

Abstract Workforce Innovation Fund Application

Applicant Name: Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Applicant Category: Individual State
Lead Applicant City/State: Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Areas Served: Statewide (all regions of the Commonwealth)
Project Name: The Kentucky Solution
Funding Level Requested: Technical cost: \$5,997,117
Evaluation cost: \$900,000

Project Type: Project C

Description of Proposed Project: The Kentucky Solution builds a strong alliance between the Cabinet for Economic Development and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. We will address the workforce needs of existing and prospective employers in a comprehensive, cohesive, unified approach. Our strategy includes aligning vertical and horizontal policy, developing employer-led sector strategies, building a world-class talent pipeline, creating an interagency customer-relations approach and demonstrating return on investment (ROI).

The Kentucky Solution will change service delivery and unify a fragmented system. We will reconfigure our business services framework that includes resource guides, policies, protocols and a unified approach to serving existing and potential employers. Seed money will be used to grow industry partnerships tied to our sector strategy approach and advance existing industry partnerships.

To develop a world-class talent pipeline, a career pathway framework will be established align policies around career pathways tied to sector strategies as well as support integrated education and training. Our project will create a shared database to deliver unified, coordinated, solutions-based service delivery. Streamlined communications and a sophisticated business intelligence model will position Kentucky to better attract, retain and grow business. Our work will be validated by our ROI model which will include key performance indicators, publicly accessible dashboards and data-driven policy and investment decision making.

The Kentucky Solution will deliver long-term economic growth, small-business expansion, a highly skilled emerging workforce, retooled incumbent workers and re-engaged unemployed workers.

Description of Proposed Evaluation Strategy: Kentucky will seek proposals for a comprehensive evaluation of the initiatives in this proposal. A third-party evaluator will be selected for the WIF grant program. Measuring success will require a multi-faceted evaluation of both partners' system data and a qualitative analysis of our systems' users. To provide partners in this initiative with the best objective data analyses and assessments related to implementation,

Attachment A: Abstract

Kentucky will augment current targeted sector businesses and job seekers in training or gaining employment within those sectors.

Both qualitative and quantitative evaluations will be used to measure the success of business services teams in all of the regions of the Commonwealth. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Industry Partnerships will include an assessment of implementation plans, links to career pathways development, community impact of the entrepreneurial culture shift, quality of life measures and worker satisfaction. To gauge the success of these proposed changes, we will design and conduct targeted surveys throughout the life of this grant.

The Kentucky Solution Team includes a five step theory of change outlined in the proposal. Each step will provide additional areas for mining data, surveying perceptions of stakeholders, and assessing progress. The types of targeted training of multiple staff, partners and community representatives will give important feedback to measure the impact of change in the service delivery system and the level of interaction, collaboration and responsiveness among groups.

This important statewide undertaking will improve the business climate in our state, increase skill attainment and lead to a better quality of life our citizens. Without the funding for The Kentucky Solution, our workforce and economic development agencies will continue to operate in separate, ineffective systems that stunt the growth of our Commonwealth and impede the success of our people.

Public Contact Information: Beth A. Brinly, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment