



TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND COVID-19

SPECIAL INITIATIVE

The Skills Development Fund COVID-19 Special Initiative (“Initiative”) is a program from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in direct response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Outbreak. TWC will award up to \$15 Million in grant awards to eligible applicants responding to the training needs of business partners adversely affected by COVID-19, and those employers who are retooling business processes to respond to the need for COVID-19 related necessities.

SDF grantees and business partners are experiencing delays due to closures and business shutdowns. However, the need for Skills training remains vital in several essential industries like healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. Grant funds awarded under this Initiative will be used to address priority training needs for these business partners and those industries responding directly to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Special Note: Priority will be given to employers responding directly to COVID-19 pandemic needs. For employers seeking other training, please refer to Skills Development Fund or Skills for Small Business.

Eligible Applicants*

Entities eligible to apply for funding under this Initiative include:

- Public community and technical colleges
- Local Workforce Development Boards (in partnership with a third-party training provider)
- Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX)

**Some entities may be required to apply for funding in partnership with other entities as identified by statute and other governing rules and regulations.*

Program Information

In order to respond quickly to COVID-19 needs, and the daily changes to these priorities, TWC proposes to award funds directly to an Eligible Applicant as follows:

FUNDING APPLICATION:

1. An [application](#) will be submitted to the [SDF COVID-19 Special Initiative](#) by an Eligible Applicant to establish grant fund award basic project parameters and grant amount.
2. A final grant fund award will be made to applicant within thirty (30) days to ensure funds are readily available to provide immediate training upon request.

TRAINING APPLICATION:

BUSINESS PARTNERS:

1. Grantee will identify business partner(s) with high-demand training needs and submit for approval, on an ongoing basis. This will be done via email with the TWC Grant Manager, and will work as follows:
 - a. Grantee will submit business partner and training forms (provided upon grant award) that

identifies the following:

- i. High-demand training in direct response to COVID-19;
 - ii. A one (1) paragraph summary how training will contribute to meeting the needs of the current pandemic;
 - iii. Name(s) of business partner(s) requesting immediate training assistance; and
 - iv. List of occupations with wages that will be included in training.
- b. Business partner(s) will be vetted for approval by TWC within 72 hours of Training Application submission.
 - c. Business partner(s) will provide assurance that identified occupations will be paid, at minimum, the local prevailing wage.
 - d. Business partner(s) will provide assurance that employees receiving training are full-time, permanent employees or employees that have been furloughed. Business partners cannot serve on the Board of Grantee(s).
2. After requested training has been approved by TWC (not more than a 72-hour turnaround time), Grantee will start to provide training no later than thirty (30) days from TWC Grant Manager approval.
 - a. Third-party training: There will be no limitations to the amount of vendor training that may be provided in a grant. Third-party training for the purposes of this Initiative, is limited to that training which cannot be provided by Grantee.
 - b. Proprietary training: There will be no limitations to the amount of proprietary training that may be covered under a grant, as long as proprietary training is in direct response to COVID-19 needs and business retooling of current processes.

These Initiative projects are intended to respond to immediate training needs. A comprehensive, large project should not be submitted under this Initiative. If a more comprehensive training project is required, please contact a TWC Project Development Outreach member at skills@twc.texas.gov to assist with the development of a regular Skills-funded grant.

HIGH-DEMAND TRAINING FOR PARTICIPANTS:

1. A Grantee may decide to provide high-demand training needed by local businesses in direct response to COVID-19 needs, and where a labor shortage for essential workers has been identified. In this instance, training may be provided to individuals who are seeking employment and *not* associated with a participating business partner. Training to individuals may be in one of the following critical areas. Justification will be required from the grantee for training to individuals to be approved:
 - i. Workers necessary for the manufacturing of materials and products needed for medical supply chains, and for supply chains associated with industries responding to the manufacture and supply of COVID-19 necessities.
 - ii. Workers needed to maintain the continuity of these manufacturing and supply chain functions.
 - iii. Workers who produce or manufacture parts or equipment that support continued operations for any essential services.
 - iv. Workers whose job functions support and respond to different areas of need impacted by COVID-19
2. Grantee will be required to provide a one-paragraph justification for the provision of training to individuals with no identified business partner;
3. Grantee will submit the Request for Training Form

4. Grantee will need to include a plan on how they will assist individuals completing training with job placement.
5. Once training has been approved by the grant manager, grantee agrees that training will start within 30 days of approval.
 - a. Third-party training: There will be no limitations to the amount of vendor training that may be provided in a grant. Third-party training will be limited to that training which cannot be provided by grantee.
 - b. Proprietary training: There will be no limitations to the amount of proprietary training that may be covered under a grant, as long as proprietary training is in direct response to COVID-19 needs and business retooling of current processes.

Other Information:

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, and in direct response to training needs of businesses retooling business processes to respond to COVID-19 needs, please note the following:

BUSINESS PARTNERS:

- Business partners who have been adversely affected by COVID-19 may participate under these special parameters.
- Small businesses will continue to be vetted by TWC staff (approval may take up to 72 hours).
- Medium and large businesses will continue to be vetted by the TWC Regulatory Integrity Division (RID) (approval may take up to 72 hours).
- Training is offered to employees of business partners who are being paid at minimum, the local prevailing wage.
- **Participants:** Participants are full-time, permanent employees of the business partner. Employees who have been furloughed are eligible to participate in training of the participating business partner with the expectation that the business partner will hire back such furloughed employees. New employees of the business partner are also eligible for training. Executive management positions will continue to be excluded from participation in training.

GRANTEES:

- Grantees will be eligible for administrative costs of fifteen percent (15%) of direct training costs.
- Grantees are not required to develop a comprehensive training project. Training and business partners will be approved on an ongoing basis as training needs are identified. (Once a business partner has been approved, they remain eligible to receive training under the grant). Grants will be in place to allow Grantees to respond immediately to training needs. Business partners and training courses will be pre-approved by TWC Grant Managers, and later amended into grants on a quarterly basis.