

**Governor's
Workforce
Board**
Rhode Island



Today's Vision... Tomorrow's Opportunity.

Request for Proposals Workforce Innovation Grants

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
RI Department of Labor & Training
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Building 73
Cranston, RI 02920**

* * *

**Proposals must be submitted no later than
Monday, May 11, 2015 at 3:00 PM.**

**Gina M. Raimondo, Governor
State of Rhode Island**

**Constance A. Howes, Chair
Governor's Workforce Board RI**

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Budget Form <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/Budget.xls>

Outcome Targets <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/OutcomeTarget.xls>

W-9 Form <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/w9Form.pdf>

Memorandum of Agreement <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/MOA.doc>

Proposal Cover Sheet <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/CoverSheet.doc>

Grant Check List

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Schedule of Pertinent Dates

Release of RFP Thursday, April 2, 2015

Pre-Proposal Conference Thursday, April 9, 2015

A pre-proposal conference will be held on Thursday, April 9 from 2:00 – 3:30 PM at the Department of Labor & Training, Conference Room 73-1, 1511 Pontiac Avenue, Cranston, RI. Attendance is strongly recommended. Pre-register by email to amelia.roberts@dlt.ri.gov.

Q & A deadline Friday, April 17, 2015

Questions about this RFP may be submitted to the GWB by email to gwbinfo@dlt.ri.gov. All questions and answers will be posted on the GWB website.

Proposal Due Date Monday, May 11, 2015 no later than 3:00 PM

Grant Awards Announced Thursday, June 17, 2015

Contract Period July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Section 1 – Proposal Requested

The Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) is seeking proposals to establish innovative partnerships between (a) one or more employer, employer organization, industry association, or labor-management organization; and (b) one or more training & education provider that will develop career pathways to address the workforce needs of Rhode Island employers and increase the employability of unemployed or underemployed adults and out-of-school youth.

The GWB has made available up to \$2,300,000 to fund this RFP. The GWB reserves the right to fund the proposal components in whole or in part. Grant awards will range from \$80,000 to \$200,000.

Additional funding may be available through the GWB Work Immersion program (<http://www.gwb.ri.gov/internships.htm>) or other programs to provide partial wage reimbursement to employers who hire and retain unemployed individuals who have been trained by Workforce Innovation grant programs. Such funding, if any, will not be awarded through this RFP.

Section 2 – Introduction and Background

The purpose of the Governor's Workforce Board Workforce Innovation grants is to promote and support partnerships between employers and training & education providers that increase the alignment between business needs and workforce development strategies so that businesses have access to appropriately skilled employees, and that job seekers have the skills, training and support they need to meet employer demand in vital sectors of the Rhode Island economy.

Workforce Innovation proposals **must** include (a) one or more employer, employer organization, or labor-management organization; and (b) one or more training & education provider in order to address the workforce needs of Rhode Island employers and increase the employability of unemployed or underemployed adults and out-of-school youth.

Workforce Innovation grants are intended to facilitate innovative strategies that are responsive to the needs, priorities, and action steps outlined in the GWB Biennial Employment & Training Plan for the State of Rhode Island (<http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/BiennialEmpTrainPlan1617.pdf>).

The GWB does not intend for Workforce Innovation grants to establish or support a complete career pathway continuum. Rather, the goal of these innovative funds is to enable existing programs to expand or supplement their current work by adding components that are currently lacking. Workforce Innovation grants will be awarded to projects that build upon prior experience, current activities, and additional resources of the partners.

The GWB is particularly interested in Workforce Innovation grant proposals that:

- A. Demonstrate *substantial* employer involvement in program design and commitment to program success
- B. Prioritize services to individuals with barriers to employment
- C. Address skills gaps by providing trainees with work-readiness and occupational skills and credentials that are of value to employers
- D. Incorporate experiential learning strategies
- E. Result in employment for unemployed or underemployed adults and out-of-school youth
- F. Support the development of career pathways in sectors that are projected to be high-growth, high-demand, and of strategic importance to the state's economic development
- G. Leverage additional public and/or private sector resources
- H. Demonstrate innovative strategies for achieving desired outcomes
- I. Create enduring and sustainable partnerships

Section 3 – Notifications to Applicants

- Potential applicants are advised to review all sections of this Request carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein will result in rejection of the proposal.
- Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.
- All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the applicant. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- The State of Rhode Island has a goal of ten percent (10%) participation by Minority Business Enterprises in all State procurements. For further information, visit the web site www.rimbe.org. To speak with an M.B.E. Officer, call (401) 222-6253.
- Interested parties are advised to peruse the Governor’s Workforce Board web site (www.gwb.ri.gov) on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this Request for Proposals.

