

Western Technical College

Request for Proposal Notice

**RFP 2025-005 –
SCC4 GRANT EVALUATOR**

ISSUED

APRIL 12, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BID INFORMATION PAGES

COVER PAGE	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
NOTICE TO PROPOSERS LETTER	3
SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RETURN LABEL	4

SECTIONS

SECTION #1: GENERAL INFORMATION	5-7
SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS	8-12
SECTION #3: PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS	13-16
SECTION #4: EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS – PROPOSAL CRITERIA	17

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS	18-20
ATTACHMENT B: PROPOSAL RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS	21
ATTACHMENT C: COST PROPOSAL FORM / FEE STRUCTURE MATRIX	22
ATTACHMENT D: PROPOSER REFERENCES FORM	23-24
ATTACHMENT E: QUALIFIED SUPPLIER CERTIFICATION	25
ATTACHMENT F: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SIGNATURE FORM	26
ATTACHMENT G: COOPERATIVE PURCHASING FORM	27
ATTACHMENT H: VENDOR INFORMATION FORM	28
ATTACHMENT I: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS	29-31

EXHIBIT

EXHIBIT 1: SMARTS AND PARTS PROJECT NARRATIVE	32-56
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NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

RFP Notice 2025-005 - SCC4 Grant Evaluator

Notice is hereby given that sealed proposals will be received by Western Technical College District until 2:00 PM CDT on Monday, May 12, 2025 for RFP 2025-005 – SCC4 Grant Evaluator.

Proposal documents may be obtained by downloading from the Western Technical College website at <https://www.westerntc.edu/purchasing> or by downloading from the DemandStar website.

Proposals must be submitted either electronically through DemandStar website.

The district reserves the right to reject any bid for due cause or to waive minor irregularities in any proposal.

All proposals must be guaranteed for 60 days after the date of opening.

Dated this 12th day of April 2025.

The Board of the Western Technical College District,
Roger Stanford, President

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals are due May 12, 2025 by 2:00 PM LOCAL TIME.

The following items **must** be received and date/time stamped in the DemandStar posting for Western Technical College RFP 2025-005 - SCC4 Grant Evaluator. **Late proposals shall be rejected.** Proposals will not be accepted in any form other than electronically through DemandStar posting. Proposals that are physically delivered, emailed, or faxed will not be accepted.

- One (1) electronic submittal via DemandStar.

Please use the following options listed below to return your proposal.

Electronic Delivery Through DemandStar Website www.demandstar.com

Electronic bids must be submitted to the RFP posting on the DemandStar website.

Suppliers can register for free at <http://www.demandstar.com/app/wapp/registration> to access RFPs and submit proposals electronically.

A link to the Request for Proposal on DemandStar is available on the Western Technical College website <https://www.westernnc.edu/purchasing> .

SECTION #1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.0 Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to provide interested parties with information to enable them to prepare and submit a proposal for SCC4 Grant Evaluator services for Western Technical College per the terms and specifications contained herein. Western Technical College through its Business Office, hereinafter referred to as Western, is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors who are able to provide services as described in Attachment A: Scope of Work.

The US Department of Labor awarded Western Technical College the Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grant – Round Four. Nine of the sixteen Wisconsin Technical College System colleges are participating in this consortium project led by Western Technical College. The Smarts and Parts grant was developed to create pathways to advanced manufacturing careers through industry recognized credentials with the intention to share the developed curriculum and outcomes with the rest of the system colleges. Please see the included Smarts & Parts Project Narrative as Exhibit 1 to this RFP.

The results of this solicitation will be used to award a contract for Western Technical College for the duration of the grant with a contract commencing on or about June 16, 2025, and ending April 30, 2028.

1.1 Background:

Description of College

Western Technical College is one of sixteen (16) technical college districts in the state of Wisconsin. Western Technical College serves parts or all of eleven (11) counties and offering associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates in over 100 programs to approximately 9,000 (head count) students. Western Technical College employs approximately 439 full-time and 436 part-time faculty and staff members. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, Western Technical College's budgeted total expenditures were approximately \$111.5 million.

Campus Information

Western Technical College main campus is located in La Crosse, Wisconsin. We also have six regional locations in Black River Falls, Independence, Mauston, Tomah, Sparta, and Viroqua, Wisconsin.

Educational Information

Western Technical College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Western Technical College offers a variety of educational and training opportunities with more than 100 programs of study in 10 career cluster areas such as Advanced Manufacture, Agriculture, Business, Design and Construction, Education and Human Services, Health Sciences, Liberal Arts, Public Safety, STEM, and Transportation. Other programs and services include apprenticeship instruction, adult basic education, customized business and industry training, counseling, testing and career services.

Mission Statement and Goals

Western Technical College provides relevant, high quality education, in a collaborative and sustainable environment, that changes the lives of students and grows our communities.

