	North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions
![NC Workforce Solutions logo]	**Policy Statement Number: PS 04-2017**
	Date: February 7, 2017
	Subject: **Maximize Carolina Sector Grants**
	From: *[signature]* **William H. Collins, Jr.** **Assistant Secretary for Workforce**
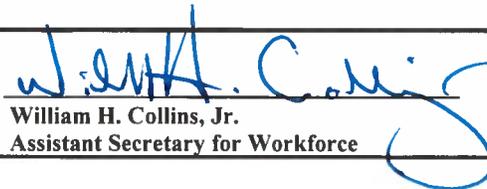
Purpose: The North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions announces the Maximize Carolina Grant for local Partnerships to develop and implement projects in targeted sectors designed to solve applicant pipeline problems related to skills gaps or workforce shortages. The grant is also intended to support or implement sector partnerships within regions and potentially be integrated with local career pathways.

Background: In some sectors, employers are struggling to find qualified workers because applicants may need technical or occupational skills. In other sectors, there is a lack of innovation and partnerships to create new jobs. When businesses experience lapses in their workforce pipeline or lack partnerships that help lead to job creation, their stability as viable businesses can be compromised. To address these issues, the Maximize Carolina Grant program was developed with input from an advisory team comprised of the Division of Workforce Solutions staff, Workforce Board Directors and Business Services Representatives from local Workforce Development Boards (WDB), representatives from the North Carolina Community College system, and individuals from the private business sector. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Reserve Funds is providing $1 million for the first year of the Maximize Carolina Grant.

Decision Makers: Each application must be from a collaborative Partnership that consists of at least two private for-profit businesses and the Local Workforce Development Board Partnerships may also include other public partners: educational institutions such as schools, community colleges, and universities, and intermediaries such as community based organizations and non-profit organizations

The Division of Workforce Solutions will serve as the grant administrator.

Action: The Maximize Carolina grant has two funding categories depending on the number of employers in the Partnership: Projects $50,000 - $75,000 and Projects up to $50,000 with awards from $32,500 to $63,750 depending on Budget Considerations as defined in this Policy Statement.

The Division of Workforce Solutions anticipates awarding 16 - 30 grants annually depending on availability of funding. Up to two grants may be approved for each Workforce Development Board each program year. The Division of Workforce Solutions reserves the right to amend these estimates based on availability of funds.

Each project must have a total financial goal that consists of the grant amount plus match funding (partnership financial responsibility). Funding match amounts depend on the county Tier levels of the business partners as defined in the "Budget Considerations" section of this Maximize Carolina policy statement.

See the Applications Instructions Section of this Policy Statement for information on completing and submitting an application.

Any questions must be submitted in writing to Marie Griffin, Sector Partnership Lead, at marie.griffin@nccommerce.com.

Effective Date: February 2017

Expiration: Indefinite

Contact: Marie Griffin | marie.griffin@nccommerce.com

North Carolina

Department of Commerce

Division of Workforce Solutions

Guidelines to Apply for Maximize Carolina Grants

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February 2017

INTRODUCTION

The Maximize Carolina Grant is intended for projects designed to solve local challenges related to applicant pipeline skills gaps or applicant pipeline sector workforce shortages in one of the following sectors:

- Information Technology
- Energy
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Environmental Sustainability
- Aerospace
- Defense
- Analytics
- Industrial Maintenance
- Healthcare
- Hospitality & Tourism

The grant is also intended to encourage sector partnerships within regions. Each partnership can apply for one grant per year. There are no lifetime limitations.

GRANT SCHEDULE

- Announcement of Grant Opportunity   January 2017
- Grant Open for Submission   February 2017
- Grant Awards Announced and Distributed   Ongoing

OVERVIEW: PROCESS FOR APPLICATION

- This grant has open application dates based on available funding.
- The partnership develops an innovative project to address a workforce challenge related to applicant pipeline skills gaps or applicant pipeline workforce shortages in one of the grant-targeted sectors.
  Definitions:
  Skills gaps - the difference in the skills required on the job and the actual skills possessed by potential employees.
  Sector workforce shortages - a shortage of potential employees for a particular sector.
- Partnership completes application.
- Local Workforce Development Board submits the application and cover sheet via email.
- Within two weeks of submission the Division of Workforce Solutions will notify the applicant of application status.

