

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

Wendi Secrist
Executive Director



Deni Hoehne
Chair

Sarah Griffin
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

514 W Jefferson St, Ste 131, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

Grant Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Committee Members: Jake Reynolds, Jay Larsen, ~~Joe Maloney~~, Kelly Kolb, ~~Rico Barrera~~, ~~Adrian San Miguel~~, Sergio Mendoza, Ben Davidson, Todd Putren, ~~Catherine McClure~~, Christi Gilchrist, Martha Luna

Staff: Denise Hill, Amanda Ames, Dee Mooney, Alyssa Williams, Chad Lahti, Jan Whiting

Guests:

Call to order at 10:08 PM

Kelly Kolb, Chair

Welcome

Roll Call, Introductions

Review Agenda, addition Executive Committee Process

****Review March 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes***

Motion by Mr. Davidson to approve March 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes. Second by Mr. Larsen. Motion carried.

WDTF Financial Report

Wendi Secrist

- March Financials, same information provided at the March 10th WDC Council meeting
- WDTF
 - \$26M starting cash balance
 - \$21.5M obligated
 - \$4.4M unobligated balance
 - \$4.5K proposals under review
 - WDC Council approved transfers at the March 10th meeting for
 - \$650k FY27 TPM set aside
 - \$250K for FY27 Externship set aside
 - \$500K Youth Apprenticeship set aside

Agency Merge

Wendi Secrist

- STEM/ WDC budgets combined July 1st
- Reviewing grants and agreements, what is the most efficient way to utilize funds
- STEM grants are typically smaller with up-front funding
 - Will be approved by Outreach Committee moving forward
 - Continue to be forward funded but could push to reimbursement model
- WDC grant process changes
 - Pilot with Executive Committee
 - Pre-application, white paper to Executive Committee for yes/no review
 - Full applications to Grant Review Committee if passed
 - Pilot will run for July submissions
 - Process
 - Application
 - Staff analysis & executive summary to Executive Committee
 - Does it meet goals? Forward to GRC for final approval
 - Funded

***WDTF Grant Requests**

Kelly Kolb

- ***Idaho Dept. of Corrections – Innovation Grant***

The Idaho Department of Corrections is establishing a computer classroom at the Idaho Falls Community Reentry Center to address critical digital skill gaps among justice involved individuals. Many residents enter the facility with limited computer literacy, restricting their ability to access education, complete online job applications, or pursue workforce aligned training. This project will equip a new training space with 20 computers to support the Integrative Coaching Program, which delivers individualized instruction across Personal, Environmental, and Community skill domains. Residents will complete digital literacy coursework, participate in online learning, and engage in career connected training developed with Idaho State College and Workforce Services. The project expects to serve 300 individuals annually, enabling at least 40 residents to earn recognized credentials and 260 to complete job related certifications. By improving digital competency and employability, the project strengthens Idaho's talent pipeline and supports long term workforce participation. All requested funds will be used solely for computer equipment.

Requested Amount: \$10,000.00

Discussion:

- Rubric Score 64%
- No clear explanation of what is being trained
- Like the grant, needs more detail on projected outcome, certificates, etc.
- Individualized training based on individual needs, experience, desire
- Can request details of training provided in report out
- List of possible pathways or fields that could be offered
- Integrate into quarterly report of what training was done, builds our confidence, progress report
- Match rate impacted score, feedback

Motion by Mr. Mendoza to approve the Idaho Dept. of Corrections Innovation Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 with added component of clarity of credentials. Second by Mr. Larsen. Motion carried.

- ***U of I Semiconductor IC Design – Innovation Grant***

The University of Idaho's Semiconductor IC Design Training program addresses Idaho's critical shortage of workers skilled in integrated circuit (IC) design and semiconductor engineering. Driven by major industry growth and investments such as Micron Technology's expansion, employers have identified a need for graduates with hands-on experience in IC design, circuit simulation, and industry-standard EDA tools. This project provides practical training in analog and digital design, simulation, layout, and system-level semiconductor development using platforms such as Cadence, Synopsys, and Siemens. Participants gain real-world experience through project-based learning and VR-enabled digital-twin environments. The program will train 20 university students and engage with additional K-12 students through outreach focused on rural, first-generation, and underserved populations. University students will earn a University of Idaho Certificate and are eligible for a Siemens digital badge, demonstrating industry-aligned competencies.

