Talent Ready Connections Grant Request for Proposals

During the 2020 legislative session, the Utah Legislature authorized an educational grant program through H.B. 68, Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, to help expand work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities throughout Utah. This fund will aid in the creation and development of programs that allow students to earn money while they learn in-demand skills for high-wage careers.

Grant Objectives

The following goals are outlined in the legislation:

- Create partnerships between education and industry to make work-based learning and apprenticeship programs available to Utah students.
- Develop work-based learning and apprenticeship programs according to the workforce needs of a high-demand industry or occupation.

Eligibility

- The primary applicant must be either a public high school or a postsecondary institution.
- The application must include a partnership between at least one participating employer and a public high school or postsecondary institution.
- The postsecondary institution must be a degree-granting institution or technical college within the Utah System of Higher Education and according to Utah Code 53B-1-102.

RFP Virtual Information Session and Questions

- **When:** February 7, 2024, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
  
  Applicants and others interested in the Talent Ready Connections RFP are invited to a virtual information session.

- **Where:** Zoom

- **What:** This information session is an opportunity to ask questions about proposal requirements and the online proposal submission. Talent Ready staff will be there to
inform and answer questions.

- **Register:** To register for the RFP information session and receive a meeting invitation, click [here](#). Questions about the RFP are welcome; please submit them using this [RFP Questionnaire](#). The deadline for questions is April 13, 2024, 5:00 p.m.

A recording of the RFP Information Session and emailed questions and responses will be posted on the [Talent Ready Utah web page](#).

**Proposal Timeline**

The proposal must be submitted online [here](#).
- Proposals are due by April 15, 2024, by 5:00 p.m.
- Proposals for this initiative will be reviewed quarterly as long as funds are available.

**Proposal Review and Questions from the Review Committee**

- All submissions will be initially verified. Applicants should be prepared to respond to requests for clarification or additional information.
- After verification, the review committee will consider proposals. Applicants should be prepared to respond to final clarification requests or additional information.

**Review Committee Recommendations to the Talent Ready Board**

- After the proposal review, the committee will present its recommendations to the Talent Ready Board.

**Award notification to awardees**

- Upon final decision by the Talent Ready Board, award notifications will be emailed to the contact listed in the application.

**Submission Process**

Each institution will upload its application documents via [Google Forms](#). An automatic confirmation email will be sent verifying the receipt of the proposal submission. The following documents are required for each application:

- Proposal Narrative
- Budget
- Letter(s) of Support

See [Instructions for Proposal](#) on page 7 for more details.
Proposal Debriefing

Upon request, a debriefing meeting can be scheduled with a bidder. A request for this meeting must be emailed to jimmy.mcdonough@ushe.edu within five (5) business days after the notification of an unsuccessful proposal is sent to the bidder. Talent Ready Utah will acknowledge receipt of the debriefing request within three (3) business days.

Discussion will be limited to a critique of the requesting bidder’s proposal. Comparisons between proposals or evaluations of the other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted by phone or virtually and will be scheduled for a maximum of 30 minutes.

Program Length

The goal of this program is to support the expansion of work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities throughout Utah. The proposed length of the program will vary by the needs of the program but must be a minimum of one year. Please indicate the proposed duration of the program in Appendix A.

Budget

Requested funding will be used solely for the direct costs associated with the program, such as the cost of instructors, marketing, curriculum development, training, travel, or equipment/supplies. Funding for general administration is not allowed.

Allowed Budget Uses:

- Curriculum Development
- Equipment/Supplies
- Travel
- Training
- Marketing
- Employer Funding (Funding to offset a participating employer’s direct operational costs associated with employing students as part of an approved apprenticeship program or work-based learning program)
Funding and Payments
Grant funds for this initiative will be disbursed once the Memorandum of Understanding is signed by all parties. Awardees must provide an invoice showing how funds were expended. Awardees must submit a payment request accompanied by a paid supplier or institutional invoice.

Reporting and Data Collection
The education partner shall report quarterly and on a regular basis as reasonably requested by Talent Ready Utah.

- At a minimum, the education partner shall provide documentation of the following:
  - Number of participants in the program.
  - Number of participants who have completed each phase offered by the program.
  - Number of participants who have been hired by a business participating in the program.
  - Demographic information.
  - Any additional data as required and outlined in the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.

