

# Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act **INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING GRANTS**

Fiscal Year 2025 – 2026

**New Businesses:** Open to new businesses not currently funded for Spring 2026.

**Application Periods:** March 2, 2026 - June 12, 2026

**Deadline:** Applications are due at 12 pm CST on Friday, February 6, 2026.

Please direct all questions and submit your completed applications to: [contact@forwardcareers.org](mailto:contact@forwardcareers.org)

Please submit your application by the specified deadlines to ensure eligibility for the upcoming training cycles.

## What Is the IWT Grant?

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Grant helps Wisconsin businesses upgrade the skills of their current employees so they can stay competitive, improve productivity, and avoid layoffs. This funding covers part of the cost for professional training that leads to industry-recognized credentials, wage growth, or promotions.

Whether it's learning new technology, leadership training, or earning a specialized certification, the IWT Grant can make it happen.

## Who Can Apply?

To apply for IWT funding, your business must:

1. **Be located in Wisconsin** and have been in continuous operation for at least 12 months.
2. **Have current employees who qualify** as "incumbent workers" (full-time, 18+, employed at least 6 months\*).
3. **Be in good standing** if you've received IWT funding before.
4. **Agree to share outcome data** (credential attainment, wage increases, promotions).
5. **Not have conducted a layoff tied to relocation within the past 120 days**
  - If your company relocated work and employees lost jobs at another U.S. location, you must wait at least 120 days after the layoff before IWT funds can be used.
6. Be able to pay your share of training costs not covered by the grant.
7. Avoid ineligible uses of funds, including:
  - Paying trainee wages during training
  - Purchasing equipment
  - Covering travel, lodging, or meals
  - Funding degree programs or required regulatory training

\*If training a group, most (but not all) employees must meet the 6-month employment requirement.

## Funding & Reimbursement

Reimbursement rates depend on company size and whether training results in:

1. Credential only
2. Credential + wage increase/promotion
3. Credential + wage increase + promotion

		Reimbursement is Based Upon Receiving One or More of the Following		
		1. Credential Attainment	2. Credential Attainment + Wage Increase or Promotion	3. Credential Attainment + Wage Increase + Promotion
Business Size	100 or Fewer Employees	50%	65%	75%
	More than 100 Employees	25%	40%	50%

### Example:

- \$5,000 training cost for a company of 80 employees
- Training leads to a credential + wage increase
- Reimbursement: \$3,250 (65%)

**Maximum Award:** \$10,000 per business per program year (July 1 – June 30)

## Training Requirements

### Must:

- Be new, not yet started
- Be between 1 day and 16 weeks
- Result in an industry-recognized credential
- Improve both employee skills and company competitiveness

**Cannot:**

- Cover travel, wages during training, or equipment purchases
- Pay for regulatory/compliance training (OSHA, EPA, etc.)
- Fund degree programs (associate, bachelor, master, doctorate)

**Benefits**

## For Businesses:

- Stronger, more skilled workforce
- Improved productivity and profits
- Reduced turnover & higher employee loyalty

## For Employees:

- Career advancement
- New opportunities & higher pay
- Recognized industry credentials
- Better job security

**Timeline**

Training Period: Training programs may range from 1 day to 16 weeks and must take place between March 2, 2026, and June 12, 2026. Training completed prior to this period is not eligible.

Application Deadline: Applications for Spring 2026 are due by 12:00 p.m. CST on Friday, February 6, 2026.

**How to Apply**

## Your application must include:

- Completed IWT Application Form
- Trainee forms for each participating employee
- Training provider invoice with details, dates, and objectives
- Job descriptions for each employee being trained
- Additional forms if training is in-house or union concurrence is required
- Please direct all questions and submit your completed applications to:  
[contact@forwardcareers.org](mailto:contact@forwardcareers.org)

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Incomplete applications with missing supporting documents will not be accepted.

Item	Status
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Submission of an accurate and fully completed <b>Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Application</b> with the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trainee Form(s)</b>: For each employee that will participate in the training program, a trainee form must be submitted with IWT application. Example, 5 employees will be trained in ABC training program, 5 completed trainee forms are submitted with IWT application.</p> <p>Refer to “Trainee Form”.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>An invoice that details</b> the 1) training and learning objectives, 2) dates of training, 3) attainment of industry recognized certificate or credential, and 4) itemized cost.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Job description(s) for each employee(s)</b> to be trained.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If the training is for a seminar, workshop, or webinar, there must be a test or assessment provided.</p>	<p>Required documents.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>In-House Training Invoice:</b> If training is occurring in-house, a letter on company letterhead, that details costs, may be submitted.</p> <p>Refer to “In-House Training Template”.</p>	<p>Required only if training is being conducted in-house</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Union Form:</b> Where a union bargaining agreement exists and is applicable to the training for the employee, submit a Union Concurrence Form.</p> <p>Refer to “Union Form”.</p>	<p>Required only if employee(s) participating in training are in a union.</p>

### APPENDICES

- A. Application Form *(Required)*
- B. Trainee(s) Form, Invoice, Training Description, and Job Descriptions *(Required)*
- C. In-House Training Template *(Required only if training is conducted in-house)*
- D. Union Form *(Required only if employee(s) are in union)*