COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY

Industry Partnership
Worker Training Guidelines

Building a Skilled Workforce
Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Department of Labor & Industry
Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board
651 Boas Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17121

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Tom Corbett, Governor
www.state.pa.us

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Proposals must be e-mailed to the Industry Partnership Resource Account (RA-LI-PAWIB-IP@state.pa.us) by 5:00 PM on August 16, 2011.

In addition, please mail an **original** and **three** (**3**) paper copies to the address listed below. **Hard copies must be post marked on or before August 16, 2011.** Official receipt of proposal will be kept through date stamp of mailed proposals to the PA WIB.

Veronica Snyder
PA Department of Labor & Industry
PA Workforce Investment Board
651 Boas Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17121

Section 1 – Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Program Goals and Changes

Since the last Industry Partnership (IP) proposal submission took place in the summer of 2009, an emphasis has been placed on targeting limited dollars to areas that have been identified by employers as a "high-priority", immediate need.

The goal of the IP program in the 2011-2012 fiscal year is to encourage highly strategic partnership initiatives that have developed cost-effective and financially sustainable means of producing quantitative outcomes by meeting the needs of an industry cluster and its regional workforce. The IP program has the ability to spur job advancement, growth, and creation by prioritizing funds to occupational areas of critical need. While the importance of continuing education within the workplace cannot be understated, the IP program must become more about movement into and up a career ladder than workplace retention.

Funds will be awarded to partnerships that submit proposals to move trainees up a career ladder or place trainees into high-priority occupations that will enable them to earn a family sustaining wage and provide for career advancement opportunities in the future. Funds will only be awarded to partnerships that are comprised of a majority of employer representatives, with strong connections to PA CareerLink®, community- and/or faith-based organizations, education and training providers, secondary education, economic and workforce development organizations, and if possible, trade or employer associations.

Similar to the last submission period, these partnership proposals will be valid for a two-year period with the opportunity for partnerships to apply for additional funding after one year based on a critical review of performance indicators and availability of funds in the new fiscal year.

In reviewing the following grant opportunity guidelines, you will notice there have been many new proposal requirements integrated into this year's guidelines. Please be aware, with our limited funding capacity for the program in the coming fiscal year, **ANY** proposal that has been deemed "non-compliant" with the proposal guidelines will **NOT** be considered for funding. This applies to **ALL sections** of the proposal requirements. Only proposals that have completed all sections of the guidelines and have been submitted on time will be read and evaluated for approval.

Section 2 – Funding Availability

Proposals submitted will be for worker training funds only. All requests should be made based upon the ability to perform the stated and approved scope of work, with an expectation of complete grant expenditure by June 30, 2012. Prior year funding should be used as your baseline. In addition, prior year expenditures will be reviewed and will be a determining factor in funding approvals.

Worker training funds will not be available for any occupation not listed on the 2011 High-Priority Occupations List, which can be found on the PA Workstats website (www.paworkstats.state.pa.us).

IP Development awards will be made to local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) based on the number of partnerships the LWIB will administer. Once training awards are determined, the Bureau of Workforce Development (BWDP) and the IP Coordinator will negotiate with the local workforce areas the needed development funds required to administer the awarded projects.

Section 3 – Applicant Eligibility

Not all current partnerships will receive additional money. It has been determined that only existing industry partnerships will be eligible to submit proposals for continued funding.

- **Lead Applicants:**
  The lead applicant must be capable of bringing together multiple partners to achieve the overall project goals, including but not limited to: coordinating the design of the project; developing an appropriate budget; collecting performance management measures; and coordinating the activities of the project. The lead applicant must possess the capability to identify public and private resources available for workforce development relevant to the work being proposed by the partnership and must develop a plan to access those resources on behalf of the project. The lead applicant should have a leadership role in developing and maintaining the IP through ongoing interaction with the regional provider networks, businesses and employee representatives. *The lead applicant and any person or organization involved in partnership management and/or coordination may not seek reimbursement for training services that they provide (the costs of these service may be applied as matching funds). Training must be provided by an organization or individual who is unaffiliated with the lead applicant and any person or organization involved in partnership management and/or coordination. This includes circumstances in which a lead applicant and/or partnership management/coordination representatives contracts with individual training providers to provide training or deliver training programs on behalf of the lead applicant organization.*

  The following entities are eligible to serve as lead applicants as long as the above conditions are met:
  - Single or a consortium of LWIBs
  - Industrial Development Authorities and Corporations
  - Non-profit organizations or associations serving as regional or local workforce intermediaries and/or coordinators
  - Business Consortium and/or Associations, including entities such as the Chamber of Commerce
  - Organized Labor
  - Labor/Management Partnerships

- **Multi-LWIB and/or Multi-Partnership Applicants:**
  Proposals submitted on behalf of multiple LWIBs and/or multiple IPs are permitted and are encouraged to promote regional workforce development strategies and to increase leveraged funds and pooled resource sharing. Proposals may be submitted within a cluster or across different clusters. While the proposal may include multiple partnerships and LWIBs, the lead applicant must be a single organization or contracted partnership coordinator. The fiscal agent must also be a single workforce investment area as determined by the LWIBs or partnerships submitting the proposal.

- **Fiscal Agents:**
  To ensure collaboration and alignment with other regional initiatives, LWIBs must be represented in the Partnership. LWIBs will serve as the fiscal agent for grant funds and will work with the lead applicant in all monitoring, tracking, and compliance requirements. Additionally, LWIBs will be required to follow their Board's approved contracting procedures. These procedures may vary based on the grant funds being Commonwealth dollars specific to the Industry Partnership Development & Training Program. As such, LWIBs should seek technical assistance when necessary to differentiate contracting and monitoring procedures to those of their Federal and State program dollars.

Section 4 – Matching and Leveraged Funds Requirements

- **Cash Match** – Partnerships seeking training funds **MUST** provide private sector matching dollars for training. Match is required at a $1-to-$1 ratio of which a minimum of 25% must be cash. **Additional points will be assessed when grading proposals that exceed the minimum cash match that an IP requires**. Cash match may **NOT** be leveraged from other state grants. Allocation of the matching dollars must be industry-driven and designated to support partnership programming, organizational development and training activities designed to improve the overall sustainability of the partnerships. This includes training new hires as well as incumbent worker training activities and career activities when Commonwealth funds are not available to do so. In rare cases, the $1-to-$1 match requirement may be reduced based on the inability of particular industry sectors to pay for training. Requests for such reductions **MUST** include a strong justification. Applications seeking a reduction in match requirements are encouraged to inquire about feasibility by contacting the IP Coordinator at the Pennsylvania WIB.

