



Lighthouse Industries Upskilling and Reskilling Program (Lighthouse Industries UP) Pre-Proposal Conference

Thursday, February 26, 2026
11:00 AM

PRESENTERS



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*Office of Strategic
Initiatives*

Maryland
Department of
Labor



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TODAY'S AGENDA

- Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Program Overview
- Proposal Components and Application Submission
- Reporting Requirements
- Timeline
- Q & A

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

- Please include your name, organization, and email address in the chat.
- You may type questions into the chat or use the hand raise function when we are ready to take questions.
- All questions and answers received today will be posted on the MD Labor website by Wednesday, March 4, 2026.
- The FAQ document on the MD Labor website will continue to be updated regularly as questions come in.
- Questions should be submitted, in writing, by Friday, April 10 to Brittney Hansen at brittney.hansen@maryland.gov and Eve Boyle at eve.boyle@maryland.gov.
- The presentation slide deck will be posted on MD Labor's website.

Lighthouse Industries Upskilling and Reskilling Program (Lighthouse Industries UP)

Lighthouse Industries UP is designed to:

- Respond to the needs of both employers and workers in the rapidly evolving “lighthouse industries”
- Support targeted training that strengthens **transferable skills** or **emerging technology skills**, and meet current demand
- Address the needs of workers, including former federal workers, by supporting the upskilling, reskilling, and professional development needed to secure new employment and/or advance along their career pathways

OVERVIEW

- Applicants can apply for funds to train jobseekers and incumbent workers pursuing careers in life sciences, technology, aerospace and defense, and manufacturing.
- Training Plans must build **transferable skills** or **emerging technology skills**
- Applicants must partner with at least three employers to ensure training programs are aligned with real-world workforce needs.

Total funding: \$1,000,000

Award ceiling: \$200,000

Period of performance: June 1, 2026 – May 31, 2028

How does this program differ from the new Lighthouse Industries and AI Internship program?

Lighthouse Industries UP (the program we are talking about today) funds up to \$200k to implement **skills training** that builds specific transferable skills or emerging technology skills within the lighthouse industries.

- Target Populations: Unemployed and underemployed jobseekers, former federal workers, incumbent workers currently employed in target industries.
- Application Process: Competitive, all applications must be submitted by deadline.
- Applications Due: April 24, 2026

The separate Lighthouse Industries and AI **Internship** program funds up to \$150k to provide internships that help students and recent graduates build real-world experience within the lighthouse industries.

- Target Populations: Individuals near completion of their schooling. Interns may be college seniors, or recent graduates within two years of graduation from Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree or Ph.D. programs.
- Application Process: Non-competitive, awards made on a rolling basis until funds exhausted.
- Applications Due: No deadline - proposals currently being accepted on a rolling basis

KEY DEFINITIONS: LIGHTHOUSE INDUSTRIES

Lighthouse Industries: For the purposes of this solicitation, applicants can select to train workers and/or jobseekers in one or more of the following industries.

- **Life sciences** – computational biology and bioinformatics, cell & gene therapy; biomanufacturing;
 - **Technology** – quantum computing, information technology, cybersecurity, computer systems design, nanotechnology, software development, data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning;
 - **Aerospace and Defense** – navigation systems, drones, space technology, aerospace data & intelligence, aerospace manufacturing;
 - **Manufacturing** – advanced manufacturing, food processing, production technology & heavy machinery, and materials.
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KEY DEFINITIONS: SKILLS TRACKS

Training must occur within one of two tracks:

- **Transferable Skills:** Foundational skills that are general, technical, or role-related and can be utilized across a range of jobs and industries. These may include communication, project management, business skills, entrepreneurship, leadership and people management.
 - **Emerging Technology Skills:** Skills in using methods and tools in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), quantum computing, bioinformatics, computational biology, advanced data sciences, robotics and/or automation, as it specifically applies to the subject matter and workstreams of the targeted Lighthouse Industry. **Preference will be given to applications that integrate upskilling on AI tools and/or AI methods into the training plan.**
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KEY DEFINITIONS: TRAINING PROVIDER

- **Training Provider:** Lead Applicants must identify the organization(s) that will serve as the Training Provider during Training Plan Implementation.
 - If the Lead Applicant is not the entity that will provide training, the Training Provider **must** provide a signed letter of commitment.

KEY DEFINITIONS: EMPLOYERS

- **Employers:** The Lead Applicant **must** provide letter of commitments for the proposed training from at least three Employers within the target lighthouse industry.
 - Employer commitments may include, but are not limited to: interviewing participants, hiring participants, partnering in training development, reviewing curricula, identifying incumbent workers to send to training, and promoting incumbent workers.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY & PRIORITY

The Lead Applicant may be any of the following, or other relevant entities at MD Labor's discretion:

● Employer	● Industry association
● Nonprofit organization	● Labor union
● Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor	● Local government
● Two or four-year institution of higher education	● Local or regional economic development entity
● Local Workforce Development Board	● Career counseling or career transition organization

If the Lead Applicant is not Maryland-based or does not have a strong presence in Maryland, the proposal must justify this entity's choice for that role. Out-of-state applicants must demonstrate the benefit to Maryland workers and prospective workers, as well as Maryland's employers and economy.

