

Innovation Grant

Applicant	Melinda Davis
Applicant ID	APP-000422
Company Name	Melinda Davis
Recipient Address	Melinda Davis 875 Perimeter Dr. Moscow, ID 83844
Email	melindadavis@uidaho.edu
Funding Requested	\$21,580.00
Status	Submitted
Funded	<input type="checkbox"/>

Application Title: Palouse Pathways Innovation Grant

Description:

Palouse Pathways - Aligning Self Awareness with Career Exploration program

Review Notes:

Grant Review Discussion from October 27, 2020

Palouse Pathways – Innovation Grant

Palouse Pathways is requesting \$21,580.00 to fund the Aligning Self Awareness with Career Exploration program. The grant will help develop and pilot a self-awareness and career exploration course that will be delivered virtually to underserved youth in the Palouse region of Idaho. The program will help guide youth and prepare them for post-secondary programs they are passionate about and in which they can make a livable wage. During the program students will have an opportunity to:

- identify and describe their unique strengths, values and interests,
- explore career possibilities based on strengths, values and interests,
- explore current career trends in the job market,
- explore college and training options related to careers of interest,
- and gain an understanding of the importance of networking and the complexity of careers.

WDTF Request: \$21,580

They are relying on volunteers to administer this. Are there concerns about sustainability?

- It is a concern from a sustainability standpoint. It is a problem for any program paid or volunteer. There are enough people involved in the project they should have a good source of volunteers.

Will there be any kind of background check or fingerprinting for the volunteers who are interacting with the youth?

- Mr. Thomsen is unsure. He will get additional information from the entity.

Motion by Ms. Griffin to recommend approval of the Palouse Pathways Innovation Grant in the full amount of \$21, 580. Second by Ms. Bradford. Motion carried.

Contact Information

Question: Lead entity legal name

Palouse Pathways, Inc.

Question: “Doing business as” entity name (if Applicable)

Palouse Pathways

Question: Federal Tax ID Number

46-5022252

Question: Street address

1120 Kouse St.

Question: PO Box (If applicable)

Not Answered

Question: City

Moscow

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip Code

83843

Question: Website

<https://www.palousepathways.org/>

Question: First name of person to be contacted about this application

Margaret (Peggy)

Question: Last name

Jenkins

Question: Job title

Founding Director

Question: Street address

1120 Kouse St.

Question: City

Moscow

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip code

83843

Question: Email address

palousepathways@gmail.com

Question: Contact phone

208-301-5099

Project Overview

Innovation grants can fund projects that address local workforce development needs. Projects may provide skills training to individuals and/or assist individuals with connecting to careers.

Question: Please provide a brief overview/executive summary addressing what you're trying to accomplish with this project. (You are limited to 2000 characters for this section so please be concise.)

Title: Aligning Self Awareness with Career Exploration

Palouse Pathways, with its partners (SEL and CEDA) proposes to develop and pilot an innovative virtual program to underserved youth in the Palouse that will help guide them and prepare them for post-secondary programs they are passionate about and in which they can make a livable wage, contribute to their communities, and succeed. Palouse Pathways proposes to develop and deliver a Self-Awareness and Career Exploration course. While career fairs provide a glimpse into career opportunities for students, there is abundant evidence that one event, often referred to as "one and done" does not have a lasting impact on student interest. For this reason, many efforts are now focusing on a deeper dive into career exploration with events like job shadowing, apprenticeships, a day in the life of a professional, and hands-on career camps. Combined with the initial exposure of career fair or conference, these activities can greatly improve a student's understanding of what a career actually entails, and what educational attainment and skills are necessary to pursue that career.

However, students still often enter post-secondary education and college majors that they soon

find they are not interested in or that they do not have the preparation for. As many as 85% of college students change their major at least once. The price of college is continually increasing and students from underserved communities literally can't afford to choose an educational pathway they can't succeed in or end up changing. Even one semester spent in the wrong major is costly. Relying on school guidance counselors is not an option in these under-resourced schools. The ratio of students to school counselors in Idaho in the 2014-2015 school year was 610 to 1 and counselors are already overwhelmed.

This program will help youth understand themselves, their own interests, passions, and strengths, prior to exploring a career path in more depth.

Question: If training is part of the project, how does it address specific employer-identified skills gaps in the community?

