

CONNECTION POINTS EXPANSION GRANT

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Background and Purpose

South Carolinians are often faced with barriers that prevent them from entering or remaining in the workforce. Barriers to employment could include transportation, childcare, disabilities, lack of housing, and criminal records. The SC Works System seeks to address these barriers and match job seekers with high-quality employment through a network of SC Works Centers and Connection Points.

Connection Points provide free public access to computers, Unemployment Insurance claims assistance, and tools to guide job seekers through the job search process. Currently, a majority of the Connections Points are located in public libraries; however, there is an opportunity to extend the reach of the workforce development system through partnership with faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs).

FBCOs are essential stakeholders in South Carolina communities. They are increasingly recognized for their potential to improve communities of low socioeconomic status through social services and community development. Communities seek and trust FBCOs as a connection to the resources and services that will help them achieve economic stability. FBCOs can serve as a connection to employment resources.

The SC Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) will provide grant funding, with award amounts of up to \$25,000, to FBCOs to stand-up employment connection points. FBCOs may submit requests for funding through the Connection Points Expansion Grant.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are 501(c)(3) or other charitable organizations that have applied for and received a tax exemption, **and** meet the following additional requirements:

- Geographically located in an under-served community as defined by the applicant
- Has a physical location that is accessible to the public and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), in which the entity can provide in-person services
- Has publicly available Internet access
- Has the resources to purchase and set-up a Connection Point

Entities that have an existing computer lab, or similar set-up in which the entity can establish a Connection Point, are **ineligible** to apply for funding through the Connection Points Expansion Grant.

Priority will be given to **Connection Points physically located** in the Tier III and Tier IV counties, as defined by the SC Department of Revenue:

TIER III Counties: Abbeville, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Fairfield, Greenwood, Horry, Jasper, Laurens, McCormick, Sumter

TIER IV Counties: Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Cherokee, Chester, Dillon, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Union, Williamsburg

Period of Performance

The period of performance is 6 months from, date of grant award. FBCO Connection Points must be operational within 90-days of receipt of the grant award.

Distribution of Funds

Grant awards will be distributed on a reimbursement basis, meaning that grantees will purchase approved equipment and supplies and then submit documentation of expenditures for reimbursement. FBCOs will need start-up funds to purchase equipment for a designated space.

Allowable Use of Funds:

Funding may only be used to cover reasonable expenses necessary for the set-up of a Connection Point.

- Computers and related accessories, including monitors, keyboards, mice, headphones, and cables/cords
- Computer software to enable the creation of resumes, cover letters, and job applications
- Printers and scanners with related accessories, including ink, toner, and paper
- Technical services needed for computer and Connection Point set up
- Other reasonable costs approved by DEW

Partnership and Collaboration

Applicants must develop and describe a referral process with their local SC Works Center to ensure that individuals who need additional services can access those services through SC Works. Additional services may include career guidance and counseling, supportive services, and training services, and the Connection Point should refer individuals to the appropriate program that provides these services. A directory of SC Works Centers can be found [here](#) or by going to <https://www.scworks.org/about-us/statewide-centers>.

Applicants selected to receive a Connection Points Expansion Grant are required to attend a mandatory orientation session and to complete training on the state's workforce development system, the job database system, and the Unemployment Insurance website.

Application Instructions

To apply for this grant, please complete and submit the following attachments to Grants Management at workforcegrants@dew.sc.gov:

- Attachment A: Application & Budget Narrative
- Attachment B: Budget Planning Worksheet
- Attachment C: Standard Assurances and Certifications
- Attachment D: Three letters of support, including one from a local SC Works Center/workforce board

Applicants must clearly and completely respond to all application questions, highlighting throughout their ability and unique qualifications. Failure to answer every question thoroughly and honestly or include all requested documentation will result in a non-responsive application and disqualification. In addition to the questions asked below, please include any additional, relevant information as necessary.

Application Review and Award

Submissions will be reviewed initially to determine responsiveness. Incomplete/non-responsive applications will not be evaluated for funding. Complete/responsive applications will be recommended for a full review. A responsive application includes all the required components indicated in the Notice of Funding.

Reviewers will evaluate responsive applications using a uniform evaluation rubric totaling 100 points. Evaluation criteria align with the application and assess the applicant's need for funding, outreach and service delivery strategy, and budget. Awards will be made to applicants with the highest number of points.

Please email questions or requests for additional information to Grants Management at workforcegrants@dew.sc.gov.

CONNECTION POINTS EXPANSION GRANT

ATTACHMENT A – APPLICATION AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

This application must be submitted along with other required application materials as described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Please attach additional sheets if more space is needed to provide an adequate response.

