



United Way of Greater Cincinnati

Future of Manufacturing Fund

Advancing the future of manufacturing together. | Funded by GE Aerospace Foundation

Grant Overview and Application Packet

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FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING PROGRAM

Advancing the Future of Manufacturing Together

United Way of Greater Cincinnati’s Future of Manufacturing Fund was established by the GE Aerospace Foundation in 2024 to address critical gaps in the advanced manufacturing workforce.

OVERVIEW: FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING FUND

United Way of Greater Cincinnati, in partnership with the GE Aerospace Foundation, is pleased to launch the third cycle of the Future of Manufacturing Fund. This initiative represents a continued investment in strengthening the advanced manufacturing workforce pipeline across the Greater Cincinnati region.

The Future of Manufacturing Fund was established to address critical gaps in connecting individuals to high-demand careers in advanced manufacturing. The fund supports organizations working across the workforce ecosystem—including education, training, and community-based providers—to expand access to career pathways that lead to employment in the sector.

This initiative supports organizations that are positioned to deliver measurable workforce outcomes, develop systems-level solutions to workforce challenges, and contribute to a more effective and aligned regional talent pipeline.

EVOLUTION OF THE FUND

Each cycle of the Future of Manufacturing Fund has built on prior investments and learning:

- Cycle I focused on awareness, recruitment, and early engagement in advanced manufacturing pathways
- Cycle II prioritized credentialing, job placement, and strengthening employer partnerships
- Cycle III advances this work by emphasizing program completion and employment outcomes

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Future of Manufacturing Fund is designed to drive measurable improvements in workforce outcomes within the advanced manufacturing sector. Cycle III prioritizes data-informed progress across participant pathways and stronger alignment between training programs and employment opportunities.

Funded projects and the cohort are expected to contribute to the following goals:

- **Increase Program Completion and Credential Attainment:** Increase the number and percentage of participants who successfully complete advanced manufacturing education and training programs and earn industry-recognized credentials or degrees.
- **Increase Employment Outcomes:** Increase the number of individuals who transition from training into employment, internships, or apprenticeships, with a priority on opportunities within the advanced manufacturing sector.
- **Strengthen Workforce Readiness:** Improve participants' technical and professional skills to support successful transition into and retention in employment.
- **Deepen Employer Engagement:** Expand and strengthen partnerships between workforce providers and employers to better align training with industry needs and increase access to employment opportunities.
- **Strengthen Data Quality and Outcome Tracking:** Improve the consistency, accuracy, and use of data across the cohort to track participant progress, support continuous improvement, and meet reporting requirements.
- **Improve System Coordination:** Increase alignment and collaboration across education, workforce, and employer partners to strengthen the regional advanced manufacturing talent pipeline.

CYCLE III FOCUS

Cycle III is designed to support organizations implementing programs that move participants through advanced manufacturing pathways and into employment. Proposed projects should be structured to deliver measurable progress across participant engagement, completion, and transition to employment outcomes.

Organizations applying for funding must:

- Deliver or support advanced manufacturing education or training programs that lead to recognized credentials, certifications, or degrees
- Implement strategies to improve participant retention and completion, particularly for individuals already engaged in training programs
- Prepare participants for employment through the development of technical skills and essential workplace competencies
- Facilitate connections to employment, internships, or apprenticeships, either directly or through clearly defined partnerships with training providers and employers
- Engage employers in program design and implementation to ensure alignment with workforce needs and to expand access to employment opportunities

Organizations that do not directly place participants must demonstrate how they contribute to the employment pathway and track outcomes through partners; programs focused primarily on awareness without defined employment outcomes are unlikely to be competitive.

