

ROAD TO CAREERS GRANT

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(For questions, email road2.careers@maryland.gov)

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION RELATED:

1. **Question:** Are non-profits eligible to apply?
Answer: Yes, non-profit organizations are eligible applicants.
2. **Question:** Are Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland grantees eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?
Answer: Yes, EARN Maryland grantees are eligible applicants.
3. **Question:** Are employers eligible to apply for the grant?
Answer: Yes, employers are eligible applicants.
4. **Question:** Will there be multiple application rounds?
Answer: The Road to Careers program is a multi-year investment made possible through a partnership between the Maryland Departments of Labor and Transportation. The Department expects to release \$4 million annually over the next six years, subject to availability of funds. The timeline for the next round of funding is under development.
5. **Question:** Can an applicant subaward funding for case management and supportive services to another entity, such as a Local Workforce Development Board?
Answer: Yes, applicants can subaward funding for case management and supportive services to another entity, including Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB). If an applicant intends to subaward funding for a partner to provide supportive services, details of this arrangement and a letter of understanding between the lead applicant and the supportive services partner must be included with the proposal.
6. **Question:** Are letters of commitment from the union, employer, or industry partners required for Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs?
Answer: Yes. Regardless of the service delivery model selected, applicants must provide three letters of commitment from union, employer, or industry partners detailing their commitment to the project.
7. **Question:** Should all the employers with whom the applicant has contracts be listed in the application?
Answer: Applicants should list any employers that will participate in the project. Additional rows may be added to Question 20 if necessary.

8. **Question:** When does MD Labor need the “intent to apply” notification from interested applicants?
Answer: There is no due date for the intent to apply or a requirement for submission of the proposals. Applicants are encouraged to email intent to apply notification prior to submitting.
9. **Question:** If funding for training is available as a leveraged resource, can an entity apply for these funds *exclusively* to provide supportive services?
Answer: Yes. As outlined in the policy, projects awarded under this program must: 1. train participants in a transportation construction career; 2. remove barriers individual participants face in securing and retaining jobs in these careers; and 3. provide supportive services to participants and oversee delivery of them via a case manager, as needed and as outlined below. However, some of these services may be funded through leveraged resources. The applicant must ensure that the leveraged funding is utilized to support one or more of the three service delivery models outlined in the policy. Sufficient evidence of the leveraged resource should be provided by the applicant. In addition, all applicants must include the required letters of support, as dictated in the policy, and may be asked to provide additional information upon request.
10. **Question:** Do organizations need to have past experience managing or receiving funds from the Maryland Department of Transportation or the Maryland Department of Labor to be eligible?
Answer: No, organizations are not required to be prior Maryland Department of Transportation nor Department of Labor grant recipients to be eligible for this grant.
11. **Question:** From whom should organizations choosing Pre-Apprenticeship as their service delivery model provide letters of commitment?
Answer: If selecting Pre-Apprenticeship as the service delivery model, the applicant must provide a letter of commitment from at least one Registered Apprenticeship sponsor to ensure a seamless connection exists for successful completers to be hired as an apprentice. This is in addition to providing three letters of commitment from the union, employer, or industry partners.
12. **Question:** Can a grantee target a couple of occupations in one application, and then be a subrecipient on another grantee's application to support their specific pathway?
Answer: Yes, an applicant can target multiple occupations in their proposal and also serve as a subrecipient in another grantee's application to support a specific occupation. However, the applicant must assure that each role is clearly defined, and the funding is not duplicated for the same activity. The organization must track the funding and expenditures separately, and the accounting system must be set up in a way to track and identify separately.
13. **Question:** Is a signed contract with an employer considered a letter of support?
Answer: No. Applicants are required to provide three letters of commitment from unions, employers, or industry partners detailing their commitment to the project. A signed contract with an employer does not count as a letter of commitment.

14. **Question:** Is the maximum award for the grant \$500,000?

Answer: Yes, the maximum grant award for the three-year period of performance is \$500,000.

15. **Question:** If our application is not selected to receive funding, will there be an opportunity to receive feedback?

Answer: Yes, MD Labor will provide feedback on proposals not selected for award upon receipt of a written request.

16. **Question:** Is it a requirement for applicants to provide past or current outcome data in the application?

Answer: No. Applicants are able to share current or past performance data as part of the application, but it is not a requirement. Applicants are encouraged to provide past performance and outcome data to strengthen their application.

PROGRAM RELATED

17. **Question:** Is there a link to review all Registered Apprenticeship programs in Maryland?

