

PennDOT Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Funding Opportunity

What is the purpose of this funding opportunity?

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is administering the PennDOT Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program, which is a competitive grant reimbursement program (the Program) incentivizing Pennsylvania Educational Institutions (PEIs) to expand or develop new technical training curriculum within the Heavy Highway Industry (HHI). The Program provides up to \$500,000 in funding to PEIs seeking to develop or expand technical training curriculum directly related to the HHI (reference list of eligible HHI occupations on pages 4 and 5).

PennDOT and its industry partners have experienced significant workforce gaps. Workforce gaps involve positions in the HHI trades (carpentry, cement masons, operating engineers, laborers, ironworkers, and electricians), construction inspection, bridge safety inspection, materials technology and testing, and highway and bridge design. PennDOT expects the workforce gaps will continue to widen without a strategic approach to increase interest in these trades.

The Program establishes and offers transportation curricula for high school and adult education programs, as well as transportation marketing materials to share with middle school students. As described below, PEIs that are interested in applying for this grant opportunity (Applicants) are expected to coordinate with industry partners and trades to ensure projects align with current HHI needs.

How much funding is available?

The total amount of direct grant reimbursement funding available under this program is \$12M. PennDOT intends to award grants of up to \$500,000 per eligible applicant.

What type of grant is this?

- Funding for the Program is provided on a reimbursement basis.
- The grant is 100 percent federally-funded and no match is required.
- Applicants are required to:

- Have a PA SAP Vendor Identification Number;
- Have a Unique Entity ID; and
- Comply with a grant agreement.

What is the timeline for application and selection?

- Question and Answer Period: All questions regarding this Funding Opportunity must be directed by e-mail to ra-pdworkforcedev@pa.gov , no later than 12:00 p.m. ET on July 30, 2026. All questions must include the specific section of the Funding Opportunity about which the potential applicant is requesting clarification. Answers to all questions will be posted at: <https://www.pa.gov/services/penndot/apply-for-a-penn-dot-career-and-technical-education-grant> on August 10, 2026.
- Application Deadline: September 1, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET

How long will grantees have to spend the money?

- Anticipated period of performance start date: Pending fully executed grant documents
- Period of performance end date: September 30, 2029

Who are the eligible Applicants?

PEIs, including public school districts, private schools, cyber schools, Career & Technical Centers, Youth Development Centers*, and other institutions of higher learning, are all eligible to apply for funding through this Program. There are no regional or residential restrictions; all brick and mortar PEIs are required to be located within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and cyber schools, must serve Pennsylvania students. **Pennsylvania Youth Development Centers (managed by the Department of Human Services) provide essential services and support for youth, including those involved in the juvenile justice system, through targeted programs of education, treatment, and rehabilitation.*

Are grantees required to partner with workforce development entities and/or employers?

Yes. PennDOT intends for the Program to support the development or expansion of technical training curriculum directly related to HHI, which directly connects completion with employment within the HHI or with pathways to additional post-secondary training.

Applications must include at least one letter of commitment from an industry partner to demonstrate a strong partnership.

Applicants may partner with one or more of the following entities:

- Regional industry employers;



- Organized Labor or Trade Unions;
- Workforce Development Boards;
- Post-secondary articulation partners; or
- Community-based workforce entities.
- Letters of commitment must include at least ONE of the following: A plan to provide work-based learning opportunities for students (with the inclusion of the type and projected number of opportunities per year), **or**
- A commitment to interview or hire (with the inclusion of the type and projected number of positions hiring for), **or**
- A commitment to accept Registered Apprenticeship applicants for testing (with the inclusion of the typical number of new apprentices hired each cycle), **or**
- A commitment to assist with the development and implementation to ensure alignment with local or regional workforce needs, **or**
- An articulation agreement (an agreement between a PEI and a continued education program for those that complete the HHI material or program) directly connecting completers to a post-secondary technical training curriculum.

What types of projects are eligible for funding?

Applicants may use Program funding to develop and implement new technical training curriculum or to expand existing technical training curriculum and/or delivery.

