Learning Community to learn about common issues facing individuals who are receiving public benefits and are attempting to transition to work or increase their income through additional hours of work or higher-level employment,
 - ii. Identify the need for and pursue state-level policy changes regarding public benefits eligibility criteria and income/asset thresholds, and
 - iii. Support on-demand, customer-centered problem-solving for individual participants by a state-level representative of each of the identified public benefit programs (specifically subsidized childcare, subsidized housing, nutrition (SNAP and WIC), income supports (TANF/TAFDC, SSI), and MassHealth).

D. 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 or promoted. An industry recognized credential can vary. For further information on industry recognized credentials: [Department of Labor](#).

E. 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 85% of enrolled un/underemployed or incumbent worker participants will complete training.
- At least 75% of un/underemployed participants who enroll in training will be placed in an unsubsidized job measured at 30 days retention.

- At least 75% of incumbent worker participants: For incumbent participants, one of the following is required as an employment outcome:
 - minimum increase of \$2 per hour wage gain.
 - Promotion.
 - Realistic-incremental wage gain-consistent and equitable with H.R. policies.

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.*

SECTION FOUR: ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

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

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Before Enrollment | The Commonwealth Corporation can offer technical assistance with successful recruitment strategies. |
| 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 attained. |
| Upon Completion of the Program | New position/employment or wage advancement information and retention information. |

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

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

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

Quarterly Reports: These reports will be due quarterly and will include updates on the training timeline, an update and reflection on progress in meeting performance measures, and reports on the project's 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.

Commonwealth Corporation must submit an annual report to the legislature providing results of the grants made through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. Commonwealth Corporation will provide the legislature with grantee specific information and will use data from the database and information from the narrative reports as a primary source.

C. Participant Eligibility & Documentation: Grantees must establish a selection and eligibility process to identify individuals who meet the target population definitions for this RFP (Request for Proposals) and are appropriate to participate in training. The lead applicant and its employer partners will be required to collect and maintain the following documentation for each participant:

| |
|---|
| Documentation of the participant’s employment status at the time of enrollment. |
| Participant Registration Form, using a required form provided by Commonwealth Corporation. |
| Documentation of training services received. |
| Case management/coaching notes. |
| Documentation of new employment, wage increases and retention. |
| Participants must be 16 years of age or over. |
| Or the minimum age in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the industry to be gainfully employed or earn a certificate in the vocational field in which the training is focused upon. |
| If under 18 years of age, you must be outside of the traditional public-school setting. Or the minimum age as dictated by the industry. |

CommCorp accepts digital signatures. If it is not accessible to use digital signature through software such as Adobe or DocuSign, we can accept the clients’ name typed out if backup documentation is kept on file that attests the client has given permissions for their typed name to act as a signature. Back-up documentation can be either an emailed or handwritten letter communicating permissions to the program manager for the authorization of their typed name as a signature.

Per alignment with the MassHire workforce system during the COVID-19 pandemic and future developments, participants must still sign documents when required. The use of electronic signatures is allowable. Forms required for signature may be converted into fillable forms with the use of electronic signature software such as Adobe Sign, DocuSign, etc. When fillable forms are

not available, staff may have the participant email agreement to the content of the required form. The email must be kept in the participant file. Staff may not sign the required forms on behalf of a participant. Participants must sign all required forms whether electronically or via email consent to the content in the required forms.

- D. *Program & Fiscal Monitoring:*** Commonwealth Corporation is responsible for ensuring that organizations receiving grant funds:
1. have the fiscal and program systems needed to meet all relevant federal and state requirements.
 2. meet the terms of the grant award outlined in the contract with Commonwealth Corporation.
 3. provide quality services to program participants; and
 4. expend grant funds only for allowable activities.

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

- E. *Technical Assistance:*** Each grantee will be assigned a Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager and must assign a main contact at their organization accountable for the grant. The Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager will be available to support grantees through the grant's duration, answering questions about operational issues and providing technical assistance to ensure grantees meet their performance outcomes.

- F. *Payment:*** Funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. Grantees will be required to submit invoices monthly using a Fiscal Status Report (FSR) or another similar tool supplied by the Commonwealth Corporation. Grantees will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the contract period. The fiscal process is subject to change in 2024 as new software programs and schedules are to be incorporated into regular operation. Grantees are required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for expenses and match contributions.

- G. *Project Terms and Conditions:*** Grantees will be required to abide by the Commonwealth Corporation's Standard Contract Terms and Conditions, which will be provided during contract negotiation. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a [final statement of work](#).

- H. *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.

- I. ***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

- A. Funding Availability & Grant Award Amount:** Over \$20million is immediately available for this grant program of a combined ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) State Budget funds. This funding is subject to availability. Please check *with [Adam Cutler](#), Director of WCTF* for more details.

