



**Request for Quotes (RFQ)  
SCPa Works'  
2025 Business Education Partnership Mini-Grants**

Release Date: November 12, 2024  
Bidders Conference: November 20, 2024  
Proposal Due Date: December 13, 2024  
Anticipated Award Notification: February 6, 2025  
Anticipated Contract Start Date: April 1, 2025  
Period of Performance: April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds this initiative through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Federal funds will finance 100% of the project.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. SCPa Works and its contracted providers reflect Equal Opportunity Employers/Programs.

## SCPa Works Overview and Background

The South Central Workforce Development Board (SCPa Works) comprises the counties of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lebanon, Perry, and York in South Central Pennsylvania. SCPa Works has branded a region where all residents have the opportunity for prosperity through the cultivation and establishment of nationally recognized initiatives across all aspects of workforce development. SCPa Works' mission is to unlock the human talent that drives the development of businesses and individuals to achieve common goals.

SCPa Works serves as the fiscal agent in funding results-driven employment and training programs across the region that increase the scope of job seekers in obtaining new skills and career opportunities while allowing businesses to accelerate business growth potential through building effective talent pipelines that meet workforce demands. SCPa Works operates six PA CareerLink® sites that serve tens of thousands of Pennsylvania residents each year, representing an annual workforce investment of nearly \$14M into employment and training programs for youth and adults across South Central PA.

SCPa Works identifies diverse job seekers who match employment and training opportunities most effectively through maintaining a dedicated commitment to several key values that guide the administration of workforce development systems. The following values are embedded in SCPa Works' integrated programming, investments, services, people, and processes, as well as the values that SCPa Works endeavors to have partners and providers emulate:

- Performance
- Equity
- Flexibility
- Collaboration
- Accountability

SCPa Works is dedicated to the development of effective strategies that result in the provision of services to those most in need and prioritizes the following in all programs:

- *Employer Engagement:* Strengthen relationships with the regional business community so that the region's system can better understand current and projected labor demand, support sector-driven training models, and invest in future workforce development.
- *Individual Investment:* Connect job seekers to career pathways and ladders, aligning education with job opportunities and lifelong learning through the PA CareerLink® system.
- *People and Process:* Support and foster a healthy environment where all team members can pursue excellence with accountability, openness and transparency, career growth, and professional development while maintaining the values of equity and respect across workforce development initiatives. Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) frameworks into every aspect of SCPa Works' business model and investments.

SCPa Works is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities. This project is 100% Federally funded.

## Purpose of RFQ

Business Education Partnership (BEP) Grants, funded by the Department of Labor and Industry, aim to:

- Enable collaboration between local workforce development boards (LWDBs), school districts, and businesses;
- Educate students, parents, and guardians about high-priority occupations and in-demand career pathways that support family-sustaining wages; and
- Connect employers, students, parents, and guardians, facilitating discussions on career-ready skills and pathway opportunities relevant to Pennsylvania’s workforce needs.

Through prior BEP awards, SCPa Works has administered a variety of initiatives, including pre-apprenticeship programs, career fairs, STEM events, and youth leadership activities. BEP projects must involve education, business, and direct student engagement, aligning with the following core BEP components in South Central PA:

- *Business Engagement*: Showcase high-priority occupations;
- *Career-Ready Skills*: Provide skill development aligned with workforce needs;
- *Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA)*: Serve historically marginalized communities;
- *Resource Leveraging*: Utilize activities aligned with Chapter 339; and
- *Stakeholder Connection*: Link students, educators, employers, and families around career pathway opportunities.

## Proposal Request

### Eligible Applicants

Entities within South Central PA (Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lebanon, Perry, and York) that may apply include:

- Non-profit Organizations
- Career Readiness Consortia/Intermediaries
- Workforce Development Agencies
- Chambers of Commerce
- Employer Associations
- Apprenticeship Sponsors
- Pre-apprenticeship Programs
- School Districts, Career & Technology Centers
- Other entities at the discretion of SCPa Works

## Grant Overview

Up to \$126,800 in overall funding is available for mini-grants. While there is no set maximum award amount, requested funds should be reasonable, indicate necessity, and be aligned with the scope of the proposed project. Proposed projects must support BEP objectives.

## Proposals Should:

1. *Connect Stakeholders*: Foster relationships to promote career pathway opportunities and skill development.
2. *Engage Employers*: Provide career exposure, STEM pathways, and summer employment for students.
3. *Promote IDEA*: Engage marginalized groups through equitable practices.
4. *Focus on Career Pathways*: Equip students with skills for high-priority occupations (HPOs) or in-demand occupations (PA IDOL).

