# New Jersey Department of Education

# *Notice of Grant Opportunity*

New Jersey Department of Education

Office of Grants Management

*May 2021*

Application Due Date: June 17, 2021

# Notice of Grant Opportunity

# Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program

**22-VE03-G06**

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**Application Due Date: June 17, 2021**

[**New Jersey Department of Education**](http://www.state.nj.us/education)

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## Section 1: Grant Program Information

### Description of the Grant Program

The purpose of this multi-year grant program is to cultivate the development of innovative career awareness and exploration programs focused on engaging career-focused instruction and unique experiences for students in the middle grades (defined as grades 5 – 8). The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) offers this NGO program and allocation of $1,096,000 from Fiscal Year 2021 Perkins Federal Reserve – Innovation funds in support of the commitment outlined in [New Jersey’s State Plan](https://www.nj.gov/education/cte/perkins/Final%20PerkinsVStatePlan_April2020.pdf) for the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* (Perkins V). These reserve funds will support innovation in promising practices and models that ramp up academic preparation and career readiness for students as they transition into high school.

Career awareness and exploration, the process of developing self-awareness, learning about the world of work and careers, and creating a plan for postsecondary success, are critical to college and career readiness. Self and career awareness give purpose and meaning, enhancing the self-direction and hope of youth (Akos, 2020). Early career and skill development also empower youth to make short- and long-term informed educational decisions and have the potential to create excitement and passion about future career opportunities.

Early adolescence is characterized by significant growth and change that is more rapid than in any other phase of life except for infancy (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989). While this period presents enormous opportunities, for many adolescents this transition is associated with a decline in self-esteem which can impact a student’s ability to perform well in core academic areas such as mathematics and English language arts (Jackson & Davis, 2000). Consequently, student disengagement—that could potentially lead toward dropping out of school—often begins in middle school (Orthner et al., 2010). In New Jersey, there were 7,991 high school dropouts during the 2015-2016 school year (NJDOE, 2021). Young adolescents can benefit the most from career awareness and exploration in the middle grades when students are at a higher risk of disengaging as a result of challenges in forming identity, coping with puberty, and navigating new environments (Association for Career and Technical Education & Career Cruising, 2018).

The National Career Development Association recommends that middle grades students learn about themselves by developing awareness of their occupational interests, aptitudes and career values; gaining an understanding of the value and concept of work; and making preliminary occupational choices that are open to change.

The scope of career guidance and counseling also presents a major challenge in schools across all grade levels. The 2011 Pathways to Prosperity Project from the Harvard Graduate School of Education identified America’s system of career guidance and counseling as one of the three big barriers to achieving the potential of career pathways (Symonds, Schwartz & Ferguson, 2011). According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the national student-to-school-counselor ratio was 430-to-1 in 2018-2019, while New Jersey’s ratio was 358:1. ASCA recommends a ratio of 250:1 to provide optimal support (ASCA, 2020). The integration of career-focused instruction can help to support school counseling programs and ameliorate the challenges related to career guidance and counseling.

Middle grades schools are well positioned to implement this initiative because of the organizational structures, programs and practices that support students’ unique academic, developmental, and social needs such as smaller learning communities, looping, advisory programs, and interdisciplinary teams.

#### ****1.1.1 Expected Outcomes of the Grant Program****

1. Increase students’ awareness of career and technical education (CTE) opportunities and New Jersey’s key industry pathways;
2. Enhance students’ self-awareness of interests;
3. Build the capacity of teachers to integrate career focused instruction aligned to students’ interests into instruction;
4. Build the capacity of school counselors to provide career information to students;
5. Increase collaboration between the middle grades and secondary schools regarding CTE offerings;
6. Increase students’ ability to make informed decisions about secondary and postsecondary options, and career pathways; and
7. Identify and disseminate resources, innovative strategies, and best practices that can be used to support other schools.

#### 1.1.2 Populations to be Served

The Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program is a three-year grant program created to serve students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Applicants are required to implement the program in at least one grade level during the first year, and at least one additional adjacent grade in each subsequent year of the grant.

#### 1.1.3 Funding Amount

A total of up to $1,096,000 from Perkins Federal Reserve – Innovation Funds will be used to fund the Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program NGO in FY22. In the first grant year, LEAs will be awarded up to $52,190 with continuation funding for FY23 and FY24 determined by the availability of funding and program progress.

The expected grant start date for Year 1 is September 1, 2021, and the end date is scheduled for June 30, 2022. Year 2 will start on July 1, 2022, and end June 30, 2023; and Year 3 will start on July 1, 2023, and end June 30, 2024.

### Eligibility to Apply

The Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration NGO is a limited competitive grant that is open to public school districts in New Jersey that contain grades 5, 6, 7, or 8. Applicants are required to implement the program in at least one grade level during the first year, and at least one additional adjacent grade in each subsequent year of the grant. Schools are required to participate in the project for at least two grant years. If your Local Education Agency (LEA) only contains one grade between grades 5 - 8, a partnership may be established with another LEA, as part of a sending/receiving relationship, in order to meet the minimum two-year requirement.

