



Request for Qualifications:
Industry Workforce Partnership Intermediaries

Release Date:
May 6, 2013

Due Date:
June 18, 2013

Questions and Responses to:
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CWFA SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

PROCESS TIMELINE

Timeframe	Activity	Comments
May 6, 2013	RFQ Released	Available to bidders on the RFQ Site Page
May 14, 2013 9 – 10 am	Bidders' Conference @ The Chicago Community Trust 225 N. Michigan Ave, Ste 2200 Chicago, IL 60601 OR online webinar format	Highly recommended for applicants considering a response RSVP HERE If you miss the Bidder's Conference Email mbruce@cct.org to follow-up
June 18, 2013	Responses to RFQ due to: Matthew Bruce CWFA Exec. Director mbruce@cct.org	Responses should be sent by email, see Section IV
June 18, 2013 – July 12, 2013	Review of Responses and Applicant Interviews with CWFA	Applicants may be invited for interviews as part of review process
Week of July 15, 2013	Notification of Selection	Will be made by email and phone
July 24, 2013	CWFA Formal Launch	Launch event with CWFA Partners
July – September 2013	Collaborative Development of Industry Partnership with CWFA Support	Selected Partner(s) and CWFA will develop grant together: goals, outcomes, budget, evaluation etc.
September 18, 2013	CWFA Management Committee Meeting: Consideration of Industry Partnership Grants	Point of Approval of 1 st Grant(s) to Industry Sector Partnership(s)
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015	Initial timeframe of grants	There will be an annual review and renewal process.

SECTION I – BACKGROUND

The Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance (CWFA)

The Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance collaborates with employers and other workforce stakeholders to increase employment and earnings for underprepared workers in the Chicago region. The Funder Alliance was launched in May 2012 as a successor to [The Partnership for New Communities](#) and the 2016 Fund for Chicago Neighborhoods, and is thus building on a rich history of collaborative philanthropy in the Chicago region.

The work of the Funder Alliance is built upon the recognition that a skilled workforce creates competitive advantages for regional economic and community development. This recognition has led the Funder Alliance to identify five strategic priorities, which are:

1. Support for new and existing workforce partnerships in high-priority industry sectors that lead to higher earnings, credential attainment and career advancement for underprepared Chicago-area residents;
2. Aligning workforce development and economic development activities;
3. Policy and systems reform that facilitates access to and delivery of effective education and training;
4. Improvements to data collection, analysis and use leading to more efficient service delivery, high-quality services and better consumer information; and
5. Workforce innovation.

For more information about the Funder Alliance, its Guiding Principles, how its planning process led to this RFQ and its general approach to funding, please see Attachment E.

Current CWFA Funders	
The Chicago Community Trust	The Joyce Foundation
The Lloyd A. Fry Foundation	JP Morgan Chase
The Robert R. McCormick Foundation	Polk Bros Foundation
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago	The Boeing Company
The Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation	

SECTION II: THE CWFA and INDUSTRY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

Why Industry Workforce Partnerships?

The Funder Alliance defines an industry workforce partnership as a collaboration between employers in a specific industry and other workforce stakeholders with the goal of improving workforce outcomes, especially for entry-level workers. Industry Workforce Partnerships utilize a dual-customer approach to build career advancement pathways for underprepared workers, while also meeting employer needs. These partnerships develop deep, long-lasting relationships between employers, the public workforce system, and education, training, and support service providers; organizing them to create a coordinated continuum of workforce services to the benefit of both employers and employees.

The Funder Alliance has embraced support for this model of workforce initiative because it is a proven strategy to increase employment and earnings for underprepared workers. Industry Workforce Partnerships are different across the country, but they have been extensively evaluated and consistently demonstrate the kind of impacts the Funder Alliance seeks to achieve¹. Improved communications and coordination across workforce stakeholders leads not only to increased employment and earnings for current employees and/or program participants, but also fosters systems and policy changes that have a positive impact on workers and employers well into the future.

Indeed, Chicagoland has a rich history of sector-based workforce initiatives. Various workforce partnerships in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, retail and other sectors have been initiated in the region; many continue to operate or are just getting started. All the leading entities in Chicagoland's workforce development system are committed to sustained partnerships with employers, organized by industry sector. The Funder Alliance's investments will affirm and encourage this commitment through the direct support of one or more existing or new industry workforce partnerships.

