



2023-2024 Tri-Agency Grant for Regional Conveners

Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, January 13, 2023

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **Senate Bill 1, Part 18. CONTINGENCY AND OTHER PROVISIONS, Sec. 18.15. Contingency for House Bill 1525**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to loiapplications@tea.texas.gov.

The LOI application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, January 13, 2023**.

Grant period from **March 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Award Date**

Application stamp-in date and time

Required Attachments

- Application Part 2: Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
- Attachment A: Regional Convenir Reference Form (Submit up to three forms with Application)

Application Information

Which [workforce development area](#) are you located in and applying to represent as a regional convenir?

Region 9

Select your organization type:

Workforce Development

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

Applicant Information

Organization **Workforce Solutions of West Central Te** CDN

Address **500 Chestnut St, STE 1200** City **Abilene** ZIP **79602** Vendor ID **32-0419203**

Primary Contact **Amelia Reeves** Email **amelia.reeves@workforcesystem.org** Phone **325-795-4364**

Secondary Contact **Mary Ross** Email **mary.ross@workforcesystem.org** Phone **325-795-4301**

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the LOI application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the LOI application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- LOI application, guidelines, and instructions Debarment and Suspension Certification
 General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name **Amelia Reeves** Title **Director of Career Education**

Email **amelia.reeves@workforcesystem.org** Phone **325-795-4364**

Signature *Amelia Reeves* Date **1/13/2023**

CDN Vendor ID Amendment # **Shared Services Arrangements**

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are NOT permitted for this grant.

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this LOI will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- 2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2023-2024 Tri-Agency Grant to Regional Conveners Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 Tri-Agency Grant to Regional Conveners Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 5. The applicant assures that any Electronic Information Resources (EIR) produced as part of this agreement will comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements as specified in 1 TAC 206, 1 TAC Chapter 213, Federal Section 508 standards, and the WCAG 2.0 AA Accessibility Guidelines.
- 6. The applicant assures to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a regional convener for a geographic region with boundaries identical to those of the workforce development area.
- 7. The applicant assures to identify at least one staff person, who meets the qualifications and experience of a regional convener lead as outlined in these guidelines, with adequate time allocated to the work of this grant project and who will serve as the regional convener lead.
- 8. The applicant assures to identify multiple staff at the regional convener organization to engage in the work and participate in the designation process. This includes someone in an executive leadership position who has decision-making authority on behalf of the regional convener organization.
- 9. The applicant assures to complete all grant activities and deliverables in a timely manner, as described in the description of program and performance and evaluation measures.
- 10. The applicant assures to coordinate with their assigned coach, to be provided by TEA for technical assistance, and meet with their coach frequently throughout the project, including within the first month to align on program priorities and requirements.

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Statutory/Program Assurances cont'd

- 11. The applicant assures to convene and engage a cross-sector pathways leadership team in the strategic planning process within the first three months of the grant project.
- 12. The applicant assures to develop an asset map and gap analysis within six months of the grant start date under the direction and guidance of their assigned coach. In addition, the applicant will keep this landscape analysis updated throughout the grant project.
- 13. The applicant assures to develop, in collaboration with members of the cross-sector leadership team, a strategic plan and supporting action plans within the first 12 months of the grant project.
- 14. The applicant assures to plan and execute work-based learning that will address K-12 gaps and will expand upon existing work-based learning within their region.
- 15. The applicant assures to participate and engage in statewide training and convenings during the grant period.

Statutory/Program Requirements

1. Current Regional Landscape - Describe the key career and education pathway initiatives and/or programs currently underway in your region, including those funded by TEA, THECB, and/or TWC, and your current level of involvement in those initiatives. Please also describe the current staff you have in place to support these initiatives and/or programs who will continue to be involved in this project and any new staff you would like to use grant dollars to hire to support this work. Describe the qualifications and experience of the staff person who will serve as the regional convener lead for this grant project.