- **Non-Cash Match –** Sources of non-cash matching funds may include in-kind contributions from employers such as paid release time for workers to participate in training, contributions of training space, equipment and training personnel, and consulting services.

- **Leveraged Funds –** The application must address how the partnership will leverage resources from other public/private workforce development programs, foundations, PA CareerLinks and economic development programs, such as WEDnet. IPs will be encouraged to coordinate their training needs and have employers apply for general funding through the traditional application process. When filling out the WEDnet application, there will be a box to check if a company is participating in the IP program. Preference will be given to proposals that can demonstrate leveraged funds based on the availability of resources.

Section 5 - Proposal Formatting Requirements

Applicants are required to submit **one original** and **three paper copies** of all application materials. Each proposal requires a completed application form and completed budget form (Attachments 1 and 5). Edited or alternate versions of these forms will not be accepted. If submitting attachments and the narrative proposal separately, all documents must be saved with a file name to include, at minimum, the fiscal agent and industry or industries the proposal addresses. For example:

a. LVWIB_MFG&LT_Application Form
b. SWCorner_EGY_Narrative

The following format requirements apply:

1. **Page Limit: The application is limited to twelve (12) pages.** This page limit does not include the application form, project budget, membership summary form, budget narrative, abstract, training plan, timeline, or any other required attachments or information appropriate for an appendix. All evaluators will discontinue reading after the 12th page of proposal content. Proposals will be evaluated based on content within the 12-page limit.
2. **Organization:** The application should be organized using the Roman numeral format outlined below in the "Narrative Content and Requirements" section. Applicants are advised to address each sub-criterion in the section where it is requested in order to facilitate reviewer evaluation of the application.

3. **Proposal Formatting:**
   - Font: 12 pt. Times New Roman font
   - Spacing: 1.15 spacing with a full space between paragraphs
   - Margins: 1" margins all around.
   - Footer: Footer must be present and include the fiscal agent and industry or industries the proposal addresses as well as page numbers.

Section 6 – Narrative Content and Requirements

Each proposal submitted must address the following sections – labeled clearly and in the numerical order they are provided in these guidelines. Information supplied should be relevant to the partnership's existing or desired structure. Partnerships are encouraged to review the Strategic Industry Partnership Toolkit developed by the PA WIB. The toolkit can be found on the PA Workforce website: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/industry_partnerships/20341.

Application Form – The application form (Attachment 1) must be COMPLETELY filled out and must be the **COVER PAGE** of each partnership proposal.

Proposal Abstract (Should directly follow the application form) – A brief summary describing the partnership's scope of work including anticipated training numbers, anticipated training programs, and projected outcomes and activities. The Department of Labor & Industry will use the abstract for information and promotional activities of the grant program when necessary. The summary overview must be no more than one page and is **NOT** considered part of the 12 pages of allowable content.

I. Introduction – A brief summary describing the history of the partnership(s) and the local area's current need for the work outlined in the proposal. If submitting a multi-LWIB, multi-partnership or cross-cluster proposal, please explain the rationale for collaborating.

II. Description of Partnership – This section should include descriptions of the following:

a. **Mission & Vision** – Provide a few sentences outlining the current or desired mission and vision of the regional partnership(s).
b. **Membership Summary** – While no narrative must be written for this, a membership summary form (Attachment 2) must be completed and attached at the end of the proposal.
c. **Capacity Building & Recruitment Strategy** – Briefly explain the strategy for increasing membership and employer involvement in the activities and decision-making of the partnership.
d. **Governance Structure –** Provide an explanation of the existing or planned governance structure of the partnership. This section is critical for proposals submitted by multiple LWIBs or partnerships. Please outline the planned organizational structure, frequency of meetings, location of meetings, decision making, outreach efforts, communication and marketing strategies, etc.
e. **Project Management -** Should describe the approval process of selecting an IP project manager. If a project manager has been selected, please provide a resume for that individual as a separate attachment. If a project manager is to be hired, please provide a job description for the position as a separate attachment.
f. **Regional Partners –** Define the regional education/workforce/economic development partners and the role(s) the different institutions play in supporting the workforce needs of

the targeted industry sector. In addition, please list any community- or faith-based, non-profit organizations the partnership will be partnering with to serve at-risk or targeted populations such as ex-offenders, veterans, or low-wage, low-skilled workers.

g. **Predicted Challenges or Barriers –** Outline challenges and/or barriers the partnership predicts over the coming two years and how the partnership plans to address those issues effectively given the planned governance structure and funding.

III. History of Accomplishments and Outcomes – Positive performance outcomes will be critical in ensuring continued funding for the IP program over the next several years. Proposals will be evaluated based on the partnerships plan for measuring and evaluating their training impact and outcomes throughout the year. In this section, please demonstrate the outcomes and accomplishments of your partnership(s) in *past* funding years. Outcomes would include any wage increases or career advancement, job placements, certificates or credentials attained, retention rate improvements, etc.

IV. Project Design, Training Plan, and Timeline – The "Project Design" *must* be a narrative in the body of the proposal. However, narratives for the "Training Plan" and "Timeline" are not required given they are to be completed as separate attachments.

Project Design – All proposals must provide the partnership's required cash match percentage and demonstrate how the partnership will effectively assess and determine regional workforce needs: how training needs will be prioritized; what activities, events, or initiatives the partnership will develop beyond training; and how the awarded funds will be allocated to ensure fairness to all parties involved. Applicants coming in as a multi-partnership collaborative must demonstrate how they plan to design their partnership activities.

