

Upskilling, Reskilling, and Next-skilling Workers Grant Request for Applications KADA 2022000018

Grant Opportunity Details

Total funding for this grant opportunity is \$2,250,000. Multiple grants will be awarded with a minimum grant award of \$100,000 per application. Award maximums are expected to be no higher than \$500,000.

Funding shall begin upon issuance of a Purchase Order and will conclude 24 months from the start of activities.. A final report shall be submitted no later than December 1st, 2023.

Objectives

House Bill 21-1264 created the stimulus investments in reskilling, upskilling, and next-skilling workers program as an initiative of the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to facilitate training for unemployed and underemployed workers in the state during times of substantial unemployment. This Bill appropriated funds and directed the CWDC to use these funds to support individuals in need of:

- Reskilling, which supports unemployed and underemployed workers to change industries in order to return to work or obtain more appropriate work based on their skills;
- Upskilling, which assists workers in increasing skill levels to retain or advance in their employment; or
- Next-skilling, which supports workers in developing future-ready skills necessary for employment in the twenty-first century.

The CWDC has been directed to distribute \$3,000,000 made available by HB21-1264 through a competitive application process to support eligible applicants who work in partnership with local workforce boards. These funds are intended to support up to 1,200 individuals to earn an industry recognized credential during the grant period.

Eligibility

The following entities that have a partnership with local workforce centers are eligible to apply for these grant funds:

- Community-Based Nonprofit Organizations
- Sector Partnerships
- Local Governments
- Institutions of Higher Education

To be eligible for funding an entity listed above must submit an application that at minimum:
Identifies a specific target population who will be served
Conveys a track record of partnership with a local workforce board
Shows the connection between the training that will be supported, the industry recognized credentials that will be earned, and the connection of each to top jobs in Colorado.

The recipients of funding are responsible for recruiting, enrolling, and working with individuals who qualify for support and administering available funds to or on behalf of qualified individuals.

Funding Sources

- The funding source is the State of Colorado House Bill 21-1264. The grant will be awarded through the State of Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Procurement process. Grants will be issued as a Purchase Order (POGG1) or contract (CTGG1).
- Expenditure Deadlines:
 - Funds must be fully spent by 10/31/2023.

Period of Performance

Funding shall begin upon issuance of a PO/Contract and will conclude on October 31, 2023.

Allowable Costs/Funding Provisions

These funds shall be used to support individuals in need of reskilling, upskilling, or next-skilling, including providing assistance to allow individuals to access and participate in short-term training to obtain an industry-recognized credential. While funding may be used for the activities outlined below, the primary objective of the funds is for individuals to obtain industry recognized credentials, and all grant recipients must demonstrate how the activities support that objective.

Allowable usage of these funds includes:

- Career counseling
- Career and academic exploration and planning
- Tuition
- Employer-provided training
- Needs-based services
- Transportation
- Equipment
- Retention services
- Program implementation and administration, including reporting activities

CWDC grant funding cannot be used for:

- Food and beverages
- Gifts
- Branding and marketing projects, including website development
- Politically related activities
- Entertainment
- Fines and penalties
- Donations
- Fundraising activities
- Individual memberships and subscriptions
- Any activities related to the marijuana industry

Reporting

Quarterly reports must be submitted through the [CWDC Grant Portal](#) which demonstrate measurable outcomes achieved, including the number of participants served, the number of individuals who have started training programs, the number of people who completed training programs, the number and type of credentials earned, year-to-date expenditure of funds, and to demonstrate the success of the grant.

- October 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021 - Report due January 15, 2022
- January 1, 2022 - March 31, 2022 - Report due April 15, 2022
- April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022 - Report Due July 15, 2022
- July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022 - Report Due October 15, 2022
- October 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022 - Report due January 15, 2023
- January 1, 2023 - March 31, 2023 - Report due April 15, 2023
- April 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023 - Report Due July 15, 2023
- July 1, 2023 - September 30, 2023 - Report Due October 15, 2023
- Final Report due **December 1, 2023**.

Invoicing

Funds will be distributed in two payments. Grantees must submit an invoice for payment upon receipt of the award Purchase Order/Contract for one half of the awarded amount. A second invoice must be submitted 6 months from award for the remaining award amount.

