

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Labor & Industry

Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships
Notice of Grant Availability

Proposals Due: October 22, 2021 by 4:00 PM EST

Tom Wolf, Governor

www.pa.gov

Jennifer Berrier, Secretary

www.dli.pa.gov



Key Dates

August 23, 2021	Application Period Opens
September 1, at 11:00 AM EST	NGA Webinar for Interested Applicants: Industry Partnership NGA Bidders Webinar
October 22, 2021 at 4:00 PM EST	Applications Due – Applications must be submitted to RA-LI-PAWDB-IP@pa.gov resource account with the email subject: “Pennsylvania Industry Partnership Application”
December, 2021	Notifications to Applicants
January 1, 2022	Contract Start Date
June 30, 2023	Contract End Date
September 1, 2023	Final Program Report Due

Overview

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA) Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) announces the availability of up to \$4 million of funding for Pennsylvania Industry Partnership Grant awards of up to \$250,000 each. This Notice of Grant Availability (NGA) seeks applications to support Industry Partnership initiatives across PA that:

- Work to identify workforce, education & training, and economic development needs
- Coordinate regional teams to support industry needs
- Identify public and community resources to address industry identified needs
- Increase collaboration among businesses within a targeted industry sector

This NGA outlines strategic goals of this Pennsylvania Industry Partnership Grant opportunity, the criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals, and the grant timeline.

The Challenge

Pennsylvania is seeking industry partnerships that improve economic prosperity and prepare the Commonwealth’s workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The Industry Partnership program requires businesses within a targeted industry partnering to strengthen their industry through training initiatives, recruitment strategies, raising career awareness, and working together to address additional challenges identified by the businesses.

Grant Opportunity Goals

The goal is to increase regional collaboration to support business needs within an industry sector. Applicants must articulate a clear plan to evaluate the effectiveness of their proposed strategies to address business identified priorities.

Additionally, ensuring the participation of diverse businesses and reaching underrepresented populations in order to increase equity is a priority of this grant program. Applicants are reminded that equity is distinguished from equality; whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that not all start from the same place and steps must be taken to address existing imbalances.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include local workforce development boards, non-profit and non-governmental entities, community-based organizations, educational and post-secondary educational organizations, labor organizations, business associations, and economic development entities. The applicant(s) must be capable of bringing together relevant partners to achieve the overall project goals of this NGA. Additionally, the lead applicant must demonstrate the ability to coordinate the project design and implementation of the project, manage the project budget, and implement a strategy to collect, analyze, and report performance outcomes. For all lead applicants other than local workforce development boards, the lead applicant must demonstrate engagement with the local workforce development board.

All applicants and fiscal agents must be registered with the Commonwealth as a vendor. Applicants and fiscal agents that are not current vendors are strongly encouraged to begin this process immediately following the application submission by registering their organization with the Vendor Data Management Unit (VDMU) at <http://vendorregistration.state.pa.us> or by calling 717-346-2676 or 1-877-435-7363.

Fiscal Agent

Fiscal agents include eligible applicants, as detailed above. If organizations apply as a partnership, the application must appoint a single entity as the lead applicant who must also act as fiscal agent. The fiscal agent will receive, manage, and disburse grant funds.

Grant Funding Source

This NGA is funded by state dollars from Industry Partnership Funding. *Reminder – Pennsylvania law requires private sector matching funding or at least 25 percent of the grant*

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by an inter-agency team and evaluated based on the following criteria:

Statement of Need and Project Goal (10 points)

- Clearly define the industry sector targeted for the proposed grant activities, including the importance of the sector's role in the regional economy. The applicant must use relevant labor market and economic data to make this case. (5 points)
- Develop a problem statement and explain how the goals of this project will address the defined problem. (5 points)

Project Design and Management Plan (15 points)

- Describe the activities that will be used to support the identified industry sector, including how these will support the needs of the businesses operating in the sector, as well as how the activities proposed in this project will support workers. *If training is part of the project design, applicants must complete the training form included in the application package.* (7 points)
- Describe how this project aligns with the goals of the relevant local, regional, and state plans, including the priorities identified in the corresponding WIOA Plans (3 points). *State, Regional, and Local WIOA Plans can be found here:*
<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/WIOA.aspx>
- Provide a project timeline including implementation steps, deliverables, and how those deliverables address the desired outcomes of the project (5 points)

Data Collection and Performance Outcomes (15 points)

