

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Labor & Industry

# Strategic Innovation Grants

## Notice of Grant Availability

Proposals Due: Friday, March 27, 2020 at 4:00 PM EST

**TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR**  
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## Key Dates

February 28, 2020	Notice of Grant Availability (NGA) Release Date
March 27, 2020 at 4:00 PM EST	Application Due Date: Applications must be submitted to <a href="mailto:RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov">RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov</a> resource account with the email subject: "Strategic Innovation Grant NGA Application – Program Year 2019."
May 8, 2020	Notification to Applicants
June 1, 2020	Contract Start Date
June 30, 2022	Contract End Date
July 31, 2022	Final Program Report

## Introduction

The PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) announces the availability of approximately \$4 million of funding for Strategic Innovation Grant (SIG) awards of up to \$300,000 each. This Notice of Grant Availability (NGA) seeks applications to support initiatives across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA) that innovatively and creatively address barriers to employment facing Pennsylvanians. The Governor's Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center identified several such barriers in its recent [annual report](#), including:

- Individuals with a criminal record re-entering the community and workforce from the criminal justice system
- Transportation
- Childcare
- Occupational licensure
- Access to education and training

In addition to these barriers, this SIG opportunity may also be used to address other common barriers to employment, including:

- Poverty and low income
- Disability
- Language and cultural barriers
- Basic skills deficiency and low literacy
- Homelessness and housing insecurity
- Transitioning off public assistance
- Age
- Transitioning out of the military

This NGA outlines strategic goals of this SIG opportunity, the criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals, and the grant timeline.

## Strategic Innovation Grant Opportunity

Pennsylvania's economy is strong and employment has recently reached a historic high. However, many job openings remain unfilled despite offering family-sustaining wages because there are simply not enough workers with the right skills and experience to fill them. At the same time, we know that there are individuals who are not engaged in the workforce for a variety of reasons, including lack of basic skills, resources, and other barriers to employment.

SIG funding provides communities in PA with flexible resources to support innovative solutions to address barriers to employment. Many government programs and community initiatives already partner collaboratively to work with individuals to resolve these barriers. SIG funding can provide resources for new, innovative concepts, fill funding gaps, or supplement existing initiatives to provide more comprehensive services for Pennsylvanians with barriers and improve their employment outcomes and support Pennsylvania's economic vitality. PA can evaluate the efficacy of these initiatives and promote and duplicate those that have a demonstrable measurable impact on improving employment outcomes.

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include local workforce development boards, non-profit and non-governmental entities, community-based organizations, education and post-secondary organizations, labor organizations, business associations, and economic development entities. The applicant(s) must be capable of bringing together business, education, workforce, community, and other partners to achieve the overall project goals of this NGA. Additionally, the lead applicant must demonstrate the ability to coordinate the project design and implementation of the project, manage the project budget, and implement a strategy to collect, analyze, and report performance outcomes.

**Additionally, applicants must have a PA SAP Vendor Identification Number and be able to comply with the Workforce Grant agreement found [here](#).** Applicants who cannot meet these additional requirements at the time of award will relinquish their award.

## **Fiscal Agent**

Fiscal agents include eligible applicants, as detailed above. If organizations apply as a partnership, the application must appoint a single entity as the lead applicant who must also act as fiscal agent. The fiscal agent will receive, manage, and disburse grant funds.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Applications will be reviewed by an inter-agency team and evaluated based on the following criteria:

### **Project Design and Management Plan (30 points)**

- Identifies a clear problem, challenge, or opportunity related to barriers to employment supported by relevant data and information. (5 points)
- Describes the activities proposed for the project to address the barriers to employment and solve the problem or challenge. (5 points)
- Illustrates the alignment with existing local, regional, and state education, workforce, and economic development initiatives. (5 points)
- Describes a clear equity strategy for the targeted population(s) to be served. (5 points)
- Provides a project timeline to include implementation steps, deliverables, and how those deliverables meet the desired outcomes of the project. (10 points)

### **Performance Outcomes (15 points)**

- Describes the metrics that will be used to show impact and success of the program:
  - Participation, including participant demographics and completion/ongoing participation in the initiative (if applicable);
  - Performance outputs, which quantify the services and activities funded by SIG resources (number of people served, barriers identified, number of sessions provided, etc.); and
  - Program outcomes, which measure the overall impact that the services and activities have had on participants (participants obtaining employment, participants showing an increase in income, etc.) (10 points)
- Describes how the applicant will provide the capacity to track performance metrics, and describes the process that will be used to collect, track, and report the data. (5 points)