Training Plan – All applicants must submit a priority training plan for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. This plan must be developed with input from all partnerships included in the proposal and show support based on regional assessments of workforce and training needs. The plan must cover September 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 and provide details on the types of training your partnership has categorized as high-priority. You must provide the name of the training, an estimate of projected participants, an average cost per training, and **most importantly, the projected outcomes of each training.**

Plans will give reviewers an idea of the types of training the partnership may provide and the projected outcomes of those trainings. They will also give the program director an idea of how to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership come year-end. The Training Plan template is included as (Attachment 3**)**. **Edited or alternate versions of this form will <u>not</u> be accepted.**

Nurse/Home Health Aide Training – Proposals submitting a training plan to include nurse aide and/or home health aide training **<u>must</u>** include, as a separate attachment, a detailed plan for addressing job satisfaction and retention barriers of all workers trained. Please keep in mind that IP dollars cannot be used for supportive or wrap-around services. In addition to evaluating this attachment, proposal evaluators will also look at the geographic area of the partnership, demand for workers within the region, availability of training providers in the region, and the demographics of the region. Preference will be given to proposals for training that can demonstrate movement up a career ladder or a high retention rate of workers trained in this occupation in previous years.

Timeline – Each proposal must include a general project timeline for the first year of the grant (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012). The timeline template can be found as (Attachment 4) in these guidelines. Since proposals will not be submitted until mid-August, be sure to include all planning activity that takes place prior to proposal submission.

V. Supporting Data and Analysis – Each proposal must include evidence of a priority need for the proposed training activities included in the training plan. This may be provided in the form of employer needs assessments, gap analyses, regional data supplied by the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, data supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or data from other reliable sources. This section should include an evaluation of the industry's or industries' critical role in the local economy and include detailed documentation from collaboration with industry and/or through published workforce information on specific occupational needs, skill gaps, location quotient, and career opportunities within these industries over the next five years. The factors contributing to these needs such as industry growth, an aging workforce, emerging career fields, technological advances, etc. should also be included. All data and information will be reviewed and verified by the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis during the review process.

Partnerships are *highly* encouraged to submit, as a separate attachment, letters of support or commitment from employers. These can be commitments to advance or hire successful completers or they can be letters supporting the critical need for planned training programs.

VI. Integration and Alignment to Workforce Investment Initiatives –

a. Provide a summary describing the role of the LWIB within the partnership. Describe the roles of the LWIB staff, the fiscal process, contracting, local monitoring and evaluation, and the LWIBs use of administrative funds. A statement within the narrative should indicate that the lead applicant is willing to participate in a third-party evaluation by providing data and access for interviews, and by participating in networking with other partnerships.

b. Indicate how the partnership will align with regional economic development and workforce development providers and other fund providers such as, but not limited to: PA CareerLink® **(required)**, Adult Basic Literacy providers, The Pennsylvania Fund for Workforce Solutions, Regional Career Education Partnerships for Youth (RCEPs), CJT and WEDnet Partners, and local foundations. Partnerships who have elected not to utilize these resources must address in their proposal how/what other resources are being leveraged to provide these services.

c. Wherever possible, partnerships are highly encouraged to align workforce training and activities to recommendations and priorities outlined by the PA WIB's Centers for Health Care, Advanced Manufacturing, and Energy & Green Careers.

VII. Projected Outcomes and Evaluation – This section should clearly state projected outcomes for training programs and other activities that will take place throughout the year. These outcomes must be measureable and, if possible, quantitative rather than qualitative. The state recognizes the importance and impact of qualitative and anecdotal success stories. However, in an attempt to demonstrate program effectiveness and the positive impact the industry partnerships are making, our priority for the time being must be to deliver a quantitative performance evaluation of each partnership and the industry partnership program as a whole.

At minimum, all partnerships will be **required** to provide projected outcomes related to four (4) key indicators:

1) Impact on Workers
2) Impact on Employers
3) Effectiveness of the Partnership
4) Impact on System Change

Partnership proposals must identify, through discussions with partnership employers and other key stakeholders, what specific metrics they will collect and measure throughout the year to meet the evaluation requirements for these four areas. Example metrics for each of the four areas have been provided below:

1) **Impact on Workers** – Demographics, wage gains, retention percentages, promotions, credentials/certifications attained, job placements, etc.
2) **Impact on Employers –** Safety incidents, productive man hours, cost savings, competitiveness, increased profits, insider knowledge, networking
3) **Effectiveness of Partnership –** Responsiveness of the partnership coordinators to meet employer and worker needs, extent to which employers are invested and engaged, ability of the partnerships to secure low-cost, high-quality training
4) **Impact on Systems Change –** Funding availability and appropriateness of funding distribution, ability of partnership to collaborate and leverage outside resources and partnership knowledge, ability of the partnership to develop best practices

Partnerships are highly encouraged to include other measureable outcomes (aside from the four areas mentioned above) such as youth outreach and career awareness, impacts to local economies, or job development and growth.

This section will be heavily weighted by reviewers to help determine funding awards and amounts. As previously stated, given the current economic environment, quantitative outcomes are critical to ensure continued funding for the IP program. Projected outcomes will be evaluated for feasibility, relevance, and likelihood of achievement. Therefore, please be realistic when projecting outcomes and carefully assess possible barriers or challenges associated with each indicator being measured.

VIII. Plan for Sustainability – This section must clearly demonstrate that the partnership and its members are taking steps to ensure the continued organizational, financial, and administrative sustainability of the partnership. Outline activities that are currently being undertaken by the Partnership to support sustainability. If the partnership has decided not to create a separate sustainability fund, a well-developed strategy for ensuring continued funding for future training and activities must be provided. Evaluation of this section will consider the feasibility of the proposed strategy and the degree of strategic planning and due diligence incorporated into said strategy.

IX. Budget & Budget Narrative – A budget form (Attachment 5) must be completely filled out and attached to the proposal. In addition, in the proposal narrative, this section must contain a complete and thorough explanation of each cost category and indicate how the grant and matching funding are tied to program design and goals. In instances where grant funds are not awarded as originally requested, LWIBs will be required to submit a corrected budget and budget narrative to serve in this capacity. Standard budgeting changes within line items during a program year are not required for submission.

Section 7 - Disallowable Costs and Activities

Although the IP proposal may contain some of these elements, the grant award cannot be used to pay for the costs associated with these items:

- Equipment or building construction
- Support lease or rental cost of building
- Website development or maintenance
- Indirect Fees and/or Fees
- Administrative costs in excess of 5%
- Supportive services such as transportation and childcare
- Reimbursement of training costs that were not determined by assessment through the IP
- Literacy Training (Literacy training may be available through other sources and applicants should inquire about partnering with literacy providers)
- Incumbent worker training for commonwealth, city, or county employees
- Training that can be supported by existing programs such as, WIA, TANF, Customize Job Training, WEDnet and services provided through PA CareerLinks®
- Articulation Agreements
- Proprietary training owned by a single business (NOTE: All training curriculum developed by grant funds is owned by the Commonwealth.)
- Training provided by the lead applicant and any person or organization involved in partnership management and/or coordination (Note: Training services provided by the lead applicant are not eligible for reimbursement but may be applied as matching funds.)

