



Workforce Issuance

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☐ Policy ☒ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
MassHire Workforce Board Chairs
MassHire Workforce Board Directors
Title I Administrators
MassHire Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
MDCS Operations Managers

cc: WIOA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
MassHire Department of Career Services

Date: December 21, 2018

Subject: **Apprenticeship Expansion - Innovation Grant RFR**

Purpose: To notify MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Center Operators and other local workforce partners of an Apprenticeship Expansion Innovation Grant RFR available through [CommBuys Operational Services Division](#).

Background: In June 2018, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) published the [Apprenticeship Expansion Plan](#), a strategic planning document compiled with inputs from and the support of multiple education, business, labor, legislative, and community partners. The goals of the strategic plan are to expand Registered Apprenticeship to the Commonwealth's priority industries: **healthcare, advanced manufacturing and technology**; and to **diversify** the apprenticeship workforce. The statewide priority industries listed above were determined via the Workforce Skills Cabinet's [Regional Planning Process](#).

In order to support the goals of the Apprenticeship Expansion Plan, Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Legislature approved a first time line item, 7003-0151. Innovation grants will be issued in accordance with this line item and the

Apprenticeship Expansion Plan. The purpose of this grant is to support the following components of the Expansion Plan:

Category 1: Pre-Apprenticeship Standards and Pipelines

One Applicant organization will be selected to review and propose a plan to align existing pre-apprenticeship standards and programs within the Department of Labor Standards' Division of Apprentice Standards across priority industries, at a minimum (as referenced above in Purpose of Procurement).

Category 2: Build Sponsor Capacity & Expertise

One/two applicant organization(s) will be selected to act as a statewide intermediary or "sponsor network" for companies in 1) healthcare and 2) advanced manufacturing and develop and manage Registered Apprenticeship models on behalf of individual companies.

Category 3: Challenge Grants

The Apprenticeship Expansion Plan identified a number of challenges to expanding apprenticeship. Rather than pre-determining solutions to articulated challenges, this portion of the RFR is seeking respondents to develop creative, robust, outcome-oriented solutions that will support the recommendations outlined in Section VIII of the Apprenticeship Expansion Plan. Specifically, EOLWD is looking for flexible, innovative solutions to the following challenges:

Lack of a diverse apprenticeship talent pipeline. EOLWD seeks to diversify the apprenticeship workforce pipeline to ensure that all Commonwealth citizens have the opportunity to participate in self-sustaining jobs.

Lack of simple pathways and transferability. Apprenticeship programs do not always culminate in an industry credential, certificate, or Associate's degree. Aligning work processes with credit-bearing programs would qualify students for Pell, Mass Grants, or other sources of funding, and would increase incentives for apprenticeship program participation.

Lack of consistent, streamlined marketing and communications targeting jobseekers and employers. Existing promotional materials do not entirely capture the value of apprenticeship for employers and apprentices. Furthermore, apprenticeship in general is perceived as limited to the building trades, exclusive to traditionally "blue collar" jobs, targeted towards males, or exclusive to unions. Shifting this narrative is critical to engaging more employers and jobseekers in this model.

Action

Requested: Please review and share this opportunity as appropriate.

Effective: Immediately. RFR posted December 20, 2018. The Bid Opening Date is 01/23/2019. Bid Number [BD-19-1043-DA001-32500-34053](#)