

## a) Statement of Need

### 1) Demonstration of Current and Future Demand

Lincoln's Employer-Driven Skills Partnership (LEDSP) is unlike any previous workforce development program implemented in this community, or in this state. The strength of our program is driven by the innovative leadership of a committed group of advanced manufacturing employers and is enhanced by robust partnerships across a broad spectrum of workforce partners. This project has its roots in the two initiatives that have had profound success in Lincoln, Nebraska. These two initiatives are the manufacturing skills training established by the Lincoln Manufacturing Council (LMC) , and the EmployLNK program, which has unified workforce development and social service programs across southeast Nebraska.

EmployLNK includes over 14 different workforce and social service organizations representing 900+ case managers, who are deeply connected to jobseekers and the communities in which they're embedded. In addition to monthly meetings to share common issues and hear from Lincoln businesses on their openings, this group plans career fairs for veterans, adults, and students, as well as orchestrates a reverse pitch job fair for case managers to learn about jobs in the community. Most recently in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, EmployLNK has responded with a series of well attended drive-through job fairs. EmployLNK will play a major role in helping to recruit potential trainees for this program, promote job opportunities for this program, and continue to build the network of manufacturing employers to better support this initiative.

The focus of this new proposal is based around enhancing the advanced manufacturing workforce training in Lancaster and Saunders counties by expanding on the LMC training model.

This employer-driven program has been devised to train both job-seekers and incumbent workers in the specific areas of need for employer partners. According to industry estimates, over the next decade nearly 3.5 million manufacturing jobs in the United States will need to be filled due to retirements and growth in the sector. Nearly 2 million of those jobs may go unfilled due to a talent shortage.<sup>1</sup> When asked for their workforce projections for the next four years of how many individuals they would need to hire in manufacturing positions, the 15 employer members of LMC estimated the following numbers:

<b>Number of entry-level workers your company will likely hire</b>	1622
<b>Number of skilled workers your company will likely hire</b>	813
<b>Total number of workers your company will likely hire</b>	<b>2435</b>

Due to the dynamic nature of the global economy, the knowledge and skills required of a successful workforce are increasingly in flux.<sup>2</sup> Demands on employers in the manufacturing sector to adopt real-time solutions to meet the fast changing realities of the available labor force are mounting. To address these challenges, employers are faced with the daunting task of restructuring existing tools, machines, and workforce training to meet both current and future work realities.<sup>3</sup> Effective solutions require innovative strategies aimed at producing greater efficiencies and enhanced results through collaboration.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States, a champion of the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), stated, “[t]o increase U.S. competitiveness,

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Labor, Funding Opportunity Announcement FOA-ETA-20-13, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Schiliro, Daniele. *Knowledge-based Economies and the Institutional Environment*. Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development. Nov. 2010.

[http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/37138/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_37138.pdf](http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/37138/1/MPRA_paper_37138.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [1] Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2010). *Help wanted: Projections of jobs and educational requirements through 2018*. Washington, DC: Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University. <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/ursjbxaym2np1v8mgrv7>

we must educate, train, attract, and invest in employees who are able to compete and grow in the 21st century.”<sup>4</sup> More than ever before, the training of a skilled workforce must be agile and responsive to industry input. It must rely on the collaboration of employers who once saw themselves as competitors in the market for skilled talent, but now seem themselves as partners in training an effective workforce locally to compete on a global scale.

What we have built in Lincoln with the LMC training model is a true sector strategy; one



which includes the establishment of a pipeline of talent through training and employment services that are properly aligned with in-demand jobs in the local or regional area. LEDSP will increase collaborative efforts to help identify in-demand

manufacturing-related skills at a local and regional

level, build traditional and non-traditional training programs aligned with in-demand occupations, and will provide intensive and specialized training to southeast Nebraska’s workers. LEDSP will accomplish this goal by building on the LMC training model, which has already shown success, and changing outmoded training models.

In order to make this program a successful reality, it will be critical that the professional development components of this plan take place on multiple levels. Not only are manufacturers in need of finding new skilled personnel for many existing positions, but they are also in desperate need to upskill existing personnel to fill more specialized positions. These specialized

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Chamber of Commerce, May 30, 2014, <http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/US%20Chamber%20of%20Commerce%20-%20WIOA%20support.pdf>

positions are often the same or similar to H-1B occupations and are increasingly reliant on technical expertise in emerging areas of technology. Additionally, as technology changes and more advanced manufacturing equipment is needed, the skill sets required to work and understand the upgraded equipment also changes. LMC's innovative skills-based training program focuses on updating the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of both potential employees and incumbent workers.

The H3 (High Wage, High Skill, High Demand) Manufacturing Career Cluster Report<sup>5</sup>, shows profound changes for many manufacturing occupations in Lincoln. Machinists are in relatively high demand in both regions and are considered an H3 occupation. Manufacturers continue to express their concern that regional data does not represent the actual need. Many companies are currently unable to expand production capacity due to the lack of skilled talent.