In addition, the following activities are not permitted:

- Projects cannot violate any conditions of a collective bargaining agreement
- Educational providers cannot use the announcement of partnership funds to solicit their training programs.

Training for any occupation not listed on the 2011 High-Priority Occupations List is **NOT** eligible for reimbursement with IP worker training dollars. Similarly, training for any occupation that has historically shown unusually high turnover rates or does not provide a family-sustaining wage, as outlined by the High-Priority Occupations guidelines, will **NOT** be eligible for reimbursement with IP worker training dollars.

The 75% consortia-based training requirement remains in effect. However, waivers of this requirement may be granted in occasional circumstances where the training may result in significant wage gain or placement outcomes. All determinations of waivers will be made by the IP Coordinator.

Section 8 – Reporting

Each grantee is required, as a condition of the grant, to provide the following reports in a timely and complete manner:

- A mid-year financial standing report (likely to take place in January);
- Training program and participant data into CWDS**. All participant data must be entered within 30 days of end date of training (this is a new requirement so please make employers who enter data aware);**

- An annual year-end report summarizing all training and partnership activities for the past year;
- Any other report or information requested or required by the Department of Labor & Industry.

LWIBs are mandated partners and serve as the fiscal agent for all IP grants. As a requirement of the grant agreement, all applicants must be willing to collect partner and participant data (**including the federal EIN of participating companies**) required by the Commonwealth for tracking purposes. All reports must be submitted to the appropriate LWIB for review and approval. All records shall be made available for review to Department of Labor & Industry staff. *Mid-year, year-end, and similar reports must be submitted to the LWIB for timely submission to the PA WIB or funding may be suspended.*

Data Entry Into CWDS - LWIBs are required to ensure all IP employers create a Business Folder within CWDS and that they submit all Worker Training participant information timely to the Commonwealth through the new Incumbent Worker Data module within the system. The data to be reported includes Name, Social Security Number, Start & End dates of training, as well as descriptive information of the training. As such, LWIBs and Partnerships must work together to create methods in which this critical information can be transmitted to ensure its accuracy. Partnerships are highly encouraged to enhance employers' ability to provide participant data themselves to avoid SSN security concerns. A participant SSN is mandatory for data entry into CWDS. Employers that are unwilling to provide LWIB or IP staff with participant SSNs and unwilling to enter participant data themselves are **NOT ELIGIBLE** to receive training reimbursement. Please refer to (Appendix A**)** for a state-issued memo regarding the process for ensuring the security of participant SSNs.

Mid-year Claw Backs – Based on mid-year financial standing reports, claw backs may take place for those projects that show little to no draw down of funds and cannot demonstrate a significant amount of obligated funds. Partnerships that have unencumbered fund balances by April 18, 2012 may be required to return funds to the Department for reallocation to other areas.

Industry Partnership Web Portal - IPs are responsible for ensuring that all information on the IP web portal is up-to-date and accurate. Partnerships should make every effort to post all training curriculum, research and studies, news, conferences/events, and contact information frequently in order to keep the portal updated and relevant for persons accessing the portal.

Section 9 – Proposal Grading Criteria

Industry Partnership proposals will be evaluated on the extent to which they incorporate the requirements set forth in this guidance.

Proposals will be critically evaluated on the extent to which they are able to ensure quantitatively measureable impacts on: A) Participants; B) Employers; C) The Partnership and; D) Systemic Change. Partnerships that can demonstrate a commitment to providing training that will result in wage gains, career advancement, job placement, new hire retention, credential/certificate attainment, job creation, and employer cost savings and improved performance will be given preference. Strategies for collecting data and measuring the above-mentioned outcomes will also be critically evaluated for feasibility and likelihood of achieving projections based on the regional labor market and past partnership performance.

Section 10 – Technical Assistance

The PA WIB will assist the partnerships in areas such as, but not limited to:

- Providing support for the recruitment of new employers into the partnership;

- Providing regional labor market data and/or cluster analysis;
- Providing tools and guidance related to assessing the training needs of multiple employers;
- Helping to develop strategies for sustaining the partnership beyond the organizational stage;
- Helping the partnership to align with educational, economic development, welfare and community partners for maximum effectiveness;
- Networking and making connections, statewide, to other partnerships with successful best practices to share;
- Statewide sectoral strategies.

Section 11 – Proposal Submission and Award Announcements

All applications must be submitted through the LWIB, **along with a letter of support from the LWIB**. Applications will be accepted for review and funding consideration **on or before August 16, 2011,** but will be subject to the availability of funds and consideration of the partnerships ability to expend the funds before they expire.

Award Notices – Applicants selected for award will be contacted directly before the grant's execution and non-selected applicants will be notified by mail. **Notice of awards will be no later than September 1, 2011.**

The PA Department of Labor & Industry reserves the right to award grants on a conditional basis if there are concerns surrounding one or more sections of the proposal. In the instance that a conditional award is granted, it is the responsibility of the applicant to take immediate and appropriate action to remedy the area of concern in accordance with the guidance of Labor & Industry.

Program guidelines may be modified as needed and will be posted on www.paworkforce.state.pa.us.

The funding period for grants awarded is approximately one year or until June 30, 2012.

Please submit the **original and three (3) paper copies** of the proposal no later than close of business **August 16, 2011** to:

Veronica Snyder
PA Department of Labor & Industry
PA Workforce Investment Board
651 Boas Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17121

In addition, please submit one electronic copy to: RA-LI-PAWIB- IP@state.pa.us

For Further Information, please contact:

Veronica Snyder
P: 717-525-5593
vesnyder@state.pa.us

Applications that do not strictly adhere to these guidelines will not be reviewed. In addition, proposals submitted using another department's application will be discarded.

