



## Colorado First and Existing Industry Job Training Programs FY 2023 Program Policies and Procedures

### 1. Colorado First Program Requirements

- a. Colorado First (CF) Job Training Program funding is only for the customized training of net new hires employed by businesses relocating to or expanding in Colorado. The net new hires must have significant career opportunities and receive training that builds the skills necessary to increase employee productivity and wages and reduces the need for public support. "Net new hires" is defined as newly hired employees in newly created positions and pertains to job growth. Replacement hires and employees in back-filled positions may not be funded.
- b. The CF Program provides training funds for either 1) full-time (32+ hours/week) permanent (regular) net new hires, or 2) full-time temporary net new hires if the employer's intent is to hire such employees for permanent (regular) employment upon training completion.
- c. Net new hires may be counted in a grant if hired within 12 months prior to the application submission date through the initiation date of training.
- d. Net new hires funded during the previous fiscal year are not eligible for CF grant funds in subsequent years.
- e. The CF per learner allowance may not exceed \$1,650 per learner (average across all trainings) per fiscal year.

### 2. Existing Industry Program Requirements

- a. Existing Industry (EI) Job Training Program funding is for the customized training of incumbent workers with significant career opportunities who are employed by established Colorado businesses. The funding is for training that supports adaptation to new technology and prevents layoffs.
- b. The EI program provides training funds only for current permanent (regular), full-time (32+ hours/week) employees.
- c. The EI per learner allowance may not exceed \$1,400 per learner (average across all trainings) per fiscal year.

### 3. CF and EI Grant Applicant Eligibility

- a. The Skill Advance Colorado grant program considers CF and EI applications from businesses in Colorado key industries as defined by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT).
- b. Only for-profit companies and non-governmental 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible for funding. State agencies and government employees are not eligible for funding.
- c. Businesses are required to pay an average wage: In urban counties, businesses must pay at least \$16.00 per hour. In rural counties, businesses must pay \$13.00/hour before December 31, 2022 and \$13.00/hour or minimum wage, whichever is higher, after December 31, 2022.
- d. Businesses are eligible to apply for CF grants every fiscal year and EI grants every other fiscal year.
- e. Businesses are eligible to apply for more than one grant and for both programs within the same fiscal year; however, learners (employees) may not be duplicated across grants within the same fiscal year. Exception: CF-funded learners (employees) may be trained in a subsequent EI grant within the same fiscal year.