### H3 Career Cluster Report<sup>6</sup>

Occupation	Location	Percent Change in Job Openings	Entry Wage
Machinists	Lincoln Region	14.64%	\$33,399
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	Lincoln Region	17.48%	\$28,305

## 2) Populations Served

LEDSP is built through place-based training strategies to maximize the connection with the largest number of underrepresented individuals in the Lincoln community. This program is an expansion of a highly innovative program designed by the Lincoln Manufacturing Council (LMC). Past training sessions have strategically been held in areas where access to classes were within walking distance from key downtown locations or public bus routes, and have been

<sup>5</sup> H3 Report, Nebraska Department of Labor, <http://h3.ne.gov/careerClusters.xhtml>)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

designed to best connect with underrepresented populations including women, people of color, ex-offenders, and individuals with barriers to employment. Utilizing a place-based strategy, these classes have been held in low income neighborhoods which fall within the Opportunity Zone



designation. these classes have already yielded numerous success stories among its students, including students falling in the demographic categories considered to be underrepresented populations.

We have also worked very closely with correction partners and have established close connections with individuals leaving incarceration. Part of the expansion of this program will be to further enhance this partnership through collaborations with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Service (NDCS), which will allow incarcerated individuals who are within 6 months of release to attend classes and gain manufacturing work experience through Cornhusker Industries (the workforce development arm of NDCS).

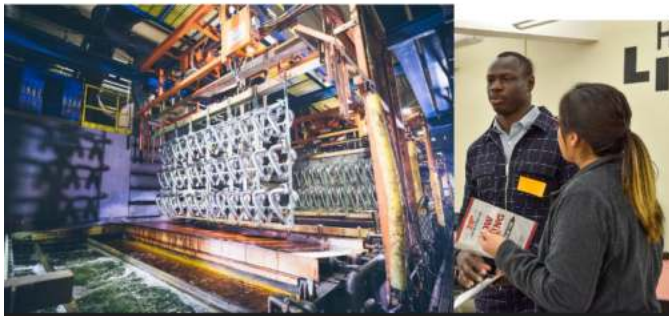
LMC convened for the first time in 2019 and heard from Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and Nebraska Department of Agriculture Director, Steve Wellman on the intersection of manufacturing with city priorities and agriculture. Convenings occur biannually to discuss needs in the manufacturing sector and to identify priorities for the Council.



The first priority of the Council has been to increase the number of people in Lincoln that have the skills and knowledge to enter into manufacturing. Many job seekers do not have the manufacturing-related experience that would allow them to get past the Applicant Tracking Systems and receive serious consideration. To increase the number of qualified applicants, the Council created a business-led class for adults to learn basic skills such as measurement, reading



Anthony  
October 2019 Class  
Electroplater



work orders, and the expectations of the industry.

Supportive services to help students succeed are already in place for this program.

Students receive a meal and childcare during the class. Students who attend every session,

complete a job shadow, and apply for a position may be eligible for a \$250 stipend. The stipend covers the opportunity cost of attending the class, as many work in the evenings. Students attend a job fair during the final class to meet with employers and apply for positions. The class is taught by trainers from LMC member companies, Kawasaki and Agility Fuel Solutions.

We are building Step Two of the program to focus on skilling up individuals who have previous manufacturing experience but are not currently working in the field or need additional skills to gain entry to a better position. This will especially help many formerly incarcerated individuals. It will also be an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on displaced workers in the retail and service industry, some of whom may have relevant skills for manufacturing and whose jobs in the service industry may not return.

## b) Expected Outcomes and Outputs

## 1) Participant Training and Employment Performance Outcomes

### i. H-1B Performance Outcome Measures

Although some participants may enter into the advanced manufacturing field in entry-level positions, interventions and coordination with career coaches and employer partners will allow participants to continue to develop and enhance their skills and credentials throughout the duration of this program. The availability of continued skill development training and regular one-on-one interventions with LPED staff will allow a sizable number of participants to have the potential to move up into middle and high skilled jobs within the four-year measurement period of this program.

<b>Performance Outcome Measures</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Total participants served (cumulative 4-year total)	620
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step 1 of Program</li> </ul>	400
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step 2 of Program</li> </ul>	80
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step 3 of Program</li> </ul>	165
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step 4 of Program</li> </ul>	60
Total participants enrolled in education/training activities (cumulative 4-year total)	600
Total participants who complete education/training activities (cumulative 4-year total)	550
Total participants who complete education/training activities and receive a degree, or other type of credential	205
Total number of unemployed and underemployed participants who complete education/training activities and obtain employment	430
Total number of incumbent worker participants who complete training activities and that advance into a new position	120

LEDSP has established performance outcome targets that meet and exceed state and local WIOA performance measures. Due to our close partnership with manufacturing employers, our participants will all have extremely high levels of access to available jobs from fifteen member manufacturers in our community. Additionally we have built many supports into the design of this program to ensure participant success and continued employment in both the short term and long term.

