

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

Technology Industry Consortium Funding Workgroup Recommendations

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

Workgroup Scope

The Technology Industry Consortium funding workgroup was charged with advancing recommendations for **\$10M** of the remaining ARPA funds designated for technology focused grant funding. The recommendation parameters included:

- Number of RFAs and funding amounts for each
- Focus of the RFAs (e.g., occupation specific/skill specific)
- Information that should be included in the applications (i.e., additional criteria like partnerships, etc.)

Guiding Principles

- Funding should focus on broad transferrable technology skills that benefit all sectors, including those identified in Future Ready Oregon (SB 1545, 2022). These skills include:
 - o Ability to integrate different operating systems (DevOps)
 - o Cybersecurity, threat hunting, incidence response
 - o Data analytics, back-end data
 - o Engineering (hardware & software)
 - o IT, enterprise application deployment
 - o High level of CRM understanding and other function/role-specific tech platforms
 - o Instructional designers
 - o Systems engineering
 - o UX design & research
- Funding should prioritize projects that create new pathways and build awareness for priority populations¹ to access transferrable technology skills, education and training that lead to good paying jobs and meaningful careers.
- Funding should consider upskilling as a key strategy for incumbent workers, including strategies such as Credit for Prior Learning.
- When evaluating applications for funding, the HECC should consider the costs and benefits of scaling existing programs vs. investing in new programs for this final ARPA investment. Funding should not prioritize existing programs and should consider opportunities to build new pathways and explore new program approaches.
- Funding should consider leveraging other funding and applications should demonstrate the sustainability of the program investment.
- Funding should consider unique regional workforce needs and demonstrate how the project addresses industry need or recognized credentials.

¹ Priority populations called out in Senate Bill 1545 include communities of color, women, low-income communities, rural and frontier communities, veterans, persons with disabilities, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, members of Oregon's nine federally recognized Indian Tribes, individuals who disproportionately experience discrimination in employment based on age, and individuals who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Recommendations

The Technology Industry Consortium Funding Workgroup recommends the HECC run one RFA for \$10M with two distinct tracks. These tracks include:

- **Career Advancement** – *Upskilling and reskilling incumbent workers in transferrable technology skills (strategies might include Credit for Prior Learning)*
- **Recruitment** – *Expanding education and training programs for transferrable technology skills (including building awareness and providing for career exploration)*
- **Both** – *Applications that include Recruitment and Career Advancement*

These broad transferable technology skills include²:

- Ability to integrate different operating systems (DevOps)
- Cybersecurity, threat hunting, incidence response
- Data analytics, back-end data
- Engineering (hardware & software)
- IT, enterprise application deployment
- High level of CRM understanding and other function/role-specific tech platforms
- Instructional designers
- Systems engineering
- UX design & research

Additional Criteria Include:

- HECC should not limit the RFA to a particular industry sector (or sectors) or pure tech employment, while also not penalizing applications that are specific to a particular industry sector's high-tech workforce needs (e.g., healthcare).
- HECC should prioritize proposals that are creating new pathways, including career exploration and awareness for priority populations to access technology skills, education, and training.
- HECC should prioritize proposals that demonstrate partnerships with employers that show how the education and training program responds to an industry need or recognized credential. HECC should provide examples in the RFA about how to do this.
- HECC should prioritize proposals that have clearly articulated a sustainability plan. HECC should provide examples in the RFA about how to do this.
- HECC should prioritize proposals that provide culturally specific and responsive education and training programs, including wrap around supports for priority populations.

² These skills were identified in employment data, as well as membership surveys conducted by the Technology Industry Consortium and its members. The Technology Industry Consortium and the Technology Funding Workgroup identified these broad transferable technology skills as addressing current workforce shortages and high demand occupations.