Requirements

Grant recipients must:

1. Recruit, screen, and enroll individuals into reskilling, upskilling, or next skilling programs that lead to an industry recognized credential
2. Track information regarding participants for use in reporting
3. Agree to participate in evaluation activities funded by the Colorado Workforce Development Council or Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
4. Work in partnership with a local workforce board to meet the needs of participants relevant to the program
5. Submit timely reports as outlined above

Grant Application Timeline/Process

- Grant posted to VSS, Bidnetdirect.com and CWDC website (www.cwdccommunitysupport.com) - July 29, 2021
- [Voluntary Q&A webinar](#), August 11, 2021 1:30pm - 2:30pm
- Question and Answer closed for new submissions August 13, 2021
- Q&A responses posted on VSS/BidNet/CWDC August 17, 2021
- Application deadline, Applications are due by 11:30pm September 3, 2021 via CWDC Community Support Portal
- Notification of award - September 15, 2021
- Grant Period of Performance shall be 24 months from date of PO/Contract issuance.

Application Submission

Application submission instructions:

1. Carefully review grant guidelines
2. If you would like to apply, complete an application by creating or logging into your account at: <http://cwdccommunitysupport.com/>
3. Go to the Technical Assistance tab or click **Apply** on the Home page
4. Select the **Upskilling, Reskilling and Next-Skilling Grant Opportunity** from the **Details** column
5. Click **Apply for this opportunity** and review the grant guidelines
6. Then click **Apply Now**

Question & Answer Webinar

A voluntary webinar will be held on **August 11, 2021** via ZoomWebinar to allow prospective applicants the opportunity to ask questions to clarify requirements for this grant. Questions answered during this conference will be published on VSS. Attendance is optional and not mandatory. To register for this conference please click on [this link](#).

Prospective applicants may also submit written questions concerning this Grant Application to obtain clarification of requirements. No questions will be accepted after the date and time indicated on the Grant Timeline of **August 13, 2021**.

Questions shall be submitted via email to: cdle_purchasing@state.co.us (note the underscore). Email must be clearly marked with **RFA KADA 2022000018**, and Upskilling, Nextskilling and Re-skilling Workers Grant

Responses to applicant's written questions will be published as a modification on VSS and in the Salesforce Grant Database on **August 17, 2021**

Evaluation Process & Team

All applications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee that includes an evaluator from the CWDC staff. The review committee will ensure that the requirements outlined in this notice are met. The technical aspects of applications will be assessed based on the soundness of the applicant's approach and the applicant's understanding of the requirement.

The CWDC has carefully designed the scoring and selection processes to ensure fair selection of the best qualified applicants. The selection process is described below. The criteria for scoring are in direct correlation to the required application components. Evaluation of applications will be based on an objective review by Evaluation Committee members (including any clarifications and any other sources of information deemed

appropriate by the Evaluation Committee) as measured against the following factors.

Organizational Capacity
Target Population and geography served
Industries Served
Understanding of program objectives
Level of evidence of the approach
Implementation Plan
Budget and budget narrative

- A schedule of activities and deliverables has been designed with realistic timelines and relevant activities to facilitate training for individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including unemployed and underemployed workers.
- Activities funded by the grant align with priorities outlined in this RFP and demonstrate an impact on reskilling, upskilling, and next-skilling.
- The extent to which the grant proposal includes a detailed plan that outlines:
 - Ability to reach the target population(s) with services
 - Demonstration of need of that population for support at this time
 - Targeted industries to support and focus areas of training
 - Number of people expected to be trained
 - Demonstrated success in serving the identified population through training programs
 - Track record of partnership with a local workforce board
 - Length of training that will be supported
 - Connections of training to top jobs and industry recognized credentials
- The budget and budget narrative for the project is reasonable.
- Level of evidence that exists supporting the program model of the applicant, as based on the evidence continuum below.

Evidence Continuum

1. **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.

2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **Pre-preliminary evidence:** meaning there is program performance data for the intervention showing improvements for one or more key workforce outputs or outcomes.

Required Information

The following information is required to complete the online grant application:

- Grant amount requested
- Grant Budget Template
- The primary contact/submitter for this application
 - Organization Name, Title, Contact information (address, phone, email address)
- Fiscal agent information
 - name, title, Organization, address, email address and phone.

Grant Proposal - *FOR REFERENCE ONLY* - Applicants to complete grant application in the Community Support Portal

Application Questions

- What geographic area will be served with the requested funding?
- Please describe the specific population(s) will you serve with these funds?
- Describe why the population needs dedicated support for economic recovery?