- All curricula must be directly related to the HHI (see examples of HHI curriculum on pages 4 and 5).
- New curriculum applications must include labor market data to support the need and must serve at least 20 students.
- Expanded curriculum applications must serve at least 20 additional students. In addition, include the anticipated number of students to be trained and the anticipated number of students to be placed into a position.
- **Applicants May Choose One of the Following Options:**
- Option 1 (augment existing training curriculum at PEI):
 - (A): The Applicant expands existing training to integrate awareness of HHI occupations and build skills necessary for HHI occupations; **and/or**
 - (B): The Applicant purchases and integrates off-the-shelf curriculum, certification curriculum, or industry-recognized credentials directly related to the HHI within an existing technical training curriculum (e.g., National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)).
- Option 2 (create new curriculum at PEI):



- (A): The Applicant designs and implements the PEI's own curriculum or program of study (POS) to integrate awareness of HHI occupations and build skills necessary for HHI occupations; **and/or**
 - (B): The Applicant purchases and implements off-the-shelf curriculum, certification curriculum, or industry-recognized credentials directly related to the HHI (e.g., NCCER), as part of a new technical training curriculum.
- Option 3 (100% work-based learning curriculum): The Applicant implements a stand-alone earn-and-learn training curriculum, including pre-apprenticeships, either by:
 - (A) The Applicant expands the PEI's existing work-based learning training curriculum; **and/or**
 - (B) The Applicant creates a new work-based learning curriculum.

Additional notes on Option 3:

- PEIs may pursue Option 3 as a standalone training curriculum or include it as the work-based learning component for either Option 1 or Option 2.
- PEIs may partner with a third-party training provider to conduct the training.
- The curriculum must occur outside of school hours and can occur in the summer.

Regardless of the Option Selected:

- When describing the curriculum to be implemented or expanded, Applicants must include:
 - Minimum instructional structure (*including minimum hours of instruction*);
 - Field and work-based learning opportunities;
 - Registered Apprenticeship or other On-the-Job training alignment (*if applicable*);
 - Core competencies to be addressed;
 - Certifications and/or industry-recognized credentials included in existing or new curriculum; and
 - Instructor/staff professional development requirements.

What types of curriculum are eligible for expansion under Options 1 and 2?

If the Applicant is applying for Option 1 or Option 2, the Applicant's eligible curriculum must provide training for occupations in the HHI, which include:

- Construction Inspection
- CDL Driver
- Heavy Equipment Operation
- Asphalt and Concrete Paving

- Carpenter
- Mason
- Welder
- Diesel Mechanic
- Traffic Control & Safety
- Earthworks/Surveying
- Materials Testing
- Construction Project Management

Eligible curriculum purchased and implemented must provide training for occupations in the HHI and should align with industry standards.

Example curriculum could include:

K-8 Opportunities

- Awareness materials – To help clarify what HHI is, available careers, and benefits of working in the industry.
- Career Days presentations – Introducing the HHI, including career opportunities.
- Interactive STEM-related activities that include teacher guides and related required materials.
- Instructional content – Providing a high-level introduction and overview of HHI.
- Summer school programs.

High School (9-12) Opportunities

- Awareness materials
- Career days presentations
- Instructional content – Introductory content providing an overview of the HHI, or more intensive and/or specified learning in essential topics or career opportunities within the industry.
- NCCER curriculum –NCCER offers a heavy highway curriculum, including Core, Level 1, and Level 2 for purchase.
- Certified construction inspection – To educate students on the core competencies related to roles in construction inspection.
- Industry-relevant certifications and trainings – Provided by various industry-recognized organizations including the American Concrete Institute (ACI), American Traffic Safety Services Association, Association for Materials Protection and Performance, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, National Ready-Mixed Concrete Association, Northeast Center of Excellence for Pavement Technology, National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies, National Commission for the

Certification of Crane Operators, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and US Department of Transportation.

- Existing Union Training/Apprenticeship
- Summer school programs.

Community College/Adult Learning Opportunities

- Awareness materials
- Instructional content
- NCCER curriculum
- Certified construction inspection
- Industry-relevant certifications and trainings
- Nationally recognized credentials
- Existing Union Training/Apprenticeship
- Dual Enrollment for HS Students – Opportunities for students to earn college credit or get a head start on professional development curriculum related to HHI
- Trades-based curriculum – To develop, expand, and/or modify curriculum for trades-based careers related to HHI that can be offered as individual courses, certificate curriculum, or degree-granting curriculum.

Are earn-and-learn activities eligible for implementation under Option 3?

Any earn-and-learn HHI training curriculum in which participants are paid for their participation is eligible at the discretion of PennDOT. The Grantee must ensure that all participants engaged in earn-and -learn activities such as applied training on an active work site are compensated at the Davis Bacon rate, if applicable, or at a minimum, an hourly wage of \$15 (not inclusive of benefits). Compliance with this minimum wage requirement is mandatory for all field work and subject to monitoring.

