

Request for Information



**City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development**

**Training Proposals for
TechHire Partnership Grant**
January 15, 2016

Proposals Due by: 12:00 p.m. CST, Friday, February 5, 2016

January 15, 2016

Dear Applicant:

The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is the lead applicant in a metropolitan-wide grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor's TechHire Partnership Grant opportunity (CFDA #17.268). The proposal will improve career pathways for youth and young adults between the ages of 17-29 in the high-growth Information Technology sector.

In advance of the March 11, 2016 application deadline, Minneapolis Employment and Training seeks to select partners to serve as Employment Service Providers, a Workforce Intermediary, and Training Partners. Eligibility requirements and guidelines for these three application opportunities can be found on the City of Minneapolis website: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp>.

Attached is a Request for Training Proposals for prospective TechHire Training Providers. The purpose of this announcement is to select training plans and providers who demonstrate capacity and capability to expand IT-related training throughout the seven-county metropolitan area.

Please consider submitting a plan to provide these services if, your organization meets the qualifications. For more details, please review the enclosed Request for Training Plans.

Proposals are due by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2016.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



D. Craig Taylor
Executive Director
Community Planning and Economic Development



Deb Bahr-Helgen
Director
Minneapolis Employment and Training

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General Information

City of Minneapolis Employment and Training, a division of Community Planning and Economic Development, is the lead applicant for a metro-regional TechHire Partnership Grant application. This federal H-1B grant opportunity, called the TechHire Partnership Grant Program, was released November 27, 2015, by the United States Department of Labor. The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is applying for these funds in collaboration with our regional Workforce Development Area partners, including Washington, Dakota/Scott, Hennepin, and Ramsey County Workforce Service Areas. If awarded, grant funds will provide employment counseling and IT training, business-focused services through a workforce intermediary, and access to well-paying IT-related jobs to residents of the seven-county metro area. Training Partner Proposals accepted through this process will become part of our TechHire federal H-1B grant application, and partners will be listed as eligible training partners to receive funds through this grant source. The full federal grant announcement can be found at: <http://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?oppId=280094>.

Summary of Federal Grant Opportunity: The US Department of Labor will distribute grant funds for the TechHire Partnership grant program. This grant program is designed to equip individuals with the skills they need, through innovative approaches that can rapidly train workers for and connect them to well-paying, middle- and high-skilled, and high-growth jobs. Projects funded by this grant program will help participants begin careers in H-1B occupations and industries which are in-demand and/or high growth. On a limited basis, this grant program will also enable applicants to work with companies on increasing the skills of existing workers in lower-skilled jobs to move into more highly skilled positions requiring technology-related skills.

Goals, Terms and Conditions: Training funds will be directed to: 1) Expand access to accelerated learning options that provide the fastest paths to good jobs, such as “bootcamp” style programs, online options, and competency-based programs to give people the skills required for employment in three months to two years among people with historic barriers to accessing employment and training; 2) Improve the likelihood that those populations complete training and enter employment, through specialized training strategies, supportive services and other focused participant services that assist targeted populations to overcome barriers, including networking and job search, active job development, transportation, mentoring, and financial counseling; 3) Connect those who have received training or who already have the skills required for employment, but are being overlooked, to employment, paid internships, or Registered Apprenticeship opportunities that allow them to get work experience and prove themselves to hiring employers; 4) Demonstrate strong commitment to customer-centered design and excellence in customer experience, so that the programs and services reflect real need of employers and participants, through human centered design methodology and other methods of design thinking; and 5) Ensure that innovations form the basis for broader change and sustainability over time and that a clear strategy exists for adapting to rapidly changing market needs during and after the initial period of the grant.

Response to this Request for Training Proposals DOES NOT GUARANTEE that your organization will be selected to provide training. Those selected will be notified, in writing, by the date indicated in this Announcement. If the City of Minneapolis TechHire Partnership grant submission is awarded, training funded under this grant will follow the individual participant, in the form of tuition payments. This means that City of Minneapolis Employment and Training and partnering workforce service areas do not guarantee a funding level to any one training partner. Training partners will work in collaboration with employers, the program intermediary service, and employment service providers to deliver training in response to business need and to jobseeker demand.

