

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
TEXAS INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
LAST UPDATED: 10/8/21

This document lists TWC's answers to questions from Workforce Development Boards (Boards) or Industry Partners about the Texas Industry Partnership Program. We will update this list as additional questions are received.

1. Q. According to the Texas Industry Partnership program (TIP) guidelines, "Boards must provide the signed, written, and dated Agreement(s) to the Agency when they submit applications." Does TWC have copies or sample Agreements available?
 - A. TWC does not have a copy of the Agreement or a suggested sample Agreement. Boards and Industry Partners should develop their agreements, insuring they include all the elements listed in Section 7 of the Application Submission Guidelines and Section 3 of the Application Submission Form.
2. Q. Does the TIP program prohibit training individuals who will go to work for a public entity?
 - A. Use of grant funds for training individuals who will go to work for a public entity is not allowable.
3. Q. Are there limits as to the type of occupations that can be funded?
 - A. The Application Submission Guidelines state: "High Demand Job Training, for this Program, means job training that supports occupations in high demand jobs as identified by Boards." Projects must be focused on addressing needs of one of the following six industry clusters: Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing, Aerospace and Defense, Biotechnology and Health Sciences, Information and Computer Technology, Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products, and Energy. Industries and occupations included under these clusters can be obtained using the Strategic Workforce Assessment Project (SWAP) webpage: <http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/swap/>
4. Q. Can TIP funds be leveraged against Industry Partner funds already expended prior to the grant award date?
 - A. No, TIP funds can only match local contributions of cash or qualifying expenditures contributions made after the grant award date.
5. Q. Can the Board receive more than \$150,000 if (a) the Board partners with more than one Industry Partner, or (b) submits an additional application?
 - A. Each Board is limited to \$150,000 of WIOA funds, per Board, per fiscal year, regardless if the Board partners with more than one Industry Partner or submits more than one application. Multiple applications may be submitted by a Board; however, the total combined WIOA funding awarded to the Board may not exceed \$150,000 per fiscal year.

6. Q Under TIP, which expenditures/services are considered individual training expenditures requiring WIOA eligibility and TWIST data entry? When a Board uses TIP grant funds for individual training or training-related expenditures (requiring assessing “basic” WIOA eligibility) does the Board have to enroll participants in TWIST, and if so, under what activity?

A. If the board uses TIP funds to pay for any portion of training or related costs for individuals, including participant support service, the Board must report those in TWIST.

This includes the following: determining basic WIOA eligibility on all individual participants (trainees) using codes provided within the grant award; recording trainees and their services in TWIST; and performing an assessment on each trainee (Note: the assessment does not need to be conducted using a formal assessment instrument). An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) does not have to be completed on each trainee. A Board may enter a case note that, as a result of an assessment, the determination was made that the trainee would benefit from training in order to become employed. Under TIP, examples of expenditures/services that are tied directly to individual participants include: paying tuition and other fees, course supplies, skills assessments, individual participant recruitment, job search skills improvement, job search, job referral, and other supportive services. If the funds are not used to provide direct services to individuals, then eligibility (basic or otherwise) is not required. Examples of expenditures that are not considered directly tied to individuals include: equipment, consumable supplies, curriculum development, and minor renovation of facilities.

7. Q What Industry Partner-funded activities can be matched with TIP funds?

A. Industry Partner(s) leveraged funds must be used to support direct training or training related costs, e.g., instructor salaries, consumable supplies, tuition, minor renovations and student transportation. This does not include recruitment and outreach activities.

8. Q What is the length of the TIP grant?

A. The length of all projects may vary, and applications can be received at any time during the fiscal year, but all grant projects must have an end date on or before April 30, 2022.

9. Q Can TIP funds be used for “paid work experience” or be leveraged against Industry Partner funds allocated for “paid work experience”?

A. TIP funds may be used for paid work experience. TIP funds may also be leveraged with Industry Partner local contributions of cash allocated for paid work experience.

10. Q Can TIP funds be used for minor renovations to a facility?

A. Grant funds can be used for minor renovations that are necessary and reasonable for performance of the award. Minor renovation cost means changes that neither add to the permanent value of the Property nor appreciably prolong its intended life. Grant funds cannot be used to expand the size of a facility, increase its floor area, or change its function and purpose. In determining whether a proposed change is a necessary and reasonable cost under this project, consideration may be given to such factors as cost, the extent to which the facility

will continue to be used for WIOA activities after the award ends, and the availability of alternative facilities that meet the program's needs.

