

Updated 4/28/2025

SBCTC considers answers in this Questions and Answers (Q&A) document to be the only official source for answers related to this funding source, aside from the Program Guidelines. Questions (Q) and answers (A) are presented in reverse order, showing the most recently received questions at the top of the document. This is so that colleges may check back frequently during the application process and easily see new Q&As. This document will be updated through May 5, 2025.

Q: If the business I am working with is a woman-owned business, but not on the OMWBE list, would a signed letter from an attorney showing possession of a majority of stock serve as proof of ownership?

A: Yes, we are happy to accept alternative forms of evidence for women, minority and Veteran owned businesses. We recognize that OMWBE certification is (a) not something all businesses go for, especially if they're not getting into government contracts; (b) OMWBE certification takes some time to complete for those who are newly seeking certification.

Q: How much funding is available for this first round of grants of FY25-26?

A: For FY26, JSP has \$7.725 million in funding. The entire amount will be available for Round 1 in the interest of giving projects as much runway time as possible, but still administer a competitive, scored review process as usual, ensuring quality of projects and high fidelity to the program's statutory priorities.

Q: With regard to scoring for the grant, might there be a number associated with saying "yes" to 2I and 2K on the grant application??

A: While there is no specific numeric score assigned directly to individual questions like 2I or 2K, saying "yes" to these can influence scoring. These questions correspond to funding priorities identified in the program guidelines (pp. 11 & 12). Applications that meet funding priorities may receive additional points assigned by SBCTC staff. These points are added to the tier-based scores (5 or 3 points) determined during the review process. So, while not individually scored, affirmative responses to 2I and 2K can strengthen an application by contributing to its overall ranking.

Q: The program guidelines' Open Licensing Policy state that all digital software, educational resources and knowledge produced as part of this competitive grant be placed under the Attribution license from Creative Commons. Does this mean that if part of the award is used for "development of new curriculum" or "enhancement of existing curriculum", those curricula would need to be made free to the public?

A: Yes. If part of the grant funds is used to develop or enhance curriculum, that content must be attributed with the Creative Commons Attribution license (CC BY 4.0).

Q: Is it possible to submit an application without a business partner?

A: No. A business partner is required for all JSP applications. The guidelines state: "JSP projects require an eligible educational institution and an eligible business or businesses." (Page 7 of Program and Fiscal Guidelines, Eligibility of Participants)

Q: Are public ports eligible for the JSP?

A: No. 501(c)4 organizations, which are civic leagues and local associations of municipal employees, are not eligible as they are no commerce-producing entities. 504(c)6 entities, which are business leagues, may be eligible if the training project they propose is to train their own employees for employment-specific skills.

Q: If two companies come together to form a consortium, and both are smaller than 500K in sales, are they both exempt from the 100% match requirement?

A: Yes.

Q: If the per-unit acquisition is under the \$10,000 threshold but the item has a useful life of more than one year, can JSP funds be used to purchase it?

A: Reach out to your business office to ask how they would classify the item you want to purchase. If the business office designates the item as a capital outlay, a different funding source will need to be used. If the business office determines the item is not classified as a capital outlay, it will remain the property of the college. The JSP Fiscal Guidelines state: "JSP funds cannot be used to purchase capital outlays. Capital outlays are defined as items having a useful life in excess of one year and a per unit acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more."

Q: Is there a hard number on the cash match amount? Would the amount of the cash match make an application less competitive?

A: There is no hard requirement or set percentage for a cash match in the Job Skills Program (JSP). While a 20% match is commonly referenced—such as \$10,000 on a \$50,000 grant—that number is not formally required or written into the guidelines. It's more of a typical practice than a rule.

What's more important is showing your (and the business') commitment to the project. That can be through a mix of cash and in-kind support (like donated equipment, staff time, or training space). Applications are evaluated on the quality of the match and the strength of the partnership with the college or training provider—not just the dollar amount. In fact, there are successful JSP applications with very little or even no cash contribution. If cash is a challenge, it's completely acceptable to include a brief explanation—such as business hardship or limited resources. That context can go a long way in helping reviewers understand your situation.

Bottom line: While a 20% cash match might help in a very competitive round, it is not required. If you can clearly show your engagement and support for the project in other meaningful ways, you'll still be in a strong position.

Q: On page 19 of the Program Guidelines, under Unallowable Costs, it states that safety training—defined as required training considered an ongoing responsibility of the company—is not allowed. As part of our grant proposal, the business is looking to provide specialized training (ex., Hoisting, Rigging, Signaling & Lift Director Training) for its employees. While they currently offer internal training, they're seeking a more formal, structured program with certification. Since safety compliance is an inherent component of this and many blue-collar training programs, would this still fall under unallowable costs?

A: Companies must provide fundamental safety training as part of their ongoing responsibilities—this is typically considered unallowable under JSP guidelines. To determine if the proposed training is allowable, consider the following:

- Does the training go beyond fundamental, employer-required safety instruction?

- Is the company already offering basic hoisting, rigging, and signaling safety training? If so, that portion may not be covered.
- Can the training be positioned as a skills upgrade rather than compliance?

To align with JSP priorities, the proposal should:

- Clearly position the training as skills enhancement – not simply compliance;
- Highlight the structured curriculum and industry-recognized training (if applicable);
- Confirm that the business does not view this as a substitute for mandatory employer-provided safety training; and
- Ensure the company seeks to elevate worker competency beyond fundamental safety obligations, making the funding request justifiable under workforce skill enhancement.

Q: In OGMS, the option to submit the application is not active/visible, or the fields do not appear when sections are clicked.

A: Permissions in OGMS do not carry over from year to year. Each new fiscal year requires a new permission because the applications are given a different name (due to the 'FYXX' included in the name). Applicants should contact their college's security contact/administrator(s) to update user accounts and assign appropriate permissions for the current application cycle.

Q: Does subcontracting instruction for a JSP grant proposal hurt the proposal's score?

A: No, the JSP review rubric does not downgrade application scores based on subcontractors being part of the proposal. However, the program's enabling statute emphasizes the benefit to both business/industry and educational institutions. So, SBCTC does encourage colleges to maximize the amount of training they can directly provide. If you are considering subcontracting instruction to a 3rd party, ask:

- How does the college still benefit from the grant?
- Are there elements of the training that the college can deliver?
- Is subcontracting necessary to meet a business's unique and urgent needs?

These and other questions you ask yourself will help guide your conversations with college leaders, the business customer and potential 3rd party trainers.

Q: For a consortium, would both (or all) companies have to be under the \$500k threshold?

A: The \$500,000 gross business income (GBI) rule regarding match requirements applies individually. In a consortium project, if any one business has a GBI of \$500K or more, all businesses in the consortium will need to match the entire project budget. However, the match does not have to be evenly split among businesses.

Some consortium projects include one or two businesses contributing most of the match, while smaller businesses contribute little or none. What matters is:

- Which businesses are paying their employee wages and benefits during training (a requirement);
- How the overall match – cash and/or in-kind – is met;
- For pre-employment training (i.e., participants not yet hired), the match must come from other sources (cash and in-kind contributions), not wages.