



# Arkansas Department of Career Education Adult Education Division

## 2015-2016 Program Year

## Competitive Mini Grant Application

FOR

## Workplace Education

\*Proposals must be submitted no later than **4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 4, 2016.**

## WORKPLACE EDUCATION PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION TITLE PAGE

(July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016)

|                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Program:</b>            | <b>Telephone:</b>              |
| <b>County(ies) Served:</b> | <b>E-Mail:</b>                 |
| <b>Contact Person:</b>     | <b>Fax:</b>                    |
| <b>Job Title:</b>          | <b>Requested Grant Amount:</b> |

**Instructions:** Complete the contact information above and return this form with the application. The awarded agency that fails to provide project deliverables, meet performance measures and goals, and/or complete tasks as specified within the grant will result in a partial payment and/or nonpayment, as appropriate.

**LEA's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Director's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Access and Equity:

The recipient will comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. (These include but are not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [P.L. 88-352], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended [20 U.S.C. 1681-1683 and 1685-1686], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [29 U.S.C. 794], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended [42 U.S.C. 6101-6107], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

# Workplace Education Planning Grant

## Introduction:

Workplace education grants funded by the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division provide support to education providers, in partnership with businesses and labor organizations, to meet current and escalating skill demands on the incumbent workforce. Workplace Education classes are designed to ensure that residents in Arkansas communities are able to receive the tools they need in order to compete in an ever-changing economy. Offering classes at the workplace increases the possibility of fitting learning into adults' busy schedules. Education programs at the workplace provide workers with contextualized language, literacy, and related skills instruction so they can maintain employment, advance on the job, and interact more fully in their work, family, and community lives.

Recognizing that the quality of the workforce is their competitive edge, business leaders realize that they cannot let worker skills become outdated. Enhancing worker skills is the way to retain relevance in a marketplace that is increasingly competitive and located in a state that depends on a highly skilled workforce. By offering basic skills instruction integrated with work-related content, these programs provide benefits for both the worker and the employer. Worker/students are engaged more effectively and their skills become more immediately relevant, thereby increasing their potential for job advancement.

Grants are awarded to provide instructional services to those with skills below the postsecondary level, from basic literacy or beginning English language proficiency through the skill level expected of a high school graduate. Each workplace, however, presents its own set of language and literacy needs depending on its employee population; workplace education classes are custom designed to meet these needs.

## Purpose:

The Workplace Education Grant aims to:

- Support partnerships of education providers, businesses and unions (in cases of business whose workers are represented by a collective bargaining agreement).
- Conduct workplace needs analysis and workplace education program design activities to determine whether there is sufficient need, demand and capacity for workplace education services at one or more workplaces.

## Key Components of a Successful Workplace Education Project:

- Analyzes the overall educational needs of workers within a business/union/organization;
- Looks for potential barriers to the success of a workplace education program and develops strategies to overcome potential barriers to the program;
- Evaluates the language, literacy, and numeracy skills needed for the range of job categories;
- Examines oral and written communication systems of the workplace, including use of workers' first languages, bilingual resources, and how workers perform their jobs; and
- Investigates the readiness of the partnership to sustain a multi-year basic education program.

## The Workplace Needs Assessment

Once the adult education provider identifies a committed business partner to explore the needs for a workplace education program, the partners jointly conduct a workplace needs analysis (WNA). When using principles of an ethnographic approach, means WNA team members keep open minds as they explore what is needed in the workplace. Through data collection activities, WNA participants are encouraged to express their own perspectives and these are recorded as such. This process, which may take between 3 and 5 months, allows stakeholders, in a neutral manner, to investigate the educational needs within the organization and identify the organizational and other assets needed to support an education program.

The WNA Team determines a method of introducing the WNA process and the possibility of a future education program to the entire workforce. At this early stage, the WNA team clarifies its purpose to the larger workforce and identifies data collection activities. Most teams will consider data collection options such as focus groups, one-on-one interviews, written surveys, questionnaires or online surveys.