Strategic Plan/Strategic Directions/Strategic Goals

In fall 2018, Western launched a new strategic plan, called Experience 2025 aimed at improving overall success for "every student, every day." The plan includes the following four strategic directions and seven corresponding strategic goals:

First Choice Service

- Increase overall student satisfaction from 69% in 2017 to 75% by 2021.
- Increase student engagement with student support services from a score of 48.6 to 52 by 2025.

Workforce and Community Engagement

- Infuse work-based learning and community-based learning in 100% of associate degree and technical diploma programs by 2025.
- Implement a comprehensive workforce sector development strategy by 2025.

Equity, Inclusion, and Support

SECTION #1: GENERAL INFORMATION

- Eliminate course completion, retention, and graduation achievement gaps between black, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American students and white students by 2025.
- Increase enrollment of program-declared students of color from 12.82% in 2018 to 15% in 2025.

Employee Engagement

- Increase engaged employees from 35% in 2017 to 45% by 2025.

1.2 Proposal Requirements

The proposal shall provide information necessary for Western to evaluate the qualifications, experience, and expertise of the supplier proposing to provide the requested services.

The Proposer is to make a written proposal which presents an understanding of the requested services. The proposal should demonstrate and provide evidence that the Proposer has the capabilities, professional expertise, and experience to provide the necessary services as described in this RFP. The Proposer shall ensure that all information required herein is submitted with the proposal. All information provided should be verifiable by documentation requested by Western. Failure to provide all information, inaccuracy, or misstatement may be sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal or rescission of an award.

In order to enhance the evaluation process and provide each firm an equal opportunity for consideration, adherence to a standardized technical proposal format is required. Responses should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that the Western may properly evaluate the firm's capabilities to provide the required services.

Proposal Response Format and Evaluation Criteria:

The format of each proposal must contain the following elements and required documents:

Responses to Questions in Attachment B: Proposal Response Requirements:

Submit responses to questions 1 through 5 in Attachment B: Proposal Response Requirements, Respond using proposer's own pages and formatting unless otherwise indicated. The proposer shall state and answer the questions in the order in which they were asked to facilitate comparisons between proposals. Failure to do so may disqualify your proposal.

Forms (Must use the provided Attachments):

- Attachment C: Cost/Fee Structure Matrix
- Attachment D: Proposer References Form (requested in Question 5 of Attachment B. so please include in response with Question 5).
- Attachment E: Qualified Supplier Certification Form
- Attachment F: Request For Proposal Signature Form
- Attachment G: Cooperative Purchasing Form
- Attachment H: Vendor Information Form

Other Required Documents:

- Current W-9

Proposers are encouraged to present innovative approaches to pricing, deliveries, training, or other programs that offer additional value added components to the Proposers response.

1.3 Definitions: The following definitions are used throughout this Request for Proposal:

Contractor means successful Proposer(s) awarded under this RFP process.

MBE means Minority Business Enterprise.

P-Card means Procurement Card (Campus credit card).

Proposer means a firm submitting a Proposal in response to this Request for Proposal.

SECTION #1: GENERAL INFORMATION

RFP means Request for Proposal.

WTCS means Wisconsin Technical College System.

Western means Western Technical College.

Customer is any Western College District, or other Wisconsin public agency, or any other public agency outside of the state of Wisconsin that by its own rules and regulations is authorized to piggyback this Western agreement.

Confidential Information shall mean information or data that may be exempt from disclosure to the public or other unauthorized persons under state or federal law. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to, a combination of names, addresses, Social Security numbers, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, financial profiles, credit card information, driver's license numbers, medical data, law enforcement records, agency source code or object code, and agency security data.

Proprietary Information shall mean information owned by the Contractor to which the Contractor claims an interest to be protected under law. Proprietary Information is information which qualifies as a trade secret, as provided in s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats., or material which can be kept confidential under the Wisconsin public records law.

1.4 **Liability for Costs:**

Western is not liable for any cost incurred by proposers in replying to this RFP.

1.5 **Debarment:**

Federal Executive Order (E.O.) 12549 "Debarment" requires that all contractors receiving individual awards, using federal funds, and all subrecipients certify that the organization and its principals are not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded by any Federal department or agency from doing business with the Federal Government. As a part of this proposal document there is debarment language and a signature block for you to self-certify your debarment status on the Proposer Response Sheet. Failure to supply this information may disqualify your proposal. Information on debarment is available at the following websites: www.epls.gov and www.arnet.gov/far/.

1.6 **Promotional Materials:**

Contractor agrees to not use promotional or marketing material which states expressly or by fair implication that the College endorses either the Contractor or any sponsor of such material.

1.7 **Availability of Funds:**

The purchase of services or products under this contract is contingent on budget availability for Western or participating agencies.

SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS

2.0 Proposal Submission Due Date:

Proposers must submit their RFP electronically through DemandStar website. Mailed, emailed, and fax versions will not be accepted. **The RFP responses are due at Western Technical College by 2:00 PM on May 12, 2025.** Any proposals received after the specified due date and time will be rejected.

2.1 Submittal Requirements:

The following items must be submitted with your proposal to be considered as “complete” and meeting RFP specifications. Any of the below listed items that are not provided in a complete fashion will be grounds for your proposal to be “rejected”:

- 1) Responses to Attachment B: Proposal Response Requirements questions 1 through 5.
- 2) Attachment C: Cost/Fee Structure Matrix.
- 3) Attachment D: Proposer References Form (requested in Question 5 of Attachment B, so please include in response with Question 5).
- 4) Attachment E: Qualified Supplier Certification Form.
- 5) Attachment F: Request For Proposal Signature Form.
- 6) Attachment G: Cooperative Purchasing Form.
- 7) Attachment H: Vendor Information Form.
- 8) Current W-9.

2.2 Clarifications/Questions:

Any and all questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing only to the Western Technical College Business Services Office Purchasing staff, Mitchel Spry and Jessica Hytry, to purchasing@westernnc.edu email address. Verbal inquiries will NOT be accepted.

The “issuing agency” for this RFP is Western Technical College, with its address as follows:

Western Technical College
400 7th Street N.
La Crosse, WI 54601

No information provided verbally, or by any Western personnel other than the individual listed above, will be considered binding for this agreement unless formalized in writing. All respondents should use this written document and its attachments as the sole basis for preparing and submitting proposals.

Additionally, the Proposer is prohibited from initiating communication related to this RFP, to any Western official, any member of the evaluation committee or any employee considering the proposals, prior to the time an award decision has been made by Western.

2.3 Applicable Dates:

April 12, 2025	Notification of RFP
April 25, 2025 2:00 PM.....	Latest date for written questions to be received from vendors.
April 30, 2025	Western to respond to questions from vendors.
May 12, 2025 2:00 PM	RFP due @ 2:00 PM local time (no fax or email).
May 27 – June 6, 2025.....	Proposer interviews (tentative - may or may not be required).
June 16, 2025 (anticipated).....	Contract award decision made.

2.4 Contents of Proposal:

All attachments, additional pages, addenda, or explanations supplied by the vendor with this proposal will be considered as part of the proposal response.

Proposers are encouraged to present innovative approaches to pricing, deliveries, training, or other programs that offer additional value added components to the Proposers response.

If an oral presentation/interview is determined to be held for selected finalists, it shall be at the Proposer's expense. However, an award may be made without discussion or any presentation/interview with the Proposer. Therefore, Proposers are cautioned that proposals should be submitted initially as a “best” or most

SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS

attractive proposal from both a technical and cost standpoint. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond that required to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired and may not be considered by the evaluation team at their discretion.

2.5 Compliance with Laws and Regulations

The contractor assumes full responsibility and liability for compliance with any local, state, and federal laws and regulations applicable to the contractor and its employees, including, but not limited to compliance with Department of Commerce requirements and the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970.

2.6 Non-Conforming Terms and Conditions:

A response that includes contractual terms and conditions that do not conform to the contractual terms and conditions in the RFP document are subject to rejection as nonresponsive. Western reserves the right to permit the Proposer to withdraw nonconforming terms and conditions from its response or to negotiate changes to the contractual requirements prior to making a determination of responsiveness and award.

2.7 Exceptions to Proposal Specifications and Terms:

Any exceptions to the Proposal specifications and terms must be clearly documented on an attachment sheet to this proposal form and indicated as "Exceptions to Specification and Terms". Western reserves the right to determine if any noted exceptions or qualifying statements indicated in a proposal are in the best interest of Western and participating agencies, and reserves the option to reject individual proposals on the basis of Exceptions to Specifications and Terms.

Submittal of a complete contract replacement or substitution for the terms and conditions of this RFP Contract will not be acceptable and may be grounds for rejection or disqualification of the Proposal submitted.

2.8 Confidential/Proprietary Information

Any restrictions on the use of data contained within a request, must be clearly stated in the RFP itself. Proprietary information submitted in response to a request will be handled in accordance with applicable State of Wisconsin procurement regulations and the Wisconsin public records law. Proprietary restrictions normally are not accepted. However, when accepted, it is the vendor's responsibility to defend the determination in the event of an appeal or litigation.

Any material submitted by the vendor in response to this request that the vendor considers confidential and proprietary information and which qualifies as a trade secret, as provided in s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats.; or material which can be kept confidential under the Wisconsin public records law, must be identified on a Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information form. This form may be obtained by contacting Purchasing via email purchasing@westerntc.edu. RFP prices cannot be held confidential.

