

# Dual Training Grant

## 2024 Proposal Technical Questions

Each week, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education will post responses to frequently asked technical questions. Technical questions must be submitted no later than 4:00p.m. central time, on April 9, 2024.

### **How will a grantee need to document Trainee Support expenditures?**

A grantee will need to track and obtain documentation related to Trainee Support expenditures. A grantee will outline their policies and procedures for these expenditures in their Budget Policies and Procedures document that will accompany their Work Plan and Budget. For example, if a grantee elects to utilize Trainee Support funds for a gas card, the grantee at minimum will need to supply to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education: (1) purchase receipt of the gas card and (2) acknowledgement from the dual trainee that the gas card was received. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education does reserve the right to request additional documentation for verification prior to approval for reimbursement. More information about Trainee Support funds can be found on pages 22 through 26 of the Request for Proposal.

### **Is a nonprofit economic development organization required to provide three years of taxes and audited financial statements?**

**Yes.** A nonprofit organization as defined on page 5 of the Request for Proposal must follow all Financial and Applicant Capacity Review steps and requirements. Nonprofit organizations requesting less than \$50,000 in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed year**. Nonprofit organizations requesting \$50,000 or higher in total grant amount will submit the following documents for the **most recently completed three years**: (1) IRS Forms 990 or 990-EZ and (2) Audited financial statements of a charitable organization which has received total revenue in excess of \$750,000 for the 12 months of operations covered by the statement per Minnesota Statutes 309.53. More information about the Nonprofit Organization Financial Documents can be found on pages 16 through 18 of the Request for Proposal.

### **Is a Budget Policies and Procedures document required, if an applicant does not request Trainee Support funds?**

**Yes.** The Budget Policies and Procedures document is required, because the grantee will need policies and procedures about the Related Instruction funds. Although Related Instruction funds are limited to tuition, fees, books and materials, each grantee has unique policies and procedures for administering the grant funds. More information about the Budget Policies and Procedures can be found on page 22 of the Request for Proposal.

## **Are all proposal materials submitted online through the grant portal? If yes, can the proposal process be saved to allow for collaboration?**

**Yes.** Applicants may access proposal content through a secure system portal. Information and the link to the portal is available online at <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2196>. Applicants can save proposal content. Applicants are welcome to collaborate with employer partners and related instruction training provides. At this time, employer partners and related instruction training providers do not have user accounts or direct access to the grant portal system. More information about those type of user accounts will be presented during the mandatory orientation.

## **Will a grantee need to submit a Related Instruction Training Provider Agreement, if the training provider was listed in the proposal and deemed eligible by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education?**

**Yes.** A grantee must submit a Related Instruction Training Agreement for each related instruction training provider included in the proposal following award notification and prior to executing a grant contract with OHE. Agreements are associated with individual grant contracts; therefore, agreements are required each grant period. Grantees will be provided with training agreements steps after award notifications. More information about Related Instruction Training Agreements can be found on pages 12 and 22 of the Request for Proposal.

## **On the GWI-OHE Portal, how do I know who is part of my Organization?**

Navigate to the top-right and click on your name. Select "Profile." Navigate to the menu on the left and select "Organization Members." You will be able to view the Organization Members and their assigned roles in the portal system. Please be sure to view the Organization Members on a regular basis, because the Organization is not notified when a new member registration is approved by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. Only the new member is notified via email that the registration is approved. More information about the Proposal Portal can be found in the Manual for Applicants.

## **Our 2023 financial documents are not complete. How do I complete the Financial Review?**

The Financial Review requires the most recently completed year(s). Therefore, you may provide 2022 financial documents. More information about the Financial Review can be found on pages 17 and 18 of the Request for Proposal.

## **Are my financial documents retained by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education?**

**No.** Financial documents are reviewed by the OHE Audit Division to analyze an applicant's financial wellbeing and capacity to administer the grant. OHE retains a summary of findings, but destroys all documents uploaded through the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review section of the proposal. More information about the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review can be found on pages 16 through 19 of the Request for Proposal.

**If we are required to pay the 25% match and our dual trainee is attending a more expensive program, what are we required to contribute?**

If a dual trainee is in a related instruction program that costs more than Dual Training Grant thresholds, the grantee is only required to contribute a grant match within means of the Dual Training Grant. For example, if a program costs \$20,000, the grantee would contribute **\$2,000**, the dual trainee would contribute \$12,000, and the Dual Training Grant would reimburse the grantee \$6,000. In addition, the grantee does need to pay the full **\$8,000** up front to the related instruction training provider and then request reimbursement from the Dual Training Grant. More information about the Grantee Match can be found on page 5 of the Request for Proposal.

**Can a tuition reimbursement program be utilized to meet the 25% match requirement?**

**No.** A grantee cannot utilize a tuition reimbursement process for the 25% match amount, because the grantee must pay the related instruction training provider directly in order to request reimbursement for the remaining 75%. The Dual Training Grant will not pay a dual trainee directly for any related instruction expenditures. Also, a grantee cannot reimburse a dual trainee for tuition and fee expenditures and then request reimbursement from the grant. More information about Related Instruction Expenditures can be found on pages 24 and 25 of the Request for Proposal.

**Regarding the financial documents, will the Minnesota Office of Higher Education enter into a Mutual Non-disclosure Agreement?**

**No.** The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is governed by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statute Chapter 13, that data is classified thereunder, and the Office has legal duties with regard to data requests. Therefore, the Office is not allowed to sign a Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement.