Answer: All Registered Apprenticeship programs can be found at the Apprenticeship Locator. The [Apprenticeship Locator](#) can be used to search for active Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in Maryland. Not all Registered Apprenticeship programs accept apprentices or partnerships at all times. The Locator tool provides an active list of programs that have indicated that they are open to applicants or public contact.

18. **Question:** How would non-profit construction training programs determine which service delivery model to utilize?

Answer: Applicants should review the requirements of the three identified service delivery models as outlined in the policy and select which model to utilize based on the structure and goals of their program¹. For more guidance, you may find contact information for the training service models included in the presentation document on the Road to Careers web page.

19. **Question:** Can an IET service delivery model be considered a 'stand-alone' service leading to skills, readiness, or employment or is the idea that participants should move from IET into a pre-app or apprenticeship service delivery model?

Answer: Utilizing the IET model can be considered a stand-alone offering or can be developed to lead to a Pre-Apprenticeship or Registered Apprenticeship program. Regardless of the service delivery model, the end result should be focused on the participants entering employment. In addition, the IET can be a

¹ 1 IET

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/IET_Toolkit_Compressed_508.pdf

pre-apprenticeship as long as the components of the IET are present. You may contact dlwdalAELS-labor@maryland.gov for more information.

20. **Question:** Are the other transportation and construction careers not listed in the policy and application eligible for this grant?
Answer: Applicants must target one of the occupations listed in Appendix A of the application. This list reflects those careers that are currently most in-demand. Applications that include occupations that are not listed shall not be considered for the award.
21. **Question:** Is there a link to review the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in Maryland? Do all training providers used for this grant need to have their program on the ETPL?
Answer: Providers that are currently on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) can be found at the link here: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/train/>. However, it is not a requirement that training providers selected for this grant are on the ETPL.
22. **Question:** Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training does not follow the Registered Apprenticeship model. Can the training be offered as Pre-Apprenticeship or IET?
Answer: CDL training can be incorporated into an IET, Registered Apprenticeship, or Pre-Apprenticeship program, but offering alone would not meet the definition of those service delivery models.
23. **Question:** Is IET limited to Maryland Labor's Adult Education providers?
Answer: No, utilization of the IET model is not limited to the Maryland Department of Labor's Adult Education providers.
24. **Question:** Can youth be served through this grant?
Answer: Yes. Youth, including those with disabilities, who have aged out of foster care, or are justice-involved are included in the list of target participants. Applicants should consider any age parameters required for certain occupations when designing their programs, as some occupations may have age restrictions (e.g., requiring participants to be 18 or older for licensing or certification).
25. **Question:** Is there a full list of supportive services? For example, is assistance in obtaining a GED not listed?
Answer: The policy provides examples of supportive services, but it is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Applicants are encouraged to include supportive service offerings that will provide comprehensive and individualized support to meet the needs of the target population.
26. **Question:** How can the grantees interact with MD Labor's existing partner network in delivering services to program participants, as outlined in the policy?
Answer: Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with partners identified on page 3 of the policy to ensure services are delivered to customers that the program aims to support. This includes developing

participant outreach and referral processes to ensure partners are aware of training opportunities and can connect eligible participants to programming.

27. **Question:** Would participants in Registered Apprenticeships need to complete training in the period of performance of 36 months?

Answer: No, if utilizing Registered Apprenticeship as the service delivery model, it is not expected that participants will complete the full Registered Apprenticeship program within the period of performance.

28. **Question:** What would be a reasonable number of people served over the course of the 3-year grant?

Answer: There is no maximum or minimum requirement for the number of participants to be served. Applicants are encouraged to develop a budget that includes high quality training coupled with comprehensive and individualized supportive services that will ensure participants are able to complete training and maintain employment.

29. **Question:** For newly employed participants, how long can this grant support daycare?

Answer: Applicants may provide child or dependent care for newly employed participants subject to the requirements set forth in the policy. Supportive services provided through the Road to Careers grant program should be comprehensive and customized to meet the individualized needs of each participant. Therefore, applicants should determine the length of this supportive service based upon what is reasonable given the participant's individual circumstance and MD Labor will consider it as part of the full application review.

30. **Question:** Would the American Job Centers (AJC) and others like it be acceptable as industry partners, for the purpose of fulfilling the required 3 letters of commitment?

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to partner with AJC staff on participant outreach and recruitment and may provide a letter of commitment from AJC partners. However, this does not count towards the three letters of commitment required from union, employer, or industry partners.

31. **Question:** If selected, are grantees required to track apprenticeships through a reporting portal such as RAPIDS?

