

Cross Agency Coordination on Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Funding, General Appropriations Act, Article VII, TWC, Rider 51

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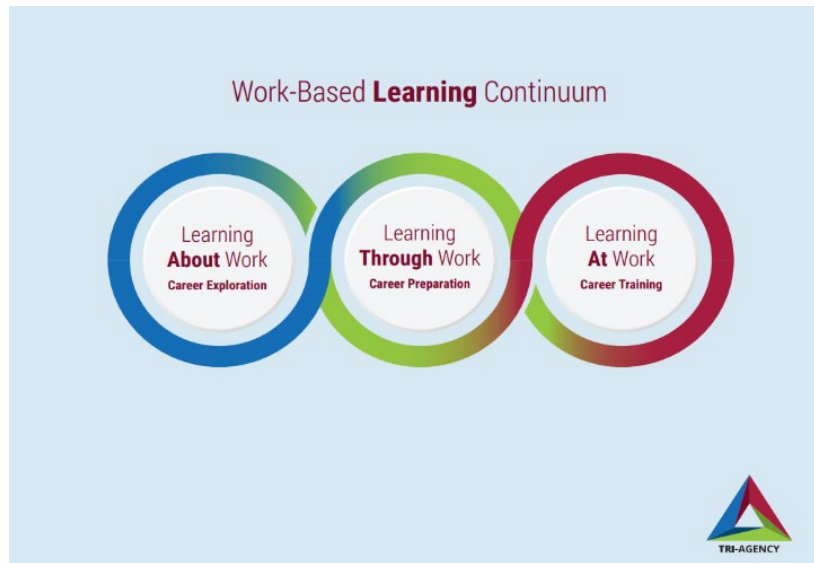
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Introduction

Rider 51 of the General Appropriations Act, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2023), directs Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to gather information about cross agency coordination on apprenticeship and other work-based learning (WBL) funding. The rider also charges TWC to work with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to identify available funding sources for future apprenticeship and WBL programs.

To complete this work, the Tri-Agency partners determined the [WBL Continuum](#) established in the [Tri-Agency WBL Strategic Framework](#) should act as a touchstone for identifying programs and their funding sources. The continuum was created to show that WBL experiences do not have definitive beginning and ending points and do not have to occur at specific times in career and education pathways; rather, WBL is a continuous process. Learners of all ages—whether in a K-12 setting, a postsecondary setting, or a workplace setting—have opportunities to learn **about** work, learn **through** work, and learn **at** work. Illustration 1 (below) is a graphic representation of the WBL Continuum.

Illustration 1: Work-Based Learning Continuum



Distinct examples of WBL opportunities at each of the three stages of the continuum include:

1. Career Exploration: Job shadowing, simulations, informational interviews with employers
2. Career Preparation: Internships, pre-apprenticeships, cooperative education, service learning
3. Career Training: Apprenticeships, on-the-job training, transitional jobs

[Appendix A](#) provides a list of initiatives that fall within the WBL continuum, their target populations, and the funding sources for each. When reviewing the list, it is important to note that funding includes sources that are no longer available or were made available after Fiscal Year 2023 (FY '23). All examples are listed to create a full picture of the initiatives undertaken by the agencies and to demonstrate what is possible as the Tri-Agency partners continue to promote and support WBL opportunities.

Definition of Work-Based Learning and Items Addressed in This Report

This report uses the WBL definition developed by and shared across the Tri-Agency partners:

WBL is practical, hands-on activities or experiences through which a learner interacts with industry professionals in a workplace, in an in-person, virtual, or simulated setting. Learners prepare for employment or advancement along a career pathway by completing purposeful tasks that develop academic, technical, and employability skills.

This report will use select Tri-Agency WBL opportunities listed in Appendix A to identify:

1. the number and types of apprenticeship and WBL programs available in Texas, including a comparison of program participants during FY '22 and FY '23;
2. a list of available funding sources that may support apprenticeship and WBL programs;
3. the number and types of apprenticeship and WBL programs in Texas that are currently supported by more than one funding source;

4. an examination of agency and cross-agency grant making policies and practices that could be amended to allow the coordination of multiple funding sources that support WBL programs, including the use of a common application process; and
5. additional recommendations that allow for further coordination of state and federal funding sources.