What types of expenses can be reimbursed?

Applicants can seek reimbursement for allowable expenses determined consistent with Title 23, United States Code, Section 504(e), and as described below. Funds may be used for HHI transportation workforce development, training, and education, including:

- Tuition and direct educational expenses, excluding salaries, in connection with education and training;
- Employee professional development (e.g., training curriculum);
- Student internships;



- Pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and career opportunities for on-the-job training;
- University, college, community college, or vocational school support (e.g., curriculum development and experiential learning curriculum);
- Education activities, including outreach, to develop interest and promote participation in HHI transportation careers; and
- Activities associated with workforce training and employment services, such as targeted outreach and partnerships with industry, economic development organizations, workforce development boards, and labor organizations.

Examples of eligible expenses may include (but are not limited to):

- Career pathways outreach programs for middle and high school students focused on HHI transportation;
- HHI transportation-related curriculum, teacher education and training, cooperative education curriculum, work-study programs, scholarships, internships, and skills development training curriculum; or
- Short-term work details or “rotational” assignments for employee development.

What costs are not eligible for reimbursement?

Costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable Federal requirements. The following costs are generally not eligible for reimbursement under the Program unless expressly approved in writing by PennDOT and permitted by law:

- Costs incurred before execution of a grant agreement;
- Entertainment, purely social activities, or promotional items not directly tied to curriculum delivery; and
- General institutional overhead or indirect costs not supported as allowable under the approved budget.

Can Program funds be used for travel, equipment, or materials purchases?

Yes, provided these costs comply with relevant cost principles for Federal awards contained in 2 CFR part 200, subpart E, as may be amended. The Grantee can spend up to, but no more than 10% of the total amount awarded on travel expenses. In accordance with FHWA Transforming Transportation Through Innovation ([FHWA - Office of Innovative Program Delivery: Center for Transportation Workforce Development](#)), the following principles are discussed in greater detail:



Travel

Travel costs, including expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred while in travel status, are allowable if they are reasonable and consistent with the non-Federal entity's travel policy. [Grantee can spend up to, but no more than 10% of the total amount awarded on travel expenses] See 2 CFR § 200.475. For example, travel costs would be allowable if they are related to a defined employee training or professional development need, curriculum, or activity, or directly associated with student transportation career awareness or preparation. In addition, employee travel to and from a training or professional development curriculum would be allowable if the curriculum would improve the employee's skill, knowledge, or abilities in HHI transportation management or a technical discipline. Travel costs should be supported with a clear, programmatic rationale for the employee's participation with relevance to professional responsibilities and benefit to the employee's professional development or technical knowledge. Activities that issue Professional Development Hours (PDH) or Continuing Education Units (CEU) would be eligible for support under 23 U.S.C. § 504(e).

Fees and other costs associated with purely social activities (i.e. golf tournaments or sightseeing excursions), including the cost of additional lodging and per diem incurred to participate in the social event(s) are not eligible for core funds support. See 2 CFR § 200.438.

Materials

Costs for materials and supplies that benefit, and are dedicated to, the Federal award activity (training, education, and workforce development) are allowable in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.453.

Equipment

Costs for equipment (tangible property) that has a useful life in excess of a year and a per-unit cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization value of the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000 are generally unallowable as a direct charge to the Federal award without prior written approval from FHWA (or the State DOT, if acting as a pass-through entity). See 2 CFR § 200.439. Participation in these costs may be charged back to a federal award on a depreciation basis in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.436.

See

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovativeprograms/centers/workforce_dev/504e_state_core_programs_guidance_0318.aspx.

Is work-based learning required for funded applications?

Yes. For Option 1 and Option 2, Applicants are required to set aside at least 10% of the awarded funding for field and work-based learning. Field and work-based learning opportunities should be clearly described in the application and supported by the required partner letter of commitment submitted with the application.

Specific opportunities may be unpaid, or paid by an employer, and include (but are not limited to):

- Internships;
- Job shadowing;
- Apprenticeships; or
- Cooperative education curriculum.

What are the required application submission procedures?

Applicants are required to submit all proposal materials and attachments electronically during the open proposal period via PennDOT's eGrants Public Portal Interface. Note that the eGrants system is not the same eGrant platform used by the Department of Education.

The electronic proposal form through the eGrants Public Portal Interface is available at: <https://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/Login.aspx>. Applicants can save their proposal at any time to access later.

