

Labor Education Advancement Program (LEAP) Grant

Questions

Last updated: February 23, 2024

1. *Who can apply for LEAP funding?*

Applicants must be community-based or nonprofit organizations, including 501(c)3 and 501(c)5 organizations, or Minnesota Tribal governments as defined in [Minn. Stat. §10.65](#), that can place, support and retain people of color, Indigenous people and women in registered apprenticeship programs in Minnesota. The state statute that established the LEAP program is listed at the bottom of this FAQ. For the purposes of this funding, schools are not considered community-based organizations.

2. *Why is funding limited to serving people of color, Indigenous people and women?*

Registered apprenticeship can provide great career opportunities for all participants, yet people of color, Indigenous people and women continue to be underrepresented in registered apprenticeship programs. Currently there are approximately 11,000 people in registered apprenticeship programs; however, only approximately 22% are people of color and Indigenous people and 8% are women.

3. *The RFP requires a minimum of one registered apprenticeship partner, if the applicant is not a registered apprenticeship program. How can we find and meet people who have registered apprenticeship programs?*

You can email Lyla Brown at Lyla.Brown@state.mn.us, and she will assist in making those connections. This type of technical assistance should be requested by 4 p.m., February 29, 2024 CST.

4. *Do applicants need to identify specific registered apprenticeship programs, or are just types of industries or occupations ok?*

Specific registered apprenticeship programs will need to be identified.

5. *What are the minimum age requirements for registered apprentices?*

Apprenticeship programs registered with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) serve and train workers who are 18 years and older.

6. *Do registered apprenticeship programs require specific qualifications for people to become an apprentice?*

Many registered apprenticeship training programs require that apprentices have a high school diploma or equivalent, a valid driver's license and reliable transportation; however, requirements differ slightly based on the program.

7. *Do applicants have to provide opportunity and guidance for people to enroll with a registered apprenticeship?*

Successful applicants will articulate and demonstrate an ability to introduce, provide guidance and facilitate entry, retention, and completion in registered apprenticeship through various means including outreach, education, assessment, preparation, support services, instruction, training, placement and retention activities.

8. *Is it ok to provide supports that only retain current registered apprentices, or do we need to also recruit, prepare, and enroll registered apprentices, too?*

It is ok to focus your grant program on just retention of registered apprentices.

9. *Do applicants have to guarantee numbers of new registered apprentices?*

Because the purpose of the grant is to facilitate the participation and retention of people of color, Indigenous people and women in registered apprenticeship programs, DLI is requiring applicants to estimate the number of people it will serve and the number of those who will enter registered apprenticeship programs. Because this can only be a best estimate, grantees are not expected to “guarantee” that number.

10. *How much funding can our organization apply for?*

There is \$1,000,000 available in funding for this round of funding. Applicants can apply for up to \$100,000.

11. *How can we find out what the allowable reimbursement rate is for staff travel expenses?*

Grantee travel will be reimbursed at the applicable IRS rate. The current IRS rate for 2024 is \$.67/mile.

12. *Do we have to fill out the application or can we send our proposal in a different format?*

Applicants need to complete the LEAP Grant Application and provide all required documents listed in the RFP and application.

13. *What kind of reporting and communication will be required of grantees?*

Organizations that receive grant funding will need to submit quarterly invoices and quarterly narrative reports with statistics, along with names and demographic information of program participants served and new registered apprentices. Templates will be provided for invoice documents and quarterly reports. Reports with participants’ personal information will need to be sent by encrypted email; DLI can provide instruction regarding that process. Organizations will also be required to take part in calls every other month with DLI. A final report will be required.

14. *How should we calculate administrative costs for the LEAP grant?*

For the 2025 LEAP grant, applicants can include administrative costs of up to 8% of their total budget. Qualifying expenses are those incurred by grant recipients in support of the day-to-day operations of their organization. These overhead costs are the expenses that are not directly tied to a specific program purpose. Administrative costs may include, but are not limited to: administrative oversight, accounting support, insurance and facilities.

