2021 Governor's Investment in Vocational Education Grant Competition

Request for Proposals and Guidelines for Submission

GIVE
Governor's Investment in
Vocational Education

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I. General Information and Overview

The Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE) is designed to foster long-term regional partnerships between Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs), community colleges, industry, economic development/workforce agencies, and K-12 to identify and address "skills gaps" in local workforce pools. Through data-driven and collaborative work, Tennessee can ensure that education institutions are producing the credentials employers need while also driving new industry to the state.

The GIVE program facilitates the alignment of local workforce and education partners through a $25 million competitive grant process. These funds are available to local collaboratives through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by THEC.

Grants of up to $1 million will be available to local collaboratives for periods of up to thirty (30) months to facilitate the development and implementation of employer-driven career pathways that include both K-12 local education agencies (LEAs) and higher education institutions. Proposals must identify and address local community/regional skills gaps through one (or a combination) of the following methods:

1. *Enhance, expand, and/or acquire equipment to develop an academic program that creates a pathway from secondary to postsecondary, culminates in a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, and fills a critical and demonstrable local workforce need.*

2. *Develop and implement collaborative, meaningful, and structured work-based learning (WBL) experiences (defined in detail on pages 4-5). Successful applicants must demonstrate how they will create or expand the infrastructure necessary to sustain successful WBL programs. WBL experiences may culminate in experiences such as internships, co-ops, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, or clinicals.*

3. *Provide industry recognized certifications to meet an identified regional workforce need.*

II. What Constitutes a Collaborative?

Grant applicants must demonstrate the viability of a local collaborative that includes the following mandatory partners:

1. A Tennessee public institution of higher education. Eligible institutions include TCATs and community colleges. The eligible institution will serve as the fiscal agent for all grant activities and will execute a grant contract with

THEC. Any public or private, non-profit, four-year institution may participate as an additional partner, but the primary partner must be a TCAT or community college.

2. A local workforce or economic development agency (e.g., development district, chamber of commerce, or local/regional Workforce Investment Board). *The preferred collaborative structure would include representation from the local/regional Workforce Investment Board.*

3. Two or more area employers representing industry sectors with a demonstrated shortage of skilled workers; these employers should be seeking to employ credentialed graduates from the proposed program.

4. At least one K-12 local administrator, representing secondary CTE programs of study and work-based learning interests.

Lead Entity

The public institution of higher education or local workforce/economic development agency will serve as the lead entity for the grant. The lead entity is responsible for coordinating all grant activities, managing partner participation and collaboration, reporting, and contract monitoring and audit. The lead entity and fiscal agent serve as accountable parties for all grant activity.

Fiscal Agent

The eligible institution (TCAT or community college) will serve as the fiscal agent for all grant activities and will execute a grant contract with THEC. The eligible institution may serve as both the fiscal agent and the lead entity.

III. Who May Apply?

In this round of funding, priority will be given to applicants not funded through GIVE 1.0. However, GIVE 1.0-funded grantees are eligible to apply by addressing the criteria outlined below.

To ensure that GIVE 2.0 is responsive to current workforce needs in each community and does not duplicate previous efforts, collaboratives awarded grant funding during GIVE 1.0 may only participate in GIVE 2.0 via:

1) The creation of new (not currently offered) educational training programs; and/or
2) The expansion of GIVE 1.0 programs to counties not served by their GIVE 1.0 program; and/or
3) Expansion of GIVE 1.0 programs within currently served counties to new site(s) in the area of service.

IV. Work-Based Learning (WBL)

The intent of the GIVE 2.0 Work-Based Learning (WBL) component is to encourage local industry partners to provide meaningful and sustainable work experiences to students andto increase workforce engagement with local education partners. Applicants must also demonstrate how they will create or expand the infrastructure necessary to sustain successful WBL programs. ***While Work-Based Learning is an optional component of the proposal, scoring preference will be given to proposals that clearly incorporate WBL experiences.***

For the purpose of this RFP, WBL is defined as a proactive approach to bridging the gap between secondary and postsecondaryeducation and high-demand, high-skill careers in Tennessee. Students and companies arepartnered to reinforce academic, technical, and employability skills through workexperience. WBL activities should begin as early as elementary school and continuethrough postsecondary. The purpose for a continuum of WBL experiences is to develop apathway that provides students with concrete, coherent, relevant actions andopportunities. WBL experiences should also culminate in credit bearing capstones such as internships, co-ops, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, and clinicals. Acceptable examples of WBL experiences include the following:

- Career Fair
- Career Mentoring
- Field Trip/Tour
- Guest Speaker(s)
- Job Shadowing
- Mock Interviews
- Apprenticeship
- Clinical Experience
- Co-op
- Internship

The WBL Framework outlines the following program expectations:

(a) Structure of the Program
(b) Coordination of the Program
(c) Supervision of Students
(d) Development of Personalized Learning Plans
(e) Student Assessment Using Multiple Measures
(f) Evaluation

The WBL Framework is established in SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.06 and is outlined in High School Policy 2.103.