APPLICATION and SUBMISSION

Instructions:

This application has 4 sections which must be completed:

- Section I. Project Information
- Section II. Project and Scope Narrative
- Section III. Listing of Partners and Roles
- Section IV. Budget Narrative
    1) Financial Information
    2) Partnership Financial Responsibility
    3) Application Budget

The partnership identifies a workforce challenge related to applicant pipeline skills gaps or applicant pipeline sector workforce shortages in a grant-targeted sector and develops an innovative project to address these issues.

Please note: This is *not* a new version of the incumbent worker training grant program. For information about incumbent worker/layoff aversion, please contact your local Workforce Development Board.

Below are a few examples of possible project ideas. Note that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations apply to grants involving WIOA enrolled participants.

- A collaboration of several advanced manufacturing companies who are having difficulty filling entry-level positions develops a youth apprenticeship program and wants help to pay stipends to participants.

- A group of hospitals and health facilities needs to create a marketing website and materials to attract workers into allied health positions such as radiology, equipment maintenance, et cetera.

- A community needs to revitalize a blighted area in their downtown and requests to hire dislocated workers. The companies involved requests assistance in providing training to the workers.

- A collaboration of companies wants to start a boot camp to prepare workers for craft jobs in the energy field. Additional financial resources are needed for instructors and curriculum.

- A collaboration of information technology companies needs to attract more minorities and women and plans to start an academy hosted at a NCWorks Career Center.

Each project must have a total financial goal that consists of the grant amount plus match funding (partnership financial responsibility). Funding match amounts depend on the county Tier levels of the business partners as defined in the "Budget Considerations" section of this Maximize Carolina policy statement. Please see "Budget Considerations" and "Funding Examples" for information on funding match requirements.

This grant has open application dates. The local Workforce Development Board will email the completed Application and cover sheet as a Word document. Within two weeks of submission, the Division of Workforce Solutions will notify the applicant of the application status.

Any questions must be emailed to Marie Griffin at marie.griffin@nccommerce.com.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Each application will have a total financial goal for the project which consists of the grant amount plus match funding (partnership financial responsibility). Any expenditures from the grant amount should be allowable under WIOA, Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) uniform guidance, and state and local fiscal guidelines. If there is a question regarding a specific use of grant funds, please email marie.griffin@nccommerce.com.

The partnership is expected to contribute actual dollars for the matching portion of the project. Partnership financial responsibility may come from business partners, education partners, crowd funding, grants, federal funds, or other non-WIOA financial sources. In-kind donations do not count towards partner financial responsibility. Donation of a staff member's time would not be considered a financial contribution.

The maximum amount of the grant relates to the size of the overall project and the size of the employer led collaboration; outlined in the table below.

Number of Employers in the Partnership	Maximum Project Amount
2	$50,000
3 or more	$75,000

Funding match amounts depend on the county Tier levels of the business partners.

Funding level for Tier 3 Counties
The partnership is required to raise or contribute a minimum of 35% to the total cost of the project. Once total funds raised for the project equates to 35%, the Division of Workforce Solutions will fund the remaining balance through the Maximize Carolina Grant. The Division of Workforce Solutions will administer the grants through the local applying Workforce Development Board. Local Workforce Development Boards may use up to 10% of the total project amount to cover their administrative costs.

Funding level for Tier 1 and 2 Counties
The partnership is required to raise or contribute a minimum of 15% to the total cost of the project. Once total funds raised for the project equates to 15%, the Division of Workforce Solutions will fund the remaining balance through the Maximize Carolina Grant. The Division of Workforce Solutions will administer the grants through the local applying Workforce Development Board. Local Workforce Development Boards may use up to 10% of the total project amount to cover their administrative costs.