Section 4 – Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1)

§ 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy. – (a) Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090.

Section 5 – Required Components of Workforce Innovation grants

A. Partners

Workforce Innovations **must** include (a) one or more employer, employer organization, industry association, or labor-management organization; and (b) one or more training & education provider. Workforce Innovations may also include additional partners. Collectively, Workforce Innovations must have the necessary experience, capacity and expertise to successfully design and implement the proposed training program, and achieve and document outcomes.

Workforce Innovation proposals must include formal agreements describing the governance and decision-making process for the Workforce Innovation partnerships, and the roles, responsibilities, commitment and contributions (financial and other) of each partner. Each partner must sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining their role during the project. This MOA must be included in the Grant Application Package. (<http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/MOA.doc>)

B. Participants

Workforce Innovations **must** serve unemployed or underemployed adults or out-of-school youth (ages 16-24) by providing career exploration, training, education, work readiness, experiential learning, and supportive services that prepare participants for jobs, continuing education, and careers in high-demand occupations and industries. Specific GWB priorities are:

Innovative strategies and partnerships that provide services to adults and out-of-school youth with barriers to employment, including veterans, homeless, ex-offenders, individuals with disabilities,

Unemployment Insurance claimants, TANF recipients, long-term unemployed (ie, greater than six months), individuals with a high school education or less, and individuals with limited English proficiency. Examples of such innovations include, but are not limited to, contextualized education, bridge-to-college or training programs, transitional employment, work-based experiential learning, occupational skills training, pre-apprenticeship programs, and on-the-job training. Expected outcomes for this population include attainment of skills, credentials, academic advancement, work readiness, work experience, and employment.

Note: Grantees will be required to track and report participant-level data, including eligibility, age, race, gender, and outcomes, in a format to be provided by the GWB.

Definition of Underemployed: For the purpose of this Request for Proposals, an “underemployed” individual is defined as an individual who is earning less than the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL), as established by the US Department of Labor for Rhode Island. The LLSIL for Rhode Island in 2015 is \$11,770 for a family of one; \$17,334 for a family of two; \$23,790 for a family of three; and \$29,368 for a family of four. An individual will also be considered underemployed if s/he is employed in a job in which her/his education, experience, or skills significantly exceed the requirements of the job.

C. Work Readiness

Employers frequently cite lack of basic work-readiness as a barrier to employment and/or career advancement for many individuals and expansion of work-readiness activities for youth and adults is identified as a major priority in the GWB Biennial Employment & Training Plan.. While specific aspects of work-readiness may vary by employer, sector, or occupation, basic work-readiness skills typically include interpersonal effectiveness, working with others, motivation and work effort, and conduct. For many jobs, basic literacy and numeracy are also elements of work-readiness.

To help employers find candidates with these foundational work readiness skills, the State of Rhode Island is currently piloting the National Career Readiness Certificate Plus. The National Career Readiness Certificate Plus is a work readiness credential, issued by ACT, a nationally acclaimed organization, which certifies essential skills needed for workplace success. Launched in 2006, today more than 1.7 million certificates have been issued with more than 40 states sponsoring statewide or regional certificate programs.

Individuals can earn the NCRC Plus by taking the following Work Keys Assessments:

- Soft Skills (non-cognitive)
 - Talent Assessment
- Cognitive
 - Applied Mathematics
 - Applied Information
 - Reading for Information

Workforce Innovation grant recipients **must** provide assessment and training to increase the work-readiness credential of all participants. The GWB will give preference to proposals that intend for participants to take the NCRC, where appropriate. Funding for NCRC curriculum and/or testing will be provided by the GWB.