The NJDOE expects to make twenty-one awards, provided there are enough applications that receive a passing score. The NJDOE will ensure that seven (7) awards are made in each region in rank order, provided there are enough applications that receive a passing score in each region. All other awards will be made in rank order by score regardless of region until either funds are exhausted or no applications with passing scores remain.

The NJDOE recognizes three geographic regions in the state: Northern Region, Central Region, and Southern Region. Each applicant’s assigned region will be determined by the location of the LEA.

**Regional Distribution of New Jersey Counties**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Northern Region** | **Central Region** | **Southern Region** |
| * Bergen County
* Essex County
* Hudson County
* Morris County
* Passaic County
* Sussex County
* Warren County
 | * Hunterdon County
* Mercer County
* Middlesex County
* Monmouth County
* Ocean County
* Somerset County
* Union County
 | * Atlantic County
* Burlington County
* Camden County
* Cape May County
* Cumberland County
* Gloucester County
* Salem County
 |

### Federal Compliance Requirements (DUNS, SAM)

In accordance with the Federal Fiscal Accountability Transparency Act (FFATA), all grant recipients must have a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered with the federal System for Award Management (SAM), the successor to the federal Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database. DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet and are available for free to all entities required to register under FFATA.

* To obtain a DUNS number, applicants must go to the Dun & Bradstreet [website](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/).
* To register with the SAM database, applicants must go to SAM [website](https://www.sam.gov/SAM/).

Applicants are required to submit their DUNS number and expiration date of their SAM registration as part of the Electronic Web Enabled Grant (EWEG) system application using the appropriate EWEG tab (i.e., Contacts) and must certify that they will ensure their registration will remain active for the entire grant period.

Applicants also must print the “Entity Overview” page from their [SAM](https://www.sam.gov/SAM/) profile (which displays their DUNS number and street address with ZIP+4 code) and upload a scan of the page using the Upload tab in the grant application.

#### FFATA Executive Compensation Disclosure Criteria:

In the preceding fiscal year:

* If an applicant received at least $25,000,000 in annual gross revenues from federal awards; and
* If at least eighty percent of the applicant’s annual gross revenues came from federal awards; the applicant is required to disclose the name and total compensation of the five most highly compensated officers of the applicant as part of the grant application.

This information is to be entered using the appropriate EWEG tab (i.e., Contacts). The term “federal award” includes federal contracts, subcontracts, grants, and sub-grants.

No award will be made to an applicant not in compliance with FFATA.

### Statutory/Regulatory Source and Funding

The applicant’s project must be designed and implemented in conformance with all applicable state and federal regulations. The Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration program is 100percent funded fromFY21 Perkins Federal Reserve – Innovation Funds. CFDA # 84.048A/V048A200030, ORG/APU # 21-100-034-5062-084-H200-6130-R011.

Final awards are subject to the availability ofPerkins Federal Reserve – Innovation funds. Total funds for Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration program are $1,096,000. If balances are available, or if additional Perkins Federal Reserve – Innovation funds become available during the fiscal year, the next highest scoring application(s) above 70 points and that meet the intent of the NGO may become eligible for award. The braiding of federal title and local funds through matching is encouraged to supplement this grant program to achieve optimal outcomes.

The grantee is expected to complete the goals and objectives laid out in the approved grant application, complete implementation activities established in its grant agreement, and make satisfactory progress toward the completion of its approved action plan. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal by the NJDOE of the grantee’s eligibility for the continuation of grant funding. The NJDOE will remove ineligible, inappropriate or undocumented costs from funding consideration.

The project period for the first year of the three-year grant is September 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

### Dissemination of This Notice

The Office of Career Readiness will make this notice available to eligible applicants listed in section 1.2 based upon the eligibility statement, to the Office of Comprehensive Support Team Leaders and to the county superintendents of the counties in which the eligible agencies are located.

Additional copies of the NGO are also available on the NJDOE’s [Discretionary Grant](http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/discretionary/) web site or by contacting the Office of Career Readiness at the NJDOE, River View Executive Plaza, Building 100, Route 29, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500; telephone (609) 376-9067; fax (609) 984-5347.

### Technical Assistance

The Technical Assistance Workshop will be held remotely on May 19, 2021 at 1:30 pm***.*** Preregistration is required by May 18, 2021. Please register [online](https://homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/events/). Registrants requiring special accommodations for the Technical Assistance Workshop should identify their needs at the time of registration.

### Application Submission

The NJDOE administers discretionary grant programs in strict conformance with procedures designed to ensure accountability and integrity in the use of public funds and, therefore, willnot accept late applications.

The responsibility for a timely submission resides with the applicant. The Application Control Center (ACC) must receive the completed application through the online Electronic Web Enabled Grant (EWEG) system access through the NJDOE [Homeroom](http://homeroom.state.nj.us) web page **no later than 4:00 P.M. on** Thursday, June 17, 2021. Without exception,the ACC will not accept, and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) cannot evaluate for funding consideration, an application after this deadline.

Each eligible applicant must have a logon ID and password to access the system. LEA applicants should contact their district’s Web (Homeroom) Administrator, who will complete the registration.

Please direct questions regarding access to EWEG to the EWEG help email account.

The NJDOE advises applicants to plan appropriately to allow time to address any technical challenges that may occur. Additionally, applicants should run a consistency check at least 24 hours before the due date to determine any errors that might prevent submission of the application. Applicants are advised not to wait until the due date to submit the application online as the EWEG system may be slower than normal due to increased usage. Running the consistency check does not submit the application. When the consistency check runs successfully, a submit button will appear. Once the submit button is clicked, the application may not be edited, additional information may not be submitted, and the application can no longer be accessed or returned. **Please Note: The submit button in the EWEG system will disappear as of 4:00 PM on the due date.**

Complete applications are those that include all elements listed in Section 3.3, Application Component Checklist of this notice. Applications received by the due date and specified time will be screened to determine whether they are, in fact, eligible for consideration. The NJDOE reserves the right to reject any application not in conformance with the requirements of this NGO.

**Paper copies of the grant application will not be accepted in lieu of the EWEG application. Applications submitted via fax or email will not be accepted under any circumstances.**

### Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients must submit periodic project and fiscal progress reports. Upon submission of the final report, grantees must provide resources, strategies and best practices to support the State and local goals for this program. All reports will be submitted through the EWEG system. Reports for this program will be due as follows:

|  **Report**  | **Reporting Period** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1st Interim | September 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021 | January 31, 2022 |
| 2nd Interim | September 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022 | April 30, 2022 |
| Final | September 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 | July 31, 2022 |

### Assessment of Statewide Program Results

Over the twelve-month grant period, the Office of Career Readiness will require ongoing reporting and data submission from the grantee in order to monitor the grantee’s progress toward meeting the State goal, local goals, objectives and outcomes of the grant. Assessments will be in the form of desk audits of periodic interim project and fiscal reports as well as onsite monitoring visits.

### 1.10 Reimbursement Requests

Payment of grant funds is made through a reimbursement system. Reimbursement requests for any grant funds the local project has expended are made through the EWEG system. Reimbursement requests may begin once the application has been marked “Final Approved” in the EWEG system, and the grantee has accepted the award by clicking on the “Accept Award” button on the Application Select page and completing the Grant Acceptance Certificate information.

Only one (1) request may be submitted per month. Grantees must submit their request no later than the 15th of the month. The requests may include funds that will be expended through the last calendar day of the month in which reimbursement is requested. If the grantees’ request is approved by the NJDOE program officer, the grantee should receive payment around the 8th-10th of the following month.

The last day to submit a budget modification is March 31, 2022.

The last day to submit a reimbursement request is July 31, 2022.

**NOTE:** Payments cannot be processed until the award has been accepted in EWEG.

## Section 2: Project Guidelines

The intent of this section is to provide the applicant with the framework within which it will plan, design, and develop its proposed project to meet the purpose of this grant program. Before preparing applications, potential applicants are advised to review Section 1.1, Description of the Grant Program, of this NGO to ensure a full understanding of the State’s vision and purpose for offering the program. Additionally, the information contained in Section 2 will complete the applicant’s understanding of the specific considerations and requirements that are to be considered and/or addressed in their project.

Please note that the passage of N.J.A.C 6A:23A-7 places additional administrative requirements on the travel of school district personnel. The applicant is urged to be mindful of these requirements as they may impact the ability of school district personnel to participate in activities sponsored by the grant program.

### 2.1 Project Design Considerations

Applicants will find within this section the requirements for designing a local program that is consistent with the State goals of the program.

The State goals of this program are to *empower students by providing early access to engaging career-focused instruction and unique experiences that build self-awareness, increase focused direction in high school, and ignite interest and passion for high-skill, high-wage and in-demand careers.*

Applicants are required to develop measurable goals that are consistent with the State goals and develop attainable objectives that support them, resulting in measurable grant outcomes. In addition to the State goals, applicants must develop the following measurable goals:

1. A goal consistent with building the capacity of teachers to provide career focused instruction;
2. A goal consistent with building the capacity of school counselors to provide career information and resources to students; and
3. A locally developed goal.

The goals and objectives will remain consistent for the duration of the three-year grant period.

Options for program delivery include:

1. Integration into academic core content or enrichment courses;
2. Development of new courses;
3. Online instruction including virtual reality;
4. Summer programs; and/or
5. After-school programming.

Applicants seeking funding are required to implement career-focused education in at least one grade level in the first year of the grant (5, 6, 7), and at least one additional grade level in each subsequent year in FY23 and FY24. The delivery of career-focused instruction and related activities should commence during the 2021-2022 school year with all related supplies and equipment in place and available for student use during the grant period.

Perkins V states that innovation funding may be used to award grant funds to eligible recipients for career and technical education activities to address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(3)(C)(ii) in order to promote the development, implementation, and adoption of programs of study or career pathways aligned with State-identified high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations or industries.

Applicants may select the Career Cluster(s)® and industry pathways to focus on based on their district’s Perkins performance data on the highest gaps and disparities (if applicable); or from the list of Eligible Career Clusters and New Jersey Key Industry Pathways in Appendix C.

Collaborative teaching models are encouraged to support the full continuum of career awareness and exploration within the career pathways selected. Effective programs require knowledge of CTE opportunities in secondary schools, including county vocational schools, postsecondary options and career pathways.

In order to enhance students’ self-awareness, districts should identify students’ career interests in multiple ways that are developmentally appropriate. It is expected that schools meet the specific needs of students above and beyond what is currently occurring in the school.

The scope of the program should reach as many students as possible. While a specific target for student enrollment in the program is not provided, applicants will be evaluated on the projected number of participating students. Entrance criteria shall not be used for participation and schools are required to develop inclusive programs for all students which include students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, students preparing for non-traditional fields, single parents, (including single pregnant women), English Language Learners, homeless students, students placed in a resource family home, and students with a parent who is an active duty member of the armed forces.

Many schools currently have students with mild disabilities actively learning with their neurotypical peers. Instructional supports are to be made available to support students with individualized education programs (IEPs) in the general education setting. Examples of supports include Tiered Systems of Support, the Universal Design for Learning Framework to meet the needs of all students, and the resources available at the [NJDOE's Regional Learning Resource Centers](https://www.nj.gov/education/lrc/). Programming should focus on rigorous career focused instruction aligned to the eligible Career Clusters and New Jersey Key Industry Pathways and utilize scaffolding and supports to meet the developmental needs of all students.

Career-focused instruction may also include opportunities for [work-based learning](https://www.state.nj.us/education/cte/sle/), developing employability skills, and participation in [Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)](https://www.nj.gov/education/cte/ctso.htm).

**Potential Resources to Support Career Focused Instruction**

Schools are encouraged to use web-based career information systems such as the [New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator | Home (intocareers.org)](https://portal.njcis.intocareers.org/) (NJCAN) to support the development of personal plans for secondary and postsecondary success. Students and schools can use NJCAN to conduct self-assessments, research colleges and other postsecondary schools and engage in other career exploration and planning activities. Personal plans can be developed in collaboration with parents, school counselors and teachers to support students’ decision making about secondary and postsecondary schools, and career opportunities.

CTSOs provide students with the opportunity to enhance their career, employability and leadership skills through a variety of activities, such as conferences, award programs and competitive events. There are seven CTSOs recognized by the NJDOE as intra-curricular in nature and in practice. Each organization plays a significant role in providing opportunities for students to learn and practice leadership development, academic and technical skills, and become involved in their community. Teachers infuse the organization’s activities into the instructional programs, thereby enabling students to see and immerse themselves in the real-world connections to their academic studies.

### 2.2 Project Requirements

#### Project Abstract

The Project Abstract is a 250- 300 word summary of the proposed project’s need, purpose, and projected outcomes. The proposed project and outcomes must cover the full multi-year grant period. Do not include information in the abstract that is not supported elsewhere in the application.

Statement of Need: [20]

The Statement of Need identifies the local conditions and/or needs that justify the project proposed in the application. A “need” in this context is defined as the difference between the current status and the outcomes and/or standard(s) that the school would like to achieve.

* Describe the target population to be served, including the grade levels (between 5 – 8);
* Identify the county or local needs that the applicant will attempt to address through implementation of the NGO.
* Identify the reason for seeking funding; discuss the needs of the student population relative to the grant’s goals;
* Identify the needs and capacity of the school counseling program to support career awareness and exploration and identify what will be done differently as a result of this grant;
* Identify and discuss the disparities or gaps in Perkins performance served by the eligible LEA in the school district, if applicable; and
* Discuss any other factors or conditions that the grant will address.
* Provide documentation to substantiate the stated conditions and/or needs. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, demographics, test data, descriptions of target population(s), student data, labor market data, local conditions, personnel data, and research;
* Describe the programming that will take place to support student learning needs to meet:
	+ New Jersey Student Learning Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation, and Training;
	+ New Jersey student achievement standards; and
	+ Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills Practices;
* Do not attempt to address problems that are beyond the scope of the grant program.

Project Description: [25]

* Describe in a detailed narrative the complete multi-year project design and plan for implementing the project. Provide assurance that the strategies or activities are of sufficient quality and scope to ensure equitable access and participation among all eligible program participants. Provide evidence that the project is appropriate for and will successfully address the identified needs of the school. Describe the effect the project will have on the school upon completion. When possible, cite examples of how the approach or different strategies have led to success for other districts in the region or state.
* Present a targeted and achievable plan for identifying, enrolling, and supporting students from non-traditional and underrepresented populations including but not limited to students with disabilities, English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, students preparing for nontraditional fields, homeless students, single parents, including single pregnant women, students placed in a resource family home, and students whose parent or guardian is a member of the armed forces and is on active duty.
* Research-based strategies for effectively assembling and communicating with students and families in the identified subgroups, including when and where the county vocational school district anticipates making the communications;
* Describe the design of the grant program, e.g. when instruction and activities will occur, Career Cluster(s) of focus, grade levels, and student supports; include specific examples of systems, curriculum, or design approaches that will be incorporated.
* Include a justification for identifying this as an area to improve and the plan to make this transition.
* Estimate the number of students who will be served by the program and describe how the district will include underrepresented students to meaningfully participate with their peers to meet their needs. Entrance criteria cannot be used for students participating in this program.
* Include benchmarks for the early, middle and final stages of the process and how progress will be measured towards these benchmarks.
* Identify who will be responsible for what stages and what level of support they will be given.
* Write clearly and succinctly, focusing on quality and not quantity.
* Ensure that the steps of the Project Activity Plan are well-articulated and logically sequenced in the narrative.