- Describe your level of experience serving this population and explain what has made your organization successful.
- Please list the industries for which people will be trained?
- What credentials do you anticipate participants will obtain through your program?
- How many people do you anticipate will earn a credential in the first year? How many in the second year?
- Describe the relationships and connections that exist between your organization and the industries you are planning to support?
- Describe your experience and success rate in placing people into employment in the targeted industries.
- How long will training programs take to complete that your participants will engage in?
- Describe why these industries were selected for your focus areas, and share the data that connects the certifications to in-demand industries and career pathways.
- What level of the evidence continuum best describes your program?
- What steps would you anticipate taking during the grant period to increase the level of evidence of your programming?

Grant Budget and Narrative - *to be uploaded as an attachment to Grants Portal*

Complete the Grant Budget Template provided with the online application. The Grant Budget Template requires a brief budget narrative to describe how you will use the funds if awarded to reach grant outcomes. Be sure to include detail around personnel, including the number of FTEs and the purpose of the roles. If any expenses are listed under 'other' please provide details in the narrative. Please review the allowable costs section.

Implementation Plan- *to be uploaded as an attachment in Grants Portal*

Statement of Work - Schedule of Activities and Deliverables - Identify major activities and deliverables for the grant. As a condition of receiving funds, grantees must identify key activities required to achieve success for your proposed project. A downloadable document will be provided. You may add as many rows as are needed to describe your work.

Task	Key Activities	Outcome	Notes

Location of Work

Provide the address where work will be completed. If work will be completed in multiple locations please provide all addresses.

Other Required Information – *To be uploaded as attachments in Grants Portal*

The following forms must also be completed and submitted with your online application in Salesforce:

- Signature Page –Attachment A
- Fiscal Agent signature page (if different from the applicant) –Attachment B
- Risk Assessment – Attachment C
- Subrecipient Certification – Attachment D

Definitions

- **Colorado VSS:** Colorado Vendor Self-Service is a website where companies and individuals are able to register and maintain vendor account information. Solicitations for goods and services, as well as construction notices for State Agencies and State Institutions of Higher Education are published on the website.
- **Fiscal Agent** - This is the organization that may receive the funds from an awarded grant. It may be the grant applicant or some other agent, but must have a relationship in the partnership. A fiscal agent takes responsibility for financial or other types of transactions for the grant applicant. The fiscal agent must be clearly defined in the aspects of the grant application.
- **Grant Applicant** - Organization applying to carry out all the programmatic and strategic requirements of this grant. This organization identifies the fiscal agent, grant administrator and any public and/or industry partners and subcontractors. This organization may also be the fiscal agent and the grant administrator.
- **Grant Administrator** - This person (a single point of contact) handles day-to-day operations, logistics and administration of the grant. They support grant applicant helping to achieve the programmatic and strategic requirements of the grant. They may also manage sub-grantees. This could be a person in the grant applicant's organization.
- **RFA:** This solicitation is a Request for Applications; however, for purposes of publishing on the State of Colorado solicitation notification website the term RFP (see next definition) is used.
- **RFP:** A Request for Proposals is the avenue of publishing this solicitation on Colorado VSS.

Other Applicable Documents

Exhibits listed below apply to this solicitation.

Exhibit A – OMB Circular – Federal Grant Terms and Conditions

Exhibit B – State Purchase Terms and Conditions are applicable to this Grant

Exhibit C - Sample State Grant Contract (required for awards exceeding \$150,000)

Procurement Administration

The State of Colorado, Department of Labor and Employment seeks Request for Applications (RFA) in accordance with the specifications delineated in this RFA.

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB) OMB Uniform Guidance (Title 2 of CRS, subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200 (Exhibit A) applies to this solicitation and any awards.

SOLICITATION DISCREPANCIES. Should the applicant find any part of the solicitation to be discrepant, incomplete or otherwise questionable in any respect, applicant shall be responsible to call such matters to the attention of the purchasing agent immediately. Failure to do so shall be at the applicant's risk. Amendments and modifications to this solicitation will be official only if published on Colorado VSS. Applicants shall not rely on verbal statements that alter this solicitation.

CANCELLATION. CDLE reserves the right to cancel this solicitation at any time without penalty.

PRICING.