Applicants will need to provide backup documentation for any requested reimbursements as part of the financial monitoring purposes.

15. How do you define community-based organizations and nonprofit organizations?

A community-based organization is a public or private nonprofit organization which is governed and operated by the specific community it serves and provides education or related services to individuals in that specific community. For the purposes of this grant, community-based organizations should specifically serve people of color, Indigenous people, and/or women. For the purposes of this grant, a nonprofit organization includes 501(c)3 and 501(c)5 organizations.

16. We are a university / college / K-12 school district, can we apply for LEAP funding?

As a general rule, no.

However, an eligible community-based organization or nonprofit organization grantee can partner with an institution of higher education or K-12 entity to provide services for program participants.

17. We currently have a FY24 LEAP grant. Can we apply for this round of LEAP funding?

You may not. Programs that received LEAP grant funding in the 2024 grant round (period of performance October 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025) are ineligible to apply for additional funding to avoid overlapping grant contracts.

18. Can two partners both apply for LEAP grant funding?

Yes, if grant funds are used for different types of services. For example, one partner could provide training, while another could provide recruitment and support services.

19. I'm filling out my application and am not sure where to find the area demographic and unemployment information. Where can I get that data?

That information can be found at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) website. See below for specific links that reference the Application cover sheet section C. demographic data of the service area, including:

Required proposal data	Links where applicants can find information on their service area
Rate of unemployment in the service area:	https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/laus/
Percent of unemployment between people of color, Indigenous people, and women and others, in your service area:	https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/county-profiles/

Required proposal data	Links where applicants can find information on their service area
Percent of people of color, Indigenous people, and women in your service area:	https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/county-profiles/

If applicants are unable to find the specific information they need, DEED’s Labor Market Information (LMI) team has a group of analysts who can help people out:

https://mn.gov/deed/assets/deed_rao_flyer_102522_tcm1045-578925.pdf

20. Can a 501(c)3 or 501(c)5 that is based in a state other than Minnesota, but delivers programs and services in Minnesota apply for funding?

Yes. Your program participants must be Minnesotans.

21. Does the State expect a desired number of new apprentices from grantees?

No. Applicants should be judicious about what is a reasonable objective for their program and capacity. Some LEAP grantees serve several hundred participants; others serve one dozen participants.

22. If we are a 501(c)6 organization, are we eligible to apply?

Yes.

23. What if I have more questions?

Questions may be submitted by email to Lyla Brown at Lyla.Brown@state.mn.us.

Please submit questions no later than 12p.m., March 1, 2024 CST. Questions and answers will be posted each Monday, February 12 to March 4 , at <https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/labor-education-advancement-program-leap-grant>.

If needed, our agency has access to Language Line, a free language translation service for limited-English speakers. Contact us and we will get in touch with an interpreter at 651-284-5005 or 800-342-5354.

Additional resources

LEAP RFP, Application and FAQ can be found on the DLI website at www.dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/apprenticeship-funding-opportunities under LEAP Grants.

Legislative language

Minnesota Statute 178.11 Labor Education Advancement Grant Program states:

The commissioner shall establish the labor education advancement grant program for the purpose of facilitating the participation or retention of people of color, Indigenous people, and women in registered apprenticeship programs. The commissioner shall award grants to community-based and nonprofit organizations and

Minnesota Tribal governments as defined in section 10.65, serving the targeted populations on a competitive request-for-proposal basis. Interested organizations shall apply for the grants in a form prescribed by the commissioner. As part of the application process, applicants must provide a statement of need for the grant, a description of the targeted population and apprenticeship opportunities, a description of activities to be funded by the grant, evidence supporting the ability to deliver services, information related to coordinating grant activities with other employment and learning programs, identification of matching funds, a budget, and performance objectives. Each submitted application shall be evaluated for completeness and effectiveness of the proposed grant activity.