

H-1B Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Grant Questions and Answers

- Q1. Can Certificate Programs be included in the grant? I think you already answered this one but I want to double check. There are numerous certificate programs at MCC that are directly connected to advanced manufacturing careers but do not lead to an AAS degree. They do typically result in employment and according to MCC, approximately 30-40% choose to continue the AAS degree once they have achieved the certificate.
- A1. Per the terms of the grant, funding is only provided for training that leads to an associate's degree in one of the ten allowable subjects listed in Program Guidance Letter 1. If earning a certificate is a standard part of an allowable degree program, then that would be approved providing that it led to one of these associate's degrees.
- Q2. Would the Applied Integrated Technology (AAS) program be eligible? This is a program that was developed out of a need expressed by advanced manufacturers. It is an interdisciplinary program that would lead to a career in advanced manufacturing in product design, system troubleshooting, process development, and/or evaluation of manufacturing components or systems.
- A2. Per the terms of the grant, funding is only provided for training that leads to an associate's degree in one of the ten allowable subjects listed in Program Guidance Letter 1.
- Q3. Would the cost of Transitional/Remedial courses be covered by the training vouchers for students who are determined to need such courses as a pre-requisite to taking math or English courses required for the degree program?
- A3. Similar to the above certificate question, if taking a transitional/remedial course is a standard part of an allowable degree program, then that would be approved providing that it led to one of these associate's degrees. Please note that the use of Subject Matter Expert tutors is provided through a portion of the grant funds. The need for this educational assistance should be determined on a case-by-case basis and incorporated into the training strategy for each participant.
- Q4. In the case that these courses are covered, can the training funds continue to be drawn into a 3rd year/5th semester as long as the \$8500 per applicant has not been exhausted?
- A4. The participant must be a full-time student during the course of the program in order to receive funding. In designing a course of study for participants in need of remedial course work, every effort should be made to utilize summer sessions as a means to ensure these participants have an opportunity to complete their degree program on time. If needed, the participant may take an extra semester to complete necessary coursework, as long as it does not extend past the end of the grant period (5/15/2015).

- Q5. May a participant be employed part-time while attending school?
- A5. Participants must be unemployed at the time that the training plan is created and the NOA is issued. If the participant finds part-time employment during the course of the program, then the ITA will not be affected, and the participant may continue to use the funds in pursuit of an allowable degree. The participant must remain a full-time student in order to continue with the program. For the purposes of this program, part-time employment is considered to be 20 hours or less per week. Between June 15 and August 15, participants may work more than 20 hours per week, as long as they are not in summer classes. Note that it is the responsibility of the case manager to ensure participants are adhering to these guidelines should they gain employment during their participation in the H-1B Advanced Manufacturing program.
- Q6. If a student fails to complete a semester (drops out) are they obligated to re-pay the funds spent on the training voucher?
- A6. No, they are not obligated to repay funds that have already been spent. If a participant drops out, any unspent funds must be rescinded.
- Q7. Can a participant attend part-time as long as they do not have full time employment?
- A7. Participants must be unemployed at the time that the program begins. The program provides funding for full-time study leading to one of the ten allowable associate's degrees. Because of this, participants will not be allowed to study part-time.
- Q8. In the Advanced Manufacturing Guidance Letter No. 1, under the section on Local Area Program Responsibilities, it indicates the LWIA's are expected to follow all local ITA and Supportive Service policies (except for ITA caps). Our local area has a Priority of Service in place for WIA Adult ITA funds. Does that mean we can only serve Adults whose household income meets the low-income guidelines (70% LLSIL) or who are on public assistance?
- A8. WIA Priority of Service requirements apply to WIA Adult funds only. Because this program is using H-1B funding, priority of service does not apply.
- Q9. Our local policy does not provide for Supportive Services. Does that mean that under the H-1B grant, we would not be able to offer any supportive services?
- A9. It is up to the local area to decide if they want to provide supportive services funds. If the local area policy does not provide for the use of supportive service money, then it must be updated to allow supportive services before utilizing those funds.
- Q10. The guidance letter states that the local area must ensure that all resources available to the individual are exhausted prior to requesting H-1B ITA funds. Does that include

WIA funds? Would WIA funds have to be used first and then the H-1B funds would supplement what's not covered under WIA?

A10. The H-1B Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways grant is to be used in place of WIA ITA funds. Because of this, it is not required that WIA funds be exhausted before the use of H-1B funds. It is still expected that local areas will exhaust other outside funding sources like TAP and Pell grants.

Q11. Does an applicant have to be 18 years old when they apply or when they start the educational program?