DATA AND OUTCOMES EXPECTATIONS

A central priority of Cycle III is the ability to consistently track and report participant outcomes. Organizations must demonstrate the ability to collect, manage, and report participant-level data aligned with the fund's core measures. Funded partners must report data at both mid-year and end-of-year intervals, including:

- Number of individuals served
- Number of individuals who remain engaged in and complete program activities
- Number of individuals who complete an advanced manufacturing education or training program (e.g., certification, credential, or degree)
- Number of individuals who secure:
 - Employment (any type)
 - Internships or apprenticeships (any type)
 - Advanced manufacturing employment
 - Advanced manufacturing internships or apprenticeships

Partners must have existing systems or processes to track these outcomes and to use prior performance data, where available, to inform projections and program design. Partners must also track participant demographics and, where applicable, report outcomes for specific populations (e.g., high school students).

Organizations that do not directly place participants into employment must demonstrate how they will track their participants' progression into employment, internships, or apprenticeships through partner relationships.

COHORT MODEL AND PARTICIPATION

Funded organizations must participate in a structured cohort, including:

- Attendance at in-person and virtual convenings throughout the year
- Participation in sector-wide events, including employer engagement opportunities and regional workforce initiatives

- Engagement in peer learning and information sharing with other cohort members
- Contribution to collective learning through data reporting, reflection, and discussion of successes and challenges
- Collaborative development of scalable and implementable solutions to improve completion rates in advanced manufacturing training and education programs
- Willingness to engage in processes to identify collaboration opportunities across projects to enhance overall impact

In addition to data reporting, partners must contribute to storytelling efforts, including sharing participant success stories that highlight pathways into advanced manufacturing careers. Additional funding opportunities may be available during the grant period to support participant success, including resources to address barriers to completion or employment and incentives tied to successful employment outcomes.

ORGANIZATIONAL ELIGIBILITY:

Organizations must meet the following criteria to be eligible for funding:

1. Organizational Status:

Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or other tax-exempt entity, including educational institutions, or operate with a fiscal sponsor.

2. Geographic Focus:

Provide services to individuals within United Way of Greater Cincinnati's service area, including:

- Hamilton, Clermont, and Brown counties in Ohio
- Boone, Campbell, Kenton, and Grant counties in Kentucky
- Dearborn and Ohio counties in Indiana

3. Programmatic Alignment

Operate programs or services that prepare participants for **and** connect them to advanced manufacturing career pathways, including education, training, credentialing, or workforce preparation.

4. Connection to Employment Pathways

Demonstrate a defined pathway from program participation to employment, internships, or apprenticeships. Organizations must show how participants progress toward these outcomes and how results are tracked. Organizations that do not directly place participants into employment must demonstrate how they facilitate these connections through partnerships **and** track participant employment outcomes.

GRANT PROCESS AND KEY DATES:

These dates may change. Any changes will be communicated in a timely manner.

- June 1: Program Overview via Webinar (will be recorded)
- June 1: Application opens in e-CImpact
- June 11 & June 17: Open Q&A Office Hours on Teams
- June 22: Applications DUE in e-CImpact
- July 27: Funding awards announced
- August 1: Grant period begins

INFORMATION SESSIONS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & OTHER SUPPORT:

United Way will be providing a range of ways to support organizations as they explore this opportunity and complete the application.

- Informational Webinar (Live and Recorded): An informational webinar will be hosted on June 1. A recording of the webinar will be made available for those unable to attend – visit www.uwgc.org/manufacturing-fund for the recording.
- We will hold open office hours on June 11 and June 17 for grantees to log on and ask questions. Each session will be one hour long.
- Send us an email at impact@uwgc.org with your communication preference (email or phone) to ask questions, schedule a technical assistance meeting to navigate the application system or discuss a concern. The appropriate staff will contact you within 1-2 business days of receiving your email.
- Access online materials at www.uwgc.org/grants. All materials, including a recording of the information session and additional resources, will be posted on United Way's website.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

United Way of Greater Cincinnati staff and a group of volunteers will evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

Alignment to Workforce Outcomes:

- For organizations that place participants in employment, the application demonstrates how the proposed work will result in measurable employment outcomes
- For those who do not directly place participants in employment, the application demonstrates a clear through line between proposed activities and participant progression into employment, internships, or apprenticeships

Program Design and Implementation Approach

- Presents a clear and feasible approach to delivering or supporting advanced manufacturing education, training, or workforce preparation aligned with participant and employer needs
- Includes strategies to improve participant retention, completion, and transition to employment
- Demonstrates how the approach builds on prior results or experience, where applicable

Data Collection and Outcome Tracking

- Demonstrates the ability to collect, manage, and report participant-level data aligned with required measures
- Describes how outcomes will be tracked, including employment, internship, or apprenticeship placement
- For organizations that do not directly place participants, outlines how data will be collected through partner relationships

Employer Engagement and Partnerships

- Demonstrates existing partnerships with employers, training providers, or workforce organizations
- Shows how these partnerships will directly support participant transition into employment opportunities

Organizational Capacity and Cohort Participation

- Demonstrates the organizational capacity to implement the proposed work within the grant period
- Shows readiness to participate in a cohort model, including engagement in convenings, shared learning, and reporting requirements

Application Questions

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Provide/review general information about your organization. Some of the information may be prepopulated by the system:

- Organization Name
- Organization EIN
- Organization Address
- Organization Phone Number
- Organization Website (if available)

LEADERSHIP AND PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

Provide contact information for your organization's leadership as well as the point of contact during the grant process.

- Executive Director or CEO Contact Information: Name, Pronouns, Title, Email, Phone
- Executive Director Demographics: (Select age range, gender, and race)
- Primary Contact Information for this Application: Name, Pronouns, Title, Email, Phone

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Provide information on your organization's current programs and services that support pathways into advanced manufacturing careers.

1. Program Description: Briefly describe your current programs or services that prepare individuals for advanced manufacturing careers. Include all of the following:
 - Target population(s) served
 - Types of services offered (e.g., training, credentialing, workforce preparation, job placement, etc.)
 - Any partnerships with training providers or employers

2. Current Outcomes and Performance: Report outcomes achieved over the most recent 12-month period (or most recent program year). Include, as applicable:
 - Total number served
 - Number of individuals who completed program activities
 - Number of individuals who completed an advanced manufacturing education or training program (e.g., certification, credential, or degree)
 - Number of individuals who secured:
 - Employment, internships or apprenticeships (any type)
 - Advanced manufacturing employment, internships or apprenticeships
 - If certain measures do not apply to your program, briefly explain why and provide alternative measures that demonstrate program effectiveness.
3. Pathway to Employment: Explain how participants move from your program into employment, internships, or apprenticeships.
 - If you do not directly place participants, describe how participants are connected to employment pathways through partners and how outcomes are tracked.
4. Data Collection and Tracking: Describe how your organization collects and tracks participant data
 - What systems or tools you use
 - How you track participant progress over time
 - How you collect employment or post-program outcomes

PROPOSED PROJECT

Provide information specifically on the program/project for which you are requesting funding.

1. Project Name: Provide a title or name for the project.
2. Requested Grant Amount
3. Indicate which category you are applying for. Applicants should select the track that **best reflects** their primary role in supporting participant progression into employment:
 - **Workforce Architect Track:** Organizations that deliver comprehensive advanced manufacturing training programs and **directly** support participant progression through credential attainment and into employment.
 - Provide industry-recognized credentials or degrees in advanced manufacturing (e.g., CMfgE, CMfgA, CPT, certificate or degree programs)
 - Demonstrate strong completion and credential attainment outcomes
 - Maintain direct employer partnerships that result in job placement opportunities. In this case, “job placement opportunities” are defined as co-ops, internships, apprenticeships, full-time, and part-time employment.
 - Demonstrate data-backed results in placing participants into employment
 - **Talent Connector Track:** Organizations that facilitate entry to advanced manufacturing training and employment opportunities and support their progression through the workforce pipeline.
 - Maintain established partnerships with training providers and/or employers
 - Demonstrate a defined pathway for participants to enter training, credentialing, and employment

- Support participant progression into training and employment
 - Track participant outcomes, including entry into training programs and progression into employment, internships, or apprenticeships
 - May provide wraparound supports that improve retention, completion, and transition to employment
 - **Both tracks should:**
 - Demonstrate existing, successful programs or partnerships that are ready to scale or replicate
 - Demonstrate capacity to execute against the fund's goals
 - Take a systems-focused approach
 - Demonstrate readiness to participate in a cohort model
4. Project Overview: Describe the proposed project, including the primary goal and populations served.
 5. Project Approach and Key Activities: Identify the challenge your organization is addressing and explain your approach and the approach you will implement. Include all of the following:
 - The key activities or strategies
 - What will be done differently or expanded
 - Any evidence or prior results
 - How the proposed activities will improve participant outcomes
 6. Pathway to Employment Outcomes: Explain how the proposed project leads to participants securing employment, internships, or apprenticeships.
 - If you directly place participants, describe how this project will strengthen or expand those efforts
 - If you facilitate employment placements, describe:
 - How participants will be connected to next steps;
 - The role of partner organizations; AND
 - How participant outcomes will be tracked
 7. Anticipated Outcomes: Provide projected outcomes for the proposed project over the grant period. Include estimates for:
 - Number of individuals served
 - Number of individuals who will complete program activities
 - Number of individuals who will complete an advanced manufacturing education or training program
 - Number of individuals who will secure:
 - Employment, internships or apprenticeships (any type)
 - Advanced manufacturing employment, internships or apprenticeships
 8. Employer Engagement: Describe your current or planned employer partnerships and how they will support this project. Include all of the following:
 - Types of employers you work with
 - How employers are engaged (e.g., training design, hiring, internships, etc.)
 - How these partnerships will contribute to employment outcomes
 9. Organizational Capacity: Describe organizational capacity to implement this project. Include all of the following:
 - Key staff responsible for the work
 - Existing resources or partnerships that support implementation

- Any anticipated challenges, including those related to the 12-month timeline, and how you will address them
10. Program Budget: Include the total cost to execute the program, both from this grant program and any other funds.

REPORTING AND PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS:

By applying, the organization agrees to the following reporting and participation requirements.

1. Submit two reports during the grant period:
 - Mid-year report
 - Final report
 - Reports will include participant-level data aligned with required measures, as well as a brief narrative on progress and outcomes.
2. Participate in cohort activities, including:
 - In-person and virtual convenings
 - Sector-wide events (e.g., employer engagement opportunities, talent recruitment opportunities)
 - Peer learning and information sharing
3. Contribute to storytelling efforts, including providing at least one participant success story and supporting related communications, as requested.

Additional details will be outlined in the grant agreement for selected organizations.

How Do I Apply?

STEP ONE: REVIEW GRANT INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Prior to completing the application, please review all the information in this grant packet and any supplemental information, along with attending the Overview Webinar. This will help ensure that all organizations who apply are fully eligible and prepared to fulfill the requirements of grant funding.

STEP TWO: COMPLETE THE FULL APPLICATION

United Way uses a grant application system called e-CImpact. You will be asked to use this system to complete the questions above. **The online application will be available June 1.** At that point, you can access e-CImpact. (You can also find this link by visiting <https://www.uwgc.org/partner-with-us/> and clicking and scrolling to the bottom of the page. Look for a box with “e-CImpact Online Reporting”:

- Click on the e-CImpact Online Reporting tile.
- If you are a current user, enter your username and password to log in and click to register for the application process.
- For new users, select the option to **create an e-CImpact account**.
 - Username: Must be your organizational email address
 - After creating an account, you will be able to click to register for the application process.



Complete instructions on accessing the application through the system will be posted www.uwgc.org/grants by June 1.