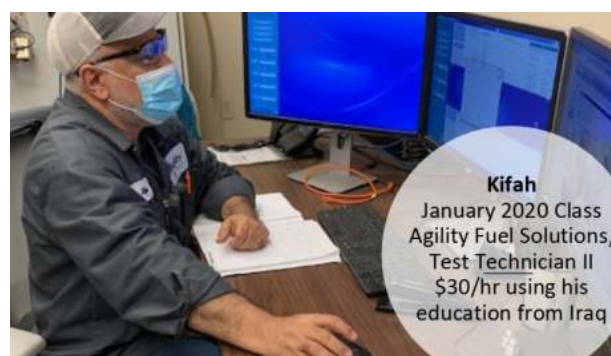
WIOA Performance Outcome Measures	Targets
Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit	83%
Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit.	87%

## 2) One Workforce Program Outputs

### i. Proof of Concept


The proof of concept has already been illustrated with the success of early LMC skills training sessions and can be seen through some of the success stories mentioned in this project narrative. LMC has completed three cohorts of the class with 45 graduates. Of those 45, we have had hires at Kawasaki, InExhaust, Agility Fuel Solutions, Lincoln Industries, and General Dynamics.

Success stories include Tori , who is now a Team Leader at General Dynamics after being hired as a Fabricator and was promoted after only 90 days on the job. She had no previous experience in manufacturing and worked a low-wage dispatch position prior to the class. She



**Kifah**  
January 2020 Class  
Agility Fuel Solutions,  
Test Technician II  
\$30/hr using his  
education from Iraq

now makes more than double her previous wage, over \$20/hour, and “loves” her new position at



General Dynamics. Kifah (pictured) was hired by Agility Fuel Solutions, tripling his previous salary, and now works as a Test Technician II. He had skills and experience from Iraq that he was able to utilize at Agility. Finally, Adam did not complete high school but his case manager at the school reached out to ask if he could take the class. He was hired by Agility Fuel Solutions and has already been promoted twice and now makes just over \$20/hour. He is on a path for a stable and successful career in manufacturing.

## **ii. Sustainability Plan**

The sustainability plan for this grant is focused on the fact that this initiative has been business-driven since day one and has already achieved many success stories. As such, it will continue to be sustained over the long-term through LMC membership fees paid to LPED (totaling over \$50,000 per year currently and will grow as members are added) and through leveraged business resources such as providing instructors and consumables for training classes. The funding request we are pursuing is conservative in nature and will allow us to expand and tool up our available training resources, which will then be able to be maintained long-term. This model relies on leveraged resources in the form of employer commitments and employer-led classes as well as donated training space and materials from partners including the Lincoln Public Schools Career Academy, Community Action, Lincoln Literacy, Lutheran Family Services, Catholic Social Services, and Educare of Lincoln.

LEDSP is not starting from scratch. It is building upon the work and financial investment of the Lincoln Manufacturing Council. Federal funds will help scale this work and expand the breadth and depth of the offerings provided. Notably, the basic LMC training model is lean and has little overhead. Employers will continue to allow team members to teach classes, which

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allows us to carry these classes forward without having to hire new instructors. Additionally, there will be very little location costs associated with the classes, which will be held at leveraged locations such as Lincoln Public School sites, Community Learning Centers, Southeast Community College, worksites of employers, and various sites of community partners.

LEDSP has developed a timeline for program evaluation and for developing a plan for future program funding. Bryan Seck, Director of Workforce Development for LPED, will lead the charge in showing the value of the program to local and national philanthropic organizations, as well as to potential community-based funding organizations. Prosper Lincoln is a community-wide effort to create intentional scaffolding and financial support for workforce development, early childhood education, and neighborhood development in our community and has been active since 2016. The Lincoln Community Foundation (LCF) (STAN- use Barb's letter here as needed) leads the effort and has provided funding for Bryan's efforts at LPED. LCF will work with LEDSP to identify funding needed after the grant ends from organizations that have funded Prosper Lincoln and other workforce efforts locally and stateside including the Peter Kiewit Foundation, Woods Charitable Fund, the Cooper Foundation, and others. LPED played a major role in helping the New Americans Task Force receive one of five Google nonprofit grants in Nebraska.

LEDSP will utilize existing programs at SCC and industry certifications as a component of the program. This will allow these programs to continue to have the number of students from the area needed to ensure success. The Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board (GLWDB), which is the WIOA entity serving the Lancaster County and Saunders County local area, is committing incumbent worker dollars to help make this program a success. We anticipate

that these funds will continue to be available for Lincoln’s manufacturing employers even after the funding for this grant ends.

