



# U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation TPM Career Readiness Academy

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Request for Proposals



U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation



## Purpose

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (U.S. Chamber Foundation) seeks to co-host a Career Readiness Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy, designed for community colleges and sub-baccalaureate program leaders, employer partners, and community-based organizations. TPM as a framework seeks to unlock employer leadership and orchestrate talent supply chains, of which community colleges play a critical role. This Academy model aims to enhance the quality of career pathways and to align those pathways and the credentials they provide with in-demand jobs and skills with actual employment prospects upon program completion. In particular, this effort prioritizes improving outcomes for adult students of color.

The TPM Academy is supported by a curriculum that will give community colleges, community-based organizations, and their employer partners a guidebook to developing more effective partnerships by providing the knowledge, skills, and ability to implement talent supply chain solutions. The U.S. Chamber Foundation is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from business-leading organizations or public-sector entities (what we refer to as state coordinating partners) in partnership with a community college system(s) interested in partnering with the U.S. Chamber Foundation to co-host the TPM Academy and receive technical assistance to support TPM projects in the state.

## Background

In 2014, the U.S. Chamber Foundation created the TPM initiative to flip the workforce system and build the capacity of the business community to better manage career pathway partnerships. In this system, employers proactively organize and manage preferred talent provider partnerships to orchestrate performance-based talent supply chain solutions. These partnerships streamline career pathways for newly credentialed individuals and existing workers in ways that ensure employers get the talent they need optimizing time, quality, and cost.

The movement began in 2014 with a white paper, national conference, and call to action, and in 2015 the U.S. Chamber Foundation launched seven pilot partnerships that explored new employer engagement strategies. By 2016, the U.S. Chamber Foundation took best practices learned from field testing and launched the TPM Academy designed to grow employer leadership and capacity to manage talent supply chains at scale through business member associations. The movement has grown exponentially with close to 1,000 TPM Academy participants representing 44 states, DC, and Canada, and thousands of employers involved in employer collaboratives. The TPM library of resources now includes ways to leverage the framework for career and technical education partnerships, for opportunity population serving organizations, and for employers seeking to improve job quality. To learn more, visit [www.thetalentsupplychain.org](http://www.thetalentsupplychain.org).

## Academy Structure

The TPM Academy is a training that can be hosted virtually, in-person, or via a hybrid approach. The 33 TPM Academies that have occurred to date are each customized to ensure an ideal learning experience



that can result in direct action taken throughout or after completing the Academy training. What does not differ is the TPM framework on which the Academy and its accompanying curriculum are based.

For this Career Readiness TPM Academy, learners will experience the TPM framework in numerous ways including ongoing support webinars hosted by the U.S. Chamber Foundation and partners before, during, and after they learn the TPM framework. They will learn the core curriculum via self-paced learning on our online learning platform, TPM Co/Lab, as well as complete the TPM Opportunity Populations specialty course to develop a foundational understanding of how TPM can be leveraged to improve outcomes for students and workers who experience barriers to education, employment, and career advancement opportunities. On a weekly basis, they will meet virtually with TPM Academy faculty to ensure the learning concepts are resonating and have an opportunity to discuss application. At the mid-point of their training as well as at the completion, they will participate in in-person implementation workshops in which they will put their understanding of the theory to work in order to strategize how to maximize education and workforce partnerships to improve employer-aligned pathways, particularly for adult students of color.

The makeup of the primary learners must include multiple community colleges and sub-baccalaureate programs though it is of no preference to the U.S. Chamber Foundation if the institutions are a part of the same college system (i.e., not all states have statewide community college systems). All participants must be committed to improving employer engagement with campuses and programs that not only seek to improve employer-aligned credentials and pathways, but also seek to reach and improve outcomes for Black and other priority populations. Leaders from community-based organizations should have a similar commitment to the colleges in prioritizing equity.