¹ <http://nfwsolutions.org/about-us/evaluation> Links to several evaluations of workforce partnerships.

Steps to Supporting Industry Workforce Partnerships

Given the advanced state of experience with and commitment to sector-based workforce initiatives in Chicagoland, the CWFA has set a general goal for this investment area:

To add capacity to industry workforce partnerships in Chicagoland, either existing or nascent, and thereby achieve improved workforce outcomes for the Funder Alliance's target population of underprepared workers.

Philanthropic partners have an important role to play in these partnerships, and the Funder Alliance believes its support can make a significant impact. But the Funder Alliance seeks to "support" and "empower" workforce partnerships, it does not seek to "lead" or "own" them. Given this orientation, the steps the Funder Alliance will follow to achieve the above goal are as follows:

1. Through this RFQ the Funder Alliance will select at least one industry partnership intermediary, who is leading or would lead an industry workforce partnership, which the Funder Alliance will then join and support;
 - As a result of its planning process, the Funder Alliance would prefer to support partnerships in Manufacturing, Healthcare or Information Technology. See Section III for additional guidance.
2. The method of selection will be to identify in this RFQ the best practices the Funder Alliance sees as requirements of high-performing industry workforce partnerships, and then to evaluate potential intermediary partners based on their demonstrated capacity to implement the best practices;
3. Selection(s) through this RFQ represent a "commitment to fund" from the Funder Alliance, but they will not result directly in a grant award or a guarantee of funding;
4. Over the coming months the Funder Alliance will work collaboratively with the industry workforce partnership(s) it selects on the design, implementation and evaluation of the partnership and any specific activities the Funder Alliance would support. This work would result in a complete proposal for CWFA funding, including a scope of work, budget, outcome goals, evaluation plan, etc.
5. Proposals could be approved at the September CWFA Management Committee meeting with a potential grant start date of October 1, 2013. The Funder Alliance is committed to multi-year funding cycles, contingent on annual review.

CWFA support of an industry workforce partnership is in no way a guarantee of its success.

Available Funding and Resource Development

The process outlined above does not lend itself to making a hard commitment to a specific range of anticipated grant size. There are too many unknowns: the CWFA might commit to one industry workforce partnership or more than one; the initial activities might be targeted or comprehensive; the industry workforce partnership might be established and at-scale or it might be nascent and growing. The “normal” range of annual grant size from funder collaboratives around the country to workforce partnerships is quite broad; they are generally between \$100,000 and \$500,000 per year. The grant period commitment varies as well, generally between 2 and 5 years. The CWFA is committed to working with its selected partners to set the size, scope and length of its investments appropriately.

Another avenue the Funder Alliance will explore and pursue as part of its commitment to industry workforce partnerships will be the development of other funding sources. There are many workforce funders in the region who have not yet joined the Funder Alliance. The launch of the Funder Alliance’s commitment to a workforce partnership with a specific focus will provide a platform on which to solicit support from other funders. These new funders may opt to support all CWFA initiatives, or they may opt to only support a specific project like a specific industry workforce partnership. In either case the Funder Alliance can use its unique position as a fundraiser to bring additional support to a project.

SECTION III: RFQ RESPONSE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to help respondents make a clear case for their selection as a CWFA partner. Please limit the narrative section of responses to 3,500 words and please do not include attachments not requested by the RFQ.

Who Should Respond?

The purpose of this RFQ is to select an intermediary who would lead an industry workforce partnership*. There is no one ideal type of intermediary or partnership lead. This function has been performed successfully by industry associations, workforce boards, unions, labor/management organizations, community colleges, community-based organizations, economic development agencies, individual employers and others. The Funder Alliance is not restricting the type of organization which may apply.

While one individual agency will need to identify itself as the lead, responses to this RFQ should be made on behalf of a broader coalition of partners. The Funder Alliance is open to developing support for either existing or new industry workforce partnerships. Please be clear throughout a response about whether it is for an existing or new partnership.

Elements of the Response Narrative

Responses to this RFQ should address each of the following 22 question areas or requests for information. Respondents should show their capacity to lead a high-performing industry workforce partnership by demonstrating how they would implement what the Funder Alliance considers to be best practices. The Funder Alliance strongly recommends respondents refer to Attachment C for more background on these best practices and how they support high-performing industry workforce partnerships.

