



## Innovations in CTE Grant

### Grant Awards of up to \$250,000 per Project

### Award Period: July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

#### [PURPOSE](#)

#### [BACKGROUND](#)

#### [CTE STRATEGIC GOALS](#)

#### [DEFINITIONS](#)

#### [TIMELINE](#)

#### [ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS](#)

#### [CRITERIA](#)

#### [GRANT APPLICATION FORMAT](#)

#### [SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS](#)

#### [UNALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES](#)

#### **PURPOSE:**

This annual approximately \$1.8 million supplemental grant initiative is aimed at fostering innovation in CTE programming across Colorado. Grant dollars should be part of a larger effort for transformational change aimed addressing strategic priorities for CTE in Colorado. This grant initiative provides an opportunity for current Perkins grant recipients to apply for additional dollars awarded through a competitive process to implement innovative strategies—particularly those that are data-driven, evidence-based, and linked to outcomes of the regional needs assessment process to expand and transform the quality of CTE programming in Colorado. This initiative will help distribute federal CTE dollars broadly across Colorado to deserving applicants who may not otherwise have had the resources to implement significant innovations in CTE with just the funds generated through the Perkins formula grant. Over time, best practices will be identified along with opportunities to appropriately scale successful strategies across the state.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In July 2018, Congress passed the “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the Twenty-First Century Act” (Perkins V). The law continues the federal investment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and expands uses of the Reserve fund dollars to encourage and foster “innovation through the identification and promotion of promising and proven career and technical education programs, practices, and strategies...” (Section 112(c)(2)(A)). Colorado took this challenge in the law and set aside approximately one million eight hundred thousand dollars of the ‘reserve’ dollars the state receives each year to award Innovation in CTE Grants. In November 2019 and again in March 2024, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) approved the State Perkins Plan which aligns to the strategic vision and goals for CTE in Colorado. CTE programs in middle school, high school and at the postsecondary level are administered by the SBCCOE through the Colorado Community College System (CCCS). The goals outlined in the strategic plan align with other state priorities for workforce and education as well as with the federal Perkins Act.

**CTE STRATEGIC GOALS:**

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>Career Advisement &amp; Development</b> – Ensure each Colorado Learner has access to ongoing career advisement and development.
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>Instructor Recruitment &amp; Retention</b> – Develop and ensure a viable pipeline of CTE instructors to fill the educator positions at the middle school, secondary, and postsecondary levels.
<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>Partnerships</b> – Prepare Colorado’s future workforce through transformational partnerships.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>Quality Programs</b> – Elevate the quality of CTE programs to support each learner’s skill development and meet industry needs.
<b>GOAL 5</b>	<b>Work-Based Learning</b> – Ensure access to meaningful work-based learning opportunities for each CTE learner.
<b>FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS</b>	<b>EQUITY &amp; ACCESS</b>
	Create opportunities for each learner to access quality CTE programs and distribution of CTE programs throughout the state.
	<b>INCLUSIVITY</b>
	Provide each learner with the opportunity to participate in a CTE program and decrease the gaps of CTE participation for target populations, non-traditional occupations, and geographic areas.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- I. **CTE Participant:**
  - a. **Secondary:** A student who has completed 1 or more year long CTE courses = 2 or more semester long CTE courses = 1 or more Carnegie Units of CTE= 120 or more contact hours of CTE coursework
  - b. **Postsecondary:** Students who have completed at least 1 CTE course within the reporting year.
- II. **Fiscal Agent:** In the event that multiple eligible institutions (see eligibility requirements section) decide to collaborate to submit a grant application proposal collectively, the partner institutions will need to agree on a program lead/fiscal agent who will be the primary point of contact for all grant related communications, project coordination, and coordination of financial reimbursement requests as is currently the case in a Perkins Local Application by a secondary consortium.
- III. **Nontraditional field:** An occupation or field of work, such as careers in computer science, technology, and other current and emerging high skill occupations, for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in such occupation or field of work. (Perkins Act 3(33))
- IV. **Rural:** Designated as rural by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) at the secondary level. A postsecondary institution is designated as rural if its primary campus is located in a town whose school district is on the CDE list.
- V. **Special Populations:** Individuals with disabilities; individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults; individuals preparing for non-traditional fields; single parents, including single pregnant women; out of-workforce individuals; English learners; homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 1143a); youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; and youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101(a)(4) of title

10 United States Code); and is on active duty (as such term is defined in section 101(d)(1) of such title) (Perkins Act 3(48)).