Section 12 – Narrative Checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure that you have included all necessary sections of the proposal narrative and that all required attachments are completed (not all items will apply to each and every proposal):

- ☐ Application Form (Attachment 1 as cover page of proposal)
- ☐ Proposal Abstract
- ☐ Narrative Contents
  - ☐ Description of the Partnership (including Attachment 2 – Membership Summary)
  - ☐ History of Accomplishments and Outcomes
  - ☐ Project Design (narrative), Training Plan, and Timeline
    - ☐ Training Plan (Attachment 3)
    - ☐ Partnership Timeline (Attachment 4)
  - ☐ Supporting Data and Analysis
  - ☐ Integration & Alignment with Workforce Initiatives
  - ☐ Projected Outcomes and Evaluation
    - ☐ Impact on Employees
    - ☐ Impact on Employers
    - ☐ Effectiveness of the Partnership
    - ☐ Impact on Systems Change
  - ☐ Plan for Sustainability
  - ☐ Budget Narrative and Budget Form (Attachment 5)
- ☐ Letter/s of Support from LWIB/s
- ☐ Letters of Commitment from Employers (not required)
- ☐ Nurse/Home Health Aide Training Attachment (not required unless providing this training)
- ☐ Resume of Project Manager (not required)

Explanation of Appendices

The following appendices are included for your referenced in the planning and development of your proposals:

- **Appendix A – Memo Regarding the Collection of Participant Social Security Numbers**
  This memo can be used for verification of the confidentiality and security of participant SSNs in the event an employer requests information. The memo outlines the need for SSNs and the processes and procedures in place to ensure the security of confidential information.

- **Appendix B – Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers Recommendations and Priorities**
  This document, containing detailed information regarding high-priority recommendations should be reviewed by manufacturing partnerships and recommendations should be considered in planning and developing proposals.

- **Appendix C – Registered Apprenticeship Concept Paper**
  This concept paper was developed out of a USDOL-sponsored regional action planning clinic and is intended to inform partnerships of the steps being implemented to significantly increase the number of registered apprenticeships within several industries in Pennsylvania. The paper can serve as a reference to partnerships in Manufacturing, Building & Construction, and Energy or Green Jobs.

APPENDIX A

MEMORANDUM

TO: WIB Directors, Fiscal Agents, and Industry Partnership Coordinators

FROM: Daniel D. Kuba – Acting Director, Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership

DATE: June 13, 2011

SUBJECT: Training Participants and Social Security Numbers (SSNs)

The industry partnership (IP) initiative is a very unique program and has received national recognition. Very few programs try to address the challenges of both workforce players: the company and the employee. With this program, we strive to enhance the employee's skill sets so that they can climb career ladders, obtain family sustaining wages, and use these new skills to enhance the competitive nature of the business/employer.

This initiative provides IP and Worker Training grants, which fund such things as education/training costs or the building of IPs. These grants have conditions that are required to be eligible for funding, one of which is the SSN requirement. This requirement is written into the IP guidelines.

The collection of the information, including the participants' SSN, is critical for several reasons. As we have seen in the current budget cycle, funding for these grants is not guaranteed. The information we collect is used to support our request for continued funding from the General Assembly (Senate & House of Representatives). Critical wage data analysis is conducted using the SSNs to support the great work each local area is conducting to develop partnerships and provide the critical training employers need. We are able to analyze the following: wage increases, employer retention, retention within the industry cluster, etc. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) is continuously working to find other ways of collecting returns on investment (ROI), in order to help support this initiative.

L&I currently receives SSNs through companies' Unemployment Insurance tax forms. L&I collects and holds access to every SSN of every worker within the Commonwealth. The rationale behind the collection of the training participant's SSN is that it allows us to track the employee's wages and determine wage gains that they may experience due to the training.

In an effort to assure employers, IPs, and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) that the information collected is safeguarded, the SSNs entered into the Comprehensive Workforce Development System (CWDS) are "encrypted" (converted or disguised) and stored in a password protected file location that is only accessible by Authorized Security Personnel. Additionally, the system will suppress the first

five digits of the social security number. Please note that providing only the last four digits of an individual's SNN is not sufficient due to the fact that this data is collected and analyzed on a national level and there are individuals with the same last four digits.

If an employee or employer wants to participate in the partnership but does not want to provide the employee's SSN, there are two alternatives:

1) They can still access the training opportunities available as long as the employer is willing to pay for the entire training cost. This grant program requires a 25% cash match by each employer that participates in the industry partnership. For those that do not want to provide the SSN, the employer can pay for the costs of that employee's training and count this cost toward their required cash match obligation. The cash match contributed by employers is also reported to the General Assembly.
2) The employer can choose to enter their employee participant data directly into the CWDS. LWIB and IP staff is encouraged to assist and guide employers as much as possible if employers choose to enter data themselves.

To date, this initiative has over 6,300 employers involved and has trained over 91,000 people - those trained have experienced wage gains of 6.62%. Over 45% of the employers participating in a partnership did not have a training program prior to participating in this program. Employers have invested over $8.7 million in cash to support the program.

Assurance

Will my Social Security Number be kept confidential?

Short answer: Absolutely!

Long answer: Individual SSNs are kept confidential and compiled by the L&I into an aggregate (total) report. Your SSN is entered into the CWDS website by either a representative of your employer, the IP coordinator, or LWIB staff, and your SSN is "encrypted" (converted or disguised) and stored in a password protected file location that is only accessible by Authorized Security Personnel at L&I. The performance data will only display in an aggregate report format and is not identifiable to any individual.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Please contact Veronica R. Snyder at 717-525-5593, or via email at vesnyder@state.pa.us if you have additional questions, comments, or concerns.

