



Request For Proposal: Healthcare Upskilling Programs

Introduction

Central Six AlabamaWorks! (Central Six) is committed to developing a skilled and adaptable workforce that meets the evolving needs of our region's employers. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), we invite qualified training providers to submit proposals for upskilling programs designed to enhance the skills and credentials of incumbent workers for critical healthcare roles such as Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA), Pharmacy Technician, Medical Billing & Coding Technician, and Sterile Processing Technician, but not limited to these roles.

Through a \$10.8 million dollar grant made possible by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, the City of Birmingham created the Birmingham Region Health Partnership (BRHP). The BRHP consists of Central Six AlabamaWorks!, Prosper, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, STRIVE Birmingham, and the Women's Foundation of Alabama. This grant, the Good Jobs Challenge (GJC), is a federal initiative focused on creating equitable access to quality employment opportunities and upskilling workers for in-demand industries. The BRHP is a sector-based partnership that brings together healthcare employers, training providers, and community partners to address workforce challenges and create sustainable healthcare career pathways. Our goal through this initiative is to train 1,200 individuals and place 1,000 in quality healthcare jobs in the Birmingham region.

Rolling RFP for Training Providers

This is a rolling RFP. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis, as needs arise. We encourage training providers to submit proposals at any time, however, all training programs must be completed prior to the end of the grant performance period, September 30, 2025.

Employer Selection of Training Providers

Central Six will vet and maintain a pool of approved proposals from qualified training providers, matching training providers with employers when appropriate. Employers will play a key role in selecting eligible training providers for their organization's upskilling programs.

Application Requirements

Scope of Work

Selected training providers will be responsible for the following:

- Collaborating with healthcare employers to co-design upskilling training programs
- Developing curriculum and training materials that are aligned with industry needs and standards
- Delivering training programs in a manner that is accessible and engaging for incumbent workers
- Providing ongoing support to participants throughout the training program with the support of the Central Six team
- Evaluating the effectiveness of training programs and making adjustments as needed in collaboration with Central Six, our employer partners, and the BRHP.
- Submitting regular data reports on program outcomes, including participant demographics, training completion rates, job placement rates, and wage increases, as required by the Good Jobs Challenge grant and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to submit a proposal, training providers must meet the following criteria:

- Be a recognized and accredited training institution or organization
- Have a proven track record of delivering high-quality training programs
- Demonstrate experience in designing and implementing upskilling programs
- Be able to provide data on program outcomes, including job placement and wage increases

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include the following information in the **Healthcare Upskilling Program Proposal Form** and **Sample Budget Narrative** provided separately.

- **Program Description:** A detailed description of the proposed upskilling program, including learning objectives, curriculum, delivery methods, and assessment strategies.
- **Instructor Qualifications:** Information on the qualifications and experience of the instructors who will deliver the program.
- **Cost and Budget Narrative:** A detailed budget outlining all program costs, including tuition, fees, materials, and instructor compensation.

- **Co-design Plan:** A comprehensive plan outlining the training provider's approach to co-designing existing programs with employers, including strategies for gathering input, incorporating feedback, and ensuring alignment with industry needs.
- **Implementation Timeline:** A realistic timeline for program development, launch, and completion, including key milestones and deliverables.
- **Evaluation Plan:** A plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the program, including data collection methods, metrics, and reporting procedures. The evaluation plan should align with the reporting requirements of the Good Jobs Challenge grant.

Selection Criteria

Program Expectations:

- Training programs must lead to jobs that are considered to be in "high demand" in the Birmingham metro area.
- Priority will be given to proposals that support incumbent workers who are historically underserved or from distressed communities, including women, communities of color, and rural populations.
- While training providers are not expected to provide success coaching and wraparound services, Good Jobs Challenge grants require training providers to coordinate with Central Six to ensure students have access to success coaching provided by our Career Navigators & Case Managers.

