



Pathways with Purpose Through Career-Connected Learning

Funding Opportunity Virtual Information Session

Friday, March 20, 2026, 1:00-2:00 p.m. Eastern



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Foundation

Welcome & Introductions



Jason Tyszko
Senior Vice President
U.S. Chamber Foundation



Jaimie Francis
Vice President
U.S. Chamber Foundation



Joe Quick
Senior Consultant
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Jamie Jutila
Senior Program Officer
The Walton Family Foundation



Anne Larkin
Senior Program Officer
Gates Foundation



Agenda

- Welcome, Intros, and Initiative Background
- Overview of Opportunity: Focus, Eligibility, Requirements, and Provided Supports
- Proposal and Project Timelines
- Proposal Requirements and Scoring
- Submission, Review, and Selection Process
- Q & A
- Close-Out

Overview of Need & Purpose

- Support employer-led consortia that organize and lead collaborations with State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- Foster meaningful alignment between K-12 education and industry by leveraging employer leadership to generate career pathway innovations that yield tangible results for learners.
- Develop and implement scalable, employer-driven innovations that bridge the gap between education and workforce needs.



Jason Tyszko
Senior Vice President
U.S. Chamber Foundation



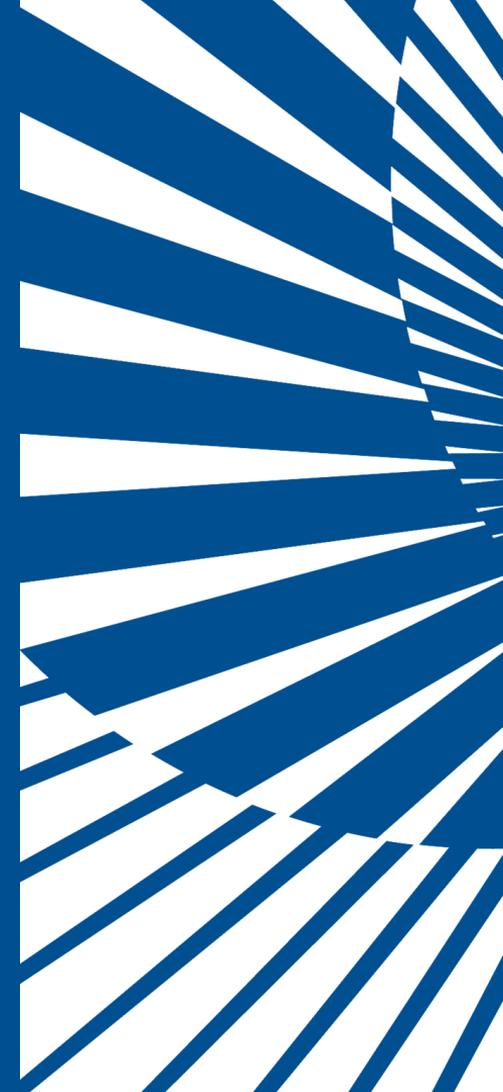
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Overview of Opportunity: Focus, Eligibility, Requirements, and Provided Supports



Pathways with Purpose Website & Contacts

[Visit the Pathways with Purpose website here.](#)

- Background info and summary of focus, eligibility, and requirements
- Timelines
- Links to RFP and downloadable and editable proposal form (for drafting your response)
- Link to proposal submission form
- Contact information for questions (pathways@uschamber.org)
- Q&A posted by April 13th

Core (Required) Focus Areas

All grantees will be expected to address two core topics:

- **Aligning Curriculum and Credentials to Labor Market Needs** — Using data-driven, industry-led approaches to align career pathway programming with in-demand jobs and credentials of value
- **Experiencing the World of Work (Work-Based Learning)** — Expanding access to quality work-based learning experiences such as internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and other career immersion opportunities co-designed with employers

Note: Applicants may also propose additional innovative strategies that extend or enhance these core areas.



Eligibility & Partnership Requirements

Open to employer-led anchor organizations. Examples include:

- A chamber of commerce
- A statewide or regional industry- or sector-based association
- An employer coalition or collaborative
- An economic development organization
- An industry intermediary working on behalf of multiple employers
- Other employer-led entities

With creativity, scale, and impact in mind, we are seeking partners that can organize a regional or statewide effort to innovate and advance new employer engagement and leadership strategies that strengthen K-12 career pathways.