* NOTE: For ease of reading the tense used in these response guidelines is conditional: "What *would* your partnership do?" We realize for the audience of existing partnerships the present tense may have been more appropriate: "What *is* your partnership doing?" Please do not interpret this choice of tense to represent any preference for either new or existing partnerships.

A. Industry Sector and Geography

1. Identify the industry sector on which your workforce partnership would focus. If that sector is *not* Manufacturing, Healthcare or Information Technology², then you should also demonstrate the economic significance of the sector to the regional economy, and explain why focusing on that sector is a good strategy for advancing the CWFA mission.
2. If applicable, identify the industry sub-sector on which your partnership would focus. For example, a healthcare partnership might focus on long-term care. Explain why focusing on that sub-sector is a good strategy for advancing the CWFA mission.
3. If applicable, identify the area within Chicagoland on which your partnership would focus. For example, a manufacturing partnership might focus on the cluster of employers in or around Will County. The geographic focus area must fall within the CWFA target area, which includes the 7 IL counties of Metro Chicago (see Attachment E).

B. Employer Leadership

4. How would your organization ensure that your industry workforce partnership will have the necessary level of employer leadership and commitment?
5. What specific employer partners would be leaders of an industry workforce partnership? How are they already playing a leadership role and/or why would they be committed leaders?
6. How would your organization continuously develop employer engagement and leadership in your industry workforce partnership?

C. Business Problem Driven

7. What workforce business problems are currently driving the interests of employers in your selected sector? How would you prioritize them? Please be specific in framing the problems.
8. How would your industry workforce partnership address these workforce problems? What activities might it engage in to address the issues?
9. How would both employers and underprepared workers benefit from these activities? Describe what the outcomes for both employers and workers might look like.

Two examples of industry workforce partnership activities are:

² The CWFA has already targeted these sectors as the best candidates for industry workforce partnership support; it is unlikely the Funder Alliance will support a partnership in a different sector, although not impossible.

Several area hospitals identify the challenge of clinical internships openings going unfilled. At the same time colleges and training agencies complain they can't get enough clinical internships for their students. An activity of an industry workforce partnership could be to implement and sustain the use of a technology based solution to the coordination problem.³

Several small and medium manufacturing companies are struggling to hire maintenance mechanics. They are reluctant to invest in the training of either new or incumbent staff out of fear that the trainees will simply leave after the training. Through the industry workforce partnership these employers work with community colleges, the public workforce system and the Funder Alliance, to develop a maintenance mechanic apprenticeship program in such a way that it shares the costs and risks of the training across multiple partners.

For more information of possible activities and uses of CWFA funding, see Attachment D.

D. Appropriate Intermediary

10. Why is your organization the appropriate intermediary for this industry workforce partnership?

11. Who on your staff would lead the industry workforce partnership? What is their professional background? In the industry? In workforce development? If you cannot identify the specific person at this time, what would you require from the candidate you would hire?

ATTACHMENT – If applicable, attach the resume(s) of the key staff who would be leading the industry workforce partnership.

12. Demonstrate why you would have the deep trust of employer partners. How do employers view your organization? How do you know they view you this way?

13. Demonstrate why you would have the deep trust of the other necessary stakeholders. Explain how you interact with the following types of organizations –

- Community colleges
- Workforce boards
- Industry associations
- Economic development agencies
- Community based organizations

14. To what extent have you played the role of intermediary and connector in the past?

³ The Funder Alliance is aware that exactly this tool had been developed and was in use in Chicagoland. It is nonetheless a good example of an appropriate industry workforce partnership activity.

E. Critical Mass

Successful industry workforce partnerships maintain both the number of their partners and a healthy ratio of partner types. Usually maintaining a high ratio of employers to other types of partner is important. The structure of the partnership is part of maintaining critical mass. Some industry workforce partnerships minimize or separate the participation of non-employers, some have one table for all partners but they control participation, still others allow any and all interested parties to join equally. There is no right formula.

15. How would your industry workforce partnership be structured to ensure the right mix of enough of the right partners? Why would you structure it in that way?