This proposal is for career awareness training. The Palouse is a geographical region that encompasses north central Idaho and extends into southeastern Washington. The top industry clusters by employment are health, forest, tourism, construction, metal fabrication, and agriculture (Pathways to Accelerate North Central Idaho Clearwater Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020 -2025. <http://www.clearwater-eda.org/regional-resourcesdownload-my-file/>). Employers in the Palouse and across North Central Idaho continue to cite lack of available skilled workforce as a major hindrance to growth. In these rural communities, the workforce problem is exasperated by the lack of career awareness and educational opportunities in emerging technical fields. Even with the growing workforce demands of these industry sectors, most students in rural communities have little exposure to these careers let alone opportunities to prepare for them. Poverty rate is high, and most student age populations are first generation college students with poor access to opportunities. Those students that do choose to pursue careers in these industry sectors often enter post-secondary programs ill prepared because of a lack of understanding of the requirements. Further, the drop-out rate is high. Only 45% of Idaho's High School graduates pursue college, and only 62% of those return after their freshman year. In high-poverty districts — where at least 60 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch — high school graduates are less likely to attend college and the go-on rate is only 41.5 percent (<https://www.idahoednews.org/news/idahos-go-on-rate-shows-no-improvement/>). The need to provide access to career awareness and guidance to the underserved populations in rural communities of north central Idaho is indisputable. By adding this unique training to the career awareness activities already available:

1. Students will identify and describe their unique strengths, values and interests,
2. Students will explore career possibilities based on strengths, values and interests,
3. Students will explore current career trends in the job market,
4. Students will explore college and training options related to careers of interest, and
5. Students will understand the importance of networking and the complexity of careers.

Question: Workforce Development Training Funds are intended to supplement, but not supplant or compete with resources available through existing programs. Are there existing resources available to meet the employers' needs? How are those resources lacking?

Currently, there are no programs in the Palouse and North Central Idaho that focus on this component of career exploration, especially for rural, underserved populations. Palouse Pathways proposes to develop and offer such a program virtually to youth (8th through 12th grade). Additionally, Palouse Pathways will partner with industry, higher education, and other career awareness programs to provide these students with the resources and opportunities to further explore careers that they have identified through this project. This proposed project will compliment existing career exploration activities that are state and regionally funded. There are currently no available resources or funding sources for this type of student self-awareness training.

Question: What employment opportunities does the project seek to fill?

The proposed project will target first generation, low income and underserved youth, grades 8-12 in the Palouse region with goal of increasing interest in the top industry workforce needs,

namely, manufacturing and engineering, forestry and forest products, agriculture, health, tourism, and related disciplines.

Question: How will the project accelerate the pathway to a career for individuals being trained.

Palouse Pathways proposes to develop and deliver a Self-Awareness and Career Exploration course designed to be an ongoing course, divided into four 2-hr workshop modules. The purpose of the course is to help students in the Palouse Pathways program improve self-awareness as it relates to personal strengths, values and interests. Additionally, students will increase their knowledge of careers, current trends in the job market, and educational options related to careers. Students will use this improved self-awareness, in conjunction with newly acquired career knowledge, to explore career possibilities. Research shows that when career choice aligns with interest, individuals increase their effort to develop relevant knowledge and skills, set higher career-related goals, and work to achieve those goals. The 4 module workshop series proposed consists of:

Module 1) Describe unique strengths, values and interests,

Module 2) Career Exploration based on strengths, values and interests,

Module 3) College and educational training exploration, and

Module 4) Explore the concept of complexity of careers and the value of creating networks. (Optional bonus class).

Question: How will the project change and/or enhance the current landscape of Idaho's talent pipeline/development efforts.

The proposed project, in collaboration with more in depth career awareness opportunities, will provide a comprehensive approach to engaging youth in career exploration. This approach will result in a higher likelihood that the student participants pursue a career they are truly interested in and that is in demand in this region. This will lead to improved preparation in high school and increased retention in post-secondary education and training.

Question: Who will provide the training and/or implement the project?

Palouse Pathways will implement the project. Palouse Pathways will contract an instructor, Ms. Susan Rose, for curriculum development and delivery of the workshops and volunteer training. Susan Botts Rose, Ed.S., is a Career Advisor, Educational Specialist and Speech-Language Pathologist. She has over 30 years of experience in education, designing personalized learning plans for individual students, small groups and middle and high school classes. Susan has held positions in public and private schools and has served as a school administrator where she designed and implemented a personalized learning, strengths-based program. She currently owns her own business focusing on Career Development and has her certification from the National Career Development Association. In addition, Susan is certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and is licensed by the state of Florida. Ms. Rose will also develop the training manual for volunteers and assemble the digital resource library of career simulations.

The curriculum will be designed such that each module builds on the previous one to raise student awareness of their own strengths and passions and the career options available, and how to pursue those options. In Module 1, students will:

- Complete two types of career assessments,
- Analyze results with instructor using a variety of resources,
- List at least two ways they can work on strengthening one of their strengths over the next two months,

- Document findings, and
- Create a digital portfolio in which to curate Career Exploration materials.