Required partners:

- One or more SEAs or LEAs (LOC or MOU required)
- One or more employer champions

Grantee / Program Expectations

- Demonstrate employer leadership and buy-in.
- Demonstrate education partnerships – SEA(s) and/or LEAs.
- Address **both** core focus areas.
- Show capacity for regional or statewide innovation and scale.
- Demonstrate need for and commitment to engaging in TA and peer sharing.
- Participate actively in the cohort.
- Serve as fiscal agent.
- Participate in documenting and disseminating outcomes and practices.
- Dedicate staffing capacity to support the project.

Grantee Staffing Expectations

Recipients of this funding must dedicate adequate staffing capacity to achieve the programmatic activities and goals outlined in their proposal.

This *must* include:

- **At least part-time support from two to three team members.**
- **A dedicated project manager to own the work on behalf of the employer-led community partnership (of the staff listed above).**

The proposed staffing model should ensure accountability and redundancy in the event of a change in employment or re-assignment.



Opportunity for Innovation, Regional Context, & Flexibility

- Think outside the box. Innovate, launch, or scale promising approaches.
- Propose career-connected approaches that meet your unique state or regional needs.
- Propose measures of success that match your proposed goals and approaches.



Supports Provided to Grantees

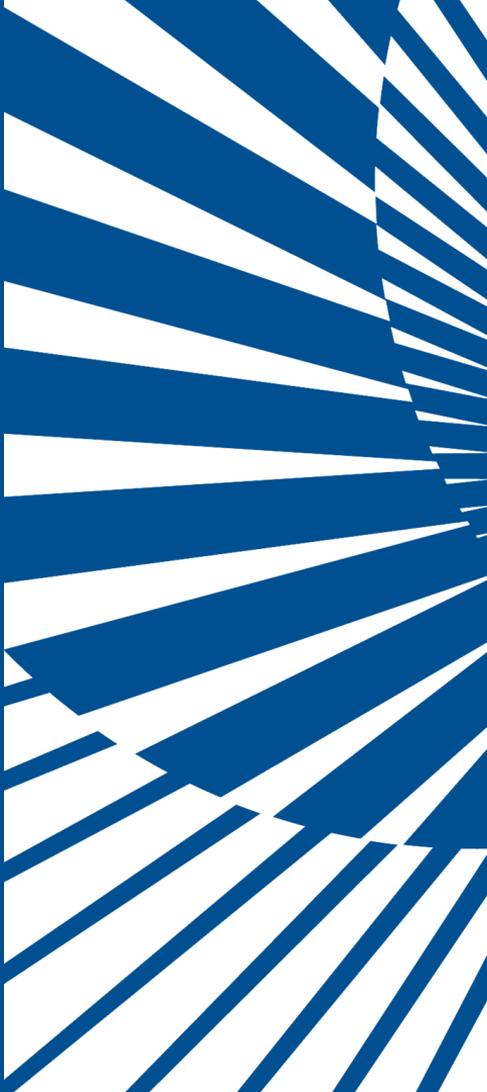
The Chamber Foundation will provide:

- Financial support of \$295-365k (see allowable activities).
- Technical assistance and resources, delivered in collaboration with Chamber Foundation partners, including:
 - One-on-one coaching
 - Targeted technical assistance
 - Access to tools and resources
 - Access to emerging work
- Cohort learning and networking.
- Communications and visibility.