**We are a school district that partners with a local employer. Can we submit a proposal on behalf of the employer?**

**No.** The employer is the eligible applicant and needs to be the entity submitting a proposal for the grant. The applicant may collaborate with the school district on the content of the proposal, but the applicant must write and submit the proposal. More information about Collaboration can be found on page 9 of the Request for Proposal.

**If a grantee pays for related instruction costs and the dual trainee withdraws from the related instruction program, will the Dual Training Grant still reimburse the grantee?**

**Yes.** If a dual trainee is charged for tuition/fees/books and the grantee’s policy allows for payment, the Dual Training Grant will reimburse the grantee regardless of course withdrawal date. Although rare, if a grantee has paid the training provider, the grant has reimbursed the grantee, the dual trainee withdraws from coursework, and the training provider provides a refund ... the grantee will need to refund the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. More information about Related Instruction Expenditures can be found on pages 24 and 25 of the Request for Proposal.

## **What is the Training Provider Agreement and when does this step occur in the grant process?**

The Related Instruction Training Agreement is a document signed by both the grantee and the training provider to acknowledge elements of planning for a dual-training program including, but not limited to, program availability, student privacy policies, billing procedures, and Dual Training Grant requirements. The agreement is not a legal contract. Grantees may pursue contracts with training providers, but are not required to do so for purposes of the Dual Training Grant. The agreement process will be detailed following award notification. The agreement process must be complete prior to executing a grant contract with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. More information about the Related Instruction Training Agreement can be found on page 22 of the Request for Proposal.

## **May a consulting firm apply for the Dual Training Grant through an educational institution?**

**No.** The employer is the eligible applicant and needs to be the entity submitting a proposal for the grant. The applicant may collaborate with a consulting firm and/or educational institution on the content of the proposal, but the applicant must write and submit the proposal. More information about Collaboration can be found on page 9 of the Request for Proposal.

## **In the portal, on the Proposal Narrative screen, there is a Training Provider Certificate Upload. What certificate do I need to upload?**

Applicants must download the spreadsheet that is included in this section. On the spreadsheet, the applicant must detail the related instruction programs that have been selected for dual trainees to attend, if awarded grant funds. The applicant must upload the completed spreadsheet to this section.

## **In the portal, on the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review screen, was organizational chart am I uploading for the Certification of No Felony Financial Crime?**

Applicants must upload a chart or list documenting the staffing structure of the organization. The organizational chart must include, at minimum, the individuals who will be involved in any aspect of the Dual Training Grant.

## **In the portal, on the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review screen, what financial statements are uploaded for a business entity?**

Typically, applicants who are business entities will upload state and federal tax return documents. Upon review, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education will notify an applicant if any further financial documents are necessary.

## **If a dual trainee is double majoring and one of the majors is not specific to the Pipeline Occupation, will the Dual Training Grant cover costs for both majors?**

**No.** The Dual Training Grant reimburses grantees for the related instruction costs associated with the program directly related to the eligible occupation. If a particular course is credited for both majors, the Dual Training Grant will reimburse costs for that course. Grantees must be attentive and work closely with the related

instruction training provider to ensure coursework outside of the eligible occupation is not invoiced through the Dual Training Grant.

**In the portal, on the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review screen, what financial statements are uploaded for a nonprofit organization?**

Typically, applicants who are nonprofit organizations will upload certified audit documents. Upon review, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education will notify an applicant if any further financial documents are necessary.

**Can an employee who is contracted through a staffing agency participate in the grant?**

**No.** An eligible dual trainee must be employed by the eligible applicant or employer partnering with the eligible applicant. Employment cannot be on a temporary basis, like through a staffing agency. More information about an Eligible Dual Trainee can be found on pages 5 and 6 of the Request for Proposal.

**Are required and/or recommended tools considered Related Instruction or Trainees Support expenditures?**

Required and recommended books are Related Instruction expenditures. Required and recommended materials are Related Instruction expenditures. Tools would be considered materials. Books and materials must be either required or recommended by the related instruction training provider. The requirement or recommendation must be documented by the training provider. Tools that are neither required nor recommended are not considered Trainee Support expenditures. More information about Expenditures can be found on pages 23 through 26 of the Request for Proposal.

**Must all dual trainees be recruited and begin coursework in fall of 2024?**

**No.** A grantee may continue to recruit dual trainees throughout the grant period, which is typically August 2024 through August 2025. A dual trainee may be recruited mid-term or for an upcoming term. If a dual trainee is recruited mid-term, a grantee may be reimbursed for the term costs through the Dual Training Grant. If a dual trainee is recruited after the end of a term, the grantee cannot request reimbursement from the grant for a past term; however, the grantee can request reimbursement for the upcoming term.

**Must a dual trainee be a new student or can they be already enrolled and attending in a related instruction program?**

A dual trainee may be already enrolled and attending in a related instruction program. For example, an employee may be entering into the second year of their two-year degree program when they become a dual trainee. In addition, a grantee may employ an individual mid-term and then the employee becomes a dual trainee.

**What happens if a grantee is unable to utilize all of the Dual Training Grant funds during the grant period?**

Any unused grant funds will be distributed back to the general Dual Training Grant account, to be awarded through a future Request for Proposal. Grantees are not evaluated or penalized based upon grant utilization rate.