

Mass Workforce Issuance

Workforce Issuance No. 07-04

Policy Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Investment Board Chairs
Workforce Investment Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Associate Directors
DCS Field Managers

cc: WIA State Partners

From: Suzanne M. Bump, Director
Department of Workforce Development

Linda Rohrer, Acting President
Commonwealth Corporation

Susan V. Lawler, Director
Division of Career Services

Date: January 24, 2007

Subject: **Availability of the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund Application**

Purpose: To transmit notice of the availability of the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund Application (attached) to Local Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce investment partners.

Background: The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) was established as part of the Workforce Solutions Act/Economic Stimulus Bill of 2006 to:

- improve the competitive stature of Massachusetts Businesses through improved skills for current and future workers, and
- to improve access to well-paying jobs and long-term success for the Commonwealth's residents, especially those who experience barriers to employment success.

Three categories of grants are available:

1. Partnerships applying for sector initiative grants in Healthcare, Travel & Tourism and other critical industries will compete for grants available through regional allocations (cross-region initiatives may be submitted).
2. A total of up to \$2 million will be available for planning grants. Of this amount, a portion will be awarded for direct “planning” activities. The balance will be held in reserve and will be made available on a competitive basis for implementing projects developed from the planning grants.
3. A total of \$1 million will be available to support programs for older workers (age 45+).
 - Of this amount \$500,000 will be dispersed to the regions to support projects that integrate programs for older workers into regional sector initiatives.
 - The other \$500,000 will be available through a statewide competition to programs that specifically propose to serve older workers.

Implementation Grants for Sector Initiative Partnerships

A maximum total of \$500,000 per grant may be awarded for up to three years (renewable yearly) for partnership initiatives specific to a particular industry. Sector initiatives will include a comprehensive investigation of industry and worker needs and development of specific solutions. Sector initiatives must seek to leverage funding and other commitments to sustain the project beyond the initial WCTF grant period.

Planning Grants Leading to Implementation Grants

A maximum of \$25,000 may be awarded for up to 6 months for newly formed or developing partnerships to conduct research or to determine the feasibility of new workforce development interventions. Upon completion of the planning phase, projects may compete for implementation funds (see #2, above). Approximately five planning grants will be awarded.

Health Care Sector

Partnership initiatives in healthcare should seek to enhance employment opportunities from entry level through professional. Healthcare initiatives are encouraged to also address issues of improving workforce diversity to help combat healthcare disparities.

Travel and Tourism Sector

Partnerships should utilize and develop career pathways to enhance employment opportunities in this sector. Projects may include ESOL, connecting youth through school-to-work efforts and customer service for entry level and mid-level workers. Projects may also focus on small business and entrepreneurial needs, such as sales, marketing and management (provided those businesses can demonstrate they employ or plan to employ at least 10 workers).

Action

Required: Please review the attached application. All application packages are due by 12:00 noon, April 2, 2007 at Commonwealth Corporation, 529 Main Street, Suite 110, Charlestown, MA 02129. The submission must include one complete original Application and six (6) copies.

The Application and additional info may be accessed at:

www.commcorp.org/sectorstrategy

For interested parties, WCTF Bidders' Conferences have been scheduled for:

February 5, 2007	February 7, 2007	February 8, 2007
American red Cross	Banknorth Building	Crittenton Women's Union
Worcester	Springfield	Boston
1:00 – 4:00 pm	9:30 am – 12:30 pm	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Inquiries: Please direct all inquiries to: Eileen Haggerty, Director of Sector Strategies, ehaggerty@commcorp.org or 627-727-8158, ext. 2265.