- Describe the output AND outcome metrics that will be used to measure performance of this project. Outcomes are the differences made as a result of the outputs. (10 points) *Please refer to Appendix B for PA WDB recommended potential metrics. Applicants are welcome to propose alternative metrics in their application.*
 - Outputs may include, but are not limited to, the number and types of activities that are part of the proposed project, the number of individuals served, or the number of events held. **Applicants must include specific goals for each output listed.**
 - Outcomes may include, but are not limited to, the benefits of the activities proposed in the project, the impact on the individuals receiving services, and the beneficial results of any events held. **Applicants must include specific goals for each outcome listed.** (note – outcomes should, whenever possible, be quantifiable and measurable in terms of their impact)
- Describe your capacity to track progress towards meeting the program outcomes and describe the processes and data sources that will be used to collect, track, and report the data. If the strategy to track and evaluate outcomes includes partnering with another organization, applicants must identify that partner and describe the relationship. (5 points)

Evidence Building and Project Effectiveness (10 points)

- Project Design and management plan is supported by relevant data. This includes a description of why the project strategy was identified based on successful models supported by data. (5 points)
- For existing partnerships only – Applicants must describe their partnership's current evidence capacity, including their current evidence category. Refer to Appendix A for the defined categories of evidence adopted by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board. Applicants must explain how they intend to strengthen their ability to utilize evidence for the purposes of evaluating program outcomes. (5 points)
- For new partnerships only – Applicants must describe which category of evidence most closely aligns with their proposed project. Refer to Appendix A for the defined categories of evidence adopted by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board. Applicants must explain how they intend to strengthen their ability to utilize evidence for the purposes of evaluating program outcomes. (5 points)

Equity Strategy (15 points)

- Project design includes a clear equity strategy to address the stated problem, explains how the equity strategy will address disparities and inequities, and reach target population(s). Target populations should include both businesses and workers in the targeted sector. (10 points)
 - Equity strategy uses data to identify and reach a target population(s) such that businesses and workers participating in the partnership reflect the demographics of the community's overall population (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, etc.).
 - Equity strategy describes how the approach will address disparities in outcomes for businesses and workers in the target population(s) and the structural inequities that cause disparities in outcomes.

- Partner organizations and project team reflects the demographics of the community's overall population (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, etc.). If the project team does not reflect the demographics of the community, the partner organizations and project team have a strategy to build relationships within the community to build a more inclusive project team in the future. (5 points)

Stakeholder Engagement (15 points)

- Identify key partners on project team and demonstrates an effort by the lead applicant to develop strong, high quality, inclusive, and diverse partnerships committed to working collaboratively to implement the project. (Note – applicants are strongly encouraged to have multiple partners supporting the program (e.g., education partners, workforce development partners, business partners, economic development partners, and community partners) that demonstrate their commitment through letters of support outlining how these organizations will support the goals of the proposed project. (5 points)
- Identifies the roles, responsibilities, contributions, and commitments of each partner. (5 points)
- Identifies the individuals responsible for grant administration and how those individuals will lead the project team to foster collaboration throughout project implementation. (5 points)

Leveraging Resources and Sustainability (10 points)

- Describe the matching funds that the applicant and/or program partners will provide for the project. (Reminder – Pennsylvania law requires private sector matching funding or at least 25 percent of the grant). (3 points)
- Describe how the project will:
 - o Leverage federal and non-commonwealth resources, including, but not limited to, WIOA, Adult Basic Education, SNAP, TANF, philanthropic resources, employer contributions, and other resources to reach the project goals;
 - o Leverage existing staff, facilities, equipment, and other in-kind resources to reach their project goals; and
 - o Supplement, not supplant, existing public and private resources (e.g., other federal or state grants and philanthropic contributions, cash, in-kind, etc.). Proposals should demonstrate efficient and effective use of resources. (4 points)
- Describe how the project partners will sustain the project beyond the grant period. (3 points)

Budget Form and Justification (10 points)

- Applicants must provide a complete budget broken out by line item. The budget must contain:
 - o A detailed budget justification which includes a detailed breakout of quantity, cost, and narrative to support each line item of the budget. (5 points)
 - o Explain how each budget line item supports the stated deliverables of the project. (3 points)
 - o Any staff time funded by the grant must include the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person's time devoted to the project, and the amount of each person's salary funded by the grant. (2 points)

Application Process and Submission Information

The Pennsylvania Industry Partnership NGA and related materials are available on L&I's grants website: <http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants>.

Application Submission Information

Applications must be complete, including all required documents outlined below, and submitted by October 22, 2021 at 4:00 PM EST. An electronic copy of the application and all required components **MUST** be emailed to the RA-LI-PAWDB-IP@pa.gov resource account with the email subject: "Pennsylvania Industry Partnership-Application."

All applications must include the completed application requirements below. The appendices and letters of support do not count toward page limit.