11. Q. The TWC application uses the term "match." Will the requirements for matching funds have to be followed?

A. Although the TWC application uses the term "matching funds", the required Industry Partner(s) contribution to the TIP is considered "leveraged funds." TWC is using WIOA funds which have no matching requirement; thus, any third-party contributions are considered leveraged funds. Leveraged funds must be for costs allowable under the federal Cost Principles in the applicable OMB Circulars (A-87, A122, or A-21). The Industry Partner must submit periodic narratives on the progress of the TIP and the costs expended during the program. Documentation regarding the leveraged funds expended should be maintained by the Industry Partner and available for audit.

Example: An Industry Partner proposes to provide supportive services (e.g., work boots, gloves, etc.) to the trainees as part of its contribution to the TIP. Participant supportive costs are allowable under Federal Cost Principles and would be an allowable use for leveraged funds.

12. Q. Can grant funds be used to pay a stipend for living expenses or supportive services?

A. Stipends are interpreted to mean cash payments to participants that are calculated based on hours of participation or a fixed amount per participant, which the participant can use for a variety of purposes. Grant funds cannot be used to pay stipends. Supportive services are services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities. Funds may be used for supportive services. Because supportive services are need-based, the type and amount of service provided to a participant should consider the barriers facing that individual student. Support services can be provided only to the extent deemed reasonable and necessary to carry out another priority. Applications requesting 100% support services will not be funded.

13. Q. What information is required from the Industry Partner(s) on the periodic narratives provided to the Boards?

A. The Industry Partner's periodic reports should report cumulative expenditures and corresponding narrative(s) of the service/activities. Also, the report requires the numbers of participants assessed and number of participants trained.

14. Q. Can grant funds be used to pay incentives to participants?

A. Grant funds may be used for necessary and reasonable non-monetary incentives that are in compliance with Office of Management and Budget Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. Part 200). Incentives of a reasonable amount may be provided to participants who exceed minimum program requirements (i.e., participants who achieve or exceed goals that are not considered requirements for participation) of this grant. The value of the incentive should be tied to the size and nature of the achievement and scaled to inspire participants to work toward the associated achievements. Guidelines should be established that identify the types of incentives available to

a participant, activities that qualify for an incentive, timelines within which such activities must be completed to earn the incentive, and if applicable, timelines within which the participant must claim the incentive. Examples of nonmonetary incentives include minimal cost certificates, plaques, ribbons, small trophies, or items to be used in program activities; prepaid credit cards; prepaid merchant gift cards (with no cash-back option); prepaid gas cards; and prepaid telephone cards. Funds may not be expended on entertainment costs or other costs that are prohibited under 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

15. Q. Who are the eligible Industry Partners?

A. Corporations and corporate foundations often wish to make contributions to projects such as this one. Should an employer wish to provide a cash investment, but the employer is not incorporated, that employer is an eligible partner under the terms of the grant. The language can be expanded to foundations, corporations, and private employers.

16. Q. Who can be the training provider? Colleges and other third party? Can the Industry Partner provide the training?

A. Training funded with WIOA dollars must be facilitated by a training provider deemed allowable under WIOA.

17. Q. Must the project benefit a larger group beyond the entity providing the match?

A. To the extent a local project is interested in addressing training needs, TIP will not pay for training for a specific employer. Employers who are interested in training their workforce should contact TWC regarding the Skills Development Program. TIP can fund training projects that are addressing general Pipeline issues to address the needs of certain industries.

18. Q. The discussion paper calls for cash match. Do we mean "in kind" or "cash match"? If cash match, must the board secure the funds prior to drawing cash? If so, the MOU must address this. If cash match, the board would then need to take the cash and procure and purchase equipment, which is slower than if the business entity provides it via in kind. The in-kind model is simpler.

A. The intent is that the contributing Industry Partners provides leveraged funds in the form of local contributions of cash or qualifying expenditures that are used to support grant activities and outcomes that are sponsored by this program. Qualifying expenditure means a project expenditure incurred by an Industry Partner during the grant period that is funded by resources other than grant funds and are allowable under the OMB. In kind matches are not considered leveraged funds.

19. Q. When can the Workforce Board apply?

A. Applications are taken throughout the fiscal year, starting on September 1, 2021 and ending on August 31, 2022. However, if you want to be awarded during fiscal year 2022, you should submit your application no later than July 31, 2022.