WBL Program Participants, Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023

The following table provides numbers of participants in FY '22 and FY '23 for various WBL programs listed in Appendix A¹. A majority of the WBL programs with participant data available show an increase in participants from FY '22 to FY '23.

Table 1: Numbers of WBL Program Participants

Initiative	Agency	Number of Participants FY '22	Number of Participants FY '23
Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship			
Child Care Registered Apprenticeships	TWC	--	100
Critical Skills Apprenticeship	TWC	--	43
DOL Expansion Grants	TWC	1,313	2,132
Explore Apprenticeship 2.0	TWC	25	23
Healthcare Apprenticeship	TWC	--	284
Pre-Apprenticeship Bridge	TWC	--	44
TEC Chapter 133, Related Instruction	TWC	7,187	7,559
Career Exploration			
Workforce Readiness Outreach: Virtual Reality Career Exploration Experiences	TWC	12,374	14,258
Career Preparation			
Building and Construction Trades	TWC	228	140
Internship			
GEER Work Based Learning Grants Emergency Funding for Community Colleges during the pandemic	THECB	20	--
Project SEARCH	TWC	197	191
Skills Training to Employment Project (STEP)	TWC	105 ²	--
Summer Earn & Learn (SEAL)	TWC	2,516	2,952
TXWORKS	THECB	11	30
Work-Study			
Work-Study Student Mentorship Program	THECB	57	50
Upskilling			
High Demand Job Training	TWC	1,657	2,815
Skills Development Fund	TWC	8,477	9,035
Texas Industry Partnership Program	TWC	100	1,448

¹ Data is limited to WBL programs in which participant numbers are reported per grant or program requirements.

² STEP data is cumulative. At the time of this report, 105 customers have completed since the 2022 launch.

Available Funding Sources to Support Apprenticeships and Other WBL Programs

Funding Source	Federal or State	Notes
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To help adults get the basic skills they need, including reading, writing, math, English language proficiency, and problem solving, to be productive workers, family members, and citizens · State Grants AEFLA (ed.gov) · Adult Education & Literacy Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 84.126	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To serve individuals determined eligible for the VR program · State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program Rehabilitation Services Administration (ed.gov) · Vocational Rehabilitation Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To provide financial assistance to low-income families to access child care and to improve the quality of child care programs · Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Resource Guide The Administration for Children and Families (hhs.gov) · Child Care & Early Learning Program - Texas Workforce Commission
DOL Apprenticeship Expansion Grant	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To create or expand registered apprenticeship programs · Active Grants and Contracts Apprenticeship.gov · Apprenticeship Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Grant	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To address critical workforce needs and, in some cases, economic downturns · Grants U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov)
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To provide quality education and equal opportunities for all K-12 students · Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) U.S. Department of Education · Every Student Succeeds Act Texas Education Agency

Funding Source	Federal or State	Notes
Federal Social Security Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (SSA/VR)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To assist individuals with disabilities to go to work · Vocational Rehabilitation Cost Reimbursement Program The Work Site SSA · Vocational Rehabilitation Program - Texas Workforce Commission
General Revenue (GR)	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To carry out activities and meet objectives specified in legislative acts · Appropriated Funds/General Revenue Accounts Texas Comptroller Manual of Accounts Fiscal 2024 (state.tx.us)
Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To purchase and install equipment necessary for the development of career and technical education courses or programs that lead to a license, certificate, certification, or post-secondary degree in high-demand occupations · Jobs & Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Self-Sufficiency Fund Program	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To help individuals obtain industry recognized credentials · Self Sufficiency Fund Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Skills Development Fund	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To train new workers or upgrade the skills of existing workers · Skills Development Fund - Texas Workforce Commission
Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To develop more fully the academic knowledge and technical and employment skills of secondary and postsecondary students enrolled in CTE programs and programs of study · Perkins V (ed.gov) · Perkins V Texas Education Agency · Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education - Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Funding Source	Federal or State	Notes
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To help low-income families with children achieve economic self-sufficiency · Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) The Administration for Children and Families (hhs.gov) · Choices Program - Texas Workforce Commission
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To provide career and training services to job seekers, including job search assistance, workforce preparation, and career development services, and to help businesses find the skilled workers they need · WIOA includes five titles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Title I – Workforce Development Activities o Title II – AEL Services o Title III – Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services o Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Services o Title V – General Provisions · Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov) · Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program - Texas Workforce Commission