Connection Points Expansion Applicant and Project Information	
Legal Name of Grant Applicant:	
Applicant Point of Contact:	
Title:	
Email:	
Telephone:	
Mailing Address:	
Physical Address: (If different from mailing)	
Website Address:	
Applicant Eligibility: Does the applicant meet the following eligibility requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 501(c)(3) or other charitable organization that has applied for and received a tax exemption- Geographically located in an under-served community as defined by the applicant- Has a physical location that is accessible to the public and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), in which the entity can provide in-person services- Has publicly available Internet access- Has the resources to purchase and set-up a Connection Point- Entities that do not already have a computer lab Yes No	
Project Service Area: Provide the physical address of the Connection Point, including the counties to be served. <i>Please note: priority will be given to Connection Points physically located in Tier III and Tier IV counties.</i>	
Letters of Support: The applicant obtained three (3) letters of support, including one from a local SC Works Center/workforce board. Yes No	

Issue/Need Statement

Instructions: Describe the geographic location and community that will benefit from the Connection Point. Include barriers faced by individuals and members of the community and how a Connection Point will address the needs and areas of opportunity in the community.

Community and Participant Outreach

Instructions: Briefly describe the plan for communicating the availability and benefits of the Connection Point to individuals and members of the community. Include a list of partners that will help to promote the Connection Point.

Service Delivery

Instructions: Provide a timeline for setting up the Connection Point. Provide Connection Point hours of operation and describe the plan for staffing the Connection Point. Additionally, describe the process of referring individuals that need additional services, such as career guidance and counseling, training and supportive services, to the nearest SC Works Center.

Program Sustainability

Instructions: Describe the plan for sustaining the Connection Point beyond the 6-month period of award.

Budget Narrative

Instructions: Describe in detail each of the costs included in the Budget Planning Worksheet and how the item(s) will be used in the Connection Point.

Please attach additional sheets if more space is needed to provide an adequate response.

**CONNECTION POINTS EXPANSION GRANT
Attachment B - Budget Planning Worksheet**

PROJECT INFORMATION				
Applicant				
Financial Contact Name		Financial Contact Title		
Financial Contact Email		Financial Contact Phone		
		Item Cost	Quantity	Total
	Computer(s)			
	Computer Software (list each type of software)			
	Microsoft Word (or comparable word processing software)			
	Other:			
	Computer Accessories (list each accessory and the amount of funding)			
	Computer monitors			
	Keyboard			
	Mice			
	Cords			
	Other:			
	Printer/Scanner(s)			

	Printer Accessories			
	Ink			
	Cords			
	Paper			
	Other:			
	Other			
	Other:			
			TOTAL BUDGET	

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Attachment C - Standard Assurances and Certifications

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (“DEW”) will not award a grant where the applicant has failed to accept the assurances and certifications below.

As a duly authorized representative for _____ (“the Applicant”), I certify that:

1. The Applicant has the legal authority to apply for Federal and State assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal and non-State share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. The Applicant will give the State of South Carolina, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. The Applicant will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest or personal gain.
4. The Applicant will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. The Applicant will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
6. The Applicant will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
7. The Applicant will comply with all other applicable requirements of Federal and State laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program. The Applicant will also comply with all requirements of the grant, including requirements listed in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, Terms and Conditions, and Statement of Work. The Applicant understands that failure to comply may result in a delay of payment or forfeiture of funding.
8. The Applicant assures that it has the ability to comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws and will remain in compliance for the duration of the award of federal and state financial assistance:
 - (A) Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion,

- sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity;
- (B) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin;
 - (C) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
 - (D) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
 - (E) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs; and
 - (F) The South Carolina Pregnancy Accommodations Act, which protects employees and applicants who have medical needs arising from pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

9. The Applicant also assures that, as a recipient of the Connection Points Expansion Grant, it will comply with all regulations implementing the laws listed above in Section 8. This assurance applies to the Applicant's operation of the Connection Points Expansion Grant's assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the Connection Points Expansion Grant's financially assisted program or activity. The Applicant understands that the State of South Carolina has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

I hereby certify that I am an authorized representative of the Applicant named above, with the authority to commit the Applicant to legally binding contracts and agreements. I further certify that the information given as part of and attached to this application is true and accurate. I am aware that any false information or intended omissions may subject me or the entity I represent to civil or criminal penalties for filing of false public records and/or forfeiture of any funds approved through this program.

This application does not constitute a contractual agreement. If any portion of the application is approved, a formal agreement between the parties will be executed and this signed document, along with the Notice of Funding Opportunity, Terms and Conditions, Statement of Work, and all other policies implemented by DEW will govern the grant.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Phone Number

Title

Email Address