High-quality experiences are defined as having the following characteristics:

- a **purposeful focus** on applied learning in preparation for postsecondary education and careers;
- **learning outcomes** as the driver for designing experiences and learning plans;
- **relevance** to student interests, their high school Plan of Study, and learning goals;
- **integration** with curriculum or connection to related instruction;
- sufficient **variety** to provide exposure to multiple career options;
- sufficient **depth** to allow for employability skill development and professional community engagement;
- ongoing **interaction** with professionals from industry and the community;
- close **supervision** from both teachers and employers;
- opportunities for **reflection** and **analysis**;
- **assessment** of student learning that is aligned with industry-specific expectations;
- **alignment** with postsecondary and career opportunities regionally; and
- **documentation of student learning** through the development of artifacts and portfolios.

For more information and resources on offering high quality WBL experiences, please visit: https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/work-based-learning.html

V. Proposal Specifications

Applications will respond to the following criteria and present a detailed plan for achieving the outlined objectives.

Section 1. *Demonstration of Need – 20 points*

Proposals will include a thorough overview of the collaborative area's workforce needs. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed new or expansion of existing academic programs, industry certifications and/or WBL program(s), any requested equipment, and how the creation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address demonstrated workforce needs.

Essential components:

- *Alignment with Tennessee's Drive to 55 goals.* Illustrate how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between postsecondary credentials and the needs of employers.

- *Localized data demonstrating the need for action*. Demonstrate with empirical data that illustrates the needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs. Preferred data sources are the following:

  1. THEC Academic Supply and Occupational Demand Report
  2. Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development information available at Jobs4TN
  3. Data provided by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's Center for Economic Research in Tennessee (CERT) such as: LEAP 2020: In Demand Occupations or TNECD County Profile Tool

- *Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs.* Clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and skillset deficits in the local area. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand, high-skill trade and technical occupations and identify how the proposed program addresses the identified local workforce need in those areas.

Section 2. ***Program Plan – 25 points***

Each proposal will include a detailed description of the planned project.

Essential components:

- *Detailed project timeline and overview*. Provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the development and implementation of the identified program.

- *Clear alignment of workforce data and Drive to 55 goals.* Provide clear emphasis for grant activities and demonstrate how the proposal will support the region's efforts to improve the skills gap and meet Drive to 55 goals.

- *Measurable objectives for each phase of the project.* Detail the metrics to be used to continuously track student engagement. Include how the project will produce the credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers.

- *Recruitment of underrepresented student groups (gender, race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged students, English Language Learners, students with disabilities).* Proposal includes a plan for thoughtful recruitment of student groups who are traditionally underrepresented in CTE programs, with particular attention paid to the types of CTE programs. Recruitment plan will include how information will be disseminated across student groups (i.e., a communication plan; brochures in Spanish and/or relevant second language; calendar of events to educate students, families, community members of CTE program and work-based learning opportunities).

- ***Project governance and accountability plan*. Clearly detail the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director employed at the lead entity; and identify members of a project steering committee who will maintain oversight throughout the project period.**

- *Structure of the optional Work-Based Learning (WBL) program*. Proposals seeking to establish a WBL program must outline the requirements and expectations for the proposed WBL experiences (see pages 4-5 for more information on WBL) and include descriptions of whether WBL is credit-bearing, and how the WBL is aligned with local labor-market needs. ***While Work Based Learning is an optional component of the proposal, scoring***

preference will be given to proposals that incorporate WBL experiences.

- *Role of proposed equipment request*. Required only for proposals seeking equipment purchases with GIVE 2.0 funds. Explain how equipment purchases will specifically address local labor market employment and/or training needs and provide a detailed description of equipment, the educational value of equipment in preparing the workforce, and the justification for purchase. Equipment purchases should help prepare students to enter a career in a local industry while earning a postsecondary credential and/or industry certification.

Section 3. ***Strength of Partnership – 20 p o i n t s***

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners (higher education, K-12, industry, local workforce or economic development agency, etc.) in a meaningful role.

Essential components:

- *Detailed description of each mandatory partner's role in implementation of the identified program.* Describe how each partner will carry out the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; and identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project.

