Cannabis Workforce Development

Funding Available: Up to $3 million

Purpose

The legalization of recreational marijuana has created significant market opportunities for New Yorkers. SUNY and New York State are partnering to support growth in this sector. SUNY community colleges, in partnership with private sector businesses and community-based organizations, will create/enhance and deliver short-term, non-degree credential programs or course offerings within certificate, Associate of Occupational Studies (AOS), and Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) degrees to quickly address employer skill needs and prepare job seekers, especially those from underrepresented communities, for careers in the cannabis industry. Each awarded campus or consortium of campuses will be supported by start-up funds for a three-year period.

Strategic Criteria

Awards will be made on a competitive basis within the SUNY system. Multiple community colleges may partner in a "hub and spoke" model with one college applying and assuming the lead role. The proposed coverage area can cross multiple Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) regions.

Proposals must:
- Create new or enhance existing non-degree and degree-eligible courses/programs (certificate, AOS, AAS), stackable credentials, and/or micro-credentials that quickly address local employer skill needs within the cannabis industry.
- Partner with employers to ensure programs directly address local employer needs and demonstrate how employers will be involved in curriculum development and review.
- Summarize the college's current successful initiatives in workforce development and explain how this initiative will build and scale these programs.
- Outline marketing strategies to target employers and attract students, including partnerships with community-based organizations and other entities.
- Identify support services that will contribute to positive outcomes for trainees.
- Include a detailed budget describing how State funding would be used for each of the three start-up years.
- Articulate a plan that leads to financial sustainability, including milestones with revenue targets, that outlines how the program will financially operate following the third year of start-up funds.
- Give preference to serving social equity candidates as defined by the Office of Cannabis Management when possible.

Proposals and awards will be coordinated and administered by SUNY System Administration via the Office of Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline.

Allowable use of funds may include:
- Supporting business engagement professionals and best-in-class curriculum developers to create new courses/programs.
- Engaging faculty and trainers to design and teach new/enhanced courses ensuring students can receive college/degree credit, stackable credentials, and/or micro-credentials.
- Covering the cost of training.
- Providing supportive services to students while in training.
- Providing stipends for applied learning opportunities.
- Deploying innovative marketing to target employers and prospective students.
- Providing necessary services that support student success.

Capital expenses are not allowable; however, limited funds may be used for equipment and supplies necessary to run the program.

Eligibility: All 30 SUNY community colleges are eligible to apply. Applications may propose a single college "stand-alone" model or a "hub and spoke" model with one college applying as lead with one or more additional campuses as partner(s).

Award Level: Up to $3.0M is available to award start-up funds to be used for a period up to three years, with minimum awards of $500,000 and a maximum award of $1.0M.

Deadline: April 29, 2022 at 4:00 PM with awards made in June 2022.

Application:

Application Link: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/8bd9cfbcf0bd415f811afde373ad0f96

Budget Template Link: https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/workforce-dev/budget-chart-cannabis.xlsx

Reporting: Awarded institutions will furnish an annual report to the SUNY Office of Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline. Reports must include a narrative and measurable metrics on:
- Partnerships
- Courses/programs developed/enhanced
- Micro-credentials and other stackable credentials
- Marketing initiatives
- Program participant outcomes, such as training completion
- Job placements

Lessons learned and curriculum will be shared with other SUNY community colleges.

More Information:

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