

# Advancing the Future MedTech Workforce

## Grant Request for Proposal

### Overview

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is soliciting grant applications for projects responding to the evolution of skillsets required as the MedTech sector embraces the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other advanced technology. These funds will be available for educational institutions and businesses in targeted MedTech industries working in collaboration to develop new training programs within Minnesota's educational institutions and develop strategies to train workers in the skills needed to build the future MedTech workforce in Minnesota.

Artificial Intelligence and other advanced technologies are rapidly improving, impacting more than 1.6 million jobs highly exposed to AI. Minnesota has a high concentration of employment that will be impacted, making education and training programs critical to prepare our present and future workforce. A critical component of this work is building a robust skilled and diverse talent pipeline ready to step into a fast paced and cutting-edge career in the growing MedTech sector.

The development of sector partnerships is a crucial part of Minnesota's workforce development vision and strategy. These partnerships engage key stakeholders to develop strategies to train workers in the

skills needed for high-demand jobs while addressing the challenges that hinder workers' participation, recruitment, placement, and retention in the in-demand jobs providing family-sustaining wages and thereby unlocking opportunities in science and technology for those who have been historically left out.

DEED is seeking proposals from educational institutions partnering with two or more businesses to collaboratively address the evolving needs of the sector to provide workforce development and employment training opportunities, ensuring the workforce is prepared and trained to meet the need of technological advancements. These funds will help businesses train new and incumbent workers quickly, efficiently, and in content supporting the transition towards AI and the skills needed to adapt and effectively work alongside these technologies. Furthermore, these funds will enable DEED to respond to training requests related to economic development, providing an opportunity to strengthen the MedTech sector and enhance the economic competitiveness of the state.

### Funding Availability

Up to \$1.5 million in grant funds is available to fund one to two large-scale projects. The maximum award for an individual project is \$1.0 million. These funds are intended to complement the current portfolio of Minnesota Job Skills Partnership programs by covering training costs on a larger scale than what is currently allowable under the existing programs. For this reason, grant requests of less than \$500,000 will not be considered. Projects should be completed within three years, although DEED staff may consider a one-time extension of up to one year if deemed necessary to complete project activities.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing content and community specialists with regional knowledge. We expect to announce selected grantees in June 2025. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures once the grant contract agreement is fully executed, and the grant has reached its effective date.

## Priorities

The goals of this program are to promote economic development in the state by strengthening the MedTech sector and enhancing economic competitiveness for our state; to build capacity within Minnesota educational institutions through the development of training programs that address the new skillsets needed to respond to emerging AI and other advanced technologies; and to provide economic opportunity for Minnesota workers by providing training for the skills needed for high-demand jobs while addressing the challenges that hinder workers' participation, recruitment, placement, and retention in the in-demand jobs providing family-sustaining wages and thereby unlocking opportunities in science and technology for those who have been historically left out.

## Eligibility

To be considered for funding, projects must meet the following eligibility criteria.

- Projects must include the participation of one or more accredited Minnesota educational institutions and two or more businesses located in Minnesota. The partnering businesses must be in the medical technology industry. The medical technology industry is defined as a sector which develops, manufactures, and distributes medical devices, equipment, health information systems, and diagnostic tests.
- One accredited educational partner or the Minnesota State Systems Office must serve as the Grantee and may sub-contract with other partnering accredited educational institutions.
- Grant funds must be matched by contributions from one or more participating businesses on at least a one-to-one ratio. The match may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions directly related to the training project.
- Projects must include training related to Artificial Intelligence (AI) or occupations that support the implementation of AI and may include other areas of advanced technology. Some examples include data privacy, cyber safety and security, and data analytics.
- Training must be for permanent, full-time positions within the MedTech sector that pay wages of at least 120% of federal poverty guidelines for a family of four.
- The grant application must include a description of the training being developed and implemented and how it increases the value to the company and the employee.

Eligible costs include training-related costs such as curriculum development, delivery of training, training materials and supplies, training equipment, training space, instructor travel, and assessment, testing and certification fees. Eligible costs may also include costs associated with project administration, career and sector awareness and outreach efforts, integration with K-12, training wages, wrap around support services, and work-related language training. Indirect costs at a rate of up to 10% of direct costs or based on the applicant organization's federally negotiated indirect cost rate are allowed.

## Collaboration and Competitive Priorities

This program aims to engage key stakeholders to help build the future MedTech workforce in Minnesota. As such, strong collaborations are considered an important element of this program. Collaboration between one or more training institutions and two or more businesses is required. Preference will be given to projects that include the highest number of meaningful employer, educational, and workforce partner collaborations.

In addition, priority will be given to partnerships that leverage a higher amount of private sector funding.

## Selection Criteria and Weight

The review committee will be reviewing each application based on a 125-point scale. The review committee will make funding recommendation to the Commissioner of DEED. The Commissioner of DEED will review funding recommendations and make final funding decisions.

The scoring criteria and weight by which applications will be judged are as follows:

- Project Design (25 Points) – Points are given for cash contributions from business; grantee/linkage contributions; grant applicant experience and capacity to administer grant; a training plan that is consistent with stated objectives; and reasonable costs.
- Economic Development (35 Points) – Points are given for creation of new jobs; projects assisting new or expanding businesses; projects that identify measurable outcomes for the business; strong indication that training will result in the retention of jobs at risk; level of impact for the industry; and level of impact on positioning the state of Minnesota to further develop and maintain our position as a global leader in the MedTech industry.
- Capacity Building (30 Points) – Points are given for development of new curriculum; collaboration between educational institutions; development of new credentialed training program; educational institution acquiring training specific equipment/technology; and evidence that curriculum will be utilized beyond the grant period.
- Economic Opportunity and Equity (30 Points) - Points are given for wage rates; training that provides durable skills; increased wages as a result of training; meaningful/stackable credentials or certifications for trainees; the development of strategies to recruit and provide opportunities to underrepresented populations; and business partners with formal diversity, equity, and inclusion plans.

## Required Financial and Grantee Capacity Review

Minn. Stat. §16B.981/[Chapter 62 - MN Laws](#), Article 7, Section 11 requires that a pre-award risk assessment is conducted for grant awards of \$50,000 or more.

All grantees as defined in [Minn. Stat. §16B.981](#) Subd. 1 (c) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial and capacity review prior to a grant award of \$50,000 and higher. This requirement does not apply to potential grantees that are State agencies.

In order to comply with this requirement, the following information and documents will need to be submitted before the grant contract agreement is fully executed for potential grantees that are not State agencies:

- I. **[Certification](#): No current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years: All potential grantees**
- II. **[Evidence of good standing](#): For-profit and nonprofit potential grantees**
  - For-profit and nonprofit grantees: Filed and up to date with the Secretary of State
- III. **[Nonprofit grantee required documents](#), as applicable**
  - Most recent Form 990 or Form 990-EZ
  - Most recent audited financial statement of a charitable organization which has received total revenue in excess of \$750,000 for the 12 months of operations covered by the statement per [Minn. Stat. §309.53](#)
  - Most recent board-reviewed (or managing group if applicable) financial statements, description of internal controls over business expenditures and outcomes of grant funds, if awarded, and evidence of exemption
- IV. **[For-profit certification disclosure](#) and required documents, as applicable**
  - Most recent federal and state tax returns:

- If not in business long enough to have a tax return, description of internal controls over business expenditures and outcomes of grant funds, if awarded
- Current financial statements
- Certification that business is not under bankruptcy proceedings
- Disclosure of any liens on assets

The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject an organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law.

Based on Minn. Stat. §16B.981/[Chapter 62 - MN Laws](#), Article 7, Section 11, Subd. 3-5 establishes the authority for a granting agency to:

- Provide or require enhanced grant oversight
- Request additional information from a potential grantee to determine whether there is a substantial risk that the potential grantee cannot or would not perform the required duties of the grant agreement.
  - The potential grantee has 30 business days to respond
- Develop a plan to address the risk or concerns identified
- Not award the grant.
  - The granting agency must provide notice of this determination to not award the grant to the grantee and the Commissioner of Administration.
  - The notice must include the following:
    - The reason for postponing/not awarding the grant
    - The timeline for the process for contesting the agency’s decision

## Questions

- Questions may be submitted via email at [deed.mjsp@state.mn.us](mailto:deed.mjsp@state.mn.us).
- All answers will be posted within three business days on DEED’s [Competitive Grants and Contracts webpage](#) under “Advancing the Future MedTech Workforce Grants”.
- **Questions must be submitted no later than 4:30 pm, Central Time, on April 21, 2025.**

## Application Content

Applicants must submit a grant application and budget on the forms provided at the links below. Applicants that are not state agencies must also provide the items outlined in the previous section that are needed to conduct the required pre-award risk assessment. To be considered for funding must complete and submit the following items linked below.