In Module 2, students will:

- Use a variety of resources to explore career possibilities including:

Online resources

Sources for real and virtual

informational interviews and job simulations,

Local sources for job shadowing

- Create a list of 2 - 4 career possibilities based on results of strengths, interests, and values analysis and perusal of online resources,
- For each career, use resources provided to project possible salary ranges and current career trends, and
- Document results and resources in portfolio.

In Module 3, students will:

- Explore college and training options for their list of careers, using a variety of sources,
- Create a document outlining the following for each possible career choice the;

Educational needed

Possible colleges or training location preferences

Cost and time of education.

In Module 4, students will:

- Discuss complexity of careers,
- Identify scenarios of chance occurrences and effects these may have,
- Discuss the importance of networks and networking,
- Identify a list of people in their network,
- Learn strategies for working with people in network, and
- Create a plan for continuing career exploration after the course, including at least 2 specific activities such as job shadowing, conducting informational interviews, and/or viewing

informational interviews or job simulations online. Students will be directed to partner activities and resource

Question: Where will the training be provided/project be implemented?

All aspects of the project will be implemented virtually to students in North Central Idaho and the Palouse. The project is requesting support for 12 months of license for Zoom Pro, which will be the platform used for delivery of all modules/workshops and volunteer training. Additionally, the instructor will be using Canvas, a free Learning Management System for making assignments, tracking student progress on assignments, delivering resources, and moderating a discussion thread. Both Zoom and Canvas are currently being used by most public schools in this region and are therefore familiar to students.

Question: Who will benefit from this project, (Examples - adult job seekers, high school seniors, current employees)?

The primary benefit will be to youth (grades 8-12) from low income or first generation families in rural communities.

Students who are aware of their unique strengths, interests and values, and who are informed about opportunities and possibilities in the job market, are poised to make more informed decisions related to college and career. These informed decisions can result in savings in time and money and improve a student's chances of finding career satisfaction.

Question: List any prerequisites for individuals interested in participating in the project.

None

Question: How will participants be selected? What are the agreed-upon screening processes, if any?

Palouse Pathways currently has a scholars program of students from rural communities that participate in other preparatory activities offered by Palouse Pathways. These students, and those that are recruited for the DIDI conference, the SEL sneak peek activities and the CEDA 8th grade career awareness events will be the first target for piloting the program. The only requirements will be that the students are from one of the rural communities within the NC Idaho region and are in grade 8-12.

Question: What outreach efforts will the team use to encourage under-served populations to participate in the project?

Palouse Pathways is bringing a marketing intern on board to increase all efforts to advertise programs and opportunities to students and families in rural communities in and around the Palouse. The primary focus of her position will be to inform students and families from these under-served populations about this and other opportunities. She will be responsible for creating advertising materials and soliciting participation. Depending on the course of the pandemic, much of this may be conducted virtually and with social media.

Question: Please provide a detailed description of why funding is needed for this project?

Palouse Pathways relies almost entirely on donations from community members for its operating budget. Volunteers are key to success of the existing programs. The proposed project requires someone with a detailed, working knowledge of career advising and curriculum development for

personalized learning which does not currently exist in the volunteer base and requires

contracting. The contract services will provide what is needed to sustain the program indefinitely with current resources.

Question: Will participants be charged to participate in this project?

NO, there will be no cost to participants.

Community-Based Team

Innovation Grants require participation from a community-based team with representation and support from business, education and other community partners as an ideal partnership.

[Letter of Intent](#)

Question: Please describe how the community-based team partners are involved in the project.

Palouse Pathways Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that was formed in 2013. The mission of Palouse Pathways is the advancement of educational and career opportunities and the provision of educational and career preparation, information and resources. Palouse Pathways grew from efforts of teachers, parents and community members who wanted to assist and encourage families and students preparing for life beyond high school. The organization: provides resources, information and inspiration to families to help them prepare their students for colleges and careers; encourages and engages students in college and career planning; helps students gain admission to colleges and programs; helps families save for college and make sustainable college financing choices; and supports the work of local schools and the aspirations of local students. Palouse Pathways operates on a small annual budget of around \$15K from community donors and utilizes volunteers primarily for activities. Palouse Pathways will lead this project, develop and provide the workshops for students, and train the volunteers for future workshops.

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories (SEL) invents, designs, and builds digital products and systems that protect power grids around the world. SEL owns and operates three state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, two of which are located on the Palouse, in Lewiston, Idaho and in Pullman, Washington, and they are one of the largest employers in the region. They are committed to helping prepare the next generation of workforce for their industry.

