

\$450M in US Labor Department grants available to expand job-driven training partnerships between community colleges and employers

Grant solicitation is the final installment under four-year, nearly \$2B initiative

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor today announced the availability of the final \$450 million in grants under the [Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training](#) initiative. Over the last three years, these unprecedented investments have helped expand the capacity of the American community college system to provide accessible training programs that connect people to available jobs in growing industries in their communities. These grants are an important part of the Obama administration's job-driven skills agenda and are being implemented in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education.

"Through the first three rounds of grants more than 800 colleges across the country are helping to build strong ladders of opportunity that allow people to secure a foothold in the middle class, while also supporting businesses to compete and grow," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez. "This final round will help scale what works, strengthen career pathways and improve the way employment and education data are used in assessing programs throughout the country."

Previous grantees have leveraged strong partnerships between community colleges, the workforce system, employers and industry groups to transform the way they design and deliver courses through accelerated learning strategies; redesigned curricula; distance learning; work-based training, such as [Registered Apprenticeships](#); and innovative uses of technology to enhance learning activities. This solicitation continues to promote these strategies.

"Community colleges play a vital role in equipping our nation's students with the skills they need to meet the demands of today's careers," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. "This program is not about tinkering — it's about transformation. This is not about getting more students to enroll — it's about getting more students to graduation day and into good jobs."

The program is designed to ensure that an eligible institution in every state plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico receive dedicated funding of at least \$2.25 million. Single institutions may apply for grants of up to \$2.5 million and consortia of institutions within the same state or among institutions that share an economic region may apply for grants up to \$15 million.

This round of funding strengthens employer engagement throughout the grant process. Successful applicants will design programs that are responsive to the workforce needs of multiple employers within an industry sector by working closely with regional and national employers and industry groups. These employer and industry partners will help identify and map necessary skills and competencies, as well as assist in designing curricula, programs, assessments or credentials that will help quickly connect ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be-filled jobs.

The final round of grants will place a priority on three additional goals by making additional funding available to those applicants who propose to:

- develop partnerships with national industry groups or employers to scale strategies across the country;
- engage employers, educators, Registered Apprenticeships and the workforce system to support the development or expansion of state career pathways systems; or
- improve the integration of state employment and education data.

In an effort to scale promising practices from previous grants and sustain meaningful improvements to the community college system, additional preference will be given to collaborations that include:

- in-depth employer partnerships, such as work-based learning and commitments to hire;

- partnership with the workforce system and the network of nearly 2,500 [American Job Centers](#) to help support program implementation; or
- partnerships with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in their local and regional areas, particularly in occupations and industries with expected workforce shortages.

Those interested in applying for the newly available funding should visit <http://www.grants.gov>. The deadline to apply is July 7, 2014.

Eligible applicants include community colleges and other public, proprietary or nonprofit educational institutions that offer programs that can be completed in two years and are accredited by an agency or association recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

All curricula and training materials developed with the support of the grant will be made available for free re-use under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 \(CC BY\) License](#), ensuring that colleges around the country can replicate their promising programs.

General information about the TAACCCT program can be found at <http://www.doleta.gov/taaccct/>.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to read successful applications through the Labor Department's grants database at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/grants/> and to view the online tutorial "Grant Applications 101: A Plain English Guide to ETA Competitive Grants" at http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit.