

Going PRO Talent Fund

Formerly known as the Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF)

Frequently Asked Questions - Fiscal Year 2019

These FAQs were developed as a supplement to the Going PRO Talent Fund (Talent Fund) Overview. Questions regarding the Talent Fund Fiscal Year 2019 may be directed to your local Michigan Works! Agency contact found [here](#).

1. How can I apply?

Eligible employers may contact their local Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) to discuss the requirements for the Going PRO Talent Fund and determine if they are eligible to apply. For a list of MWA contacts please visit the Talent Fund [website](#).

2. Where do we submit the Talent Fund application?

Companies submit their applications to the MWAs. The MWAs will review and then submit applications to the Talent Investment Agency (TIA).

3. Can a training provider submit an application?

No, all applications must be submitted by a Michigan Works! Agency.

4. How will I be notified about the status of my application?

TIA will notify the Michigan Works! Agencies of all awards and, in turn, the MWAs will notify the employer applicants.

5. Who is a potential eligible employer?

TIA shall ensure that the Talent Fund provides a collaborative statewide network of workforce and employee skill development partners that addresses the employee talent needs throughout the state. Therefore, to be eligible for a Going PRO Talent Fund award, an employer must have a need for skill enhancement, including apprenticeship programs and advance-tech training programs for current employee(s) or new employee(s). Additionally, employers must: have a physical presence in Michigan; be in compliance with all federal and state tax obligations including, but not limited to, corporate, sales, use, withholding, personal income and unemployment insurance taxes; and be willing to participate under the program's eligibility parameters and guidelines.

An eligible employer may be a private, for-profit or not-for-profit company/organization. Public institutions or entities are not eligible to apply unless they are a municipality designated as a [Rising Tide Community](http://mirisingtide.org) (<http://mirisingtide.org>).

6. Who is an eligible training provider?

Michigan community colleges; universities; private training providers; registered United States Department of Labor (USDOL) joint apprenticeship training centers (JATC); vendors providing training in operation of equipment or systems for which they were the provider; employers (only if their resources or equipment are exclusive where training is not available elsewhere and supporting rationale is documented in the application); other training providers identified by and agreed upon by all partners that can do accelerated "just-in-time" training; and any proprietary institution providing training must comply with Public Act (PA) 148 of 1943, Private Trade

Schools, Business Schools and Institutes. Proprietary schools must be licensed in Michigan. See [question #7](#) for additional details.

7. Must training be provided by a licensed training provider?

Any proprietary institution providing training must comply with Public Act (PA) 148 of 1943, Private Trade Schools, Business Schools and Institutes, which includes:

MCL 395.101 Sec. 1. (1) A person shall not operate a proprietary school in this state without a temporary permit or license from the department under this act. The department shall prescribe the form of license and temporary permit.

MCL 395.101a (b) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, association, organization, or other legal entity. (c) "Proprietary school" means a school that uses a certain plan or method to teach a trade, occupation, or vocation for a consideration, reward, or promise of any kind. Proprietary school includes, but is not limited to, a private business, trade, or home study school. Proprietary school does not include any of the following:

- A school or college possessing authority to grant degrees.
- A school licensed by law through another board or department of this state.
- A school maintained or a program conducted, without profit, by a person for that person's employees.

If it is determined locally that an institution identified to provide training under the Talent Fund requires licensing, the forms necessary to begin the licensing process can be obtained at the following website: michigan.gov/lara.

8. Who is an eligible trainee?

Trainees may be any Michigan resident 18 years of age or older. Trainees who live out-of-state and work for a Michigan company that pays all applicable taxes to the State of Michigan are also eligible. Trainees, both current and new employee(s), must be permanent, full-time employees of the employer. Seasonal and/or part-time employees, current or future, are ineligible.

9. Is there a preference for hiring veterans, active military reservists, older workers, and returning citizens?

Yes. An extra \$500 may be reimbursed to an employer for each new employee who qualifies under one of these categories and who has been trained and retained by the employer. The \$500 incentive must be used to help offset training costs. The maximum amount per new employee that an employer may receive is \$500, even if the employee meets the criteria in more than one category.

10. What types of training are eligible?

Classroom training that leads to a credential that is transferable and recognized by industry is eligible. On-the-job training for new employees and USDOL Registered Apprenticeship* training for new (first-year) apprentices are also eligible.

*A USDOL Registered Apprentice is an individual who begins a new USDOL Registered Apprenticeship on or after May 1, 2018, or any individual not in a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship at the time of application who begins a new USDOL Registered Apprenticeship prior to award closeout. This may be a current or new employee.

11. What is the role of an employer participating in the Talent Fund?

Please refer to the [Talent Fund Overview](#) for expectations of employers.

12. Is there a maximum amount that may be requested on an application?

No, however, companies need to drill down to the critical skill needs. It has been demonstrated that large grant awards are difficult for companies to successfully complete. As a point of reference, the average award for Fiscal Year 2018 was less than \$35,000.