Goals, Objectives, and Indicators: [10]

School districts applying for the Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration program will develop four goals: one required goal consistent with the State goal; one required goal consistent with Goal A: building the capacity of teachers to provide career focused instruction; one required goal consistent with Goal B: building the capacity of school counselors to provide career information and resources to students, and a local goal. Using the goals, create objectives that are (1) relevant to the selected goal, (2) applicable to grant-funded activities, (3) clearly written, and (4) measurable. Objectives should clearly illustrate the plan to achieve the goals. They must be achievable and realistic, while identifying the “*who, what, and when”* of the proposed project. Objectives must be results-oriented, and clearly identify what the project is intended to accomplish. They must contain quantitative information, benchmark(s) and how progress will be measured. Objectives should also link directly to individual stated needs and provide a time frame for completion.

Applications must also include a plan to evaluate the project’s success in achieving the goals and objectives. Indicators of success must be established for each project objective. In constructing the indicators, describe the methods that will be used to evaluate the progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives, as well as the overall grant project outcomes. Also, describe in the indicators the measures and instruments to be used, the individuals responsible for developing and conducting the evaluation, and how results will be used to improve project outcomes. Well-constructed indicators of success will help establish a clear understanding of responsibilities and a system of accountability for the project. They will also help to determine whether or not to refine an aspect of the project to ensure overall success.

* Review the Statement of Need before and after constructing the objectives to ensure that the objectives clearly address identified needs.
* Identify the anticipated outcomes of the project in measurable terms and in relation to the stated needs.
* Define the population to be served.
* Identify the timeline for implementing and completing each objective.
* Identify the level of performance expected in order to indicate successful achievement of the objectives.
* Make certain to construct measurable indicators of success that directly link to and support project objectives.

Schools should strive to develop programs that are innovative, replicable, and sustainable. When developing objectives and indicators, keep in mind the following:

**Administrative Vision and Staff Commitment** – Successful programs require the leadership and support of district and building level administration, and commitment of teachers, school counselors, and other staff involved to carry out the goals and objectives.

**Organizational Structures and programs** – Consideration should be given to examining existing structures and programs such as advisory, smaller learning communities (teams, houses), teacher teams, and enrichment courses to maximize the scope and impact of the program.

**Academic and Technical Skills –** Consideration should be given to the integration of English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and Science academic content and skills to support overall student achievement. Math in CTE, ELA in CTE, and Science in CTE are strategies that may be implemented to support students’ academic and technical knowledge and skills.

Project Activity Plan: [15]

The Project Activity Plan follows the goals and objectives that were listed in the previous section. **The Activity Plan is for the current grant period.** Activities represent the steps that it will take to achieve each identified objective. Also, the activities that are identified in this section serve as the basis for the individual expenditures that are being proposed in the budget. Review the goals and the objectives when constructing the Project Activity Plan to ensure that appropriate links have been established between the goals and objectives and the activities.

* State the relevant objective in full in the space provided. Number the Goal 1 and each objective 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.
* Describe all of the tasks and activities planned for the accomplishment of each goal and objective.
* List all the activities in chronological order.
* Space the activities appropriately across all report periods of the grant project.
* Identify the staff directly responsible for the implementation of the activity. If the individual conducting the activity is not referenced appropriately on the Project Activity Plan, it may not be possible to determine an allocation of the requested cost, and costs may be disallowed.
* List the documentation that tracks the progress and confirms the completion of each activity, such as agenda, minutes, curriculum, etc.
* In the Report Period Column on the Project Activity Plan, indicate with a checkmark the period in which the activity will be implemented. If the activity is ongoing or recurring, place a checkmark in the boxes under each period in which the activity will talk place.
* Do not list the project director or other person with general oversight authority for the project as the “person responsible” for carrying out all activities.

Organizational Commitment and Capacity: [20]

After identifying the conditions and/or needs and the plan to address them, next describe the applicant organization and its capacity to take on the project. First, explain why the project being proposed is important to the school. Describe the commitment to addressing the conditions and/or needs identified, including the organizational support (staff, resources) that exists for implementing the proposed project.

A project lead must be identified who will maintain oversight of the grant program and serve as the liaison with the NJDOE. The project lead should possess general knowledge about postsecondary education and career pathway programs. Building level staff required for program implementation includes at a minimum the school counselor, and certified instructional staff.

