

NCWorks Local Innovation Fund Frequently Asked Questions



Can a collaborative team submit more than one grant project application?

Answer: Yes, a collaborative team can submit more than one grant application. However, we encourage teams to create their most robust proposal rather than apply for multiple grants.

Regarding serving the “under-resourced,” does this mean that participants need to fit into one of the four WIOA categories to qualify for service?

Answer: When Local Innovation grant funds are expended for an individual (e.g. work experience, tuition, and credential attainment), the individual must be eligible under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as an adult. Eligibility information for each training participant, including specific information identified for the project, must be entered into NCWorks Online.

Can grant funds be used for salaries?

Answer: Yes. Salary information will need to be clearly marked and explained in attachment 4, the Budget Summary Excel Spreadsheet.

Can a Local Area Workforce Development Board charge an administrative fee for serving as the lead agency and administering the grant? If so, what is the maximum percentage?

Answer: The Local Area Workforce Development Boards will be allowed to utilize up to a maximum of 5% of the funds awarded for administrative fees for serving as the lead agency and administering the grant. If a LAWDB chooses to utilize awarded funds for administrative fees, please be sure to indicate this as a line item in Attachment 4--Budget Summary Excel Spreadsheet, on Line 12-Other Expenses, and specify the LAWDB Administrative fee.

Are grantees required to hire a third-party evaluation firm to complete the evaluation?

Answer: No, grantees are not required to hire a third-party evaluation firm to complete the evaluation.

Will the Commission hold a public call or webinar to provide an overview of the opportunity?

Answer: Yes, the Commission held an informational webinar on March 1, 2023. A link to a recording of this session can be [found here](#).

Regarding the Innovation Grant, are there any thoughts/preference/restrictions on funds as far as the development of the budget around staff/operational versus direct learner costs?

Answer: There is no state mandate regarding staff salaries vs. participant training cost. However, there is an expectation that a reasonable and allocable staff-participant cost ratio be utilized to meet the goal of serving an adequate number of participants and to make the project impactful in its region.

One program that we are really interested in obtaining funding for is a collaboration with the county in obtaining apprenticeships for high school students that lead to a living wage or higher jobs and meet a workforce need in the county. Am I understanding your grant guidelines correctly that high school students would not be eligible to participate in this grant? Also, is the grant funding \$225,000 each year for two years for a total of \$450,000. Or is it a total of \$225,000 over the two years?

Answer: We plan to award two implementation grants with totals up to \$225,000 each, to be expended over the next two program years (July 1, 2023—June 30, 2025). As each group develops their proposal and feels it is a good plan that explains the eligibility of the participants, the group should then move forward for application submission. We encourage local areas to decide what solutions they want to develop based on their local area needs.

Eligible Applicants (as shown on page 4 of the grant application) may include Education Organizations (K-12). The eligibility requirements will be met if the Educational Organization (which includes high school students) has an innovative idea that can be replicated across the state while partnering with a K-12 organization.

All youth participating in this program must meet the eligibility requirements below.

- Must be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States;
- Meet Military Selective Service registration requirements (males only); and
- Be an In-School Youth or Out-of-School Youth.

An In-School Youth is an individual who is:

(a) Not younger than age 14 or (unless an individual with a disability who is attending school under State law) or older than age 21 at time of enrollment;

(b) Attending school (as defined by State law), including secondary and postsecondary school;

(c) A low-income individual; and

(d) One or more of the following:

1. Basic skills deficient;
2. An English language learner;
3. An offender;
4. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway;
5. An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement;
6. An individual who is pregnant or parenting;

7. An individual with a disability; or
8. An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

An Out-of-School Youth is an individual who is:

- (a) Not younger than age 16 or older than age 24 at time of enrollment;
- (b) Not attending any school (as defined under State law); and
- (c) One or more of the following:
 1. A school dropout;
 2. A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter;
 3. A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
 4. An offender;
 5. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway;
 6. An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement;
 7. An individual who is pregnant or parenting;
 8. An individual with a disability; or
 9. A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

If you have additional questions, please email the Commission at:

ncworkscommission@commerce.nc.gov.