- *Capabilities of each mandatory partner in ensuring project success.* Discuss the unique strengths of each partner in executing the proposed program and describe how each partner is qualified to participate.

- *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the partnership agreement from local and area employers.* Applicants must also submit a signed MOU with at least two local area employers citing need and outlining benefits for their industry. Entities seeking to establish a WBL program will submit a signed MOU with each of the partnered employers providing the proposed work-based learning experiences**.**

- *MOU outlining the partnership agreement from higher education institution(s)*. If the proposal includes two or more postsecondary partners, applicants must also submit a signed MOU with the leader(s) of the partnering educational institution(s) demonstrating interest and capacity for program participation.

At a minimum, a Memorandum of Understanding included as part of this grant should establish an agreement among the partners of the collaborative that outlines each partner's respective benefits, roles, and responsibilities. MOUs **must** be signed by **all** partners to earn points in the scoring rubric.

Section 4. ***Budget Plan – 15 points***

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan and a completed budget using the template provided. Applicable "Grant Budget Line-Item Details" should be submitted **as a separate attachment with the completed budget**.

Essential components:

- *Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities*. Detailed discussion of how each line item of the budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the proposed GIVE 2.0 program.

- *Explanation of any anticipated indirect costs associated with the implementation and administration of the grant.* Indirect costs are limited to 8% of the total budget.

Section 5. ***Sustainability – 20 points***

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the 30-month period.

Essential components:

- *Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the 30-month funding period.* Describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period and outline the roles of each partner thereafter.

- *Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all program partners beyond the 30-month funding period.* Describe how each partner will continue to work collaboratively to share resources, outcomes, and other relevant programmatic information after the conclusion of GIVE 2.0 funding.

- If applicable, detailed description of availability of long-term resources to house, maintain, and/or repair equipment.

- If applicable, WBL programs will describe how the education-industry partnerships will continue. This includes a detailed commitment and strategy of private industry tomaintain a GIVE 2.0-developed WBL program beyond the 30-month funding period that describes structures for supporting students, including central points of contact for supervisors and other supports, such as transportationand scheduling.

Section 6. ***Economic Status Acknowledgement (up to 15 additional points available)***

Each year, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) prepares an index of county economic status for every county in the United States. Economic status designations are identified through a composite measure of each county's three-year average unemployment rate, per capita market income, and poverty rate. Based on these indicators, each county is then categorized as distressed, at-risk, transitional, competitive, or attainment.

Tennessee has a long-term objective of reducing the number of distressed counties to 10 by 2025. To assist in attaining this state goal, proposals that **clearly** serve counties designated *distressed* or *at-ri*sk will automatically receive points acknowledging the economic status of that area.

For the purpose of scoring proposals, applicants **directly** serving counties designated as ***distressed*** will receive **15 additional points,** and those **directly** serving counties designated as ***at-risk*** will receive **10 additional points. The maximum points available under this section** for any **one proposal is capped at 15 points. Points will be awarded based on** the county's **economic status designation as of July 1, 2021.**

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development has developed a dashboard illustrating the current economic status for all 95 counties in Tennessee as measured by the ARC. To view the TN ECD dashboard visit: County Economic Status Map .

VI. Submission Guidelines and Timeline

The application process consists of two affirmative steps: the submission of the Notice of Intent to Submit and the submission of the final proposal.

A *Notice of Intent to Submit* must be transmitted via Formstack no later than **4:30 p.m. (Central Time) on Thursday, August 5, 2021.** The *Notice of Intent to Submit* must include the following:

- Lead Entity Information
- Project Director/Co-Director
- Project Director/Co-Director Phone Number(s)
- Project Director/Co-Director Email Address(es)
- Name of Higher Education Institution(s)/Fiscal Agent
- Title of Proposed Project
- Proposed Partners (All additional Mandatory Partners and Anticipated Workforce Partners)
- Proposed Funding Requested

The submission of the Notice of Intent to Submit is a mandatory step in order to submit a proposal for this grant program. Final proposals must be received electronically through Formstack by **Thursday, September 16, 2021, at 12:30 p.m. (Central Time). SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DEADLINE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

Link to Notice of Intent: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/give_2_0_letter_of_intent

RFP Timeline:

- Technical Assistance Webinar: Friday, July 23, 2021
- Notice of Intent due: Thursday, August 5, 2021
- Technical Assistance Webinar: Thursday, August 12, 2021
- Final proposal due: Thursday, September 16, 2021
- Grant applicants notified of selection: October/November 2021
- Technical Assistance Webinar for Grantees: November 2021
- Start date for contracts: November/December 2021

VII. Grant Application Procedures

All grant applications will be submitted by Formstack. After submitting the letter of intent, potential applicants will receive instructions for uploading documents through Formstack. Applicants will be able to upload all proposals and verify that their proposals were submitted on time through this process**.**

The application must include:

- Cover Sheet (see Appendix A)
- Table of Contents
- One-page Abstract/Project Summary
- Program Proposal: This section should be double-spaced, 12-point font, with one-inch margins.

