



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



UPSKILL: NJ INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING GRANTS

Notice of Grant Opportunity

Fiscal Year 2021

Announcement Date: week of January 11, 2021

Application Deadline: See Schedule of Submission Dates and Times, page 5

Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner

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HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

- The [Glossary](#), which begins on page 6 of this document, provides definitions and additional information for important terms as they relate to this grant, and **contains the specific criteria on which the grant application will be scored.**
- An [NJDOL Business Representative](#) will be assigned to each applicant to provide assistance. This staff member will be your best resource for help and information during the application process and during the contract period of the grant, should one be awarded.
- The [Letter of Intent](#) to apply for this grant is submitted by email to upskill@dol.nj.gov . Incorrect or incomplete information submitted on the Letter of Intent **will delay** processing time and subsequently, the applicant’s access to the online application and assignment of an NJDOL Business Representative. **Please ensure all information is correct.** Download the required fillable form [here](#).
- An online grant management system, The System to Administer Grants Electronically (SAGE) is used for the submission of applications and the management of grant activities. The Authorized Official (AO) must [register](#).
- Links to Required Forms for the online application are within this document and may also be found on the Required Documents page in SAGE. Completed forms will be uploaded on the same page.
- During SAGE registration, the Letter of Intent process, and at any time your assigned NJDOL Business Representative is unavailable, the Customized Training Unit Help Desk may be reached at upskill@dol.nj.gov .
- Should a grant be awarded, [Standard Assurances and Certifications and General Provisions](#) will be a part of the contract between the grantee and NJDOL.

- All submission dates and times specified in the "[Schedule of Submission Dates and Times](#)" are firm.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF GRANT FUNDS:

Take Notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4 et seq., the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (hereinafter "the Department" or "NJDOL") regularly publishes on its website at <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor> all notices of fund availability pertaining to federal or state grant funds, which may be awarded by the Department. The notices of fund availability may be found on the Department's website under the heading "Research & Information" and the subheading "Grant Opportunities." The State of New Jersey is committed to addressing the needs of New Jersey businesses by enhancing the employability of New Jersey residents and building a skilled workforce through work-based learning initiatives.

Name of grant program:

UPSKILL: New Jersey Incumbent Worker Training Grants

A. Purpose for which grant funds will be used:

UPSKILL: NJ Incumbent Worker Training Grant funds are competitively awarded to New Jersey employers to provide up to 50% cost reimbursement assistance to train [incumbent frontline employees](#) to meet the current and future occupational skill requirements of available high wage, middle-skill and high-skill jobs in New Jersey. Grant funds are intended to achieve [measurable outcomes](#) for the employers and the employees trained, "seed" occupational skills training, and support New Jersey businesses in maintaining their footprint in New Jersey and retaining incumbent workers. **Grant funds are not intended for required annual or onboarding training or any training that would otherwise be conducted without grant assistance.**

Types of training include [Third-Party Classroom Training](#), [On-the-Job Training](#) (OJT) and [Company In-House Training](#). The maximum reimbursement rate for Third-Party Training is \$200 per clock hour. Eligible expenses include tuition fees, textbooks, software and examination/credentialing fees. OJT and Company In-House Training, available only to individual employers, is reimbursed at 50% of the base wages of trainees during training.

Amount of funding available:

The projected amount of funding available for this program is estimated to be **\$3,500,000** in fiscal year 2021(FY21). Funding is contingent upon availability and authorization.

Applicant	Maximum Award
Individual Employers	May apply for a maximum of \$100,000
Industry-specific Consortiums	May apply for a maximum of \$150,000 (Participating businesses are capped at \$15,000 each)
Applications for higher award amounts will be considered if NJDOL determines the requested amount is well-supported by the application information and funding is available.	

NJDOL will give priority to businesses currently under a procurement or military contract with the United States Department of Defense, the United States Department of Veteran's Affairs or any branch of the United States Armed

Forces; or businesses who will provide training to veterans; or businesses who focus on the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Consult your NJDOL Business Representative for accepted forms of documentation.