Professional development, held quarterly, will be required for all participating staff including the project lead. The professional development will be provided by NJDOE and include educational consultants, business and industry, postsecondary education and other key partners. During the initial grant year and subsequent years, professional development for staff in the next grade level should occur prior to implementation of the program in order to adequately prepare staff.

Explain any experience the organization has had in implementing similar types of projects, as well as the outcomes of those projects. What worked, what did not and why? Explain how previous experiences will ensure successful implementation of the proposed project. If the organization or members of the staff have not implemented similar projects, explain why the proposed project will be successful.

* Describe all organizational resources (staff, facilities, equipment, funds, etc.) that will support successful project implementation.
* Describe how the work experience of participating staff members aligns with the selected Career Clusters and key industry pathways.
* Describe the district’s and its LEA partner’s capacity (if applicable) to successfully carry out this grant program. If a partner will support this program describe what contributions the partner will make to improve the quality of outcomes. Consideration should also be given to business and industry and non-profit entities to supplement the program such as the NJ Coalition for Inclusive Education (NJCIE) to support individuals with disabilities, teachers, administrators, and families.
* Describe the commitment to addressing the conditions and/or needs identified in the Statement of Need.
* If the district has an approved CTE program, identify the experiences for fully including students with diverse needs (i.e., emotional, behavioral, academic, cognitive, English Language Learners) in the CTE program.
* Describe how the program can be sustained beyond the three-year grant period.

### 2.3 Budget Design Considerations

Once the objectives that will guide the work in the implementation phase of the grant have been prioritized, begin to develop the details of the budget that will be necessary to carry out each activity.

The applicant’s budget must be well-considered, necessary for the implementation of the project, remain within the funding parameters contained in this handout, and demonstrate prudent use of resources. The budget will be reviewed to ensure that costs are customary and reasonable for implementation of each project activity.

The applicant must provide a direct link for each cost to the goal, objectives and activities in the Project Activity Plan that provides programmatic support for the proposed cost. In addition, the applicant must provide documentation and details sufficient to support each proposed cost.

Guidance on constructing a grant budget may be found in the [Pre-award Manual for Discretionary Grants](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/docs/PreAwardManual.pdf).

**The budget submitted as part of the application is for the current grant period only. Budgetary items will represent each applicant’s allocation of the total grant funds, up to $52,190 for which they are applying.**

The NJDOE will remove from consideration all ineligible costs, as well as costs not supported by the Project Activity Plan. The actual amount awarded will be contingent upon the applicant’s ability to provide support for its proposed budget upon application and ultimately will be determined by the NJDOE through the pre-award revision process. The applicant’s opportunity to make pre-award revisions will be limited by the NJDOE which is not responsible either to provide repeated opportunities for revisions or to permit reallocation of the funds previously requested for costs that have not been approved or have been disallowed.

### 2.4 Budget Requirements [10]

Budget requests should be linked to specific project activities and objectives of the Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration program.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 contain additional requirements concerning prior approvals, as well as expenditures related to travel. It is strongly recommended that the applicant work with their business administrator when constructing the budget. The NJDOE applies these restrictions uniformly to all grantees. Unless otherwise specified, the following restrictions apply to all grant programs:

* No reimbursement for in-state overnight travel (meals and/or lodging);
* No reimbursement for meals on in-state travel; and
* Mileage reimbursement is capped at $.35/mile.

**Eligible costs may include**

* Salaries to support the grant program (costs for staff time outside of contracted hours) such as stipends and substitutes for teachers to attend professional development;
* Costs associated with professional development (including the summer months);
* Associated fringe benefits;
* Purchased services used to directly support the program;
* Program related materials and supplies;
* Travel related to the program, such as student field trips; and
* Other costs will be considered and may be allowed to support the project.

**Ineligible costs**

Funds may not be used for the following costs:

* Indirect costs; and
* Costs not supported by the program plan.

## Section 3: Completing the Application

### 3.1 General Instructions for Applying

To apply for a grant under this NGO, applicants must prepare and submit a complete application. The application must be a response to the State’s vision as articulated in Section 1: Grant Program Information of this NGO. It must be planned, designed and developed in accordance with the program framework articulated in Section 2: Project Guidelines of this NGO. The applicant may wish to consult additional guidance found in the [Pre-award Manual for Discretionary Grants](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/docs/PreAwardManual.pdf).

### 3.2 Review of Applications

Evaluators will use the selection criteria found in Part I: General Information and Guidance of the Pre-award Manual for Discretionary Grants to review and rate the application according to how well the content addresses Sections 1 and 2 in this NGO.

Please be advised that in accordance with the Open Public Records Act P.L. 2001, c. 404, all applications for discretionary grant funds received September 1, 2003 or later, as well as the evaluation results associated with these applications, and other information regarding the competitive grants process, will become matters of public record upon the completion of the evaluation process, and will be available to members of the public upon request.