NOTE:
If a partnership includes business partners from more than one county tier, the Division of Workforce Solutions will provide the following project match amounts:
- Projects that include employers in Tier 1 and 2 counties will receive 85% match
- Projects that include employers in Tier 1 and 3 counties will receive 85% match
- Projects that include employers in Tier 2 and 3 counties will receive 85% match
- Projects that include employers in only Tier 3 counties will receive 65% match

Funding Examples

Example 1: 2 Companies	**Tier 3**	**Tiers 1 and 2**
Total project goal:	$50,000	$50,000
Partnership financial responsibility match:	$17,500	$7500

Below is an example of how the financial responsibility can be divided

Education Partner:	$3000	$1000
Industry Partner:	$12,000	$5000
Other Partners:	$2500	$1500

Grant:	$32,500	$42,500
10% Administrative funds for WDB:	$5000	$5000

Example 2: 3+ Companies	**Tier 3**	**Tiers 1 and 2**
Total project goal:	$75,000	$75,000
Partnership financial responsibility match:	$26,250	$11,250

Below is an example of how the financial responsibility can be divided

Education Partner:	$5000	$2250
Industry Partner:	$20,000	$8,000
Other Partners:	$1250	$1000

Grant:	$48,750	$63,750
10% Administrative funds for WDB:	$7500	$7500

Rescinded

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

A panel appointed by the Division of Workforce Solutions will review applications for consistency with the application instructions based on the following rubric or guidelines:

Does the project include required business partners for the level of funding requested?
- For projects up to $50K: At minimum 2 for profit businesses and the local Workforce Development Board
- For projects up to $75K: At minimum 3 for profit businesses and the local Workforce Development Board

Is the partnership business-led and does it show significant support from these businesses?

Does the application clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of each partner?

Does the project focus on workforce challenges for the talent pipeline in one of the following industry sectors aligned with the NC economy: information technology, energy, advanced manufacturing, environmental sustainability, aerospace, defense, analytics, industrial maintenance, healthcare, and tourism & hospitality?

Project Description
Is the project designed to address a local workforce challenge related to applicant pipelines or workforce sector shortages?

Is the challenge well defined and documented?

Strategies, Outcomes, and Benefits
Are strategies, expected outcomes, and benefits defined?

Will the project lead to the expected outcome?

Does the project describe the specific benefits that it plans to achieve?

Do the benefits clearly align with the challenge being addressed by the project?

Are clear, quantifiable, and objective evaluations and metrics included?

Is the project timeline clearly identified? Will the project be completed in 12 months?

Budget Considerations
Does the project budget include reasonable and customary expenses?

Are all expenses in line with the grant guidelines?

Does the match amount requested from the grant and the partner-provided amount add up to the project total?

Grants will be awarded based on alignment of the problem being solved with stated grant guidelines, and timing of the application as related to availability of funds. Applicants will be notified of the decision via electronic mail within 2 weeks of date application is received by Division of Workforce Solutions.

The partnership has six months from project approval to raise their financial responsibility amount. After funds are raised and verified, the Division of Workforce Solutions will award the grant funds to the local Workforce Development Board who will then manage the grant for the project.

OVERVIEW: FUNDING PROCESS

The partnership will notify their local Workforce Development Board when their financial responsibility amount has been raised. The local Workforce Development Board will notify the Division of Workforce Solutions. *(Note: if the partnership financial responsibility amount is not confirmed within 6 months of application approval, the partnership may reapply after waiting 3 months.)*

- Once the partnership financial responsibility amount is reached, the Division of Workforce Solutions will direct the funds to the local Workforce Development Board who will manage the grant for the partnership.
- Project begins!
- Projects must be completed, and monies spent, within one year from the award of funding.
- During the year, partnerships will have the opportunity to network with other grantees to learn from each other. Webinars or conference calls will be scheduled by the Division of Workforce Solutions.

Local Partnership Raises Match Funds after Approval

Local Workforce Development Board

Informs Match Funds Raised

Grant Funds Transfered

Division of Workforce Solutions

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GRANT REPORTING

Six months after the funds are awarded, the partnership will submit a short review of the progress of the program, including status of the project, metrics to date, benefits noted, and any successes realized by this point.

