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## **2025 Education Readiness Grants Application Primer**

### **Background (Manufacturing Readiness Grants)**

Makers and movers across the world are maximizing the use of technologies and data to increase competitiveness, productivity and profitability. The emergence of new technology and processes – often referred to as Industry 4.0 or the 4th Industrial Revolution – will provide opportunities for Indiana’s advanced manufacturing and logistics companies and Hoosier talent to grow and succeed for generations to come.

Since 2020, Conexus Indiana and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation have been working together to provide matching grants to companies interested in deploying Smart Manufacturing technology and tech enabled-equipment. This in turn will stimulate the existing manufacturing community and open new opportunities in a dynamically changing marketplace. The program functions to expand critical knowledge and lower the barriers to Smart Manufacturing technology adoption and to reassure Indiana’s manufacturing dominance on a national and regional level.

### **Education Readiness Grants**

In 2025, Conexus Indiana is thrilled to continue to work alongside the Indiana Commission for Higher Education’s career and technical education team to administer Education Readiness Grants. Designed to work in tandem with existing Manufacturing Readiness Grantees, Education Readiness Grants will enable K-12 school ecosystems to procure equipment and technology that will bolster enrollment within career and technical education (CTE) and develop students’ skills within advanced manufacturing and logistics pathways to meet the needs of Industry 4.0. These reimbursement grants will amplify the linkage between education and industry by preparing, motivating, and strengthening the talent pipeline for industry partners embracing Smart Manufacturing technology.

Thank you for being a visionary and leader of your community and education ecosystem. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education and Conexus Indiana are incredibly excited to work with you to promote innovative initiatives and enhance students' experiences within CTE while developing the necessary skills for tomorrow's jobs. Please complete the form in its entirety; incomplete submissions will not be considered.

### **Spring 2025 Eligibility**

For this iteration of Education Readiness Grants, only high school and career center applicants that are currently offering the following Next Level Programs of Study will be eligible for grant funding:

- Industrial Automation and Robotics
- Digital Manufacturing - Industry 4.0
- Biotechnology

This cycle will include particular emphasis on industry partner references and a continuum of Work Based Learning. The maximum award is \$125,000. **Applications close Friday, January 24, 2025.**

If your school or school district/corporation would like to implement this opportunity in a middle school setting or for a different career and technical education pathway, or if you have additional questions about the program and eligibility, please contact PJ McGrew at [pmcgrew@conexusindiana.com](mailto:pmcgrew@conexusindiana.com).

### **About the application**

The application contains the following sections:

- Applicant Information (12 questions)
- Senior Official Contact Information (name, title, email, phone)
- Senior Fiscal Contact Information (name, title, email, phone)
- Program Instructor Contact Information (name, title, email, phone, 2 questions)
- Project Description (12 questions)
- Technology/Equipment Investments (8 questions)
- Employer Engagement and Workforce Pipeline (6 questions)
- Project Plan (4 questions)
- Terms & Conditions (4 questions)

Partial submissions may be saved and resumed within 30 days with a custom link provided by the system. However, you must complete the form in its entirety to be considered for submission. Should you have any technical issues with the form, please contact PJ McGrew at [pmcgrew@conexusindiana.com](mailto:pmcgrew@conexusindiana.com).

### **Reference**

Smart Manufacturing is the intersection of manufacturing and digital transformation [e.g. industrial internet of things (IIoT), sensor technology, COBOTS, additive manufacturing (3D printing), big data and analytics, cybersecurity, machine learning, artificial intelligence (AI), digital twin, advanced modeling, blockchain, autonomous robotics or vehicles, augmented, virtual or mixed reality, cloud computing, and advanced communications (5G, etc)].

### **Questions**

#### **Applicant Information**

1. Name of educational institution
2. Type of entity (school district, career and technical center, senior high school, other)
3. Mailing address
4. Supplier ID number
5. Website
6. Number of students enrolled in CTE course offerings (use data from most recent school year)
7. Number of students enrolled in manufacturing CTE program(s) of study (use data from the most recent school year)
8. Next Level Program(s) of Study offered (Eligible programs for the Spring 2025 grant are Industry 4.0 - Smart Manufacturing, Industrial Automation and Robotics and Biotechnology)
9. List any post-secondary partners with which the manufacturing program of study collaborators
10. List any dual credit courses offered within manufacturing program of study
11. List any post-secondary credentials offered within manufacturing program of study
12. List any promoted industry certifications offered within manufacturing programs of study

## **Contacts**

13. List a grant administrator – someone with authority to speak/comment on behalf of the institution (name, title, email, phone number)
14. List a grant fiscal agent (name, title, email, phone number)
15. List a program instructor – someone who will leverage the technology/equipment procured through the grant (name, title, email, phone number)

## **Project Description**

*This section should include details for related elements of any larger technology adoption project (in addition to the specific reimbursable technology/equipment investment).*

