

ATTACHMENT G: MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY CONSORTIUM RECOMMENDATIONS WORKFORCE READY GRANTS ROUND THREE: MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing Industry Consortium

Funding Workgroup Recommendations

March 20, 2024

The Funding Workgroup, a committee of the Manufacturing Industry Consortium, convened twice in February and once in March 2024 to develop recommendations for future rounds of Workforce Ready Grant funding. This document outlines the workgroup's process and recommendations.

Workgroup Scope

The Manufacturing Industry Consortium funding workgroup was charged with advancing recommendations for **\$12M** of the remaining ARPA funds. The recommendation parameters include:

- Number of RFAs and funding amounts for each
- Focus of the RFAs (e.g., occupation specific/skill specific)
- Additional criteria that should be included in the RFA

Foundational Principles

Future Ready Oregon (SB 1545, 2022) requires:

- Funding must advance opportunities for historically underserved priority populations as defined by SB 1545 (2022).
- Funding must be awarded to community-based organizations or workforce service providers.
- Funding should intentionally engage employers, communities from priority populations, and other education and workforce development partners.
- Funding may provide for paid work experience, tuition and fee assistance, wraparound services and supports, culturally and linguistically specific career pathways, and organizational capacity.

Guiding Principles

The Funding Workgroup considered the following principles which guided the identification of priorities and the development of additional criteria:

1. Focus on transferrable and high-demand manufacturing skills that benefit all types of manufacturing.
2. Include training on essential employability skills.
3. Create pathways for priority populations to access education and training programs and lead to upward economic mobility.
4. Include outreach to K-12 as a component.
5. Support small and medium manufacturers and/or manufacturers in rural locations engaging in regionally relevant training and upskilling opportunities.
6. Consider upskilling as a key strategy for retention of priority populations in the workforce.
7. Consider the cost-benefit of scaling existing programs versus investing in new programs for this final ARPA investment.
8. Consider projects that address documented regional workforce demand and strong partnerships with industry. Strong partnerships with industry may include commitments between industry and grant proposers.
9. Project should demonstrate a plan for project sustainability. Sustainability can be addressed by factors such as replicability, sharing best practices with others, a plan for maintaining project longer-term, or other means.

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Recommendations

The Manufacturing Industry Consortium Funding Workgroup recommends the HECC run one RFA for **\$12M** with two focus areas.

Intentional Outreach, Career Awareness and Exploration that Prioritizes Equitable Participation by Individuals from Priority Populations. Projects that prioritize:

- a. Multigenerational outreach to priority populations including K-12 students.
- b. Awareness-building of how to access both career awareness tools and activities, wrap-around supports, upskilling opportunities, and any additional resources to support prospective and incumbent employees.
- c. Helping individuals from priority populations see the training pathways that lead to a continuum of career opportunities in manufacturing. This might include career ladder or career pathway development that is responsive to regionally identified workforce needs.
- d. Culturally specific and responsive outreach and exploration activities in more than one language.

Earn and Learn Opportunities* for Priority Populations. Projects that prioritize:

**Earn-and-learn opportunities are those that provide compensation for priority populations to participate in training opportunities that lead to employment, such as stipends, on-the-job training, paid internships, scholarships, tuition reimbursement, etc.*

- a. Integration of both manufacturing industry-recognized credentials and skills, and essential employability skills.
- b. Inclusion of wrap-around supports which could include but not be limited to: transportation support; childcare, housing, and food.
- c. Support for employers' capacity to provide earn and learn opportunities to both incumbent and prospective employees.
- d. Small and medium manufacturers and/or manufacturers in rural locations engaging in regionally relevant training and upskilling opportunities.
- e. Incentives for industry participation and engagement in the delivery of education and training programs.
- f. Seamless career-connected learning opportunities for students transitioning from high school to career or postsecondary education and training.

Both: Projects that include outreach, career awareness and exploration and earn and learn opportunities for priority populations.

Additional Criteria include:

- HECC should prioritize proposals that address documented regional workforce demand and strong partnerships with industry. Strong partnerships with industry may include commitments between industry and grant proposers. HECC should provide examples in the RFA about how to do this.
- HECC should prioritize proposals that have demonstrated a plan for project sustainability. Sustainability can be addressed by factors such as replicability, sharing best practices with others, a plan for maintaining project longer-term, or other means. HECC should provide examples in the RFA about how to do this.
- HECC should prioritize proposals that demonstrate partnerships with employers and community-based organizations with knowledge of and programs geared towards meeting workforce needs, intentionally engaging communities from priority populations, and other education and workforce development partners with a commitment to increasing diversity and retention of priority populations.
- HECC should prioritize awards to maximize the impact.

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