Marking of the entire response as proprietary will neither be accepted nor honored. The College cannot guarantee that all such material noted remains confidential, particularly if it becomes a significant consideration in contract award. Information will only be kept confidential to the extent allowed by Wisconsin Public Disclosure Law.

2.9 Alternate Proposals:

An alternate proposal is viewed as a proposal describing an approach to accomplishing the requirements which differs from the approach set forth in the solicitation. An alternate proposal may also be a second proposal submitted by the same Proposer, which differs in some degree from that Proposer's prime proposal. An Alternate proposal should be clearly marked as "ALTERNATE PROPOSAL". Western may consider or reject any or all alternate proposals submitted.

2.10 "Or Equals" Considered:

Specifications contained in this RFP are intended to define the level of quality and performance required and not to restrict competition. Proposers offering alternate proposals to the products or specifications listed shall submit, with their proposal, detailed comparisons to the RFP products and specifications documenting equivalence to the products or services identified and describing the effect the alternate

SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS

product or service would have on the performance or quality of the products or services being proposed. Proposers may offer more than one alternative with required supporting documentation. Where certain brands or part numbers are specified, it is to match standardized products currently being used or to establish a standard for features and construction. Equivalent products and services are acceptable and allowed and Proposers may offer varying brands of “equivalent” items and services for Western’s consideration. Western and the participating agencies will be the sole judge of equivalency.

In the event that equivalent or alternate products or services are not allowed, information will be provided, (i.e. must be compatible with existing equipment, software, have interchangeable parts, not need specialized tools, required by grant or funding authority), with the RFP showing why alternate or equivalent products or services will not be considered.

2.11 Acceptance or Rejection of Proposals:

This RFP does not commit Western or any participating public agencies to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies as a result of this RFP process. Western reserves the right to accept or reject any portion of a proposal, the complete proposal, or all proposals received as a result of this request, to waive any minor irregularities in the process or procedure, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety, this RFP, if it is considered to be in the best interest of Western or participating agencies to do so.

2.12 Non-Interest of Agency Employees and Officials:

No official or employee on the evaluation committee shall have any financial interest, either direct or indirect, in the proposal or contract. No official or employee of the evaluation committee shall exercise any undue influence in the awarding of the proposal or contract.

2.13 Right to Amendments/Addendums:

Western reserves the right to amend the terms and specifications of this RFP as necessary during the RFP process.

Amendment/Addendum of Proposals:

- a. **By Western:** Requests for Proposals may be amended by Western in response to a need for further clarification, specifications, or requirements changes, new opening date, or any other changes need to clarify the RFP or to allow for answers to Proposer questions. In the event of any formal published changes to the terms and/or specifications of this RFP, notice will be posted to all of the Proposers using the same methods as originally used for posting along with posting to the website www.demandstar.com. It will be the responsibility of the Proposer to register for DemandStar to receive any notifications of any addendums, notices or changes applying to the RFP. Registration on the Demandstar system allows the Proposer to be notified of other future RFP or Proposal processes posted on Demandstar by other users of the Demandstar tool. Suppliers wishing to participate in opportunities with Western and other public agencies within Wisconsin can register for free at <http://www.demandstar.com/app/wapp/registration>.
- b. **By Vendor:** Proposals may be amended after receipt but before opening by Western by submitting a later dated proposal that specifically states it is amending an earlier submitted proposal. No proposal may be amended after the RFP due date unless requested by Western.

2.14 RFP Tabulations/Abstracts

RFP Tabulations are available to the public after date of contract award, and normally within 60-90 days from the date of RFP opening (RFP Due Date). In some situations, RFP tabulations may be completed early and be available for public review on the date of contract award(s).

2.15 Cooperative Purchasing Agreement:

The Contract award will be subject to suppliers completing and providing with their proposals a signed “Cooperative Purchasing Agreement” form (enclosed) to indicate the Proposers willingness to extend contract pricing and terms to other eligible public agencies and entities in the State of Wisconsin wishing to “piggyback” this contract.

A vendor’s decision whether or not to offer a volume discount plan should other Colleges.

SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS

municipalities, etc. wish to piggyback onto this contract will not be used by Western Technical College to evaluate the submitted proposals. However, such a plan has the potential of creating more business for the selected firm from these other sources that may otherwise have to undertake their own competitive selection process in the future.

2.16 Required Forms to Submit Proposal Information:

No proposal will be accepted on any other form(s) than those herewith specified and/or provided with this RFP.

2.17 Qualified Supplier Certification Form:

Included with the proposal documents is a "Qualified Supplier Certification Form" (Attachment D) that must be completed properly and submitted with the required proposal documents in order for the Proposer to have a complete proposal for consideration. Only proposals from qualified suppliers shall be considered. This form must be signed and be included with the proposal response by the specified proposal due date and time.