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas (WFSWCT) currently leads several career and education pathway initiatives. Career and Education Outreach: 3.5 FTE Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialists provide presentations to 33 partner schools in the West Central Texas region over high-demand careers, employability skills, work-based learning opportunities, and postsecondary pathways. Specialists also utilize virtual reality career exploration modules to bring immersive experiences to students in rural areas of the region; Youth Success program: 7.5 FTE Youth Success Advisors are embedded in 12 rural high schools to provide individualized college and career advising to all seniors throughout their senior year and for a year after high school graduation. Advisors help students develop a postsecondary plan that aligns with their career goals, complete college and scholarship applications, coordinate work-based learning placements, and connect students with disabilities or barriers to postsecondary education to support services; Teacher Externship program: WFSWCT, in partnership with Region 14 ESC, coordinates summer externship experiences for 6th-12th grade teachers; Texas Internship Initiative: Junior and senior students enrolled in dual credit CTE courses at partner high schools are placed in internship experiences at local businesses. WFSWCT, through funding from TWC, provides students with stipends for completing the internship experience and covers the costs of industry-based certification fees; Texas Regional Pathway Network: WFSWCT serves as the Regional Convener for a manufacturing pathway in partnership with Region 14 ESC and Abilene Wylie, Merkel, and Hawley ISDs. Cisco College, US Gypsum, and Rentech Boiler Systems are also actively engaged in this work. 1 FTE comprised of WFSWCT Director of Career Education and Project Manager lead this initiative; Advance Together: In partnership with the Big Country Manufacturing Alliance, WFSWCT regularly convenes a steering committee with education, industry, postsecondary, economic development, and parent representation to lead work related to increasing awareness of manufacturing jobs and work-based learning opportunities for underserved students; Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development: WFSWCT is utilizing funds from a DOE grant to expand the Youth Success and Career and Education Outreach programs and increase work-based learning opportunities for rural students currently enrolled in partner IHEs. In addition to current staff, WFSWCT would hire staff for data and communications, project management, and work-based learning coordination. The regional convener lead will be the Director of Career Education who has extensive experience convening cross-sector partnerships with ISDs, IHEs, industry, and economic development for career pathway alignment and work-based learning implementation.

2. Regional Convener Priorities - What are your priorities for strategic alignment across current state, regional, and local pathways initiatives in the WDA? What would be necessary for that alignment to take place?

Over the past few years, as the work related to career and education pathways has grown, WFSWCT has aligned regional priorities with the state-level Tri-Agency priorities for strategic alignment across the workforce, k-12 education, and higher education sectors. The Tri-Agency priorities center around efficient and flexible pathways, student support, and a robust collaboration and goal alignment infrastructure to improve student outcomes and meet employer needs.

Priorities for strategic alignment at the regional level include:

- Alignment of career pathways to K-12 programs of study, postsecondary education and training programs, and employer needs supported by labor market data and information with established entrance and exit points throughout the pathway.
- Established student support services through individualized college and career advising and navigation of available resources for students in special populations or those with barriers to postsecondary education and training.
- Consistent and frequent cross-sector collaboration through steering committees and task forces to develop strategies with aligned goals and solidify commitment to the long-term sustainability of programs.

A cross-sector team must be convened made up of leaders from industry, education, and workforce/economic development to achieve strategic alignment at the regional level. In addition, student and teacher representation would be valuable to provide a voice to the population directly affected by the work. An in-depth asset map must be developed to understand the breadth and depth of the work done in the region by WFSWCT and partners. Additionally, a data dashboard that reflects West Central Texas information related to career and education pathways, work-based learning, and labor market information is needed to increase the transparency of the work. A data dashboard will be a valuable tool for all partners to recognize trends, gaps, and areas of potential growth and visualize progress toward regional goals.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

3. Regional Alignment Experience - Describe your organization's experience leading strategic planning to support regional career and education pathways (or related education and training initiatives) in collaboration with stakeholders representing a mix of industry, K-12 education, higher education, and workforce development entities.

As a key stakeholder in career and education pathway development in West Central Texas, WFSWCT has experience leading strategic planning in collaboration with industry and education stakeholders. WFSWCT, with input from rural ISDs, economic development, and IHEs who served over 30% of rural students, developed a logic model to increase access, retention, and completion of postsecondary education and training for rural students. WFSWCT supported the BCMA in developing a theory of action and logic model to work towards the BCMA's north star goal of increasing job opportunities in manufacturing by 10% by 2030. As the Regional Convener in the TRPN in West Central Texas, WFSWCT collaborated with Region 14 ESC to develop strategic goals and an action plan to create and align a manufacturing pathway to labor market demands and postsecondary programs in three partner ISDs.