Entities eligible to apply for funding under the grant program:

The grant program is open to the following New Jersey applicants:

- Individual employers, including those operating small to medium-sized businesses;
- An employer organization, labor organization, community-based organization or faith-based organization;
- An industry-specific [consortium](#).

Requirements of applicants:

- Read and understand the Notice of Grant Opportunity.
- Registration of the [Authorized Official](#) (AO) for the grant application in SAGE (the System to Administer Grants Electronically).
- [NJSTART](#) registration
- Accurate planning of project-based front-line employee-focused training which will achieve measurable outcomes through the most cost-effective method of delivery, totaling \$2000 or less per trainee.
- Commitment to retain trainees for at least six months after training is completed.
- If a grant is awarded, notification of the award to the local Workforce Development Board to ensure it is apprised of local business training needs. The assigned NJDOL Business Representative will assist.
- Submission of all required documents and completed online SAGE application before due date and time for the Round as specified in the [“Schedule of Submission Dates and Times”](#).

Required documents:

1. Emailed to upskill@dol.nj.gov: **Letter of Intent (LOI)**: Submitted and accepted by NJDOL by the due date and time for the Round. Download the required fillable form [here](#).
2. Uploaded to the “Required Documents” page in SAGE by the application due date and time for the Round:

REQUIRED FOR ALL APPLICANTS:	REQUIRED ONLY FOR PREVIOUS (3 fiscal years) RECIPIENTS OF CUSTOMIZED TRAINING GRANT FUNDS:
Long-range Human Resource Development Plan	Non Duplication Attestation form
Narrative	REQUIRED ONLY FOR APPLICANTS REQUESTING ISO TRAINING: (consult NJDOL Business Representative)
Tax Clearance Certificate	ISO Letter
Training Plan	REQUIRED ONLY FOR CONSORTIUM APPLICANTS:
FY21Program Conditions form	Participating Companies List
REQUIRED ONLY FOR FUNDING REQUESTS OF \$25,000 OR MORE:	
Development Subsidy Job Goals Accountability Act Application	

1. Program Reporting/Invoicing: (If a grant is awarded, submitted monthly via SAGE, due by the 10th day of each month)
 - a. *The Expenditure Report/Payment Voucher*
 - i. Details monthly training expenses; a “0” expenses report is submitted if there are no expenses for the month.
 - ii. Documentation supporting the expenses, which includes all elements on the [Suggested Trainee Sign-In Sheet](#).
 - iii. Please **do not** include documentation for trainees who do not appear on the Expenditure Report. **Please consult your NJDOL Business Representative about acceptable documentation of training delivered remotely.**
 - iv. Request for reimbursement is submitted upon completion of the course and must align with the contract.

- v. Grantees will be paid on a monthly cost reimbursement method after the submitted Expenditure Report/Payment Voucher has been reviewed and approved by NJDOL.
 - vi. **Before submission of the FINAL Expenditure Report, please contact your NJDOL Business Representative for important closeout instructions.**
- b. *The Activity Report (Dashboard):*
- i. Class offerings
 - ii. The number of classes/sessions provided
 - iii. The number of clock hours for each class
 - iv. The number of employees trained
 - v. The FINAL Activity Report must be completed by the grantee (the AO or other company representative) within 60 days of the contract end date. The FINAL Activity Report **MAY NOT** be completed by a third-party. It should include level of satisfaction with the grant program, assessments of training providers and training outcomes, barriers to meeting goals, best practices learned, status of anticipated new hires and return on investment.

Application process:

1. Determine who will serve as the Authorized Official (AO) for the grant application.
2. SAGE registration by the AO, or if already registered, log in to ensure all registration information is current/update if needed. Click [here](#) to register or log in.
3. Submit the completed Letter of Intent (LOI) to upskill@dol.nj.gov before the deadline; await an email confirming access to the online application and assignment of an NJDOL Business Representative.
4. Upload all required documents and submit the completed online application in SAGE before the deadline.