Programs Supported by More than One Funding Source

Apprenticeship and other WBL programs currently supported by more than one funding source include:

Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship

- Critical Skills Apprenticeship – TWC
 - o DOL Apprenticeship Expansion Grant
 - o WIOA
- Explore Apprenticeship 2.0 – TWC
 - o Federal Grant CFDA 84.126
 - o Federal Social Security Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (SSA/VR)
 - o GR
- Healthcare Apprenticeship – TWC
 - o DOL Apprenticeship Expansion Grant
 - o WIOA
- TEC Chapter 133, Related Instruction – TWC
 - o DOL Apprenticeship Expansion Grant
 - o GR
 - o TANF
 - o WIOA

Apprenticeship and Internship

- Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH)
 - Foundation School Program (FSP) and GR
 - WIOA
- Work Experience – TWC
 - Federal Grant CFDA 84.126
 - SSA/VR
 - GR

Internship

- Project SEARCH – TWC
 - Federal Grant CFDA 84.126
 - SSA/VR
 - GR
- Skills Training to Employment Project (STEP) | Paid Work Experience and Vocational Adjustment Training – TWC
 - Federal Grant CFDA 84.126
 - SSA/VR
 - GR
- Summer Earn & Learn (SEAL) – TWC
 - Federal Grant CFDA 84.126
 - SSA/VR
 - GR
- Texas Internship Challenge
 - WIOA
 - GR (TXWORKS Postsecondary)
- Texas Interns Unite!
 - WIOA
 - GR (TXWORKS Postsecondary)

Grant Making across the Tri-Agency Partners and Recommendations

The methodology used by each of the Tri-Agency partners to develop, award, and manage grants is a comprehensive, multi-step, and statute-and rule-driven process. In most cases, eligible applicants, allowable costs, requirements, deliverables, and other funding parameters vary across sources of funding. For these reasons, it is challenging to envision a process in which the three agencies combine funding, make awards, and manage grants through one system.

In addition, the three agencies face constraints in creating and sharing documents, following shared workflows, and engaging in real time communications. These constraints are due to IT systems fittingly designed to limit access to individuals not employed within each agency.

To address the limitations, the Tri-Agency partners have found solutions to work together in the funding of WBL opportunities. Examples of collaboration include:

- identifying areas in which WBL can be promoted and supported through grants;
- drafting of RFAs;

- sharing information on grant opportunities and application timelines across multiple stakeholders;
- reviewing and scoring of applications;
- receiving updates on grant performance; and
- receiving information on grant outcomes.

Given the visionary leadership behind the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, it is inevitable that the three agencies will find new ways to continue and improve collaborations, especially when promoting and supporting WBL opportunities. Recommendations for future collaboration in WBL grant activities include the following:

1. **Publish an inventory.** Create and maintain an inventory of available WBL grant opportunities and post on the [Tri-Agency website](#).
2. **Develop a checklist.** The checklist could be used across agencies to determine whether an initiative is a candidate for shared funding.
3. **Publish informational graphics.** Share information on how various sources of funding can be used together to support WBL³.
4. **Create a shared document management and collaboration site.** Through the site, Tri-Agency staff can work together in the development and storage of grant guidelines, RFAs, scoring rubrics, calendars, dashboards, etc.

³ For example, ISDs receiving [Texas Regional Pathways Network](#) funding (Perkins V) could also apply for JET Grant funding (GR) for equipment purchases for the participating CTE classrooms. In addition, participating CTE teachers could engage in externships (WIOA) to learn about new skills required in the relevant workplace.

Appendix A: WBL Opportunities and Funding Sources

Learning about Work – Career Exploration: Job Shadowing, Simulations, Informational Interviews with Employers

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Career Exploration	WBL Framework	TEA	K-12 students	FSP and Perkins V
Career Exploration	Workforce Readiness Outreach: Virtual Reality Career Exploration Experiences	TWC	K-12 and postsecondary students	TANF

Learning through Work – Career Preparation: Internships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Cooperative Education, Service Learning