REQUEST FOR

TechHire Training Partner Plans

- I. INVITATION:** The City of Minneapolis (hereinafter referred to as the City), acting through its Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) makes this Request for Training Partner Plans (hereinafter referred to as the “solicitation”) in order to select qualified training organizations (hereinafter referred to as the Training Providers) for providing tuition-funded training (hereinafter called the Project). The Project is generally described in the “Scope of Services” (Attachment A), contained within this solicitation, including descriptions of roles, responsibilities and relationship of the Training Partner(s), City, and other parties involved in the Project. Selected training providers will be included in Minneapolis’ federal TechHire grant application.
- II. PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE:** A pre-proposal conference will be held from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at City of Minneapolis Employment and Training, Suite 200, 105 Fifth Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401. Potential Training Partners are encouraged to attend this conference. Applicants are welcome to submit questions, in writing, by e-mail to marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov, by January 21, 2016, at 4:30 p.m. All questions received by this date/time will be addressed at the pre-proposal conference. Written responses to questions will be posted to the City of Minneapolis web page, at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp> by 4:30 p.m. CST on January 28, 2016. No additional questions will be accepted following this deadline.
- III. PROPOSAL DUE DATE and LOCATION:** Training Providers shall submit electronic and hard copies of their training proposals. Training Providers shall submit an original and eight (8) hard copies of their proposal to City of Minneapolis Employment and Training:

City of Minneapolis Employment and Training
Request for Proposals:
TechHire Partnership Grant – Training Providers
105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2593

Training Providers shall also submit an electronic copy of the proposal via email to the following address: marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov. The email’s subject line should state: “TechHire Partnership Grant – Training Providers.”

The submittal (both electronic and hard copies) shall be made at, or before, **12:00 P.M. CST, February 5, 2016.** **NOTE: Late Proposals may not be accepted.**

- IV. ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS:** Eligible Training Partners are required to be registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, which provides consumer protection for students and prospective students. Two Minnesota state laws require private and out-of-state postsecondary educational institutions to meet state standards to operate legally in Minnesota. More information is available at <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=197>. **Additionally, eligible respondents meet each of the screening criteria included on page 8 (Attachment**

B) to this solicitation. Please do not submit an application unless all eligibility screening criteria have been met.

V. PROPOSAL CONTENT: Training Providers shall supply the appropriate information in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the evaluation criteria have been satisfied. To allow for easier comparison of proposals during evaluation, proposals should contain the following sections and appendices and be arranged in consecutive order.

1. Proposal Cover Sheet (1 page) – See Attachment D.
2. Eligibility Screening Checklist– See Attachment B
3. Bonus Point Criteria and Questions Section – See Attachment C
4. References - List business references from related projects you currently operate or have operated within the past three years.

VI. INITIAL PLAN REVIEW: Proposals will be reviewed and selected for inclusion in the Project’s Human Centered Design process. Evaluation will include:

1. CONTENT: Quality, thoroughness, and clarity of proposal.
2. Training leads to job placement in high-demand, mid-to-advanced level positions in IT
3. All screening criteria (ATTACHMENT B) have been met, and bonus criteria (ATTACHMENT C) has been responded to.
4. Based on responses to questions in ATTACHMENT C: how well does the experience and capacity of each Training Provider meet City and Project-specific objectives.

VII. HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN SESSION: Selected Training Providers will be required to participate in a human centered design planning session for TechHire, scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at 105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55401. Failure to participate in this Project planning session will result in exclusion of the Training Partner from the federal TechHire grant application.