It is essential that the WNA team ensures all feedback is kept confidential and communicates that confidentiality policy to the workforce. No classes should be promised at the start of the planning process. This initial step may help to dispel uneasiness when the process to elicit input from work groups begins. The information collected will determine the readiness of the business to establish an education program and will ultimately be used to design a strong program.

During the Workplace Needs Analysis engagement process, partners should:

- Identify specific program issues by talking to faculty, students and community members.
- Study enrollment patterns, retention and promotion data.
- Establish session lengths based on student data.
- Develop curriculum and exit criteria for the designated sessions. Faculty involvement is essential.
- Plan a pilot with enthusiastic faculty at one site. Learn what works and what needs to be adjusted before expanding the program.
- Remember it is a pilot. Remove administrative threats [for example, canceling classes with low attendance]. This will allow teachers to focus on successful implementation strategies.
- Develop an atmosphere where change is an ongoing process to meet student, faculty, administration and community needs. If there aren't changes, then managed enrollment becomes a stagnant product rather than a process.

### **Required Partners:**

Partnerships must include at least one Arkansas-based business (employer) and at least one Arkansas-based adult education provider. If the employees targeted for workplace education services are represented by a collective bargaining agreement, the partnership must also include the relevant labor organization(s). Planning grant activities must include an evaluation of the readiness of the partnership to support an on-site multi-year ABE/ESL contextualized workplace education program. Each partner must sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining their roles and responsibilities during the Planning Grant phase of the project. A sample MOA for the Planning Grant phase is provided in Appendix A.

### **Target Population:**

The Workplace Education Grants are intended to serve workers 16 and older who are not currently enrolled in high school, and

- have not earned a high school credential, or
- lack the academic skill level of a high school graduate (as determined by the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores) or
- have English language skills that limit their ability to advance professionally or educationally (as determined by Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus or TABE Clas E assessment)

Therefore, Planning Grant activities must be focused on needs analysis and program design associated with workplace education services for this population.

### **Instruction:**

Contextualized curriculum is the cornerstone of an effective workplace education program. At many work sites, workers are placed in classes according to their shift schedules with their educational skill level needs a secondary consideration. Multi-level groups also result because workplaces only offer one or two classes into which interested students go. Teachers must base instructional methodologies and strategies on a foundation of research and effective practice. In addition, the program's curriculum and its components must be informed by the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education.

### **Release Time:**

Release time is the paid time the employer agrees is available for the workers to attend class. While release time is not required, it is highly recommended. Some employers offer 100% release time; this level of commitment provides the best incentive for employees to attend classes. In this example, the workers attend class on company time during normal business hours.

Other employers are able to offer 50% paid release time for class participation. For example, if a class runs for two hours, the business may cover one hour of pay and the employee is expected to attend for one hour on his or her own time.

If release time is not possible or practical because of heavy workload periods, lean staffing, or complications with scheduling, some businesses offer stipends to employees to attend class, applying the same formula as release time: the employer pays one hour to the employee for attending class and the employee attends class for one hour on his or her own time.

A partnership not able to offer release time must identify strategies to ensure students will attend every class and persist over time. Offering classes during the workers' lunch time is not a recommended option, although it can be considered in some limited situations.

Choosing a class meeting time is specific to the realities of the industry and site. Generally, class times are chosen when the most number of people can attend. An example of 50% release time sometimes this happens when one shift ends and another begins. For example, a 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. class time can work for the 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. shift as well as the 3:00 p.m. - 11:00

p.m. shift. Employees from the 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. shift are released at 2:00 p.m. for class. Employees of the 3:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. shift arrive to work for class at 2:00 p.m. and start work at 4:00 p.m. In both scenarios, students receive one hour of release time for every 2 hours of class.

Note that long-term classes (not short-term workshops) must be offered so that students improve their academic skills. Each industry has its high and low seasons; each workplace has its own rhythms and staffing concerns. Effective class scheduling takes this into account. If a workplace lays off its staff during slow seasons, it doesn't make sense to schedule classes during this time. It is unlikely people will return to the workplace just for the classes, and attendance will be severely affected.