Applications will also be reviewed for completeness and accuracy. The following point values apply to the evaluation of applications received in response to this NGO. The total point value is 100.

| **Application Component** | **Point Value** |
| --- | --- |
| **Statement of Need**  | 20 |
| **Project Description**  | 25 |
| **Goals, Objectives and Indicators**  | 10 |
| **Project Activity Plan (Year One)**  | 15 |
| **Organizational Commitment and Capacity**  | 20 |
| **Budget (Year One)** | 10 |

All applications must score a minimum of 70 points out of 100 and meet the intent of the NGO to be considered eligible for funding.

If an application has been selected for pre-award revisions (PARs), the successful applicant will be notified by the EWEG system via email. Only the personnel listed on the contact page will receive a notification. The successful applicant will be required to initiate the PAR process by accessing the EWEG system, creating an amendment for the application and submitting the amendment through EWEG to the NJDOE. You will not be able to make changes on any of the application pages at this time. Questions on how to submit an amendment should be directed to the EWEG help desk.

### 3.3 Application Component Checklist

The following components are required (see *Required ü Column*) to be included as part of the application. Failure to include a required component may result in the application being removed from consideration for funding. Use the checklist (see *Included ü Column*) to ensure that all required components have been completed in the application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Required Components in EWEG |  |
| EWEG Tab/Subtab | Check (*ü* ) if included |
| Admin (Contacts, Allocation, Assurance, Board Resolution and DUNS-SAM) |  |
| Budget |  |
| Narrative (Abstract, Need, Description, Goals/Objectives/Indicators, Activity Plan, Organizational Commitment & Capacity) |  |

| Required Components to Upload in EWEG  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Component | Check (*ü* ) if included |
| “Entity Overview” page from the applicant’s [SAM](http://www.sam.gov) profile. |  |
| Documentation of Eligibility Form (Appendix A) |  |
| Local Education Agency (LEA) Partnership Form Partnership Form (Appendix B) - if applicable |  |

###

## Appendix A: Documentation of Eligibility Form

**Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program**

(This form must be completed, signed and uploaded in the application using the Upload tab)

**Name of Applicant /School District:**

By submitting this application, the Lead Agency (school district) certifies that the application meets all eligibility criteria for the **Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program**.

Signature of School District Chief School Administrator Date

## Appendix B: Local Education Agency (LEA) Partnership Form

(This form must be completed, signed and uploaded in the application using the Upload tab)

**Instruction to Applicant:** Please have the LEA partnercomplete a separate copy of this form, including the LEA Building Principal partner.

**Instruction to LEA Partner:** This document is to be signed by an eligible partner and included with the application as evidence of the collaboration between the applicant and the eligible partner in the **Middle Grades Career Awareness and Exploration Program**. The LEA Chief School Administrator and Building Principal must complete and sign the statement below:

I **commit** to be a collaborative partner with [ ], the applicant/lead agency and to ensure that my agency acts in full support of the proposed project through the provision of personnel, time, activities, information, data, services, and/or resources necessary to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the grant project with fidelity.

I **agree** to protect the confidentiality of individual students and/or educators as necessary when providing information to the applicant and the project evaluator to fulfill project requirements.

I **certify** that a designated representative, my agency’s grant lead person, will continue to collaborate with the applicant to meet the requirements of this grant opportunity as specified in the grant application.

**Print Name** **of** **LEA Chief School Administrator:**

**Print Name of LEA:**

**Signature of** **LEA Partner Chief School Administrator:**

**Signature of** **Partner** **Building Principal:**

**Date (mm/dd/yyyy):**

## Appendix C: Eligible Career Clusters® and New Jersey Key Industry Pathways

Through the Perkins V State Plan, the NJDOE announced its focus on increasing academic preparation for middle school students in advance of entry into rigorous CTE programs at the high school that align to high-wage, high-skill, in-demand careers. Our sister agency, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) has identified nine key industry clusters in New Jersey: Construction and Energy; Finance; Health Care; Leisure and Hospitality; Life Sciences; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; Technology; and Transportation, Logistics and Distribution.

This grant opportunity focuses on the high-skill, high-wage, in-demand pathways that fall within each of these key industry clusters.A brief description of the industry and the focus of the CTE cluster are included for reference. It is critical to note that not all of the occupations that fall within these clusters meet the high-skill, high-wage, in-demand designation but have been designated as programs supporting participation in nontraditional fields/occupations. Key pathways have been selected for your reference and review, with a link to brief descriptions found here: <https://careertech.org/career-clusters>

**Architecture and Construction**

This Career Cluster is focused on careers in designing, planning, managing, building and maintaining the built environment*.*

* Design/Pre-Construction Pathway: *People with careers in design/pre-construction turn a concept into a set of plans. Their plans guide other construction professionals as they continue the building process.*
* Construction Pathway: *Employees in construction build and remodel houses, apartments, industrial buildings, warehouses, office buildings, churches, schools and recreational facilities. This pathway also includes the builders of highways, streets, bridges, tunnels, and airports as well as power plants, chemical plants, refineries, and mills.*
* Maintenance/Operations Pathway: *Employees in maintenance and operations unload, inspect, and move new equipment into position. They determine the optimal placement of machines in a plant, assemble machinery, install machinery, repair machinery, and perform preventive maintenance. They detect, diagnose, and correct minor problems on machinery.*

**Business Management**

This Career Cluster is focused on careers in planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating business functions essential to efficient and productive business operations.