Sustainability Activity	Timeline
Employers will leverage existing resources to build, teach, and sustain classes	Already in place and will be expanded throughout Years 1-4 and beyond
Grant-funded staff will creating content to share with foundations and partners about the program to keep them informed of future funding opportunities	Years 1-4
The Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board will set aside funding for incumbent worker training	Years 1-4 and beyond
LPED staff will leverage membership fees from the Lincoln Manufacturing Council, and enlist additional members, to sustain these efforts	Years 1-4 and beyond
The program will leverage existing space at Lincoln Public Schools, employer work sites, Southeast Community College, and community partner locations	Years 1-4 and beyond
LPED and grant-funded staff will submit funding proposals to foundations. Bryan will continue to be lead on LMC and EmployLNK ongoing and donate time to LEDSP.	Years 2-4 and beyond
Executive Training Committee from LMC (Diane, Nick, and Jim) will continue donating 5% of their time to ensure the initiative is employer led.	Already in place and will continue beyond the grant period.

## c) Project Design – One Workforce Model

### 1) Sector Strategies and Workforce System Alignment

LEDSP is built around sector strategies. As addressed in the Work Plan, the sector strategies associated with this proposal will include all of the elements addressed in the definition and will bring a multitude of valuable business, workforce, and training providers to help support this business-led initiative.


WIOA established a new vision for how workforce development partners and industry should better work together. With business and industry leading as champions of change, WIOA promotes its bi-partisan support and vision of helping businesses grow through better collaboration. These “sector strategies” only function when businesses are working together to provide input to workforce partners and training providers to identify areas where improvement is needed. This process helps to more efficiently find skilled workers to fill job vacancies across all levels of employment. It’s a win-win for businesses, job-seekers, training providers, and workforce partners. The requirements in WIOA mandate that local boards “develop, convene, and implement.”

Revitalizing manufacturing training also requires Nebraska’s employers to embrace WIOA’s expanded and strengthened American Job Center services to employers and individuals. This includes placing an “emphasis on leveraging resources to provide America’s workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family sustaining wages, as well as providing America’s employers with the skilled workers the employers need to succeed in a global economy.”<sup>7</sup> LEDSP aligns its services with extremely close collaboration with the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board (GLWDB). Not only is GLWDB a primary partner on this program, but two of the board members have also played instrumental roles in developing the LMC training curriculum that has launched this program.

LEDSP will help bridge the gap between workforce skills and available jobs, while improving Lincoln’s ability to educate, train, and recruit a qualified workforce that meets

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<sup>7</sup> Access – for all – to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jobs. National Urban League, Washington Bureau. <http://nulwb.iamempowered.com/sites/nulwb.iamempowered.com/files/Urban%20Ideas%20Forum%20Handout%20-%20Jobs%20and%20Tech%20FINAL%2011%204%2014.pdf>



Lincoln's economic current and future needs and encourages economic growth for generations to come. Nebraska faces a challenge in finding long term solutions to a labor shortage issue. While Nebraska enjoys a low unemployment rate, 3.5% (September 2020) compared to a 7.9% national unemployment rate for the same month<sup>8</sup>, which poses a significant problem in finding enough workers to fill Nebraska jobs. Although the labor participation rate may be exceptionally high in Nebraska, there is a high number of employees earning low wages or working multiple jobs to make ends meet. This program connects residents to QUALITY full time jobs with career pathways in manufacturing and get people out of part-time jobs - build the pipeline to not need as many H-1B visas.

Many of Lincoln's High Wage, High Growth, High Demand (H3) job opportunities are growing at a significant pace, but manufacturing employers are not finding the qualified workforce needed to fill those positions. Job creation is not the greatest challenge in Lincoln and throughout Nebraska; creating a pipeline of skilled workers prepared to meet employer demands -- both now and in the future, with rising automation -- is the biggest challenge.

Nebraska is seeing an astonishing disconnect between the rising educational levels of job-seekers and the needed skills for many H3 job openings in the manufacturing sector. While the education level of Nebraska's job seekers is rising steadily, many job openings requiring middle- to high-skill levels are going unfilled. This program addresses those skills challenges by helping close the "skills gap" in what is one of the most important sectors to Lincoln's economy -- advanced manufacturing.

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<sup>8</sup> INFOlink, Nebraska Department of Labor, <https://www.dol.nebraska.gov/Infolink>

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The high level of buy-in for on-going coordination is demonstrated by the creation of LMC and the charter between LPED and other workforce development organizations in creating the EmployLNK partnership. EmployLNK helps to ensure a high degree of coordination and collaboration between employers and workforce agencies. The EmployLNK workforce agency coalition will be particularly beneficial to ensure the input and participation of workforce agency staff in promoting this program to potential trainees and case managers, as well as in reaching underrepresented populations. EmployLNK membership includes, but is not limited to representatives from Equus (WIOA Title I Service Provider), the American Job Center, the Nebraska Department of Labor, Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development/Prosper Lincoln, Lutheran Family Services, Catholic Social Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Center for People In Need, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Veterans Affairs and includes a 800 person listserv of nonprofits and agencies that workforce is a valuable part of their work including NDHHS, domestic violence agencies, probation/parole, and local nonprofits that assist people seeking full-time employment and stability.