2.18 Warranties:

All product and services provided by the supplier will be warranted to levels of quality and professionalism as is considered "customary and usual in the industry" for the products and services being purchased under this contract. At a minimum, any products sold must have the Manufacturers Standard Warranty available. Failure of a Contractor to warrant their product or work to customary and usual standards for quality and service may be grounds, at the discretion of that public agency, to terminate its purchase of products and services from the Contractor. Contractor must identify their warranty terms for Manufacturers proposal and should provide corresponding warranty documents with their RFP.

2.19 Request for Financial Statements:

Western and Participating agencies may request financial statements containing three (3) years of Profit and Loss statements, Balance Sheets, and other financial documents for purposes of evaluating the financial ability of firms to provide the scope of service and support required by this RFP. Copies of supplier's Certified Auditor Statements may be requested. In the event such financial information is required for the evaluation of proposals, such will be requested in writing to the supplier by Western. Western reserves the right to review other and alternate sources of financial record including Equifax, Dunn and Bradstreet and any other third party reporting organizations available.

2.20 Withdrawal of Proposals:

Proposals may be withdrawn by the Proposers any time prior to the due date of the proposal. These proposals will not be opened or considered. Proposers may request that their proposal be withdrawn after the due date and time, however, these will be opened and will become part of the public record at the point the RFP process is completed. Negligence on the part of the proposer in preparing the proposal confers no right of modification of the proposal after the due date for submission.

2.21 Firm Proposals:

All terms and conditions of the proposals submitted are to be firm for a minimum of sixty (60) days from the award of the contract. Any price increase request (or other proposed change in any of the contract terms) must be requested in writing and must have a written justification showing why the price change or other term change is being requested. Western reserves the right to review any existing index or other third party measure to verify information provided by the Contractor under these conditions. Western will accept or reject the proposed change in contract and reserves the right to negotiate terms with the Contractor based on the best interests of Western. Any exceptions shall be fully noted.

2.22 Level of Competing Proposals Received:

Western reserves the right to reject all proposals received and resubmit the RFP if it feels an adequate level of competition was not obtained, if specifications/terms did not allow for a sufficient level of competing proposals to be received, if desired specifications, features, or standards were not acceptable or if proposals of sufficient quality or completeness were not received.

2.23 State Sales Tax and Federal Excise Tax Exemption:

Notice is hereby given that Western is a Wisconsin municipality and is exempt from state sales taxes and

SECTION #2: PROCESS INSTRUCTIONS

federal excise taxes. Such taxes should not be included in prices or quotes proposed to Western and will not be paid by Western or participating agencies for products or services received.

2.24 References:

Western will assign evaluation points based on comments and reviews of the supplier's product and/or services as provided by references. As a part of the Proposers response, they should provide a minimum of 3 references of Customers of similar size or type to Western campuses to be served by this contract.

2.25 Demandstar Vendor Registration:

Suppliers wishing to participate in this and additional opportunities with Western and other public agencies within Wisconsin can register for free at <http://www.demandstar.com/app/wapp/registration> . This will provide access to review Requests for Bids and Requests for Proposals, download documents, and submit e-bids and proposals if accepted in that manner.

2.26 Selection/Award Process

The Western evaluation team will review proposals received and score them based on the scoring criteria identified in the RFP. A contract will be awarded to the highest scoring proposer providing contract negotiations are successful.

2.27 Oral Presentations and Site Visits

Western, at its sole discretion, may require oral presentations and/or site visits to supplement the proposals. Failure of a proposer to conduct a presentation on the date scheduled may result in rejection of the proposal. Oral presentations cannot be used as an opportunity to alter the proposals.

2.28 Best and Final Offers

At the sole discretion of Western, those Proposer(s) most likely to be awarded a contract may be requested to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) in order to further clarify the deliverables, contract language, or costs presented in the Proposers RFP. If a Best and Final Offer is requested, the BAFO will be evaluated against the stated criteria. There is no obligation on the part of Western to request a BAFO from any or all of the Proposers responding to the RFP so Proposers are encouraged to submit their best RFP effort with their original submission.

2.29 Notification of Award

All Proposal Submitters who respond to this RFP will be notified in writing of Western's award of contract(s) as a result of this RFP.

2.30 Public Inspection of Proposals

To maintain the integrity of the competitive proposal process, proposals received from suppliers will NOT be made available to other competing suppliers or to individuals or firms outside of Western proposal evaluation team until an award decision and notification have been made.

2.31 Dispute Process

Any dispute of Western's award must be received no later than five (5) working days after the award notice is issued by the Business Office. A written dispute must be filed with:

Wade Hackbarth
Vice President Finance, Operations, and Workforce Development
Western Technical College
400 7th Street N
La Crosse, WI 54601

with a copy to:

Mitchel Spry
Purchasing and Accounts Payable Manager
Western Technical College
400 7th Street N
La Crosse, WI 54601

The protest must be in writing. Protesters must make their protests as specific as possible and must identify statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code provisions that are alleged to have been violated.