Amount Requested: \$23,907.00

Discussion:

- Rubric Score 56%
- High School outreach region 2
- U of I currently has 5 open grants with us
- Like other projects
- Training is needed but performance is a factor
- Need push forward for a better ROI on what we have with them in process
- Match rate is very impactful to score, they can control this
- Requested amount is awkward
- Want a more strategic approach, small projects seem scattered
- Submitting Instructors are new and don't seem to understand what is needed in approach
- Dean and provost should be included in this process to assist them
- Micron should be helping drive this
- Feedback to them
 - More unified approach
 - More vision to show how it is impacting the semiconductor industry in Idaho

Motion by Ms. Gilchrist to deny the U of I Semiconductor IC Design Innovation Grant in the amount of \$23,907.00. Second by Mr. Davidson. Motion carried.

- ***Western Aircraft – Employer Grant***

Western Aircraft, Inc., is developing and implementing a large-scale workforce expansion and technical training program to onboard and skill 92 new full-time employees in response to the nationwide aviation mechanic shortage. These training programs include Maintenance Technician Apprentices, Airframe Structures Trainee Course, and Aviation Maintenance Technician Apprentice Course, each designed to deliver job ready technical capabilities and support long term FAA certification pathways. Grant funding will enhance Western Aircraft's ability to accelerate workforce development, increase wage potential for Idahoans, and ensure the company remains competitive in a rapidly evolving aviation market.

Amount Requested: \$138,000.00

Discussion:

- Rubric Score 80%
- Number trained is impressive

- Internal training
- One certificate would require recert if individual moved to another employer
- Expensive program, grateful they are doing this, the need is there
- 2 full-time recruiters
- This is what WDC is all about
- Feedback will be to see how they get to 92

Motion by Mr. Larsen to approve the Western Aircraft Employer Grant in the amount of \$138,000.00. Second by Mr. Davidson. Motion carried.

- ***Ascent Medical Transport – Employer Grant***

Ascent Medical Transport, LLC will develop a comprehensive Critical Care Transport (CCT) training and simulation initiative. The project aims to expand and retrain Ascent's workforce to safely manage critically ill patients during transport. Grant funds will be used to acquire essential simulation equipment to support a structured, scenario based training program, creating a simulation environment to allow clinicians to maintain proficiency in low-frequency, high-acuity interventions. 18 existing employees will be trained, and 22 new staff will be hired and trained, all supported by defined clinical career pathways from EMT through critical care roles. The program enhances promotability, increases wages, strengthens retention, and builds Idaho's only dedicated ground CCT training environment while improving access to critical care across urban and rural communities.

Amount Requested: \$30,000.00

Discussion:

- Rubric Score 77%
- First grant application
- This is a transport program trying to skill up their team to be a critical care transport team
- Community colleges struggled filling this in the past
- Regional need in North Idaho, this is in southern Idaho
 - Litecast data specific to region, demand is a 9; not huge compared to other regions
 - Advanced EMT is one level above paramedic
- Community colleges have increased interest but are affected by budget cuts
- LAUNCH has several regular EMT but not advanced
- Replication, is not new, already out there
- Makes sense from a need perspective

Motion by Mr. Putren to approve the Ascent Medical Transport Employer Grant in the amount of \$30,000.00. Second by Mr. Davidson. Motion carried.

- ***Idaho Milk Products – Employer Grant***

Idaho Milk Products is completing a major expansion to support the launch of a new ice cream and powder blending facility in Jerome, Idaho. The expansion significantly increases manufacturing and production capacity, introduces new technologies and advanced equipment, and supports diversification into new product lines. To ensure successful operation of the new facility, the company will hire and train 120 new employees, ensuring the workforce is equipped with the technical skills needed for high precision food manufacturing. The proposed training, delivered through a combination of vendor led instruction and structured internal programs, will create quality jobs, foster talent development, and contribute to Idaho's economic growth.