The system of partners located at the American Job Centers, which consistently sees 1,000 job seekers a month, will play a key role in leveraging resources for serving the participants of this grant, as well as in participant recruitment, utilizing their established strategies, expertise, and proven track record in area program recruitment campaigns.

## **2) H-1B One Workforce Partnerships: Demonstration of Employer and Industry Engagement**

Lincoln employers and workforce partners have recognized that a collective impact effort was needed to create a more cohesive strategy for talent recruitment and employer growth. To do this, a group of highly energized manufacturers began working together with LPED to create a

new method of recruiting and training new employees. Lincoln Manufacturing Council (LMC) was formed by 15 of Lincoln's manufacturers. Each employer has dedicated the time and talents of many of its top leadership members to write, create curriculum and training exercises, teach the class, provide job shadows during the LMC classes.

Creating these classes has functioned as a launching point for many additional collaborative endeavors aimed at energizing Lincoln's manufacturing sector. It will also help to educate the public about the manufacturing industry and job opportunities in order to change the perception of the industry from dirty out-dated environments to safe, high-tech companies.

<b>Company</b>	<b>Products/Description</b>	<b>Website</b>
TMCO	Concept-to-completion metal manufacturing services.	<a href="https://www.tmcoinc.com/">https://www.tmcoinc.com/</a>
Bison Inc	Sports equipment manufacturing	<a href="https://www.bisoninc.com/">https://www.bisoninc.com/</a>
Kawasaki	Produces All-Terrain Vehicles, Utility Vehicles, Personal Watercraft, Recreation Utility Vehicles, and Passenger Rail Cars	<a href="https://www.kawasakilincoln.com/">https://www.kawasakilincoln.com/</a>
Agility Fuel Solutions	Manufacturer of clean energy storage, delivery, and conversion systems for commercial vehicle OEMs & fleets	<a href="https://agilityfuelsolutions.com/">https://agilityfuelsolutions.com/</a>
Lincoln Industries	The largest and most diverse privately-held metal finishing company in North America	<a href="https://www.lincolnindustries.com/">https://www.lincolnindustries.com/</a>
Deeter Foundry/Neenah Operations	Quality iron castings like manhole frame and covers, inlets, tree grates and more	<a href="http://www.deeter.com/">http://www.deeter.com/</a>
Mapes Panels	Makers of Infill Panels, Architectural Panels, Sandwich Panel, Metal Panel, Insulated Metal Panels, Glazing Infill	<a href="https://mapespanels.com/">https://mapespanels.com/</a>

	Panel	
General Dynamics	The Global Leader in Weapon and Platform Protection Systems for Land, Sea and Air.	<a href="https://www.gd-ots.com/">https://www.gd-ots.com/</a>
Nature's Variety	Natural pet food company	<a href="https://www.naturesvariety.com/">https://www.naturesvariety.com/</a>
Molex	Manufacturer of electronic, electrical and fiber optic connectivity systems	<a href="https://www.molex.com/molex/home">https://www.molex.com/molex/home</a>
Continental ContiTech	Develops, manufactures and markets products, systems and intelligent components made of rubber, plastic, metal and fabric	<a href="https://www.continental.com/en-us">https://www.continental.com/en-us</a>
Teledyne Isco	Manufacturer of a wide range of innovative products designed to increase productivity while improving the quality of life on our planet.	<a href="https://www.teledyneisco.com/en-us">https://www.teledyneisco.com/en-us</a>
LICOR	Biosciences designs and manufactures instrument systems and research tools for environmental and biotechnology research.	<a href="https://www.licor.com/">https://www.licor.com/</a>
Lincoln Machine	Provides CNC machining, 3D printing, grinding, welding, lathes, and mills; serves automotive, agriculture, transportation, food, pharmaceutical, utilities, and telecommunication industries.	<a href="https://www.lincolnmachine.com/">https://www.lincolnmachine.com/</a>
InExhaust	Silencer & exhaust systems manufacturer with over 50 years' combined experience in exhaust system manufacturing, power generation, emissions, and the oil and gas industries.	<a href="https://www.inexhaust.com/">https://www.inexhaust.com/</a>

### 3) Career Pathways and Training Design

#### Manufacturing Training Progression

The Lincoln Manufacturing Council’s Manufacturing Training Progression (MTP) is divided into four steps. Step 1 and 2 are for individuals who do not have experience in the manufacturing industry. They focus on introducing employees to member companies of LMC and training employees to get their foot in the door in manufacturing. Step 3 and 4 are for skilling-up incumbent employees and progressing them into well-paid technical jobs.