Participating campus teams can include staff members from both the degree-granting and non-degree granting divisions within the colleges as well as their employer partners. Teams should consist of three to five representatives including key decisions makers and implementation leads for both the college (e.g., CTE directors, partnerships coordinators, program development specialists, etc.), community-based organizations that work with priority talent populations, as well as employers (e.g., HR, hiring managers, and talent acquisition specialists) or those responsible for organizing a collaborative of employers (e.g., lead staff at a chamber of commerce or sector partnership).

RFPs are welcomed from single entities that will take on the responsibility to ensure geographic diversity throughout the state, or through a group of regional-based entities that will coordinate with one another to ensure representation for their respective locality.

## **What Role Do Providers Play in TPM?**

Though TPM is an employer-led movement, it is by no means employer alone. Provider partners—those who offer education, training, and other support services—play a critical role in developing effective talent supply chains that benefit learners. While not limited to community college partners, TPM encourages employers to seek partnerships with those that are responsive and have the ability to meet employer needs. As employers collect and aggregate data related to their most critical jobs and most



pressing pain points, TPM suggests that preferred providers are informed prior to engaging in a co-design process for optimal talent supply chains but more fully engaged once employers have done their homework. This results in not only more clear communication from one or more employers, but more engaged and committed employer partnerships that are bought into the concept of shared value for all partners.

## **Eligibility and Requirements for Participation**

The U.S. Chamber Foundation is seeking proposals from business-facing organizations, public sector partners, or those best suited to work in partnership with a community college system(s) or individual community colleges to co-host a Career Readiness TPM Academy, and it is likely the proposal will need to be a coordinated effort among these partners. Partners should have some familiarity with TPM.

Applicants must:

- Demonstrate a convincing plan of action as well as the capability and capacity to implement a TPM Academy for up to 40 individuals, preferably representing different community college campuses, local community-based organizations, employers, and business-facing organizations.
- Demonstrate that community college partners have a student body reflecting regional demographics and priority opportunity populations—those who experience barriers to education and employment. This includes Black and African American, Hispanic and Latinx,



Native American, and other underrepresented learners. Participating community-based organizations should serve similar priority populations.

- Commit to and execute data collection on specific program changes as a result of this investment including but not limited to number of programs improved and aligned with employer needs and estimated number of learners impacted, number of new programs launched and aligned with employer needs and estimated number of learners impacted, and number of credentials that are aligned with employment and labor market demand. (Note: no identifiable student information will be required).
- Provide institutional goals as it pertains to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including but not limited to enrollment, persistence, and completion for adults of color, as well as how those goals are being measured and evaluated over time.
- Provide employer measures of success as it pertains to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as determined by employer partners. These should be complementary to the institutional goals previously referenced.
- Demonstrate sufficient interest and buy-in from employers in (1) implementing the TPM framework with your institutional partners, and (2) improving their talent sourcing of opportunity populations, including Black and African American, Hispanic and Latinx, Native American, and other underrepresented learners.
- Demonstrate a desire and need for technical assistance from the U.S. Chamber Foundation.
- Be willing to serve as advisers and provide guidance to the U.S. Chamber Foundation on how to successfully host future TPM Academies targeting community college partners and community-based organizations.
- Possess the ability to serve as a fiscal agent capable of receiving funding and will be responsible for confirming all funds are used solely for appropriate 501(c)(3) activities.

**Recipient entities are prohibited from engaging in political activity, lobbying activity, and advocacy related to specific legislative proposals with U.S. Chamber Foundation funding.**

## Timeline

This section includes a tentative selection process and training timeline for the TPM Career Readiness Academy. Exact dates will be decided upon with the co-hosting partner.

### *Tentative RFP and Selection Process*

March 1, 2024	<b>Request for Proposal released.</b>
April 5, 2024	<b>Applications due by 5:00 pm (ET).</b>
April 8 – April 19, 2024	<b>Application review.</b> The U.S. Chamber Foundation may contact certain applicants for additional information.
April 22, 2024	The U.S. Chamber Foundation <b>to confirm selection.</b>
By May 3, 2024	<b>Kickoff call</b> for planning.



