



Big News for Small Businesses in Texas

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) responds to the training needs of Texas businesses that have fewer than 100 employees with the Skills for Small Business program. These employers are the backbone of Texas' business community – the state's more than 433,000 small employers. Training through the Skills for Small Business program increases business competitiveness, upgrades the skills of current employees and prepares newly hired employees for job requirements.

This exceptional opportunity is in conjunction with the Small Business Forums hosted by the Office of the Governor.

About Skills for Small Business

- Emphasizes training newly hired employees – those who have been hired by the company up to three months prior to the date that TWC receives an application.
- Funds tuition and fees up to \$1,450 per newly hired employee and up to \$725 per incumbent employee. An individual employee can participate once per 12-month period.
- Funding for training is for full-time employees.
- All training must be provided by a public community or technical college, or the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX). No third-party vendor training is allowed.
- Training must be selected from active course catalogs/schedules – credit, continuing education, on-line or other available unpublished courses.
- May focus on training for occupations within the Governor's six targeted Industry Clusters: Aerospace and Defense; Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing; Biotechnology and Life Science; Energy; Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products; and Information and Computer Technology.
- May also emphasize training in occupations targeted by Local Workforce Development Boards.
- Employers must pay the prevailing wages in the local labor market for the trainees funded under the grant.

Getting Started

- Small businesses identify training courses.
- Businesses apply directly to TWC for training. TWC evaluates the applications and works with the local college to fund the selected training.
- Applications available on the TWC Web site, at the Governor's Small Business Forums, at local colleges and from Local Workforce Development Boards.
- TWC project development specialists available at the Governor's Small Business Forums to help complete applications, and will be available as needed by the business.

For More Information

- For information on Skills for Small Businesses, including an application and Frequently Asked Questions, access <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/ssb.html>. For further assistance, contact the Workforce Business Services Project Development Team at 1-877-463-1777 or e-mail, Skills@twc.state.tx.us.

Skills Grants Start With Collaboration

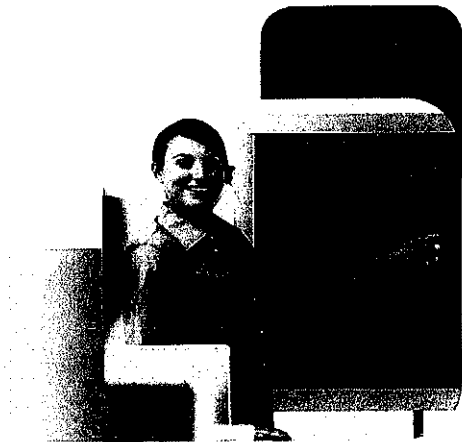
Employer:

A private business, business consortium, or trade union in need of workforce training and funding assistance can rely on an experienced network of partners for guidance along the Skills Development Fund path.

The role of each partner is unique and essential to the success in meeting business needs for Skills Development Fund grant projects.

College Partner – A public community or technical college, or the Texas Engineering Extension Service:

- Acts as the grant applicant, fiscal agent, and coordinates training.
- Assists the business to identify workforce skills gaps and employees needing training.
- Plans and designs the customized curriculum to meet training needs.
- Implements methods best suited to meet training needs such as classroom, on-site, hands-on, Web-based or simulation instruction.



Local Workforce Development Board Partner:

- Builds relationships with area businesses to facilitate partnerships.
- Assists businesses with recruiting and hiring new workers for training projects.
- Collaborates in project development.
- Helps identify grant training partners.
- Provides labor market information.

Economic Development Partners:

- Identify new and expanding businesses that could benefit from Skills Development project participation.
- Coordinate local economic development resources.

TWC Workforce Business Services Technical Assistance Team Partner:

- Connects businesses with college and workforce board partners.
- Advises colleges during project development.
- Provides ongoing technical assistance.



What is the Skills Development Fund?

- The Texas Workforce Commission's \$90 million Skills Development Fund is Texas' premier job training program providing training dollars for Texas businesses and workers.
- Success with a Skills Development Fund project is achieved through collaboration among businesses, public community and technical colleges, local workforce development boards, and economic development partners.
- Businesses gain a more highly trained workforce, workers upgrade their skills, and the Texas economy is strengthened.