Address to which applications must be submitted:

1. The Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply must be submitted via email to upskill@dol.nj.gov .
2. The online application is submitted electronically via SAGE (The System to Administer Grants Electronically)

Application submission date:

Schedule of Submission Dates and Times							
FY 2021 Round #	Authorized Official's completed SAGE registration or update of existing account.		Letter of Intent (LOI) submitted by email and accepted by NJDOL.		Online application with all Required Documents uploaded, completed and submitted in SAGE.		Expected Panel Review
	Date	Time	Date	Time	Date	Time	Week of:
1	02/03/21	12:00 noon	02/03/21	12:00 noon	02/24/21	12:00 noon	03/15/21

Panel Review and Rating Criteria:

Panel Review:
UPSKILL: NJ Incumbent Worker Training Grants are competitive. All completed applications submitted by the deadline date and time for each round will be reviewed and rated by a diverse panel comprised of NJDOL representatives who will make funding recommendations to the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. All awards are subject to final approval by the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.
Rating Criteria:
Applications will be scored as follows: A maximum of 25 points may be awarded for the Long-Range Human Resource Development Plan ; a maximum of 75 points may be awarded for responses to Narrative Questions 1 – 3 , for a total of 100 possible points .

Date by which applicant will be notified:

Applicants will be notified of the panel review outcome after the panel review date. Upon completion of all requested revisions and re-submission of completed applications within the required timeframes, applicants will be notified of the final determination of their request when NJDOL’s internal finalization processes have been completed.

Resources:

Please carefully read this Notice of Grant Opportunity. If you have questions, the Customized Training Unit team is here to help through all phases of the process.

- A Technical Assistance Power Point Presentation detailing program changes for fiscal year 2021, eligibility, the application process and program requirements will be available on the NJDOL website.
- Additional Technical Assistance if needed is available by contacting upskill@dol.nj.gov.
- Once the Letter of Intent Process is complete and you have been assigned a Business Representative, one-on-one technical assistance sessions by phone, email or via Microsoft Teams are available. Please contact your assigned Business Representative to schedule. Contact information will be provided by email.
- If at any time assistance is required when your NJDOL Business Representative is unavailable, contact the Customized Training Unit Help Desk at upskill@dol.nj.gov.

Glossary:

Terms defined as they relate to the UPSKILL: NJ Incumbent Worker Training Grants Program

Authorized Official (AO) – This individual must be authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the company. The AO may give access to other company representatives or third parties to complete the application and manage certain grant activities, **but must:** initiate the process, electronically sign contracts, ensure grant-related activities occur as planned, ensure billing is accurate and personally approve any modifications to the contract.

Small Business - 1 – 99 employees

Medium Business – 100 – 499 employees

Large Business – 500 or more employees

Career pathway – Education, training and/or experience which enables trainees to advance over time to higher wage jobs, and/or higher levels of education and training.

Company In-House Training - Instruction provided by qualified in-house company training instructors, in a physical or virtual* classroom to a group or individual.

Consortium – A group of businesses from a particular business sector with common training needs led by a New Jersey employer, or labor, community-based or faith-based organization, or secondary/postsecondary school or training provider. The consortium must be completed at the time of application. **All participating companies must be identified and approved by NJDOL before the application deadline.** A **Participating Companies List** in Microsoft Excel format with the FEIN, contact person and contact information for each company must be uploaded to “Required Documents” in SAGE before the application deadline. No additional participating companies may be added to the consortium after the application deadline. Reimbursement is contingent upon participation of the companies identified and approved.

NJDOL Business Representative – NJDOL staff member assigned to provide direct customer service, including technical assistance, training consultation, expenditure approval and monitoring of grant activities.

Frontline employee - Those directly involved with the production of the good or service produced or provided by the applicant and those who directly supervise or support them.

Incumbent worker – Employees who have completed all required onboarding training and activities.