For more information about the NCRC, go to: <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/NCRC.doc>

D. Experiential Learning

The GWB Biennial Employment & Training Plan identifies experiential learning as an important and effective strategy to increase work-readiness and work experience of youth and adults, while enabling employers to assess and develop prospective employees. Workforce Innovation grant recipients

must include experiential learning activities as a component of their training and education plan. Examples of experiential learning include paid and unpaid internships¹, apprenticeships, fellowships, on-the-job training, mentoring, job shadowing, work-site tours, volunteer work, and project-based learning. Research indicates that temporary paid work experiences result in stronger attachments between individuals and employers than unpaid work experiences. In addition, state and federal law limits the work that can be performed during unpaid work experiences, while temporary paid work experiences permit individuals to have more a substantive work experience. The GWB will give preference to proposals that are designed to include temporary paid work experiences for participants. Separate funding for temporary paid work experiences (i.e., internships) may be available through the GWB Work Immersion program.²

E. Career Pathways

The federal departments of Labor, Education, and Human Services define career pathways 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.”

Many states, including Kansas, Maryland, Oregon, and Virginia have successfully adopted this approach to serve unemployed and underemployed adults³, as well as to prepare youth for employment within Career and Technical Education programs⁴ or through integrated approaches within K-12. The GWB Biennial Employment & Training Plan identifies the further development of career pathways as a major priority for Rhode Island’s workforce development system.

Career Pathways typically comprise the following elements and activities:

- Alignment with skill needs of high-demand industries
- Include full range of secondary, adult education, and postsecondary options
- Include integrated education and training and occupational skills training
- Lead to the attainment of an industry-recognized degree or credential
- Help a worker advance within a specific sector or occupational field
- Include academic and career counseling, wrap-around support services

Workforce Innovations are not expected to establish or support an entire career pathway continuum. Rather, the goal of Workforce Innovation grants is to support existing programs to expand or supplement their current work by adding career pathways components that are currently lacking.

F. Job Placement

The ultimate objective of Workforce Innovation grants is to enable program participants to obtain full-time, well-paying jobs in high-growth, in-demand occupations and industries. The Governor’s Workforce Board will give preference to proposals that are designed to prepare individuals for full-time jobs (at least 30 hours/week) that pay at least 150% of the Rhode Island minimum wage (currently \$9.00/hour).

¹ In order for an individual to be considered an unpaid intern, the internship must meet the criteria documented by the USDOL’s Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act (<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>). The same criteria apply if individuals are provided a stipend or wages below minimum wage.

² <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/internships.htm>

³ <https://learnwork.workforce3one.org/page/home>

⁴ <http://cte.ed.gov/>

G. Innovation

For the purpose of this RFP, the term “innovation” refers to activities that create or build upon new and evolving strategies, methods, and partnerships that are likely to produce exceptional outcomes that can serve as a model for future investment and service delivery strategies. Applicants may cite research, evidence, and/or the prior experience of their organization or others to substantiate the innovative nature of their proposal.

Section 6 – Eligible Applicants

The lead applicant must have the fiscal and administrative capability to receive and manage federal and state grant funds, as documented by submission of the organization’s most recent audited financial statement. The lead applicant serves as the recipient of funds and must have a leadership role in developing and maintaining the partnership. The lead applicant shall:

- A. Convene the partners to achieve the overall project goals, including, but not limited to, coordinating the design of the project, developing an appropriate budget, negotiating agreement of the project performance management measures, developing the work plan, and coordinating all activities of the project.
- B. Collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the project.

The lead applicant agency may be any of the following types of organization:

- Rhode Island employer
- Governor’s Workforce Board Industry Partner (<http://www.gwb.ri.gov/lpartners.htm>)
- Business or Industry Association
- Chamber of Commerce
- Labor-management organization
- Labor organization
- Local workforce investment board
- Institution of higher education
- Career and Technical Education center
- Comprehensive secondary school
- Local Education Agencies (LEA)
- Non-profit education, training and other service providers

An organization may not be the lead applicant for more than one application. Organizations may propose to participate as partners on more than one application.

Section 7 – Period of Performance

The funding period for the grant is twelve months (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016), and funds must be spent within the contract period. The proposer’s contract performance will commence upon execution of a contract and be evaluated on a quarterly basis. The GWB may, at its discretion, renew for an additional year the contract of any and all Workforce Innovation grant recipients based on achievement of performance targets and other GWB priorities. FY16 quarterly performance reports for the first three program quarters, will be compiled, reviewed, and considered by the GWB as part of this renewal process. Workforce Innovation grant recipients will also have the opportunity to develop and submit a performance narrative, on or before May 9, 2016, describing program performance in greater detail, and explaining any possible discrepancies between the performance data reported for the first three quarters and the performance targets in the grantee’s contract.

