

Talent Ready Connections Grant Request for Proposals

During the 2020 legislative session, the Utah State Legislature authorized an educational grant program through [HB 68](#) to help support the expansion of work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities throughout Utah. This fund aims to help create and develop programs that help students earn while they learn in-demand skills for high-wage careers.

Grant Objectives

- 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 that are responsive to the workforce needs of a high-demand industry or occupation.

Eligibility

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

Proposal Timeline

The proposal must be submitted online [here](#).

- Proposals are due by 5:00 pm on: February 19th, 2026
- Proposals for this initiative will be reviewed as long as funds are available.

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 final decision by the Talent Ready Board, notification of awards will be sent by e-mail message to the contact listed in the application

Submission Process

Each institution will upload its application documents via Google [form](#). An auto-response will automatically be generated via email confirming receipt of the proposal submission. The following documents are required for each application:

- Proposal Narrative (5 pages maximum)
- [Budget](#)
- Budget Narrative
- Per 2024 H.B. 335, if the applicant will receive any other state funding for the proposed project during the requested award period, please provide the funding source and the projected budget.
- Letter(s) of Support

See **Instructions for Proposal** on page 10 for more details.

Proposal Debriefing

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

The discussion will be limited to a critique of 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

This program aims to support the expansion of work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities throughout the state of Utah. The proposed length will vary depending on the program's needs, but it must be a minimum of one year.

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 will not be allowed. In addition to the budget, applicants are required to submit a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. Below is a brief description of the budget categories that would be considered for this initiative:

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 the 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 - Staff Domestic

- Staff Domestic Travel: Expenses for transportation, lodging, meals, and other travel-related costs for project personnel within the country.

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.
- Conferences & Meetings: Expenses related to organizing and attending project-related events, including venue rentals, materials, and travel costs.
- Employer Operational Expenses: General administrative expenses required to support project operations/participant success.

Tuition & Participation Support

- Stipends: Payments to students or participants involved in the project to support their engagement, persistence, and successful completion of program activities.
- Tuition Fees: Costs covered for educational purposes directly linked to the project, such as tuition for courses, certifications, or training programs required for participation.
- Student Program Fees (Pilot Eligible): Required institutional or course-based fees associated with participation in pilot or demonstration programs, including lab fees, materials fees, technology access fees, licensing or certification fees, or other mandatory charges necessary to remove financial barriers to student participation.

- Employer Participation Incentives: Modest financial or in-kind support provided to employer partners to offset costs associated with hosting or engaging students, such as supervision time, training, mentorship, equipment use, or work-based learning coordination. These funds are intended to reduce participation barriers and expand employer engagement in internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education, or other work-based learning activities.

All incentives must directly support program participation and workforce training outcomes and may not supplant regular wages or existing employer obligations.

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 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. The final invoice must be submitted by the quarter report submission deadline, following the MOU end date. Requests for reimbursement should be sent via email to TRUgrants@ushe.edu.

Reporting and Data Collection

The education 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 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.

Annually, the education institution will provide a narrative report summarizing the quarterly reports, achievement of set goals, program success and challenges, 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 utilizing a fair and objective process. An Evaluation Committee will review and score proposals using the scoring rubric below.

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 respective applicants who submitted proposals for additional information and/or revisions.

If you have any questions regarding the Talent Ready Connections grant initiative or the application process, please email TRUgrants@ushe.edu.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Instruction for Proposal

Formatting

The proposal narrative shall not exceed 5 pages in length. This includes a cover, table of contents, attached graphs, or research, if applicable. It does not include the budget worksheet or letter(s) of support. 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:

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 that this program will meet.
- Describe the high-demand industry or occupations that this proposal will be supporting:
 - Summarize labor market information, including growth projections and increased demand/need, to support this being a high-demand industry.
 - Must be 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.
- 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 you 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, that you will partner with to recruit and support participants. (Confirmed by Letters of Support)

Letter(s) of Support may include:

- How the partner intends 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, of participants that will complete each phase offered by the program, and who will be hired by a business participating in the program.
- Discuss how you 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 employer(s) partner will be obtained and utilized to improve the quality of the program.

Budget/Budget Narrative- 15 points

Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. In your budget narrative, describe how the Budget Information, and “Budget Category” totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe any proposed items of cost that require prior approval, including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value.

- 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.

Appendix

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