



**Accelerate MT Rapid Training Program
Proposal for Additional Funding Dec 15, 2022**

Program Overview

In order to address the significant workforce and skills shortages in multiple industries across the State of Montana, the State's ARPA Workforce Commission allocated \$6m of funding in December 2021 to Accelerate MT to establish a Rapid Training program. The program objective is to **train new or upskilled employees to enter or advance Montana's workforce over the two years 2022-23.**

Key features of the program design and progress to date include:

- Accelerate MT was asked to focus primarily on the construction, manufacturing, healthcare and technology sectors.
- Rapid training programs have been defined as trainings that are completed in less than six months, although longer term programs can be included if they get trainees into the workforce in less than six months and provide continued training alongside employment.
- Accelerate MT has worked closely with two-year and tribal colleges across the State and to date has signed agreements providing funding to 13 colleges to support 32 projects and counting.
- Based on current programs being delivered or supported through Accelerate MT it is projected that 1,700 trainees will complete rapid training programs during the 2-year period. That number is anticipated to increase significantly as new programs or additional cohorts for existing programs are added through 2023.
- The program has seen strong engagement and interest from employers, colleges, high schools and other economic and workforce development stakeholders.

Rapid training programs that have been developed or supported to date include:

- Bitterroot College
 - Marketing for all rapid training courses including CDL, Phlebotomy, CCMA, CNA, and Low Pressure Boiler
 - Job Site Ready cohort
- Blackfeet Community College
 - 2 Job Site Ready cohorts happening first half of 2023
- City College
 - Job Site Ready cohort in planning phases
- Dawson College
 - Early stage planning for 911 Dispatch Training
- Department of Corrections
 - 2 Job Site Ready Cohorts happening first half of 2023 – one cohort at the women's prison and one cohort at the men's prison
- Flathead Valley Community College
 - Underwriting approximately 6 CDL cohorts for an evenings and weekends program. Providing wrap around services to the learners who might need support with the travel and childcare necessary to take the training.

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- Underwriting RampUp Career Training – program designed to bridge the gap between career exploration and workforce training and provide access and opportunities to learners. The program results in a micro credential.
- Gallatin College
 - Job Site Ready cohort happening Q1 2023.
- Great Falls College
 - Developing Rural EMT program to pilot with Belgrade and Glasgow in Q1.
- Helena College
 - Marketing for CDL program including funding branding of CDL trucks. Truck wraps were installed by Department of Corrections.
 - Job Site Ready cohort happening Q1 2023.
 - Supporting CDL truck leases so that the college can expand their offerings.
- Highlands College
 - Underwriting CNA and CDL dual enrollment cohorts.
 - Underwriting Operation NEXT – program for veterans in welding and CNC machining.
 - Supporting Lineman Program with marketing and cohort underwriting
- Miles City
 - Funded the college to become a 3rd Party Testing Site for CDL making it easier for students to complete testing and helping alleviate the testing capacity statewide.
- MSU-Northern
 - Final stages of developing Automotive A/C program that can be delivered in a shorted format in a variety of locations around the state.
 - Developing Electrical and Plumbing Journeyman test prep courses.
- Philipsburg High School
 - Job Site Ready cohort planned for Q1/2 2023.
- Missoula College
 - Marketing support for CDL program.
 - Funded the college to become a 3rd Party Testing Site for CDL making it easier for students to complete testing and helping alleviate the testing capacity statewide.
 - Piloting CDL onboarding training program to support the orientation and prep work learners must complete before entering a training program.
 - Job Site Ready cohort in Q2 2022. Dual enrollment cohort in process Q4 2022.
 - Exploring developing community paramedicine program.
- University of Montana – Integrative Physiology and Athletic Training
 - Developing telemetry program to be delivered in 2023.
- UM-Western
 - Job Site Ready cohort in Q1 2023.
- Accelerate Montana
 - Salesforce Administrator training. Developed in 2022 and pilot launched Q4 2022. Additional cohorts will be offered in 2023.
 - Production Assistant – Film Set Ready online course developed in 2022 and launched in Q4 2022.

Key Learnings

Key learnings from the program to date have included:

- The need, where feasible, to transition traditional classroom learning to online/remote and hybrid live/self-paced delivery to provide increased flexibility and accessibility to learners.
- The need to reconfigure the delivery of in-person training to more intensive bootcamps or pushing the delivery to more localized locations beyond college campuses, through collaboration with high schools, employers, or community facilities.
- The benefit of shared online curriculum and a shared LMS across multiple colleges to expand availability of workforce offerings across the state.
- Strong interest in digital badging from trainees, employers, and colleges.
- The need for outreach and marketing to create awareness of program availability and to “educate” prospective trainees about this alternative path to workforce opportunities.

Opportunities for Utilization of Additional Funding

Accelerate MT sees significant additional opportunities to expand the scope, scale and duration of the Rapid Training program.

Notable areas of expanded program opportunity include:

- Growing the reach and accessibility of existing and new programs in rural and tribal communities where significant barriers remain.
- Expanding the portfolio of rapid training courses in construction to build upon the success of the Job Site Ready training program and provide pathways, including pre-apprenticeships, into various construction career pathways, including plumbing, electrical, and infrastructure.
- Broadband workforce for broadband rollout given the substantial state funding that is due to flow to the broadband sector spanning infrastructure construction to technology skills.
- Expanding the portfolio of manufacturing and trades rapid training programs (including pre-apprenticeships) to address skills shortages in areas such as welding, machining, heavy equipment, low voltage electrical, automotive technician etc.
- Expanding the portfolio of healthcare training programs particularly in behavioral health.
- Expanded supervisory, management and leadership training. This has become an acute need in many industries, particularly healthcare and construction, where individuals with technical skills are being required to take on management and leadership responsibilities due to workforce shortages but lack the skills to manage business objectives, budgets, HR and related duties.

Accelerate MT believes the long-term benefits of rapid training programs would be enhanced by leveraging additional funds to extend the current and expanded programs into 2024. Extension of program funding into 2024 would allow the following:

- The ability to adapt and refine end-to-end program delivery based on feedback from trainees, employers and colleges. Rapid training programs benefit from building strong connections with key stakeholders such as schools, Job Service, employers, Chambers & economic development partners. These partnerships help attract and enroll trainees, support them through training and connect them with employers.

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- Several areas of program development and delivery are dependent on the participation of faculty who are mostly fully deployed in delivering conventional workforce and academic programs. This has impacted the speed with which some rapid training programs can be rolled out. Extended funding would allow continued program development and adaptation in areas of constrained expertise.
- Delivery of critical workforce programs into low population areas has benefited from use of Rapid Training funds to underwrite courses that might otherwise not happen due to insufficient enrollment.
- Continued marketing & outreach to drive awareness and enrollment into rapid training programs
- Accelerate MT operates several shared capabilities that support the delivery of rapid training programs across the state including:
 - A team of outreach and recruitment coordinators (including two indigenous outreach coordinators)
 - Program management for several statewide training programs including Job-Site Ready, Cyber Montana Rapid Training, Production Assistant, CDL Onboarding, Salesforce Administrator.
 - Shared curriculum, learning management system (LMS) and badging functions
 - Learner support in advising and onboarding to trainees
 - Marketing and outreach including website, social media and print collateral.

Accelerate MT has established a robust and impactful capability for targeted and coordinated rapid training across the State in close partnership with two year and tribal colleges. Additional funding would enable continued expansion and development of rapid training programs that will deliver long term workforce and economic benefits to the State.