

**Governor's Workforce Board Innovative Partnership Grants  
Questions & Answers**

**Q & A from Pre-Proposal Conference December 17, 2012**

**1. The RFP states no ABE or ESL is allowable. Is contextualized ESL allowable?**

ANSWER: Funding for contextualized adult education may be permitted so long as the applicant makes a clear and compelling case that funded activities are job-related.

**2. Our agency has an indirect cost rate; can we use that in the budget?**

ANSWER: No, you must show your expenses by line item.

**3. When negotiating the MOU with employers, will the employers get the wage subsidy?**

ANSWER: Funding for wage subsidies may either be paid directly to employers or to the lead applicant; however, such funds must be used exclusively for wage subsidies.

**4. Can employer wages that are used to match the wage subsidy also be counted toward the 30% cash match requirement?**

ANSWER: No

**5. The RFP states that the work readiness piece/work readiness credential is a requirement. Does RI currently have a work readiness credential?**

ANSWER: At this time RI does not have one, but if RI does adopt one it will become a required component, if practical. Presently, a detailed work-readiness assessment and training plan must be included in the proposal.

**6. Could you provide more detail on "qualifying internships"?**

ANSWER: Internships of 165 hours for students and 100 hours for out-of-school youth/adults may qualify for bonus points in scoring the proposals. (*See Appendix B*) However, there are no specific activities or hours required to fulfill the experiential learning component of the proposal (*see Section 5D*). Applicants should describe in detail the nature of internships or other experiential learning strategy, the value that it will have for participants, and how the quality of the experience will be assured.

**7. Under allowable costs it states a maximum of \$1,000 stipend?**

ANSWER: Yes, it is the maximum allowable stipend per individual. Applicants should describe the rationale for stipends in the budget narrative.

**8. Is the MOU/MOA the suggested format or do we have to use that one?**

ANSWER: It is a guide, you can modify to suit your needs, but be sure to address all that is required.

**9. If an agency has federal funds can this be used as a cash match?**

ANSWER: Yes, provided that applicants must indicate how matching funds will augment the proposed activity, and will not be supplanted by Innovative Partnership funds.

**10. Is there a requirement that we recruit from RI youth centers or netWORKri One Stops?**

ANSWER: No, you tell us where you will recruit from and why.

**11. Are non-RI training providers eligible to apply for this grant?**

ANSWER: Non-RI training providers can be partners on the grant but are NOT eligible to be the lead applicant.

**12. Will the list of attendees from this pre-conference be posted?**

ANSWER: Yes.

**13. What is allowable for the 30% cash match?**

ANSWER: See Question #20.

**14. Can assessments for work readiness be counted as an out-of-pocket cost towards that cash match?**

ANSWER: Yes, if it is an actual cash expense that can be documented.

**15. Can Innovative Partnership funds be used to train individuals to start their own business?**

ANSWER: No, that is outside the scope of the intended outcomes for this RFP. These funds should be used to develop the skills of potential employees to meet the needs of RI employers.

**16. What is the timeline or deadline for hiring once the training is complete?**

ANSWER: The GWB is most interested in supporting outcomes that will be achieved within the 15 month time frame of the grant – including job placement and other outcomes. Those outcomes that will be achieved beyond 15 months should be noted as such. Note: Funding for hiring incentives (*Section 9C*) may be expended beyond the 15 month grant period, if necessary.

**17. Define “Career Pathways.”**

ANSWER: Career Pathways are defined in the RFP as “a series of connected education and training strategies and support services that enable individuals to secure industry relevant certification and obtain employment within an occupational area and to advance to higher levels of further education and employment in those areas.”

**18. How can outcomes that result from these funds be distinguished from outcomes that are achieved from other funds?**

ANSWER: Innovative Partnership funds are intended to support new and innovative activities that build upon existing efforts. Applicants should describe the outcomes that will directly result from the use of Innovative Partnership funds, as well as how these funds will contribute to overall outcomes, where applicable.

**19. Explain the hiring subsidy.**

ANSWER: Additional funding of up to \$400,000 is available to provide hiring incentives (i.e., 50% wage subsidies for up to six months) to employers who hire unemployed individuals who have been trained by Innovative Partnership programs, and who are retained by the employer for at least 90 days. The maximum hiring incentive per individual is \$3,600.