In addition to these examples, WFSWCT convenes regional advisory councils and work-based learning task forces with stakeholders representing industry, education, and economic development regularly to discuss shared goals, share stakeholder-specific priorities related to individual activities, and stay up-to-date on the needs of the different sectors.

4. Regional Data Experience - How do you currently monitor progress and measure quality of career and education pathway programs or initiatives? What do you currently use as metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) to understand the strength of your region's pathway programming?

WFSWCT currently monitors the progress and quality of career pathway programs and initiatives through established data-sharing agreements with partner ISDs, utilizing a cloud-based CRM system (Salesforce) and work-based learning management platform (Transeo), conducting surveys, and convening a steering committee to gather regular input and feedback on progress toward established goals. WFSWCT is an active member of the WECAN initiative with Educate Texas and supported the development of a data dashboard to understand regional performance, assess progress and effectiveness of new initiatives, drive regional investment and prioritization decisions, and serves as a "baseline" for what data is and is not available today. Examples of metrics and KPIs that WFSWCT tracks related to different initiatives include:

Career and Education Outreach program – number of presentations, number of students receiving presentations; number of foster youths receiving presentations, quarterly success stories and lessons learned from Specialists, student interest in demand occupations, student interest in work-based learning, and student awareness of career pathways

Youth Success program – students completing postsecondary plans, FAFSA, college applications, industry-based certification, dual-credit courses, financial plans; students experiencing job shadowing, campus tour, industry tour; parent engagement, total dollar amount of scholarships awarded per student and per school, postsecondary enrollment, postsecondary persistence from 1st to 2nd semester

Work-based learning – number of students completing industry tours, job shadowing, mentorship, and internships; post-experience student surveys measuring student satisfaction and interest in career; post-internship employer survey measuring employer satisfaction

Texas Regional Pathway Network – Many of the metrics already listed in the above programs are utilized in the TRPN work. In addition, WFSWCT tracks the number of partners from IHEs, ISDs, and industry engaged in the work, number of students enrolled in manufacturing-related programs of study, CTE completers and concentrators, and the number of courses aligned to manufacturing offered at partner ISDs

WFSWCT utilizes the above metrics and KPIs to regularly evaluate and adjust programming to best support the ISDs and students of West Central Texas. The Director of Career Education and project management staff regularly meet with partners to garner feedback and input on what is working and where gaps are emerging so they can be addressed.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

5. Regional Work-Based Learning Experience – Using the Tri-Agency WBL Continuum attachment available on the TEA Grant Opportunities webpage, describe your experience planning, implementing and/or monitoring work-based learning activities aligned within each of the following categories: a. “Learning about Work”; b. “Learning through Work”; and c. “Learning at Work”

a. Learning about Work – WFSWCT plans and coordinates activities to provide students with opportunities to learn about in-demand industries and occupations in West Central Texas. In the past year, WFSWCT connected approximately 40 employer partners across the region, with 105 students from 12 high schools participating in a one-day job shadowing experience. WFSWCT staff led employer outreach, logistics, and coordination with teachers and counselors. WFSWCT also evaluated the job shadow experiences with student and employer surveys. WFSWCT, in partnership with the BCMA, hosts an annual Manufacturing Day event that includes worksite tours at manufacturing plants across the region. In 2022, XX students from XX schools visited XX manufacturers in XX different communities in West Central Texas. WFSWCT Career and Education Outreach Specialists take virtual reality headsets with career exploration modules to school districts to teach students skills related to in-demand occupations in a safe environment. Virtual reality career exploration also negates the need for travel for rural schools that do not have access to the variety of industries in the more urban areas of the region. In the summer, WFSWCT leads the Teacher Externship program that places 6th-12th grade teachers at places of business and industry to learn about careers, skills, and needs of the future workforce. The real-world experiences are taken back to the classroom for students to learn more about the many career opportunities in West Central Texas.

b. Learning through Work – WFSWCT plans and coordinates WBL activities that increase students' knowledge and experience of the employability and technical skills required for jobs in a high-demand career pathway. WFSWCT has utilized the Texas Internship Initiative grant from TWC multiple times over the last few years to plan and implement internships with students in STEM career fields. Recently, WFSWCT conducted research and gathered employer and education input to develop a work-based learning toolkit that includes pre-requisite experiences to an internship for students and employers to improve internship outcomes and increase retention of students in the career pathway. WFSWCT has provided labor market information and input for individual school districts to implement electrical pre-apprenticeship programs. WFSWCT staff has also worked directly with Career Practicum teachers to identify and coordinate opportunities for students at local employers related to their program of study.