### 4. CF and EI Grant Parameters

- a. The CF and EI programs fund training only for employees who have significant career opportunities and who require substantive instruction.
- b. The CF and EI programs do not provide funding for seasonal employees or employees in retail occupations.
- c. Requested training funds are capped at \$150,000 per application; total training funds are capped at \$200,000 per business per fiscal year.
- d. Total grant awards include a 12% administration fee that is retained by the administering college, with a minimum of \$1,500 and a maximum of \$12,500.
- e. Skill Advance Colorado funding supports only Colorado businesses and employees. Employees funded by the CF and EI programs must be residing and working in Colorado during the full training period of the grant.
- f. A Colorado-based employee of the business/grant applicant must be identified as the grant contact and act as the grant manager.
- g. Forty percent (40%) of training costs must be financed by the grantee in cash and/or in-kind contributions.
- h. Skill Advance Colorado grant applicants and grantees must consult with and operate under the guidance of a Skill Advance Colorado community college representative for grant application and submission assistance as well as grant management. Skill Advance Colorado community college representatives take the lead role to:
  - i. advise on and facilitate training needs assessment and grant application development and submission processes with the grant applicant;
  - ii. interpret program policies and procedures for the grant applicant and the grantee; and
  - iii. perform grant management duties with the grantee (including, but not limited to, policy and procedure interpretation; training implementation and attendance monitoring; payment and reimbursement documentation collection; accurate completion of reporting documents; final report development; and grant compliance.)
- i. Skill Advance Colorado grantees may not allow third-party training vendors to interpret program policies and procedures, serve as a program advisor or a grant manager, or perform grant management duties.
- j. Grant-funded activities may not begin until the grant application has been approved by the Skill Advance Colorado application review committee. Grant-funded activities include, but are not limited to, curriculum development, training, purchasing materials, signing vendor agreements, travel, and paying invoices.
- k. Training attendance forms signed by learners and by the grantee, and an attestation of attendance data accuracy signed by the grantee, are required to be submitted with final reporting documents.
- l. A *Colorado First Learner Information Form* must be completed by each Colorado First-funded learner and submitted with the Final Report.
- m. On-site visits to grantees may be conducted by OEDIT, Colorado Community College System (CCCS) program administrators, and/or college representatives.
- n. In rare and extenuating circumstances, a grant extension to complete training may be approved by the Skill Advance Colorado administration team. Extension requests must be submitted via the college representative prior to the published training completion deadline and must be accompanied by a statement from the grantee describing the extenuating circumstance. The grantee must submit final reporting documents per the adjusted reporting deadline identified in the extension approval notification to avoid forfeiture of grant funds.
- o. Changes to training plans and related grant activities are not permitted without Skill Advance Colorado administration team approval. Approved grants may be revised a single time. Revision request submissions must include a new training budget, a newly signed and dated application narrative/Attestation reflecting the proposed changes, and third-party training vendor training cost quotes if applicable. Revised grants may not exceed the originally approved grant amount. Grant activities related to the proposed changes may not occur prior to revision approval.
- p. Grant-funded learners must be eligible to work in the U.S. Grantees must warrant that each employee employed by the Grantee within the United States is a United States citizen or, if not a United States citizen, is lawfully present in the state and authorized to work. In the Final Report, an authorized grantee/business representative (employee) must attest that
  - i. the organization has examined the legal work status of all employees named on the training attendance forms; has retained file copies of all documents required by U.S. Code Title 8, Section 1324a ("Unlawful Employment of Aliens"); and that no employment identification documents have been altered or falsified; and the grantee/business has not knowingly hired an unauthorized alien,
  - ii. and that the eligibility verification for all learners is in compliance with C.R.S. 24-76.5-101, et seq., if applicable, which prohibits certain public benefits for individuals who cannot provide verification of lawful presence within the United States.
- q. The Colorado First and Existing Industry Job Training Programs, their participating colleges, trainers, and grantees are subject to program

compliance and auditing. In the case of an audit, colleges, grantees, and training providers are required to provide backup evidence and documentation upon request. Grantees shall permit the State or its designee to audit, inspect, examine, excerpt, copy and/or transcribe its records related to approved grants for a period of 12 months following grant closeout to assure compliance with the terms hereof or to evaluate the Grantee's performance hereunder.

#### **5. CF and EI Grant Applications**

- a. Applications are reviewed on a first come, first served basis. Grant applicants are not entitled to receive Skill Advance Colorado grant funding; grant approvals are at the discretion of the grant application review committee.
- b. EI grant applicants must complete and submit a financial information form to OEDIT for approval. The *FY23 EI Financial Review Form* is available on the Skill Advance Colorado website.
- c. When a Skill Advance Colorado grant applicant has interest in pursuing training provided by a third-party training vendor, the applicant must consult and involve the Skill Advance college representative prior to planning vendor-provided training.
- d. Skill Advance Colorado grant applicants may not allow third-party training vendors to initiate training needs assessment or grant application development, interpret program policies and procedures, or serve as a program advisor or grant manager.
- e. Grant applicants must include a Third-Party Training Vendor Attestation signed by each vendor with their grant application submission if third-party training is proposed in the application.
- f. If training is to be provided by a third-party training vendor, a detailed training cost quote must be submitted with the grant application. The quote must be on the vendor's letterhead, include a date, and reflect the training costs proposed. Contracts, agreements, invoices, and emails outlining training costs are not accepted as quotes.
- g. Grant applications may include training provided by the college (faculty, adjunct instructors, and staff); college contractors; qualified grantee employees; and third-party training vendors. The Skill Advance Colorado program does not endorse any third-party training vendor.
- h. All direct training costs must be broken out in the appropriate line items on the training budget. Lump sum or combined costs will not be considered by the Skill Advance Colorado application review committee.