SECTION #3: PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

3.0 The terms listed in this section (Contractual Requirements) shall be the minimum required in any contract with a participating public agency for services awarded under this RFP. A Western Technical College contract will be the only signed document between the successful proposer and Western specifying the terms and conditions of performance. Western will not accept nor sign a supplier's own contract, and proposers must be willing to sign and accept a Western contract as the sole document specifying the contractual duties and responsibilities addressed by this RFP.

3.1 Term of Contract:

The resulting term of the contract from this RFP will be for the duration of the grant with a contract commencing on or about June 16, 2025, and ending April 30, 2028.

3.2 Payment Terms

Western will pay the vendor Net 30 days within receipt of invoice for equipment received and as accepted by the College and payment shall not exceed quoted amounts.

3.3 Insurance:

Insurance requirements or submission of a Certificate of Insurance IS REQUIRED for this contract. A Certificate of Insurance must be submitted by the Contractor to Western and to any Customer utilizing this contract as a condition to performing any work on the Customer's site location. The Certificate of Insurance must also list Western initially and any Customer as "named insured" upon their request. Minimal required insurance levels as follows:

General Liability

- \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- \$3,000,000 aggregate

Automobile Liability

- \$1,000,000 combined single limit

Workman's Compensation and Employers Liability

- Must carry coverage for Statutory Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability limit of:
 - \$100,000 Each Accident
 - \$500,000 Disease Policy Limit
 - \$100,000 Disease-Each Employee
- Must include coverage for occupational disease, sickness, and death.
- Must include Broad Form All States Endorsement/other states endorsement.
- The vendor shall bear full and complete responsibility for all risk of damage or loss of equipment, products or money resulting from any cause whatsoever and shall not penalize Western for any losses incurred related to this contract.
- The vendor will provide thirty (30) calendar days written notice to Western, before cancellation, reduction or other modifications of vendor's insurance coverage.
- Cancellation, non-renewal or expiration of insurance or reduction of coverage prior to expiration of the contract will constitute an automatic termination unless the contractor obtains other or additional insurance to cover the risks as herein required.
- Western shall promptly notify the contractor in writing of any claims against either Western or the vendor, and in the event of a suit being filed, shall promptly forward to the vendor all papers in connection therewith. Western shall not incur any expense or make any settlement of any such claims or suit without contractor's consent.

3.4 Applicable Law:

This contract will be governed by Wisconsin State Statute and the provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC). Western and other public agencies participating on the contract are provided all rights and remedies of contract as afforded under the UCC for the State of Wisconsin, and include all rights and protections afforded public institutions under the laws of Wisconsin and any federal laws or statutes that apply.

3.5 Nondiscrimination

In connection with the performance of work under this agreement, the Contractor agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, marital status, sexual orientation, sex, disability, national origin, or ancestry.

For purposes of any contract issued by Western, the supplier is to comply with Executive Order 11246 entitled

SECTION #3: PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

“Equal Employment Opportunity” as amended by Executive Order 11375, and as supplemented in Department of Labor Regulations (41 CFR Part60).

3.6 Assignment or Subcontract:

Neither party shall assign a right or interest, delegate or subcontract any obligation required under this contract without the written consent of the other party.

Any Contract resulting from this proposal shall not be, in whole or in part, subcontracted, assigned, or otherwise transferred to any Subcontractor without prior written approval by Western, participating agencies or the Customer.

Upon request Contractor must provide Subcontractor’s complete contact information including EIN# (TIN#, SS#) and signed W-9 form.

Western shall have the right to audit Subcontractor invoices at any time during the course of this Contract.

The Contractor shall be directly responsible for any subcontractor’s performance and work quality when used by the Contractor to carry out the scope of this contract. Western reserves the right to assess Contractor Liquidated Damages in excess of the contract amount for Subcontractor’s failure to perform or inability to complete required project milestones.

Subcontractors must abide by all terms and conditions under this Contract. If Subcontractors are to be used, the Contractor must clearly describe and explain their participation in support of this contract.

3.7 Independent Supplier Status:

The Contractor agrees that it is an independent supplier with respect to the products and services provided pursuant to this agreement. Nothing in this agreement shall be considered to create the relationship of employer and employee between the parties.

3.8 Amendments to Contract Terms and Conditions:

Western and other participating agencies purchasing the contracted products or services resulting from this RFP reserve the right to change, modify, or cancel the terms of a contract by providing the Contractor a minimum of thirty (30) days advance written notice. Any and all changes to the terms and conditions of a contract with a Customer will be binding only through formal written addendum. In instances of contract breach by a Contractor, or in instances where the actions or products of a Contractor pose a health risk or safety issue, contract termination can occur immediately with no advance notice provided to the Contractor. (See Contract Termination below).