ATTACHMENT – Complete Attachment B: Partner List. Please be sure to explain who the partners are, what roles they would play, and what strengths they would bring.

ATTACHMENT – Any letters of support from or agreements with partners on your list.

F. Desired Impact

As stated above, the Funder Alliance seeks to raise employment and earnings for *underprepared workers*. Industry workforce partnerships are a means to this end. In order to justify the investment in sustaining these partnerships they must maximize their desired impact on the target population. The organization(s) leading these partnerships should be just as concerned for and committed to the target population.

16. How would your organization ensure the industry workforce partnership maintains a balance between serving employer needs and advancing the ultimate goal of helping the target population?

17. What is your partnership's collective experience with creating and promoting career pathways, removing barriers to advancement, and cultivating the kinds of systems changes listed in the chart in Attachment C?

18. What is your partnership's collective experience working with the target population?

19. If applicable, are there sub-groups within the target population that your industry workforce partnership would focus on? (for example: veterans, ex-offenders, immigrants, low-income/low-skilled individuals) Such a focus is not required.

G. Financial and Administrative Capacity

Ultimately, the lead of a CWFA supported industry workforce partnership will have to manage a grant from the Funder Alliance, and comply with all administrative, financial, and reporting requirements. While the Funder Alliance will always seek to minimize administrative burdens on grantees, it will also pursue an evaluation strategy for all of its investments. The Funder Alliance's commitment to evaluation will necessarily translate to some reporting and other administrative requirements for grantees.

20. Demonstrate that your organization has the financial and administrative capacity to manage a large, multi-year grant from the Funder Alliance. Give examples of other grants of similar size your organization has successfully managed in the past.

21. Demonstrate that your organization has the capacity to comply with reporting and evaluation requirements, including the tracking and reporting of participant-level data.

22. What metrics might you use or develop to track outcomes and demonstrate impact?

ATTACHMENT – A copy of your organization's most recent annual budget, for instance, the version from your organization's most recent annual report.

Recommended Partners

The Funder Alliance is not requiring a specific set of partners for responses to this RFQ. However, in the interest of improving the *current* state of industry workforce partnerships the Funder Alliance strongly recommends that respondents align with the [World Business Chicago Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs](#) and the [Illinois STEM Learning Exchanges](#). In addition, for the chosen geographic area the Funder Alliance recommends alignment with the appropriate:

- Workforce Board(s)
- Community College(s)
- K-12 School System(s), and
- CBO community.

SECTION IV: SELECTION PROCESS

- Responses to this RFQ are due on June 18, 2013. Responses should be emailed to mbruce@cct.org as *two* attached documents, one with the cover sheet, narrative, and attachment B, and one with other attachments (resumes, letters of support etc.)
- Responses should *only* include the following elements:
 1. A completed response cover sheet (Attachment A). *No cover letters please.*
 2. A narrative responding as requested in Section III's RFQ Response Guidelines (the narrative should be no longer than 3,500 words)
 3. Requested attachments
 - Partner List (Attachment B)
 - Requested Resume(s)
 - Letters of Support or Agreements
 - Most recent annual budget
- The CWFA Management Committee will review responses and evaluate them with respect to the guidelines laid out in this RFQ, and also based on any additional information gleaned from the selection process. Other elements of that selection process may include:
 - An interview or site visit with a respondent and their partners;
 - Feedback from outside evaluators asked by CWFA to review responses; and
 - Additional information or documents requested from respondents by CWFA after responses to this RFQ have been submitted.
- The week of July 15 the Funder Alliance will notify respondents of its decisions and if the respondent agrees they will be asked to take part in a CWFA launch event.

Next Step After Selection

- Selection will enable the Funder Alliance to work collaboratively with its new partner(s) on developing the implementation of the Funder Alliance's support for the industry sector partnership. This work would result in a complete proposal for CWFA funding, including a scope of work, budget, outcome goals, evaluation plan etc.