*Tentative Facilitation Schedule*

May 6 – June 7, 2024	<b>Select TPM Academy participants (acceptance can be on a rolling basis so that learners can gain access to the eLearning modules)</b>
Week of June 17	<b>First Live Learning Cohort Meeting (TPM Orientation)</b>
Week of June 24	<b>Second Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 1)</b>
Week of July 8	<b>Third Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 2)</b>
Week of July 15	<b>Fourth Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 3)</b>
Week of July 22	<b>Fifth Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 4)</b>
Week of August 5	<b>In-Person Implementation Workshop</b>
Week of August 19	<b>Sixth Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 5)</b>
Week of August 26	<b>Seventh Live Learning Cohort Meeting (Strategy 6)</b>
October 2024	<b>In-Person Implementation Workshop</b>

## Expectations of Selected Proposal Applicants

The U.S. Chamber Foundation will require a strong commitment from the selected state coordinator(s) to successfully execute the TPM Academy. Selected partners are required to meet the following expectations:

- **Execution of submitted TPM Academy plan.** Selected applicants are expected to complete activities specified per their submitted plan for assistance planning and executing the TPM Academy, including but not limited to:
  - Educating and informing the community about TPM and the TPM Academy
  - Demonstrating that it has the staff capacity and willingness to commit to the community college partnership and an aligned mission to support priority populations
  - Providing evidence of effective partnerships, most especially with the employer community and community colleges
  - Soliciting appropriate applicants
  - Finalizing and communicating TPM Academy dates
  - Securing a meeting location, organizing, and confirming AV and catering
  - Communicating with and fielding questions from TPM Academy participants
  - Bearing event costs that exceed the amount provided by the Chamber Foundation
  - Providing guidance and feedback to the Chamber Foundation on improving the Academy model for future TPM Academies targeting community colleges



- **Availability for status updates with the Chamber Foundation and its partners.** The Chamber Foundation will periodically conduct check-ins with the selected proposal applicants regarding completed accomplishments, challenges encountered, and implemented solutions. This may include team check-ins via phone or site visits. Once selection is confirmed, the Chamber Foundation and the state coordinator(s) will discuss a plan, including appropriate timing for submitting required performance metrics (see Appendix A).
- **Contribution to case studies and network communications.** Selected applicants will be expected to provide interviews and share materials for use in development of case studies and other outreach materials.
- **Performance in a fiduciary capacity.** The selected applicant is expected to receive the financial award, spend the funds within the limits of the law, and be responsible for reporting receipt of the financial award to appropriate authorities.

## Required Response Content

The proposal will likely be a coordinated effort between the state coordinator and community college system(s). Should a state submitting an RFP not have a community college system, please provide information as to who will play a coordinating role on behalf of the community colleges so that multiple community colleges are aware of the opportunity and can affirm their ability to report the required information.

Component	Description
<b>State Coordinator Organization(s) Overview</b>	<p>The state coordinator organizational overview narrative should provide a summary of the organization, including size, mission, and focus, and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The overview should highlight how the organization is equipped to collaborate with the community college system(s), how it is equipped to co-host the TPM Academy, which staff will work on the TPM Academy, and who will be responsible for which tasks. It should also include what involvement with TPM the state coordinator has had to date.</p> <p>Should the proposal include multiple organizations that will coordinate with one another for comprehensive state representation, please include the information above on each entity, as well as a memorandum of understanding signed by all parties on how the entities will collaborate with one another to achieve the project’s goals.</p>



<p><b>Community College System(s) Overview</b></p>	<p>The community college system(s) overview narrative should include institutional mission; student demographic information as well as regional demographic information; institutional goals as it relates to student success (as well as baseline information on student enrollment, persistence, and completion disaggregated by race/ethnicity and program if available) and alignment with industry; and a summary about the system’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and supporting adult students of color. See previous note re: states that do not have community college systems.</p>
<p><b>Proposal</b></p>	<p>The proposal should essentially serve as the action plan. It should present the applicant’s vision for co-hosting a TPM Academy in partnership with a community college system(s) and community-based organizations (see Expectations of Selected Proposal Applicants for specific criteria that should be included in the response). The proposal should include the applicant’s definition of the state’s workforce challenges, including ties to DEI; what commitment exists from the employer community to prioritize expanding talent pipelines for people of color; an explanation of the value in hosting a TPM Academy to link more adult students of color to employer-aligned credentials and post-program success; and how the state coordinator and community college system(s) would go about ensuring partnerships result from their participation in this process.</p>
<p><b>Partner Descriptions</b></p>	<p>The applicant should describe the roles of lead partners that would be considered for TPM Academy participants (campus teams and/or organizations, not individuals).</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and Budget Narrative</b></p>	<p>The selected proposal’s state coordinator will be awarded \$30,000 to cover the administrative costs associated with co-hosting the Academies (i.e., staff time) and most importantly, creating a sustainability plan once the training has concluded. Should multiple organizations apply together, they will need to decide how the funding will be split amongst their organizations and include this information in their budget narrative.</p> <p>Proposals should include what the sustainability effort would be and how TPM projects would be scaled, with which partners, and what support would be needed to maintain activity and support for adults of color entering into and completing employer-aligned credentials.</p> <p>The budget narrative should describe the proposed use of funds and identify any additional (non-U.S. Chamber Foundation) funding sources.</p> <p>Please include a budget narrative for costs associated with hosting two in-person, two-day convenings for up to 40 people, which will be covered by the U.S. Chamber Foundation but will need to be arranged by the state coordinator organization (e.g., secure venue, food and beverage, and basic</p>





	AV requirements such as WIFI, screen for PPT, microphone depending on the venue).
<b>Technical Assistance &amp; Support</b>	A narrative detailing the intended use of technical assistance and support to be provided by the U.S. Chamber Foundation and its partners. Narrative should include anticipated need (if any) for onsite support or visits by the U.S. Chamber Foundation and/or its partners.

## Selection Process

The U.S. Chamber Foundation will select applications based upon analysis of the submitted response content above. During the selection process, reviewers may request additional information from the applicants.

Selected applicants will be notified as early as April 22, 2024, of selection. Selections will be made based on the following criteria:

- **Organizational Capacity and Commitment to DEI:** The proposed entities (both the state coordinator and community college system(s)) are well-equipped to oversee a TPM Academy and have a clear, authentic commitment to achieving DEI goals. (15 pts.).
- **Feasibility of Action Plan.** The feasibility of the proposed entity(ies) to meet their defined objectives through this grant, including ability to report necessary metrics (15 pts.).
- **Sustainability and scalability of efforts.** The applicant’s efforts are able to be sustained beyond initial U.S. Chamber Foundation funding and support, and the proposed set of activities and initiatives are able to be broadened and replicated (10 pts.).
- **Strength of partnerships.** The quality of partners committed to executing TPM projects including the community college system(s) and employers (5 pts.).
- **Proposed use of funds and support.** The proposed use of funds and provided support demonstrates that funds will be used effectively to accelerate solutions (5 pts.).

In addition, the applicant must meet the minimum eligibility criteria to receive grant funds listed in the *Eligibility and Requirements for Participation* section above.

While utilizing the criteria above, the U.S. Chamber Foundation reserves the right to make award decisions that ensure there is diversity among the network partners in terms of geography, industry sector focus, and strategy.

## Questions

Additional questions may be submitted in advance of the application deadline via email to [jfrancis@uschamber.com](mailto:jfrancis@uschamber.com).



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This solicitation is made possible by the generous support and sponsorship of Lumina Foundation.