Accessing the proposal requires a Keystone Login. If the Applicant already has a Keystone Login, that may be used. Instructions for registering for a new Keystone Login are provided on the login page.

The following are guidelines for information required in the user profile:

- FEIN: This is the Applicant's federal employer/tax ID number. Enter as 9 digits without dashes.
- SAP Vendor #: This is the Applicant's SAP (Systems, Proposals, and Products) vendor number to receive payments from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If the SAP Vendor number is unknown, it can be located at https://b2b.ies.pa.gov/apps/vendor_lookup/index.html. An SAP vendor number will not be required to submit a Proposal but will be required prior to contract award. To request an SAP vendor number, please refer to <https://www.budget.pa.gov/Services/ForVendors/Pages/default.aspx>.
- Entity Name: This should be the official legal name and match the name used for SAP Vendor Registration and used on official resolutions.

- Top Official/Signing Authority: Identify the personnel with authority to sign the contract.

What additional documentation will Applicants be required to submit?

Each application **must** include the following information:

- Project Summary (1 page) – goals, number of students served by the grant per calendar year, geographic reach, dollar request.
- Narrative (up to 10 pages):
 - Need Statement (labor market demand, local PennDOT/contractor hires);
 - Curriculum Design (course sequence/hours, credential alignment, instructor qualifications, facilities & equipment);
 - Partnerships;
 - Key Outcomes and Outputs;
 - Recruitment/retention Plan;
 - Sustainability Plan (how the curriculum continues post-grant); and
 - Line-item project budget and budget justification.

Applicants will be required to submit the following additional documentation with their CTE Grant Program application:

- At least ONE Letter of support from regional HHI Employers and/or workforce development partners;
- Federal and State Funding Forms, including:
 - Federal Lobbying Certification Form;
 - FFATA Federal Funding Accountability Form; and
 - Worker Protection Form.

Applicants may submit the following supporting documentation with their CTE Grant Program application:

- Articulation agreements with post-secondary partners.

What compliance and procurement requirements apply to funded Grantees?

Successful Applicants must comply with all applicable Federal and Commonwealth requirements, including terms under the grant agreement executed with PennDOT and 2 CFR Part 200, as applicable (“Grantee”). Grantees will be responsible for maintaining adequate financial and Program records and following applicable procurement and documentation requirements, including, but not limited to:

- Procure goods and services using applicable competitive procedures;
- Maintain supporting documentation for expenditures and Program activities;
- Comply with applicable civil rights, nondiscrimination, and labor requirements; and
- Retain records for audit, monitoring, and closeout purposes.

What technical assistance is available to Grantees?

PennDOT is actively developing its own Transportation Construction Inspection Certification curriculum to create a standardized workforce development pathway for individuals interested in careers in transportation construction inspection throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Aligned with PennDOT job expectations, PennDOT's draft curriculum is designed to equip learners with the foundational knowledge, technical skills, and practical experience necessary to successfully enter the transportation construction industry. Upon successful completion, learners will earn a PennDOT-recognized certification that supports advancement as a Transportation Construction Inspector Trainee.

The curriculum is designed for implementation in high schools, career and technical schools, and community colleges. Pending final development and approval, the Program is anticipated to be ready for school-based implementation in the Fall of 2026.

Subject to availability, PennDOT may provide successful applicants with technical assistance and resources. Applicants interested in receiving this support should indicate their interest in their application narrative.

What reporting and monitoring requirements will apply after award?

Funded Grantees will be required to submit periodic financial and performance reports in a format specified by PennDOT. Reports may include information on expenditures, recruitment, enrollment, participation, completion, earned credentials, work-based learning, and other approved outcome measures. PennDOT may also conduct desk reviews, request supporting documentation, and perform monitoring activities to verify progress and compliance.

What award conditions apply to this funding opportunity?

Awards are subject to the availability and receipt of federal funds, successful execution of a grant agreement with PennDOT, submission of all required forms and documentation, and compliance with all state and federal laws, as may be amended during the application or grant term. PennDOT reserves the right to negotiate scope, budget, and performance measures; make partial awards; not make an award to any Applicant; and consider geographic distribution and overall Program balance when selecting Grantees.

What are the key outcomes and outputs expected for funded Applicants?