  *Note: Maximum document length is **fifteen pages**, excluding the cover sheet, data list, and abstract, table of contents, budget, and appendices.*
- Budget with applicable line item details (Appendix B)

Notification

Once each proposal has been received, a confirmation notice will be generated by Formstack and received by the projectdirector. **If you do not receive your confirmation notice within one hour of submitting your proposal, please call Brandon Hudson at (615) 741-7575 or Mitch Currey at (615)741-1072.** It is the sole responsibility of the proposed project director to verify receipt of the proposal and notify project partners.

One week after the proposal deadline, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission will post all received proposals on the THEC website accessible at www.tn.gov/thec. **If you have submitted a proposal but it is not listed, contact Brandon Hudson at (615)741-7575 or Mitch Currey at (615) 741-1072 immediately.**

Review and Award Process

The Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE) 2.0 grant proposals will be submitted to THEC and reviewed by a selection committee. Selection committee members will score proposals utilizing the standardized rubric which is included in the GIVE Request for Proposals (RFP) as an attachment. The rubric will ensure that all grants are reviewed objectively, and selected proposals are in alignment with the state's workforce and education goals. Further detail on the scoring rubric is found in Appendix C. Final scoring from the committee members alone will determine theproposals that are approved for funding.

VIII. Legal Information

Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that federally-assisted programs be free of discrimination. Should you feel you have been discriminated against, contact your local Title VI representatives. The Title VI Coordinator at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission is Amber Walsh (615) 532-3500.

Funding

Funder reserves the right to fund any proposal in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to reject any of the proposals responding to the RFP, and to re-issue the RFP and accept new proposals if the selection committee determines that doing so is in the best interest of the State of Tennessee. In addition, the funder may consider geographic parity in awarding.

All costs incurred in preparation of a proposal shall be borne by the applicant. Proposal preparation costs are not recoverable from grant funds. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) reserves the right to withhold funding if at any point the program is not adhering to federal or state requirements or to the goals and objectives declared in this RFP. THEC staff reserve the right to attend any project activity or meeting to ensure the fidelity of this program, and to conduct regular monitoring of the project.

APPENDIX A- Cover Sheet

NAME OF LEAD ENTITY

2021 Governor's Investment in Technical Education (GIVE 2.0) [Program Title]

[Lead Entity Name] [Fiscal Agent]IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

1. [Workforce/Economic Development Agency]
2. [Higher Education Institution(s)]
3. [LEA/School District Name]
4. [Employer Partners]

[Project Director Name, Mailing Address]

[Director's Telephone]

[Director's E-mail Address]

Funding requested:

$[Dollar Amount]

X

President of Higher Education Institution
(Fiscal Agent)

X

Project Director (Lead Entity)

APPENDIX B- Budget

GRANT BUDGET				
GIVE Program Competitive Grant				
The grant budget line-item amounts below shall be applicable only to expenses incurred during the following **Applicable Period: BEGIN: 11/15/21 END: 05/15/24**				
POLICY 03 Object Line-item Reference	**EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY [1]**	**GRANT CONTRACT**	**GRANTEE PARTICIPATION**	**TOTAL PROJECT**
1, 2	Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	0.00	0.00	0.00
4, 15	Professional Fee, Grant & Award [2]	0.00	0.00	0.00
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Supplies, Telephone, Postage & Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental & Maintenance, Printing & Publications	0.00	0.00	0.00
11, 12	Travel, Conferences & Meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	Interest [2]	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	Specific Assistance to Individuals	0.00	0.00	0.00
17	Depreciation [2]	0.00	0.00	0.00
18	Other Non-Personnel [2]	0.00	0.00	0.00
20	Capital Purchase [2]	0.00	0.00	0.00
22	Indirect Cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
24	In-Kind Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	**GRAND TOTAL**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**

[1] Each expense object line-item shall be defined by the Department of Finance and Administration Policy 03, *Uniform Reporting Requirements and Cost Allocation Plans for Sub recipients of Federal and State Grant Monies, Appendix A*. (posted on the Internet at: www.state.tn.us/finance/act/documents/policy3.pdf).