\$90 Million Available to Texas Employers



How does it work?

- A business, consortium of businesses, or trade union identifies a training need, and then partners with a public community or technical college to fill its specific needs.
- Businesses work with college partners to submit proposals, develop curricula, and conduct training.
- The Skills Development Fund pays for the training, the college administers the grant, and businesses create new jobs and improve the skills of their current workers.

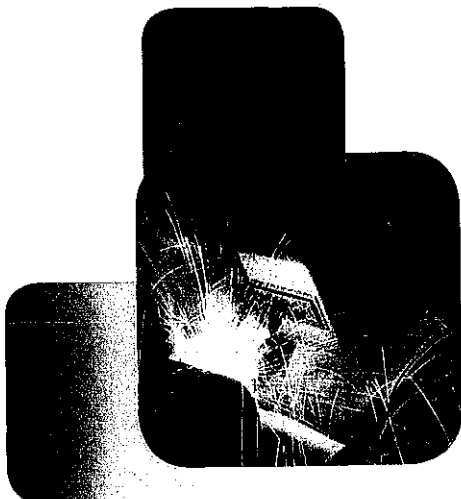
How does TWC help?

- TWC provides immediate access to a team of professionals from TWC's Workforce Business Services Department who will provide consultation and technical assistance to streamline project development.
- Our team of professionals works directly with employers, colleges, local workforce boards and economic development partners throughout the life of the project to ensure employers are getting the training that their workers need.

How does the Skills Development Fund benefit businesses?

Skills results since 1996

- Helped 3,263 employers.
- Created 76,191 jobs.
- Upgraded the skills of 208,630 workers.
- 2008 Skills' average hourly wage \$24.29.





The Skills Development Fund program assists businesses and trade unions by financing the design and implementation of customized job training projects. This fund successfully merges business needs and local customized training opportunities into a winning formula to increase the skills levels and wages of the Texas workforce.



Becoming a Partner

To be considered for a Skills Development Fund grant, the private business, business consortium or trade union must:

- Partner with an eligible grant applicant, who is a public community or technical college, the Texas Engineering Extension Service, or a private, nonprofit community-based organization in partnership with one of these institutions.
- Be actively involved in the planning and design of the customized training project.
- Pay wages to the employees who successfully complete the training program that are equal to or greater than the prevailing wage for the occupation in the local labor market.
- Disclose any other state or federal grant funds sought or awarded for the proposed training project.
- Sign an agreement with the grant applicant outlining each entity's roles and responsibilities in the training project, including reporting requirements related to trainee participation.
- Provide information on the occupations for training, employment benefits, Equal Employment Opportunity employment, wages and Social Security numbers for trainees.
- Use WorkinTexas.com to post openings for new workers trained under the project.

Grant Award Information

Grants for a single business may be limited to \$500,000. Tuition, curriculum development, instructor fees and training materials can be included; however, trainee wages, drug testing and travel costs cannot be covered. Equipment purchases have certain restrictions and total cost limits. Contracts are typically 12 months in duration.



Quality Proposals

Quality projects align with legislative direction and match business needs with innovative customized training solutions. Collaboration between businesses, Local Workforce Development Boards, and economic development and training partners is required. Criteria considered in making funding recommendations include:

- Positive economic impact on the local region.
- Equitable geographic distribution of funds.
- Inclusion of small- and medium-sized businesses.
- The fiscal stability of the business partners.
- Cost per trainee in comparison to the state average.

How do I get started?

For information on the Skills Development Fund, including Proposal Submission Packet and Frequently Asked Questions, access: <http://skills.texasworkforce.org>. For further assistance, contact the Workforce Business Services - Project Development Team at 1-877-463-1777 or email Skills@twc.state.tx.us

The Texas Workforce Commission provides equal access to all programs and activities.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Relay Texas: 1-800-735-2989 (TDD) 1-800-735-2988 (Voice)

Workforce Business Services Mission:

Connect businesses with value-added workforce solutions,
and develop innovative economic and workforce strategies.

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WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

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