

State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Summary Information

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	John Barr (john.w.barr@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	FY26-1
Funding Opportunity Title	Workforce Upskilling for HVAC Supply Chain Manufacturers
CSFA Number	420-30-3766
CSFA Popular Name	Workforce Upskilling for HVAC Supply Chain Manufacturers
Anticipated Number of Awards	1
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$2,000,000
Award Range	\$2000000 - \$2000000
Source of Funding	State
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	Yes
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	11/10/2025
Application Date Range	11/10/2025 - 12/10/2025 : 5:00 PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/b25261c0029947c9ae01deedd643514a
Technical Assistance Session	No

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

Workforce Upskilling for HVAC and Plumbing Supply Chain Manufacturers

NOFO ID: 3766-3184

For information about grants please visit:

<https://dceo.illinois.gov/dceo-grants.html>

A. Program Description

Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department” or “DCEO”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to set forth the requirements for funding for the *Fast Track Training Support Program* funded by the Workforce, Technology and Economic Development Fund 20 ILCS 605/605-420, for the following purposes:

- To assist individuals targeted for service through education, training and workforce development programs to obtain employment-related skills and obtain employment
- To identify, develop, commercialize and promote technology within the State
- To promote economic development within the State

This NOFO is for a local workforce innovation area (LWIA) in St. Clair County to provide a range of services to Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVAC) and plumbing supply chain manufacturers currently located in or relocating to St. Clair County that are seeking to hire, train and/or upskill workers. This funding is intended to provide critically needed workforce development training and job placement support to specialized manufacturers in the St Clair County area.

Program Description

Illinois’s advanced manufacturing sector is a nationally significant driver of economic growth and innovation, employing more than 190,000 workers across nearly 5,000 firms statewide. The HVAC and plumbing manufacturing industry and its related supply chain manufacturers are essential employers in Illinois’ Southwest Economic Development Region and St. Clair County. This industry faces workforce challenges that threaten its competitiveness including outdated skill sets among incumbent workers, limited leadership development pipelines, and insufficient readiness to adopt advanced production technologies. This program will help adapt to technological change, creating a strong foundation of industry-driven skills for Illinois workers that are required by HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers.

The successful grantee will be required to work with the Department and HVAC and Plumbing Supply Chain Manufacturer(s) in St Clair County to develop employer-driven incumbent worker training plans that include, but are not limited to, the following information:

- Listing of the training program/training courses
- Description of the training course, including an outline of the objectives and/or training curriculum
- Training provider and qualifications
- Length of the training to be provided (number of days per week, and number of hours per day)
- Anticipated training outcomes including, but not limited to, certifications or other industry recognized credentials
- Cost of the training program (to include only reasonable and acceptable costs)
- Agreement by the employer to provide company and employee information necessary to track worker/project activity and outcomes

Program History

Although this is a new program, applicants should have an established history of providing a comprehensive range of workforce services tailored to the unique needs of manufacturers in St. Clair

County. The funding is intended to address workforce opportunities and contribute to the growth and sustainability of the HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in the region.

Performance Goals and Measures

The grantee will be required to report performance data on the activities and outcomes that are negotiated in a project work plan in support HVAC and Plumbing Supply Chain Manufacturers in St. Clair County. The anticipated activities and outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Number of individuals enrolled in incumbent worker training to support HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers
- Number of individuals completing incumbent worker training to support HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers
- Number of individuals that achieve a certificate, degree or other industry recognized credential
- Number of individuals hired by HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County
- Number of training participants retained in unsubsidized employment for 6 and 12 months employed with participating HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County
- Number of training participants experiencing a wage/benefit increase in the HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers jobs in St. Clair County
- The percent decrease in recordable workplace injuries

Other Information

N/A

B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing state funds appropriated by the General Assembly through Public Act 104-0003. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$2,000,000. The Department expects to make one award through this NOFO.

The period of performance is expected to be January 1, 2025 through November 30, 2027.

Allowable costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable based on activities contained in the scope of work. Applicants will be required to justify all proposed costs in the application narrative and uniform budget attachment. Note that this program will not support construction and other capital costs.

If approved, allowable pre-award costs incurred from date of the Notice of State Award through the period of performance start date are allowed to be charge to the Grant. Costs associated with the development of the grant proposal are not allowed.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/get-an-employer-identification-number>)
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<https://sam.gov>). SAM.gov registrations must be marked as "public" to allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information;
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>)
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at <https://sam.gov>)
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable (https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/business_services/corp.html)

- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>)

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

At this time, federal memo M-21-20 allows entities to apply for grant awards without a valid UEI number. The UEI number must be obtained prior to grant execution. The State of Illinois has adopted this guidance for the issuance of state awards also.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

Organizations that serve as the grantee for the administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title IB programs in St. Clair County with the mission to provide workforce supports, prepare people for employment and assist workers advance in their careers.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Cost sharing or matching is not required for this opportunity.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year, depending on the grantee's audit type requirements.

c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect to waive payments for indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to "Waive Indirect Costs" into the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system.

The following State University Facilities & Administration Rate and Base will apply to all State issued awards that contain either Federal pass-through funding or State funding.