[2] Applicable detail follows this page if line-item is funded

GRANT BUDGET LINE-ITEM DETAIL

Line 1 Salaries and Wages

On this line, enter compensation, fees, salaries, and wages paid to officers, directors, trustees, and full-time employees. An attached schedule may be required showing client wages or other included in the aggregations.

Line 2 Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes

Enter (a) the institution's contributions to pension plans and to employee benefit programs such as health, life, and disability insurance; and (b) the institution's portion of payroll taxes such as social security and Medicare taxes and unemployment and workers' compensation insurance. An attached schedule may be required showing client benefits and taxes or other included in the aggregations.

Line 4 Professional Fees

Enter the organization's fees to outside professionals, consultants, and personal-service contractors. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)

Line 5 Supplies

Enter the organization's expenses for office supplies, food and beverages, and other supplies. An attached schedule may be required showing food expenses or other details included in the aggregations.

Line 6 Telephone

Enter the institution's expenses for telephone, cellular phones, FAX, E-mail, telephone equipment maintenance, and other related expenses.

Line 7 Postage and Shipping

Enter the institution's expenses for postage, messenger services, overnight delivery, outside mailing service fees, freight and trucking, and maintenance of delivery and shipping vehicles.

Line 9 Equipment Rental and Maintenance

Enter the institution's expenses for renting and maintaining computers, copiers, postage meters, and other office equipment used exclusively for this grant initiative.

Line 10 Printing and Publications

Enter the institution's expenses for producing printed materials (not including posters, advertising, and other marketing materials), purchasing books and publications, and buying subscriptions to publications.

Line 11 Travel

Enter the institution's expenses for travel, including transportation, meals, lodging, and per diem payments.

Line 12 Conferences and Meetings

Enter the institution's expenses for conducting or attending meetings, conferences, and conventions. Include rental of facilities, speakers' fees and expenses, printed materials, and registration fees.

Line 15 Grants and Awards

Enter the institution's awards, grants, subsidies, and other pass-through expenditures to individuals and to other institutions, including travel and equipment allowances outside the institution (this includes WBL salary reimbursements). This classification includes items used in direct support of this initiative. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)

Line 18 Other Non-personnel Expenses

Enter the institution's allowable expenses for advertising, the institution's and employees' membership dues in associations and professional societies and licenses, permits, registrations, and testing fees.

Line 19 Capital Purchases

Enter the organization's purchases of fixed assets and purchases with a minimum life expectancy of one year. Include land, equipment, buildings, leasehold improvements, and other fixed assets.

Line 22 Indirect Costs

This amount is intended to cover costs associated with administrative functions including providing the required project reports, financial information, and information to support project evaluation. Not to exceed 8 percent of the total budget.

Line 24 In-Kind Expenses

This amount is for reporting the value of contributed resources applied to the program. Approval and reporting guidelines for in-kind contributions will be specified by those contracting state agencies who allow their use toward earning grant funds.

Line 25 Total Expenses

Total Direct and Administrative Expenses, and Line 24, In-kind Expenses, goes on this line.

APPENDIX C – Scoring Rubric

Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE 2.0) Proposal Rubric

Design

The following rubric will be used as a scoring guide to determine which GIVE 2.0 proposals areawarded funding. The rubric is divided into six sections mirroring the sections of the GIVE 2.0 proposal. The rubric was developed in partnership with the Department of Education, the Tennessee Board of Regents, and other state agencies focused on education and workforcepolicy.

Use

The primary function of the rubric is to ensure a fair, impartial review of every proposal.

Sections 1-5 of the GIVE 2.0proposal, along with relevant supporting documentation, will be scored against a list of criteria in Sections 1-5 below. Each scoring section is divided into sub- categories to assist reviewers in determining the appropriate score and level of implementation (Does Not Meet, Approaching, Demonstrating, and Excelling). Within the "Demonstrating" and "Excelling" sub-categories, the list of "required evidence" must be demonstrated in the proposal and supporting documentation to earn the minimum number of points for that sub-category and advance to the next sub-category. Criteria listed under "advanced evidence" and "exemplary evidence" in these sub-categories will help reviewers to determine whether an applicant earns any additional points. If all criteria in a sub-category are not met, the proposal cannot receive points greater than the highest allowable points in that sub-category. For example, In Section 1, a proposal only meeting two of the criteria in the "Approaching" sub-category cannot receive more than 4 points in this section. In Section 6, applicants clearly serving counties designated as **distressed** will receive **15 additional points**, and those clearly serving counties designated as **at- risk** will receive **10 additional points**. **The maximum points available under this section for any one proposal is capped at 15 points.**

Helpful Definitions

Postsecondary Credential: For the purpose of this RFP, a postsecondary credential is defined as a certificate, diploma, or degree that is conferred by a postsecondary institution (i.e. Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology, community colleges and 4-year universities).