### Basic Training

Step 1 is a 6-week introductory course targeted at underrepresented populations, unemployed individuals, and underemployed individuals who do not have previous manufacturing experience but are looking for full-time opportunities with benefits. The classes are taught by member manufacturers to provide the curriculum as well as ‘real-world’

instruction for the

students. The

training includes a

job shadow

experience and

basic principles in

safety,

measurement,

problem-solving,

and soft skills. In addition, two member employers visit each class to show a ‘day in the life’, as

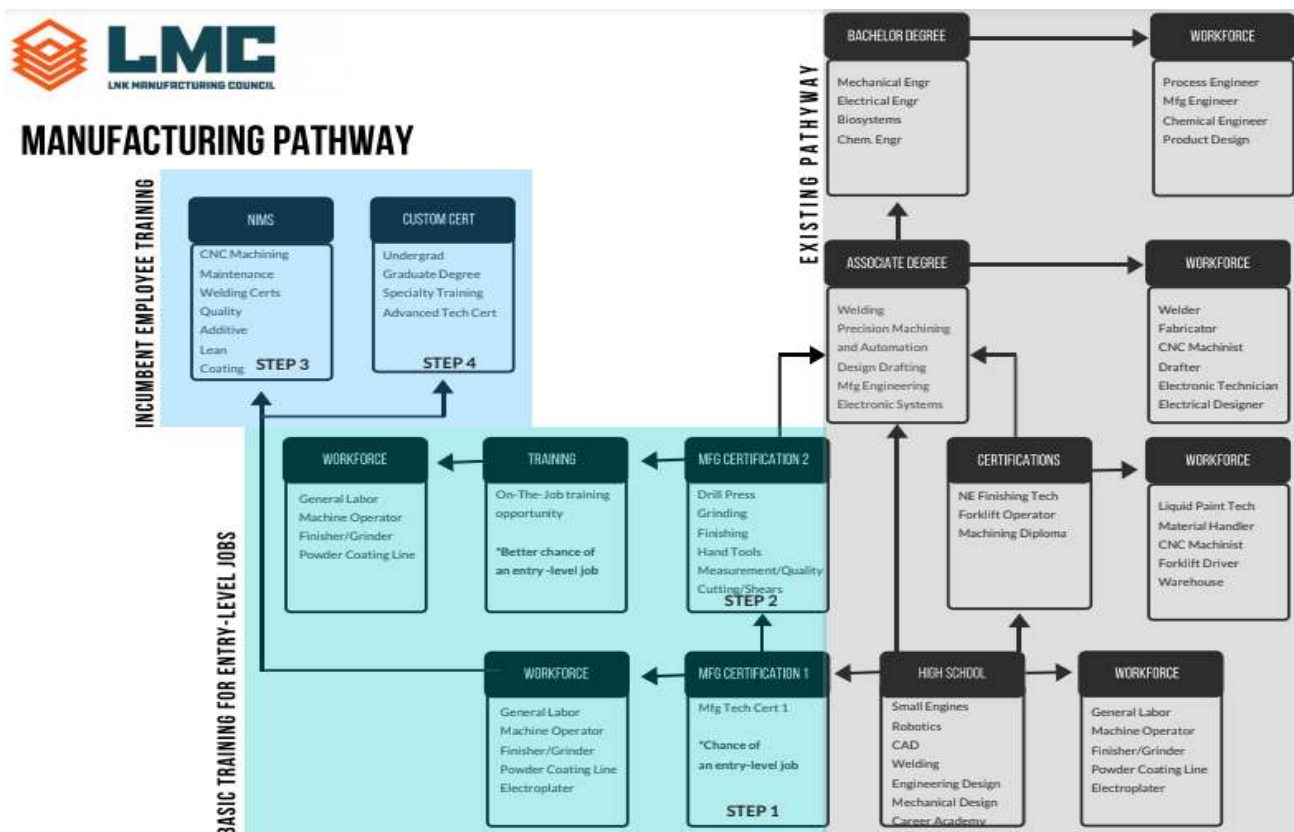
the students have no prior exposure to the variety of manufacturers in Lincoln. In addition,


students participate in a Career Fair during the final class to begin their transition into a new



career. Step 1 is delivered by LMC at different locations and agencies that are accessible to the target population using a place-based services model.

Step 2 will begin the expansion of our existing program. It will result in greater knowledge and practice in technical skills. Step 2 is targeted toward people that have manufacturing experience in the past but are not currently in the industry. Examples include people currently working in other industries who are seeking a return to manufacturing, as well as people with manufacturing experience who are exiting the justice system or addiction treatment facilities. The certification could run around 12 weeks to teach in-depth soft skills, especially workplace communication. Employers have identified quality, proficiency in hand tools, learning to interpret prints, work orders and spec sheets as technical skills that would be advantageous on the job. This step will also introduce opportunities through other certifications





(forklift, OSHA, computer literacy – offered by SCC). This step is a continuation of Step 1 – some may not find employment opportunities without demonstrating better technical proficiency and commitment to learning. This step will be combined with a grant-funded on-the-job training opportunity, which will allow employers to be reimbursed up to 50% of the training costs of hard-to-place participants for a period of up to six months. It is estimated that 100 program participants will be assisted through on-the-job training..