### **Stakeholder Engagement (15 points)**

- Identifies key partners and additional partners as warranted. Demonstrates an effort by the lead applicant to develop strong, high quality, diverse cross-sector partnerships committed to working collaboratively to implement the project. Please note: Applicants are encouraged to have multiple partners across sectors (e.g. education partners, workforce development partners, business partners, economic development partners, and community partners) that demonstrate their commitment through letters of support. (5 points)
- Identifies the responsibilities of each of the partners. (5 points)
- Identifies the adequacy of the key personnel on the grant to foster collaboration and implement programs (identify personnel by name and qualifications). (5 points)

### **Impact and Sustainability (10 points)**

- Describe how the project partners will sustain the project beyond the grant period. (5 points)
- Describe any matching funds that the applicant and/or program partners will provide for the project, if applicable. (5 points)

### **Other Evaluation Criteria (15 points)**

Priority consideration will be given to applicants that support innovation in the spirit of the SIG. Proposals must also support:

- **Data-Driven, Evidence-Based Innovation:** Proposals support their proposal with relevant data and information, identify an evidence-based solution, or are piloting a promising practice to address barriers to employment. (5 points)
- **Leveraging Other Resources:**
  - Leverage federal and non-commonwealth resources, including, but not limited to, WIOA, Adult Basic Education, SNAP, TANF, philanthropic resources, employer contributions, and other resources to reach their project goals;
  - Leverage existing staff, facilities, equipment, and other in-kind resources to reach their project goals; and
  - Supplement, not supplant, existing public and private resources (e.g. other federal or state grants and philanthropic contributions, cash, in-kind, etc.). Proposals should demonstrate efficient and effective use of resources. (10 points)

### **Budget Form and Justification (15 points)**

Applicants must provide a complete budget broken out by line item. The budget must:

- Include a detailed budget justification which includes a detailed breakout of quantity, cost, and narrative to support each line item of the budget. (5 points)
- Explain how each budget line item supports the stated deliverables of the project. (5 points)
- State the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person’s time devoted to the project, the amount of each person’s salary funded by the grant, and the total personnel cost for the period of performance. (5 points)

## **Application Process and Submission Information**

The SIG funding NGA and related materials are available on L&I’s grants website:

<http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants>.

### **Application Submission Information**

Applications must be complete, including all required documents outlined below, and submitted by March 27, 2020 at 4:00 PM EST. An electronic copy of the application and all required components **MUST** be emailed to the [RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov](mailto:RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov) resource account with the email subject: “Strategic Innovation Grant NGA Application – Program Year 2019.”

All applications must be no more than 12 pages (one page maximum for Project Summary Cover Page, one page maximum for Application Form, and 10 pages maximum for Project Narrative). All applications must be single spaced on 8.5” by 11” paper, with 1” margins using 11-point Calibri font. Budget documents and Letters of Support do not count toward the 12 pages. All application documents must be in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). Page numbers must be provided in the footer. Do not include any internet addresses (URLS) that provide information necessary to review the application. Documents must not include any proprietary or sensitive business information as PA may make it available to the public.

Incomplete applications or applications that do not meet these specifications will not be evaluated or scored. If an application is more than 12 pages, evaluators will only review the first 12 pages.

### **Completed Application Documents**

Completed applications must include all five (5) required documents:

1. **Application Form** (saved as a single file titled “Application Form”) The grant application form must be completed in full and submitted with the other required documents. The application form can be found at <http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants> and an example can be found as Appendix A.
2. **Project Summary Cover Page** (saved as a single file titled “Project Summary Cover Page” and one- page max) with the following information:

- a. Name of applicant;
- b. Name of fiscal agent;
- c. Project title;
- d. Project partners;
- e. Project service area (e.g., counties to be served, and House and Senate legislative districts);
- f. Project summary;
- g. Project point of contact and contact information.

i. The Project Summary Cover Page is available as Appendix B.

