

Utah Works Program (UWP) Request for Proposals (RFP)

During the 2022 legislative session, the Utah Legislature authorized an educational grant program through [H.B. 333, *Economic and Workforce Development Amendments*](#), to promote partnerships between companies and postsecondary institutions to **fill high-demand positions** and/or **provide skills training**. This program teams industry, postsecondary institutions, and state agencies to address specific workforce gaps identified by companies. The Utah Works Program aims to **accelerate hiring and skills training that will lead to economic growth**. Proposals for Commercial Driver's License (CDL) programs will not be considered during this Utah Works review cycle.

Grant Objectives:

- Develop short-term pre-employment and/or short-term early employment training programs to fill targeted high-demand positions in Utah.
- Provide required skills training to ensure individuals meet the required level of skill for targeted employment.
- Provide expedited skills training to prepare a large number of individuals in a short period to fill targeted skilled labor positions.

Eligibility:

- The proposal must be jointly developed by a company and a 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 53H-13-307](#).
- A company representative must certify that:
 - The company has a skilled labor gap;
 - The proposed postsecondary institution partnership will meet that gap need;
 - The company has significant one-time or ongoing hiring demands; and
 - The company commits to providing a cost-share contribution.
- The company must have a substantial presence in Utah.

- A substantial presence, for the purposes of UWP, requires:
 - The company must be properly registered with the Utah Division of Corporations as an active, for-profit business entity in good standing; and
 - The company must be properly licensed in the appropriate city or county.
- Additionally, TRU shall, according to its judgment and discretion, determine whether a company has a substantial presence for purposes of a UWP grant by weighing the following factors:
 - Total workforce and percentage of the company's workforce in Utah;
 - Amount of business taxes paid to the state of Utah;
 - The relative size of the company;
 - Whether the company's principal place of business is Utah;
 - Likelihood that the company will maintain a significant presence in the state of Utah;
 - A commitment of capital expenditure and/or new job creation in the state; and
 - The degree to which the company's activities and operations positively impact Utah's economy.
- The company must fulfill the following cost-sharing requirements:
 - Provide a company representative to support the collaboration.
 - Provide an "in-kind" contribution, approved by TRU, which may include:
 - Company representative's time spent on the collaboration.
 - Materials and equipment;
 - Work/research space;
 - Travel and other company expenses budgeted for the collaboration or
 - Other contributions approved by TRU
 - Make all reported cost-share activities available for audit.

RFP Information Session

Applicants and others interested in the Utah works Program RFP are invited to a virtual RFP information session.

- When:
 - January 20, 2026, 11 a.m. — 12 p.m.
 - April 15, 2026, 1 — 2 p.m.
- Where: Zoom

- **What:** This information session is an opportunity to ask questions about the proposal 2 requirements and online proposal submission. Talent Ready Utah staff present to share information and answer questions.
- **Register:** [Register for the RFP information session](#). After registration, you will receive a meeting invitation. A recording of the session will be posted on the Talent Ready Utah web page.

Review Cycle Dates:

Proposals for the Utah Works Initiative will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Proposals will be reviewed by a review committee, and recommendations for funding will be presented to the Talent Board during their regularly scheduled meetings. Below are the dates when proposals must be submitted to ensure they are reviewed, and recommendations can be made to the Talent Board:

- February 19, 2026
- May 19, 2026

Proposal Timeline

The [proposal, due on February 19, 2026, must be submitted online](#). Proposals submitted after February 19, 2026 will be submitted via our Grant Management system. Instructions will be provided.

Proposals Due

- No later than 5 p.m. on the date listed in the Review Cycle dates above. Proposals submitted after will be automatically considered during the next cycle.

Proposal review and questions from the Review Committee

- All submissions will be initially verified, and applicants should be prepared to respond to requests for clarification or additional information.
- After verification, the review committee will consider proposals, and applicants should be prepared to respond to final requests for clarification 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 the Talent Ready Board's final decision, the contact listed in the application will receive an email notification of awards.