APPLICATION DETAILS - Training Plan (1 of 4)

Applicants must propose a Training Plan that delivers immersive, hands-on training aligned with employer demand. **Training Plans should:**

- Include training for jobseekers and/or incumbent workers within one or more target lighthouse industries.
- Focus on training in one of two tracks: Transferable Skills or Emerging Technology Skills.
- Describe how the proposed training is data-driven, experience-driven, and meets immediate needs of jobseekers, incumbent workers, and/or employers within the target industry.

APPLICATION DETAILS - Training Plan (2 of 4)

Training Plans should also:

- Detail how underemployed or unemployed individuals will be recruited and screened for training, including former federal workers, and/or how the Lead Applicant will work with employers to identify incumbent employees to train.
- Describe the goals, structure, curriculum, timeline, and expected outcomes of the proposed training.
- Detail how the Lead Applicant will work with employers and other partners post-training to facilitate interviews, job placements, and retention for participants in one or more of the lighthouse industries.

APPLICATION DETAILS - Training Plan (3 of 4)

To develop Training Plans, applicants can:

- Include real experiences from target industry employers regarding actual and projected gaps in skills training and job readiness, and other workforce needs.
- Leverage both qualitative data provided by the target industry through varied collection methods (interviews, surveys, focus groups, roundtable discussions, etc.) and quantitative labor-market and industry-specific data.
- Consideration may be given to such issues as understanding high demand occupations in industry, projected job growth by occupation, analysis of gaps between supply and demand of employees, understanding the root causes of these gaps, and characterizing the needed skills to close any gaps.

APPLICATION DETAILS - Training Plan (4 of 4)

Successful plans should lead directly to employment and/or advancement:

- Training plans that target unemployed or underemployed workers, including former federal workers, are expected to have the explicit goal of training a workforce for existent, or soon-to-be- existent, positions.
- It is important that a Training Plan include a means for employers to connect with, recruit, and/or interview training participants for job opportunities.
- For Incumbent Workers, it is expected that industry will provide evidence of career advancement in the form of title promotion, salary/wage increases, or similar evidence.

LEVERAGED RESOURCES

- Lead Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage additional resources for the implementation of the Training Plan. **Applicants that include budgets with leveraged resources will receive preference.**
- While there is no match required, MD Labor will give preference in the evaluation process to Training Plans that leverage direct financial or in-kind contributions by members of the target industry.
- Leveraged resources may also include braided funding from other public, private or philanthropic sources.

ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

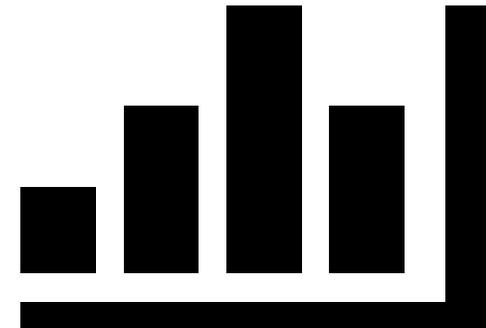
Applicants may apply for up to \$200,000

- All expenses must be expenses of the training grant and its implementation. The need for, and rationale, of all costs must be fully justified and explained in the Budget Summary and Narrative Form (Appendix C).
- Eligible expenses may include reasonable project management costs.
- The following are costs that shall not be covered by Lighthouse Industries UP funds:
 - Building construction
 - Website development or maintenance. (Development of web content may be allowed in certain circumstances.)

REPORTING

Grantees will submit **quarterly reports and expenditure reports** to MD Labor. This reporting process will serve as the mechanism through which grant funds are disbursed. Reports will **track key outcomes:**

- Participant level demographic data
- Number of participants
- Credential attainment
- Supportive Services provided
- Employment status post-training
- Wages and hours worked post-training
- Post-training survey
- Employer satisfaction



PROPOSAL FORMAT

- Letter of Application
- Appendix A - Application
 - Cover Page, Executive Summary, Narrative, Assurances
- Appendix B - Letters of Commitment and other Supporting Documentation
 - MUST include Signed letter(s) of commitment from at least three employers
 - Signed letter(s) of commitment from the Training Provider, if the Lead Applicant is not the Training Provider
 - Signed letter(s) of commitment from any Subrecipients, if applicable
 - Signed W9 Form from the Lead Applicant
 - Certificate of Good Standing - required for Lead Applicant & any subrecipient
 - A copy of official notice of tax-exempt status from the IRS if Lead Applicant is a 501(c)
- Appendix C - Budget
 - Includes budget narrative and information on leveraged resources
 - Requests cannot exceed \$200,000

TIMELINE

February 18	Proposal Release
February 26	Pre-Proposal Conference
Friday, April 24	Applications Due
April - May	Review Period
June 1	Award Announcements
June 1, 2026 - May 31, 2028	Period of Performance

Questions?

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