Industry-valued credential – A recognized degree, diploma, certificate or certification awarded for an occupation or occupational skill that is valued and demanded by employers, transferable from one employer to another and furthers the recipient’s career pathway.

Letter of Intent (LOI) – This required fillable form is submitted by email to upskill@dol.nj.gov to inform NJDOL of the intention to apply for an UPSKILL grant. The submission of this completed form and SAGE registration begins the grant application process. If anyone other than the company Authorized Official (AO) submits the LOI, the AO MUST be copied on the submission email. **Missing or incorrect information will delay access to the online grant application.** See Schedule of Submission Dates and Times for the due date and time for each Round.

Long-Range Human Resource Development Plan – An MS Word document uploaded to SAGE:

For Individual Applicants:

A long-range plan to ensure the availability of an adequate number of employees with the skills and training needed to perform the jobs required to meet current and future business goals as determined by the company’s strategic planning, which is developed through:

1. preparation of a human resource inventory of employees and preparation of a job analysis
2. assessment of future demand and assessment of future supply
3. establishment of a plan for recruiting, hiring, educating, appraising, compensating and scheduling employees

The Plan should include:

1. identification of short-term hiring/workforce needs and the training required for those jobs
2. the expected results of the training for which grant funds will be used
3. strategies for the advancement of current employees and creating new positions for unemployed jobseekers
4. **If applicable, please also include:** If you were awarded a Skills Partnership or UPSKILL Grant in the past three years, how did the previous grant funds impact your business and what measurable outcomes were achieved?

For Consortium Applicants:

A long-range plan to ensure the availability of an adequate workforce with the skills and training needed to perform the jobs required to meet current and future industry goals as determined by strategic planning, which is developed through:

1. preparation of a human resource inventory of employees and preparation of a job analysis

2. assessment of future demand and assessment of future supply
3. establishment of a plan for recruiting, hiring and educating employees

The Plan should include:

1. identification of short-term hiring/workforce needs and the training required for those jobs
2. the expected results of the training for which grant funds will be used
3. strategies for the advancement of current employees and the creation of new positions for unemployed job seekers.
4. **If applicable, please also include:** If you were awarded a Skills Partnership or UPSKILL Grant to conduct training in this industry in the past three years, how did the previous grant funds impact the participating companies and what measurable outcomes were achieved?

Measurable outcomes – Expected results of training. Examples include: skill attainment that advances the employee’s career pathway, pay increases for the employee, industry-valued credentials for the business or employee and job retention.

Narrative – An MS Word document uploaded to SAGE with clear and concise answers to the Narrative Questions:

For Individual Applicants:

1. What is (are) your specific business issue(s)/need(s)?
2. How will the proposed training address the issue(s)/need(s)?
3. What measurable outcome(s) will the requested training achieve for the business and the trainees?

For Consortium Applicants:

1. What are the collective business issue(s)/need(s) of this industry sector?
2. How will the proposed training address the issue(s)/need(s)?
3. What measurable outcome(s) will the requested training achieve for participating businesses and trainees?

On-the-Job Training (OJT) - Hands-on instruction or skill acquisition provided under the constant and direct guidance of a qualified in-house company trainer in the direct production of a good or service. Instruction/guidance may be provided via remote* means.

SAGE – The **S**ystem to **A**dminister **G**rants **E**lectronically is the online grant management system for this grant program. The Authorized Official must register in SAGE and may give system access to others to manage certain grant activities. **Under no circumstances should a SAGE username and password be shared.** Applicants will upload required documents and complete and submit the grant application in SAGE. Should a grant be awarded, grantees will submit monthly expenditure reports/payment vouchers and monthly activity reports in SAGE.

Third-Party Classroom Training - Training provided to a group of trainees in a physical or virtual* classroom by a qualified instructor from a third-party training provider which is located in the state of New Jersey and listed as approved on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL.)

**For all training remotely delivered, please consult your NJDOL Business Representative about acceptable documentation of training.*