

New \$100 million America's College Job Driven Promise Grant Program

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I apologize in advance if the following summary is long, but I wanted to give you a full overview. I have read the RFA in detail, and these are the key points.

As we've learned in the past, DOL grants can often be more trouble than they're worth, but that wouldn't really deter me from suggesting we apply for this. I think it would be great if we were better positioned for DOL grants, but we've had difficulty positioning ourselves appropriately in the past, due to weak partnerships with the workforce investment system. Through our previous experience, we learned that performance measures can be really difficult to reach, the reporting requirements are intense, the multi-faceted partnerships are difficult to develop, and the leveraged resources required are significant.

For this opportunity, we must have strong employer involvement from at least five employers. It also requires partnerships with our local WIBs. In this regard, Mt. SAC has been at a significant disadvantage for years. I know that Dr. Scroggins has been working to try to make these relationships better, but I'm not sure of the status at the moment. The grants also require partnerships with economic development agencies, which we do have in place. The San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership is a strong partner, and someone with whom we've worked on grant applications in the past. Each partner must include a letter of commitment or partnership agreement that specifically defines their role and the amount of leveraged resources in support of the program.

This program requires leveraging of resources, and applicants who leverage resources from existing federal programs will weigh more favorably. Unfortunately, we do not have grants from any of those programs. In addition to connecting with those grant programs, applicants are required to leverage other resources as well, including in-kind resources from all partners and from other public, private, and foundation sources. The minimum amount of leveraged resources is 25% of the grant amount. So if we were to fall in the \$2 million range (over a four-year period), we would have to match that at a minimum of \$500K.

The grant program is set up with funds awarded based on the number of participants to be served. The following are *minimum* participant goals, and the RFA encourages exceeding these minimum targets. Here's the breakdown:

- \$1-2 million if serving 175-355 participants
- \$2-3 million if serving 355-535 participants
- \$3-4 million if serving 535-715 participants
- \$4-5 million if serving 715-890 participants
- \$5-6 million if serving 890-1070 participants

Another requirement is that grantees place participants into middle- and high-skill jobs during the four-year grant period. This can be difficult to achieve unless a clear pathways program is already in place, with across-the-board employer buy-in of the common skills needed within that career pathway. The program requires that grantees provide tuition-free education to unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers - with emphasis on disadvantaged populations such as low-income, underrepresented in the targeted industry, dislocated workers, and other populations with employment and training barriers - to help them secure middle- to high-skill employment. We have found that this population tends to take longer to complete programs that would lead to high-wage jobs, and have less success in securing those jobs. So it can become difficult to achieve the required outcomes of the project, especially with such a high minimum participant target. Intense case management is required on this type of grant.

Please let me know if you'd like to meet to discuss it further. I see that the proposal is due at the end of August, but a group of partners would need to meet as soon as possible if we were serious about applying. Since the vast majority of work would be done in the Tech & Health Division, we'd want to bring them into that discussion. I don't really know what already exists in a healthcare careers pipeline with LaVerne, so I can't speak to the specifics of how successful such a partnership might be when it comes to this grant opportunity.

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