3.9 Right to Negotiate Contract Terms:

Western and participating agencies reserve the right to negotiate terms including scope of work, pricing, and terms and conditions with Proposers prior to final award of the RFP process and entering into a final contract agreement.

3.10 Contract Termination:

Western may terminate this Contract at any time, **without cause**, by providing 15 days written notice to the Contractor. If the Contract is so terminated, Western/Customer is liable only for payments for products provided or services performed, to the extent that any actual direct costs have been incurred by the Contractor pursuant to fulfilling the contract. Western/Customer will be obligated to pay such expenses up to the date of the termination.

Contract Termination Due to Federal Government Orders or Termination of Federal Grant Award:

If the Federal Government were to issue a suspension of work and stop-work orders, which would affect this contract, Western Technical College’s SCC4 Grant Project Coordination Team will provide the following in writing:

- (1) a clear description of the work to be suspended;
- (2) instructions concerning the contractor’s issuance of further orders for materials or services, including what a contractor should do regarding pending material orders, permits, services, and scope of work;
- (3) guidance to the contractor on action to be taken on any subcontracts; and

SECTION #3: PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

(4) other suggestions to the contractor for minimizing costs.

The Federal Government has the unilateral right to terminate all or part of a federal grant award per FAR 49.100-102 and 2CFR200.340. If this were to happen all work must be halted immediately and indefinitely per the date of termination. Upon notice of termination, Western Technical College's SCC4 Grant Project Coordination Team will immediately notify subrecipients and subcontracts via email, followed by an official letter including notice that:

- The contract is being terminated for the convenience of the government under the contract clause authorizing the termination;
- The effective date of termination;
- The extent of termination;
- Any special instructions; and
- The steps the contractor should take to minimize the impact on personnel if the termination, together with all other outstanding terminations, will result in a significant reduction in the contractor's workforce.

3.11 Termination of Contract for Cause:

Western may terminate this contract for cause, as determined by the College which shall consider such items as, but not limited to, insufficient insurance coverage, failure to meet specifications and standards for cleaning, failure to enforce required standards of sanitation, or unsatisfactory quality of service to the College. This may include any cessation or diminished service including but not limited to failure to maintain adequate personnel, whether arising from labor disputes, or otherwise, any substantial change in ownership or proprietorship of the Contractor which in the opinion of the College is not in its' best interest, or failure to otherwise not comply with the terms of this contract. The College shall provide to the Contractor a minimum of ten (10) calendar days written notice of any instance of contract neglect, and unless within ten (10) calendar days such neglect has ceased and arrangements made to correct, the College may terminate the contract immediately.

If the Contract is terminated for cause, the College shall be entitled to full reimbursement from the contractor for any cost incurred by the College by reason of the contractor's failure to perform or to satisfactorily perform its responsibilities and duties, which costs may include, but are not limited to, the cost of using the College's employees or any other person to perform the obligations of the contract. The College may obtain any such reimbursement by deduction from payments otherwise due to the contractor or by any other proper and lawful means. It is the College's intent to give the contractor a reasonable opportunity, wherever practicable, to correct any such failure to perform or satisfactorily perform its responsibilities and duties.

If at any time the Contractor performance **threatens the health and/or safety** of Western, its staff, students or others who may be on campus, Western has the right to cancel and terminate the Contract without notice.

Failure to maintain the required Certificates of Insurance, Permits and Licenses shall be cause for Contract termination. If the Contractor fails to maintain and keep in force the insurance as provided in Standard Terms and Conditions, Section 22.0, Western has the right to cancel and terminate the Contract without notice.

3.12 Multi-Year Contracts:

Continuation of the contract resulting from the RFP process beyond June 30th of any year is contingent upon the appropriation of funds.

3.13 Waiver:

One or more waiver by any party of any term of the contract will not be construed as a waiver of a subsequent breach of the same or any other term. The consent or approval given by any party with respect to any act by the other party requiring such consent or approval shall not be deemed to waive the need for further consent or approval of any subsequent similar act by such party.

3.14 Auditor Access:

In the event that the Customer deems it necessary to conduct an audit or inspection, the Contractor shall, during normal business hours, furnish or make available at a time designated by the Customer and in a reasonable form required by the Customer, information, records and reports regarding powers, duties, activities, organization, property, financial transactions, method of operation, or any and all other records, reports or information in supplier's custody or control, relating to this contract and to the Customer.

Any information provided to the auditors, which is deemed confidential by federal, state, or local laws shall be

SECTION #3: PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

held as confidential and not disclosed to the public.

3.15 Indemnification And Defense Of Suits:

The Contractor agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Western, its members and any Customer, its officers, agents, and employees from any and all liability including claims, demands, damages, actions or causes of action, together with any and all losses, costs, or expense, including attorney fees, where such liability is founded upon or grows out of the acts, errors, or omissions of the Contractor, its employees, agent or Subcontractors.