Step 3 offers various industry certifications that are common to companies. They might be offered in a single location (SCC/Career Academy) or through certification by a mobile trainer. The chart shows some examples of possible certifications, including NIMS certification, Industry-recognized credentials, and employer-specific training.

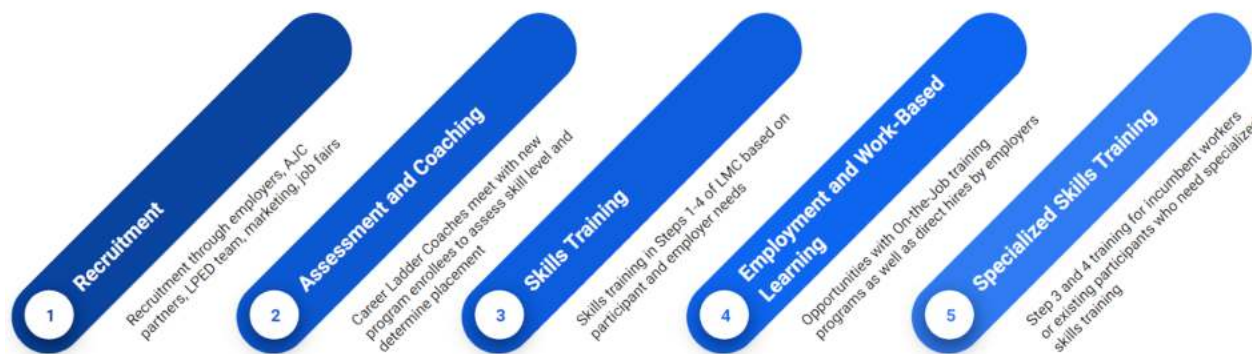
Step 4 is specialized training toward degrees or advanced technical certifications. This will differ by company and by process. Companies will determine what is needed to up-skill their employees and will be provided with specialized training such as NIMS certification, Associate Degrees, Bachelor's Degrees, Industry-recognized credentials, and employer-specific training which becomes necessary as employers invest in state-of-the-art equipment needed to compete globally.. This specialized training allows our program participants to move from entry-level position into positions that are substantially similar to H-1B occupations.

LEDSP will incorporate assessment tools administered by the Career Ladder Coaches. This tool will be designed to help match the potential study and career areas within the manufacturing field with the skills, interests, and/or abilities of the participants. Assessments will be inclusive so as not to discourage anyone from pursuing a manufacturing profession, but

will help to identify skill and education gaps to better assess the educational and/or work-based training needs of the participant.

The selection of the assessment tools will be done in conjunction with the industry insight of our employer partners. Participants will be placed on one of three customized intervention tracks: 1) intensive coaching and other short-term, specialized services culminating in direct job placement into middle and high-skilled jobs; 2) short-term training leading to employment; and 3) accelerated skills training along a career pathway that leads to an industry-recognized credential and employment.

## LEDSP Process and Flow Chart



In an effort to reduce the amount of time it takes to find employment, the Career Ladder Coaches will work one-on-one with participants and be housed at the AJC. They will also actively be involved in EmployLNK and LMC meetings in an effort to identify additional training that may be necessary, more effectively match existing job skill sets to available jobs, and develop professional resumes catered to the occupational interests of the participant. This

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will ultimately lead to a path to employment in entry-level and specialized manufacturing occupations where some employers have indicated difficulty in filling their vacancies due to a lack of skills in the available workforce.

#### **4) Project Work Plan**

Employers within the same industry seeking to draw similarly skilled employees from an environment where the number of skilled job applicants does not meet the demand for open positions have the greatest collective impact when they are not in isolation from one another. Effective workforce cohesion in the 21st century requires working together to train, skill-up, and recruit employees. LEDSP addresses each of these needs through a program built upon three pillars: 1) various levels of skills training, 2) active recruitment for open positions/training, and 3) employer commitments to innovation and collaboration.

### **d. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity**

#### **1) Capacity of Lead Applicant, Partnership Structure, and Administrative Controls and Systems**

The execution of the work plan for LEDSP will be done collaboratively through a leadership team approach. Project leadership will include executive business leadership from manufacturers across Lincoln who have formed LMC, the leadership team at Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED), and local workforce board members from the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board. Grant-funded staff from LPED as well as Southeast Community College will play an active role in helping to coordinate meetings. Leadership team members from the partnering entities will be responsible for the timely delivery of milestones and to ensure successful program outcomes. At a minimum, the leadership team will schedule

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monthly meetings for the duration of the grant, either in person or via technology. Additionally, the leadership team will schedule and conduct annual comprehensive evaluations of all performance of grant contractual partners. The primary grant partners on this initiative are LPED, GLWDB, and SCC.

