

THE NEW YORK  
COMMUNITY TRUST



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## **New York City Workforce Development Fund**

The New York City Workforce Development Fund (The Fund) was established in 2001 in The New York Community Trust as a cooperative foundation effort to help low-income residents access New York City's labor market. The members of the Fund act as its advisors. Currently, 11 foundations and corporate philanthropies participate: Altman Foundation, CD&R Foundation, Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, Ira W. DeCamp Foundation, Robin Hood Foundation, Siegel Family Endowment, Solon E. Summerfield Foundation, The New York Community Trust, The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation, The Pinkerton Foundation, and The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. Since its inception, the Fund has awarded nearly \$19 million in grants for organizational capacity building, advocacy and policy research, employer engagement efforts, and demonstration projects.

## **Call for Letters of Interest**

New York's workforce development sector is among the largest and most complex in the nation, spanning more than a dozen government agencies and myriad public funding streams, the City University of New York's vast system of non-degree and degree programs, and a broad field of nonprofit training providers. The sector is challenged to meet the needs of New Yorkers who experience unemployment, underemployment, weak labor protections, unfair wages, occupational segregation, and other structural causes of economic inequality. Despite increasing collective will to lift low-income New Yorkers, few large-scale strategies have emerged to address economic inequality by marshaling existing government and philanthropic resources or developing a coordinated plan for utilizing historic new federal investments—including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)—to connect low-income New Yorkers to high-quality jobs.

The Fund invites Letters of Interest for projects that advance robust and effective systems of workforce development services for low-income New Yorkers through research, advocacy, and systems-level strategies.

Applicants may submit *one* Letter of Interest aligned with one of two major priorities and must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, or have a 501(c)(3) as a funds administrator, and be operating in the five boroughs of New York City, a City University of New York Community College, or a division of CUNY Central.

**1. Research and advocacy to inform workforce policies, programs, and investments.**

*Competitive research and advocacy submissions should seek to:*

- Shape the city’s workforce development policy and programmatic priorities;
- Inform the strategic allocation of public and private funding streams;
- Unlock more public funding for New York City;
- Provide insight into the current and emerging labor markets for workforce practitioners and policymakers;
- Expand existing or develop new worker protections and/or public policies that benefit essential workers; and/or
- Improve the quality of essential jobs and/or address occupational segregation.

*Priority will be given to projects that have the greatest potential to impact the city’s workforce policies, programs, and investments.*

**2. Systems-level strategies to improve the ability of New York City’s public workforce system, public education system, or field of nonprofit training providers to connect low-income New Yorkers to high-quality jobs.**

*Competitive systems-level submissions should seek to:*

- Identify structural changes to the public workforce or educational systems or the field of nonprofit training providers that reduce occupational segregation and/or lead to increased connections to high-quality jobs for low-income New Yorkers;
- Support the expansion of cross-system coalitions and/or coordinate stakeholders within or across workforce and education systems to develop new or expanded connections to high-quality jobs for low-income New Yorkers and/or improve the quality of essential jobs; and/or
- Develop new or expand existing industry or labor union engagement strategies that result in new or expanded connections to high-quality jobs for low-income New Yorkers and/or improve the quality of essential jobs.

*Priority will be given to projects that leverage public funding, address multiple structural barriers faced by low-income New Yorkers, or expand access to proven pathways.*

Given The Fund's emphasis on systemic change, we will NOT consider requests for:

- Direct services that are not tied to or part of a broader effort to inform workforce policies, programs, and investments or improve New York City's public workforce or public education systems, or field of nonprofit training providers.
- Single-site career preparation or training programs.
- Lobbying activities.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible applicants include New York City government agencies that contract for workforce services or inform workforce policies and programs; the Department of Education, the City University of New York (CUNY), or partnerships of multiple CUNY colleges; research organizations; workforce intermediaries or coalitions working with the field of nonprofit training providers; or intermediaries or coalitions working across multiple systems. Projects must focus on high-quality jobs (aligned with the [Aspen Institute's job quality framework](#)) or on improving the quality of essential jobs.

## **Submission Guidelines**

The deadline to submit letters of interest is **Thursday, June 22, 2023**. Letters must be submitted electronically no later than 6:00 p.m. through The New York Community Trust's Grants Portal:

**<https://proposals.nycommunitytrust.org/Home/ThreeChoices>**.

**Combine the following into a single PDF saved with the filename format "Organization Name.pdf":**

1. A three- to four-page narrative (in 12 pt. font) including:
  - a. Organization(s) involved;
  - b. Summary of lead organization's mission, history, and record of accomplishment in delivering workforce development programming, advocacy, or research;
  - c. Description of proposed project, major project activities, and project goals;
  - d. Description of intended impact:
    - i. *For research and advocacy projects:* How will the project impact the city's workforce policies, programs, or investments?
    - ii. *For systems-level strategies:* How will the project strengthen the ability of the public workforce system, public education system, or field of nonprofit training providers to connect low-income New Yorkers to high-quality jobs?
  - e. Description of anticipated project milestones;
  - f. Plan for measuring and evaluating outcomes;
  - g. Plan for sustaining the project beyond the grant period; and
  - h. Description of job quality metrics prioritized by the project (using the Aspen Institute's job quality framework as a guide) and a description of current or anticipated labor market demand for any occupation(s) prioritized by the project (if applicable).
  
2. A project budget listing personnel, program, and administrative expenses and sources of revenue, including foundation, government, and corporate funders. Please specify the amount of each revenue source and whether each grant award or funding commitment is secured or pending.

## **Evaluation Process**

This is a competitive opportunity. Letters of Interest will be evaluated by The Fund's Executive Committee according to the following criteria:

- Alignment with The Fund's mission to promote robust, coherent, and effective workforce development *systems*;
- Potential impact on or benefit to the public workforce *system*, the public education *system*, and/or the *field* of nonprofit training providers; and
- Inclusion of multiple stakeholder groups.

## **Grant Awards**

Grant awards will range from **\$50,000 to \$250,000 for a 12- to 18-month period**. The Fund expects to award up to 6 grants. Applicants will be notified by email if the submission is of interest to The Fund and may be asked to provide additional information. Site visits and/or follow-up meetings for clarification may also be necessary. Grant decisions will be announced by fall 2023.

## **Information Sessions**

Virtual information sessions will be held on **May 23rd at 11:00 am** and **May 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm**. To register, email [nycworkforcefunders@gmail.com](mailto:nycworkforcefunders@gmail.com) with your name, title, and organization.

*Please direct all questions about this solicitation to Judith M. Smith, coordinator of the New York City Workforce Development Fund, at [nycworkforcefunders@gmail.com](mailto:nycworkforcefunders@gmail.com).*