Section 8 – Proposal Instructions/ Program Design Components

General Instructions: The proposal narrative must include the following: an abstract, a partnership profile, a needs statement, an action plan, expected outcomes, administrative and fiscal capacity, and a leveraging and sustainability plan. The narrative must convey to evaluators that the proposer understands the approach to be followed for each of the program components in order to provide the necessary services and must include and set clear performance goals that are measurable.

The narrative (Section 8 A - F) should not exceed 20 pages, 1.5 line spacing, in Arial 11 point font with 1" margins on all sides. This page limit does not include the budget and budget narrative, timeline, Memorandum of Agreement, staff résumés, or other appropriate information.

All proposals must include:

A. Abstract (5 points)

A one-page summary of the Workforce Innovation proposal, including principal partners, additional partners, target populations, target industry and occupation(s), training and education strategies (including skills and credentials to be acquired by participants), experiential learning strategies, job placement strategies, estimated numbers served, and anticipated outcomes.

B. Partnership Profile (10 points)

A description of the roles and responsibilities of each of the principal partners and any additional partners, demonstrating the experience and commitment of each, including:

1. The mission and goals of each partner as they relate to the Workforce Innovation proposal
2. Leadership and governance of the Partnership (including organizational structure, management, meeting frequency, by-laws, etc.)
3. Relevant experience of the Partnership, including previous collaboration, demonstrated knowledge, experience in developing solutions to industry-specific workforce issues.
4. For training & education provider(s), describe:
 - a) Expertise and demonstrated success engaging and serving the target population
 - b) Expertise and demonstrated success in recruitment, assessment, case management and job development, where applicable
 - c) Expertise and demonstrated success providing education, occupational skills training, and credentials relevant to the targeted industry and occupations
 - d) Expertise and demonstrated success providing work-readiness training
5. For employer partner(s), describe, where applicable, what their involvement will be in
 - a) recruitment and assessment of program participants
 - b) design, delivery and/or evaluation of the proposed training and education program
 - c) provision of experiential learning opportunities (eg, internships, mentoring, job shadowing, on-the-job training, Work Immersion, etc) for participants
 - d) interviewing, providing feedback and/or hiring participants who complete the program
6. Any other relevant expertise of the partners that will contribute to the success of the Workforce Innovation grant

A Memorandum of Agreement between all partners detailing the above roles must be submitted with this application. (<http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/MOA.doc>).

C. Needs Statement (10 points)

The needs statement must describe the workforce needs of the principal employer partner(s) and related sector, and the education and training needs of program participants that will be addressed by the Workforce Innovation grant.

1. Applicant shall provide labor market information obtained from public and private sources describing current and projected job vacancies; skills gaps; training, education and credential requirements; and career advancement opportunities in the employer, sector, or occupations for which participants will be trained. Applicant shall also describe how the selected employer, sector, or occupation(s) is high-growth, high-demand, and of strategic importance to the state or local economy.
2. Applicant shall describe the anticipated demographic characteristics of the target participants, including employment status, education level, income level, age, race, gender, English proficiency, TANF eligibility, disability, veteran, homeless, criminal background, and/or other barriers to employment. Applicant shall describe the unique barriers to education and employment faced by the target participants, as well as the training, education and supportive services needed by the target participants. Applicant shall also describe the experience it has in serving the target participants.

D. Action plan (45 points)

The action plan must incorporate each of the components listed below. These components provide the framework of the Workforce Innovation proposal and the strategies from which tactics should be developed.

1. Description of program (35 points)

For each of the following sections, please note those activities that are currently provided with separate funding, and those innovative activities which will be made possible with Workforce Innovation grant funds.