Answer: No. Road to Careers grantees report outcome data on a monthly basis on templates provided by MD Labor. Registered Apprenticeship sponsors are required to submit apprentice registrations and updates to the Maryland Office of Apprenticeship using the [registration forms found here](#). Maryland does not utilize the Registered Apprenticeship Program Information Data System (RAPIDS) to track apprentices.

32. **Question:** Is the expectation that supportive services are offered regardless of the service delivery model selected?

Answer: Yes.

33. **Question:** Can a general credential (such as English proficiency) be included in the pre-apprenticeship program, or does it need to be related to a specific career?

Answer: A pre-apprenticeship program should focus on developing the core skills required for a specific trade or occupation. General skills such as English proficiency may be included; however, they should be integrated with industry-specific and occupational training.

For English Language Learners (ELLs) participating in an IET model, language instruction should be contextualized and taught concurrently with the Adult Education and Literacy, Workforce Preparation and Workforce Training components of the IET.

34. **Question:** Where can the applicants find occupations related to the general categories in Appendix A, such as "Construction Laborers" or "Maintenance and Repair Workers, General"?

Answer: Applicants can find occupations under each general category in Appendix A by referring to nationally recognized occupational classification resources. O*NET OnLine:

<https://www.onetonline.org/find/all> OR U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/a-z-index.htm>. Applicants should clearly state the connection between the specific training and certification to the occupations listed in Appendix A.

35. **Question:** If a community college was the Related Instruction (RI) Provider, would an employer or nonprofit be an appropriate sponsor?

Answer: Yes, a community college can serve solely as the Related Instruction (RI) Provider for an apprenticeship program. An employer or other organization can act as a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor, as long as they develop and register "standards of apprenticeship" with the Maryland Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship. Standards of apprenticeship outline how the apprenticeship will function and what role each party – RI provider(s), employer(s), and sponsor – will play in the Registered Apprenticeship program.

Providers, organizations, or employers who are considering developing a new Registered Apprenticeship program can receive free assistance from an [Apprenticeship Navigator](#).

BUDGET RELATED

36. **Question:** Are applicants allowed to use funds for stipends?

Answer: Yes. Stipends, which offer program participants a fixed cash payment, are an allowable supportive service when the grantee has a substantiated reason to believe that the payment is necessary to the program participant's successful completion of program activities. If a grantee wishes to modify their approved plan and budget to include stipends, it must notify MD Labor staff and provide

a written proposal to explain and justify the proposed stipend. MD Labor staff will review the proposal and determine whether the stipend would be appropriate for inclusion as a supportive service

37. **Question:** Can other funding streams be used to leverage the funds?

Answer: Yes.

38. **Question:** What is the allowable admin cost cap?

Answer: Admin costs are 10% of the estimated total cost of the grant.

39. **Question:** Is equipment purchasing and installation for training an allowable expense?

Answer: Potentially, however applicants should review 2 CFR 200 to understand federal requirements around purchasing equipment utilizing federal funds.

40. **Question:** Is leasing or purchasing a vehicle for CDL training an allowable expense?

Answer: Leasing or purchasing a vehicle for CDL training may be allowable under the grant as a direct cost, but prior written approval is required. Prospective applicants are encouraged to review the relevant sections of 2 CFR 200 to ensure compliance (see, e.g., 2 CFR 200.313 or 2 CFR 200.439).

41. **Question:** Will the disbursements be issued monthly or quarterly based on submitted invoices?

Answer: Grantees will submit reporting, including invoices, on a monthly basis. Labor will provide funding on a reimbursement basis upon submission of an invoice.

42. **Question:** Are down payment and insurance support for newly hired apprentices to purchase cars an allowable expense?

Answer: Down payments and insurance for personal vehicles for Registered Apprentices are not considered allowable for the Road to Careers grant.

43. **Question:** For applicants who are using braided funding models for this grant, is there any funding source which cannot be used as a match for this grant?

Answer: Braided funding is allowable under this grant. There are no restrictions in using other funding sources, as long as there is no duplication of funding for the same activity.

44. **Question:** Is there a maximum amount for "cost per trainee"?

Answer: There is no maximum or minimum cost per trainee associated with this grant.

45. **Question:** Are study/teaching modules and aids (such as software) an eligible expense under this grant program?

Answer: Study modules, teaching aids, and educational software may be allowable costs under 2 CFR 200.403, 200.453. The costs must be reasonable and justified within the application and necessary to

achieve the goals contained within the proposal, in addition to satisfying the other requirements under the Uniform Guidance.

46. **Question:** Does the grant allow for a percentage of funding disbursement for awardees upon signing the contract (i.e. 25% at signing)?

Answer: Grantees will be reimbursed on a monthly basis for costs incurred. MD Labor is unable to provide advances.