## Submission Information

### Project Narrative Requirements

SCPa Works will conduct a comprehensive merit-based evaluation using the following criteria:

- *Program Overview and Rationale (60%)*:
  - Provide a comprehensive proposal that addresses the narrative questions and key points outlined in the RFQ.
    - *Scope and Scale*: Number of individuals served, geographic reach, requested funding, and details of school district and business involvement.
    - *BEP Core Alignment*: Explanation of how the project meets BEP core objectives.
    - *Community Needs Assessment*: Data-supported analysis of community needs, such as demographics, poverty rates, and employment statistics.
    - *Credentialing*: Does the project yield industry-recognized credentials?
    - *IDEA Integration*: Plan for reaching historically marginalized groups.
    - *Geographic Reach*: The counties proposed to be served by the project and how the applicant determined the proposed service region. Through this request, SCPa Works seeks to fund projects across its eight-county service region.
- *PA CareerLink® Partnership (20%)*:
  - Define the applicant's relationship with the local PA CareerLink® and outline how the organization intends to collaborate in delivering the program (a letter of support is required). If the entity was awarded a previous BEP mini-grant, please detail how the organization partnered with PA CareerLink® on the previous project.
- *Project Budget (20%)*:

- Provide a detailed budget, with justification for each line item. Costs should be reasonable and necessary and aligned with program goals as outlined in the RFQ. The applicant must provide adequate justification to allow reviewers to assess the necessity and appropriateness of each cost. While not required, demonstrating matching funds is strongly encouraged.

## **Program Budget**

Applicants must submit a detailed budget request using the provided template. The budget will be assessed based on cost reasonableness and its relevance to the proposed program activities. The budget must cover the full grant period and will serve as the financial foundation for any award, including reimbursement of costs over the project duration. Each cost item must be justified in detail, broken down by object class category, and supported by additional information as required. Please provide the written budget justification in the Excel sheet supplied. Matching funds are encouraged but not required.

## **Other Requirements**

- *Assurances and Certifications:* Complete the attached forms.
- *Letters of Support:* Include up to three letters of support; a PA CareerLink® letter is mandatory. If applying as a consortium, a letter from a partnering school district/CTC is required.

## **Submission Instructions**

- *Deadline:* Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Responsive platform by close of business on December 13, 2024.
- *Completeness:* All requirements, forms, and attachments must be completed to be eligible.

## **Proposal Development Tips for Proposal Creation:**

- Demonstrate an understanding of BEP components.
- Detail organizational qualifications and experience.
- Propose innovative strategies addressing South Central PA workforce needs.
- Ensure clarity and conciseness; proofread for professionalism.

## **Questions and Bidders Conference**

Submit questions via email to [info@scpaworks.org](mailto:info@scpaworks.org) or through the Responsive platform by ten business days before the deadline. Questions received before the Bidders Conference on November 20, 2024, at 9:00 AM, will be addressed at the conference, with responses shared on our website and in Responsive.

## **Funding Restrictions**

This is a cost reimbursement grant. Funds awarded through this grant must be utilized exclusively to establish or enhance a Business-Education Partnership (BEP) by supporting activities aligned with the BEP mission. Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage existing resources, such as staff, facilities, and equipment, to maximize the impact of the proposed project. While project scopes may vary, allowable expenses under this grant are limited to those directly related to the successful program components and core objectives outlined in this RFQ. All costs must be categorized as direct expenditures. Any adjustments to the budget during the grant period must receive prior approval from SCPa Works prior to expenditure.

Applicants are reminded that pre-award costs are incurred at their own risk, as SCPa Works holds no obligation to reimburse such expenses should the application be denied or if the awarded amount is less than anticipated. Costs deemed unreasonable or unnecessary will not be eligible for reimbursement.

### **Allowable Costs**

- Implementing a strategic plan to bring education, workforce, and business entities together to coordinate career awareness and exposure opportunities.
- Supporting and funding career awareness guidance resources.
- Supporting and funding career development components including, but not limited to, career awareness activities for youth, parents, and educators; student activities and coursework focused on soft skills development; costs associated with providing internships, workplace shadowing, career mentoring; and similar opportunities.
- Convening partners to discuss local labor market needs and how the education system can support training and curriculum development to meet those needs.

### **Disallowable Costs**

- Indirect costs;
- Purchasing equipment;
- Building construction;
- Pre-award costs;
- Supporting the lease or rental cost of a building;
- Procuring lobbying services; and
- All other costs not associated with the direct performance of the award.

SCPa Works reserves the right to disallow any costs that do not align with the approved grant proposal.

## **Reporting Requirements**

Awarded applicants will submit the following during the grant period:

- *Quarterly Narrative Reports:* Summarize activities and demonstrate impact.
- *Monthly Invoices:* With financial documentation and planned expenditures.

Grantees may need to maintain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in accordance with state and SCPa Works policies.

## Timeline

- *RFQ Release:* November 12, 2024
- *Bidders Conference:* November 20, 2024
- *Proposal Deadline:* December 13, 2024
- *Anticipated Award Notification:* February 6, 2025
- *Anticipated Contract Start:* April 1, 2025
- *Performance Period:* April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

## Discussions and Award

SCPa Works reserves the right to reject all applications in response to this announcement.

SCPa Works 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 for the requirement.
2. Only a portion of the application is selected for award.
3. SCPa Works required additional information to determine that the recipient is capable of complying with reporting requirements.
4. Special terms and conditions are required.

Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by SCPa Works within a specific period of time determined by SCPa Works may preclude the applicant's award. SCPa Works reserves the right to request clarification and negotiate final awards with grantees. If at any time the provider/contractor violates the terms of the agreement or fails to submit timely invoices and reports, SCPa Works may revoke said contract.

The successful applicant(s) will be required to enter an agreement with SCPa Works in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A to ensure compliance with the provisions of WIOA, its regulations, applicable laws and regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and SCPa Works policies, which shall comprise the terms and conditions of the award.



*2024 Business Education Partnership Mini-Grants*

SCP a Works 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 RFQ.