- Application Narrative (10 pages maximum)
- Application Form
- Budget Form
- Budget Narrative
- Partnership Form
- Training Plan (if applicable)
- Letters of Support – letters of support should speak to the support of the specific project, rather than general letters of support) and should represent:
 - Economic Development
 - Education
 - Workforce Development

All applications must be single spaced on 8.5" by 11" paper, with 1" margins using 11-point Calibri font. All application documents must be in Portable Document Format (PDF), with the exception of the "Budget Form," which must be provided in Excel format. Page numbers must be provided in the footer. Documents may not include internet addresses (URLS) that provide information necessary to review the application. Documents must not include any proprietary or sensitive business information as PA may make it available to the public.

Incomplete applications or applications that do not meet these specifications will not be evaluated or scored. If a project narrative is more than 10 pages, evaluators will only review the first 10 pages.

Completed Application

1. **Application Form** (saved as a single file titled "Application Form") The grant application form must be completed in full and submitted with the other required documents. The application form is included as part of the application package on the L&I grants page: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx>
2. **Project Narrative** (saved as a single file titled "Project Narrative" and 10 pages max) that includes detailed information in response to all the Evaluation Criteria prompts, including:
 - Statement of Need (10 points)
 - Project Design and Management Plan; (15 points)
 - Data Collection and Performance Outcomes; (15 points)
 - Evidence Building and Project Effectiveness; (10 points)
 - Equity Strategy; (15 points)

- Stakeholder Engagement; (15 points)
 - Leveraging Resources and Sustainability; and (10 points)
3. **Budget Form** (save as a single file titled “Budget Form”)

Applicants must submit a detailed budget that includes expenditures by line item. The budget will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria above, and in terms of cost reasonableness and the relationship to proposed activities. Budgets must be for the period covering the contract start date to June 30, 2023. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award, including making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. PA reserves the right to unilaterally modify application budgets, prior to, and/or after grant award. The Budget Form is included as part of the application package on the L&I grants page: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx>
 4. **Budget Narrative** (save as a single file titled “Budget Narrative”)

Applicants must justify each expenditure by line item, including the costs proposed in each cost category and any other information to support the budget.
 5. **Partnership Form** (save as a single file titled “Partnership Form”)

Applicants must identify the key partners on project team, including the organization’s name, point of contact, and the roles, responsibilities, contributions, and commitments (e.g. financial or other) of each project partner. The Partnership Form template is included as part of the application package on the L&I grants page: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx>
 6. **Training Plan** – if applicable (saved as a single file title “Training Plan”)

Applicants must identify the training name, number of participants, total cost of training, average cost per participant, SOC code, SOC title, and specific outcomes for each training that is planned. *Note: All individuals trained with funds from this grant must be entered into CWDS. Further details will be outlined in terms and conditions if an applicant is selected for award.* The Training Plan template is included as part of the application package on the L&I grants page: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx>
 7. **Letters of Support** (saved as a single file titled “Letters of Support”)

Each application must have no more than 5 letters of support specific to this grant application, how the proposal will help address the problem and goals of this NGA, and its impact on the target population(s) and community.

Grant Award Administration

Period of Performance

L&I anticipates a performance period beginning January 1, 2022 and ending on June 30, 2023.

Grant Agreements

Awardees are required to enter into a workforce grant agreement with L&I. Local workforce development board awardees will be funded under their LWDA grant agreement with dates of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. L&I reserves the right to seek repayment of funds if it is determined that funds were not utilized for the original stated and approved purpose.

L&I also reserves the right to award grants ensuring program diversity and alignment with other public funding and/or initiatives. L&I reserves the right to request additional information or modifications to applications for any reason deemed necessary. L&I shall notify all applicants whose applications are not accepted for funding under this NGA.

L&I may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including but not limited to: (1) the budget is not appropriate or reasonable; (2) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (3) L&I needs additional or clarifying information; (4) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by L&I within a specific period determined by PA may preclude award to the applicant.

L&I reserves the right, without qualification, to reject any or all applications received in response to this announcement and to select any application, in whole or in part, as a basis for negotiation and/or award. L&I reserves the right to award grants on a conditional basis if there are concerns surrounding one or more sections of the application(s). In the instance that a conditional award is made, the applicant is responsible to take immediate and appropriate action to remedy the area of concern in accordance with L&I guidance.

The L&I contracting officer is the only individual who can make awards or commit PA to the expenditure of public funds. A commitment by other than the contracting officer, either explicit or implied, is invalid.

L&I reserves the right to de-obligate funds for those projects that show minimal expenditure or obligation. Any funds not committed may be reallocated to other projects awarded under this NGA.

Grant costs will be paid by reimbursement only.