3. **Project Narrative** (saved as a single file titled “Project Narrative” and 10 pages max) with the following information:

- a. Details answering all of the evaluation criteria, and sub criteria, outlined herein, including:
  - i. Project Design and Management Plan (30 points);
  - ii. Performance Outcomes;
  - iii. Stakeholder Engagement;
  - iv. Impact and Sustainability; and
  - v. Other Evaluation Criteria.

4. **Letters of Support** (saved as a single file titled “Letters of Support”)

Each application must have no more than 5 letters of support. Each application must have at least one letter from an education, workforce development, or business/economic development partner.

5. **Budget Form** (save as a single file titled “Budget Form”)

Applicants must submit a detailed budget that includes expenditures by line item. The budget will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria above, and in terms of cost reasonableness and the relationship to proposed activities. Budgets must be for the time-period June 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award, including making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. PA reserves the right to unilaterally modify application budgets, prior to, and/or after grant award. The Budget Form is available as Appendix C.

6. **Budget Justification** (save as a single file titled “Budget Justification”)

Applicants must justify each expenditure by line item, including the costs proposed in each cost category and any other information to support the budget. The Budget Justification instructions are available as Appendix D.

## Grant Award Details

### Grant Funding

NGA is funded by PA Reemployment funds. Reemployment funds may be used to fund programs and services to assist individuals to become employed or improve their employment, including, without limitation, job search and placement services, educational enhancement, job training and job readiness and workplace skills training.

### Estimated Funding and Award Size

Approximately \$4 million is available. Grants will be awarded and funded competitively based on availability of funds up to \$300,000 per application.

### Application Deadline

SIG applications are due Friday, March 27, 2020 at 4 P.M. EST. Late applications will not be accepted.

## Proposed Grant Timeline and Award Period

SIG funding is anticipated to be used for grant-related activities between June 1, 2020, and June 30, 2022.

## Allowable and Disallowable Costs and Expenses

Funds available through this NGA must be used to support a SIG initiative and support addressing barriers to employment for Pennsylvanians. While matching funds are not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage federal and non-commonwealth resources, including, but not limited to, WIOA, Adult Basic Education, TANF, SNAP, philanthropic resources, employer contributions, and other resources to reach their project goals. Applicants are also encouraged to use existing staff, facilities, and equipment, and other in-kind resources to reach their project goals. Finally, SIG funding should supplement, not supplant, existing public and private resources (e.g. other federal or state grants and philanthropic contributions, cash, in-kind, etc.). Proposals should demonstrate efficient and effective use of resources.

- **Allowable Direct Costs:** Allowable costs include, but are not limited to, education and training costs, customer service costs, barrier remediation costs, support services costs, participant outreach and recruitment costs, and administrative costs (must not exceed 10 percent of total amount requested).
- **Unallowable Costs:** Unallowable costs include pre-award costs, building construction, and procuring lobbying services. Pre-award costs are incurred at the applicant's risk. L&I is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the applicant does not receive an award or if the award is made for a lesser amount than the applicant expected.

## Grant Award Administration

### Award Notices

Applicants will be notified in writing within 30 days after the award determination.

### Period of Performance

L&I anticipates a performance period beginning June 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2022.

### Grant Agreements

Awardees are required to enter into a workforce grant agreement with L&I unless the grantee has a current grant agreement already in place. L&I reserves the right to seek repayment of funds if it is determined that funds were not utilized for the original stated and approved purpose.

L&I also reserves the right to award grants ensuring program diversity and alignment with other public funding and/or initiatives. L&I reserves the right to request additional information or modifications to applications for any reason deemed necessary. L&I shall notify all applicants whose applications are not accepted for funding under this NGA.

PA may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including but not limited to: (1) the budget is not appropriate or reasonable; (2) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (3) PA needs additional or clarifying information; (4) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by PA within a specific period determined by PA may preclude award to the applicant.

PA reserves the right, without qualification, to reject any or all applications received in response to this announcement and to select any application, in whole or in part, as a basis for negotiation and/or award. PA reserves the right to award grants on a conditional basis if there are concerns surrounding one or more sections of the application(s). In the instance that a conditional award is made, the applicant is responsible to take immediate and appropriate action to remedy the area of concern in accordance with Department guidance.

The L&I contracting officer is the only individual who can make awards or commit PA to the expenditure of public funds. A commitment by other than the contracting officer, either explicit or implied, is invalid.

L&I reserves the right to de-obligate funds for those projects that show minimal expenditure or obligation. Any funds not committed may be reallocated to other projects awarded under this NGA.