APPENDIX B

Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers

Manufacturing Skills Shortages: Key Issues and Recommendations

Approved January 26, 2011
PA Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers Leadership Council

In early 2010, the Center highlighted a trifecta of workforce challenges facing Pennsylvania's manufacturers - rising skill requirements, an aging workforce, and the lack of a reliable talent pipeline for new workers. The Center specifically identified two key findings:

- **An insufficient pipeline exists to fill current openings for skilled manufacturing technicians and to replace skilled incumbents who will soon retire.**
- **Manufacturing production workers (both employed and unemployed) are often not prepared to adapt to changes in the new advanced manufacturing work environment.**

The **opportunity** for Pennsylvania is that a potential workforce exists for our manufacturers who create the good-paying manufacturing jobs so critical to our regional economies. The *critical gap* is that the skills of the available workforce are misaligned and fall short of occupational opportunities. Further, one of Pennsylvania's **strengths** is its vast system of educational resources that includes community colleges, career & technical centers (CTCs), community education councils, private trade schools, apprenticeship programs and four-year institutions. However, another *critical gap* is that most of these resources are not aligned (statewide) to efficiently and promptly mitigate the mismatch between manufacturing employment opportunities and the lack of skills in the potential workforce. If this gap can be filled it will create a significant **competitive advantage** for the Commonwealth**.**

The *Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers* exists to identify and address these critical gaps. The Center's leadership knows that this can be accomplished without additional "brick and mortar" and without costly new programs. Much of the required infrastructure is already in place but educational resources need to be repositioned and realigned in keeping with the real occupational opportunities which exist. With the right leadership, policy priorities and industry input, we can find equilibrium between the supply and the growing demand for skilled manufacturing occupations.

Over the past year, the *Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers* has identified "model" programs that have succeeded in aligning educational and training resources to effectively address the manufacturing skill shortage. These local models can be replicated in rural and urban regions across the state. Unfortunately this has not occurred in part because these models are relatively new but also they may have been hidden by the sheer number of well-intentioned, but often less effective, workforce programs throughout Pennsylvania. The Center is uniquely positioned to continue identifying and expanding industry-focused training models that rely on cooperation and innovation, such as those outlined below.

Critical Shortages of Precision Machinists and Industrial Maintenance Technicians

On December 22, 2010, the Center published a comprehensive state-wide needs assessment of key technical manufacturing occupations with known supply shortages, specifically **industrial maintenance technicians** and **precision machining** occupations. These two critical occupation families now account

for a total of 72,000 family-sustaining jobs in Pennsylvania manufacturing and we project the need to fill 15,000 – 17,000 job openings in these occupations by 2020. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania simply does not have the training and education pipeline in place to produce the number of skilled workers required. Failure to meet employer needs for these critical skilled workers will put the state at a competitive disadvantage as our manufacturing companies will be unable to expand, exports will suffer and international businesses will not find Pennsylvania an attractive place to set up operations.

Recommendations

- **Challenge regional industry partnerships (IPs) to assist small and medium-sized employers (SMEs) that create most manufacturing jobs by sponsoring strong multi-employer apprenticeship programs for industrial maintenance or precision machining occupations**

  Most of the jobs for skilled manufacturing technicians are being created by Pennsylvania's small and medium-size employers. These employers work under constant cost pressures that make it difficult to individually create and sustain long-term training for entry-level skilled technicians. However, in Southwestern Pennsylvania, over 40 employers have come together in a rigorous but flexible multi-employer precision machining apprenticeship program. The program is sponsored by the *Manufacturing IP of Southwestern PA* and the local chapter of *the National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA)* and it includes both unionized and non-unionized employers. Some employers have registered apprenticeships while others choose not to formally register their training programs. The 140 employees currently enrolled have the opportunity to earn industry credentials from NIMS (The National Institute for Metalworking Skills) along with up to 30 credit hours towards an Associate's degree in Machine Technology at Westmoreland County Community College. This model could be readily adapted by manufacturing IPs and education providers around the state to help meet employer needs for developing precision machining and industrial maintenance technicians.

- **Use existing regional manufacturing industry partnerships (IPs) to engage employers in promoting quality manufacturing programs at Career and Technical Centers (CTCs) that link to strong Associate's Degree programs, particularly at community colleges.**

  Pennsylvania's most effective skills + education model can be found in the Berks-Lancaster-Lehigh region, where all three local IPs have supported a comprehensive partnership between the Schmidt Technology Center at Reading Area Community College (RACC) and local area CTCs, such as the Berks Career & Technical Center and the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute (LCTI). While still in high school, bright students in rigorous CTC programs can earn up to 27 college credits in RACC's associate's degree program in Mechatronics/Industrial Maintenance. CTC students can often earn additional college credits while still in high school through subsidized day or evening dual enrollment courses at a local community college. Job candidates with a two-year degree can expect to earn $50,000 - $75,000 per year and are employable by almost any manufacturer.

  Paid internship opportunities with local employers may be offered to these talented students as they progress from high school to college, so that they can both "earn and learn." RACC has articulation agreements with 4-year institutions, including Penn State-Berks, California University of PA and the Calumet Campus of Purdue University which allow students to seamlessly continue their formal education towards a four-year engineering degree, if they

so choose. This “2+2+2” path is now proving to be a great college affordability strategy for students and their families, especially given that employers are often willing to pay for much of the education along the way.

RACC is a founding partner in Pennsylvania’s new statewide Industrial Maintenance and Mechatronics Training Consortium that is led by Scott Sheely, Executive Director of the Lancaster Workforce Investment Board (WIB). This innovative and cooperative consortium builds on the success of the Industrial Maintenance Training Center industry partnership developed by the Lancaster County and Berks County WIBs and is leading the way in developing statewide training standards for CTCs, community colleges and other capable post-secondary institutions as well as raising awareness of the options.

Greater Skills Required for Manufacturing Production Workers

In addition to the critical shortages of skilled manufacturing technicians, Pennsylvania’s manufacturing employers face a long-term challenge in finding the adaptable problem-solvers they need in their front-line production positions. Employers identify chronic skills deficits among available workers in applied math, “soft-skills” such as communications and team work, and intermediate manufacturing knowledge in areas like health and safety, quality systems, and blueprint reading.

Recommendation

- **Invite manufacturing employers around the state (through advanced manufacturing industry partnerships, Industrial Resource Center networks, and manufacturing and business associations) to evaluate the potential value of the Certified Production Technician (CPT) credential as a benefit for employers, workers and educators.**

  The Certified Production Technician (CPT) credential was launched by the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) in 2005 and has since been adopted as a standard credential for production workers by a number of states, including Wisconsin and Indiana. In 2009, the CPT credential was endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) as a key component in NAM’s comprehensive skills certification system. The Manufacturer’s Association of South Central PA (MASCPA) recently announced a goal to train, assess and award CPT credentials to 40% of the region’s entry-level and incumbent production workforce.