c. Learning at Work – WFSWCT recognizes the importance of career training for the future workforce and talent pipeline development and has been an active member of Educate Texas' WECAN initiative since its onset in 2021. Through WECAN, WFSWCT has been able to explore options for Apprenticeship programs, identify how to support current apprenticeship programs, and develop new apprenticeship programs in partnership with employers and the local community college. WFSWCT partnered with a local employer to provide insight and support for implementing an automotive apprenticeship program in 2022 and is currently working towards implementing an electrical technician apprenticeship program in 2023. In addition to apprenticeships, WFSWCT partners with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to provide paid work experience through the Summer Earn and Learn program for students with disabilities. Through the Youth Success program, WFSWCT can connect students who are directly entering the workforce after high school graduation with employers who have established on-the-job training programs to give the students increased skills development opportunities that lead to higher-paying jobs.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

6. Regional Convener Responsibilities - Describe any current work your organization performs related to the additional functions of regional conveners listed below. If there are functions you do not perform, describe how a partner organization performs the function and your working relationship with them. If there are functions that are not currently performed by either your organization or a partner, provide context for why it has not been a focus of your organization's work to date. a. Analyze labor market information and work on an ongoing basis to ensure career and education pathways are aligned to in-demand industries in the region; b. Convene a cross-sector leadership team made up of education, workforce, and industry stakeholders to develop and implement a regional vision and strategy; c. Engage employers and broker relationships with education and training providers; d. Streamline communicating information across the region; and e. Drive sustainability planning, including coordinated funding strategies, across education and workforce development entities.

a. WFSWCT provides up-to-date labor market reports to school districts that include demand occupations and employment trends. Staff serve on multiple school CTE advisory councils in the region to provide input on labor market alignment for career and education pathways to regional in-demand industries. WFSWCT also participates in regional CTE Leadership meetings and provides information on an ongoing basis to school CTE directors, teachers, and administrators that inform instruction, equipment purchasing, and development of programs of studies.

b. WFSWCT has convened cross-sector groups to work towards different goals related to career and education pathways and strengthening the regional workforce and talent pipeline. WFSWCT serves as the Regional Convener for the Texas Regional Pathway Network stakeholder group that includes school administrators from Abilene Wylie, Merkel, and Hawley high schools, postsecondary representation from Cisco College, industry representatives from Rentech Boiler Systems and US Gypsum, the Student Hireability Navigator from Workforce Solutions, Region 14 ESC CTE Specialist, and WFSWCT leadership. WFSWCT is the backbone organization of the Big Country Manufacturing Alliance and, in conjunction with the BCMA, convenes an Advance Together steering committee that consists of industry representatives from RAM Inc., US Gypsum, Rentech Boiler Systems, and BWJ Metalworks, Region 14 ESC, Development Corporation of Abilene (DCOA), International Rescue Committee, Hardin-Simmons University, ISD representation from Coleman, Hawley, Merkel, and Abilene Wylie ISDs, and WFSWCT leadership. WFSWCT leads the Never2Late initiative to create career pathway models for upskilling and reskilling opportunity youth and adults with barriers to career advancement. The Never2Late steering committee comprises industry representatives from Arrow Ford dealerships and Abimar Foods, postsecondary representatives from Cisco College and Texas State Technical University, community-based and non-profit representatives from the International Rescue Committee, Goodwill West Texas, United Way, and WFSWCT leadership.

c. As a Regional Convener and intermediary, WFSWCT connects industry and education across the 19-county region of West Central Texas. Due to the rural and geographically dispersed nature of much of the region, many of the 60 school districts in West Central Texas have limited access to resources, including industry and postsecondary partners. WFSWCT makes connections between industry and education, assisting with aligning goals to identify mutually beneficial partnership opportunities. In addition to individual support, WFSWCT hosts Workforce Education Summits to bring industry representatives and school administrators to collaborate, learn from one another, and make lasting connections. These connections have resulted in increased opportunities for work-based learning, industry input on CTE programs, and a future workforce aware of and prepared for high-paying jobs.