16. Summary of the manufacturing project: Tell us a broad overview of the goals, what the project entails, and how it relates to Smart Manufacturing
17. Technology: Which technologies are being deployed in the project? Check the technologies that you've described above
18. CTE Enrollment: Describe how the project will serve to improve marketability of manufacturing CTE program(s) of study and bolster CTE student enrollment in subsequent school years
19. Skill Development: What skills will students develop as a result of the project? How will these skills differ from the skill development prior to this project? How will these skills improve students' competitiveness in tomorrow's workforce?
20. Innovation: How is the project innovative compared to other manufacturing CTE programs of study or other CTE pathways within your school/district?
21. Safety: What planning and preparation is included within the project to ensure student and faculty safety?
22. Training: Does the project incorporate any necessary instructor, administrative, or support personnel training? If so, please describe. Are there specific costs associated with training services or programs?
23. NLPS Adoption: Describe how the project will enhance students' experiences in the broader Next Level Program(s) of Study adoption. How does the project correlate and build upon the required components within post-secondary course alignment?

24. Are the specific items intended to be purchased through this grant exclusive of "standard" equipment already incorporated within Next Level Program(s) of Study?
25. Does the project create opportunity for cross-curricular learning and collaboration?
26. Are there any partners or other parties involved with the project whose involvement or performance can significantly impact project success?
27. Are any other grants, subsidies, incentives or other forms of federal, state, or local financial programs being utilized, leveraged, or pursued to support the project?

### **Technology/Equipment Investment(s)**

28. Total grant amount requested
29. List any hard, physical asset that is being procured and installed and dedicated exclusively to this project. Include manufacturer, model, country/state of origin, vendor, useful life, and approximate cost. Provide as an attachment if list is large.
30. Total cost of project
31. Attach any files that back up the project costs
32. Attest that specific items being funded will be fully bought and paid for by the applicant and free of any lien or other encumbrance at least to the extent that the applicant will have equity in the item greater than the funded amount.
33. Describe and estimate the cost for software or technology only if it is 1) dedicated exclusively to this project, 2) necessary for the project to achieve its goals, and 3) can be accounted for as a capital expense, i.e. its an asset with a useful life beyond the purchase year and is paid for as a lump sum rather than via a monthly or annual subscription.
34. Indiana address where project equipment will be permanently installed
35. Affirm that all equipment, technology or other funded items will not be moved from the address specified above once installed for a minimum of 5 years.

### **Employer Engagement and Workforce Pipeline**

36. Are there any industry partners that are currently aligned and/or will support this technology adoption project? How does this investment prepare students for future employment specifically at this/these employer(s)? What will collaboration with industry look like once this technology is deployed?

37. Does this technology investment align specifically with any Manufacturing Readiness Grant recipients? List any appropriate organizations and describe the alignment.
38. List any industry partner references (name, title, email address) with which the applicant has collaborated in preparation for this technology investment. If a letter of support has been obtained, provide an attachment.
39. Does this technology investment affect the connection and alignment with existing or new post-secondary partners? Are there any opportunities for collaboration or shared use with post-secondary partners after implementing this technology investment?
40. Does this technology investment create or align with any work-based learning (WBL) opportunities for secondary education students? If so, describe how WBL will be positively impacted.
41. Will this technology investment be utilized in a school-based enterprise (SBE)?

## **Project Plan**

42. When is the project anticipated to begin and complete? What are the major milestones for the project and their timing? You may provide a project plan as an attachment.
43. What are the major risks associated with the project and what measures will be in place to mitigate the risks?
44. How will you define and measure project success?
45. Please describe (or attach) any other relevant supporting information (pictures, documents, etc.) that you feel may be helpful for the review committee to fully appreciate and understand the scope, nature, and opportunity of this grant application.

## **Terms & Conditions**

46. Peer Review: Applicant consents to allow this application and all other relevant and related information and data to be made available to parties involved with its review and evaluation, provided that it is exclusively for the purpose of grant consideration and/or program reporting/enhancement. These parties include: the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Conexus Indiana, and a peer review committee. (Y/N)
47. Case Study: Applicant affirms a willingness to participate in a case study upon successful conclusion of any project that received grant funds. The case study will positively highlight the applicant and the specific project outcomes as a means to share learnings and best practices in the public domain. The intent is to increase broad understanding of technology use cases in manufacturing CTE programs of study and spur connectivity between employers and education institutions. Case studies will be in collaboration and coordination with the grantee and will be reviewed by the grantee prior to release. Case studies will include metrics and measurement of program success, along with anecdotal review and forecasts. Only non-proprietary information will be shared in the case study. (Y/N)
48. Applicant understands that a grant award offer may be contingent upon applicant entering into a "grant agreement" with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education detailing full terms and conditions of the grant prior to any qualifying project expenditures and correlated funding. (Acknowledge)
49. Attach W-9