

Application Summary & Analysis

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Spudnik Equipment Company LLC is located in Blackfoot, Idaho with a total workforce of 275 employees. Brothers Carl and Leo Hobbs designed and developed the Spudnik Scooper in a potato cellar northwest of Blackfoot, Idaho and the company was founded. From these humble beginnings in 1958, Spudnik has grown into an international company, meeting the field and storage equipment needs of potato growers across the globe. Today Spudnik is a proud member of the Grimme Group of companies which is headquartered in Damme, Germany. Grimme is the largest potato equipment manufacturer in the world and has provided solutions to the potato industry for over 150 years.

2. TRAINING NEEDS

Spudnik is requesting workforce development training funds to **retrain 250 employees and train 20 new employees (registered apprentices) with an average wage of \$15.36/hour**. Trainees will receive a variety of training opportunities from Idaho State University, outside vendors and internal on-the-job training (OJT) as follows:

- a. 42% of the proposed training cost is Computer Aided Design (CAD) training for 55 employees to learn new software Spudnik is migrating to (Siemens NX). CAD drafting is a high demand skill in southeastern/eastern Idaho currently being unfilled.
- b. Basic to advanced safety training courses affiliated with common manufacturing practices and operations.
- c. Basic to advanced production skills necessary for successful manufacturing operations.

Due to its central location in Blackfoot, Spudnik is competing for skilled labor with 443 manufacturers and a low unemployment rate in southeastern and eastern Idaho. To keep up with the company's annual growth, and the increasing demand for product and product improvement within a competitive industry, Spudnik has had to look for new innovative ways to attract and retain employees. Some of these innovations include 5 new apprenticeship programs including; machinists, welders, fabricators, painters, and assemblers. Spudnik is funding their apprenticeship programs, however some of the proposed training each apprentice is participating in with the proposed grant application may contribute to the overall apprenticeship requirements. The proposed grant request will provide necessary tools for Spudnik to effectively meet succession and attrition needs, train their employees to be more productive to meet existing/projected demands, and help initiate their new apprenticeship programs.

3. WDTF ANALYSIS TOOL SUMMARY OUTCOME

Based on wages, types of jobs, and anticipating vendor, curriculum and SOJT for training, this project could qualify for up to \$2,500 per employee, or \$675,000.00. Spudnik is only requesting \$158,271.25, averaging \$586.19 per employee.

4. RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the full amount requested equal to \$158,271.25 for the hiring/training of 20 new employees and training/retraining of 250 incumbent employees as indicated.