ATTACHMENT A: RESPONSE COVER SHEET

Name of Applicant:						
Fiscal Agent (if applicable):						
Is this a New or Existing Partnership?						
Contact Person:				Title:		
Full Address:						
Phone:			Website:			
Email:						
Organization's Legal/Tax Status:						
Total Revenue (for most recently completed fiscal year):						
Total Operating Expenses (for most recently completed fiscal year):						
Date organization began operations:						
Number of Staff:		Full-time:		Part-time:		

Response Authorization

Authorized Signature:					
Typed Name:					
Title:					
Date:					

ATTACHMENT C: INDUSTRY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP BEST PRACTICES

This attachment identifies the best practices the Funder Alliance sees as traits of high-performing industry workforce partnerships. The list of best practices comes from a review of industry workforce partnership implementations, both in Chicagoland and around the country. It draws on CWFA guiding principles, principles identified by other regions' funder collaboratives for their workforce partnership grants, and the principles of the [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#). Examples of each concept in practice are given for reference. The list is not exhaustive and as a learning organization the Funder Alliance is committed to an evolving understanding of what factors support success in this program model. However, for the purposes of this RFQ, these are the main factors the Funder Alliance will consider in selecting its partner(s).

There are two sets of best practices identified here. The first set is considered necessary for the viability and sustainability of a partnership, the second set is considered necessary for the partnership to have sufficient impact on the target population. Both are necessary for an industry workforce partnership to perform at a high-level over an extended timeframe.

Best Practices for Viability and Sustainability

Industry workforce partnerships that are not viable and not sustainable are quite common. Any employer advisory committee that struggles to get employers to attend, or ends immediately after the completion of a grant or project is an example. It is not sufficient for workforce agencies or funders to simply see the value of employer engagement and seek it out as one element of a workforce initiative. Employers are the key to an industry workforce partnership's success, and the degree of employer engagement is highly correlated with the success of the partnership. This first set of best practices is therefore focused on initiating, cultivating and sustaining employer engagement.

Best Practices for Viability and Sustainability

Employer Leadership

Employers engage along a spectrum of commitment levels. But some subset must be engaged at a leadership level for a partnership to remain viable. Employers must be active in the agenda setting and activity selection of a partnership in order for them to feel a deep commitment to the success of that agenda. Employer leaders are also the best tool for ongoing recruitment and cultivation of new employer partners.

Example: The [Boston Healthcare Career Consortium](#) is chaired by and has a core group of participants from major hospitals as its leaders. This core group actively sets the consortium's agenda and ensures the partnership remains relevant to employers.

Business Problem Driven

Viable partnerships focus on and solve the workforce business problems employers identify. It is the promise of solving these business problems that is the best motivation for an employer to engage with peers and other stakeholders on collaborative solutions. If a partnership does not solve a business problem, employers will disengage, or only participate nominally out of perceived civic or political obligations. This best practice is crucial to sustainability. Business problems come and go (ideally they are solved) for a partnership to remain viable it must be able to adapt and address new workforce problems that arise.

Example: [Apprenticeship 2000](#) was started by two manufactures in North Carolina who shared the problem of not having a stable talent pipeline. They have been joined by 5 others, including Siemens, and are sustained by this continued shared problem, and a solution that is helping all of their needs.

Appropriate Intermediary

Effective partnerships are led by intermediaries that are respected by both employers and by the workforce development system. The intermediary must be able to foster trust and communication across diverse entities. Often the best examples of intermediaries have staff with professional histories that span the public, private and non-profit sectors. Usually the best staff person to lead an industry workforce partnership at an intermediary has a solid professional background in the target industry.

Example: The Hartford funder collaborative selected the [Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology](#) as the intermediary for their advanced manufacturing workforce partnership in 2009. CCAT already had a dense network of employer relationships and an established level of trust.

<p><i>Critical Mass</i></p>	<p>Industry partnerships need to achieve a critical mass of both employers and other stakeholders in order to stay relevant and continue activities. While employer leadership is critical, it is not sustainable if a partnership is not constantly recruiting and cultivating new employer partners at all levels of engagement. A partnership also maintains viability by developing its relevance to a wide range of stakeholders, including: economic development agencies, school systems, community groups, and of course the public higher education, vocational training and workforce development systems.</p>
<p><i>Example:</i> The Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare brings together some 40+ different partners. Not only over a dozen employers, but also government agencies, CBOs, colleges, school systems, industry associations, interest groups and funders.</p>	