Projects must be completed within one year from the award of funding. Twelve months after the funds are awarded, the partnership will submit a short review of the progress of the program, including metrics, outcomes, benefits, and successes.

In order to capture quantitative and qualitative project results to date for inclusion in the annual report, partnerships will provide feedback through a survey that will be released each May.

Maximize Carolina Grant

Application Instructions

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February 2017

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application has 4 sections which must be completed:
- Section I.   Project Information
- Section II.   Project and Scope Narrative
- Section III. Listing of Partners and Roles
- Section IV. Budget Narrative
        1) Financial Information
        2) Partnership Financial Responsibility
        3) Application Budget

The local Workforce Development Board must submit the completed application as a Word document to Marie Griffin via email at marie.griffin@nccommerce.com. In addition to the application, a cover sheet is required - similar to the one on the last page of this section – which includes information about the project and the signature of the Workforce Development Board Director. Please include "Maximize Carolina Grant" and the project name in the subject of this email. Electronic mail of the application and cover sheet is required; applications sent via any other means will be deemed ineligible.

Upon receipt of the application, the Division of Workforce Solutions review team will respond within 2 weeks. Upon approval of the grant application, the partnership has six months to raise their match amount and will receive funds upon verification that the match amounts have been raised. Projects must be targeted for completion and funding must be expended within the 12 month period after being granted.

Grants will be awarded based on alignment of the challenge with stated grant guidelines, and timing of the application as related to availability of funds. Applications will be reviewed for consistency with the application instructions based on the following rubric or guidelines:

Does the project include required business partners for the level of funding requested?
- For projects up to $50K: At minimum 2 for profit businesses and the local Workforce Development Board
- For projects up to $75K: At minimum 3 for profit businesses and the local Workforce Development Board

Is the partnership business-led and does it show significant support from these businesses?

Does the application clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of each partner?

Does the project focus on workforce challenges for the talent pipeline in one of the following industry sectors aligned with the NC economy: information technology, energy, advanced manufacturing, environmental sustainability, aerospace, defense, analytics, industrial maintenance, healthcare, and tourism & hospitality?

Project Description
Is the project designed to address a local workforce challenge related to applicant pipelines or workforce sector shortages?

Is the challenge well defined and documented?

Strategies, Outcomes and Benefits

Are strategies, expected outcomes, and benefits defined?

Will the project lead to the expected outcome?

Does the project describe the specific benefits that it plans to achieve?

Do the benefits clearly align with the challenge being addressed by the project?

Are clear, quantifiable, and objective evaluations and metrics included?

Is the project timeline clearly identified? Will the project be completed in 12 months?

Budget Considerations

Does the project budget include reasonable and customary expenses?

Are all expenses in-line with the grant guidelines?

Does the amount requested from the grant and the partner-provided amount add up to the project total?

Section I. Project Information

1. *Project Name*
2. *Area Served (County/Cities/Region)*
3. *Workforce Development Board*
      Workforce Development Board Contact Information (Name/Title/Phone Number/Email)
4. *Number of employers in Partnership*
     Employers that are eligible are:
       - *A for-profit business with a facility in North Carolina*
       - *Employ 5 or more employees*
       - *In operation in North Carolina for a minimum of one year*
       - *Current on all federal and state obligations*
5. *Name and Tier designation/location of each employer*
6. *Funding Level Requested*
7. *Targeted Industry Sector*
8. *Targeted Population for Pipeline Development*

Section II. Project and Scope Narrative
(Maximum 3 pages)

The narrative will not exceed three (3) pages, use a 12 point font, and have 1'' margins and 1.5 line spacing.

The narrative should describe the challenge and demonstrate the need for the grant funds as it relates to workforce initiatives to solve local challenges related to applicant pipelines skills gaps or applicant pipeline sector workforce shortages. It must include how the project will be supported by the various partners. It should explain the project in detail including:

- Planning
- Timeline for project completion within the 12 month period
- Benchmarks
- Implementation parameters
- Intended outcomes and benefits
- Strategy to achieve outcomes
- Methods to measure project success - metrics
- If this solution has been successful in other areas of the country or state, please share this information.

