



Texas Workforce Commission Advancing Skills, Capabilities, and Expertise for New Development

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is accepting applications for Advancing Skills, Capabilities, and Expertise for New Development (ASCEND). This opportunity is designed to help Texas employers increase the skills and capabilities of the talent within their workforce. This grant program provides outcomes-based, partial reimbursement to employers for training that is responsive to rapidly evolving skill demands and local workforce conditions. ASCEND aims to strengthen the talent pipeline for the following targeted industries:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Aerospace, Aviation, and Defense
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Health Care
- Information Technology (IT)
- Nuclear Energy
- Semiconductor Manufacturing
- Shipbuilding*

These occupations require middle-to high-level skills and align with H-1B visa usage requirements as detailed in award guidelines and supporting labor market data. Employers within the targeted industry sectors will commit to upskilling current employees, creating pipelines and pathways for hiring and training employees, ranging from new entrants to the workforce to those needing to change careers.

*As indicated above, a portion of the funding will support the

revitalization of the domestic shipbuilding industry, training workers in welding, marine electrical, manufacturing, and other skilled trades.

Maximum award amount: \$500,000

Maximum allowable amount per trainee: \$4,000

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all available funds have been awarded. Employers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

ELIGIBILITY

Employer Reimbursements

Grant funds are awarded to reimburse employers for up to 80 percent of the actual cost of a participant's training. Reimbursements occur in two performance-based payments at the following training milestones:

- Sixty percent is awarded upon training completion by an eligible participant.
- Twenty percent is awarded when the participant has retained his or her job with the employer for six months post-training completion.

Employers

To be eligible to receive funding through the ASCEND grant program, employers must meet the following criteria:

- Operate a business in Texas, possess an active TWC Tax Account Number, and be current on tax obligations.
- Conduct business in one or more of the targeted industries.
- Commit to recruiting and training new hires and/or to upskilling current employees.
- Identify employees' need for the skills training, including clear H-1B visa usage or potential usage information (for example, skill gaps in

occupations commonly filled by H-1B visa holders).

- Collaborate with TWC to develop a training strategy to meet the employee training needs and identify how the training will be provided (such as whether in-house training, third-party training provider, or a combination) and the total training cost.
- Ensure that training provided to employees aligns with the industry skills needed.
- Agree to report training and employment outcomes to TWC for reimbursement and grant reporting requirements and provide necessary data to the state to calculate employment outcomes.

Employers are responsible for the following:

1. Assessing critical industry workforce development needs
2. Determining necessary skills and credentials
3. Identifying the appropriate training and working collaboratively with TWC to develop it
4. Providing training or partnering with a training provider to do so
5. Recruiting employees and new hires and assessing for eligibility to participate in training which leads to skill gains and career advancement

Eligible Training Participants

To be eligible to participate in training, an individual must be:

- a newly-hired full-time employee or an incumbent full-time employee who has worked for the participating employer for a minimum of six months; and
- at least 17 years old and not currently enrolled in secondary school within a local educational agency.

Note: The training programs should be industry-specific courses that are essential to the applying employer's business.

Allowable Training Activities

Allowable training activities include:

- classroom and virtual instruction;
- customized training; and
- employer-provided work-based learning models including on-the-job-training.

Section I - Company Information

Note: The address provided must be the street address of the participating employees' physical work site. Post Office (PO) Box addresses are not accepted.

Employer/Legal Entity:	
Official Contact:	
Title:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Authorized Signatory:	
Title:	
Email Address:	
Business Address:	
City:	
County:	
State:	Texas
ZIP Code (9-digit):	
Total Number of Employees:	
Employer Classification:	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit <input type="checkbox"/> For-profit
4-digit NAICS Industry Code: (as listed on the U.S. Census Bureau website)	
TWC Tax Account Number: (9-digit number under which the business reports wages to TWC)	
Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN):	
If the business uses a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) for payroll purposes, provide the organization's name and TWC Tax Account Number	

Employment Benefit Information

Indicate which of the following employment benefits the Employer will provide for employees who participate in the proposed training. Please choose all that apply.

Company Employment Benefits

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workers' Compensation | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation | <input type="checkbox"/> 401(k) and/or Pension Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Holidays | <input type="checkbox"/> Profit Sharing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick Days | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list): |

H-1B-Related Information

Describe the need for skills training in occupations commonly filled by H-1B visa holders for industries other than shipbuilding. This may include a description of specific skill gaps, reliance on H-1B visa holders in the past, and potential for reduced H-1B usage as a result of the training.

Project Description

Provide a general overview of the proposed training project, including the skills to be taught, the number of employees to be trained, and the anticipated outcomes for both employees and the company.

Section II – Training Information

Training Plan

Briefly describe the comprehensive training plan outlining the training curriculum, training provider (if applicable), training schedule, certificate attainment and method of delivery.

List of license, certification, or credentials to be earned:

Credential 1 (if applicable)	
Name of credential:	_____
Components (if applicable):	_____ Acronym: _____
Estimated number of people receiving a credential:	_____

Credential 2 (if applicable)	
Name of credential:	_____
Components (if applicable):	_____ Acronym: _____
Estimated number of people receiving a credential:	_____

Credential 3 (if applicable)	
Name of credential:	_____
Components (if applicable):	_____ Acronym: _____
Estimated number of people receiving a credential:	_____

Attach additional license, certification, and credentials, if necessary.

Section III—Performance Management

Total number of employees who will complete training:

Number of participants who will receive training:

Number of employees who will receive another type of diploma, degree, or certificate not included above (provide details below):

--

Section IV—Proposed Budget

The budget summary must match the [ASCEND Detailed Budget Form](#) submitted with this application. The applicant will work with TWC personnel during this process. All costs must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, and allocable under WIOA.

Total Reimbursable Project Cost (may not exceed \$500,000)	\$
Total Reimbursable Cost per trainee (may not exceed \$4,000)	\$

Reimbursable Training Costs

Training can be provided in-house or by other entities, such as community and technical colleges, state colleges and universities, industry-specific training organizations, professional associations, or credentialing entities. Qualifying training costs include tuition expenses, instructor or trainer salaries, textbooks, manuals, and required training materials and supplies.

Acknowledgements and Certifications

The applicant represents and warrants that all statements and information prepared and submitted in this application are current, complete, true, and accurate.

Submitting an application with a false statement or material misrepresentations made during the performance of a grant award is a material breach of contract and may void the submitted application and any resulting grant award.

The applicant acknowledges and confirms compliance with all required reporting, as well as the rules and regulations governing this funding, as outlined in the General Terms and Conditions, Special Terms and Conditions/WIOA and Certifications.

Name of Authorized Signatory

Signature

Title of Authorized Signatory

Date

Submit applications to the TWC Workforce Development Division at skills@twc.texas.gov.