## **2) Financial, Data Collection, and Performance Reporting Systems**

LPED has the following internal management and administrative processes to ensure compliance with applicable Federal rules and regulations: hiring process with background checks, financial work pre-audits, and a monitoring process for all programs.

LPED will provide oversight and technical assistance to the activities outlined in the Methodology and Work Plan. Luke Peltz (Director of Business Development) and Bryan Seck (Director of Workforce Development) will play leading roles in coordinating the oversight and management responsibilities of the grant in coordination with the new Project Director. Luke and Bryan have extensive leadership experience in employment and training programs, as well as economic and workforce development programs.

LPED will serve as the grantee for this proposal; however, the success of this project is reliant upon coordination of all grant partners. This collective group of partnering entities understands that workforce change requires strong coordination across a multitude of employers within the manufacturing sector, rather than the efforts of one organization. This collective impact strategy has brought together key leaders and partners that will be necessary to put the mechanisms in place which will lead to the ultimate success of the project.

For tracking purposes, LPED will use a Management Information System (MIS) called Clarity, which is used by multiple agencies and social service programs in Southeast Nebraska.

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This MIS will be customized to meet the reporting needs of this program. Track participant data, reporting, and ensure accurate quarterly reporting.

### e. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability

LPED, as the grantee, will provide all grant coordination and communication, including contract development, reporting, bill paying, and other functions. LPED will take on the responsibility of ensuring that all activities are well-communicated and coordinated among the partners, that milestones are completed in a timely manner, and that program outcomes are accomplished and reported timely. Specific milestones and timelines are included in the attached chart and align with resources identified in the attached budget narrative. The description in the budget narrative supports the needed resources to successfully achieve each of the identified milestones. The grant partners have laid extensive groundwork in preparing this proposal. Each partner has recruited key staff to ensure the success of this collective impact strategy and has extensive experience implementing workforce development projects. All partners stand ready to implement upon notification of the grant award.

LPED will serve as the grantee and operator for this grant initiative, and will provide fiscal, administrative, and performance management to support this grant. LPED will work closely with the GLWDB in these areas. LPED will be entirely responsible for areas of compliance, federal reporting, and program delivery. LPED is an entity associated with the [Lincoln Chamber of Commerce \(LCOC\)](#), which recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, and which successfully manages a budget of \$1.891,500 million annually (2020). This budget includes funding from local employers, the City of Lincoln, and foundational dollars.

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LCOC is a nonprofit organization governed by the Nebraska Nonprofit Corporation Act. As such, LCOC and LPED adhere to the highest levels of oversight related to its procurement processes, systems, and procedures. LCOC has established organizational policies and procurement policies that comply with all federal cost principles found under the Uniform Administrative Guidance (2 CFR 200). LCOC and LPED will ensure that any and all procurement meets any additional requirements outlined under this grant.

LPED will utilize a Project Director (Manufacturing Sector Director) who will oversee the entirety of operations associated with this grant, but who will work closely with the LPED leadership team, including the Director of Workforce Development. LPED will also hire two Career Ladder Coaches and one Part-Time Mobile Trainer who will oversee specific aspects of the grant, including working directly with program participants. This work will include enrollment, assessment, eligibility determination, tracking, and reporting related to participants' successes. The two Career Ladder Coaches will report directly to the Project Director. The complete LEDPS organization chart is included in the attachments.

The primary grant partners on this initiative are LPED, GLWDB, and SCC. While LPED has not held any previous ETA grants, both SCC and GLWDB have successfully completed grants. A Performance Goals Chart and Spending Rate Analysis have been attached.

## f) Budget and Budget Narrative

### 1. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative has been included as an attachment. The budget narrative goes into great detail outlining all necessary costs to ensure the success of this program and this

partnership and provides descriptions beyond what is found in the SF-424 and SF424A. The budget narrative also addresses all leveraged resources counting towards the 25% requirement for this grant.

## 2. Amount and Scope of Leveraged Resources

The total funding amount requested is \$4,061,229. The amount of leveraged resources is \$1,693,792, which is equivalent to 41.71% of the amount requested. The complete budget and leveraged resources breakdown can be found in the attached budget narrative.

### g. Priority Consideration

#### Opportunity Zones -

The proposed service area of this grant has multiple opportunity zones these are included in the table and map below:

City	Opportunity Zone ID	Zip Code	Census Tract
Lincoln	31109003003	68508	30.03
Lincoln	31109000500	68501	5
Lincoln	31109002100	68502	21
Lincoln	31109002002	68502	20.02
Lincoln	31109002001	68502	20.01
Lincoln	31109001900	68508	19
Lincoln	31109001800	68503	18
Lincoln	31109000700	68503	7