Partnerships are required to:

- offer classroom instruction with a fixed schedule;
- offer the maximum intensity, frequency and duration of instructional services possible;
- provide a minimum of four hours per week of instruction per class; and
- maintain enrollment of at least ten students per class.

### **Eligible Applicants:**

Adult education programs currently receiving state and federal grant funds through the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division are eligible to apply based on the Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) request for proposal. Programs should use the 2014-2015 performance benchmarks for guidance, expecting a one to two percent increase in each area.

### **Number of Awards:**

The number of awards for FY 2015-2016 will be determined by the number of applications eligible for funding through the open competitive bid process. All applications will be scored based on the criteria established in each specific grant's application. Priority will be given to programs that made at least an 80% of the Effective and Efficient performance calculation during the 2013-2014 program year and whose proposal shows promise of sustainability and success.

## **Project Title: Workplace Education & Narrative**

### **I. Need for Project and Specific Evidence of Need:**

Provide a workplace needs analysis (WNA) that includes identification of: 1) workers' goals for participating in such services 2) business's objectives for offering such services 3) work processes and functions currently performed or to be performed by participating workers. Describe the tool and methods that will be used to determine the feasibility of a workplace education program.

### **II. Academic Goals and Learning Objectives for This Project:**

What are the project's overall goals? Project Goals are connected to specific state and national curriculum standards and/or College and Career Readiness Standards in addressing academic need through contextualized instruction.

How will student learning be measured? What outcomes will be achieved? What instructional practices, based on research that has proven to be effective in preparing adult learners in workplace education programs, will be used (cite sources)?

### **III. Project Planning and Design:**

Identify the type (workplace contextualized ABE and/or workplace contextualized ELL) and level of class(es) to be offered. What will be the class design? Where, when, and how often will classes be held?

Describe how the program will solicit student feedback in clarifying how the class content and instructional methods will assist him or her in meeting goals for the class, in their personal lives, and for current and/or future job growth.

How will the project recruit students? What support systems will be provided to students to reduce barriers and retain students participating in the workplace education class(es)? To what extent will supervisors and managers be willing to support workers' participation in such services through paid release time or stipends?

What criteria will be used to determine the qualifications of the workplace education teacher? Describe how the program will develop wait list policies and attendance policies to ensure equitable access to the education program, determine who will be eligible to attend class(es), and resolve work coverage issues for enrolled students.

What business impact metrics and measurement methodology will be used to determine program's effectiveness?

### **IV. Project Timeline:**

Develop a timeline for the planning, design, and implementation of Workplace Education. This should be realistic and comprehensive. Include dates, key contacts and the tasks necessary for implementation. Timeline may also include activities by teachers and students, including a work plan, recruitment plan, training, implementation, evaluation, and sharing if applicable.

### **V. Sustainable Impact:**

Describe how workplace education will be sustained following its initial development and implementation. Future funding for the implementation of the project may be possible but applicants should use existing state and federal funding, leverage new funding through innovation, and braid funding streams to create programs that complement service delivery.

### **VI. Project Evaluation:**

How will the project assess, evaluate and report learning gains of the participants? How often? This plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the curricular innovations to be funded by the grant should identify both formative and summative evaluation tools and activities.

### **VII. Project Budget:**

Include components to be funded by the grant. Also, include all other necessary materials and equipment required, their availability, and alternatives for achieving your goals if grant proposal is not funded. Be sure to include sales tax and shipping costs. Research best prices, and check your math carefully!

## Grant Submission Information

### TECHNICAL/FORMATTING AND APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Number of application documents to be submitted:

- One application with original signatures
- Three identical copies of the original application

**Note:** It is the submitting agency's responsibility to ensure that all three copies are identical to the original. One original and then three copies of that original.