Certification: While not considered a postsecondary credential, certifications are viable credentials that prepare students for postsecondary completion and provide them with meaningful industry knowledge. Certifications are awarded by a certification body through an educational institution based on an individual demonstrating, through an assessment process, that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific occupation or skill.

Drive to 55: Tennessee's goal of equipping 55 percent of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential by 2025.

Work-Based Learning (WBL): For the purpose of this RFP, WBL is defined as a proactive approach to bridging the gap between secondary and postsecondary education and high-demand, high-skill careers in Tennessee. Students and companies are partnered to reinforce academic, technical, and employability skills through work experience. The purpose for a continuum of WBL experiences is to develop a pathway that provides students with concrete, coherent, relevant actions and opportunities. WBL experiences should also culminate in credit bearing capstones such as internships, co-ops, registered apprenticeships, and clinicals.

Reviewer Scores and Notes

Reviewer Name	
Date	

Program Name	
Lead Entity	
Higher Education Partner	

Section	Points Possible	Points Awarded	Notes
Demonstration of Need	**20**		
Program Plan	**25**		
Strength of Partnership	**20**		
Budget Plan	**15**		
Sustainability	**20**		
Economic Status Acknowledgement	**15**		
Totals:	**115**		

Section 1: Demonstration of Need (20points)	
Demonstration of Need: Successful proposals should be aligned with regional and/or local economic and labor-market opportunities, as demonstrated by available labor market information.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
Does Not Meet (0 points)	☐ Proposal provides little to no state, regional, or local labor market data to justify the grant activities and/or does not cite data sources.
Approaching (1-4 points)	☐ Proposal provides general labor market data to justify grant activities from at least one of the preferred data sources. ☐ Proposal identifies clear industry sectors that are aligned with proposed grant activities but does not go into detail. ☐ Proposal provides some information (e.g., job growth or wage information) about industry sectors that are aligned with proposed grant activities but does not provide adequate supporting information.
Demonstrating (5-10 points)	**Required Evidence (5-7):** ☐ Proposal provides state, regional, or local labor market data to justify grant activities from several sources, including TNECD LEAP 2020: In Demand Occupations, Jobs4TN, **and/or** THEC reports. ☐ Proposal utilizes labor market data to identify occupations tied to grant activities that offer livable wages (MIT Living Wage Calculator for a single adult or 75% of the median wage for the region). ☐ Proposal states goals and connects with workforce priorities but lacks detail in how planned grant activities satisfy workforce need. **Advanced Evidence (8-10):** ☐ Proposal states goals and connects with workforce priorities and demonstrates how grant activities assist in meeting workforce needs.

Excelling (11-20 points)	**Required Evidence (11-15):** ☐ Proposal provides comprehensive and rigorous state, regional, and/or local labor market data to justify grant activities from several sources, including TNECD, LEAP 2020: In Demand Occupations, Jobs4TN, **and** THEC reports that focus on anticipated or future needs that include, but are not limited to, projected growth and retirement metrics. ☐ Proposal utilizes labor market data to identify occupations that offer livable wages (MIT Living Wage Calculator for a single adult or 75% of the median wage for the region). ☐ Proposal provides detailed and clear connections between local needs and planned activities. ☐ Proposal outlines how the grant activities will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provides clear linkages between postsecondary credentials offered through the grant and the needs of employers. **Advanced Evidence (16-20):** ☐ Proposal includes industry-specific data from local employers indicating explicit labor market needs aligned with the grant activities and credentials offered. ☐ Proposal provides additional supporting materials and resources illustrating industry-specific data (e.g., a letter or report from the local chamber of commerce that shows their own analysis of labor market trends and or specific needs identified by local employer(s)) related to labor market data that are utilized to inform grant activities.

