



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Center on Disability
& Development



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

TAMU Work-Based Learning Project

2025-2026 Request for Proposal (RFP)

For Technical and Financial Support to

Develop A New Work-Based Learning Project (Stage 1)

Or

Expand an Existing Work-Based Learning Project (Stage 2)

This project is supported in part by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) with a contract totaling \$2,464,552.00 to the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University. The contents are those of the project and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by TWC, VR, or the Texas Government. For more information, please visit cdd.tamu.edu for more information.



ABOUT TAMU WORK-BASED LEARNING PROJECT:

The TAMU Work-Based Learning Project offers work-based learning (WBL) opportunities to high school students with disabilities in Texas. We work with selected high schools to implement one or more WBL programs, with an emphasis on school-based enterprises, to provide students authentic work experience in integrated settings. Through a competitive application process, project staff will select high schools, help them refine their WBL project for implementation, and provide funding, staff training, and support so that students can learn and practice employment skills.

Please note: While we understand the value of independent living skills and work simulation, this project cannot fund these activities. The project is designed to support school-based enterprises or other employment experiences.

For more information about Work-Based Learning, please visit the website

<https://cdd.tamu.edu/wbl-project/>

HOW TO APPLY:

Applicants can be public, private, or charter schools/districts. Students to benefit must have active IEP or 504 plans. The process involves the following steps:

1. The TAMU WBL Project is ongoing, with applications reviewed monthly. The deadline is the 1st of each month to be included in that month's review cycle.
2. Inquiries can be sent to jhardin@tamu.edu
3. An electronic copy of completed proposal must be submitted to jhardin@tamu.edu
4. **Please review the CDD's Work-Based Learning Application Guide for more information. The application guide can be found at <https://cdd.tamu.edu/wbl-project/>**



APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization Name:

Physical Address:

Mailing Address:

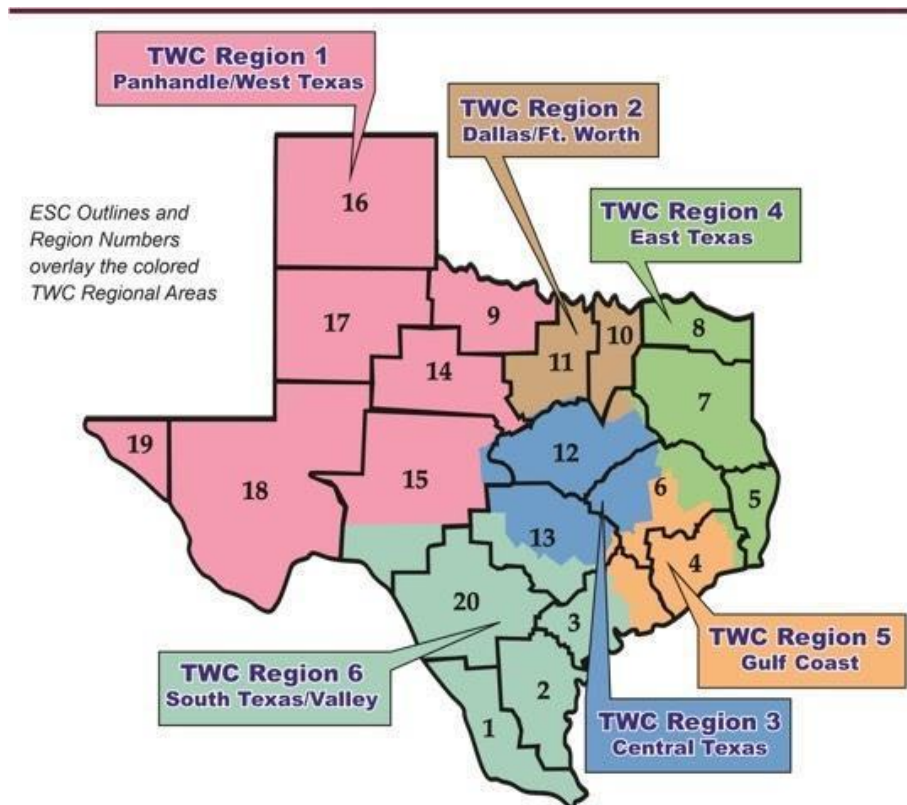
Contact Name:

Contact Phone Number:

Contact Email:

List the TWC Region for the WBL project: _____

List the ESC Region for the WBL project: _____





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Work-Based
Learning Project

List the Planning Team Committee members. At least one community/business partner is required. Community partners with experience in a related industry are preferred.

