

Bridging the Green Economy Skills Gap-Iowa

Abstract

Iowa Workforce Development is submitting a single state, (statewide) response to this grant opportunity. The funding requested for this initiative is \$1,172,614.00.

Iowa's proposal centers on the most comprehensive analysis of both the Labor Supply and Labor Demand ever performed on Iowa's Green Economy. It will use some of the best-known assets of the Labor Market and Workforce Information Division to create a comprehensive and ongoing survey of Green Economy industries and employers, then match them with a Human Capital Inventory of Iowans and their skill sets.

The Labor Demand research will include an analysis of the labor market through survey instruments, use of standard BLS workforce data, an overview of Iowa's regulatory and incentive environment in the Green Economy, a study of the state's needs for building deconstruction and recycling, and training opportunities for Iowa's dislocated and targeted worker populations including those affected by restructuring in the auto industry.

The statewide analysis work will include occupational demands, skill needs, current job openings, percentages of jobs per Green Industry, and future job opportunities. Partners for this will include state government leadership, the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, the Institute for Decision Making at the University of Northern Iowa, Iowa's major utility companies, and other business and industry partners.

The Labor Supply surveys and research will use IWD's data collection tools to develop a Human Capital Inventory of workers in cohorts that will include: worker locations, income levels, education, certifications, skills, experience, willingness to relocate or change to a Green Economy job, commuting patterns, willingness to attend classes for upskilling or degree programs, and methods to connect employers and workers to Iowa's Green Economy jobs.

An ongoing gap analysis between workforce skills supply and workforce skills demand as the Green Economy evolves will inform state workforce and education policy. It will also assist the state in prospecting for Green Businesses to start up or move to Iowa.

The resulting information on job opportunities will help state officials with decision making on the use of ARRA and I-Jobs funds. Continuously updated information on occupations studied will populate IWD's new Green Jobs website and better direct Iowans to Green Economy jobs in their area as well as attract Green Economy talent from other states.