SEL has a K-12 Education and Outreach program currently designing a career “sneak peek” series that will introduce high school students to careers and professionals in engineering, manufacturing and service industries. Palouse Pathways is working with them to design this program to be offered virtually during the pandemic, which can later be offered in person. The program will take students on a “tour” of a career in action at the SEL facility with time to talk to professionals and see their day to day activities. SEL plans to offer the first career event, manufacturing, in the December of 2020, followed by Engineering in Spring of 2021. SEL’s Education and Outreach has committed to working with CEDA and Palouse Pathways to develop this more comprehensive approach to career awareness and to give students from the Palouse Pathways program preference for registration for the sneak peek events.

Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA) drives regional development and works with community leaders to build community assets and wealth within the Idaho counties of Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce. Through collaborations with industry, agencies,

and education, they support workforce development and access to outstanding educational opportunities that align skills with industry needs.

CEDA has recently received an award from the Idaho Workforce Development Council to provide career awareness for 8th grade students. While they originally planned to conduct face-to-face workshops, they are now considering providing the workshops virtually. They have committed to reaching 15 school districts. Additionally, they will be building a library of local industry videos highlighting occupations and hosting an 8th grade STEM competition when the pandemic danger passes. Working closely with CEDA, Palouse Pathways has intentionally developed this proposed project to compliment, not replicate CEDA's efforts. Palouse Pathways will contribute to this library of resources by providing a collection of relevant career simulations. Palouse Pathways will recruit students from the CEDA program to the self-awareness program as well as direct students to CEDA's activities while they are completing Module 3. CEDA has committed to working with Palouse Pathways and SEL toward our common goal of comprehensive career awareness for Idaho youth.

The Dream It Do It (DIDI) program, managed by CEDA will also be organizing the Youth Conference with University of Idaho to be held in March of 2021, either virtually, in person, or with a hybrid model. This will be open to 10th and 11th grade students in all north-central Idaho schools and southeast Washington schools in Asotin, Garfield, and Whitman. Palouse Pathways will again, in partnership with DIDI and SEL, help raise student awareness of career opportunities in the region through this event.

Other businesses, organizations, and education providers in the Palouse are organizing career events in an attempt to increase interest in areas of workforce demand. Palouse Pathways

commits to continue to seek out partnerships that can serve to expand the breadth of opportunities that students are exposed to.

Question: Number of employer partners involved in this project?

1.00

Question: Number of non-employer partners involved in this project?

2.00

Question: Please upload completed Letter of Intent from each community-based partner. A link to the Letter of Intent is provided above.

[2020 Palouse Pathways-CEDA Ltr of Intent_.pdf](#) (10/1/2020 2:54 PM)

Project Sustainability

Question: If the community has plans to sustain the project beyond the life of a Workforce Development Innovation Grant, please share. (Not a requirement to receive grant funds.)

Palouse Pathways is primarily operated by volunteers who are committed to helping youth in this region. As part of the grant activities, volunteers will attend four to six 90-minute individual or small group training sessions that prepare them to teach the modules after the grant expires. Additionally, a manual for volunteers will be created that includes instructions for each module. Volunteers will also be asked to view a recording of the second session or attend the modules and provide feedback to the curriculum developer. Volunteers will complete an informal assessment to demonstrate comprehension of the materials presented.

After the grant period (one year), the only anticipated continuing costs will be \$20 per student to purchase the Strengthfinder 2.0 assessment (estimating 30 students/year or \$600) and continuing licensing of the delivery platform (Zoom Pro) of about \$180/year. These costs are reasonable and within the operating budget of Palouse Pathways.

Project Schedule

Please provide anticipated numbers/methods to assess the effectiveness of the proposed project.

[Project Schedule Form](#)

Question: Please provide an anticipated project start date.

11/16/2020

Question: How many training sessions/events will be held during the 12 months of the grant?

The curriculum (series of 4 modules) will be piloted twice over a one year period, each series delivered to 10 students with feedback used to make course adjustments. The curriculum will be delivered via the platform Zoom Pro and the free version of Canvas will be used as the learning management system. Four to six 90-minute individual or small group training sessions for volunteers will be held over the 12 month period.

Question: Please download and complete the project schedule form. The completed form can be uploaded here. To download the form click on the link provided above.

[Innovation Grant Project Schedule PP.xlsx](#) (10/1/2020 3:31 PM)

Project Outcomes

Question: How will employer satisfaction be measured?

Attendance of student participants in industry led career awareness events will be tracked and reported back to industry partners with an accompanying questionnaire regarding satisfaction and suggestions for improvement.