Section 2: Program Plan (25 points)	
Program Plan: Successful proposals should include a detailed timeline and overview of activities; clear alignment of workforce data and Drive to 55 goals; measurable objectives; project governance and accountability and work-based learning (WBL) components. If equipment is purchased, the role of the proposed equipment request must be included.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
Does Not Meet (0 points)	☐ Proposal contains little to no information pertaining to the timeline and overview of activities; alignment of workforce data and Drive to 55 goals; measurable objectives; project governance, and accountability components.
Approaching (1-4 points)	☐ Proposal includes project timeline and overview elements. ☐ A project plan is presented but lacks sufficient details or is missing one or more of the following essential components: identified objectives, governance, accountability information, or skills gap improvement.
Demonstrating (5-10 points)	**Required Evidence (5-7):** ☐ Proposal includes detailed project timeline with a month by month overview of activities, critical meetings and actions that will comprise the development and implementation of the project. ☐ Proposal includes measurable objectives for each phase of the project. ☐ Proposal includes a detailed governance and accountability plan. ☐ Proposal clearly aligns grant activities with workforce data and Drive to 55 goals. ☐ *If proposal includes WBL, proposal outlines requirements and expectations for proposed WBL experiences and how these experiences align with workforce needs.* ☐ *If purchasing equipment, proposal provides a clear justification for the purchase and demonstrates how the equipment purchase will address local labor market and/or training needs.* **Advanced Evidence (8-10):** ☐ Proposal includes measurable objectives for each phase of the project that clearly align with workforce needs. ☐ Proposal includes a signed Memorandum of Agreement for data sharing that will be used for the purposes of sharing outcomes of activities funded through the proposal. ☐ Proposal specifies quality WBL experiences offered through grant activities to high school and postsecondary students and the corresponding employer partner that provides these experiences.

Excelling (11-25 points)	**Required Evidence (11-15):** ☐ Proposal describes how grant activities provide a secondary to postsecondary pathway that will serve as an intentional progression of coursework leading to a credential and/or degree that aligns with workforce needs. ☐ The proposal includes two or more early postsecondary opportunities as a component of the grant activities that align with workforce needs. ☐ Proposal provides a continuum of high-quality work-based learning opportunities that progressively build on one another and are aligned with workforce needs. **Advanced Evidence (16-20):** ☐ Proposal includes stackable credentials involving two or more postsecondary institutions demonstrating the certificates/diplomas/degrees that students will be able to pursue through the grant activities. ☐ Proposal describes structures for supporting students in work-based learning experiences, including central points of contact for supervisors, and monitors other supports, such as transportation and scheduling. ☐ Proposal provides documentation of an MOU with employers outlining a capstone work-based learning experiences such as: internships, co-ops, registered apprenticeships, clinical, or practicums. ☐ Proposal includes contingency plan for proposed project activities, outlining how unexpected challenges will be overcome to ensure project success. **Exemplary Evidence (20-25):** ☐ Proposal incorporates creating a new, expanding, or using an existing worker ethic program such as: the *Work Ethic Diploma, Work Ethics Matter, and Work Ethic Distinction*. ☐ Proposal describes the types of support services offered to high school and postsecondary students that assist with completion by partnering higher education institutions. ☐ Proposal describes opportunities for educators to gain industry knowledge and become familiar with updates in industry-specific technology and business practices through externships and other professional development experiences outside the classroom. ☐ Proposal includes data on current CTE/work-based learning enrollment in their school, disaggregated by student groups (gender, race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged students, English Language Learners, students with disabilities). ☐ Proposal provides evidence of formalized processes and protocols, such as those in the Work-Based Learning Toolbox(used to recruit and engage employers based on alignment to regional labor/workforce data analysis. Proposal demonstrates alignment with other local workforce initiatives/grants.

Section 3: Strength of Partnership (20 points)	
Strength of Partnership: Successful proposals must provide a detailed description of each mandatory partner's role in implementation of the identified program, capabilities of each mandatory partner, letters of commitment from partners or a partnership MOU.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
Does Not Meet (0 points)	☐ Proposal does not clearly state or define partnerships or lacks the required members.
Approaching (1-4 points)	☐ Proposal lists all required partners but does not incorporate the partners in a meaningful role or lacks required partnership MOUs.
Demonstrating (5-10 points)	**Required Evidence (5-7):** ☐ Proposal provides signed MOU(s) with at least two employers demonstrating support and commitment to the grant activities. ☐ Proposal provides signed MOU(s) with other partnering higher education institution(s), if applicable, demonstrating interest and capacity for program participation. **Advanced Evidence (8-10):** ☐ Proposal contains a detailed description of how each partner will carry out grant activities and tasks assigned to each partner. ☐ Proposal contains signed articulation agreements and/or MOUs/ that provide evidence that all partners are engaged.
Excelling (11-20 points)	**Required Evidence (11-15):** ☐ Proposal provides documentation of a formal agreement with at least one postsecondary institution that in addition to accepting credit for early postsecondary opportunities confers a credential from a TCAT or community college (e.g., technical certificate, diploma, or degree) ☐ Proposal contains signed MOU(s) demonstrating partner commitment to the grant activities with required regional resources necessary for program success. **Advanced Evidence (16-20):** ☐ Proposal provides details of articulation agreements and partnership activities with **other** postsecondary institutions, if applicable, that include details about the nature of partnership (e.g., transfer of credits, accelerated degree completion). ☐ Proposal demonstrates that learning experiences are collaboratively designed by education (secondary and postsecondary) and industry partners. ☐ Proposal contains a signed MOU that outlines each partner's respective benefits, roles, and responsibilities and shows evidence that all partners are engaged (e.g., shared vision statement) and clearly defines roles of each partner.