Amount Requested: \$209,964.54

Discussion:

- Rubric Score 78%
- 1 previous grant, exceeded expectations
- Wide range of positions affected
- New facility, expanding production
- Rather than increasing wage after training, bring in at higher rate with expectation of completion
- Large amount of training seems normal for production facility, however all certified which enhances the positions
- Internal training
- One of the more comprehensive applications we've seen

Motion by Mr. Larsen to approve the Idaho Milk Products Employer Grant in the amount of \$209,964.54. Second by Mr. Reynolds. Motion carried.

General thoughts

- Thought – do higher ed require a dean or provost sign off on applications?
- Encourage them to look at the whole scope
- Conversations need to happen
- Perhaps talk to Jenn white about it
- Lots of conversations about dollars going to higher ed
- Maybe universities should be looking at how they are working with their private sector partners, they need to show that
- Could request a letter from the dean, approval
- K-12 conversations, who have they talked to in the other ecosystems
- Letters of support need to be non-generic

****WDTF Grant Rubrics and Application Updates***

All

- Employer Application
 - Updated policy didn't move the needle, just cleaned up the language
 - \$250K max amount, 2 years length; most are 1-year with ability to extend an additional year
 - Do we ask for starting wage and wage after training?
 - Pg 7 add above "project information"
 - Yes/No - have you reviewed the policy & goals
 - How does this project align with the policy and goals
 - Pg 8 Work-Based Learning Continuum
 - On agenda for next Work-Based Learning Committee agenda
 - What really is this, maybe better as background info
 - This applies to higher ed and companies
 - Leave it alone
- Employer Rubric
 - Updated goals into rubric
 - Clean up to make it more workable
 - Auto score for match
 - Anticipated % of increase over starting wage

- Past performance should not be decided by staff
 - Lots of nuances, decisions are truly the committee's
- How do we give more weight to wage increase and alignment with in-demand careers
 - Weighted for in-demand career, auto populate as yes or no
 - % of in-demand = points, based on number of employees that are being trained
 - >50% exceeds, <50% partially meets, 0 inadequate
- 25% match required, no hard rule but cash shows more skin in the game
- Capital Investment, remove from line 19
- Change scoring descriptors: Exceeds, meets, partially meets, inadequate
- Average wage scored in quantitative funding model and affects amount of funds that can be applied for
 - \$12 is policy
- Industry Sector
 - Rubric
 - Industry partner – policy is 3 – if they are adequate, up to committee
 - Quality of the 3 is the key
 - At least 3 varying degrees of engagement, depth
 - Credentials
 - Include in staff analysis
 - Leave as is
 - Occupational concentration and transferability
 - Score, staff guidance during scoring to in demand
 - Budget
 - “within the occupational industry”
 - Sustainability and Replicability - ok
 - Past performance same as innovation
 - Exemplary, Reasonable, Adequate, Inadequate
 - Pull out of scoring total is NA
 - Credentials
 - Past performance
 - Application
 - No cap
 - Is “how many participants” needed?
 - Training plan into contract, must verify they align
 - 60 days after training
 - Not used or tracked
 - Remove 4 “number of participants” items before sustainability
- Innovation
 - Rubric
 - \$25K per region or if it incorporates WBL or apprenticeships
 - Change variables to match employer grant
 - Need
 - Added language
 - Include in staff analysis match industry sector
 - Match rates, not required bonus points
 - If match is at least 25% 3, some but less than 25% 1
 - Change language in application to define

- If none pulled from scoring
 - Put on yes/no, not scored remove from rubric
 - Budget, as is
 - Removed “within occupation and industry”
- Application
 - Add in demand careers
 - Add TPM link? Yes
 - Outcomes
 - Remove
 - Remove “60 days”
 - Satisfaction measurement references removed
 - Keep metrics
- Rubric staff numbers at top

Unanimous consent motion by Mr. Larsen to adjourn. No objections.

Meeting adjourned 3:01 PM