#### **6. CF and EI Training Eligibility, Requirements, and Compliance**

- a. Skill Advance Colorado-funded training must be short-term and customized (contextualized/tailored content) to specific business needs and related to substantive, resume-building, transferable skills.
- b. Training assessment, planning, and curriculum development/customization activities must take place prior to training implementation.
- c. All training funded by Skill Advance Colorado must take place within Colorado.
- d. Reimbursement requires training to be completed by the published training implementation deadline. (See the *CF and EI Program Calendar*.)
- e. Businesses may apply for funding for both essential/non-technical and hard/technical skills training.
- f. If funding becomes limited, priority will be given to training focused on hard/technical skills.
- g. Training Funds Cap (excludes Colorado community colleges): Customer service, sales, and related training funding across all FY 2023 grants is capped at \$25,000 per training organization group (including but not limited to grantees and third-party vendors and their affiliates, subsidiaries, and companies with common trainer(s) or person(s) with related involvement). Customer service, sales, and related training includes, but is not limited to, sales and customer service communication; business/client/customer engagement and/or development; customer outreach; marketing; and branding.
- h. Skill Advance Colorado does not fund:
  - i. training related to grantee/business orientation, personality assessments (i.e., DISC, MBTI, Clifton Strengths, etc.), strategic planning, project planning, foundational/beginning/basic computer skills or office administration/productivity software (i.e., Microsoft Office Suite and Google Workspace), and non-customized training available at local colleges, workforce centers, and public service providers;
  - ii. training related to federal and state mandated training (e.g., OSHA, Commercial Driver's License (CDL));
  - iii. labor union-required or labor union-funded training; or
  - iv. consulting services.
- i. CF- and EI-funded training implementation must be compliant with current COVID-19 orders and guidelines issued by the Governor's Office, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and local city and county governments and health departments.

#### **7. CF and EI Grant Awards**

- a. CF and EI grants are funded through an annual appropriation by the Colorado legislature and are contingent upon available funding.
- b. The Skill Advance Colorado application review committee strives to provide grant approval or denial notification approximately three weeks after date of application submission to the committee by the college representative.
- c. If funding becomes limited, priority will be given to college and/or college contractor-provided training over third-party vendor-provided training.
- d. Preference for grant approval is given to Colorado small business applicants (fewer than 500 employees company/organization-wide).

#### **8. CF and EI Fiscal Requirements and Compliance**

- a. Cost reimbursement is permitted for grant activities that take place only between the grant approval date and the published grant activity completion deadline.
- b. Cost reimbursement is not permitted to take place prior to completion of each grant activity, (i.e., curriculum development/customization, training delivery, instructional materials purchases, etc.) and/or receipt of full backup evidence by the grantee and college;
- c. Grantees are responsible for submitting backup documentation to the college prior to receiving reimbursement for implemented grant activities. Backup documentation includes, but is not limited to, contracts, invoices, payment evidence, purchase receipts, travel documents/receipts, payroll information, customized curriculum evidence, Colorado First Learner Information Forms, and training attendance documents.
- d. Colleges and grantees may not render payment on any approved grant activity prior to the grant activity taking place, including deposits for services.
- e. Unused training funds: Departures from the original approved training plan may reduce the amount of the reimbursable training costs. If the actual training cost is lower than the cost on the originally approved training budget, unused funds must be returned to CCCS via the grant closeout process.
- f. Grantees may be subject to forfeiture and/or return of approved funding if: the job creation goals are not met (CF grants); the approved training is not executed as proposed; the CF and EI Program Policies and Procedures are not adhered to; and/or the required, complete final reporting paperwork and backup documentation are not submitted to the representing college per the *CF and EI Program Calendar*.

*The Skill Advance Colorado administration team reserves the right to change any provision or requirement of the policies and procedures below at any time. The change shall become effective immediately unless communicated otherwise.*