d. Communication is crucial in the implementation and expansion of career and education pathway initiatives. WFSWCT regularly shares information with school districts, postsecondary institutions, industry, and other partners via a quarterly newsletter and the WFSWCT Career Education webpage. WFSWCT also partners with ESC 14 and 15 to communicate information to their respective school districts. The education service centers are a valued resource in West Central Texas, and by sharing our information, they provide WFSWCT credibility in the eyes of school district administration. When starting a new program or looking for school districts to participate in a career and education pathway initiative, ESC 14 and 15 provide direct connections for WFSWCT by hosting trainings, connecting us via email, or promoting the opportunities in their professional development sessions. For communication with industry partners, we rely heavily on the internal Business Services team at WFSWCT and our economic development partners in communities across the region to broaden outreach efforts and introduce more employers to the career and education opportunities in West Central Texas.

e. WFSWCT braids funds from public and private grants, as well as WIOA and TANF dollars to support career pathway development. WFSWCT also provides contract services for the TRPN in partnership with Region 14 ESC and for Next University with the DCOA and Abilene ISD. 12 school districts provide financial investment into the Youth Success program at a planned four-year step-down cost share rate. WFSWCT also works closely with school administrators to explore how best to maximize and allocate CCMR Outcome Bonuses. WFSWCT coordinates with Region 14 and 15 ESC, school districts, economic development, postsecondary institutions, and the BCMA to align initiatives so as not to duplicate efforts.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

7. **Partnerships** - Describe your current partnership(s), including the specific activities involved, with the following: a. Industry partnerships or specific employer partners (by sector); b. Postsecondary education; c. Secondary education; and d. Workforce or economic development.

As a regional convener, we plan to leverage existing partnerships to streamline data collection and sharing, communicate effectively, and establish WBL experiences that align with local skill and occupational demand. WFSWCT aims to lead a collective effort to develop high-quality pathways through critical partnerships with industry, secondary education, postsecondary education, and workforce/economic development.

a. Industry partnerships/Employer partners – As a regional workforce board, WFSWCT’s mission is to provide resources for good jobs, strong employers, and a healthy regional economy. Active and mutually beneficial partnerships with industry from all sectors are crucial to that mission. WFSWCT includes industry representation on all task forces, steering committees, and advisory boards to maintain an accurate and current perspective on local workforce needs. Industry partners are active participants in our many Career Education initiatives, such as the World of Work (WOW) Youth Expo, Teacher Externships, What’s Next Senior Event, and Workforce Education Summits. Industry leaders provide insight and knowledge about their industry directly to students and teachers. Examples of individual industry partners from different sectors include Hendrick Health Systems, Buffalo Gap I&E, Tolar Inc., US Gypsum, Rentech Boiler Systems, RAM Inc., and First Financial Bank. In addition to individual industry partnerships across West Central Texas, WFSWCT serves as the backbone organization of the Big Country Manufacturing Alliance (BCMA). The BCMA is an industry-sector partnership aiming to increase opportunities for high-wage jobs in manufacturing across West Central Texas. WFSWCT and the BCMA work on many activities, such as Manufacturing Day, Manufacturing Alley at WOW, and Industry and Education Leaders Networking events.

b. Postsecondary education – WFSWCT has developed and maintained robust and effective partnerships with several regional postsecondary institutions. All the institutions participate in the annual World of Work (WOW) Youth Expo and the What’s Next Senior Event. Cisco College is active in our work with the Texas Regional Pathway Network, apprenticeship development, and upskilling and reskilling initiatives. Texas State Technical College has four regional campuses in West Central Texas, and its leadership team is actively engaged in upskilling and reskilling initiatives. Instructors at Cisco College and TSTC have hosted campus visits for students in the Youth Success program and participate as panelists at the Workforce Education Summits. Cisco College, McMurry University, and Hardin-Simmons University partnered with WFSWCT in 2022 to expand Career Education services to the postsecondary level through the Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development grant program with the US Department of Education.

c. Secondary education – WFSWCT partners with the Region 14 ESC CTE Specialist, Vicki Hayhurst, on many Career Education initiatives and serves as a representative on the BCMA board of directors. Mrs. Hayhurst provides perspective and insight into the needs of the rural school districts in our region while also providing a direct line of communication to promote WFSWCT Career Education initiatives. WFSWCT has established MOUs and data-sharing agreements with 12 school districts to implement the Youth Success program. Thirty-three schools are active partners in the Career and Education Outreach program with established MOUs. Through the Texas Regional Pathway Network, WFSWCT has established partnerships with three school districts to focus on developing and aligning a manufacturing pathway.

