Massachusetts workforce training fund

Grant Overview
The Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) provides grants to help Massachusetts employers address business productivity and competitiveness by providing resources to businesses to fund training for current and newly hired employees. The Workforce Training Fund’s major focus is small to medium-sized businesses that would not be able to make an investment in improving employee skills without the assistance of the Fund. Training funded by the Workforce Training Fund Program should address the following priorities:

- Projects that will result in job retention, job growth, or increased wages.
- Projects where training would make a difference in the company’s productivity, competitiveness, and ability to do business in Massachusetts.
The Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) provides grants to help Massachusetts employers address business productivity and competitiveness.

Companies of any size may apply. Companies must be in operation, with employees, long enough to have at least two full years of financial statements available for review, if requested, to be considered for a grant.
1. Companies of any size may apply.

2. Organizations that contribute to the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Unemployment Insurance Fund are eligible to take part in WTTP grant programs.

3. A copy of a Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue that is less than 6 months old must be provided by applicants prior to being considered for a grant. This can be requested from the MassTaxConnect website.

4. Applicants must also be in full compliance with all obligations to the Department of Unemployment Assistance, Department of Industrial Accidents, and any other obligations to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

5. Companies must be in operation, with employees, long enough to have at least two full years of financial statements available for review, if requested, to be considered for a grant.

6. Previous General Program award recipients will not be considered for new grants until one year has elapsed from the close of a prior General Program training grant.

7. WTTP policy prohibits General Program funding for topics that were addressed in a prior grant, until five years has passed since the closeout of the last grant.

8. Applications ranging from $10,000 to $250,000 are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year.

9. All trainees must be W2 payroll employees of participating companies that are employed in Massachusetts. (They are not required to live in Massachusetts.) Contractors or employees of other firms (e.g. temps) are not eligible to participate.

10. All trainees must be paid at their regular pay rates during training hours.

11. Grants must be matched dollar-for-dollar by the company’s expenditure for employee training time. The matching requirement considers wages and fringe benefits. In most cases, there are no out of pocket costs to companies other than travel and training materials. Typically, the salaries paid to employees while they are participating in training meet or exceed matching requirements.
12. Employers may use the training provider(s) of their choice. Applicants must provide information about the qualifications and costs of training providers, as well as the selection process used to choose proposed providers.

13. Grants funds may be applied only to the direct cost of delivering instruction. Grant funds may not pay for the costs of preparation, planning, travel, or consulting services. Training should apply best practices, be distinguishable from consulting services, reasonably priced, appropriate for proposed trainees, and logically relate to a business objective with quantifiable performance indicators.

14. Cost for training may not exceed $350 per hour of instruction. If an applicant wishes to include courses with rates greater than $350 per hour of instruction, they may do so by including costs in excess of $350 per hour of instruction as matching expenses to be paid out of pocket by the grant recipient. For example: An 8-hour course that costs $3600 could include up to $2800 in grant funds and at least $800 in matching contribution.

15. Grant funds may be used to pay for training that takes place once a grant is awarded and a contract is executed. Expenses incurred before or after the designated contract period will not be eligible to be paid for with grant funds.

16. Training programs must be completed within a two-year period.

17. Sensitive information such as trade secrets, commercial, or financial information disclosed in the application for, or administration of, a Workforce Training Fund Program grant is protected from public record by the law that authorizes the Workforce Training Fund. All financial statements and information pertaining to the earnings of individual employees will be protected from public record. Any additional trade secrets, commercial, or financial information that should be protected from public record should be identified by applicants or grant recipients.
Grant Preparation by GBMP: If GBMP is the primary training provider, we will partner with your company to produce a successful Workforce Training Fund application. We can incorporate training that meets other needs within your company as well (e.g. Industry Specific Skills). Writing the grant will be a collaborative process and will include company review and sign-off prior to submission.
Key Questions on the Grant Application

**Training Objectives:** Describe how the training initiative will contribute to addressing the business needs and/or opportunities. Why are the courses being proposed and how do they relate to the business needs, opportunities, and/or goals of the application?

**Key Performance Indicators:** How will you measure the success of the courses in this module? What are some specific business impact metrics your company will use to analyze performance over the two-year grant period? Include current (baseline) measurements for each metric as well as end goals. (e.g., “Increase new product sales by 10% from $250,000 per year to $275,000 per year.”)

**Job Creation:** Does the company expect to add employees in Massachusetts over the next two years. This question is addressing net changes in the number of employees in Massachusetts. You should explain the rationale on which you base your expectations and explain the impact of a training grant on growth.

**Wage Impact:** Will the proposed training lead to increases for employees to be trained by the end of the grant? You will need to explain how you expect training to impact the wages of trainees and include both the percent of estimated increases and the historical percentage of past raises.

Other Workforce Training Fund Programs

**Express Program**
- Available for businesses with 100 or fewer employees.
- Grant funds are limited to $30,000 per company per calendar year and to $3,000 per employee per course.
- Approved businesses will be reimbursed for up to 50% of the actual cost of training.

**Small Business Direct Access Program**
- Available for businesses with 100 or fewer employees.
- Created for smaller-scale training needs, this program offers training slots, free of charge, to eligible businesses.
- Ask about available slots in a Lean Certificate Course or Six Sigma Green Belt Course funded by this program.

Please go to http://workforcetrainingfund.org for more information about all of these programs.
Documentation Required to Apply:

- **Cover letter**: A cover letter that includes a concise summary of the proposed project and rationale is highly recommended. Additionally, if there is any important information that should be considered but doesn’t easily fit elsewhere, it should be included in the cover letter.

- **Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (required)**: All applicants and consortium partners for Workforce Training Fund grants must provide a valid Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (not to be confused with a Certificate of Incorporation), issued within the last six months. For more information and to apply for a Certificate of Good Standing, please see the Department of Revenue website:

  https://www.mass.gov/how-to/request-a-certificate-of-good-standing-tax-compliance-or-a-corporate-tax-lien-waiver

- **Descriptions of Training Modules & Courses (required)**: In addition to the information entered in the course description page, applicants must include a syllabus or detailed course outline for training proposed (supplied by training providers).

- **Union Support Letter (required if union members are included in training)**: A letter of support, on union letterhead, is required from an officer of each union whose members will be involved in training. This application cannot be considered for funding until such letters are received.

- **Information on Company Diversity** or a copy of the company’s EEO-1 form (i.e. Equal Employment Opportunity – Employer Information Report EEO-1).

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