- a. Describe the approach to recruitment and assessment of participants.
 - How will potential participants be recruited?
 - How will participants be selected?
 - What steps will be taken to determine eligibility and suitability of participants?
- b. Provide an overview of the curriculum.
 - Describe the key components of the training and education curriculum, including syllabus, materials, facilities, instructors, timeline, etc.
 - Describe how the curriculum is responsive to employer needs.
 - Describe how the curriculum is responsive to the needs of the target participants.
- c. Work-readiness (see Section 5C)
 - What are the core competencies the work-readiness training will address?
 - How will work-readiness training be delivered?
 - How will the program ensure that participants are prepared for, and sit for, the National Career Readiness Credential? *(If you do not believe some or all of your participants will be able to take the NCRC test, please explain.)*
- d. Experiential learning strategies (see Section 5D)
 - Describe in detail the experiential learning strategy(ies) that will be utilized, including duration, structure, employer involvement, incentive payments (if any).
 - How will the applicant secure temporary paid work experiences for participants?
 - How will these experiences enhance the job and career-readiness of participants?
 - How will the competencies gained through the experiential learning be monitored and evaluated?

- e. Occupational skills and credentials
 - Describe in detail the occupational skills instruction that will be utilized.
 - Describe the academic and/or employer-recognized credentials, if any, that will result from successful completion of the training and education program.
- f. Relationship to career pathways (See Section 5E)
 - Describe the ways in which the program will support participants in their academic and/or career advancement along high-demand career pathways.
- g. Supportive services
 - Describe and explain the case management and other supportive services that will be provided to program participants.
- h. Job placement
 - How will hiring managers be included in the program design and implementation?
 - How will job search, job matching, and job placement services be developed?
 - Describe how temporary work experiences will be utilized to develop job placement opportunities.
 - Describe whether and how this program will prepare participants for full-time jobs (at least 30 hours/week) that pay at least 150% of the Rhode Island minimum wage (\$9.00/hour)?
 - What supports will be available to participants and employers post-job placement?
- i. Staff capacity
 - Describe the qualifications of the existing and/or proposed staff that will manage and implement this program.

2. Theory and evidence (5 points)

Cite research, evidence, and/or prior experience of the applicant or other organizations to provide the rationale for the proposed program. Describe how the proposed strategy, activities, goals and/or partnership are innovative? What is new, different, promising? How is it different from your previous efforts? How does it build upon them?

3. Timeline (5 points)

Provide a timeline (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016) describing all Workforce Innovation grant activities, including planning, implementation, and expected outcomes. Indicate for each activity the start and end date, the numbers to be served by each activity, and the individual or organization primarily responsible for implementing the activity. Grant activity must begin no later than August 1, 2015.

E. Outcomes (10 points)

Describe the expected outcomes that will result from this funding. Include clear, measurable, quantitative performance indicators, as well as qualitative outcomes, that will enable the applicant to define and demonstrate progress towards the proposed goals and objectives (which shall be reported to the GWB on a quarterly basis, and which shall include participant-level data). Proposed outcomes shall show a positive impact for participants, employers, and the workforce system, and shall include the following:

1. Participant outcomes: Describe the anticipated outcomes for participants. Specifically, indicate the number of participants who will enroll, complete training, obtain skills, obtain credentials, obtain a work-readiness certificate, complete an internship or other experiential learning, and obtain employment.

Please use Outcomes Form at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/OutcomeTarget.xls>

2. Employer benefit: Describe the anticipated benefit for employer partners. For example, number of internships, quality of new hires, retention of new hires, impact on productivity or quality of services, establishment of pipeline for future employees, improved relations with training and

education providers. (Note: All grantees will be required to do a survey of employer partners upon completion of the program.)

3. **System changes:** Describe the positive system changes – within the partner organizations and/or within the workforce development system – that will result from this Workforce Innovation grant.

F. Leveraging and Sustainability Plan (6 points)

Funding for this Workforce Innovation grant is not assured beyond June 30, 2016. As such the GWB is particularly interested in supporting proposals that will build upon existing experience and resources, are aligned with the mission and objectives of the principal partners, and are likely to be sustained beyond the grant period.