Prioritization

This RFP prioritizes upskilling programs that meet the following criteria:

- **Wage Growth Potential:** The program should lead to a credential, certification, or skill enhancement that results in a demonstrable increase in wages for participating incumbent workers.
- **Industry Alignment:** The program should align with the Good Jobs Challenge's focus on high-demand industries in the Birmingham metro area, particularly healthcare. Eligible roles may include, but are not limited to:
 - Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA)
 - Pharmacy Technician
 - Medical Billing & Coding Technician
 - Sterile Processing Technician
 - Other healthcare roles with demonstrated wage growth potential

- **Support for Underserved Populations:** Priority will be given to proposals that support incumbent workers who are historically underserved or from distressed communities, including women, communities of color, and rural populations.
- **Proven Placement History:** Priority will be given to programs with a track record of trainees gaining employment as a result of training

Additional Considerations:

- Proposals should clearly outline the anticipated wage increases for program graduates and provide data or evidence to support these projections.
- Training providers should demonstrate their capacity to support participants from underserved communities, ensuring equitable access to upskilling opportunities

Funding & Eligibility

Funding Stipulations

The total funding amount awarded per project may be less than the requested amount, depending on factors such as budget availability, the strength of the proposal, and the alignment of the program with the goals of the Good Jobs Challenge grant. Applicants may request funding up to \$150,000 to fund the following expenses:

- Tuition & Fees
- Books & Supplies
- Certification/licensing exams

Funding Exclusions

Per EDA guidelines and requirements, no funds can be expended for the following purposes:

- Stipends or other direct payments to individuals
- Food, alcohol, or other entertainment
- Contributions or donations
- General government costs
- Cost share or matching funds for other federal awards
- Advertising/public relations for general publicity (only allowable for project-related outreach)
- Travel, unless documented that it is necessary and costs are reasonable
- Capital expenditures to buy/improve property or equipment
- Lobbying

Submission Instructions

Proposal Forms and Budget Templates should be submitted electronically to goodjobs@centralsix.org. Please include "Good Jobs Upskilling RFP" in the subject line. Training Providers must submit a proposal form and budget template for individual courses (e.g. separate proposals for Clinical Medical Assistant course, Sterile Processing course, Pharmacy Technician course, etc.). The maximum amount of funding is given per Training Provider, not per course type.

Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of workforce development professionals and industry experts. The review process will focus on the following criteria:

- **Program Quality:** The quality of the program design, curriculum, and delivery methods.
- **Relevance to Industry Needs:** The alignment of the program with the needs of employers in targeted industries.
- **History of Successful Outcomes:** The ability of the program to achieve measurable outcomes that demonstrate its effectiveness, **including high job placement rates and sustained employment for program graduates.**
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** The value and affordability of the program relative to its potential impact.

Reservation of Rights

Central Six AlabamaWorks! reserves the right to:

- a. Reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP.
- b. Waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposal process.
- c. Issue addenda or modifications to this RFP at any time before the selection of a training provider.
- d. Negotiate final terms and conditions of the upskilling program with the selected training provider.
- e. Terminate the upskilling program for any reason, with appropriate notice given to the training provider.

Contact Information

For any questions or inquiries regarding this RFP, please contact Caleb Rotton at crotton@centralsix.org or goodjobs@centralsix.org

Implementation & Execution Timeline

Phase 1: RFP Launch & Initial Selection	
Feb. 18th	Applications officially open on a rolling basis
Feb. 18th - 28th	Conduct an initial review of applications as they are received and prioritize those who clearly demonstrate expertise in the healthcare sector and a strong understanding of co-design principles.
	The Central Six Employer Alliance Manager will schedule meetings with employers to prioritize roles for upskilling.
Phase 2: Employer-Training Provider Co-design	
Feb. 18th - 28th & on-going through Sept. 30th, 2025	Based on the initial application reviews and early employer feedback, identify a small group of highly qualified training providers (3-5) to begin co-design sessions with employers as soon as possible.
	Hold co-design sessions between selected training providers and employers who have provided initial input to identify key skills gaps and begin customizing existing curriculum frameworks.
Phase 3: Program Implementation & Support	
Feb. - Sept. 30, 2025	As new employers express interest in upskilling, the Central Six team will provide intensive support to facilitate co-design meetings with selected training providers to ensure rapid program launch.
	Training programs will begin on a rolling basis , starting as soon possible after finalizing with training providers and employers. New upskilling programs may launch throughout the grant term as employer needs are identified and co-designed programs are ready for implementation.
Phase 4: Evaluation & Continuous Improvement	
Apr. - Sept 30, 2025.	Program evaluation activities will continue throughout the grant term to ensure quality and identify areas for improvement in upskilling programs, including gathering feedback and data, tracking progress to completion, and adjusting elements as needed.