VIII. SCHEDULE: The following is a listing of key Proposal and Project milestones:

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| RFI Release | January 15, 2016 |
| Written Questions on RFI Due by | January 21, 2016 |
| Pre-Proposal Conference | January 26, 2016 (10:30am) |
| Responses to Questions posted by | January 28, 2016 |
| Proposals due by | February 5, 2016 (12:00pm) |
| Estimated Training Provider Selection | February 11, 2016 |
| Required Partner Meeting: Human Centered Design | February 16, 2016 (9am-12pm) |
| Estimated services start date (if grant is awarded) | July 1, 2016 |
| Estimated services end date (if grant is awarded) | June 30, 2020 |

IX. TUITION PAYMENTS: If selected to provide training under this federal grant, the Training Partners will receive tuition payment(s), through this grant funding source, for eligible and enrolled individuals. Tuition payments follow the individually-enrolled trainee.

X. DEPARTMENT CONTACT/REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION: The Training Partners’ primary interface with the City will be with the Industry Relations Manager, who will

act as the City's designated representative for this solicitation. The Industry Relations Manager is the only individual who can be contacted regarding this solicitation before proposals are submitted. The Industry Relations Manager cannot vary the terms of the solicitation.

Prospective Training Partners are welcome to submit questions, in writing, by e-mail to marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov, by January 21, 2016, at 4:30 p.m. All questions received by this date/time will be addressed at the pre-proposal conference. Written responses to questions will also be posted to the City of Minneapolis web page, at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp> by 4:30 p.m. CST on January 28, 2016. No additional questions will be accepted following this deadline.

XI. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS: The City reserves the right to reject all proposals or any Training Provider on the basis of the proposal submitted.

XII. ADDENDUM TO THE Solicitation: If any addendum is issued for this solicitation, it will be posted on the City of Minneapolis web site at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/procurement/rfp>
The City reserves the right to cancel or amend the solicitation at any time.

ATTACHMENT A

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Minneapolis Employment and Training is a division of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development, a department of the City of Minneapolis. Minneapolis Employment and Training has been designated a Workforce Service Area under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, reaffirmed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and by the State of Minnesota. The Minneapolis Workforce Council, which is staffed by Minneapolis Employment & Training, provides strategic guidance for the broad partnerships that make up the local workforce development system – a “one-stop” service delivery system for area jobseekers and employers.

The mission of City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is to grow a competitive workforce through programming aimed at helping youth learn academic, life and work skills, identify career paths, and achieve meaningful employment; and to increase access for adults to resources that further career success, whether skills training to gain sustainable and stable employment or career counseling for rapid reentry to the workforce.

The collective goal is to build a workforce with the skills employers seek, in order to help strengthen and maintain the area’s economy. Employers benefit by hiring workers with the skills they need for business success; workers benefit by achieving and maintaining economic self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. A primary responsibility of the Minneapolis Workforce Council is guidance and oversight of employment and training programs administered by the City of Minneapolis.

To further these goals, the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is the lead applicant in a metropolitan-wide grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor’s TechHire Partnership Grant opportunity (CFDA #17.268). The proposal will improve career pathways for youth and young adults between the ages of 17-29 in the high-growth Information Technology sector.

In advance of the March 11, 2016 application deadline, Minneapolis Employment and Training seeks to select partners to serve as Employment Service Providers, a Workforce Intermediary, and Training Partners. Eligibility requirements and guidelines for these three application opportunities can be found on the City of Minneapolis website: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/procurement/rfp>.

The City of Minneapolis is applying for these funds in partnership with the Metro Workforce Investment Board, consisting of the following Workforce Service Areas: Minneapolis Employment and Training, Anoka County Job Training, Dakota-Scott County Workforce Services, Hennepin-Carver Workforce Council, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, and Washington County Workforce Center. If awarded, grant funds would provide employment counseling and IT training, leading to well-paying jobs in the IT industry, to residents of the seven-county metropolitan area serviced by these workforce service areas.

The full federal grant announcement can be found at: <http://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?oppId=280094>. Information on the national TechHire initiative can be found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/technology/techhire>.

Response to this solicitation DOES NOT GUARANTEE that your organization will be selected to provide workforce training services. The selected Contractor will be notified, in writing, by the date indicated in this solicitation. The City of Minneapolis' funding for training is contingent upon receipt of the proposed federal award. This means that City of Minneapolis Employment and Training and partnering workforce service areas do not guarantee any funding level to responders of this solicitation.