Section III. Listing of Partners and Project Roles

Identify all partners and clearly describe their roles and responsibilities by completion of the table in the application similar to the one below. Information must include: name, title, employing agency, role the team member will play in the project, email address, and phone number..

Partners may come from numerous backgrounds including: workforce development, education/academic, community, and industry. At a minimum, Partnerships must include a local Workforce Development Board member and two industry partners/employers. Partnerships may also include educational institutions and intermediaries such as community based and non-profit organizations.

Although federal, local or state entities are ineligible to apply for grant funding, they may contribute to the project in an appropriate capacity in order to meet the overall goals of the project initiative.

Name	Work Title	Agency or Organization	Project Role & Responsibility	Email Address	Phone Number

Section IV. Budget Narrative

Three types of budget information must be included in the budget narrative:
1) The <u>Financial Information</u> including total project amount, grant amount requested, Partnership financial responsibility, and administrative fee
2) Source and amount of match funding (<u>partnership financial responsibility</u>)
3) <u>Application Budget</u> - listing of how monies will be spent

For financial information, the application has a funds table similar to the example below:

Financial Information (example of 2 business partners, tier 3)

Total Project Amount	$50,000
Grant Amount Requested	$32,500
Partnership Financial Responsibility (35% of total)	$17,500
Administrative Fee (10%)*	$ 5,000

*Up to 10% of the total project amount can be used for local Workforce Development Board Administration Fee.

For identifying the sources of match funding, the application has a table similar to the one below. In-kind contributions do not count towards partnership financial responsibility. Donation of a staff member's time is not considered a financial contribution.

Partnership Financial Responsibility

Total Match Funding Amount to be raised	AMOUNT
Business Partners (list each one)	
Education Partners (list each one)	
Grants (list each one)	
Other non-WIOA financial sources (list each one)	
Crowd Funding (list each one)	

A listing of how the funds will be used must also be included as part of the application. Any expenditures from Maximize Carolina grant funds provided should be allowable under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance, Policy Statement 19-2015 (state) and local fiscal guidelines. For projects that serve Registered Apprenticeships, federal and state guidelines must be followed – the state Apprenticeships Agency is NCWorks Apprenticeship.

The application includes a line-item budget, similar to the Sample Application Budget below, to identify how the proposed expenses support the overall goals and activities of the project. Provide as much detail as possible on each budget item.

Examples of funding uses that may be considered as part of a project include:

- Training for job seekers*
- Certifications (like Work Keys)
- Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Adult/youth work based learning
- Improving diversity and candidate pipeline
- Events and outreach

* Note: If training is a component of the project, the local Workforce Development Board and the partnership should discuss the trainee information required. Federal requirements mandate that funded partnerships provide, at a minimum, the following data for each training participant and must be entered in NCWorks Online:

- Social Security Number
- Complete Name and Contact Information
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Citizenship (Right-to-Work status)
- Selective Service Compliance
- Person with a Disability
- Ethnicity and Race

Note: For Registered Apprenticeship programs, each training participant must be in the Registered Apprenticeship database that include the following information:

- Social Security Number
- Complete Name and Contact Information
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Citizenship (Right-to-Work status)
- Education Status
- Person with a Disability
- Ethnicity and Race

Items that the funding *cannot* be used for include:
- Building costs
- Plant machinery
- Equipment (computers, et cetera)
- Partner staff salaries
- Workforce Development Board staff salaries
- Process improvement or quality related training for existing employees

Sample Application Budget

Category	Description	Proposed Grant Amount	Proposed Match Amount
Outreach			
Recruiting			
Training			
Software			
Events			
Other Expenses – please specify			
	Total		
	Total Project Amount (Grant + Match)		

Cover Sheet to be filled out, signed, scanned and submitted via email in addition to the completed application document.

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<u>**Example of**</u>
<u>**Maximize Carolina Grant Application Cover Page**</u>

Project Name:

Industry Sector Targeted:

Location of Project:

Number of Employer Partners:

County Tiers of Employer Partners:

Funding Level Requested:

Workforce Development Board:

Signature of Workforce Development Board Director:

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Ready to apply? *Click here for the application*.