1. **Leveraging Resources:** Describe how the proposed Workforce Innovation grant is aligned and integrated with the mission and vision of the applicant and partner organizations. Describe the funding and resources that the applicant currently has which are consistent with, and available to support, the goals of this proposal. Describe how the proposed Workforce Innovation grant will leverage the activities and resources of other public and private organizations that are aligned with the goals of this proposal.
2. **Sustainability:** The intent of the Workforce Innovation grant is to create enduring and sustainable partnerships that will continue the innovative efforts that are supported by this funding. Describe how this partnership will be sustained after completion of this grant, including current or potential new public or private funding sources. Analyze the potential for this program to be included on the State of Rhode Island's Eligible Training Provider List (<http://www.dlt.ri.gov/wio/ApplicationInfo.htm>)

Note: Workforce Innovation grants shall supplement, and not supplant, other funding sources. All funded projects will be required to contribute at least a 20% cash match of the Workforce Innovation grant award from employers, partners, public, philanthropic, or other funds.

G. Budget and budget narrative (10 points)

1. **Budget Form:** The budget form is available at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/Budget.xls>
2. **Budget Narrative:** The budget narrative should provide a detailed explanation for each line item of the budget, including the need for each line item as it relates to the program design and goals, and the basis for the cost of each line item. In cases where services are to be provided by a subcontractor, consultant, or other organization, applicant must provide a detailed basis for the corresponding costs. Applicants that utilize a Cost Allocation Plan must submit one with the budget indicating how costs will be shared across the various funding streams. The narrative shall also include information on any other sources of matching funds that will be used to support this effort. *A minimum of a 20% cash match must be provided.*
3. **Allowable Costs:** Funds may be used for costs associated with designing and delivering education and training activities, as well as for services to prepare participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), optimize opportunities for participant learning and career development, and assist participants to improve their occupational skills, credentials, work-readiness, education levels, wage levels, employability, academic and/or career advancement placement for participants. Funds may be used to support the following:
 - Outreach, recruitment, assessment and selection
 - Support services needed to ensure participants' success, such as transportation, child care, uniforms and tools
 - Training delivery, including classroom and formal on-the-job training
 - Tuition and related expenses

- Incentives for individuals to participate in unpaid training. (The maximum allowable incentive is \$1,000 per participant, based on number of hours. Applicant must explain the basis for the amount of incentive.)
- Staff time for partnership and program coordination, job development, case management, career coaching and data entry

Grant recipients must follow federal allowable cost principles which apply to their specific organizations and/or Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures.

4. **Disallowable Costs:** Funds cannot be used to purchase equipment or for building construction. Funds may not result in the reduction of the workforce or the displacing of workers. Projects cannot violate any conditions of a collective bargaining agreement. Funds may not be used to pay for adult literacy, numeracy, GED, or ESL instruction.
5. **Additional funding for hiring incentives:** Additional funding may be available to provide hiring incentives and/or retention bonuses to employers that hire unemployed individuals who have been trained by Workforce Innovation grant programs. Such funding, if any, will not be awarded through this RFP.
6. **Fidelity Bond:** Prior to the initial disbursement of funds, selected proposers must submit a written statement from the insurer that all persons handling state and federal funds are covered by a fidelity bond equal to the average daily financial transactions.

H. Administrative and Fiscal Capacity (4 points)

The management plan should include the following components:

- A statement of qualifications that demonstrate the proposer's ability to execute the project.
- A résumé of the current project manager or draft job description for a future project manager.
- A schedule for internal monitoring to ensure success in the program administration and compliance with all aspects of the contract.
- A statement that applicants are willing to collect participant data and track and report program performance and outcomes.
- A statement that the lead applicant agrees to participate in a third-party evaluation.
- Copy of the lead agency's most recent audit and/or audited financial statement (Pell-eligible institutions are exempt).
 - All governmental and non-profit organization must follow the audit requirements of Federal OMB circular A-133 (www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2011)
 - Commercial organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds must have either an organization-wide audit conducted in accordance with OMB circular A-133 or a program-specific financial and compliance audit. Those entities that expend \$500,000 or more in federal funds may include audit costs to the grants on a pro-rated basis.

I. FY15 Performance Narrative and Outcomes – To be completed by current Innovative Partnership grant recipients only (±5 points)

For *each* of the following applicable program components, describe and explain what worked well and what did not in your current grant, and what you would do differently if you were to receive further funding from the GWB. This section should not exceed 4 pages, 1.5 line spacing, in Arial 11 point font with 1" margins on all sides, and is not counted towards the 20 page limit for Sections A - F.