- All pricing shall be FOB destination. Applicants shall specify any minimums, special charges, restrictions or conditions. The failure of an applicant to note any special conditions or exceptions shall be deemed a waiver of any such conditions.
- In case of an applicant's error in pricing extension, unit price shall prevail.
- Except as otherwise disclosed in applicants submission of a quote, applicant certifies that the prices have been arrived at independently without any consultation, communication, agreement with, or knowledge of the contents of the quote by any other competing applicant. For purposes of this paragraph, "consultation, communication, agreement with, or knowledge" does not include knowledge of prices gained through availability of established price lists or catalogues made available to the public by the competing applicant. No attempt has been made or will be made by the applicant to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a DQ response for the purpose of restricting competition.

EVALUATION AND AWARD. Evaluation and award will be based on applicant meeting all the criteria for this grant. CDLE reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to waive informalities and minor irregularities (as determined by CDLE) in responses received, and to accept all or any portion of the response if deemed in the best interests of CDLE. Multiple awards may be made.

RECIPROCAL PREFERENCE. Per Colorado Revised Statutes, Section 24-103-906, a resident applicant shall be allowed a preference against a non-resident applicant equal to the preference given or required by the state in which the non-resident applicant is a resident.

APPLICANT AGREEMENTS. The terms and conditions of CDLE's purchase order, Exhibit B or resulting contract and all Colorado VSS solicitation terms and conditions apply to this procurement. Applicants may submit, with their bid, alternate or additional terms and conditions for consideration; however, CDLE is not required to accept and agree to applicant's alternate or additional terms and conditions.

TERM OF AWARD. The period of Award made as a result of this solicitation is upon execution of a CDLE Purchase Order or Agreement through December 1, 2023.

REMEDIES.

1. Grants. If an applicant disagrees with the determination of whether that applicant should have received a Grant or with a determination of its compliance with the requirements of a Grant, the applicant will have the following remedies in relation to that Grant:
 - a. Federal Program Remedies. If a federal program under which funding is provided for the Grant provides for an appeal process, then the State Agency administering the Grant shall follow the appeal process provided for by the federal program.
 - b. State Award Remedies. If there is no federal appeal process available as described in the prior section, then Applicants who believe that they should have been awarded a Grant when they were not or who believe that they were otherwise not properly awarded a Grant may submit their appeal to the CDLE's Procurement Official, who shall review the appeal and make a final determination, unless the authority for making this determination is otherwise specified by law. The sole remedy for Applicants shall be potential funding depending on availability of funding.

c. Grant Agreement Disputes. If the applicant has a dispute related to a Purchase Order or Agreement to which they are a party, then the dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the terms of the Purchase Order or Agreement. If the Purchase Order or Agreement does not include a dispute resolution process, the program staff at a CDLE shall attempt to resolve the dispute with the applicant. If the program staff and the applicant are unable to resolve the dispute, the applicant shall appeal to the CDLE's Procurement Official, who shall make a final determination to resolve the dispute.

2. Contracts. Any protest, appeal, or dispute related to a Contract shall be resolved in accordance with the Procurement Code.

PAST PERFORMANCE. Each applicant's past performance can be reviewed as part of the State's overall evaluation. This evaluation will take into account past performance information submitted as a part of such applicant's response including but not limited to, information regarding predecessor companies, key personnel who have relevant experience, and subcontractors performing major or critical aspects of the service(s), if such information is relevant. Applicant's without a record of relevant past performance or for whom information on past performance is not available will receive a neutral past performance rating.

SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES. 24-103-905 C.R.S. allows for a preference to Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB). To qualify for this preference, a SDVOSB shall submit documentation of SDVOSB certification issued through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs with their bid.

MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS AND SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES. CDLE is dedicated to creating, operating, and maintaining a procurement and contracting system that provides all Colorado individuals and businesses, including minority and/or women-owned enterprises (M/WBE), and small business enterprises with an equal and fair opportunity to compete for CDLE business. applicants shall take all necessary affirmative steps, as required by 45 CFR 93.36(3), Colorado Executive Orders, and Procurement Rules

to ensure that small, minority and women's business enterprises are utilized, when feasible, as sources of supplies, equipment, construction, and services purchased under awarded contract.

NONDISCRIMINATION. Applicant (grantee) shall comply with all applicable federal, state, local laws, ordinances, executive orders, and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, and sex, including but not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (P.L. 88-352), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Unless required by federal law or regulation, employers may not automatically bar applicants or employees with an arrest or conviction record from employment.

SECTION 508 COMPLIANCE. All electronic and information technology deliverables under this solicitation shall comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794 (d); 36 CFR Part 1194) and the Access Board Standards. Section 508 requires that accessibility for people with disabilities is incorporated into all electronic and information technology developed, procured and maintained under the resulting solicitation award.