



**Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation  
Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2024**

**Program Name:** Fabrication Laboratories (Fab Labs) Grant

**Program Inception:** WEDC FY17

**Lead Division:** Business and Community Development

**New**             **Revised** [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**Aid**             **Pass-thru Aid**     **Technical Assistance**

**Program Goal:**

The goal of the Fabrication Laboratories (Fab Labs) Grant program is to support the growth of a talent pipeline in the state of Wisconsin.

**Program Description:**

The program is designed to support hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) education by assisting public school districts with equipment purchases used for instructional and educational purposes in fabrication laboratories in Wisconsin schools. The open Fab Lab environment enables students to learn the skills necessary to thrive in the 21st Century global economy. Fab Labs may also serve as a local economic development tool, providing a resource for entrepreneurs, businesses and inventors through community access.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

**Definitions:**

“CESA” means Cooperative Education Service Agencies, as defined by § 116.01 Wis. Stats.

“Fab Lab” means a high technology workshop equipped with computer controlled additive and subtractive manufacturing components, such as 3-dimensional printers, laser engravers, computer numerical control routers, and/or plasma cutters. A fully functioning Fab Lab has active engagement with the business community, is accessible to multiple departments within a school or schools, provides community access, and is integrated with the network of Wisconsin-based Fab Labs.

“Public School District” means the territorial unit for school administration as defined by § 115.01(3) Wis. Stats or a tribal school as defined by § 115.001(15m) Wis. Stats.

**Grant Conditions:**

Wisconsin public school districts may apply for a grant to purchase equipment to be used for instructional and educational purposes in one or more fabrication laboratories by elementary, middle, junior or high school students. Either a CESA, or a lead public school district, may apply on behalf of a consortium of two or more public school districts. All applicants must match 50% of the



grant amount provided by WEDC.

WEDC will take the following into account when considering a Fab Lab Grant:

- Readiness and long-range planning
- Curriculum
- Business and community partnerships
- Financial need and previous awards

Activities ineligible for grant assistance or match include, but are not limited to:

- Past costs
- In-kind contributions
- Indirect construction costs (a.k.a. "soft" costs)

### **Incentives and Available Funding (FY24): \$500,000**

The incentives in this program are grants of up to \$25,000 for individual school districts or up to \$50,000 for consortium applications to reimburse recipients for equipment purchases. The minimum grant amount available is \$10,000. Applicants may only be awarded one grant per fiscal year. Applicants can receive a maximum of three grants. This does not apply to Milwaukee Public Schools or if an applicant is seeking a one-time grant to establish a Fab Lab for use by K-8 students.

### **Activities and Expected Outcomes:**

Assist 20 public school districts or consortiums.

### **Performance Reporting:**

Recipients will be required to submit a performance report documenting the number of unique students who accessed the lab as part of a curriculum-based learning environment, as well as any other contract deliverable.

WEDC annually selects awards on a sample basis for an audit. All backup to the performance report and financial records are required to be maintained by the Recipient for a period of at least Three (3) years after the last performance report is due.

WEDC may impose additional reporting requirements to evaluate project performance and to ensure compliance with contract deliverables.

### **Application and Awards Process:**

The Fab Labs program has a continuous application process with a deadline of January 15 for receipt of completed applications. Applicants for a grant should complete an application through an Account Manager. The completed application will be assigned to an underwriter and will go through the award review process.

For more information on the application review, internal process, and award distribution, please refer to WEDC's award administration policies and procedures.


**Revision History:**

Effective Date	Description of Change
7/1/2018	Moratorium on applicants who have already received three Fab Lab grants.
7/1/2019	Clarified performance reporting requirements
7/1/2020	Expand eligibility for school districts establishing Fab Labs to be used by K-8 students; decrease match requirement; include standard list of ineligible grant or match activities.
11/10/2020	Expand eligibility to include tribal schools.
07/1/2022	Changed to non-competitive program
07/1/2023	Set minimum grant amount

**PROGRAM REVIEW:**


This document has been reviewed by the following parties (Check all that apply):

- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Legal Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Senior VP Strategic Investment and Policy:  Date 7/20/2023

Division Vice President: Michael Ward Date 7/20/2023

**AUTHORIZED APPROVAL:**

CEO or Designee:  Date 7/20/2023