Section 4: Budget Plan (15 points)	
Budget: Successful proposals will provide clear alignment between funding requested and grant activities. All proposals must include a detailed financial plan and completed budget using the template provided.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
Does Not Meet (0 points)	☐ Budget is incomplete and/or impractical given the scope of the proposal.
Approaching (1-4 points)	☐ Budget lacks sufficient detail, but expenditures are practical given the scope of the proposal.
Demonstrating (10 points)	**Required Evidence (10):** ☐ Budget is complete and submitted using template provided. ☐ Budget contains detail and justification for expenditures.
Excelling (15 points)	**Required Evidence (15):** ☐ Budget contains clear alignment between funding requested and grant goals and objectives. ☐ Budget is complete and accurately reflected with sufficient justifications and detail listed for each line item.

Section 5: Sustainability (20 points)	
Sustainability: Successful proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the 30-month period.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
Does Not Meet (0 points)	☐ Sustainability plan is incomplete and/or impractical given the scope of the project.
Approaching (1-4 points)	☐ Sustainability plan lacks sufficient detail, but is practical given the scope of the proposal.
Demonstrating (5-10 points)	**Required Evidence (5-7):** ☐ Proposal includes a plan for sustaining the program and partnerships beyond the grant period. ☐ *If proposal includes equipment purchases, a detailed plan including the availability of long-term resources for maintenance, repair, and housing equipment is included.* **Advanced Evidence (8-10):** ☐ Proposal includes a **detailed** plan for sustaining the program and partnerships beyond the grant period. ☐ *If proposal includes a WBL component, a detailed plan describing how the WBL programs and industry partnerships will continue is included*
Excelling (11-20 points)	**Required Evidence (11-15):** ☐ Proposal includes a detailed plan for sustaining the program and partnerships beyond the grant period **that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner.** **Advanced Evidence (16-20):** ☐ Proposal includes formal written documentation of commitment to sustain the grant activities and partnerships beyond the grant period through a signed partnership MOU. ☐ *If proposal includes a WBL component, a detailed commitment and strategy for partners to maintain GIVE 2.0 developed WBL programs beyond the grant period that describes structures for supporting students in work-based learning experiences, including but not limited to, central points of contact for supervisors and other supports, such as transportation and scheduling, is included.*

Section 6: Economic Status Acknowledgment (up to 15 points)	
Economic Status Acknowledgement for "Distressed" or "At-Risk" Counties: Each year, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) prepares an index of county economic status for every county in the United States. Economic status designations are identified through a composite measure of each county's three-year average unemployment rate, per capita market income, and poverty rate. Based on these indicators, each county is then categorized as distressed, at-risk, transitional, competitive or attainment. TNECD produces a list of the economic status designations of each of Tennessee's 95 counties based on the ARC measurements each year. Tennessee has a long-term objective of having no distressed counties by 2025. To assist in attaining this state goal, proposals that serve counties designated *distressed* or *at-risk* will receive points acknowledging the economic status of that area.	
Sub-Categories	**Criteria**
"At-Risk" (10 points)	☐ Proposal implements a new program or expands an existing program in at least one ***at-risk county***. Proposal **clearly** demonstrates implementation through work-based learning, market driven early postsecondary opportunities, and/or other industry informed programs.
"Distressed" (15 points)	☐ Proposal implements a new program or expands an existing program in at least one ***distressed county***. Proposal **clearly** demonstrates implementation through work-based learning, market driven early postsecondary opportunities and/or other industry informed programs.
Scoring Note:	For the purpose of scoring proposals, applicants **clearly** serving counties designated as ***distressed*** will receive **15 additional points,** and those **clearly** serving counties designated as ***at-risk*** will receive **10 additional points. The maximum points available under this section for any one proposal is capped at 15 points. Points will be awarded based on the county's economic status designation as of July 1, 2021.**