BUSINESS ACCELERATOR GRANT For Incumbent Worker Training

Call for Submission of Grant Applications to

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB)

## kEY pOINTS:

* The Business Accelerator Grant for Incumbent Worker Training is a **competitive, cost reimbursement training grant** through which qualifying businesses can address employees’ skills gaps. These skills gaps can be a result of a worker's changing responsibilities/requirements in her/his job, or for a worker whose job may potentially be eliminated, and skill upgrading is needed to accept new responsibilities. Incumbent worker (IW) training should increase the knowledge, skills, and/or certifications of workers, and increase the competitiveness of the employee and the employer.
* North Carolina for-profit and not-for-profit businesses with an employer-employee relationship (W-2) with at least five or more employees, that have been in operation for a minimum of one year prior to the Workforce Board’s application date, are current on all federal and state tax obligations, and are financially viable are eligible to apply.
* Training Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum award amount is up to $10,000 per grant.
* The Training Grant is administered through the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board. Applications are submitted directly to the workforce board. The board may request additional information or establish supplemental provisions and requirements for the training applications.
* For each grant application cycle, the MAWDB will set the application due date.
* Only complete grant applications will be considered for this competitive grant process. Incomplete applications may be corrected if time allows prior to the due date or resubmitted the next grant application cycle.
* Application Process and Tentative Schedule

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| Call for Pre-Application Questionnaire (required) | December 27, 2021 – January 7, 2022 |
| Call for Applications | December 27, 2021 – January 14, 2022 |
| Zoom meeting for first-time applicants (required) | January 5-7 and January 10-12, 2022 |
| Draft Application Deadline (required) | January 14, 2022; 4 pm |
| Final Application Deadline | January 28, 2022; 4 pm |
| Application Review | February 1 – February 11, 2022 |
| Award Announcement | February 18, 2022 |
| Deadline for Contracts | March 18, 2022 |
| Deadline for Training Completion | June 30, 2022 |

All applications will be reviewed by the Workforce Board’s Grant Committee. The Committee uses an assessment scoring system for each application. The Committee will make recommendations to the Board on applications for funding. After the Board approves the recommendations, the business will be notified within 5 business day by email and/or phone. The Business Services Representative will have up to 60 days from award notification to prepare the contract. Payment for training that is purchases or conducted prior to the date of the dually signed contract can’t be reimbursed.

**Who may apply for funds?** Any private for-profit or private non-profit business that has five or more employees, been in operation in the State of North Carolina during the entire twelve-month period immediately preceding the date of application, is current on all federal and state tax obligations and that proposes training at a facility it operates that is located in the State may apply. State agencies, local community colleges, labor unions and training providers are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.

**How is “incumbent worker” defined?** An incumbent worker is a paid employee of the applicant’s business who has been employed by the company in NC in an employer-employee (W-2) relationship. At least fifty percent of the employees to be trained must have an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more prior to the start date of training. The remainder of the employee(s) may have less than 6 months employment with the company prior to the start date of training. All employee(s) must be in an employer-employee relationship (W-2) prior to the start of training.

**How do I apply for funding?** To request the grant application and guidelines, contact Barbara Darby at the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board at **(828) 231-6611** or barbarad@landofsky.org. The application and guidelines may also be found at [www.landofsky.org](http://www.landofsky.org) and [www.mountainareaworks.org](http://www.mountainareaworks.org). Once a decision is made to submit an application, the business must complete the Pre-Application Questionnaire. **First time applicants must meet with Barbara prior to the draft application due date to ensure the applicant understands the application.**

**How much money is available?** The maximum funding per application is up to $10,000 for a single business and up to $12,500 for a collaborative application (two or more businesses).

**What types of training are allowable?** Two types of training are available:

• Occupational skills training that is designed to meet the special requirements of a business or group of businesses

• Educational training defined as short courses that address the identified skills gaps and

 could lead to a credential to an industry-recognized certification. The training may include a curriculum course but cannot be part of a trainee’s pursuit of an educational degree.

**What are the requirements for employees participating in the program?** Your business will need to identify the individuals or groups of individuals eligible for participation in the Business Accelerator Grant program. In addition, to be eligible for funding under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, individuals must be: at least 18 years old; and a U.S. Citizen or a non-citizen whose status permits employment in the United States; and if the individual is a male born after 12/31/1959, he must be in compliance with selective service registration requirements. ([www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)). Please see this website for selective service requirements for non-US Citizens.

**When are funds made available?** There will be up to two funding rounds per program year based on funding availability. This program year (PY) runs July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. A Call for Applications will be issued when funding is available at [www.mountainareaworks.org](http://www.mountainareaworks.org) and [www.landofsky.org](http://www.landofsky.org) and through other channels.

**When and Where do I submit my application?**

**A Pre-Application Questionnaire should be submitted by January 7, 2022 by email.** The Pre-Application determines if the community colleges or the Small Business Training & Development Center can provide the training at no cost. This requires a phone call or email to the organizations listed in the Pre-Application. Make sure you have contacted your local community college for possible financial provision of part, or all of the training, and you have provided their responses in the Pre-Application.

**A Draft Application should be submitted in the fillable pdf Word form by email, complete with budget, and an electronic signature on or before 4 pm on January 14 , 2022.**  Draft applications should be emailed to barbarad@landofsky.org. Title your document, “ Name of Company Draft Application 1-12-22 (date submitted). The applications will be reviewed by business services staff. Staff will contact the business for clarification or corrections and notify the business if changes are needed. Carefully review the grant guidelines to ensure that the type training you are requesting is eligible for funding. If in doubt, contact barbarad@landofsky.org.

**The Final Application Deadline is 4:00 pm January 28 , 2022,** Please submit one electronic copy of your signed grant application in pdf format bearing the signature of the business’ authorized representative. Also submit a copy of your Budget in Word as a separate document.

Title your documents as “Name of Company Final Application 1-26-22 (date submitted) and

“Name of Company Budget 1-26-22 (date submitted).

**If my application is approved, what are the next steps?** If your application is recommended for approval by the board’s grant review committee the business will receive notification by phone and/or email within 5 business days of the grant committee’s decision. Following award notification, the MAWDB’s business services department will prepare a contract between the MAWDB and the business/employer) that will serve as the legal agreement for the Business Accelerator Grant. The contract must be signed within 60 days of the award notification.

Purchase of training and training can begin after the Contract is dually signed. All costs associated with the program will be on a **cost reimbursement arrangement.** **No expenditures are reimbursable prior to the contract signature date and no training outlined in the application can take place prior to the contract signature date.** The employer will also need to ensure that performance measures and outcomes from the grant are properly documented. Reimbursement can occur after one or more training components are completed, and the business has submitted required documentation outlined in the instructions.

GRANTS ARE COMPETITIVE AND PRIORITIZED BY THE BOARD REVIEW COMMITTEE AND NO GUARANTEES ARE MADE OR IMPLIED THAT AN AWARD OF GRANT FUNDS WILL BE FORTHCOMING AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION.

The Pre-Application Questionnaire, Grant Application, and Grant Guidelines, will be available at [www.landofsky.org](http://www.landofsky.org) and [www.mountainareaworks.org](http://www.mountainareaworks.org).

 For questions, contact Barbara Darby at barbarad@landofsky.org or 828.231.6611.

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Program

This Business Accelerator Grant opportunity offered by the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is 100% federally funded by the Employment and Training Administration of the US Department of Labor as part of an award totaling $809,990.