- a. Grant administration (fiscal and programmatic)
- b. Recruitment, assessment, and selection of participants
- c. Retention of participants
- d. Development and delivery of curriculum
- e. Work-readiness training
- f. Experiential learning

- g. Engagement and contributions of employer partners
- h. Attainment of occupational skills and credentials
- i. Preparation of participants for academic and/or career advancement along high-demand career pathways
- j. Supportive services
- k. Job placement

FY15 quarterly performance reports for the first three program quarters, will also be compiled, reviewed, and considered as part of this section. Current Innovative Partner grant recipients should be mindful of this performance data when preparing their Performance Narrative and are welcome to explain any possible discrepancies between the performance data reported for the first three quarters and the performance targets in the grantee's contract.

Section 9 – Payment

Payment will be on a cost reimbursement basis and will be paid quarterly. Payment requests must include all required supporting documentation.

Section 10 – Fiscal Management / Internal Oversight

Contractors are required to maintain complete and accurate records of all financial expenditures with supporting documentation. These records must be available to the GWB and other monitoring staff. Contractors are required to internally monitor fiscal activities to ensure compliance with the applicable federal cost principles. At a minimum, internal oversight will address the following:

1. Staff attendance and payroll disbursement have been properly documented;
2. Accounting records are traceable to the source document and the application of grant funds relating to authorizations, obligations, balances, liabilities, expenditures and income;
3. Program expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation; and
4. Budget allocations and expenditures comply with contracted obligations.

The lead agency must ensure that all funds expended are in compliance with the contract, applicable OMB guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Disallowed costs by the partner(s) agency will be the liability of the lead agency. No work is to be performed without authorization from GWB and receipt of a signed contract and an approved purchase order.

Section 11 – Adherence to State and Federal Laws & Regulations

The proposer must comply with the applicable state and federal laws, regulations and policies for each funding stream; including, but not limited to, labor laws; including child labor, OSHA, Right-to-Know and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Nepotism: No individual may be placed in an employment activity if a member of that person's immediate family is directly supervised by or directly supervises that individual.

Section 12 – Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of the successful proposer to limit access to personal and proprietary information generated in the course of the contract. All data stored and generated may only be used for the purposes of this program. The proposer must specify that all electronic data files are secure and access is limited on a need to know basis. Identity theft is a prime concern and must be guarded against at all times.

Section 13 – Selection Process

A. Evaluation of Technical Proposals

The GWB will commission a Technical Review Committee that will evaluate and score all proposals that were submitted on time, signed by the signatory authority of the respondent organization and are

not debarred, suspended or voluntarily excluded from receipt of federal funds. All proposals meeting this test will be evaluated to determine whether the proposal is responsive to the proposer's duties and responsibilities as provided in the RFP.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.

1. Abstract (5 points)
The applicant has provided a clear and concise description of the structure, purpose, methods, and goals of the Workforce Innovation grant proposal.
2. Partnership Profile (10 points)
The applicant has provided a clear and compelling description of the commitment of the principal partners to the success of the program, which is detailed in an attached Partnership Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The applicant has also demonstrated a capacity to execute the project.
3. Needs Statement (10 points)
The applicant has provided a clear rationale, supported by evidence or research where applicable, for the workforce needs of employers and individual participants that will be addressed by this proposal.
4. Action Plan (45 points)
The applicant has presented a plan of action which is clear, detailed and logical, and meets the requirements of each component, including recruitment and assessment, work readiness (including the NCRC, where applicable), occupational skills training, experiential learning (including paid work experiences), and job placement. Applicant has demonstrated a clear relationship between the proposed program and the needs of employers and participants. Applicant has demonstrated how the program will support participants for advancement along a high-demand career pathway. Applicant has described the supportive services that will be provided to participants. Applicant has described how it will develop full-time, well-paying job placement opportunities for participants. Applicant has presented the qualifications of the existing and/or proposed staff that will implement and manage this program. Applicant has provided theory and evidence to support the rationale for the program design and to substantiate the innovative nature of the proposal. Applicant has provided an appropriate timeline to implement program components or services.
5. Outcomes (10 points)
Applicant has clearly described the expected outcomes that will result from this project, including both quantitative and qualitative performance indicators that will enable the applicant to define and demonstrate progress towards the proposed goals and objectives. Applicant has provided a timeframe in which measurable participant outcomes, including training, education, and employment goals, will be achieved. Applicant has also clearly described the positive benefits for employer partners, as well as the positive system changes within the partner organizations and/or within the workforce development system, that are expected from this Workforce Innovation grant.
6. Leveraging and Sustainability Plan (6 pts)
Applicant has clearly described how the proposed project will leverage existing funds, resources and activities of the applicant and partner organizations. Applicant has provided a realistic description of how this partnership will be sustained after completion of this grant, including an analysis of the potential for the proposed program to be included on the Eligible Training Provider List.