Award Start Date

- Institutions should anticipate a start date of the first day of the second month after the proposal date. For example, a proposal due on December 8 should anticipate a start date of February 1.

Submission Process

Each institution will upload its proposal 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 Worksheet
- Executed Collaboration Agreement
- Per 2024 H.B. 335 State Grant Process Amendments, if the applicant receives any additional funding from the State of Utah for the proposed program, they must provide budget details for the additional funding.
- Letter(s) of Support (optional)

See **Instructions for Proposal** on page 8 for more details.

Executed Letter of Collaboration

All proposals must include a Letter of Collaboration that outlines the partnership between the postsecondary institution and the employer partner. This letter must detail the roles and contributions of each party, certify the company's skilled labor needs, and describe how the partnership will address these needs through targeted training programs. While the Letter of Collaboration is a mandatory component of the proposal, the sample provided in Appendix A is intended solely as an example. Applicants are encouraged to tailor their letters to reflect the unique aspects and specifics of their

collaboration. Letters of Collaboration must be signed by an authorized signer at the institution and employer partner.

Proposal Debriefing

A request for a debriefing meeting must be emailed to TRUgrants@ushe.edu within five business days of the applicant receiving notification of an unsuccessful proposal. Talent Ready Utah will acknowledge receipt of the debriefing request within three business days.

The discussion will be limited to feedback on the requesting applicant'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 develop short-term pre-employment and short-term early employment training that meet the needs of an identified employer. The proposed length of the program will vary by the needs of the employer partner but should not exceed two years.

Budget

Requested funding will be used solely for the direct costs associated with the program, such as the cost of instructors, marketing, curriculum development, or equipment and supplies. Outside of the cost of implementing a new program (i.e. equipment, curriculum development), the cost per student should be in line with the institution's cost per student. Funding for the general administration is not allowed.

Allowed Budget Categories:

Salaries & Benefits

- **Salaries:** Compensation for faculty, staff, and other personnel directly involved in the project, including those working on curriculum development.
- **Benefits:** Health insurance, retirement contributions, and other fringe benefits related to personnel.

Equipment

- **Non-Capital Equipment:** Purchase of items with an acquisition cost greater than or equal to \$3,000 but less than \$5,000.
- **Capital Equipment:** Purchase of a single item (not invoice) that costs \$5,000.00 or more, is freestanding, and has a use life of one year or more.

Supplies – Office Supplies

- **Office Supplies:** general office materials including paper, pens, toner, and other everyday items used for administrative purposes.
- **Project-specific Supplies:** Specialized materials necessary for the project, such as textbooks, educational resources, curriculum development software, and scientific supplies.

Travel – Student

- **Student Travel:** Travel expenses to support rural students participating in the program.

Contractual – Subcontracts (TRU Approval Required)

- **Subcontracts:** Agreements with external organizations or individuals to perform specific tasks or services directly tied to the project.
- **Professional Services:** Fees for external consultants, experts, or professional services engaged to support the project, including those assisting with curriculum development.

Other Direct Costs

- **Communication:** Telephone, internet, postage, and other communication expenses necessary for project execution.
- **Publication, Printing & Marketing:** Costs for publishing and disseminating project results, printing curriculum materials, and marketing efforts related to the project.
- **Curriculum Development:** Expenses related to customizing and developing curriculum to meet industry/employer needs.
- **Pre-employment Expenses:** General expenses to support participant placement.

Talent Ready Utah must approve changes to the program's final budget or program scope before they are made. If the grant funds are not used in compliance with the specified guidelines or if any disclosures are inaccurate or incomplete, Talent Ready Utah reserves the right to reclaim funds.