Note: The hiring subsidy is available to employers regardless of whether they submit the optional Affidavit (*Appendix B*) committing to hire program participants. However, bonus points will only be awarded to proposals that include a signed Affidavit, and available funds for hiring subsidies will first be awarded to those programs that have submitted a signed Affidavit.

**Q & A submitted electronically**

**20. We are having a hard time wrapping our head around the cash match portion of the grant. What are some examples a business could do to fulfill the cash match portion in the budget? It is my understanding that we can not do any in-kind matches so what does that leave us with as a business to do? If our instructors do the teaching and we pay their salaries, does that count?**

ANSWER: For the purpose of this RFP, cash match shall be defined as any expense that can be documented as being in service of the project that is not used as a match for other grants. Instructor salaries may be counted as a cash match, based on time allocated to the project.

Examples of Cash Match:

- Staff time spent on project
  - Based on percent of staff time allocated to the project
- Other grants that support the project, including Federal, State, or private.
  - Funds may not be used as a match for more than one grants
- Services and materials, such as
  - Bus or transportation for participants
  - Classroom materials purchased or used in training
  - Equipment purchased for use on project
  - Depreciation expense of equipment used in project
- Space
  - Rent and related expenses that are allocated to the project

**21. Do apprenticeship programs qualify for inclusion in the structure of the grant? We are interested in having apprentices work with our plant technical personnel (electricians, mechanical ) that will be retiring in a year or two. The apprentice would then become the employee upon the retirement of the senior individual.**

ANSWER: Innovative Partnership must include at least one employer and one education and training provider. Where the employer is also a training provider, additional training and support services must be provided by a partner organization. Training programs that

are run solely by employers are not eligible for Innovative Partnership funds; however they may be eligible for federal on-the-job training funds and/or other funds.

**22. If we have multiple programs we are thinking of -- apprenticeship, mentoring high school / after school with office skills / coops in our R&D department. Is this one application or multiple applications?**

ANSWER: Applications that propose multiple programs will be scored as a single proposal; and, the GWB reserves the right to determine which, if any, of the programs will be funded. An organization may not submit more than one proposal as the lead applicant; however, organizations may participate as partners on more than one application.

**Additional Q & A from Pre-Proposal Conference January 2, 2013**

**23. How should the proposal packet be put together? Can it be bound?**

ANSWER: However you want to present it is fine as long as there are 7 copies: 3 with original signatures and 4 photocopy versions.

**24. Can grants proposals be submitted by mail?**

ANSWER: Yes, but keep in mind that all grant proposals must be received, in hand to the GWB, by 3pm on Wednesday February 6, 2013. We would recommend physically delivering the grant package to the GWB.

**25. Are digital signatures acceptable?**

ANSWER: No.

**26. Are employers who do NOT pay into the Job Development Fund eligible to apply?**

ANSWER: Yes

**27. Can applicants include an indirect cost rate?**

ANSWER: No, all costs (direct and indirect) must be itemized in the budget and explained in the budget narrative.

**28. If our agency has a separate fiscal agent that charges us a flat percentage for administration, how do we include this in our budget?**

ANSWER: The cost charged by the fiscal agent must be itemized in the budget.

**29. Where should the wage subsidies (i.e., hiring incentives) be included?**

ANSWER: There is a separate section of the budget where they should be included. They should also be referred to in the budget proposal narrative, MOAs, and/or Affidavit, where applicable.

**30. Is there a cap on how many employees an employer can claim a subsidy for?**

ANSWER: No. Wage subsidies are available for unemployed individuals who have been trained by the Innovative Partnership program and are hired and retained by an employer for at least 90 day period; provided, however, that there is a maximum of \$400,000 available for wage subsidies under this program.

**31. If an employer is also a training provider, do they need a partner applicant?**

ANSWER: Yes, all proposals MUST have an employer partner and an education & training provider partner.

**32. If an employer is also a training provider, can the employer receive a wage subsidy for hiring an individual that it has trained?**

ANSWER: Yes. Eligibility for the wage subsidy would begin when the trainee becomes a permanent employee.

**33. Are audited financial statements required even for small companies that have less than \$500,000 in Federal Funds? Would an annual compilation be sufficient?**

ANSWER: An annual compilation can be submitted for companies that expend \$500,000 thousand or less in Federal Funds. An audit (A-133) must be submitted for all companies that expend more than \$500,000 in Federal Funds.