Best Practices for Achieving Desired Impacts

While the above practices are considered necessary for viability and sustainability, they alone will not lead to the kind of impact the Funder Alliance is seeking. The Funder Alliance is focused on its mission of increasing employment and earnings for underprepared workers, and especially for disadvantaged workers. Industry Workforce Partnerships can be an effective means to advancing this goal, but **only** if they can strike a balance between maintaining their value and relevance to employers, and improving workforce outcomes for the target population. One of the CWFA guiding principles is that “Alliance projects will minimize subsidizing business functions that employers can do themselves.” As the Funder Alliance proceeds with its strategy of supporting industry workforce partnerships, heeding this guiding principle will become increasingly important. The Funder Alliance would not be able to remain committed to an industry workforce partnership if that partnership is not able to implement a balanced, dual-customer approach, where both employers **and** underprepared workers substantially benefit from the initiative’s activities.

The following best practices are important ways to help maintain such a balanced approach; examples of how they have implemented are also given.

Best Practices for Achieving Desired Impacts

<p><i>Focus on Career Pathways and Barriers</i></p>	<p>Effective industry partnerships improve career pathways for entry-level workers. They may do this by increasing access to pathways, adding assistance along them, or by removing barriers to entry and advancement. Some employers or industries may already have pathways, but they need to be better promoted and understood. Others may benefit from creating pathways.</p> <p>An essential element of this best practice is linking work on career pathways to the broader education and workforce systems. Industry workforce partnerships can be particularly effective at promoting the use of industry recognized credentials, and promoting the connection of competence based credentialing to portable higher education credit-hours.</p>
<p><i>Focus on Systems Change</i></p>	<p>The highest form of success for industry partnerships are systems changes; permanent alterations to policy and/or practice that improve workforce outcomes for the target population.</p> <p>Systems changes may be about career advancement or they may be about improving things like work quality or racial equity. They may apply to public systems or employer systems, or to interactions between them.</p> <p>A major area of systems change would be the level of investment in and commitment by employers to their entry-level workforce. High-performing industry workforce partnerships are capable of finding creative ways to permanently raise this level of investment.</p>

Examples: [The Pennsylvania Partnership for Direct Care Workers](#) is focusing on moving entry-level healthcare workers and low-skilled job seekers into career pathways. A common example of systems change it and other healthcare collaboratives have achieved are changes to an employer’s tuition remission or incumbent training policies, which make it easier for entry-level staff to access resources.

The [Dan River Region Collaborative](#) has been effective working on systems change in their manufacturing sector by working to promote adoption of the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) amongst their manufacturing employers. Adoption of the NCRC moves employers towards use of industry recognized credentials and it becomes the first rung on a shared career pathway across employers.

The following page gives several more examples of the kinds of systems changes the Funder Alliance would like to encourage.

Examples of Systems Changes Industry Workforce Partnerships Can Cultivate*		
	Focus Area	Sample Strategies
Employer Systems Changes	<i>Hiring Practices</i>	Create pre-employment or other types of internships
		Develop preferred provider relationships between an employer and a community-based service provider
		Negotiate competency-based rather than credential based hiring
	<i>Working Conditions</i>	Teach supervisors to mentor low-skilled workers
		Modify management performance reviews to include goals for advancing entry-level workers
		Negotiate for release time to participate in training
		Develop job descriptions that identify competencies needed to perform them adequately
	<i>Advancement Opportunities</i>	Map internal career pathways to identify very large advancement steps, and negotiate interim steps with accessible criteria
		Change employer criteria for tuition reimbursement to cover pre-college courses or to make up-front payments rather than reimbursements
Training and Education Infrastructure Systems Changes	<i>Improve access to for-credit education</i>	Offer community college courses at accessible times and locations
		Align ABE/GED outcomes with college placement exam criteria
		Build/support bridge programs to improve readiness for academic programs
	<i>Create alternative pathways to credentials</i>	Negotiate academic credit for work based learning
		Develop pre-apprenticeship readiness programs
		Develop prep courses for incumbent workers for industry-recognized credentials
	<i>Strengthen pipelines among service providers</i>	Organize single-point-of-contact agreements between service providers and employers
		Build cohort of providers that share information on employer competency expectations and career advancement criteria
	* with thanks to Skillworks: Partners for a Productive Workforce http://www.skill-works.org/	