13. Can training only take place in Michigan?

The preference is for training to be completed in Michigan. If there is a documented need and rationale for training to occur out-of-state, and the local MWA is supportive of the proposal, it may be submitted for consideration.

14. What is an appropriate length of training?

Funding will be utilized to provide short-term training to meet current, documented needs of employers. No single training should exceed six months. All Talent Fund-supported training should be completed within one year (12 months) of the date of the award.

15. Since Registered Apprenticeships are not short-term training, how is it envisioned that the Talent Fund be utilized?

The Talent Fund can help with USDOL Registered Apprenticeship start-up to offset some of the employer's costs.

16. Will classroom training be paid prior to the start of training?

No, payment will be made after training has been completed. The Talent Fund is a reimbursement-based program.

17. Can the names of the trainees change between application and start of training?

Yes. At the time of award closeout, the employer must ensure that the final list of employees who completed training is accurate and must provide the required back-up documentation.

18. Must an employer provide a prevailing wage for participants?

Following the completion of training, employers must pay wages that are equal to, or greater than, the current regional labor market occupational wage for the applicable job title.

19. How does an employer document "need/demand?"

By working with the MWA to determine whether the skill sets needed are available in the current labor pool.

20. We are on the border of Michigan and we employ non-residents. Can we train non-residents with Talent Fund funding?

The Talent Fund may pay for training of non-Michigan residents if the employee is permanent full-time and the employer is paying all applicable taxes to the State of Michigan for the employee.

21. What are eligible training expenditures?

Eligible training expenditures include the actual costs for the classroom, new employee on-the-job training and USDOL Registered Apprenticeship training as well as any other reasonable cost required for the successful completion of training. For example, a training provider may quote a

fixed amount for training that includes the cost of their travel.

22. Can the Talent Fund be used to purchase equipment?

No, the Talent Fund cannot be used to purchase equipment. However, equipment purchased by a company and used during the training of participants should be counted as an employer contribution.

23. Can the Talent Fund be used for curriculum development?

No.

24. What is the eligible cost per trainee in a Talent Fund project?

The cap per trainee is \$1,500 for all training except for USDOL Registered Apprenticeships, which is \$3,000 per trainee.

25. Can companies submit an application that has training for new employees as well as current employee(s)?

Yes, it is acceptable that an application has all types of training included (i.e. classroom, new employee on-the-job training and new USDOL Registered Apprenticeship training).

26. Is there a minimum number of hours in which the training must occur?

No, there is not a minimum number of hours or weeks in which training must occur.

27. What is the definition of new employee on-the-job training?

On-the-job training activities are training services provided to eligible trainees via an agreement between the MWA and the employer. Training allows the individual(s) to become proficient in the full-time job for which they were hired. Training is conducted at the worksite. Employers must commit to retaining the trainee at the end of a successful training.

28. Can we use the Talent Fund for wage replacement of a current employee?

No. However, the wages may be used as an employer contribution or leveraged funds.

29. Can the Talent Fund be used for travel costs to send someone to training?

No, the Talent Fund may be used for training costs only. The employer must cover these costs but may show them as part of the employer contribution.

30. Can the Talent Fund be used to pay for training that is delivered through distance learning?

Distance or online training is eligible if the training cannot be obtained locally or within a reasonable travel distance and is not offered in the classroom. The preference is for the course to be instructor-led or virtual training versus online learning at the trainee's own pace.

31. An employer has professional trainers on staff and most of the training material is exclusive (proprietary). Is it eligible for the employer to provide the training and be reimbursed directly for the training?

Such training will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. The training should be fully explained in the application rationale.

32. What is exclusive training?

Exclusive training is training that is owned and controlled by the business and is subject to laws

such as copyrights, patents or trademarks. The control of the training curriculum usually is retained by the business. It may be training on resources or equipment that is exclusive to a single business process. A company that wants to use its own training curriculum in a Talent Fund project must demonstrate a lack of capacity, or inability, to meet its own demand. An application must also explain why the company's infrastructure cannot support its training needs without the assistance of a Talent Fund award.

33. Can a business participate in multiple Talent Fund projects?

Businesses may participate in industry-led collaborative applications and one independent Talent Fund project per year, per location.

34. Can more than one employer be involved in a Talent Fund project?

Yes, we encourage collaborative efforts to reduce training costs.

35. Can a request for an industry-led collaborative of employers cross counties/regions?

Yes. There will need to be a lead MWA identified as the sponsor of the application.

36. Can an employer apply through an MWA other than the one in their area?

Yes. This may occur when an employer is on a border of a county or has multiple locations in multiple workforce areas. An employer may choose to work with an MWA of their choice. The sponsoring MWA must notify the local MWA of the application and obtain a letter or email of support that will accompany the application.

37. How will an employer be paid for the training?

The employer will submit an invoice along with all required documentation to the MWA to request reimbursement. The MWA will reconcile the request with the approved application/training plan and make payment to the employer and/or training provider.