7. Budget and budget narrative (10 pts)
Budget and budget narrative are clearly understood. Projected costs are clearly justified, appropriate, and reasonably related to the project activities and goals. Applicant has complied with 20% match requirement. In cases where services are to be provided by a subcontractor, consultant, or other organization, applicant must provide the basis of the corresponding costs.
8. Administrative and fiscal capacity (4 pts)
Applicant has demonstrated the administrative and fiscal capacity to manage the fiscal and programmatic responsibilities of the project. Applicant has demonstrated appropriate governance, management, and staffing to oversee and implement the project.
9. FY15 performance (Current Innovative Partnership grant recipients only) (±5 points)
Applicant has provided a thorough report and analysis of FY15 grant activity. Applicant demonstrates an understanding of the factors that contributed to the program's success, as well as those factors that impeded the program's success. Applicant has provided a comprehensive and realistic program improvement plan that will address current challenges and result in improved outcomes. FY15 quarterly performance reports demonstrate substantial achievement of outcome targets.

C. Negotiation

The GWB reserves the right to negotiate with proposers on costs and deliverables in order to contract with the proposer who best meets the Board's needs. Upon completion of the negotiation, a final contract will be drafted and signed, a state Purchase Order (PO) will be issued, and work may then commence. If a contract for any reason cannot be negotiated, another proposer may be selected.

Section 14 – Proposal Submission

The following items must be submitted on paper **and** electronically **no later than 3:00 P.M. on Monday, May 11, 2015.***

- Six (6) complete sets of the proposal, including one (1) with original signatures, must be submitted to the Governor's Workforce Board, RI Department of Labor & Training, 1511 Pontiac Ave., Bldg. 73, Cranston, RI 02920. Faxed proposals will not be accepted.
- All required attachments and a Proposal Cover Sheet must be submitted with the proposal. (see Section 15)
- A PDF of the entire proposal must also be emailed to scarello@dlt.ri.gov.

*** Incomplete proposals, or proposals received after this time and date, will not be considered.**

Section 15 – Required Attachments

Attachment A - Budget Form

All proposals must include a budget and budget narrative. A budget form is available as an Excel spreadsheet and may be downloaded at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/Budget.xls>

Attachment B – Outcome Targets

All proposals must include outcome targets. An outcome targets form is available as an Excel spreadsheet and may be downloaded at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/OutcomeTarget.xls>

Attachment C – W-9 Form

All proposals must include a federal W-9 Form. A W-9 form and instructions may be downloaded at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/w9Form.pdf>

Attachment D – Memorandum of Agreement

All proposals must include either a separate Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or a separate section within a single MOA, for each partner to this proposal. An MOA template may be downloaded at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/MOA.doc>

Attachment E – Proposal Cover Sheet

All proposals must include a Proposal Cover Sheet, which may be downloaded at <http://www.gwb.ri.gov/pdfs/Innovation/CoverSheet.doc>

WORKFORCE INNOVATION GRANT CHECKLIST

Proposal Narrative

- Abstract
- Partnership Profile
- Needs Statement
- Action Plan
 - description of program
 - theory and evidence
 - timeline
- Outcomes
- Leveraging and Sustainability Plan
- Budget Narrative
- Administrative and Fiscal Capacity (including staff resumes and audits)
- FY2015 Performance (current Innovative Partnership grantees only)

Proposal Attachments

- Budget Form
- Outcome Targets Form
- Signed W-9 Form
- Memoranda of Agreement
- Proposal Cover Sheet

Proposal Submission requirements

- One (1) complete proposal (narrative and attachments) with original signatures
- Five (5) copies of original proposal (narrative and attachments)
- Emailed PDF version of complete proposal (narrative and attachments)