It is the intent of this document to outline the general services of Training Partners, but by no means is it conclusive or exhaustive. This solicitation is asking Training Partners to provide a training plan, explaining how they propose to deliver workforce training services to facilitate job placement in the IT sector throughout the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region. Those initially selected through this process will participate in human centered design sessions both pre-award, and during Project implementation (if awarded).

ATTACHMENT B

ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

To be eligible to provide training under the TechHire grant application, Training Providers must indicate they meet each screening criteria in the table below. Please indicate “yes” or “no” for each required criteria.

If you are not able to respond “yes” to each criteria, STOP. You are not eligible to respond to this solicitation.

| Response | Screening Criteria: all are required to continue with application |
|----------|--|
| Yes/No | 1. Contextualized, experiential learning: Training programs incorporate experiential learning opportunities, ranging from class projects to internship (paid or unpaid) to formal apprenticeship into IT training. |
| Yes/No | 2. Accelerated training, short-term training modules, or modified schedules: Partners are open to providing training outside of the traditional academic calendar, on weekends, evenings, etc. |
| Yes/No | 3. Training can be delivered at multiple, satellite locations throughout the 7-county metropolitan area: Planned IT training will need to be delivered throughout the metro region. Therefore, partners should be prepared to offer training off-campus, on an as-needed basis, and in response to business and industry demand. |
| Yes/No | 4. Equity focus: Recruiting is focused on diverse populations |
| Yes/No | 5. Employer engagement: Training providers regularly convene business advisory panels, solicit feedback from employers, and connect graduates to employer networks |
| Yes/No | 6. Articulation to formal educational programs: Substantial transfer of short-term training programs to certificate, diploma or degree programs, preparing participants to complete formal education; options could include CLEP testing, portfolio development and review, credit hours agreements among training partners; customized credit, or other. Applicants must show current articulation, or a plan to complete articulation within the first year of the grant. |

IF YOU HAVE INDICATED “Yes” to each of the above, you are eligible to continue your application. Please proceed to ATTACHMENT C.

ATTACHMENT C

Bonus Point Criteria and Questions Section

Please indicate “Yes/No” to each of the items included in this “Bonus Point Criteria” table, noting that each item has been assigned a maximum point value.

For each “Yes” response, please provide detailed information on page 10, within your written training plan, and in response to the specified questions.

| | Bonus Point Criteria | Points (for City of Minneapolis use only) |
|--------|---|---|
| Yes/No | 1. Condensed, full-length semester (or trimester) programs that lead to a diploma or degree | Bonus points: up to 15 Score: |
| Yes/No | 2. Stackable, portable, third-party verified, industry-recognized credentials | Bonus points: up to 10 Score: |
| Yes/No | 3. Scholarships, sliding tuition fee scales, educational grant eligibility, and other programs to make training accessible. | Bonus points: up to 20 Score: |
| Yes/No | 4. WIOA Certified Training Program | Bonus points: up to 10 Score: |
| Yes/No | 5. Incumbent Worker Training Experience/Customized Training Solutions | Bonus points: up to 15 Score: |
| Yes/No | 6. Track record of successful programming for 17-29 year old out-of-school youth, with barriers to employment, who enter training programs with little/no education related to IT | Bonus points: up to 20 Score: |
| Yes/No | 7. Referral networks and pipeline to high schools, adult education, etc., in order to attract nontraditional students to courses | Bonus points: up to 10 Score: |
| | | Total: |

Responder Questions:

Please submit a training plan, in the form of responses to the questions listed below. Your plan is limited to eight pages (or less), in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Additional attachments do not count against the 8-page limit (see question C). **Label your responses A-M, aligning with each of the questions on pages 10-11.**

Total possible points: 140

- A. (required: no point award) Describe short-term, accelerated training, modularized curriculum, or modified schedules, in detail.** (Refer to ATTACHMENT B, Question number two).
- B. (required: no point award) Training can be delivered at multiple, satellite locations throughout the 7-county metropolitan area:** (Refer to ATTACHMENT B, Question number three). **Please describe your plan for training locations.**
- C. (required: no point award) Articulation to formal educational programs:** (Refer to ATTACHMENT B, Question number six). Substantial transfer of short-term training programs to certificate, diploma or degree programs, preparing participants to complete formal education; options could include CLEP testing, portfolio review, credit hours agreements among training partners; customized credit, or other. Applicants must show current articulation, or a plan to complete articulation within the first year of the grant.