ATTACHMENT D: POSSIBLE USES OF FUNDING

The Funder Alliance anticipates future grants made to raise the capacity of industry workforce partnerships will be used to support both their operations and their activities. Support for operations usually means defraying the staffing and other administrative costs associated with convening and sustaining an active collaboration across multiple partners. Support for activities can refer to a wide range of uses. The strength of an industry workforce partnership lies in its ability to coordinate resources from multiple sources to support its activities and maximize its impact. These multiple sources must include both public workforce development or education programs, and direct or in-kind contributions from employer and industry partners, in addition to philanthropic support. The advantage of CWFA support is the flexibility of its funding. The ideal partnership will creatively use the flexible support from the Funder Alliance to complement and leverage multiple other sources such that the resulting initiative is more than the sum of its funding components. There is no one right use of CWFA funding to achieve this goal. For example, while the funding of a pilot project is certainly a conceivable activity for a CWFA supported industry workforce partnership, it is by no means the only activity. The following is a partial menu of types of activities the Funder Alliance could support:

- Development of a continuum of training and services spanning community partners, training partners and employer partners;
- Creation of a credential or apprenticeship model for an industry sector, including curriculum or program development;
- Return-On-Investment (ROI) analysis of a workforce development intervention;
- Education and/or training of either incumbent worker or non-incumbent worker participants, as part of a comprehensive strategy designed by the industry workforce partnership to address an appropriate and specific issue or problem;
- Support services or assistance, or solutions to barriers to program success such as transportation, again as part of a comprehensive strategy;
- Development of competitive public funding proposals;
- Support for systems change strategies (see Attachment C) that lead to improved workforce outcomes for the target population;
- Facilitation or other supports for the implementation of work-based learning.

This list is intended as a reference and not as a directive. The activities of an industry workforce partnership should be determined by the partnership itself.

ATTACHMENT E: MORE CWFA BACKGROUND

Guiding Principles for CWFA Funding

- The Alliance’s geographic scope is metropolitan Chicago (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties in Illinois).
- Alliance programming will help create jobs, reduce unemployment, and increase earnings, particularly for disadvantaged workers.
- The Alliance works collaboratively with private and public funders of workforce and economic development and other workforce stakeholders.
- To the greatest extent possible, and where it advances the goals of the Alliance, it will leverage and align public, private, local and national investments in workforce development.
- The Alliance will address workforce problems that the public workforce development system either has not addressed or cannot address.
- Alliance projects should yield a strong return on investment.
- The Alliance tests and scales promising strategies offering long-term sustainability.
- Alliance projects will minimize subsidizing business functions that employers can do themselves.
- Alliance projects will be directed at specific populations or communities only to the extent that doing so addresses the policy needs of metropolitan Chicago.
- Alliance grant making is proactive and strategic, using RFPs or invitations to apply.

The CWFA Planning Process

In its first six months as a staffed entity, the CWFA carried out a planning process in order to derive actionable investment areas based on its five strategic priorities and informed by robust stakeholder engagement. Over a hundred fifty individuals from over a hundred organizations, agencies or companies were interviewed and/or came to a stakeholder meeting. The initial stage of this planning process generated dozens of potential avenues for the Funder Alliance to advance its mission. The second stage focused on prioritization and narrowed the areas of focus. The result of this planning process is a set of three project areas where the CWFA will seek to make its initial investments. They are:

- A - Supporting a Data Driven Regional Workforce Development System
- B - Improving Employment and Earnings for Low-Wage Workers
- C - Supporting Effective Industry Workforce Partnerships

This procurement initiates the Funder Alliance's formal efforts in Project Area C, through which it hopes to support the effectiveness of at least one industry workforce partnership.

The CWFA Approach to Funding

The CWFA's intent is to develop and implement initiatives as ongoing collaborations between the Funder Alliance and its partners. This is the best way to create the deep, multi-stakeholder commitment necessary for the sustained success of complex endeavors. The CWFA's general approach to starting this kind of collaboration follows three steps:

Step 1 - Identify the partner or partners with whom to develop CWFA's support of an initiative;

Step 2 - Work with the partner(s) to design and/or develop the initiative, including the design of CWFA's investment(s) in its success;

Step 3 - Empower the partnership with resources, resource development and other tools, and embark upon the initiative's implementation together.

The CWFA's support for industry workforce partnerships will follow this approach, with this RFQ initiating the first step.