### **Reporting and Evaluation**

Grantees will be required to submit program and fiscal progress reports during and upon conclusion of the funded project. All projects will be required to do a pre-evaluation and post-evaluation of the project. All required forms will be supplied by PA and will be outlined in the award package. All close-out final reports are to be submitted no later than August 30, 2022 or within 60 days of full award expenditure (whichever occurs first). In addition to report submissions, awardees are required to participate in routine calls with PA staff, unless otherwise determined, to identify grant progression, share best practices and receive technical support. Additional information will be provided upon award selection.

### **Questions/Agency Contacts**

Questions regarding the content of this NGA must be submitted in writing to [RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov](mailto:RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov).



# Appendix A: Application Form

## Application Form

<b>Type of Submission:</b>	Choose an item.	<b>Type of Project:</b>	Choose an item.	<b>Applicant Type:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Local Workforce Development Board:</b>	Choose an item.				
<b>Grant / Project Title:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.				
<b>Targeted Industry Cluster:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		<b>Sub-Cluster:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	
<b>Counties served by this grant:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Adams	<input type="checkbox"/> Clarion	<input type="checkbox"/> Huntingdon	<input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/> Venango	
<input type="checkbox"/> Allegheny	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Indiana	<input type="checkbox"/> Montour	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	
<input type="checkbox"/> Armstrong	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinton	<input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson	<input type="checkbox"/> Northampton	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beaver	<input type="checkbox"/> Columbia	<input type="checkbox"/> Juniata	<input type="checkbox"/> Northumberland	<input type="checkbox"/> Wayne	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedford	<input type="checkbox"/> Crawford	<input type="checkbox"/> Lackawanna	<input type="checkbox"/> Perry	<input type="checkbox"/> Westmoreland	
<input type="checkbox"/> Berks	<input type="checkbox"/> Cumberland	<input type="checkbox"/> Lancaster	<input type="checkbox"/> Philadelphia	<input type="checkbox"/> Wyoming	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blair	<input type="checkbox"/> Dauphin	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawrence	<input type="checkbox"/> Pike	<input type="checkbox"/> York	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bradford	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon	<input type="checkbox"/> Potter	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Statewide</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bucks	<input type="checkbox"/> Elk	<input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh	<input type="checkbox"/> Schuylkill		
<input type="checkbox"/> Butler	<input type="checkbox"/> Erie	<input type="checkbox"/> Luzerne	<input type="checkbox"/> Snyder		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cambria	<input type="checkbox"/> Fayette	<input type="checkbox"/> Lycoming	<input type="checkbox"/> Somerset		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cameron	<input type="checkbox"/> Forest	<input type="checkbox"/> McKean	<input type="checkbox"/> Sullivan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Carbon	<input type="checkbox"/> Franklin	<input type="checkbox"/> Mercer	<input type="checkbox"/> Susquehanna		
<input type="checkbox"/> Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Fulton	<input type="checkbox"/> Mifflin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tioga		
<input type="checkbox"/> Chester	<input type="checkbox"/> Greene	<input type="checkbox"/> Monroe	<input type="checkbox"/> Union		
<b>Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) affected by this grant:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Allegheny	<input type="checkbox"/> Lackawanna	<input type="checkbox"/> Pittsburgh	<input type="checkbox"/> West Central		
<input type="checkbox"/> Berks	<input type="checkbox"/> Lancaster	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern Alleghenies	<input type="checkbox"/> Southwest Corner		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bucks	<input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley	<input type="checkbox"/> Tri-County	<input type="checkbox"/> Northwest		
<input type="checkbox"/> Chester	<input type="checkbox"/> Luzerne-Schuylkill	<input type="checkbox"/> North Central	<input type="checkbox"/> Central		
<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tier	<input type="checkbox"/> South Central		
<input type="checkbox"/> Westmoreland-Fayette	<input type="checkbox"/> Philadelphia	<input type="checkbox"/> Poconos	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Statewide</b>		
<b>Is your business a Pennsylvania Qualified Small Business as described in 4 Pa. Code 2.32?</b>			Choose an item.		
<b>Applicant Information</b>					
Name					
Address 1					
Address 2					
City			PA		ZIP Code
<b>Name and contact information of primary person to be contacted on matters involving this application</b>					
First Name		Last Name		Phone	
Title				Email	
<b>Funding proposal request (\$):</b>		Labor & Industry: \$		Matching Funds: \$	
<b>Authorized representative printed name:</b>		Name			