Tangible outcomes and products anticipated for successful Grantees could include, but are not limited to:

Curriculum & Training

- New or expanded HHI-aligned curriculum
- Stackable credential pathways (Pre-apprenticeship → apprenticeship → associate degree)
- Industry-recognized certifications embedded (OSHA-10/30, NCCER, ACI, PennDOT certifications, etc.)
- Lesson plans and instructional materials

Partnerships

- Formalized agreements (with contractors, unions, PennDOT, consultants)
- Advisory boards with industry representation
- Work-based learning structures (internships, co-ops, apprenticeships)

Outreach and Recruitment

- Marketing materials (K-8 STEM engagement content, career awareness campaigns)
- Recruitment events
- Targeted outreach plans for underrepresented population

Applications should:

- Clearly articulate how the Program will promote awareness and interest in HHI, develop tangible skills, and align with current workforce needs and industry standards;
- Include some discussion of the scale of the Program, such as the anticipated number of participants; number of work-based learning placements; number of guest speakers or site visits conducted; and/or participation of underrepresented groups; and
- Explain the ability to measurably reduce gaps in workforce shortages or create repeatable pipelines into the industry; create positive economic impact and reduce project delays associated with labor shortages; and/or create system-level change (sustained integration of transportation education into PEIs, replicable models across the state, or stronger alignment between education and HHI labor market needs).

What are the scoring criteria that will be used to review applications?

1. Design and Management Plan | 30 points

- a. Clearly defines employment need and opportunity by including relevant labor market data and employer commitments (*5 points*)
- b. Identifies target occupations/job classifications within the HHI (*5 points*)
- c. Includes estimated number of students to be served and total hours of training to be provided (*5 points*)
- d. Includes relevant curriculum, resources, or technical training to be used (or developed) and industry certifications or credentials to be conferred (*5 points*)
- e. Describes plan for the provision of work-based learning opportunities for participants (*5 points*)
- f. Describes PEI's current capacity and instructor qualifications, and availability of facilities and resources (*5 points*)

2. Impact and Sustainability | 30 points

- a. Describes how the project promotes the overall goals of the initiative (*10 points*)
- b. Demonstrates the positive impact of partnerships supporting both students and regional employers, including: (*10 points*)
 - Number of students expected to be hired;
 - Number of students expected to be placed in Registered Apprenticeship or other On-the-Job training opportunity; and
 - Estimates of number of open positions to be filled
- c. Includes detailed budget and budget narrative (*5 points*)
- d. Describes the Applicant's capacity to track and report on data, such as recruitment, enrollment, participation, and completion (*5 points*)

3. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership | 20 points

- a. Identifies local stakeholders and/or partners including: (*10 points*)
 - i. Local/regional industry employers;
 - ii. Organized labor or trade unions;
 - iii. Workforce development boards;
 - iv. Post-secondary articulation partners; or
 - v. Other community-based workforce partners
- b. Clearly demonstrates the development of quality relationships with project partners, including commitments (*10 points*)
 - i. to interview/hire;
 - ii. support opportunities for field- or work-based learning; and/or
 - iii. support direct matriculation into related post-secondary or advanced training opportunities

4. Readiness and Timeline | 10 points

- a. Fully describes the project timeline, including (*5 points*)
 - i. Steps to implementation

- ii. Key project milestones
 - iii. Projected cohort start and finish dates
 - iv. Tasks necessary to scale and replicate the Program (if applicable)
 - b. Identifies key personnel and demonstrates their ability to implement project goals and milestones, including relevant experience in managing similar projects (5 points)
- 5. Performance Outcomes | 10 points**
- a. Describes desired outcomes and outputs and how they will be measured and tracked (5 points)
 - b. Describes the metrics to be used to demonstrate the impact and success of the program (5 points)

Geographic Reach: PennDOT reserves the right to ensure statewide distribution of funded projects when selecting Grantees.

Once Program funding is awarded, will supportive services be provided to students?

Participating students enrolled in the Program may receive up to \$10,000 each in supportive services funding, separate from this Program funding, to reimburse PennDOT-approved expenses that reduce barriers to participation. A PennDOT representative will contact funded grantees and students to provide the necessary information.

For more information regarding supportive services for eligible program participants visit: [PA OJT SSC – Pennsylvania On-the-Job Training \(OJT\) Supportive Services](#).

Additional Information and Questions

All questions regarding this Funding Opportunity must be directed by e-mail to rapdworkforcedev@pa.gov, no later than 12:00 p.m. ET on July 30, 2026. Answers to all questions will be posted at <https://www.pa.gov/services/penndot/apply-for-a-penndot-career-and-technical-education-grant> on August 10, 2026.