NAME	TITLE (e.g., teacher, transition specialist, business owner, family member, VR counselor, etc.)	CONTACT EMAIL

WBL PROJECT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 1) Select the appropriate designation for the applicant:
 - ☐ Stage 1 Applicant (developing a new WBL project)
 - ☐ Stage 2 Applicant (expanding an existing WBL project)
- 2) Students to participate in the WBL project receive support services through (select all that apply):
 - ☐ Special Education
 - ☐ 504
 - ☐ Other

If you marked "Other," list the support service(s).



Work-Based Learning Project

- 3) Describe the target population for the WBL project to include any specific programs, disability categories, or locations.
- 4) List the age range of the students you expect to participate in the WBL project.
- 5) The WBL project will take place (select all that apply):
- ☐ On-campus ☐ Off-campus
 - ☐ During school hours ☐ After-school hours
 - ☐ Outside of the traditional school setting (e.g., internships)

If you marked "Outside of the traditional school setting," describe the setting below:

- 6) The WBL project will allow students to (select all that apply):
- ☐ Operate a small business
 - ☐ Perform work for other businesses
 - ☐ Complete tasks for volunteer or non-profit organizations
 - ☐ Other

If you marked "Other," describe project below:



WBL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Describe in detail the WBL enterprise your team will develop. Tell us what your students will make or sell, or what services they will provide. Describe what jobs they will have within the enterprise, and how those roles will improve their employability.

If your team plans to expand on an existing enterprise, describe the current enterprise, the expansion, and how the expansion will improve the existing enterprise.

2. Specify how the project will collaborate with a community-based or web-based business or organization. Include a description of any community partnership that will benefit the WBL, such as providing donations, technical support, or other resources.



3. Describe the WBL project's approach to provide all students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school instruction to real-life work activities and future career opportunities. How will the project develop transferable employability skills?

4. Work-Based Learning is one of five Pre-Employment Transition Skill (Pre-ETS) Areas identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). What additional Pre-ETS skills will students gain through the project? How will the skill area(s) be addressed?
 - Please address all areas that apply to the project, but not all areas need to be addressed.
 - ☐ a.) Career Exploration (opportunities to learn about different careers, learn about the skills needed for a variety of jobs, and discover career interests).

[Information, curriculum materials, and resources can be found here.](#)

 - ☐ b.) Postsecondary Opportunities (exploration of options for continued education after graduation[community college, university, technical training, apprenticeships, military service, etc] , the benefits, and requirements).

[Information, curriculum materials, and resources can be found here.](#)



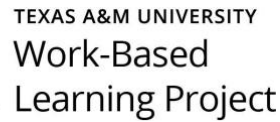
- ☐ c.) Workplace Readiness (learn job specific tasks, soft skills, and related social and independent living skills required for success in employment).

[Information, curriculum materials, and resources can be found here.](#)

- ☐ d.) Self-Advocacy (supporting students' knowledge of themselves [strengths, needs, and interests], understanding of their rights and responsibilities, the use of effective communication, and requesting needed accommodations and support).

[Information, curriculum materials, and resources can be found here.](#)

5. Specify how the team will evaluate student progress. Progress monitoring should include job-specific skills as well as soft skills. Pretests and posttests are provided by the CDD, but additional progress monitoring will be needed to document individual student progress. Free assessment tools are available through NTACT:C's [Student Progress Monitoring Toolkit](#) if needed.



6. Provide detailed steps your team will need to take to develop the WBL project. If your team will expand on an existing enterprise, provide detailed steps your team will need to take to expand.
7. How will you ensure the sustainability (financial, staff, location, etc) of the WBL enterprise? How will you maintain the project beyond the initial funding cycle? For example, how will you make a profit, and how do you know there's a market for your product or service?
8. Provide any additional information your team would like the selection committee to know.



WBL PROJECT SUPPORT REQUEST

1. Provide the total financial amount requested. (up to \$10,000)
2. Attach an itemized budget spreadsheet. Please note that the TAMU WBL Project cannot fund construction or building renovations, vehicles, trailers, segregated/self-contained job sites, or work simulations such as task boxes. If you have questions about whether an item can be funded, please contact Joette Hardin at jhardin@tamu.edu
3. Specify training and support needs. TAMU Work-Based Learning Project can provide training and support for the development, maintenance, or expansion of the WBL project/enterprise. We do not provide tech support such as web design. We recommend that you partner with your CTE department or community partner to address these needs.