- VI. Work-based learning:** Sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required of a given field that are aligned to curriculum and instruction. In Colorado, this is reflected through the ‘Learning Through Work’ and ‘Learning At Work’ portions of the Colorado Work-Based Learning Continuum. (Definition based on Perkins Act 3(55))

#### **TIMELINE:**

- I. **March 20, 2024** – Webinar to answer questions about the grant (note there is also a webinar from 2022 that remains posted on our website as dates have changed, but key processes and facts have not).
- II. **March 15, 2024** – Grant application period opens
- III. **May 15, 2024** – Grant application period closes at 5:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time
- IV. **May 16-June 14, 2024** – Application screening by review committee
- V. **Week of June 17, 2024** – Notifications to applicants about their application
- VI. **June 24-June 28, 2024** - Grant agreements negotiated and signed
- VII. **July 1, 2024** – Funds available to awardees for fiscal year 2025 once Grant agreement is finalized

#### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

- I. Each applicant (and partner education institution in the application) must be participating in the regular, formula-based Perkins grant program for the fiscal year of the application.
- II. Each education institution (i.e. district, consortium, or college) must meet at least one of the following criteria as outlined in the Perkins Act:
  - a. Qualify as a rural recipient (secondary district designations align with the Colorado Department of Education’s rural list);
  - b. Have a high percentage of CTE participants compared to the overall student population (This is defined as having at least 15% participation in CTE in the last academic year);
  - c. Have a high number of CTE participants (defined as 1,000 or more CTE participants in the last academic year); or
  - d. Be submitting an application in order to directly address an area with an identified deficiency or gap in performance as described in Section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii) in the Perkins Act.

#### **CRITERIA:**

- I. New demands from the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace, rapid globalization, shifts in the State’s demographics, and raised expectations for equitable outcomes for K-12 and postsecondary students have highlighted the critical need to elevate innovative practices within career and technical education (CTE) programming. Therefore, the application must clearly outline how the project proposed addresses a minimum of two of Colorado’s CTE goals in addition to the partnership goal.
- II. Priority and preference will be given to:
  - a. Collaborations that include rural partners

- b. Geographic location and/or size of participating institutions, to ensure equitable access to funds and diverse representation across the state
        - c. Alignment to CTE Strategic Plan, especially proposals that:
          - i. Include a focus on nontraditional programs and populations; and
          - ii. Include specific strategies designed to erase equity gaps for special populations in CTE; and
        - d. Alignment to comprehensive regional needs assessment results.
- III. Partnership is a strategic priority for Colorado CTE. This includes partnership of all types, including, for example: secondary, postsecondary, industry, and other demonstrations of partnership. Multi-partner grant applications that highlight new or existing collaborations are encouraged; however, partners not meeting the eligibility requirements (below) may not serve as the project lead or fiscal agent. Independent applications will be considered the lowest priority in funding.
- IV. Only one application per project will be accepted; however, the application may include multiple partners and should be submitted by the program lead and/or fiscal agent. Applications should be approved by the applicants' appropriate levels of administration before submission.
- V. Grant ranges vary depending on the scope of the grant and proposals of up to \$250,000 will be accepted. **Applicants may also apply for smaller grants such as to conduct feasibility studies or do other analysis that will lead to innovation;** however, such applications must include a timeline and plan to scale that approach. While any proposal that meets the criteria, eligibility, and application requirements of this request for proposals will be considered, some examples of possible proposal activities may include:
  - a. Feasibility studies and development comprehensive action plans to address CTE teacher shortages on a regional basis;
  - b. Action plans to address barriers to participation in CTE or equity gaps that have been identified;
  - c. Projects that expand access to CTE programming such as through creation of a mobile lab, shared instructor, or regionally coordinated CTE program;
  - d. Development of shared resources within a community to increase capacity or quantity in the number of work-based learning experiences available to CTE students;
  - e. Projects that upskill or provide meaningful professional development to CTE instructors, including those that provide a regional or statewide community of practice as part of the project.
- VI. Innovations in CTE Grants are reimbursement-based grants and will be reimbursed through a voucher process as is used with the basic Perkins grant application. Grant recipients must be able to pay expenses and submit for reimbursement at a later date. Additionally, payment of the final voucher request will be contingent upon each of the following:
  - a. Submission of a report as detailed in the project's proposal (see Grant Application requirements below)
  - b. Presentation of the project and results at the annual CACTE conference (CACTE should be included in the Grant Application budget as noted below)
  - c. Conformance to the applicable grant requirements, including those listed in this document and the Grant Recipient Agreement signed upon award of the grant funds.