Funding and Payments

Grant funds for this award will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted quarterly to Talent Ready Utah. Invoice submissions should correspond with quarterly report submissions (see Reporting and Data Collection below) and are also due on the 10th day of April, July, October, and January. Payment requests will not be processed until the institution's quarterly report is received. Awardees must submit a completed Talent Ready Utah payment request, accompanied by an institutional invoice and supporting documents such as receipts, invoices, registration records, and payroll documentation. Requests for reimbursement should be sent via email to TRUgrants@ushe.edu

Reporting and Data Collection

The postsecondary institution shall report quarterly and on a regular basis as reasonably requested by Talent Ready Utah. Quarterly reports will be due on the 10th day of April, July, October, and January.

- At a minimum, the education partner shall provide documentation of;
 - The number of students enrolled in the program;
 - The number of students that have completed the program; and
 - The number of students placed in relevant employment.

The postsecondary institution will be required to provide a narrative report annually that includes data on how participants heard about the pre-employment program (if applicable)

Evaluation Criteria

The proposal review and evaluation process will be competitive, using a fair and objective approach. The table below outlines the points and weights assigned to each section of the proposal. A reviewer will be responsible for a specific section and will assess how well the proposal addresses the questions provided in the outline. Reviewers will only evaluate the submitted proposal content.

| Category | Total Points | Weight |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Introduction/Need Assessment | 25 | 25% |
| Program Management | 25 | 25% |
| Implementation | 20 | 20% |
| Performance Outcomes | 15 | 10% |
| Budget | 15 | 20% |
| Total Possible Points | 100 | 100% |

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

For general questions regarding the Utah Works Grant and application process, please contact us via email at Jordan.hill@ushe.edu.

See the Next Page for Proposal Instructions/Outline

Instruction for Proposal

Formatting

The proposal narrative should not exceed six pages in length. This includes cover, table of contents, attached graphs, and any appendices to the proposal. It does not include the budget worksheet, executed collaboration agreement, or department budget documentation. A “page” is 8.5” x 11”, with 1” margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1” margin. Use one of the following fonts: Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia typeface. 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 file.

Applicants must address each of the following criteria:

- Introduction/Need 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:

Proposal Outline

Introduction/Need Assessment — 25 points

- A detailed description of the pre-hire program, if applicable, and skills training program
- Description of the identified skilled labor gap
- Describe the high-demand position(s) being trained for in this program:
 - Hard-to-fill jobs with a lack of skilled labor applicants/employees or a large number of skilled labor positions are needed in a short amount of time.
 - Ranked as a 3-star or higher occupation on the Utah Department of Workforce Service Occupation Explorer or provide a detailed explanation as to the future openings, growth rate, wages, and openings in your geographic area.
 - Provide a position description.

- What are the employer partners' projected job openings over the period of the proposed program?
- What significance will this program have to the Utah/local economy?

Program Management —25 points

- Provide a detailed overview of the pre-hire program, if applicable, and the outline of the skills training program and how it will address the identified skilled labor gap.
- Discuss the curriculum proposed for the program.
- What credentials and/or certifications will be offered to participants?
- Identify the targeted participant to enroll in this skilled labor training program.
- How will you conduct outreach and market the program to ensure sufficient students are trained to meet the employer's projected hiring needs?
- Describe organizations, if any, that you will partner with to recruit and support participants.
- Summarize the executed collaboration agreement to include.

Implementation — 20 points

- Provide a start-up implementation timeline/plan.
- Provide a training timeline for participants to successfully complete the program.
- How will participants enroll/register for the program?
- For pre-employment programs, describe participants' transition to the employer's hiring process.

Performance/Outcomes — 15 points

- Provided the projected number of individuals who will start, finish, and be successfully hired through the program.
- How will the institution and employer collaborate to track performance/outcome data?
- Describe how feedback from the employer(s) will be obtained and utilized to improve the program's quality.
- How will the institution ensure timely and accurate invoicing and reporting as required?