The education provider will provide an annual narrative report summarizing the quarterly reports, achievement of set goals, success and challenges of the programs, and possible best practices. The education partner shall submit to any audit by Talent Ready Utah or an approved third party to verify reported data.

Evaluation Criteria
The proposal review and evaluation process will be competitive and conducted with a fair and objective process. An Evaluation Committee will review and score proposals using the scoring rubric below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/Need Assessment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Management</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Outcomes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Possible Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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While not required, preference will be given to a proposal that includes: (i) a description of a stackable credentialing pathway created by the program for participating students between at least two of the following: (A) a public high school; (B) an institution of higher education, including technical colleges; or (ii) the potential for participating students to obtain full-time employment with the participating employer upon completion of the program.

If the Evaluation Committee requires further information to make its recommendation, Talent Ready Utah may contact respective bidders who submitted proposals for additional information and/or revisions.

For any questions regarding the Talent Ready Connections grant initiative and application process, please contact Jimmy McDonough at jimmy.mcdonough@ushe.edu, or Samantha Aird at samantha.aird@ushe.edu.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS
Instruction for Proposal

Formatting
A page is 8.5 x 11 inches, with 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1-inch margin. Use one of the following fonts: Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia. Applications submitted in any other font will not be accepted. Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). All proposals should be converted and uploaded as a PDF.

Applicants must address each of the following criteria:

- Introduction/Needs Assessment (25 points)
- Program Management (25 points)
- Implementation (20 points)
- Performance/Outcomes (15 points)
- Budget (15 points)

The following guidance may assist applicants in addressing each of the selection criteria:

Introduction/Need Assessment - 25 points

- Provide a detailed description of the proposed apprenticeship or work-based learning program.
- Describe the workforce needs of the targeted high-demand industry or occupation this program will meet.
- Describe the high-demand industry or occupations this proposal will support:
  - Summarize labor market information to support this as a high-demand industry, including growth projections and increased demand/need.
  - Determine if the occupation is ranked as 4-stars or higher on the Utah Department of Workforce Service Occupation Explorer or provide a detailed explanation of future openings, growth rate, wages, and openings in the geographic area.
- What are the employer partners' projected job openings over the period of the proposed program?
- How will this program support the expansion of work-based learning opportunities in a specific CTE region and/or state of Utah?
Program Management - 25 points

- Describe the partnership between the institution(s) and employer(s) to meet the workforce needs of the targeted high-demand industry or occupation. (Confirmed by Letters of Support)
- Provide a detailed overview of the proposed apprenticeship or work-based learning program to include instructional and on-the-job training hours.
- Discuss the curriculum proposed for the program.
- What school credits, credentials, and/or certifications will be offered to participants?
- Identify the targeted participant to enroll in the work-based learning or apprenticeship program.
- How will the institution conduct outreach and market the program to ensure sufficient students are trained to meet the projected needs? (Confirmed by Letters of Support)
- Describe organizations, if any, the institution will partner with to recruit and support participants. (Confirmed by Letters of Support)

Letter(s) of Support may include:
- How does the partner intend to support or contribute to the proposed program?
- Validation of workforce needs
- Commitment to the length of the proposed program
- Commitment of materials, resources, and/or financial support to the proposed program

Implementation - 20 points

- Provide a start-up implementation timeline/plan.
- Provide a training timeline for participants to complete the program.
- How will participants enroll/register for the program?
- How does the institution plan to sustain the program?

Performance/Outcomes - 15 points

- Provide the projected number of participants in the program, participants who will complete each phase offered by the program, and who will be hired by a business participating in the program.
- Discuss how the institution will track demographic information and credit, credential,
and/or certificate attainment.

- Describe any institution or employer-specific metrics that will be used to measure program success.
- How will the institution and employer(s) collaborate to track performance/outcome data?
- Describe how feedback from the partner employer(s) will be obtained and utilized to improve the quality of the program.

**Budget- 15 points**

- Outline a budget for total program cost, including:
  - A description of any funds already secured for activities related to the program.
  - A breakdown of costs to complete the scope of work.
  - An itemized budget detailing the planned use of grant funds, including how the funding will be allocated, tracked, and reported.
- Describe staff resources, by title, utilized for the proposed program and their FTE allocation.
- Number of students projected to be served.
- List the cost per student.

**Appendix**

If the proposed program requires the Utah Board of Higher Education or school district approval, the institution must provide evidence that approval has been obtained.