## **GRANT APPLICATION FORMAT:**

**The grant application should include all components below and be submitted in a Word or PDF document along with a detailed budget in Excel (template Excel budget is provided) and any applicable supporting documents including letters of support as noted below. The application and all supporting details should not exceed 8 pages; however, the detailed budget and letters of support do not count toward that total.**

- I. **Project Name.** What is the name of your grant project?
- II. **Project Leads.** Who will be the key leads for this grant project? Provide full names and titles. **Designate one Primary Point of Contact**, including email, phone, and mailing address, to whom all communications from CCCS will be directed.
- III. **Fiscal Agent.** What institution is sponsoring this grant program and will coordinate reimbursement and reporting efforts? Indicate whether senior leadership has approved of this arrangement for each of the participating entities.
- IV. **Project Partners.** Which institution(s) are collaborating on this project submission and what roles will the partners play in the project? Include the partner institution name as well as the full name and title of the primary contact for each partner institution.
  - a. Additionally, a letter of support should be provided from each partner supporting the project and the partnership.
- V. **Eligibility.** Note which of the eligibility requirements pertain to your application submission. For example, do the institutions applying qualify as rural, have a high percentage or number of CTE participants; or is the application addressing a gap in performance.
- VI. **Project Description (not to exceed 1,000 words).** Describe your proposed project and how it addresses a minimum of two of Colorado's CTE goals (Career Advising & Development, Quality CTE Programs, Teacher Recruitment & Retention; and Work-based Learning) in addition to the goal of strengthening Partnerships. It is suggested that the project description include strategies designed to erase equity gaps in CTE for special populations. What are the key strategies that you will undertake to advance your work? Describe the extent to which planned activities correlate to the results of the comprehensive regional needs assessment process.
- VII. **Data.** Describe the data that led you to pursue this project. Include relevant information as to how these data can be expanded or used to inform decision-making processes as the project moves forward.
- VIII. **Success.** Define what success is for this grant program, specifically including the anticipated impact on the goals identified for the project.
- IX. **Scaling.** Describe how you will scale and institutionalize this work if the grant program is successful. How does this grant fit into the partner institutions' long-term goals?
- X. **Creating Buy-in.** Detail how partners were involved in the development of this grant project. How was buy-in secured for this grant, including for external or non-education partners (if you have external or non-education partners)?
- XI. **Reporting.** Describe how you will report and share any successes, failures, and other details with colleagues inside and outside your application partner(s). All grant recipients will be

required to share their results at the Summer 2024 CACTE conference and will also be required to submit at least one photo, quotation from a student impacted by the project, appropriate releases, and article that can be used to promote the project. A project status update is also required with each reimbursement request submitted.

- XII. Budget.** Provide a budget narrative with a detailed breakdown of how you propose to use the funding. Indirect costs are allowed at the fiscal agent’s negotiated rate up to a maximum of 5% for this grant. Note that federal requirements in Perkins and Uniform Grant Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 will apply. Direct administration costs will not be allowed. **Include a line item for registration costs to attend the Summer 2025 CACTE Conference to present on the outcomes of the grant project.** For reference, CACTE registration generally ranges between \$525 and \$650 per person depending on membership and the conference will be held in Loveland in the third week of July 2025. Registration is the only CACTE cost that should be included as travel occurs outside the grant period and will be negotiated with CCCS separately. In addition, address the following questions:
- a. What is your sustainability plan when the grant dollars run out if the project is not a one-time investment or takes longer than one year to complete?
  - b. What do you plan to do if you don’t get the full amount? We expect to fund as many grants as possible at the full request amount, but there may be applications that are only partially funded given the amount of dollars available for award.
  - c. What is the lowest amount of money you could receive and still be effective?
  - d. What matching or in-kind support is your partnership contributing to this program? Matching or in-kind support is not required although it can be helpful in demonstrating how a successful project may be sustained over time.
  - e. If the project includes activities related to preparing learners for non-traditional career fields, please indicate those activities and the specific correlating expenses.
- I. Timeline and Implementation Plan.** Please attach a detailed timeline that outlines the key activities of your grant, key implementers, stakeholders, timing, outcomes associated with each activity, and expected completion of these outcomes.
- II. Assessment.** Detail your assessment plan that highlights the overall success and impact of program implementation. Assessment should review how implementation correlates to the identified project goals, and measure the results of program implementation.

**SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please submit your full application to Colorado CTE ([cte@cccs.edu](mailto:cte@cccs.edu)) by 5pm Mountain Daylight Time on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Please add in the subject line the name of your entity and “Innovations in CTE Grant FY2025.” Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

**UNALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES:**

Since the Innovations in CTE Grant funds come from Colorado’s federal Perkins grant award, there are several activities that are unallowable and would therefore also be unallowable in an Innovations in CTE application.

- I. Capital construction or building improvement projects

- II. Supplanting (The Perkins Act requires that grant funds are supplemental and may not be used for activities that supplant)
- III. Non-CTE projects
- IV. CTE program development activities (setting up a program, equipping a lab, etc.) for middle grades or lower
- V. Activities that result in discrimination based on protected or special population status would not be permitted

2025