There is no maximum grant award. However, applicants should consider the following in developing the grant budget:

- The authorizing legislation for WCTF limits a grant award to \$500,000.
- Grant awards exceeding \$500,000 will be supported with ARPA (federal) funds.
- Grants proposals surpassing \$500,000 awards will be available on a limited basis.

Please note: Grants over \$500,000 will be funded with federal funds; applicants requesting this amount should be prepared to comply with and handle associated federal requirements upon grant award.

- B. Matching Funds:** Awardees will be required to provide a 30% match of the total awarded funds. Match may include:

- Staff time to support the program.
- May be cash or “in-kind” (payment in goods or services in lieu of financial contributions)
- Providing in-kind technical assistance internal within the organization related to the training.
- Support services.
- Rent and associated operating costs that are not charged to the grant.
- Other expenses related to program implementation.

*Applicants are **not** required to have 100% cash in hand at the start of the grant-however they will be responsible for this on completion of the grant. The Match Budget is required to provide projected sources and amounts.*

In kind funds must specify as to which entity or partner in the program is contributing.

- C. 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 for participants. Funds may be used to support the following:

- Marketing, outreach, recruitment, assessment, and selection,
- Support services needed to ensure participants' success, such as transportation, childcare, 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.
- Additional funding opportunities for participating in training and work experience.
- Staff time for partnership and program coordination, job development, case management/career coaching, and data entry.
- An increase in administrative costs can be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Costs of licenses associated with delivery of digitally enabled training.
- The costs of large equipment or technology can be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Limited funds for research and evaluation.

D. Cost per Outcome: Each training program proposal will be evaluated based on the proposed cost per employment outcome. This is calculated by dividing the total requested grant amount by the number of un/underemployed participants planned to secure an unsubsidized job measured at 30 days retention. Applicants should be thoughtful about what they propose to maximize public dollars. 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 leveraged resources and funds contributed as match.

SECTION SIX: SUBMISSION SCHEDULE & INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

A. Submission Schedule:

| Activity | Date |
|---|---|
| Request for Proposals Released | April 1, 2024 |
| Initial Webinar: Pre-Application Technical Assistance | April 5 th and 10 th , 2024 |
| Question and Answer Sessions | Weekly: Fridays at 11am, April and May |
| Initial Responses Due | May 10th, and November 2024 |
| Applicants Notified of Status | Varies by award |
| Earliest Anticipated Contract Start Date | Varies by award-average of 4 to 5 months from application due date. |
| Anticipated Contract End Date | up to 3 years After Contract Start Date |
| | |

B. Clarification Period: Questions about this grant program will be accepted in writing. Please submit questions via email to [Adam Cutler](#), Director of WCTF. Potential applicants can sign up at [link](#) to receive email notifications when new responses are posted. However, all potential applicants are advised to check the Commonwealth Corporation’s website periodically for additional information and updates.

C. Application Submission Instructions: Applications may be submitted while the RFP is posted. (1) **Name** of the lead applicant organization, (2) the lead applicant organization’s **Federal Employer ID Number**, (3) the lead applicant organization’s **Department of Unemployment Assistance ID Number**, (4) the **Total Program Design 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 before uploading to ensure they have completed all the required information.

- Application Summary forms must be submitted in the provided MS Word file format.
- Program Narrative forms must be submitted in the provided MS Word file format.
- Budget forms must be submitted in the MS Excel file format provided.
- Signed MOAs (Memorandum of Agreement) or letters of commitment must be scanned and submitted as a single PDF file.
- COGS must be submitted in the form of a single PDF file.
- W-9 must be submitted in the form of a single PDF file.

D. 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 application's disqualification. 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 |
| PART 2 | Program Narrative |
| PART 3 | Program Budget Summary Program Budget Summary, Grant Budget Request Narrative & Match Contribution Narrative Forms |
| PART 4 | Sample MOA |
| PART 5 | Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) |
| PART 6 | W-9 Form |

Part 1: Application Summary Form

This form provides the 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 into the online application system.

[Application Summary](#)

Part 2: Training Program Application Narrative Form

[Program Narrative](#)

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 program must have its own tab.

Part 3 Budget Summary & Budget Narrative Forms/Instructions

[Program Budget Summary](#)

[Program Budget Summary, Grant Budget Request Narrative & Match Contribution Narrative Forms](#)

Part 3a, 3b & 3c are the Budget Summary, Grant Budget Narrative and Match Contribution Forms. Applicants must submit a detailed budget request using the provided forms. You may provide an overall budget that combines the budgets for each individual training program. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award and for making cost reimbursement payments over the project. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to modify application budgets prior to and/or after grant award. The budget should reflect the complete life cycle for the entire grant. The Commonwealth

Corporation reserves the right to consider other factors such as geographical distribution and industry occupation/program as well as innovative program modelling into the final grant award decisions.