* General Management Pathway: *General Management focuses on careers that plan, organize, direct, and evaluate all or part of a business organization through the allocation and use of financial, human, and material resources.*

**Finance**

This Career Cluster is focused on planning, services for financial and investment planning, banking, insurance, and business financial management.

* Business Finance Pathway: *The business finance function in a company is to manage policy and strategy for (and the implementation of) capital structure, budgeting, acquisition and investment, financial modeling and planning, funding, dividends, and taxation.*
* Accounting Pathway: *Accounting encompasses careers that record, classify, summarize, analyze, and communicate a business's financial information/business transactions for use in management decision-making. Accounting includes such activities as bookkeeping, systems design, analysis, and interpretation of accounting information.*
* Banking Services Pathway: *Primarily concerned with accepting deposits, lending funds, and extending credit, banking services include cash management, short-term investments, mortgages and other loans, credit cards, and bill payment. Banking services are delivered via a number of different institutions, from commercial banks (the largest group) and other traditional means (savings and loans associations, credit unions, and local banks).*

**Health Sciences**

This Career Cluster is focused on planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, and biotechnology research and development.

* Therapeutic Services Pathway: *Careers in the Therapeutic Services pathway are focused primarily on changing the health status of the patient over time. Health professionals in this pathway work directly with patients; they may provide care, treatment, counseling, and health education information.*
* Diagnostic Services Pathway: *Careers in the Diagnostic Services pathway use tests and evaluations that aid in the detection, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, injuries, or other physical conditions.*
* Biotechnology Research & Development Pathway: *Careers in the Biotechnology Research and Development pathway involve bioscience research and development as it applies to human health. These scientists may study diseases to discover new treatments or invent medical devices used to directly assist patients or to improve the accuracy of diagnostic tests.*

**Information Technology**

This Career Cluster is focused on building linkages in information technology occupations for careers related to the design, development and management of hardware, software, multimedia and systems integration services.

* Network Systems Pathway: *Careers in Network Systems involve network analysis, planning and implementation, including design, installation, maintenance, and management of network systems. Successful establishment and maintenance of information technology infrastructure is critical to the success of almost every 21st century organization.*
* Web & Digital Communications Pathway*: Careers in Web and Digital Communications involve creating, designing and producing interactive multimedia products and services, including development of digitally-generated or computer-enhanced media used in business, training, entertainment, communications, and marketing. Organizations of all types and sizes use digital media to communicate with existing and potential customers, to track transactions, and to collaborate with colleagues.*
* Programming & Software Development Pathway: *Careers in Programming and Software Development involve the design development implementation and maintenance of computer systems and software, requiring knowledge of computer operating systems, programming languages, and software development.*

**Manufacturing**

This Career Cluster is focused on planning, managing and performing the processing of materials into intermediate or final products and related professional and technical support activities such as production planning and control, maintenance and manufacturing, and process engineering.

* Production Pathway: *People with careers in production work on the shop floor making parts or assembling them. They work with machines, making or assembling electronic parts, constructing or assembling them, assembling modular housing, performing welding jobs, wind energy, or printing various materials.*
* Manufacturing Production Process Development Pathway: *Employees in Manufacturing Production Process Development are responsible for product design and design of the manufacturing process. They work with customers to ensure the manufacturing process produces a product that meets or exceeds customer expectations. They also monitor the manufacturing process and the materials used to manufacture the product.*

**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.)**

This Career Cluster is focused on planning, managing and providing scientific research and professional and technical services (e.g., physical science, social science, engineering) including laboratory and testing services, and research and development services such as geothermal generation technologies*.* The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics cluster uses prepares students for careers using problem-solving and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills.

* Engineering & Technology Pathway: *Careers aligned with the engineering and technology pathway involve studying and applying principles from advanced mathematics, science disciplines, and technology. All engineers and technologists apply key science concepts and processes to design solutions to identified problems.*

**Transportation, Distribution and Logistics**

This Career Cluster is focused on planning, management, and movement of people, materials, and goods by road, pipeline, air, rail and water, and related professional support services such as transportation infrastructure planning and management, green energy, logistics services, mobile equipment, and facility maintenance.

* Logistics Planning & Management Services Pathway: *Careers in the Logistics Planning and Management Services pathway involve planning, management and control of the distribution of materials, products, and people. Often, more than one mode of transportation is used as distribution efforts can be complex, even national or global. These people are responsible for the plans which will ensure that cargo arrives at the right location, on time, and in the safest, most economical manner.*
* Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance Pathway: *Careers in the Facility and Mobile Equipment pathway include the maintenance, repair, and servicing of vehicles and transportation facilities. All transportation relies on equipment which must function as designed, whenever needed. The people in this pathway keep the equipment and machinery running while looking for more efficient, safe, and cost-effective ways to do so.*

## Appendix D: References

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