2. Place all application items in the following order:

- a) Application Title Page
- b) Narrative
- c) Initial Budget Page with Narrative
- d) Any proposed invoices for instructional materials and text, equipment, etc.
- e) Grant Rubric

3. NARRATIVE SECTION MAXIMUM PAGE LIMIT: TEN (10).

This does not include any required forms and/or other specified information.

**Narrative Section response format:**

- a) Font size – 12
- b) Margin size - 1" – both sides and top/bottom margins
- c) Double spaced (this does not include charts or any other supporting documents)
- d) Single-sided pages
- e) Complete the narrative using the same sequence presented in the

**Narrative Section.**

4. Secure the original and all three copies individually with a removable binder clip in the upper left hand corner of each document – do not staple or spiral bind.
5. Do not include covers, tabs or other items that will prevent ease of photocopying.
6. Do not submit unrequested materials such as: DVDs, newspaper clippings, brochures, etc.

Proposals must be submitted no later than **4:00 p.m., Friday, March 4, 2016.**

Applications may be faxed, e-mailed, or postmarked by the deadline.

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|--|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>MAILING ADDRESS:</b><br>Department of Career Education<br>Adult Education Division<br>Three Capitol Mall<br>Little Rock, AR 72202 | <b>E-MAIL:</b><br>AdultEd@arkansas.gov | <b>FAX:</b><br>1-501-682-1706 |
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## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

### Memorandum of Agreement: Workplace Education Planning Grant

#### I. Purpose of This Memorandum

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlines the agreement between the partners listed below to conduct workplace needs analysis and workplace education program design activities. The goals of these activities are to: (1) determine whether there is sufficient need, demand and capacity for workplace education services at one or more workplaces and if so, (2) prepare the partners to submit a Learn at Work Program Implementation Grant Proposal. For the purpose of this agreement, workplace education services are defined as Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or English Language Learners (ELL) programs that are contextualized to the industry, products or services of the participating business(es) and either to work functions currently performed by the program participants or to new work functions they are preparing to perform.

#### II. Term

This MOA shall be in effect from \_\_\_\_\_ and shall end on \_\_\_\_\_. This MOA may be terminated prior to the effective end date upon the full written approval of all the partners.

#### III. Partners, Roles and Expectations

List the names of the partners participating in your Partnership. Outline the specific roles and expectations of each partner.

Name of Education Provider : \_\_\_\_\_ will support the program in the following ways.

- Assign individual with expertise in workplace needs analysis and workplace contextualized ABE/ESOL to participate in workplace needs analysis and program design activities.
- Coordinate all Planning Grant activities.
- Convene and facilitate partnership meetings, report regularly to partnership members on outcomes of workplace needs analysis and program design activities.
- Draft for partners' review and submit all required reports about the process and results of Planning Grant activities to the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division.
- If the members of the partnership agree to apply for Workplace Education Planning Grant funding, facilitate the development of the Implementation Grant Application.

Name of Business (es): \_\_\_\_\_ agrees to support the workplace needs analysis and program design activities in the following ways.

- Assign senior level staff to participate in workplace needs analysis and program design activities, including but not limited to identifying classroom space conducive to learning, identifying work relevant materials to be incorporated into curriculum design, and identifying business objectives and developing business impact metrics and measurement methodology.
- Provide paid work release time for prospective participants, supervisors and department managers to participate in interviews, focus groups or complete surveys designed to identify the need for workplace education services and to inform program design requirements.
- If the members of the partnership agree to apply for Workplace Education Planning Grant funding, participate in developing the Implementation Grant Application.

#### IV. General Terms and Conditions

(Outline the general terms and conditions all partners must comply with as a partner in the project, e.g., "Each partner will have a representative attend and participate in Program Coordination Team meetings" or "The terms and conditions of this MOA may be revised or modified at any time during the effective period of the MOA, upon written consent of all of the partners")

**V. Signatures**

Have each partner's representative sign and date the MOA. Make sure the signatories have contractual authority for their organization.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Education Provider (Grant Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of CEO or COO of the Business(es)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date