



Talent Recruitment Grant Program

Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2026	
Lead Division: Marketing & Brand Strategy	
☒ New	☐ Revised
☒ Grant	☐ Loan ☐ Tax Credit ☐ Technical Assistance

Introduction

Background Information: The Talent Recruitment Grant Program (TRG) was created by [2025 Wisconsin Act 15](#) to support local efforts to attract and incentivize out-of-state talent to relocate to Wisconsin municipalities.

Program's Purpose: The purpose of TRG is to assist local organizations and communities with talent recruitment programs that incentivize households to relocate from outside of Wisconsin to a municipality in Wisconsin.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants: TRG applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a city, village, town, county, or American Indian tribe or band located within Wisconsin¹; or
- Be a nonprofit organization, the mission of which includes economic development, workforce and talent development, or community development.²

Eligible Use of Funds: Talent Recruitment Grants can fund the following activities³. Costs are only eligible to be applied to grant and matching fund expenses after WEDC approval.

- The administration of talent recruitment programs; and
- The costs associated with incentivizing households to relocate from outside of Wisconsin to a municipality in Wisconsin.

Matching: The applicant must provide matching funds of at least 20% of the total talent recruitment program cost. Matching funds may be cash, local investment, or in-kind donations.

Household Eligibility: A Household is eligible for TRG incentives if the Household meets at least all of the following eligibility criteria:

- The Household resides outside of Wisconsin at the time the Household applies for TRG incentives.
- The Household has an individual household income of at least \$55,000.
- The Household submits an application to the recipient of a TRG grant to receive talent

¹ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(4)(a)1.

² Wis. Stat. § 238.14(4)(a)2.

³ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(3).



recruitment program incentives.

Available Incentives

FY26: \$5,000,000

Award sizes: The maximum TRG is \$500,000 per municipality per fiscal year.⁴

Awards per Applicant: Up to one award per applicant per fiscal year.

Activities and Expected Outcomes

Assist 10 communities to recruit 250 households to Wisconsin.

Impact: Address and mitigate projected population decline and workforce shortages by providing financial assistance to eligible applicants for the design, implementation, and promotion of initiatives that attract new residents.

Metrics: As a talent attraction and capacity building program, performance reporting metrics for TRG are focused on measuring the relocation of households to Wisconsin as well as measuring the connection of project to community. TRG program metrics include the following list, and each project will include one or more of these metrics in its reporting requirements depending on the project's specified use of funds.

- Households Relocated
- Leverage – Total

Application Guideline

Timeline: This program will operate under a structured application and review process. Applications will be accepted during a defined application window in the first half of 2026 and will not be considered on a rolling basis. All submissions received during the open period will be reviewed collectively based on alignment with the program's review considerations and overall strategic goals.

Review Considerations: WEDC may take the following into account when considering a TRG:

- The following details of the applicant's talent recruitment program:
 - The total estimated cost of the program and the individual estimated costs associated with the program's design, administration, marketing, and relocation incentive initiatives.
 - The program's Household Goal and the estimated total grant amount per household.
 - The program's estimated total economic impact⁵, including estimated state and local tax revenue.

⁴ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(3)(b)

⁵ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(4)(b)



- The applicant's demonstrated ability to meet the Matching requirements of the grant.⁶
- If the applicant is a previous recipient of a TRG, the applicant's achievement of the Household Goal stated in the talent recruitment plan for the previous grant.⁷

How to Apply: An interested applicant should contact a WEDC Account Manager to determine if their project is right for the program. Upon review of the project and alignment with eligibility criteria, an applicant will be invited to submit their application through Network Wisconsin.

Award Process

The completed application will be assigned to a panel of reviewers and may include an interview. A WEDC underwriter will be assigned to review each recommended award and go through the WEDC award review process.

WEDC will disburse 50% of the award amount upon entering into a contract with the awardee. The remaining 50% of the award amount will be disbursed when the awardee reports meeting at least half of the Household Goal listed within in contract with WEDC. In the event the awardee fails to meet at least half of the Household Goal, WEDC will not disburse the remaining 50% of the award amount.

Performance Reporting

Recipients must submit semiannual performance reports to WEDC detailing the outcomes of their talent recruitment program.

These reports must include the following information:

- Economic impact of the talent recruitment program, including state and local tax revenue and new consumer spending.
- Applicant Data: Household Annual Income, Household Occupation(s), Pre-Relocation Residency (Zip code), New WI Residency (Zip code), Relocation Date, Relocation Grant Amount, TA Assistance Cost

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.

Helpful Information

Definitions:

⁶ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(3)(c).

⁷ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(3)(d).



["Household"](#)⁸ – a group of one or more individuals who dwell together within the same dwelling.

["Household Goal"](#)⁹ – the total number of households that a talent recruitment program seeks to successfully incentivize to relocate or commit to relocate from outside this state to a municipality in this state.

Revision History

Program Inception – 2025 Wisconsin Act 15

⁸ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(1)(a).

⁹ Wis. Stat. § 238.14(1)(b).