

# **Digital Skills, Education, and Workforce (DSEW) Round 2 Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated 08/12/2024

**Q: Can you apply for round 2 if you received an award in round 1?**

Yes, you may apply. Organizations in counties that did not receive funds in round 1 will be prioritized. One application per organization is allowed.

**Q: Could a county-wide health department be an applicant?**

Local/county governments or entities within are not eligible applicants for this program.

**Q: Would serving those who are children of incarcerated individuals count towards the five bonus points?**

For those bonus points, we're specifically looking at serving those experiencing incarceration; however, serving children of justice-involved individuals is a great idea.

**Q: Would an internship program that provides paid internships and digital skills training for high school students qualify under workforce development, and if so, would letters from committed employers who are providing internships suffice as letters from employers?**

Yes, that kind of project would be considered to be under workforce development, and letters would strengthen the application.

**Q: Are construction projects eligible?**

No, the DSEW Round 2 Grant Program is specifically for training services. Construction projects, such as installing a new elevator, are not within the scope of this program.

**Q: What demographic information are we required to track, and how do we verify the population data?**

Applicants are required to track demographic information to ensure the program reaches its intended audience. Applicants are encouraged to capture data directly from people served. Please see the resources under the *Digital Opportunity Grantee Resources* tab on [this webpage](#).

**Q: How does the cybersecurity and online accessibility component vary between applicants?**

The requirements for cybersecurity and online accessibility can differ based on each applicant's specific circumstances and the nature of their proposed project. Applicants should tailor their cybersecurity measures and online accessibility features to address the unique risks and needs of their target populations. It is important for each applicant to detail their specific approach in their application, demonstrating how they will meet the requirement and why their approach aligns with the trainings they aim to provide and the communities they aim to serve.

**Q: How should indirect costs be addressed in the application?**

Please be aware that indirect costs are considered ineligible and will not be covered. These ineligible indirect costs include:

- Any hours worked that cannot be specifically identified and documented as directly related to the grant activities. This includes general administrative duties or other tasks that do not have a direct connection to the specific objectives and activities outlined in your grant proposal.
- Rent and utility expenses that cannot be directly allocated to the grant activities are ineligible. Only those costs that can be clearly and accurately documented as necessary for the completion of the grant-funded project will be considered eligible.

**Q: Is feedback available for applicants who were not approved in Round 1 to help avoid similar mistakes or understand qualification issues?**

Yes, feedback was provided by request. Applicants can reach out to Codi ([Codi.Drake@tn.gov](mailto:Codi.Drake@tn.gov)), who can review applications and offer insights on areas for improvement.

**Q: Can more than one person from an organization be signed up on the Smart Simple platform?**

Yes, the process allows for multiple contributors to be registered. Additional contributors can be added by emailing Codi ([Codi.Drake@tn.gov](mailto:Codi.Drake@tn.gov)) or through the main registered person in the system.

**Q: In the Workforce Development application under Project Information, how should questions related to Digital Skills be answered if the program does not include digital skills?**

Programs focused solely on Workforce Development should not receive specific digital skills questions. However, applicants should emphasize the skills provided through their Workforce Development program in their responses.

If your organization aims to conduct both workforce and digital skilling activities through the grant, you must pick one to prioritize for your application and answer the corresponding supplemental questions on the General Information tab of the application. You will only be able to answer on set of supplemental questions about your program – both sets are equally weighted in terms of scoring points possible. You are encouraged to select the focus that best reflects your organization's capacity for service. Please detail the full scope of services in the Project Information tab of the application.

**Q: Do Higher Education institutions need to partner with another entity or nonprofit, and should that partner be the primary applicant?**

Yes, Higher Education institutions must partner with another entity or nonprofit, which would serve as the primary applicant. ECD would then contract with that partner entity. Higher Education institutions are not eligible for round two as stand-alone applicants.

**Q: Is there a resource available to view Round 1.0 awards to avoid duplicating existing programs?**

Yes, the press release from Round 1 is available here: [Governor Lee & Commissioner McWhorter Announce \\$163 Million in Funding to Further Expand Broadband](#).

**Q: For libraries located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), is it necessary to collect verification from attendees?**

Verification is not required as it is assumed attendees fall into covered populations. However, it is recommended to collect data for records

**Q: How should a program that includes both Workforce Development and Digital Skills decide on a primary focus?**

Programs that address both should ultimately choose a primary focus for their application. It's important to clearly define main objectives while providing relevant supplemental information. Meeting all necessary requirements and providing additional details where appropriate is crucial. It is up to applicants to determine which should be their primary focus.