Overview and Purpose

The SUNY Workforce Development Training Grant program provides funding to assist SUNY community colleges to operate workforce development/job training programs to businesses and organizations to promote and encourage the location and development of new business in the State, and to create and retain employment opportunities in local communities. Matching funds of at least twenty-five percent shall be required by each participating business or organization.

The funding is administered by SUNY System Administration’s Office of Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline, with assistance from the Finance and Budget Office, Counsel’s Office, Office of Governmental Relations, and Provost’s Office as needed.

Eligible Workforce Training Project Types

All proposals should include training that is customized to the employer’s needs. Funding of business-specific projects will be the priority, however, proposals for non-profit and non-state governmental organizations will be considered.

Three types of workforce training are eligible for funding:

- **Individual projects**: Projects that focus on training for a single employer in a particular training area or areas.

- **Consortium projects**: Projects that focus on a type of training that serves multiple employers or where multiple colleges work together as a regional consortium to train for an employer(s) in a specific area. An industry association may act as the employer for this type of project if that organization provides the match.

- **Demonstration projects***: A limited number of demonstration projects may be considered that develop and implement new and innovative courses, programs or curriculum. For these types of projects, modest funding for other direct costs may be included such as staff assistance, release time, material development, and/or incidental operating costs and travel for project activities. Matching funds from employer(s) will still be required at 25% of the total project cost including a 10% cash match.

*Demonstration project proposals may include:

- Training courses or programs that provide a pathway for employees between non-credit and credit courses, certificates and degree programs.
- Industry or campus certifications awarded for specific training programs.
- Innovative training ideas (boot camps, short courses, etc.).
- Entrepreneurial programs that tie to START-UP NY programs or companies.
- Development of regional training programs in a new or emerging industry.
Project Planning

Please consider the college’s role in serving the economic and workforce development needs of the state’s business enterprises which could include:

- New employers requiring training for startup including START-UP NY companies.
- Employers locating to the state (or newly located to the state).
- Employers expanding their operations and/or creating new jobs.
- Employers that seek to improve productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and profitability as a result of the training.
- Employers where training is key to remaining in the state.
- Employers where training is essential to survival and job retention.
- Firms that are small and without assistance would not be able to afford training.
- Firms that show promise of increased sales, new products, or new markets as a result of the training.
- Collaboration with other state, workforce or community partners.
- Clear link to the Regional Economic Development Council goals.

Other Project Requirements

- When possible, colleges are encouraged to use faculty, adjunct faculty or qualified staff for training. However, all qualified training providers should be considered.
- For audit proposes, please maintain a list of employees who receive training under the grant. It is recommended that the college provide a sign-in sheet for each training session that includes project title, training conducted, employee name, employer, date of training and employee signature.
- Consulting costs are not allowable.
- In preparing its proposal, each college should make realistic projections of the number of employees to be served, jobs to be created or retained, etc. Inflating outcomes is discouraged and colleges will be expected to report actual outcomes at the end of the project; these numbers will be compared to the original proposal.
- “Canned” programs and sole-sourcing multiple contracts to single training providers is discouraged. High-cost training associated with sending employees to training institutes will not be considered. Funding may not be used to cover tuition except for special, pre-approved projects.
- Colleges are asked to use the “SUNY Workforce and Continuing Education” Workplace Group to post pictures and overviews of the trainings that are offered through this program.
- Employers that were funded in past years may be asked to wait a year before applying again.

Marketing and Outreach Expectations

Based on SUNY’s Completion Agenda and the need for colleges to provide access to higher education for all students including adult and non-traditional students, SUNY is requesting the grant contact provide information to employers and employees on additional non-credit, certificate and/or credit and degree program offerings where applicable. This outreach could include providing admissions materials along with training materials and/or arranging for the admissions office to visit employers and employees.
during or prior to a training session to briefly discuss additional education options. SUNY is looking to highlight best practices in this area so a description of this outreach will be required as part of the final report.

Funding Guidelines

Proposals: SUNY community colleges may submit proposals on a rolling basis until all funds have been committed.

Funding Amount: A college may apply for a minimum of $500 per project. The maximum for all projects is $125,000. Multiple project proposals may be submitted. The maximum to be awarded per project is up to:

- $50,000 for individual project grants
- $75,000 for consortium projects
- $75,000 for demonstration projects.

Employer Match: The employer must contribute at least 25% of the total project cost in matching funds and at least 10% must be in the form of cash. The remaining 15% may be comprised of in-kind commitments and trainee release time. This contribution must be documented in the employer final report letter for audit purposes. (Note: space costs are not allowed as in-kind costs). It is recommended that the employer pay out the required match directly to the college at the start of the training. These funds would then be deposited to the project account and used to pay a share of the training costs as they occur.

Project Costs: The total project costs are to be paid by the college and include training delivery direct costs (costs as a direct result of offering the training such as salary/fringe benefits for the trainer, copying of training handouts, binders/folders, supplies such as flipcharts and markers, books, assessments for individual students, access to online tools or software licenses to be used during the training only) and administrative/indirect costs (limited to 20% of the direct costs and intended to cover the cost of college staff administering the training). Training delivery direct costs do not include expenses such as employee training wages/release time or purchase of food, equipment or software packages for multiple uses or that require annual licenses, etc. (unless project is a demonstration project). These may be covered by employer match or indirect costs. The SUNY grant may not exceed 90% of the total project cost.

Proposal Review Process

All project proposals must include the following basic criteria to be considered for funding:

- Complete proposal and budget.
- A letter from the employer(s) stating they agree to the proposed project with a brief outline of the agreed upon training, number of estimated employees they plan to train and the anticipated timeframe for the training. In the letter, the employer must indicate the cash and in-kind match they will provide to the college for the training. A consortium project may provide one letter signed by all employers participating in the training.
Note: Only complete submissions including proposal, budget and employer(s) letter will be reviewed. SUNY reserves the right to reject submissions that do not meet the stated goals of the funding or those with inappropriate training proposals based on the guidelines.

Fiscal Management Policies

Funds must be spent in accordance with the approved project proposal unless a request is made for modification to SUNY in writing. If it is determined at any point in the project that full funding will not be required please notify Denise Zieske immediately at denise.zieske@suny.edu. Please note that awards from this funding should be considered as part of the awarded community college’s “restricted budget” and should be recorded accordingly.

Reporting Requirements

Colleges will be required to submit final reports on completed projects. Part of the final review will be to compare the actual outcomes of the project with those planned in the initial proposal and to explain any major differences. A final report format will be provided. A final cost breakdown may be requested.

The following information will be required upon completion of each project:

- Number of employer partners.
- Number of individuals trained.
- Number of contact hours.
- Overall benefits and impact of the training including learning outcomes.
- Note that while the reporting responsibility rests with the college, it is also required that all employers who have received training write a letter, on company letterhead, describing the benefits and impacts of the training and attesting that they have met the required match and the value. This letter(s) should be included with the college’s final report.

Proposal Contact

Please direct questions to Denise Zieske, Director of Workforce Development, at 518-320-1160 or denise.zieske@suny.edu in the SUNY Office of Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline.