



#135-21

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #135-21**

DATE: May 14, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Career and Technical Education (CTE) High School Innovation Grants**

The CTE High School Innovation Grant model combines high school, college, and business and industry Work-Based Learning experiences to prepare students for a high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career. The grants are intended to provide students with a CTE career pathway that starts in grade nine (9) and culminates in the attainment of an industry recognized credential, a high school diploma, and an associate's degree in up to five (5) years. Dual enrolled credit will begin in the eleventh (11th) grade with exceptions individually approved by the college president. The program is offered at no cost to students and includes Work-Based Learning experiences such as, but not limited to, mentorships and paid internships designed to prepare students for positions in an identified career field. Dual enrollment tuition, fees, and necessary instructional resources will need to be paid by the local school division.

Specifically, the model delivers five (5) core benefits to students:

1. A rigorous, relevant, cost-free CTE career pathway that starts in grade nine (9), culminates in the attainment of a high school diploma and an associate's degree in up to five (5) years, and is focused on the knowledge and skills students need for a high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career;

2. Work-Based Learning that includes ongoing mentoring by professionals in the chosen career sector, worksite visits, speakers and/or paid internships;
3. Intensive, individualized academic support by K-12 and college faculty within an extended academic year and/or school day that enables students to progress through the program at their own pace;
4. A career pathway to a high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career meeting regional sector workforce needs throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia; and
5. The commitment to be considered for a job with the participating industry partners following completion of the program.

Additionally, the program will:

- develop CTE career pathways in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers;
- align school, college, and community resources in the identified career pathways;
- increase opportunity and access to postsecondary education for academically at-risk, disadvantaged populations of students;
- support strong academic and technical performance;
- promote informed and appropriate career choice and preparation; and
- ensure that employers in key technical fields have access to a talented and skilled workforce.

Attached A is a copy of the Request for Proposals that provides the grant requirements and submission details. Grant funds requested must be at least \$50,000, but may not exceed \$200,000 for a single school division. If multiple school divisions within a region apply, grant funds must be at least \$100,000, but may not exceed \$500,000.

The student-selected career pathways must be determined based on labor market data targeting jobs in a high-tech in-demand field. The grantee fiscal agent must ensure the accuracy of this selection process.

Timeline

- May 21, 2021 - Intent to submit due
- May 24, 2021 - Information webinar - [Join the informational webinar](#) scheduled for May 24, 2021 at 9 a.m.

- June 4, 2021 - Proposal applications due
- June 25, 2021 - Preliminary intent to award notification
- July 1, 2021 - Office grant award notification

For more information

If you have questions, please contact Dr. David Eshelman, Director, Workforce Development and Initiatives, or George R. Willcox, Director, Operations and Accountability, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, at CTE@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2052.

JFL/DSE/GRW/aar

- A. Attachment: [CTE High School Innovation Grant Request for Proposals](#) (PDF)