**34. Is there a minimum hourly wage or hours per week required for an employer to receive a hiring subsidy?**

ANSWER: NO, provided that employees must be paid at least the legal minimum wage.

**35. Does the GWB have the capacity to check if an employer has retained the trainee past the 90 days?**

ANSWER: The GWB will verify that employees have been retained for at least 90 days before paying the wage subsidy, but will not monitor employment beyond that point.

**36. If a participant's eligibility changes midway through the program (eg, income) are they still eligible to participate?**

ANSWER: The only explicit eligibility requirement under this grant is that adult participants must be unemployed or underemployed upon enrollment. Changes in participant status subsequent to enrollment do not affect the participant's eligibility for the program.

**37. Is the Affidavit for bonus points considered as part of the 20-page limit?**

ANSWER: No, the 20-page limit is for the proposal narrative, and does not include the Memorandum of Agreement, appendices, or other required attachments.

**38. Can an employer receive funding for its grant-related training costs?**

ANSWER: Additional expenses that result directly from program activities are eligible for funding under this grant. Other current expenses or resources that are contributed to program activities should be identified as cash match.

**39. Is a payroll register sufficient to show staff time?**

ANSWER: Yes, or a time sheet showing allocation of staff time to the grant.

**40. Are companies who currently have an Incumbent Worker Training grant excluded from applying?**

ANSWER: No

**41. Could one proposal cover more than one industry sector?**

ANSWER: Yes.

**42. If an applicant proposes to work with two (or more) industry sectors, but the review committee is only interested in funding activities for one of the sectors, will the GWB consider funding one sector and removing the other sector?**

ANSWER: Yes, if only one sector is accepted, we will negotiate a contract with you.

**43. Does the GWB's intention to fund proposals from three different industry sectors mean that our proposal should include three different industry sectors?**

ANSWER: No, proposals do not need to include more than one sector. The GWB intends to fund at least three separate qualified proposals that address the workforce needs of distinct industry sectors.

**44. Are letters of support allowed and where should they be included?**

ANSWER: General letters of support should NOT be included. Specific commitments of support from program partners should be detailed in an MOA signed by the partner.

**45. How or when will payments to contractors be made?**

ANSWER: Grant recipients will receive cost reimbursement on a monthly basis.

**46. Is the hiring subsidy a lump sum payment to the employer, or must it be based on actual wages paid?**

ANSWER: The hiring subsidy is based on actual wages paid (i.e., 50% of wages paid during the first six months of employment, up to a maximum of \$3,600 per employee) for employees who have been retained for at least 90 days.

**47. For an employer to receive a hiring subsidy, must the employee be unemployed, or can s/he also be under-employed?**

ANSWER: The employee must have been unemployed.

**48. For an employer to receive a hiring subsidy, must the employee be unemployed at the time s/he is hired?**

ANSWER: The employee must have been unemployed at the time of entering the training program.

#### **Additional Q and A submitted electronically January 10, 2013**

**49. I have a question regarding the Innovative Partnership Grants allowable sources of funds for cost share or match. If we are exploring a high opportunity technology field and want to expand audiences, can funds from a private grant (not used as match elsewhere) that will purchase some necessary equipment and software to enable a larger audience to participate in the program be used as part of the match? I know the GWB funds cannot be used for the purchase of equipment, but can outside funding for the necessary servers to accommodate other sites and participants be used as cost share?**

*ANSWER: Yes. Funds should be cost-allocated so that it is clear which portion of the expense would be attributable to the GWB participants.*

**50. Hello - this is an inquiry about the Innovative Partnerships grant:**

**If externally-funded, contextualized ESOL or ASE classes are proposed as part of the project, may we count funds expended on these classes as a cash match? For example, if participants in proposed GWB-funded training are co-enrolled in linked RIDE-funded adult ESOL classes focused on employment in a particular industry, can we count the RIDE dollars as a match? Put another way, are these non-allowable costs (ESOL and GED) allowable for the match side of the budget?**

**Thank you for any guidance you can provide.**

*ANSWER: Yes. Again, funds from the other grants should show which will be supporting GWB participants. That is, if the RIDE grant is \$1,000 and 50% of the participants will be GWB, then 50% of the grant counts toward the match.*

**51. Are employers who do not pay into the JDF eligible for the \$3600 hiring incentive if they hire a program participant?**

*ANSWER: Yes.*