Proposal & Project Timelines



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Timelines

RFP and Selection Timeline

Date	Milestone
March 11 th	RFP released
March 20 th	Information session
April 8 th	Questions due to pathways@uschamber.org by 5 p.m. (ET)
April 13 th	Question responses posted by 5 p.m. (ET)
April 20 th	Applications due by 5 p.m. (ET)
April 20 th – 28 th	Review period – Chamber Foundation may reach out for additional info
April 30 th	Selection notifications sent no later than this date

Tentative Project Timeline

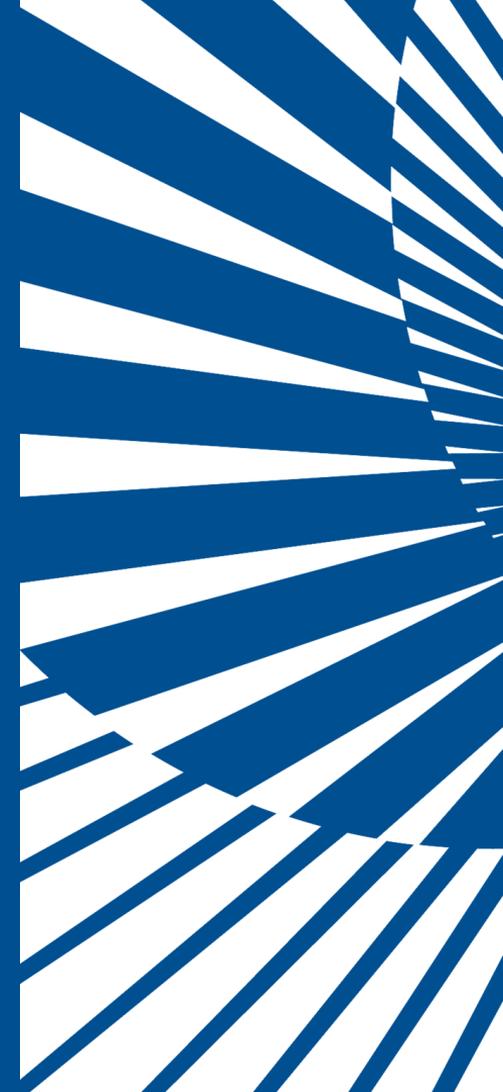
Date	Milestone
May 29 th	Contracting and/or sub-grant agreement processes completed
June 8 th	Virtual consortia launch meeting
June to September	Planning, partner alignment, baseline data collection, development of detailed implementation plans
Late July / Early August	Consortia check-in “show and tell” to discuss implementation plans (potentially in person)
September to June 2027	Implementation of core activities, regular cohort convenings, technical assistance, documentation of progress and outcomes
June 2027	Consortia end-of-year review meeting (potentially in person)
August 2027	Grantee final reports due



Proposal Requirements & Scoring



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Section 1: Anchor Organization & Employer Leadership Overview

- Summary of your organization, strategic focus areas, and constituents
- Summary of organizational capacity and expertise associated with goals and requirements
- Evidence of employer leadership and engagement and record of sustained engagement
- Staffing approach (in alignment with requirements)
- Existing initiatives related to proposed activities



Section 2: Education Partner Overview

- Description of SEA and/or LEA partners and their role in the work
- Info on student population(s) served by SEA and/or LEA partners
- Summary of current career pathway programming
- Institutional goals related to career readiness, industry alignment, and student success
- Leveraged or matching funds (not required)
- Letters of commitment or MOUs from required education partner(s)



Section 3: Regional Context & Workforce Challenges

- Description of workforce challenges, labor market needs, and priority industry sectors for associated geography (i.e., state, region)
- How challenges impact youth and young adults, including opportunity populations, Perkins V special populations, etc.
- Current regional efforts on which you may expand and the success of those efforts thus far



Section 4: Project Proposal & Action Plan

This section of your proposal should serve as a narrative description and initial action plan for your proposed project and must include the following. An updated action plan *may* be requested upon a negotiated award.

- Vision, theory of change, and goals of proposed initiative
- How you plan to address both core focus areas
- Alignment to existing state and/or regional initiatives (as applicable)
- Employer engagement strategy
- Partnership structure and governance
- Scale and reach
- Implementation timeline



Section 5: Additional Partners

- Key partners beyond the anchor organization and primary education partners
- Roles these partners will play
- Evidence of additional partner commitment (LOCs encouraged but *not required*)
- Any leveraged or matching funds expected as part of proposed activities (*not required*)

Section 6: Sustainability Plan

- Approaches to adaptability and continuous improvement
- Sustainability plans beyond initial funding
- Plans for scaling of successful programming, initiatives, and practices
- Plans for evolution, adaptation, flexibility of the partnerships associated with your work to respond to emerging needs, learnings, etc.