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Career Preparation	Building and Construction Trades	TWC	Job seekers pursuing certification and employment in building and construction careers	WIOA
Career Preparation	Dual Credit	TEA	High school students	FSP
Career Preparation	Secondary WBL Courses (College and Career Readiness)	TEA	Secondary students	FSP and Perkins V
Career Preparation	Texas Reskilling and Upskilling for Education (TRUE) Grant Program	THECB	Students in short-term workforce training programs	GR

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Pre-Apprenticeship	Explore Apprenticeship 2.0	TWC	Students with disabilities ages 14-22	Federal Grant CFDA 84.126, SSA/VR, and GR
Pre-Apprenticeship	Pre-Apprenticeship Bridge	TWC	AEL students	WIOA Title II, State Leadership §223
Pre-Apprenticeship	TEC Chapter 133 Pre-Apprenticeship	TWC	Job seekers, including high school students	GR

Learning at Work – Career Training: Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Apprenticeship (DOL-Registered Programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Registered Apprenticeships • Critical Skills Apprenticeships • DOL Expansion Grants to Boards and Public Colleges • Healthcare Apprenticeships • TEC Chapter 133, Related Instruction 	TWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Job seekers • Underrepresented populations • Individuals with more than a high school diploma but less than a degree 	Various funding sources, including CCDF, DOL Expansion Grants, GR, TANF, and WIOA
Apprenticeship	Building and Construction Trades	TWC	Young workers between ages 16-24 not currently engaged in school or the workforce	WIOA

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Apprenticeship	Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships	TWC	Employers	GR
Apprenticeship and Internship	GEER Work-Based Learning Opportunity Grants – Apprenticeship	THECB	Postsecondary students	Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund; GEER dollars, in turn, originated from the U.S. Department of Education’s administration of the Education Stabilization Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.
Apprenticeship and Internship	Lone Star Workforce of the Future	TWC	Workers in entry- to mid-level jobs in high demand occupations	GR
Apprenticeship and Internship	P-TECH	TEA and TWC	Historically underserved, at-risk, and economically disadvantaged students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSP and GR • WIOA
Apprenticeship and Internship	Texas Regional Pathways Network	TEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Education Agencies • Institutions of Higher Education • Workforce Boards • Employers • Regional Conveners 	Perkins V
Apprenticeship and Internship	Work Experience	TWC	Any VR customer	Federal Grant CFDA 84.126, SSA/VR, and GR

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Externship	Externships for Teachers	TWC	Middle school and high school teachers	WIOA
Internship	Project SEARCH	TWC	Students with disabilities ages 14-22	Federal Grant CFDA 84.126, SSA/VR, and GR
Internship	Skills Training to Employment Project (STEP) Paid Work Experience and Vocational Adjustment Training	TWC	VR customers of any age ready to be employed after training or students with disabilities ages 14-22	Federal Grant CFDA 84.126, SSA/VR, and GR
Internship	Summer Earn & Learn (SEAL)	TWC	Students with disabilities ages 14-22	Federal Grant CFDA 84.126, SSA/VR, and GR
Internship	Texas Internship Challenge	TEA, THECB, and TWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible high school and postsecondary students • Employers 	WIOA and GR (TXWORKS Postsecondary)
Internship	Texas Interns Unite!	THECB in partnership with TWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible high school and postsecondary students • Employers 	WIOA and GR (TXWORKS Postsecondary)
Internship	TXWORKS	THECB	Postsecondary students	GR TEC, Chapter 56, Subchapter E-1, §§56.0851–56.0857
Upskilling	High Demand Job Training	TWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing workers • New employees • Students - adult and youth 	WIOA and Local Sales Taxes

Type of Work-Based Learning	Initiative	Agency	Target Populations	Funding Source
Upskilling	Skills Development Fund	TWC	New or existing workers	GR
Upskilling	Texas Industry Partnership Program	TWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing workers New employees Students - adult and youth, including displaced services 	WIOA and Industry Partner Funds
Upskilling	Texas Reskilling Support Fund Grant Program	THECB	Students of any age, in any credit bearing or convertible high value credential program, re-enrolling after postsecondary stop-out, within 12 months or 25% or less of total credit required postsecondary stop-out, within 12 months or 25% or less of total credit required.	Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund; GEER dollars, in turn, originated from the U.S. Department of Education's administration of the Education Stabilization Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.
Work-Study	Work-Study Student Mentorship Program	THECB	Postsecondary students	GR TEC Chapter 56, Subchapter E, §56.079