- [Grant Application forms](#)
- [Budget forms](#) (Budget instructions available [here](#))
- Certification no current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years (form included in the Grant Application)
- If applicable, Evidence of Good Standing (form included in the Grant Application)
- If applicable, Nonprofit Grantee Required Documents (form included in the Grant Application)
- If applicable, For-Profit Certification Disclosure and Required Documents (form included in the Grant application)

## Application Submission

The deadline for the submission of regular grant applications is **4:30 pm, Central Time, on May 5, 2025**. Late applications will not be considered. The applicant will incur all costs incurred in applying to this RFP.

Applications must be submitted via email to the Department of Employment and Economic Development, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership office at [deed.mjsp@state.mn.us](mailto:deed.mjsp@state.mn.us) as one file, including attachments, in a pdf format.

## Review Process and Timeline

The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. The Commissioner of DEED will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The dates provided for the last five items in the timeline below are tentative and may be subject to change.

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| RFP posted on the DEED website                                 | March 24, 2025 |
| Questions due no later than 4:30 pm Central Time               | April 21, 2025 |
| Applications due no later than 4:30 pm Central Time            | May 5, 2025    |
| Committee begins review of applications                        | May 6, 2025    |
| Selected applicants undergo pre-award risk assessment          | May 2025       |
| Applicants submitted to DEED commissioner for review           | June 2025      |
| Funding decisions made by DEED commissioner                    | June 2025      |
| Selected grantees notified; grant agreement negotiations begin | June 2025      |
| Contracts executed   | July 2025      |

## Conflicts of Interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98 Subd. 2-3](#) and [08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties

In cases where a conflict of interest is in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

## Public Data

[Per Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#)

- Names and addresses of grant applicants and amount requested will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by [State agency] as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, Data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed

## Grant Provisions

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review at: [Office of Grants Management Policies, Statutes, and Forms/Forms and FAQs tab](#)

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services and payroll taxes
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking violations and traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.

## Accountability and Reporting

In addition to providing the deliverables outlined and approved in the grant application, grant recipients will be required to submit reports on a semiannual basis. The reports include a Progress Report indicating how the project is progressing, a Financial Report outlining the costs incurred during the report period per DEED policy, a Request for Reimbursement outlining the amount to be reimbursed by DEED, a Trainee Report providing information on project participants, and a final report on project outcomes.

Participating businesses are required to complete the Receipt Voucher for In-Kind Contributions form outlining their contributions towards the project, a Contributing Business Status report outlining how the project is progressing, and a Contributing Business Program Evaluation Report at the conclusion of the project indicating their satisfaction with the project results and any measurable outcomes resulting from the project.

## Grant Payments

Per [Policy 08-08](#) reimbursement is the preferred method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless DEED has given the grantee a written extension.

## Grant Monitoring

[Minn. Stat. §16B.97](#) and [Policy 08-10](#) Grant Monitoring require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants of \$50,000 and higher
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants of \$250,000 and higher
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants of \$50,000 and higher. For this purpose, the grantee must make expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents available upon request by the State.

## Grantee Bidding Requirements

Per [Minn. Stat. §136F.58, Subd. 1](#), Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are subject to the provisions of section [471.345](#), and in addition to the contracting authority under chapter 136F, the board may utilize any contracting options available to the commissioner of administration under chapter 16A, 16B, or 16C.

For grantees that are non-governmental organizations or for-profit businesses, any grant-funded services and/or materials that are expected to cost:

- \$100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.
- Between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids.
- Between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

The grantee must maintain:

- Written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
- Support documentation of the purchasing and/or bidding process utilized to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation of verbal quotes or bids and justifying a single/sole source bid, if applicable.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in MN: [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Information](#)

For grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per; [Minn. Stat. §§177.41](#) through [177.44](#). These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

## Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#) Subdivision 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the Commissioner of Administration, the state granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

## Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Requirements for all Grantees

- A. The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. [Minn. Stat. §363A.02](#). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.
- B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minnesota Rules, part [5000.3500](#)
- C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

## Voter Registration Requirement

The grantee will comply with [Minn. Stat. §201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

## Contact Information

For more information about this RFP, contact:

Department of Employment & Economic Development

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Program Administrator, MN Job Skills Partnership

Great Northern Building

180 E 5th Street, Suite 1200

St. Paul, MN 55101

Email: [deed.mjsp@state.mn.us](mailto:deed.mjsp@state.mn.us)

651-259-7514