Section 7: Budget Narrative

- Proposed use of the \$295-365K including breakdown by category presented in template
- Justification for costs presented by category
- Additional funding sources or in-kind contributions that will support the work (if applicable)

Appendix A: Budget Template

Budget Item	Budgeted Amount	Notes
Staffing costs (labor + fringe)		
Programmatic activity costs		
Sub-grantee costs		
Vendor/consultant/subcontractor costs		
Travel costs		
Material costs		
Other		

Section 8: Data Collection & Reporting

Expected Outputs and Outcomes:

- **Output 1: New employer- and industry-aligned programs, courses, and curricula developed and implemented** (e.g., # of new/improved programs, # of students enrolled in these programs)
- **Output 2: Expanded access to co-curricular activities such as career-connected, work-based, and project-based learning** (e.g., # of employers providing approved opportunities, # or % of students participating in them)
- **Output 3: Increased attainment of credentials of value, including industry-recognized credentials, certificates, digital badges, and micro-credentials** (e.g., # and % of students receiving credentials)



Section 8: Data Collection & Reporting, *cont.*

- We encourage flexibility and innovation.
- Applicants are welcome to suggest alternative outputs and measures that are more consistent with their plans (or that are in addition to those listed)
- The Chamber Foundation reserves the right to negotiate the performance metrics required upon award.

Note: We recognize that this funding supports one year of programmatic activity/approaches and recognize that measures of success and impact will be commensurate with this timeline.



Section 9: Technical Assistance Needs

Narrative detailing:

- How you intend to leverage TA resources provided by the Chamber Foundation
- Specific areas where support would be most valuable
- Anticipated need (if any) for onsite support or visits by the Chamber Foundation and/or its partners
- Note: Information provided here is meant to be informative, not punitive



Selection Criteria & Scoring

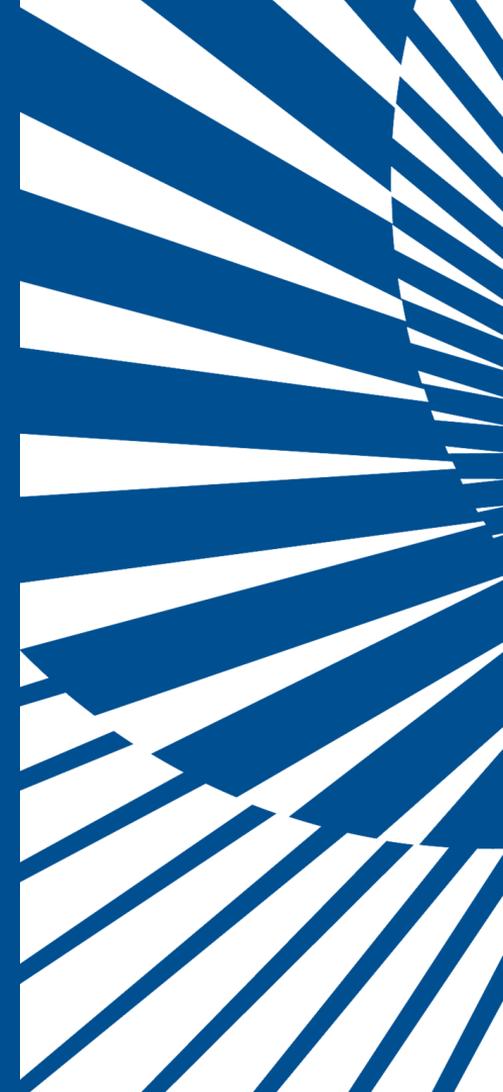
Element & Corresponding Proposal Section(s)	Total Points
Applicant's Organizational Capacity to Accomplish the Work <i>(Section 1, Section 3, Section 9)</i>	10 points
Employer Leadership and Engagement <i>(Section 1, Section 4)</i>	15 points
Partnership Quality and Engagement <i>(Section 2, Section 5)</i>	15 points
Feasibility and Quality of Proposal and Action Plan <i>(Section 3, Section 4)</i>	30 points
Scale and Impact <i>(Section 3, Section 4, Section 8)</i>	15 points
Sustainability and Scalability <i>(Section 4, Section 6)</i>	15 points



Submission, Review & Selection Processes



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Submission Requirements & Process

- Please submit your proposals via the Microsoft form included on Pathways with Purpose site.
- Use the provided template to draft responses before submitting via the form.
- Attachments will be uploaded via Dropbox. Should you need an alternative delivery method, please contact pathways@uschamber.org.