  MSSC has certified a number of regional assessment centers in Pennsylvania, but employer demand for the CPT certification has not broadly materialized to date. As our manufacturing sector continues its recovery, small and medium-size employers are increasingly reporting problems finding qualified candidates for new openings. 2011 might prove the right time to explore the CPT credential as a way for workforce development intermediaries and training institutions to help connect Pennsylvania employers with qualified workers motivated towards good-paying manufacturing careers.

Appendix C

A Proposal to Increase the Number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Pennsylvania's Advanced Manufacturing, Building & Construction Trades, and Energy & Green Jobs Targeted Industry Clusters

A Concept Paper from Pennsylvania's Registered Apprenticeship Action Planning Team

Apprenticeship Action Planning Clinic

The purpose of this USDOL–ETA sponsored clinic was to bring together a team representative of workforce development, state government, high school and post-secondary education, apprenticeship programs, local workforce investment boards and workforce intermediaries in order to assess the current state of registered apprenticeships in Pennsylvania. Out of that assessment, the goal of the clinic was for state teams to begin developing an action plan for collaborating more effectively to increase the number of registered apprenticeship programs within their states. The following paragraphs summarize the conversation and planning that took place at the clinic and outlines a proposal for moving this initiative forward utilizing Pennsylvania's already-existing workforce and educational resources.

Background on Registered Apprenticeship (RA)

For over 60 years, RA has helped mobilize our workforce with structured, on-the-job learning in traditional industries such as construction and manufacturing, as well as new emerging industries such as health care, information technology, energy, telecommunications and more. Registered Apprenticeship connects job seekers looking to learn new skills with employers looking for qualified workers, resulting in a workforce with industry-driven training and employers with a competitive edge. The USDOL's RA program offers access to 1,000 career areas, including the following high-priority occupations in Pennsylvania: Carpenters, Electricians, Pipefitters, Painters, Machinists, Industrial Maintenance Technicians, Masons, Line workers, Welders, and more.

In addition to available tax benefits and workforce development grants in some states, Registered Apprenticeship benefits employers by providing them with a competent pipeline of skilled workers with industry-specific training and hands-on experience. Registered Apprenticeship programs are customizable to match employers' needs, and highly flexible to always meet employers' changing requirements. For businesses, investing in RA demonstrates a commitment to the future success of the organization and the industry as a whole.

For workers, RA provides the opportunity to "earn while you learn." It enables a person to collect a paycheck while receiving the classroom education and hands-on training necessary to obtain an industry-recognized credential and skills that will lead the individual to a successful, long-term career. More recently, RA programs offer participants the ability to receive college credit for the technical knowledge they acquire, thereby combining skills attainment with college achievement leading to even greater career opportunities.

Background on Registered Apprenticeship in Pennsylvania

Currently in Pennsylvania, there are approximately 14,000 apprentices in the pipeline training in 200 occupations. This number is down drastically from the 18,000 that were registered in previous years, presumably due to a drop off in the building trades industry during the recent recession. Roughly 70% of the RA programs in Pennsylvania are within the building trades sector. However, after a long-period of

inattention, manufacturing programs are now showing signs of renewal as employers begin to realize the benefits of "growing their own."

Pennsylvania is currently a "SAC state," meaning that the registered apprenticeship programs within PA are reviewed and approved by the "State Apprenticeship Council" (SAC). The State Apprenticeship Council currently operates out of the Bureau of Labor Law Compliance within the PA Department of Labor & Industry. Pennsylvania is unique in that the USDOL–Office of Apprenticeship (OA) provides Pennsylvania with approximately 5 individuals to act as apprenticeship training field staff. These field representatives are critical in reaching out to employers and educational providers to inform them about the opportunities and benefits of registering their apprenticeships with the state, as well as assisting in the registration process. However, they are not Commonwealth employees, and therefore, must operate under the direction and regulations of the Pennsylvania SAC. The PA SAC and L & I do not provide promotional or marketing materials or manpower to assist in educating Pennsylvania employers about the existence of the State Apprenticeship Council and the RA program benefits.

While it would seem logical for the SAC and Workforce Development to work hand-in hand since BWDP and the PA WIB administer the state's workforce development and training programs, the two have struggled to communicate and collaborate effectively in order to develop a statewide strategy for increasing RA programs. At the apprenticeship action planning committee, it was mentioned that with the knowledge, expertise, and resources available through the SAC, BWDP, and the PA WIB, with the help and cooperation of the USDOL–OA staff, Pennsylvania is well-positioned to begin developing a comprehensive plan for promoting and executing a push for increasing the number of RA programs during this time when employers are starved for skilled workers that meet their employment needs and requirements.

Long-Term Vision for Registered Apprenticeship

Pennsylvania has the opportunity to fully develop a system of secondary and post-secondary education and employment services that effectively promotes the opportunities available to both youth and adults by entering into a Registered Apprenticeship program; a program that allows them to earn wages while receiving classroom and hands-on training and leads to industry-recognized credentials and a pathway to a long-term career. In addition, it is critical for Pennsylvania employers to gain a clear understanding of the services available to them through the Office of Apprenticeship and Labor & Industry and encourage their participation in the registered apprenticeship program as means of growing their human capital and increasing their bottom line and overall market competitiveness. This must be a two-sided approach to increase the number of RA programs while simultaneously encouraging young people and adults to enroll in an apprenticeship program. Finally, small- to medium-sized employers may be encouraged to come together with others in their local industry sector to cooperate in developing a multi-employer sponsorship of common training needs for their RA participants.

Long-Term Vision for Alignment of Services and Resources

Long-term, the action planning team envisioned a registered apprenticeship system that utilizes the K-12 school system to educate students and parents about the opportunities available through Pennsylvania's RA program. Some of Pennsylvania's critical industries, such as manufacturing and utilities, are facing severe shortages looking toward the year 2020, and without a skilled and competent pipeline of workers to fill vacancies left by mass retirements and improved technologies, these industries could find themselves crippled by an insufficient number of workers to remain competitive.

In addition, the strong network of Career and Technology Centers in Pennsylvania is perfectly positioned to collaborate with RA programs by providing classroom courses to apprentices of all ages. The flexibility

and accessibility of CTCs enables adult students to attend classes at night for relatively low costs. It is the hope of the planning committee that articulation agreements between CTCs and Community Colleges will provide apprentices the opportunity to continue their learning with the goal of obtaining an associates or bachelor's degree without having to repeat courses.

