

Finger Lakes Wired
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Purpose

The United States Department of Labor has made available Federal grant funds to businesses in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region (Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Wyoming, Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Seneca and Yates counties) to upgrade the skills of their workforce in order to meet the demands of emerging industries. Emerging Industries are defined as *Advanced Manufacturing, Alternative Energy, Bio/Life Sciences, Business Services, Engineering, Food & Agriculture, Health Care (including not-for-profit Health Care organizations), Information Technology, and Optics/Imaging*. Businesses in these industries are also encouraged to apply for up to \$25,000 in training funds to 1) Develop management competencies of mid - senior level Managers, 2) Develop technical/occupational skill competencies of their employed workers or 3) Implement process or productivity improvement initiatives (such as Lean, ISO, Six Sigma, Sarbanes Oxley, etc).

Training should be completed **within 3 (three) months**, and should lead to the acquisition of industry-recognized certifications/credentials, supervisory and managerial skills training, process/productivity improvement, and/or in-demand technical and occupational skills. Applicants are required to provide matching funds equal to the amount of funds requested. Funds are awarded through a contract process. Reimbursement payments can be made on an incremental basis or after the completion of the training project based on expenditures and supporting documentation.

Background

The Finger Lakes Wired is focusing on labor market areas that are comprised of multiple jurisdictions within state borders. It supports innovative approaches to education and workforce development that go beyond traditional strategies for preparing workers to compete and succeed both within the United States and globally. The US Department of Labor Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative is intended to catalyze the creation of high-skill and high-wage opportunities for American workers within the nine county Finger Lakes Region. For more information, please visit www.FingerLakesWired.com.

Eligibility

- Private for-profit businesses in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region (to include Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Wyoming, Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Seneca and Yates counties) may apply. Employees to be trained should work or live in the nine-county region.
- Healthcare non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for training funds.
- Public employees (i.e., federal, state, county, and municipal employees) or publicly funded organizations are not eligible for training with these funds.
- Applications may not exceed \$25,000.
- Requests for funding under \$1,000 will not be entertained.
- Organizations with poor performance outcomes on previous training initiatives will not be awarded funds.

Use of Funds

- Funds requested can include cost of classroom instruction (i.e., tuition or course fees), customized consultant training, in-house staff training costs, and training materials (books, manuals and exams).
- Matching funds can include one or portions of the following: purchase of equipment and software, wages of employees being trained while in training and expenses associated with out-of-town (training destination is 30 miles or more from her/his residence/duty post) training.

- Employees identified for training should be permanent, full-time employees with year-round attachment to the employer. Part-time employees are eligible to be trained if they work more than (20) hours per week year-round.
- Funds may not be used for administrative costs, construction/renovation of buildings, government mandated training (e.g., OSHA training), or payment of employee wages or wage subsidies.
- **Basic computer training, safety training, ERP implementation and consulting are not allowable activities under this program. (Note: specialized software programs and intermediate and higher level skills training in office support software programs are allowable.)**
- **Applications funding assistance for activities labeled “overview”, “review”, “seminar”, “conference”, or “refresher” will not be considered to be “training” and will not be considered for funding.**
- Applications will not be entertained for training that has already started or been completed. This includes tuition for courses taken towards a degree program that has started prior to the application.

Expected Outcomes

Finger Lakes Wired is committed to providing training funds that will help businesses maintain their competitive edge and grow through improving the skills of the workforce. As a result of funding, businesses are expected to provide training to employees, which will result in the success of the individual firm and the economy as a whole, acquisition of in-demand transferable skills and industry-recognized certification or credential, thereby enhancing the long-term employability, career growth and earnings potential of the workers and sustainable growth of the business.

Application Process

Organizations should **complete a Scholarship Program Application and Training Budget**. Responses to the application questions should be submitted in the form of a Word document. **Proof of cost and course description should be submitted with the application.** Applications will be reviewed on a continuous basis and awards made through a contract process until funds are exhausted. Depending on the volume of applications that are received, the **approval process may take up to 30 days**. Applications **should be submitted at least 30 days prior** to the beginning of training. Prior training initiatives can not be supported through the Wired Scholarship. Applications may be submitted electronically (preferred method), faxed, or mailed to:

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