**Responses due:
April 20, 2026
by 5 p.m. (ET)**

A screenshot of a web form titled "Pathways with Purpose through Career-Connected Learning Request for Proposals". The form is set against a blue header with a white sunburst logo. The text in the header explains that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (the Foundation), on behalf of the Pathways and Workforce Funder Collaborative (PWFC), seeks to support employer-led consortia that organize and lead regional or statewide collaborations with State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The initiative aims to foster meaningful alignment between K-12 education and industry by leveraging employer leadership to create new or improved career pathways that yield tangible results for learners. The Request for Proposals (RFP) invites applications from employer-led organizations—in collaboration with SEAs and/or LEAs—to develop and implement scalable, employer-driven strategies that bridge the gap between education and workforce needs. Selected consortia will receive funding, comprehensive technical assistance, and access to the Foundation's extensive network of resources and expertise. The due date is listed as Monday, April 20, 2026 5:00 PM EST. Below the header, a note states: "When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself." The form contains several required fields, each marked with an asterisk: "Applicant Information" (a section header), "Project Proposal Name *", "Date of Submission *", "Full Name (Primary Contact) *", "Title (Primary Contact) *", "Organization Name (Primary Contact) *", and "Email (Primary Contact) *". Each field has a corresponding input box with the placeholder text "Enter your answer".

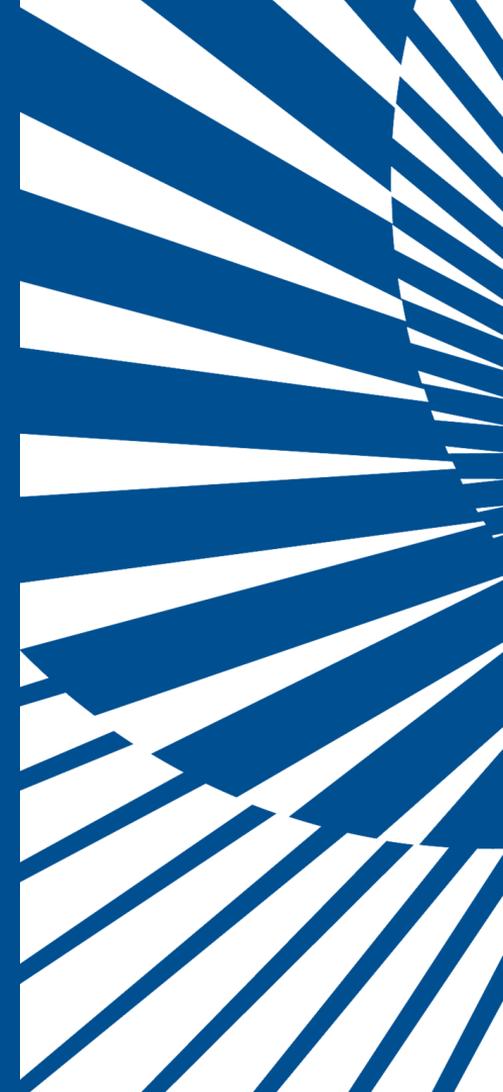
Review & Selection

- Review period: April 20–28
- Scored by Chamber Foundation staff and contractor(s) based on rubric that follows selection criteria
- Chamber Foundation may reach out for additional info
- Selected applicants notified no later than April 30th

Questions & Close-out



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Questions?

Note: Questions and responses from this session will be documented and released on the website through an interim Q&A document in advance of the question period.

Additional questions due by 5 p.m. (ET) on April 8.
Responses to submitted questions will be provided on the website by 5 p.m. (ET) on April 13.



Thank you!

Contact: pathways@uschamber.org



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