A11. The participant must meet all eligibility requirements when they apply to the program. These requirements can be found in Program Guidance Letter 1. One of the eligibility requirements for this program is that applicants must be enrolled in the WIA Adult or Dislocated Worker program, which requires enrollees to be 18 years of age.

Q12. Any restrictions or special documentation needed for home school students as long as they are accepted at college?

A12. Participants in this program must have either a high school diploma or a GED. Students who are home schooled have the opportunity to obtain a GED through the NY State Education Department. More details on testing for the GED can be found at <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/ged/>.

Q13. The grant ends as of May 2015, what happens to a student who enrolls in September 2014 or January 2015? Will funding continue for those that enter the program prior to May 2015 or do we stop enrolling students in September 2013?

A13. All training plans should be designed to be completed by May 2015. For most participants, this means they will need to be enrolled by September 2013. If participants have previously earned enough applicable credit, and are expected to be able to finish the program in less than 2 years/4 semesters, then they may enroll in the program after September 2013, as long as they are expected to complete the program by May 2015. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, the participant cannot complete the program by May 2015, then the H-1B funded portion of the ITA will not fund training after that time, and the remaining money will be rescinded. However, we encourage local areas to work with the participant to find alternative funding to complete their coursework, including the use of local ITA funds.

Q14. If a student outside the 9-county region enrolls in one of the allowable colleges, but resides in that region or on-campus during the school year, can they apply for the grant at a One-Stop within the 9-county region?

A14. It is a requirement that the participant be enrolled in WIA, and they would have to be enrolled with and receiving services from a One Stop Center operated by one of the participant areas. That's the only way the participant would be able to receive the tuition reimbursement. They would also have to

be willing to look for and accept a job in the Finger Lakes region. If a customer meets these criteria, they may participate in the program, even if they live outside the 9-county region.

Q15. Can the LWIB have two separate policies regarding supportive services, one for the H1-B funds and an existing policy for WIA funds if the current local policy does not allow for supportive services? Also, can the LWIB have two separate policies in regard to textbooks and related educational materials (one for H1-B and one for WIA) if the current local policy does not provide for textbooks?

A15. Yes, that would be acceptable. As a suggestion, rather than having two separate policies, it may be cleaner to amend the current policy to state that Supportive Services (or textbooks and educational material) will be provided only to participants of the H-1B program using H-1B funds.

Q16. Is there a timeframe when an applicant should be entered into the system similar to other programs that require the applicant not be registered more than 60 days prior to the service?

A16. There is no specific timeframe for entrance into the WIA Adult or DW program. As long as the person has been entered into one of these programs, and meets the other eligibility requirements, it doesn't matter how long they have been in the system. There is a timeframe for submitting an NOA for approval. The NOA request should be submitted no more than 1 semester before the intended training start date. For example, an NOA request could be submitted on 4/24/2012 for the Fall 2012 semester, but not for the Spring 2013 semester.

Q17. What is the impact on a participant receiving Unemployment Benefits once they start the academic program?

A17. If the participant can qualify for UI Benefits that won't have an effect on their eligibility for the program. Due to the nature of this training, participants would most likely only qualify for UI Benefits through the 599 program. Participants in the H-1B Advanced Manufacturing program can utilize the shortened application for individuals in Government Funded Training. That application can be found on the NYSDOL website by clicking Forms under the 599 drop down menu found at <http://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/tools.shtm>. Additionally, individuals will need a letter from the Community College they are attending indicating their schedule and planned completion date.

Q18. Currently, Finger Lakes Community College is not on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for the courses for the grant. Is this required?

A18. Yes. All three of the participating community colleges must be on the ETPL. All of the allowable degree programs must also be on the ETPL as well.

Q19. The Core and supportive service are entered into OSOS. What about the ITA service? Will there be a funding stream added to the funding menu in OSOS for the grant?

A19. The ITA training service will be attached to the H-1B Advanced Manufacturing program by selecting "H-1B ITA Finger Lakes Region Only" for the program. There will not be a designated funding source specifically for the H-1B Advanced Manufacturing program. The funding requires the user to select the appropriate WIB level funding source, WIA Adult Local or WIA Dislocated Worker Local and enter an amount of zero (\$0.00) dollars.

Q20. If a customer is under a WARN notice, but still at their job, can they participate in the program? In the past, people working under a WARN notice were treated as Dislocated Workers.

A20. If a customer is under an active WARN notice, and they have received a notice of termination, then they may participate in the H-1B Advanced Manufacturing program. They must be enrolled in the WIA DW program, with a classification of "Employed - Rcvd notice of Termination", and have a high school diploma or GED. If the participant meets these criteria, they will be considered unemployed, and eligible for the program.