

# Contributing Business Handbook

## MINNESOTA JOB SKILLS PARTNERSHIP

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## **MISSION**

The Minnesota Job Skills Partnership is a commitment by the State of Minnesota to extend the education and training resources of the state to provide Minnesota employers with a well-trained and skilled work force.

The Partnership was created to act as a catalyst to bring together employers with specific training needs with education or other nonprofit institutions which can design programs to fill those needs.

The Partnership programs, funded through matching grants, are intended to fulfill short and long-term objectives. In the short term, employers experiencing skills shortages will be able to employ workers trained to meet those needs. In the long term, it is the goal of the Partnership to promote the economic interests of Minnesota citizens through closer cooperation between the state's businesses and the education, employment and training systems of the state.

## **CONDITIONS OF THE GRANT**

Conduct of your training project is governed by a grant contract agreement, which is a legal agreement between the partnering educational institution (Grantee) and the State of Minnesota (Grantor), acting through the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Board. A copy of the signed contract will be provided to the Grantee organization. Whenever there is a conflict between the contract and the proposal or other documents related to the grant, the grant contract takes precedence.

A work plan, based on the approved activities outlined in the grant application, is included in the grant contract agreement. The Grantee is contractually obligated to undertake the activities set forth in the work plan. Any significant changes must be discussed with and approved by MJSP prior to implementation.

### **Grant Length**

The official beginning and ending dates of the project are stated in the grant contract agreement. The contract start date will be the date the contract is fully executed (the date of the last signature). These dates may differ from the dates stated in the proposal. When such differences exist, the beginning and ending dates in the grant contract agreement apply.

It is our policy that grants should not exceed three years in length.

Project end dates should correspond to MJSP trimester end dates, which are February 28, June 30, and October 31.

### **Budget**

The budget attached to the grant contract agreement is the official budget. It is usually the same as the budget included in the grant proposal. Where differences between the proposal budget and the Grant Contract budget exist, the Grant Contract budget applies.

## **Match Requirement**

Business partners are required to match Partnership grants on a 1:1 basis and Pathways grants on a .5:1 basis. The allowed matching contributions are outlined in the detailed budget and the Memorandum of Agreement attached to the grant contract. Matching contributions not identified in the detailed budget may not be allowed. Any changes to the allowed matching contributions must be requested in writing and approved by MJSP prior to the conclusion of the grant. MJSP costs will not be allowed for any amount that would result in the failure to meet the required match ratio.

The Grantee is required to obtain an independent audit of grant revenues and expenditures. Among other things, the audit will determine how much allowable match your business has contributed. To do so, the auditor will examine the matching contribution vouchers your company has sent to the educational institution.

The scope of the audit is generally confined to the records and practices of the grantee (the educational institution). In some cases, however, the auditor may ask you for additional documentation to verify the amounts stated on the vouchers you have sent to the grantee.

If the audit shows that the actual business match does not meet the minimum requirements, the grantee must refund the difference to MJSP.

## **Allowable Costs**

All costs which are budgeted and described in the grant application are allowed, provided that each line item in the grant contract budget is not exceeded. Amounts which exceed the budget category will not be paid unless written approval from MJSP is obtained prior to the cost being incurred.

Partnership funds and matching contributions from business are to be used for activities which are clearly related to the training described in the grant proposal. Significant changes in the nature of the training must be approved in advance by MJSP.

No Partnership funds may be paid to the contributing business.

Equipment or materials purchased with Partnership funds may not be purchased prior to the start of or after the end of the grant period. The educational institution retains ownership of equipment purchased with Partnership funds. Equipment purchased may not be sold or disposed of before the end of the project or before the end of its useful life, whichever is greater.

In the event that MJSP finds there has been failure to meet the terms of the grantee contract in whole or in part, they may refuse to disburse additional funds and require return of all or part of funds already disbursed.

## **Termination**

The grant contract contains a clause which allows MJSP to terminate your grant contract without cause, upon 30 days written notice. MJSP may immediately terminate the grant contract if there has been a failure to comply with the provisions of the grant contract, reasonable progress has not been made, or that the purposes for which the funds were granted have not been or will not be fulfilled. MJSP may withhold or recover payment for work which has not been satisfactorily completed.

## **Modifications to the Grant Contract**

MJSP anticipates that amendments to the training plan will generally not be made subsequent to the signing of the grant contract. However, if the nature of project activities or costs change for reasons which are not within your control, MJSP will consider modifying the work plan outlined in the grant contract. A written request must be made to MJSP stating the modifications needed and the reason for the request. MJSP may accept, reject or modify your request.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

An MJSP Grant Coordinator will be assigned to each project. In addition to the review of required progress reports, site visits and/or phone contacts will be conducted by the Grant Coordinator to monitor progress.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

As a participating business, you are responsible for completing three types of project monitoring forms:

- 1) Receipt Voucher for In-kind Contributions, completed on a monthly basis, or when you make non-cash contributions to the project.
- 2) Contributing Business Status Report, due every eight months (every other trimester).
- 3) Contributing Business Evaluation Report, due at the conclusion of the project.