RATE:

20% Rate for awards or programs administered On-Campus*

10% Rate for awards or programs administered Off-Campus*

BASE:

Base approved in the State Universities' current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

*Criteria for utilization of the On/Off campus rate is located within the general terms and conditions of Federal NICRA for each State University. If not clearly defined, State awarding agencies and officers will make final determination based upon the purposes of the grant scope.

4. Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information.

Applications and accompanying materials are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be clearly identified as such in the application materials. The Department will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

5. Other, if applicable.

Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information: Applications are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be identified as such in the application. The Department will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

Applicant Rights: Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. The Department is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application or pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant beginning date

Applicants may submit one application for this opportunity.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the “Grant Application Link” field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

John Barr
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Email: john.w.barr@illinois.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- ☐ Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format.
 - Signature page must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project.
 - The entire Excel document with all the tabs included, even if the tabs are not relevant to the grant opportunity, must be submitted.
 - Do not send a restricted version of the Uniform Budget.
 - Certification page must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Conflict of Interest Disclosure.
 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally
- ☐ Mandatory Disclosure.
 - Mandatory Disclosure must be signed by the authorized signatory before submission
 - Can be printed, signed, and scanned
 - Can be signed digitally

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the submission of the following other programmatic specific items as part of the program application:

- ☐ Program Application Narrative
 - Project Summary: Provide a brief summary of project goals and objectives and how the project will support HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County.
 - Applicant Capacity:
 - Describe the project team's experience in administering similar programs and grants.
 - Describe the project team's capacity to manage this program at this time.
 - Project Plan:
 - Provide an overview of the type of incumbent worker training programs that will be offered.
 - Provide a high level project workplan that includes a timeline, activities and projected outcomes.

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- Provide a budget narrative.
- Project Impact
 - Describe the workforce challenges facing HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County.
 - Describe how the proposed project will support HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers and address workforce challenges in St. Clair County.

Please note there is a maximum upload of 10 documents in the web form that you submit the application, so combining files may be necessary.

3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM. To establish a SAM registration, go to <https://sam.gov> and/or utilize this instructional link: How to Register in SAM from the gata.illinois.gov Resource Library tab. SAM.gov registrations must be "public."
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in the GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The State awarding agency may not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the State awarding agency is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the State awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

4. Submission Dates and Times.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by December 10th at 5:00 PM.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/b25261c0029947c9ae01deedd643514a>.

The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

6. Funding Restrictions.

This opportunity does allow reimbursement of pre-award costs per Part B. Funding Information. Other restrictions can be found in Sections A., B., and C.

7. Other Submission Requirements.

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A revised application addressing any deficiencies in the original application may be submitted after receiving a denial based on a low score. The revised application will be considered complete when additional documentation or revised materials have been submitted to the Department. This opportunity will not be afforded to projects that were ineligible as originally submitted.

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

The applicant can receive a copy of their submitted application by checking the "Send me a copy of my responses" box at the bottom of the application submission form.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed on a competitive basis on a 100 point scale. The threshold for not being recommended for funding will be set by the Department. The Department shall consider the following criteria when evaluating the application submittal: Capacity, Need, Program Plan and Budget

Need- Identification of stakeholders, facts, and evidence that demonstrate the proposal supports the grant program purpose	
The applicant demonstrates the project will benefit HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County.	20
The applicant documents the workforce challenges faced by HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturers in St. Clair County and how the project will address those challenges.	15
Capacity- The ability of the applicant to execute the project according to requirements of the grant program	
The applicant has experience and expertise to successfully manage grants of a comparable scale and scope.	15
The applicant provides a project timeline, including projected activities and outcomes, that demonstrates the ability to effectively execute the project.	15
Quality- The totality of features and characteristics of the project that indicate its ability to satisfy the requirements of the grant program	
The applicant describes how the project will create an impactful worker training program that benefits HVAC and plumbing supply chain manufacturer(s) in St. Clair County.	20
The applicant provides a detailed budget aligned with scope of work and is reasonable in relation to the planned activities and projected outcomes.	15

2. Review and Selection Process.

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded based on an evaluation committee's merit review of the applications and development of a funding recommendation. Decisions to award the one grant and the funding level will be determined based on the applicant's response and compliance with the requirements of this NOFO. The selected applicant will enter into negotiations with the Department for a grant. The

purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budget and scope of work revisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made.

The Department reserves the right to request additional information from applicants for evaluation purposes. At its sole discretion, the Department reserves the right to reject all applications, reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement, award in part or total, and waive minor defects and non-compliance.

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal per:

<https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappreview.html>. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted through the merit review appeal request form: (<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6444bed39ef140c589f002f53b9bc092>) within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a meritbased review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.

The Department reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

Subrecipients and Subcontractors: Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

Grant Uniform Requirements: The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Procurement: Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

3. Reporting.

Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

Monitoring

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

Audit

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Admin Rules shall apply (See 44 IL Admin Code 7000.90).

Project Reporting

Grantees will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements as directed by the Department including, but not limited to:

- Periodic Performance Report.
- Periodic Financial Report.
- Success stories.
- A final narrative assessment of project outcomes that identifies promising practices and lessons learned to inform future workforce program implementation efforts.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Grant Help Desk
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Email: CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov

H. Other Information, if applicable

N/A