Question: How will participant satisfaction be measured?

A student satisfaction survey will be administered at the conclusion of each module delivery.

Question: Total number of individuals served by this project?

20.00

Question: Number of individuals receiving credential(s)?

0.00

Question: Number of individuals already employed who will receive training?

0.00

Question: Anticipated wage gain for individuals already employed? If applicable.

0.00

Question: Anticipated starting hourly wage for individuals entering employment? If applicable.

0.00

Question: What additional metrics do you propose to gather to measure the success of the project?

All student participants will complete a survey at the end of the workshop series that assesses their interest in the career fields of greatest need in the region, their post-secondary education and career plans.

Budget

The application must provide a detailed explanation of how grant resources will be used to directly support the identified skills training. Provide the line item budget amount and detailed narrative for each item listed below to delineate how Innovation Grant resources will be used. Each line item's narrative should clearly describe how the line item amount was determined, as well as the necessity of the line item to develop/deliver the project.

[Budget Sheet](#)

Question: Why do you think WDTF is a good source of funding for this project?

The proposed project directly addresses the Innovation Grants goal of assisting individuals to connect to careers, by providing information and outreach on career education and workforce training opportunities and/or soft skill development. Specifically, this project addresses a component of career education and awareness, SELF-AWARENESS, not currently available in the Palouse or North Central Idaho, and that has been shown to be a critical component to successful impact of career awareness activities. The proposed project compliments on-going career awareness programs and enhances them by providing a pool of engaged students with a genuine interest in the specific career field.

Question: How else have you sought to fund this project?

We have investigated other state agency and private foundation grant solicitations but found none that fit well with this type of student instruction.

Question: Please download the attached budget. A link to the budget is provided above. Once completed, upload budget here.

[Copy of Innovation Grant Budget Narrative and Expenditures revised.xlsx](#) (10/5/2020 3:41 PM)

Organizational and Fiscal Capacity

Question: Provide the accounting structure, job titles and qualifications of staff responsible for fiscal actions.

Palouse Pathways' founding director, Peggy Jenkins will be responsible for general oversight of scope and budget for the project. She has a BA (Sociology) and a JD from Boston University, and a certificate in College Admissions Counseling from UCLA Extension. She was once a litigation partner in a large law firm and now works as an independent legal researcher. She is a

member of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) and one of the founders of NACAC's 1300-member Rural and Small Town Special Interest Group. She serves on the Advisory Board for the Common Application and the President's Advisory Group for Bryn Mawr College. Peggy will report directly to the Board of Directors.

The funding will be administered and tracked by Bailee Omstead, the Treasurer for Palouse Pathways. She is a graduate from Moscow High School and went on to get her Bachelor of Science in Business with an emphasis in accounting degree at the University of Idaho which she completed in December of 2015. Bailee has worked at Hayden Ross, PLLC since 2013 where she started as an intern and now works as a staff auditor. She is currently in the process of obtaining her CPA license.

Question: Please provide a short summary outlining your organizations capacity to complete this project.

Palouse Pathways is governed by a Board of Directors. Ruta Nanivadekar is the Board President for Palouse Pathways. She works in the Training & Development field, and is particularly passionate about leadership development. With her leadership and the expertise of Peggy Jenkins and the Board of Directors, Palouse Pathways has successfully created and delivered courses such as college readiness and financial preparation to students and families around the Palouse. They have a committed and talented volunteer base, ready to implement this program. Recognizing that the one area of expertise missing was that of an instructor who could develop a curriculum focused on aligning student interests and skills with career exploration, they have secured a commitment with Susan Rose for her contract services.

Question: Upon request, the lead organization may be asked to provide a statement from the entity's independent auditing firm regarding the entity's most recent fiscal audit to include a statement of any audit findings. Is an audit available?

Yes

No

Tracking and Reporting

Innovation Grant funds must be expended within a one-year time period. Quarterly tracking and reporting of individuals participating in the project will be required. Individual names, start and end dates, and outcome data must be collected and reported.

Question: Entity responsible for tracking and reporting.

Palouse Pathways, Inc.

Question: Contact Person First Name

Peggy

Question: Contact Person Last Name

Jenkins

Question: Job Title

Founding Director

Question: Contact Phone

208-301-5099

Question: Email Address

peggy@jenkinsresearch.com

Question: Street Address

1120 Kouse St.

Question: City

Moscow

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip Code

83843

Terms and Conditions

[Terms and Conditions](#)

Question: I certify I have read the terms and conditions governing the Workforce Development Training Fund grant and agree to comply if awarded a training grant. Click on the link above to view a copy of the terms and conditions.

Yes

No