d. Workforce/Economic Development – WFSWCT works closely with economic development and chamber of commerce offices in regional communities. Economic development corporations have been instrumental in attaining high-demand job training grants at several rural schools. In Sweetwater, the Chamber of Commerce works with the school district to coordinate mock interviews with all seniors. WFSWCT staff frequently communicate with economic development partners to identify local businesses' needs and collaborate on ways to overcome challenges to maintaining a healthy economy in rural west Texas.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

8. **Budget narrative** - Describe how the proposed budget will support the goals of the program. Please include justification for the specific funding allocations in the proposed budget, including how costs are connected to the grant activities described in this solicitation. Please also describe how each item in the proposed budget will support the needs of the regional team, beyond any one specific regional partner. In addition, include a description of other funding sources the region will leverage, if any, to support implementation of this project and future work.

The proposed budget will support regional alignment, work-based learning, data, and communications related to career and education pathway initiatives based on the justifications outlined below for a total of \$600,000.

- a. Payroll, \$287,000 – the following positions are WFSWCT staff: 50% of the Director of Career Education, regional lead; 25% of the Career Education Coordinator to support grant administration; 50% of a new Career and Education Outreach Manager to expand program opportunities to more school districts, oversee virtual reality career exploration, and support the implementation of educational resources related to career and education pathways; 100% of a new Work-Based Learning Coordinator to increase capacity for employer outreach and coordination of work-based learning activities; 100% of a new Youth Success Advisor to expand program opportunities to more school districts and implement effective advising strategies to support students in their career pathway; 100% of a new Data and Communications Specialist to support data collection, develop data sharing agreements with ISDs and IHEs, and streamline regional communication via a new webpage, newsletters, etc.
- b. Professional and Contract Services, \$165,000: WFSWCT will contract with ESC 14, 15, and 9 CTE Specialists to provide professional development related to career pathways and work-based learning, communicate with school districts, and provide expertise to the Pathways Leadership Team; WFSWCT will contract with an entity to develop a data dashboard as a tool and resource for stakeholders to visualize up-to-date career pathways and work-based learning data in West Central Texas; WFSWCT currently has a webpage within the existing organization's website dedicated to Career Education. These funds will be used to upgrade the webpage to become a hub for the regional convener's work, incorporate more content, and become more user-friendly for all stakeholders; WFSWCT currently utilizes a WBL management platform for ten school districts. Increased funding is needed to expand the platform's capabilities to support more schools across West Central Texas.
- c. Supplies and Materials, \$25,000: Education resources such as brochures, infographics, and guidebooks; Training workshop supplies and materials for Pathways Leadership Team, teachers, and school administrators; Laptops for WFSWCT staff funded by the Regional Convener grant
- d. Other Operating Costs, \$75,000: Out-of-state travel to cover three people to travel to Boston for the required conference; Stipends for some members of the Pathways Leadership Team and stipends for students completing internships or other WBL activities; Costs to host a regional conference in West Central Texas related to career pathways and work-based learning; costs to host regional convenings of key stakeholders; Other operating costs include in-state travel for up to 10 people to the state convening and regional travel costs for WFSWCT staff to conduct site visits at partner school districts and industry partners
- e. Indirect Costs at 8% rate, \$48,000

The region will leverage other funding sources to support the implementation of this project and expand the depth and breadth of the current initiatives supporting career and education pathways. The Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development grant from the Department of Education provides funding to support the Career and Education Outreach program, Youth Success program, and increase capacity at WFSWCT to coordinate more work-based learning activities at the high school and postsecondary level. Texas Regional Pathway Network cohort 4 grant from the Texas Education Agency supports career pathway development and alignment, as well as the implementation of the Youth Success advising model and work-based learning coordination in three school districts. If additional funds are available, WFSWCT and Region 14 ESC plan to continue applying and scaling the TRPN work in West Central Texas. The rootEd alliance grant supports the Youth Success program advising model and work-based learning initiatives at 12 partner schools. Some schools in West Central Texas are currently in a cost-share agreement with WFSWCT to support the continued implementation of the Youth Success program. Additionally, WFSWCT will continue to leverage WIOA and TANF dollars to support regional youth initiatives.

CDN Vendor ID

Amendment #

Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the [Administering a Grant](#) page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page

Amended Section

Reason for Amendment