Reporting and Evaluation

Grantees will be required to submit program and fiscal progress reports during and upon conclusion of the funded project. All projects will be required to do a pre-evaluation and post-evaluation of the project. All required forms will be supplied by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board and will be outlined in the award package. All close-out final reports are to be submitted no later than September 1, 2023 or within 60 days of full award expenditure (whichever occurs first). In addition to report submissions, awardees are required to participate in routine calls with PA staff, unless otherwise determined, to identify grant progression, share best practices and receive technical support. These can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community of practice calls;
- Monthly check-in calls;
- Quarterly reports; and
- Annual reports

Additional information will be provided upon award selection.

Questions/Agency Contacts

Questions regarding the content of this NGA must be submitted in writing to RA-LI-PAWDB-IP@pa.gov

Appendix A: Approved PA Statewide Evidence Definitions:

A. **Strong evidence:** meaning at least two evaluation reports have demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested nationally, regionally, at the state- level, or with different populations or locations in the same local area using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a quasi- experimental design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. See [CLEAR.dol.gov](https://clear.dol.gov) for full definitions of strong or moderate study design. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluations should be conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

B. **Moderate evidence:** meaning at least one evaluation report has demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested using a well- designed and well- implemented experimental or quasi- experimental design showing evidence of effectiveness on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluations should be conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Preliminary evidence: meaning at least one evaluation report has demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested using a well- designed and well- implemented pre/post-assessment without a comparison group or a post- assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups showing evidence of effectiveness on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluation may be conducted either internally or externally.

Pre- preliminary evidence: meaning there is program performance data for the intervention showing improvements for one or more key workforce outputs or outcomes.

Appendix B: Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board recommended Industry Partnership metrics

	Indicators	Unit	Collection Method	Notes
I. Workforce Development	A. Increase in worker recruitment and retention	1. Reduction in worker turnover and time to hire	Partnership surveys	None
	B. Increase in workers attaining an industry- relevant credential as a result of participating in education and training and IP	2. Number and percentage of participants; Number of new or modified programs aligning curriculum	Immediate: Partnership surveys Long- term: Partnership surveys and Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) data	CWDS data entry is required within 30 days of finishing training if using state money, so surveys may provide additional data.
	C. Increase in total compensation as a result of participating in education and training and IP	3. Number and percentage of participants; Amount and percentage of wage increase	Immediate: Partnership surveys Long-term: Common measures reporting for WIOA programs through CWDS	Total compensation includes wages and benefits. Wage data lags, and compensation increases will not be seen in data until after the close of the fiscal year. Surveys can be used for initial collection. May confound with performance of overall economy.
II. Economic Development	A. Jobs created as a result of IP participation	1. Number of jobs created within an industry cluster by participating businesses	Immediate: Partnership surveys, Dept. of Community & Economic Development (DCED) data Long term: Wage record data matching (similar to wage gain)	Demonstrates increased economic growth and improved competitiveness. As with wage gains, it could take up to a year after the close of the fiscal year to obtain the actual data. May confound with factors other than IP. Distinguish actual job creation versus backfilling open jobs.
	B. Positions filled with qualified candidates	2. Number of new hires	Partnership surveys, New Hire data (limited)	Demonstrates increased ability to find qualified candidates by engaging with public partners. There are limitations on how many new hires get captured by the program due to the structure of how reporting occurs; however, this is probably an easier number to obtain and will show larger gains than “jobs created”.

	C. Jobs retained as a result of IP participation	3. Number of jobs retained within an industry cluster by participating businesses	Immediate: Partnership surveys, DCED data Long term: Wage record data matching (similar to wage gain)	Demonstrates increased economic growth and improved competitiveness. As with wage gains, it could take up to a year after the close of the fiscal year to obtain the actual data. May confound with factors other than IP.
	D. Economic Impact of jobs created and retained as a result of IP	4. “Labor Income”, “Value Added”, and “Output” of the total direct jobs created and retained	Partnership surveys, Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) data	Demonstrates economic impact of IP. Could model after Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) program.
III. Education	A. Increase industry and career awareness	1. Number of students introduced/engaged in career awareness activities	Partnership surveys	Demonstrates building a talent pipeline. Could track various populations separately (youth, adults, educators, parents, etc.).
IV. Partnership Engagement	A. Increase in funding sources to promote sustainability (cash; in-kind; federal, state, and local grants; etc.)	1. Dollar amount and type of invested resources	Partnership surveys	Demonstrates return on investment and commitment of partners. Funding sources may include: cash, in-kind (should identify type and value of in-kind resource), etc.
	B. Ensure executive/c-level/ decision maker engagement	2. Number of participating executive-level, c-level, and decision maker business partners	Partnership surveys	Demonstrates commitment of partners, and IPs are moving beyond HR and training.
	C. Increase in public and community partner interaction	3. Number of public and community partners actively participating in IP	Partnership surveys	Demonstrates increase in partner interaction and alignment. Partners include business champions, public, and community organizations.