**Authorized representative signature/date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Application Form

## Application Instructions

### Labor & Industry (L&I) Workforce Development Grant

1. **Type of Submission:** Indicate whether this is a new request for funds for a new project or if this is a continuation of a project that was previously funded.
2. **Type of Project:** Indicate whether this grant is for training or services.
3. *Applicant:* Select Applicant type from drop down menu.
4. **Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB):** Select the name of the LWDB with whom this project will be affiliated from the drop-down menu.
5. **Grant/Project Title:** Enter the name of the project.
6. **Target Industry Cluster/Sub Cluster:** Enter the name of the Industry Cluster and, if applicable, the sub-cluster.
7. **Counties Served** – Include all counties that will be served by the grant.
8. **LWDAs affected** – List all LWDAs involved in the grant.
9. *Small Business* – Select whether your business is a Pennsylvania Qualified Small Business.
10. **Applicant Information:** Enter the applicant's name and address.
11. **Contact Information:** Enter contact information.
12. *Funding Proposal Requests:* Enter the amount requested for the project and include the amount of matching funds (if applicable).
13. **Authorized Representative:** Enter the name of the authorized representative. Sign and date the form.

Please use the electronic, accessible version of the Application Form, available at <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx>

## Appendix B: Project Summary Cover Page

### Strategic Innovation Grant Project

#### Summary Cover Page

Name of Applicant:

Name of Fiscal Agent:

Project Title:

Project Partners:

Project Service Area (*e.g., counties to be served, and House and Senate legislative districts*):

Project Summary:

Project Point of Contact and Contact Information:

## Appendix C: Budget Form

Requested Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

		Budget
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		\$ -
	Admin Staff Salaries & Fringe Benefits	
	Operational Expenses (e.g. travel, postage, printing, etc.)	
<b>CAREER &amp; SUPPORTIVE SERVICES</b>		\$ -
	Program Staff Salaries & Fringe Benefits	
	Operational Expenses (e.g. travel, postage, printing, etc.)	
	Other Program Expenses	
	Supportive Service Funds	
<b>TRAINING</b>		\$ -
	Classroom Training Expenditures	
	On The Job (OJT) Expenditures	
	Adult Education and Literacy Training	
	Apprenticeship Training	
	Incumbent Worker Training	
	Other Training Expenses	
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>		<b>\$ -</b>

Please utilize the Excel version of the Budget Form available online at [https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce- Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/grants/Pages/default.aspx).

## Appendix D: Budget Justification

### General Instructions for the Completion of a Budget Justification

The budget justification must include the following information:

- Each line item on the Budget Form must be explained, and the cost provided for each. Each line item on the Budget Form pertains to projected costs.
  - The total for each line item on the Budget Justification must match the total for each line item on the Budget Form.
  - Administrative Costs cannot exceed 10 percent of the requested funding.
1. **Staff Salaries** – List all staff positions by title. State the annual salary of each person, the percentage of each person’s time devoted to the project, the amount of each person’s salary funded by the grant, and the total personnel cost for the period of performance. Be sure to breakout administrative and program salaries.
  2. **Fringe Benefits** – Provide the overall fringe benefit percentage which reflects the recipient’s organizational fringe, and list the components included, such as health insurance, FICA, retirement, etc. Provide the fringe benefit calculation for each staff position listed under the salary line item. Be sure to breakout administrative and program fringe.
  3. **Operational Expenses** – List each item in sufficient detail for the grantor to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable (rent, utilities, printing, postage, supplies, staff travel, etc.).
  4. **Other Program Expenses**– List each item in sufficient detail for the grantor to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable. Costs included under *Other* should not fit into any other line item category.

**Note:** If including equipment, be sure to identify each item of equipment to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful lifetime of more than one year. List the quantity and unit cost per item. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are supplies.

5. **Supportive Services** – List types of supportive services for participants (uniforms, transportation, tools, test fees, etc.)
6. **Training** – Breakout Training costs into the budget category. List each item in sufficient detail for the grantor to determine whether the costs are reasonable or allowable. Be sure to include number of participants for each line item.

For example, Classroom Training Expenditures – 15 people \* \$150 Forklift Training= \$2,250.00