

Phase II Applications FAQ

Overall Impressions

We wanted to share some overall TA to guide your plan development from the discussions at the Information Sessions and Technical Assistance Workshops.

- Identify the specific foundational skills targeted for contextualization and/or integration.
- Be sure to contextualize to work - either general career awareness or specific occupation - going beyond contextualizing to life.
- Identify the specific occupational skills and competencies to be taught - so program can appropriately contextualize foundational skills.
- Connect with occupational training partners ASAP and ensure they understand model and are a good fit.

Questions and Answers

Length of funding.

Plan for one year of program delivery plus a short planning phase if needed.

Is \$50,000 the cap for mini-grants?

Yes.

Should applicants budget for an evaluation?

We're working right now on whether there will be a formal evaluation of the set of grantees. You can assume the need for data collection that includes the elements listed in the RFP. Individual grantees are not expected to budget for their own evaluation.

What documentation of a partnership is expected?

Two things. First, in your narrative, describe clearly the roles various partners will be playing and how the partnership will be managed. Second, include as an attachment a document that indicates the commitment of named partners to the project (could be a letter or an MOU).

Can we get help with outreach and recruitment if we need it?

Yes.

Will enrollees in our program have to enroll at the DESC one-stops to start?

Not necessarily; depends on your program design.

What do we mean by "system gaps"?

You can find some information about this from the CSW [labor market](#) and [foundational skills](#) studies that can be found at their website. You can also assume that by focusing on implementing/strengthening your use of the four foundational skills models you are filling gaps in the system.

The definition of "foundational skills" being used is broad, including educational proficiency, digital literacy, work readiness, and career planning. Does our program design need to encompass all of those elements?

That's preferable; research shows all are key components of successful programs. Applicants should ensure their program design includes educational proficiency – reading, writing, numeracy. Advancement in those skills is central to this strategy. Applicants should have a plan for assessing where participants start academically and set goals for academic achievement during the course of the program. For example, in some construction programs, the goal is to achieve a Level 4 on the WorkKeys test to facilitate entry into an apprenticeship program.

Can you share examples of what an “industry-recognized” credential is?

In order to ensure an educated and skilled workforce for their companies, many industries have successfully developed and implemented industry-recognized credentials to connect individuals to the skills they need to enter into and advance in jobs. In order to better understand this landscape and develop initiatives to address the skills gap, Business Roundtable gathered information from major industry associations about both the current and potential use of nationally portable, standards-based, industry-recognized skills credentials.

The resulting [inventory](#) catalogs a number of skills certifications tied to competency models that national industry associations are issuing to help businesses identify workers who possess the skills and competencies necessary to perform in high-growth occupations. The type, scope, use and delivery of these credentials are as diverse as the industries that employ them. The commonalities that exist within the wide range of industry credentials include national portability, a foundation in industry-developed standards and recognition by industry – attributes that contribute to their labor market and consumer value. *[Source: Business Roundtable]*

Are you looking for specific occupational competencies/competency levels?

No, these will depend on your targeted occupations and populations. However, you should ensure that you understand both of these well on order to design a strong program. Your program design should be clear about how you will assess participant foundational skills at entry and as they progress.

For bridge programs, do we need to ensure a fully designed career pathway to which the bridge connects?

No. Bridge program design should show that you deeply understand the immediate next step beyond the bridge so you can optimally contextualize the bridge program. If you understand multi-step career pathways within the relevant industry on which you're focusing, describing how the bridge program relates to higher level career options is also useful. The U.S. Department of Labor has collaborated with a number of national industry groups to map skill levels and progressions for jobs in those industries; their [tools](#) can be a good starting point.

How do you define online learning? Does it include live distance learning, i.e., instructor projecting over video to different locations?

We have a broad, inclusive definition of online learning, and it would include live distance learning, as well as using websites and other digital assets in the classroom, designing deliberately blended programs that combine online and classroom instruction, and implementing full online HSD/HSE programs. We are aiming to foster creativity and innovation within these models to find new and more effective ways of educating and credentialing lower-skilled Detroiters.

Will you provide us feedback on reviewer scoring after the selections are made?

Yes.