The report forms will be provided to you by the Grantee and are also available on our website under the "Grant Management" tab at <https://mn.gov/deed/business/financing-business/training-grant/partnership/>. See the following instructions for completing reports.

### **Receipt Voucher for In-Kind Contributions**

This form documents the in-kind match given by the contributing business(es) to the project.

Although the term "match" includes both cash and in-kind donations provided by the contributing business, cash contributions are documented through the educational institution's accounting system and therefore, should not be included on this form.

Match does not include contributions by the educational institution, other non-profit agencies, or businesses which are not official parties to the grant.

The contributing business must complete these forms and submit them to the grantee institution, which should retain them in their files for the audit. While these forms have no specific due date, we recommend that vouchers be filled out monthly, or whenever contributions are given/received. At a minimum, they should be completed each trimester as the grantee organization will need this information to complete their required Financial Report.

Following are descriptions of the information to be provided on this report.

**Grant Number:** The number assigned by MJSP.

**Voucher Number:** The number which you have assigned to this voucher. All vouchers should be numbered sequentially.

**Donated to:** The grantee name (educational institution).

**Donated by:** Your business name.

**Date:** The date the service was rendered or the item was made available to the project.

**Description:** A brief description of the item or service. If the contribution is described in the grant proposal, one or two words such as "trainee wages" or "curriculum development by \_\_ (name of individual)" may suffice.

Descriptions of physical donations such as equipment should include the year, make and model number or other information which could be used to identify the specific item.

**Quantity:** Number of units, hours, miles, etc.

**Value/Rate:** Cost per unit, hour, mile, etc.

**Total Value of Donation:** Total market value of the donation. Cost per unit multiplied by the number of units.

**Value to Project:** If part of the donation will be used for purposes other than the project, enter only the portion which will be used in this project. These other purposes might include equipment that is used in part by other programs at the educational institution, equipment that is used in part for non-training purposes by the business, or travel that involves activities not related to the project.

**Describe any special conditions which apply to the donation.** Some examples of special conditions that may apply include that equipment be used by instructors only; that access to training space be limited to certain times; or that parts, diagrams, etc. be returned to the business when the training is complete. The method used to prorate any donation should also be described in this section.

**Business Certification:** The receipt voucher may be signed by any individual employed by your company who has direct knowledge that the contribution has been made. Generally, one individual should be designated to sign all vouchers.

**Educational Certification:** The receipt voucher may be signed by any individual employed by the educational institution who has direct knowledge that the contribution has been made.

## **Contributing Business Status Report**

The purpose of this report is to give you the opportunity to comment on the progress of your project. The MJSP Grant Coordinator will compare your comments with reports from the educational institution and other sources. Your comments will help assure that accomplishments, opportunities and problems are recognized early.

This report is to be completed every eight months, with the more detailed Contributing Business Program Evaluation due at the conclusion of the project. The educational institution's project director will give you the due dates that apply to your project.

Generally, you should send this report to the educational institution, who will review it and forward it to MJSP. If you wish, however, you may send the report directly to MJSP.

**Grant Number:** The number assigned by MJSP.

**Business Name, Contact Person, Phone Number and Email Address:** Provide this information in the spaces available.

**Report Period and Year:** Fill in the year and select the report period covered in this report.

**Project Information:** Answer each of the questions and provide descriptions indicating how the project is progressing, any concerns you may have, whether or not the training is meeting your needs, and any other comments or feedback you may have.

## **Contributing Business Evaluation Report**

This report is completed at the conclusion of the project. Your feedback is valuable to MJSP as it will assist us in determining the impact of our program. The report is due 25 days from the end of the project. Approximately two weeks prior to the grant end date, an email will be sent directly to the contributing business with a link and instructions to complete the online report.

Preferably, the Contributing Business will share their input with the educational institution by sending a copy of the report to the educational institution. However, the businesses may opt not to share their responses with the educational institution.

While the information contained in this report may be used in reports containing cumulative data, no specific information that identifies your business will be used without your permission.

### **General Information**

The first section will contain general information such as the educational institution name, business name and the name, title, telephone number and e-mail address of the person responsible for the completion of this form.

### **Educational Institution and Training Program**

This section provides feedback on the business' relationship with the educational institution and the quality of the training provided. There are five categories under this section for the business to rate their experiences on a scale of one to five. After each category, there is a space for comments. We strongly encourage businesses to elaborate on their experience with the project in the comment spaces.

### **Business Impact**

This section provides input on the impact of the training project on the business and its employees in areas such as productivity, employee retention, wage increases, and promotions. The section includes an area to rate the impact of the project on a scale of one to five and to provide additional comments. There are additional questions for the business to provide more specific feedback on the impact of the project.

### **Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program**

The final section provides input on the business' understanding of and experience with the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership program. It also provides the business an opportunity to make suggestions for improvements to the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership program. This section provides the business an opportunity to rate their experiences and provide suggestions and other comments.