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

[Sample MOA](#)

This is the sample Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Each required 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 may use their own format or choose to edit and make additions to the sample MOA as appropriate to indicate specific partner roles and responsibilities. While only the required employer partners and training providers are expected to submit an MOA or letter, we strongly encourage additional demonstrations of commitment from additional partners such as MassHire.

Part 5: Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue

[Certificate of Good Standing \(COGS\)](#)

All **lead applicants*** must submit a Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. **Please note that community colleges, public vocational technical high schools, and public state universities serving as the lead applicant do not need to submit a Certificate of Good Standing.*

Part 6: Form W-9

All lead applicants must submit a W-9 that was generated within the fiscal year for which they are applying. <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>

SECTION SEVEN: PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

- A. Proposal Evaluation Process:** Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be reviewed by the 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 analyze all lead applicants to comply with state and federal law. Lead applicants are encouraged to review these criteria and ensure they are complying prior to applying. Commonwealth Corporation will conduct the following reviews to ensure compliance:

- Ensure applicants are in good standing with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The Commonwealth Corporation will conduct this screening by reviewing the Certificate of Good Standing (C.O.G.S.) submitted in the Qualifications Submission Package. **Please note that community colleges, public vocational technical high schools and public state universities serving as the lead applicant do not need to submit a Certificate of Good Standing.**
- Please follow this guidance when requesting and submitting a Certificate of Good Standing from the Department of Revenue:
 - The **Certificate of Good Standing from the Department of Revenue** is different from and should not be confused with a **Certificate of Incorporation from the Secretary of State**
 - C.O.G.S. must be less than six months old.
 - Please visit the Department of Revenue's website: (<http://www.mass.gov/dor/businesses/programs-and-services/certificate-of-good-standing.html>) for more information about the C.O.G.S. and to complete an online application to obtain a Certificate
 - Applications for a C.O.G.S. can take 4-6 weeks to be processed.
- 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. The Commonwealth Corporation will work with the Department of Unemployment Assistance to conduct this review.

Step 3: Review Committee

A review committee will review and score all eligible submissions. Review results will be documented. The Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to request more information from any applicant to ensure that the review committee fully understands the proposed program and applicant qualifications. Some proposals may be sent to a WCTF staff member who will provide Technical Assistance to meet the minimum standards for a successful, potential award.

Submitted proposals will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

| Category | Point Value |
|---|-------------|
| 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 | 12 |
| B. Clearly identified and articulated target occupation, target population, and need for project | 12 |
| C. Compelling evidence of employer engagement in partnership and program design, including job placement strategy that is likely to result in placement/advancement and retention for a majority of program completers | 20 |
| 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/advancement | 24 |
| 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 or pay wage increases to program completers | 12 |
| F. Budget accuracy and reasonableness | 8 |
| G. Outcomes meet the rate guidance in Section 3F, or applicant provides sufficient evidence demonstrating the case for meeting a lower benchmark; Outcomes seem attainable, given the proposed population and program design | 12 |

Applicants whose proposals meet the funding criteria and priorities for a given cycle will be prioritized for funding. Applications who do not meet the standard for funding will be provided written feedback and may request a follow-up session to discuss resubmitting their application.

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. Additionally, other factors such as industry and regional demands and priorities will be taken into consideration when making recommendation decisions.

Step 4: Notification of Grant Award Status

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

B. Additional Evaluation Notes: In addition to the scoring system outlined, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to only consider submissions that, in our sole judgment, are complete and responsive to the solicitation's requirements and include all required application components. Additionally, Commonwealth Corporation and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development reserve the right to consider other criteria in making competitive awards among comparably qualified applicants. The Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to reject all applications or accept all applications, in whole or in part, if deemed in the interest of the Commonwealth Corporation or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to do so.

Furthermore, Commonwealth Corporation, reserves the right, if a proposal is awarded, to increase the amount and duration of the grant award pending formal submission of a modification request demonstrating unmet demand and satisfactory performance of previous spending.

This RFP does not commit Commonwealth Corporation to award any contracts. Upon submission, all applications become the property of Commonwealth Corporation. Commonwealth Corporation is not responsible for electronic submissions that are not received by Commonwealth Corporation. We reserve the right to use sources of funding other than the WCTF FY'21, 22, 23, 24 Appropriations and ARPA 2021 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. The Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to extend grant award amounts and periods of performance in accordance with funding source allowances and renew funding for subsequent grants.

C. Appeals: Appeals of the funding decision may be filed with President/CEO of CommCorp, Commonwealth Corporation, 33 Harrison Avenue, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111. 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.

Project Terms and Conditions: Grantees will be required to abide by the Commonwealth Corporation's Standard Contract Terms and Conditions, which will be provided during contract negotiation. Additionally, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.



Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Grants

FOR EXPANDED TRAINING CAPACITY AND
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE



Develop & Implement

employer and worker responsive programs



Enhance

worker skills, incomes, productivity, and retention



Empower

Massachusetts firms to increase quality and competitiveness