Finally, Pennsylvania's industry partnerships include a network of over 3,800 employers. By collaborating with the industry partnerships, the PA Apprentice Council will have access to a system and an infrastructure that encompasses 11 targeted industries and over 75 partnerships statewide. Ultimately, the goal is to create a lasting connection between workforce development and the Office of Apprenticeship in order to leverage one another's resources and share information that can inform the goals and objectives of both departments.

Sample Frameworks for Strategic Alignment

The Manufacturers' Association of South Central PA, New Century Careers out of Pittsburgh, and the Precision Machining Institute in Meadville have joined forces with their local advanced manufacturing industry partnerships to develop multi-employer, regional apprenticeship programs that look to increase the number of skilled machinists and production technicians. With the help of their IP dollars, these programs look to fill current job openings, which continue to grow monthly, as well as the large number of projected vacancies that their local manufacturing companies will experience in the not too distant future.

These programs provide a model framework for the process of identifying regional resources (training providers, career and technology centers, PA CareerLink®, employers, secondary education) and developing relationships that leverage one another's strengths to create programs that "speak" to one another. Training providers utilize the employers to gather information on critical competencies and, in turn, employers are confident in the educational and technical skills and abilities of their apprentices. Similarly, the industry partnerships create a forum for apprenticeship programs to discuss their services with the PA CareerLink®, leading to increased interest and enrollment by unemployed and dislocated workers. These partnerships emphasize the need for workforce, education, and industry to work together to develop a clear understanding of how to build an apprenticeship program that is effective, efficient, and sustainable.

While these programs have done an excellent job of developing systems that respond to employer skill demands with competent, knowledgeable workers, they simply do not have the capacity to meet the projected demand of skilled machinists and technicians that Pennsylvania employers will require in order to remain competitive in the global market. The time to begin focusing on creating and sustaining a more robust pipeline of workers is now and expanding these proven regional best practices across the state is a good place to start.

The Critical Need for Skilled Apprentices in Pennsylvania

By the year 2020, Pennsylvania will be facing a shortage of approximately 15,000-17,000 skilled technical workers in the advanced manufacturing industry within two key occupational categories: precision machining and industrial maintenance. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania simply does not have the training and education pipeline in place to produce the number of skilled workers required. Failure to meet employer needs for these critical occupations will put the state at a competitive disadvantage as our manufacturing companies will be unable to expand, exports will suffer and international businesses will not find Pennsylvania an attractive place to set up operations.[1]

[1] Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers, Manufacturing Skills Shortages: Key Issues and Recommendations, January 2011

Similarly, the building trades industry is projected to grow by approximately 5,000 workers by the year 2018. Currently, more than 36,500 of the 209,148 workers that make up Pennsylvania's building trades workforce is age 55 or over. [2] That is nearly one fifth of the overall building trades workforce. As these aging workers begin to retire, the industry must be ready to fill vacancies with individuals that are both skilled and experienced – experience that can be gained through multi-employer apprenticeship programs that expose students to the technical and soft skills training needed to seamlessly transition into vacancies left by retirees.

Support from USDOL–ETA

The US Department of Labor has stated that Registered Apprenticeship is a key component of our national economic recovery—from green and advanced manufacturing to construction and healthcare. The career opportunities available in green technologies and renewable energy are based in industries with a strong history of Registered Apprenticeship. However, they have made it clear that this cannot be "your father's apprenticeship." States must begin creating 21st Century Registered Apprenticeships—strong models for all industries needing skilled workers and for all workers and job seekers needing a leg up to a better life and a long-term career.

As evidenced by the fact that Pennsylvania's action planning team included 5 members from USDOL, it is clear that this initiative will have the support and guidance needed from our national offices to be well-structured and successful on a local level.

Support from Pennsylvania's Workforce, Labor, and Education Systems

While at the action planning clinic, representatives from local workforce investment boards, industry partnerships, apprenticeship employers, labor-management, and education voiced their support for a statewide approach to better aligning the work of the SAC with that of workforce development and education. All entities offered their assistance and expertise in developing a strategic action plan to increase RA programs while still meeting their regulatory requirements and aligning with the overall missions of their organizations and agencies.

Short-Term Objectives

This section outlines 5 short-term objectives and possible first steps for aligning the work of Pennsylvania's workforce, training, and education systems in order to better facilitate the statewide promotion of registered apprenticeship to our manufacturing, building trades, and energy employers:

1. **Better cooperation and collaboration of Pennsylvania's Apprenticeship Council and Workforce Development initiatives.**
   a. Begin preliminary discussions with the Deputy Secretary for Labor Law Compliance and the Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between the Office of Apprenticeship and BWDP. Secondly, this conversation should explore opportunities for increased collaboration across programs and result in some next steps for moving this initiative forward.
2. **Ensure that increased registered apprenticeship programs would be an industry-driven initiative by gathering thoughts and feedback from relevant industry partnerships.**
   a. Bring the Advanced Manufacturing, Building & Construction, and Energy industry partnerships together via teleconference to further discuss this concept and get a feel for what

[2] Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Industry Employment Projections, 2008-2018 Projection Cycle.

is occurring in their partnerships regarding registered apprenticeship. This call would look to include a number of industry partnership employers.

3. **Ensure the development of a statewide action plan that includes input from industry, workforce, and education & training experts.**
   a. Discuss this concept with the action planning team, the Leadership Council of the PA Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers, and appropriate industry partnerships in order to begin gathering ideas and feedback as to some critical next steps in the strategic planning process.
4. **Ensure the collaboration and support of secondary and post-secondary education.**
   a. Begin initial conversations with the Secretary of the PA Dept. of Education and Director for Career & Technical Education to discuss our approach and explore the feasibility of a joint effort, pending consensus on a strategic approach for initiating the project.
5. **Establish a well-informed and engaged action planning committee.**
   a. Reconvene the action planning committee periodically to provide updates on policy and action items as well as to gather thoughts and feedback on next steps.

The action planning team, which will be provided staff support by the PA Workforce Investment Board, seeks the approval and support of the Secretary of Labor & Industry to move forward with the action items stated above with the intention of presenting a comprehensive action plan to the Board at their October meeting. If approved, the team will look to utilize remaining USDOL–ETA planning funds to support the initiative's next steps.