Next Steps:

Thank you for applying! Here's what you can expect after submission.

- 1) The selection committee will review all proposals and identify qualifying candidates.
- 2) Notice of the review decision will be sent to the proposal's primary contact person.
- 3) An initial meeting will be held to plan implementation, clarify project reporting expectations, and determine support needs.
- 4) Awardees complete acceptance paperwork and submit it to Joette Hardin.
- 5) Awardees complete a Program Assessment provided by TAMU and meet with TAMU to review in two virtual meetings within the first 60 days after the initial meeting.
- 6) The financial award is issued and training and support are scheduled by TAMU Work-Based Learning Project.
- 7) Provide TAMU with Pre/Post testing data collected using the Job Skills Student Summary data tool by the designated dates (TAMU provides this assessment).
- 8) Participate in support and training activities provided by TAMU.
- 9) Each district will participate in a Work-Based Learning Project Research learning session.
- 10) Periodic inquiries and reviews of the WBL project are completed by TAMU Work-Based Learning Project.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WORK-BASED LEARNING

WBL is an instructional approach that uses a campus, community-based worksite, or a business setting to provide students with disabilities the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school instruction to real-life work activities and future career opportunities. The opportunities are meant to engage, motivate and augment the learning process. A WBL project/enterprise can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public, or nonprofit businesses in a community or through web-based resources. Direct employer or community involvement must be a component of a qualifying WBL project/enterprise to ensure in-depth engagement. In addition, WBL requires an in-depth commitment of youth and an evaluation of work skills.

Work-based learning is one of five Pre-Employment Transition Service skill areas defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The act requires state vocational rehabilitation agencies to set aside at least 15% of their federal funding to provide these services to students who are potentially eligible for VR services.



This project is one of the Texas Workforce Commission's efforts to expand Pre-ETS services in the state of Texas. Skills the students gain through the project must include at least one additional Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS). Pre-ETS for the project might include 1) career exploration, 2) postsecondary opportunities, 3) work-place readiness, and 4) self-advocacy. WBL projects/enterprises may be on-campus or off-campus, during school or after-school, and the experiences can be outside the traditional school setting (e.g., internships). A qualifying WBL project/enterprise allows students to operate a small business, perform work for other businesses, or complete tasks for volunteer or non-profit organizations. Qualifying WBL proposals must include an integrated setting with real-world application of skills. Proposals must incorporate sustainability measures such as the use of profits to repurchase products or business sponsorships.

Examples of a WBL project/enterprise may include one or more of the following: career mentorship, career-related competitions, volunteering, paid or unpaid internships, practicums, student-led project, and paid or non-paid work experiences (see TWC's [Pre-ETS Catalog](#) for examples). Qualifying applicants must comply with [Fair Labor Standards](#) and [Section 511 of WIOA Title IV](#). Applicants may apply for funding up to \$10,000 and technical assistance, to include extensive one-on-one assistance, scheduled troubleshooting sessions, PLCs, webinars, etc. All qualifying RFP applicants must identify Planning Team Committee members who participate in the application process, WBL project/enterprise planning, and evaluation. Suggested Planning Team Committee members include but are not limited to a school administrator, transition specialist, teacher(s), paraprofessional(s), student(s), business partner(s), TWC Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or Transition Program Specialist, Chamber of Commerce board member, and family member(s) of a person with a disability. The Planning Team Committee must include at minimum one member not directly associated with the school or district. Stage 2 applicants, schools applying to expand on an existing WBL project, must meet all the requirements described above. Stage 2 applicants should specify how the current project meets the criteria and how the expansion will further improve student outcomes.

Applicants new to WBL may want to familiarize themselves with this approach to learning by reviewing [NTACT:C's School-Based Enterprise Toolkit](#) and viewing the CDD/NTACT:C [School-Based Enterprise webinar](#). Applicants are also welcome to contact the TAMU Work-Based Learning Project to review any part of the application prior to submission.

For more information about Work-Based Learning, please visit the website <https://cdd.tamu.edu/wbl-project/>