Budget — Used Required Budget Worksheet — 15 points

- Outlined budget for total program cost
 - Tab 1 – Provide the staff resources by title, role type, FTE allocation, and salary being proposed and allocated to this budget.
 - Tab 2 – an itemized budget detailing the planned use of grant funds, including how the funding will be allocated, tracked, and reported.
 - Tab 3 – an overall summary of the budget that includes proposed outcomes and cost per student.

[Institution Letterhead]

[Date]

[Company Representative's Name]

[Title]

[Company Name]

[Company Address]

[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear Talent Ready Utah,

Subject: Sample Letter of Collaboration for Utah Works Grant Application

We are pleased to confirm our collaboration between [Institution Name], a degree-granting institution within the Utah System of Higher Education, and [Company Name] in our joint application for the Utah Works Grant initiative. This letter outlines our mutual commitment to developing and implementing short-term pre-employment and/or early employment training programs aimed at filling targeted high-demand positions in Utah.

Joint Proposal Development

Our proposal has been collaboratively developed to address the critical need for skilled labor in [specific industry or job role]. This partnership leverages the academic expertise and resources of [Institution Name] and the industry insights and practical needs of [Company Name].

Institution's Role and Collaboration

[Institution Name] will contribute the following to the collaboration:

- **Curriculum Development:** Designing and developing training programs tailored to meet the specific skills required by [Company Name].
- **Instructional Expertise:** Provide experienced faculty and trainers to deliver the training programs.

- **Facilities and Resources:** Offering classroom space, labs, and other necessary facilities for training.
- **Program Evaluation:** Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the training programs to ensure they meet the desired outcomes.

Company Certification

[Company Name] hereby certifies the following:

- **Skilled Labor Gap:** [Company Name] currently faces a significant skilled labor gap in [specific job roles or functions].
- **Partnership Need:** The collaboration with [Institution Name] will address this gap through targeted training programs.
- **Hiring Demands:** [Company Name] has significant ongoing hiring demands, anticipating the need for [number] new employees within the next [timeframe].
- **Cost-Share-Contribution:** [Company Name] commits to providing a cost-share contribution to support this collaboration.

Company Presence in Utah

[Company Name] maintains a substantial presence in Utah, evidenced by:

- **Registration and Licensing:** Proper registration with the Utah Division of Corporations and appropriate city/county licenses as a for-profit business entity.
- **Workforce and Economic Impact:** A significant portion of our workforce is based in Utah, contributing to the local economy through business taxes and operations.
- **Commitment to Utah:** Ongoing and future commitments to capital expenditure and job creation in the state.

Cost-Sharing Contributions

[Company Name] will provide the following in-kind contributions:

- **Representative's Time:** Active participation of a company representative in program development and implementation.
- **Materials and Equipment:** Necessary materials and equipment for training purposes.
- **Work/Research Space:** Space allocation for training sessions and related activities.

- **Additional Contributions:** [Specify other in-kind contributions, if any].

All cost-share activities will be documented and made available for audit as required by Talent Ready Utah.

Executed Collaboration Agreement

This letter serves as our formal commitment to the following:

- **Eligibility:** [Company Name] meets all eligibility requirements for the Utah Works Grant.
- **Skilled Labor Need:** Addressing the identified skilled labor need in [specific need] through targeted training programs developed and delivered by [Institution Name].
- Proposed timeline:
 - Program Development: [Start Date] to [End Date]
 - Training Commencement: [Start Date]
 - Employment Integration: [Start Date] to [End Date]
- **Implementation Agreement:** Both parties agree to implement the proposed timeline upon grant award.
- **Hiring Commitment:** [Company Name] commits to interviewing and hiring eligible program completers who meet the necessary qualifications.

Employer Cost Share

- **Total In-Kind Contribution:** [Specify a total value of in-kind contributions].
- **Additional Financial Commitment:** [Specify any additional financial contributions, if applicable].

Signatures

For [Institution Name]:

[Authorized Representative's Name]

[Title]

[Signature]

[Date]

For [Company Name]:

[Authorized Representative's Name]

[Title]

[Signature]

[Date]