Present detailed information on articulation to degree pathways and post-secondary diploma/degree completion, including post-secondary diploma, associations, bachelors, and master's degree completion. Include the names of institutions and degree programs your training articulates to, as well as the number of credits articulated, and the articulation method(s). Please attach an articulation pathway chart(s) to this application (attachments do not count toward the page limit) clearly laying out pathways.

BONUS CRITERIA DETAILS: For each of the bonus criteria marked "YES," (Refer to ATTACHMENT C, Questions numbered 1-7), please provide detail. The maximum points for each question are noted. If you selected "No," then no response is required.

- D. (15 points possible)** Condensed, full-length semester (or trimester) programs that lead to a diploma or degree
- E. (10 points possible)** Stackable, portable, third-party verified, industry-recognized credentials
- F. (20 points possible)** Scholarships, sliding tuition fee scales, educational grant eligibility, and other programs to make training accessible.
- G. (10 points possible)** WIOA Certified Training Program
- H. (15 points possible)** Incumbent Worker Training Experience/Customized Training Solutions
- I. (20 points possible)** Track record of successful programming for 17-29 year old out-of-school youth, with barriers to employment, who enter training programs with little/no education related to IT
- J. (10 points possible)** Referral networks and pipeline to high schools, adult education, etc., in order to attract nontraditional students to courses

To date, TechHire has focused on preparing individuals for work as software coders/developers, help desk associates, and computer network/support technicians.

We are interested in expanding our IT training to include additional, high-growth and in-demand occupations. With this in mind, please address the following (K-M):

- K. (20 points possible)** Describe your plan to move individuals through training and into mid-to-high skill occupations in IT.
 - a. Which in-demand occupations are your programs designed to train for?
 - b. What level of math/reading/other academics are required for entry into your programs?
 - c. What additional criteria is used to determine training program readiness?
 - d. What are the basic goals of your training, specific to IT-related skills and competencies
 - e. Describe job placement outcomes for your graduates (include specific jobs, salaries, etc.)
 - f. Please give information on your partnerships and collaborations with business associations, nonprofit organizations, other institutions of higher education, etc.

- L. (10 points possible)** Please give a detailed description of your job development strategies, focusing on proactively networking and placing trained participants into well-paying jobs in the IT sector.

- M. (10 points possible)** Please provide your overall plan to serve each of the following target populations. If you do not provide training for these populations, please respond with N/A:
 - a. Individuals with some college credits, but who lack formal education or experience in information technology
 - b. Incumbent, front-line workers who are in need of additional training to advance their careers
 - c. Non-traditional trainees seeking access to IT jobs in demand
 - d. Individuals seeking on-line training

ATTACHMENT D

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <i>Please complete this cover page and attach it to your proposal.</i> | |
| Agency Name: | Contact Name: |
| Director Name: | Title: |
| Telephone: | Telephone: |
| Fax: | Fax: |
| Email: | Email: |
| Address: | Address: |
| Federal Tax ID: (required) | Minnesota Tax ID: (required) |
| DUNS Number: (required) | |

Applicants must submit an original and eight (8) copies of this completed cover page with the proposal by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2016. An electronic copy should be emailed to marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov with the subject line “TechHire Partnership Grant – Training Providers”

Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered.

Proposal Format and Submission Guidance:

- Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted
- The cover page, original proposal, and **eight** copies of each should be submitted in one envelope labeled: **Request for Proposal: TechHire Partnership Grant – Training Partner Plans**
- Proposals should be double spaced
- Font size should not be less than twelve (12) point
- A pre-proposal applicant conference will be held on January 26, 2016 – see RFI for details.

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Authorized Signature | Title | Date |
| | | |