

Northwest Workforce Council

PO Box 2009 (101 Prospect Street), Bellingham, WA 98227 - 360.676.3209 • 2005 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 - 360.416.3600
265 NE Kettle St., Ste. 102, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 - 360.675.5966 • PO Box 1696 (540 Guard Street #210), Friday Harbor, WA 98250 - 360.378.4662
- www.nwboard.org -

Flexible Solutions for Your Existing Workforce Training Needs

2022 Solicitation to Businesses for Grants to Upgrade Employees' Skills

The Northwest Workforce Council (NWC) has funding to support training projects with the region's key industries to help companies maintain competitiveness and retain and meet the skill development needs of their existing employees. Funding is prioritized for in-demand occupations in the manufacturing, construction, and health care industries. Proposals directly supporting training costs will be considered. Proposals up to \$3,500 per employee of direct training costs, excluding employer match, will be considered. Group training projects, including those serving multiple employees, will be considered for up to a maximum of \$30,000 of direct training costs, excluding employer match. Only two group projects will be funded per business in a calendar year. There is a limit of \$60,000 in total direct incumbent worker training cost reimbursements per business in a calendar year. Projects must provide skills upgrade or job-specific training or certifications for current employees of participating business(es). Group training supported by multiple employers is encouraged.

Incumbent Employees are individuals who are employed, meets Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship, and have an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more. Participating employees must complete a short registration form and permit access to information which establishes their right to work in the United States and allows the Council to track the employment outcomes of their training.

NWC Staff are available to assist you with your proposal and answer questions.

Elements of the Training Project Proposal:

1. The proposal must provide assurance the training described is required to achieve one or more of the following:
 - Job retention for 180-day minimum (required)
 - Employee layoff aversion
 - Increases in wages or salaries
 - Completing industry licensing requirements
 - Awards of industry skills certifications or credentials
 - Attainment of industry/business-accepted occupational skill standards
2. A statement of need describing each of the following:
 - Skill shortages, new certifications and/or other new skills required in your industry or business to remain competitive and maintain your workforce
 - Job title or classification of the employees to be trained
 - Anticipated training provider (community or technical college, private training entity,

and/or designated employer staff)

- Expected cost of training

Training should be short-term in nature (completed in less than a year)

3. This project requires businesses to share the training cost. The employer match share is based on the size of the workforce as follows:
 - At least 10 percent of the cost for employers with 50 or fewer employees
 - At least 25 percent of the cost for employers with 51 to 100 employees
 - At least 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees

4. The employer match may be cash (a share of the direct training costs, e.g., tuition) or in-kind. These may include:
 - Employee's salary, if paid while in training, and travel expenses associated with the training;
 - Replacement salaries paid while employees are in training;
 - The value of donated time of company employees when employee is providing the training.

Other employer in-kind contributions which conform to federal cost sharing rules may also be approved as part of the required employer share, but only after NWC staff review and approval. These may include:

- The current fair market value of donated equipment
- The rental value of loaned equipment
- The fair market value of company space when used in training
- Company supplies and materials expended through training

Official payroll records, time and attendance sheets, invoices for equipment purchases, etc. are used to determine the amount of the business' share of cost.

5. Identify current employees to receive training and indicate the outcomes they will achieve. At least fifty-one percent (51%) of these workers must have an established employment history with the employer for six (6) months or more. Consideration will be given for projects aimed to improve wages and skills for people who experience barriers to employment, e.g., limited English, justice system involved, low income, etc.

Selection Criteria:

Proposals are prioritized on the following factors:

- Identification of skills necessary for business retention and/or expansion including expanding the workforce
- Percent of direct training cost cash match or nature of in-kind match
- Assurance of employee's job retention
- Employee will move into a higher skilled and paid job, allowing the company to hire a job seeker to backfill the incumbent employee's position

- Amount of wage increase
- Certification, industry recognized skill standard or other demonstration that skills acquired are transferable to other employers within the sector
- Labor market information indicating scarcity of available labor pool, certified workers or skill sets
- Continued skill and wage progression opportunities within career ladder
- Skills required for new process or the implementation of technology

Timeline:

- Project proposals are reviewed for acceptability as they are received, until targeted funding is exhausted. A notification will be posted on the Northwest Workforce Council's website at https://www.nwdawn.org/pages/public/resources_for_employers/incumbent_worker_training when funds are no longer available.
- Priority is given for acceptable projects received and training completed by December 31, 2022.
- Project training and associated outcomes must be completed by June 30, 2023.

Submission:

Please click here to submit your proposal:

www.cognitofirms.com/NorthwestWorkforceCouncil/IncumbentWorkerTrainingProposal

If you have any question or would like additional information, please contact:

Alex Kosmides

Deputy Director

Ph.: 360.676.3207

akosmides@workforcenorthwest.org