3.16 Force Majeure:

If the performance of any part of this Contract by either party is delayed or rendered impossible by reason of natural disaster, flood, fire, riot, explosion, war or actions or decrees of governmental bodies, the party who has been so affected shall immediately give notice to the other party of the nature of such conditions and the extent of delay and shall do everything possible to resume performance. Upon receipt and acceptance of such notice, all obligations under this Contract shall immediately be suspended. If the period of nonperformance exceeds fifteen (15) days from the receipt of notice of the Force Majeure Event, the party whose ability to perform has not been so affected may by giving written notice, terminate this Contract.

3.17 Contract:

Any agreement or contract above and beyond this RFP Contract shall be on forms supplied by Western Technical College.

3.18 Invoices/Payments:

Western will pay the Contractor Net 30 days within receipt of invoice for each phase in accordance with milestones and achievements and as accepted by the College. Proposers should state in their RFP response if they will include any discounts for earlier payment, for example, 1% 10 days/Net 30.

Contractor must agree that all invoices shall reflect the prices and discounts established for the items on this contract for all orders placed even though the contract number and/or correct prices may not be referenced on each order.

Before payment is made Accounts Payable must verify that all invoiced charges are correct as per this Contract. Only properly submitted invoices will be officially processed for payment. Prompt payment requires that your invoices be clear and complete in conformity with the instructions below. All invoices **must be itemized** showing:

- Contractor name
- Remit to address
- Purchase order number if given
- Release number if given
- Date of order/release
- Item manufacturer's name or abbreviation (if applicable)
- Complete item description identical to those stated in proposal
- Prices per the contract.

3.19 Protection of College's Confidential Information:

Contractor acknowledges that some of the material and information that may come into its possession or knowledge in connection with this Contract or its performance may consist of information that is exempt from disclosure to the public or other unauthorized persons under state or federal laws ("Confidential Information"). Contractor agrees to hold College's Confidential Information in strictest confidence and not to make use of Confidential Information for any purpose other than the performance of this Contract, to release it only to authorized employees or Subcontractors requiring such information for the purposes of carrying out this Contract, and not to release, divulge, publish, transfer, sell, disclose, or otherwise make the information known to any other party without the College's express written consent or as provided by law. Contractor agrees to implement reasonable physical, electronic, and managerial safeguards to prevent unauthorized access to College's Confidential Information.

SECTION #4: EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS – PROPOSAL CRITERIA

This is a Request for Proposal and factors other than price alone will be reviewed and evaluated. Specification contained in this RFP are intended to define the level of quality and performance and not to restrict competition. Evaluations of proposals will be performed by a committee and will be based on a weighted point system as follows:

A.	Plan for Project Evaluation:	50
B.	Experience and Qualifications:	35
C.	Cost	15
	TOTAL	100 POINTS

Cost Scoring:

The lowest priced proposal will receive 100% of the allotted cost points. All other proposals will be scored using the formula as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Lowest Proposed Cost (constant)}}{\text{Other Proposer's Cost (varies according to proposal being scored)}} \times \text{Maximum evaluation points given to cost}$$

Calculation of points awarded to subsequent proposals will use the lowest dollar proposal amount as a constant numerator and the dollar amount of the firm being scored as the denominator. This result will always be less than one. The result is then multiplied by the number of points given to the cost section of the RFP.

Presentation or Interview Process Scoring:

Western, at its sole discretion, may require oral presentations to supplement the proposals. Failure of a proposer to conduct a presentation on the date scheduled may result in rejection of the proposal. Oral presentations cannot be used as an opportunity to alter the proposals.

The proposers with the highest scores from the initial RFP proposal review would be notified if required to provide a presentation or interview and would be provided with the presentation criteria and/or interview questions in advance. Evaluations of presentations or interviews will be performed by a committee and will be based on a weighted point system. The presentation score will be added to the original total score to determine the highest scoring proposer.

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS

Western Technical College is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors for SCC4 Grant Evaluator services who are able to provide services as described as follows in Attachment A: Scope of Work. The results of this solicitation will be used to award a contract for Western Technical College for the duration of the grant with a contract commencing on or about June 16, 2025, and ending April 30, 2028.

The US Department of Labor awarded Western Technical College the Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grant – Round Four. Nine of the sixteen Wisconsin Technical College System colleges are participating in this consortium project led by Western Technical College. The Smarts and Parts grant was developed to create pathways to advanced manufacturing careers through industry recognized credentials with the intention to share the developed curriculum and outcomes with the rest of the system colleges. Please see the included Smarts & Parts Project Narrative as Exhibit 1 to this RFP.

PART 1: SCOPE OF SUPPORT FROM THRID PARTY EVAULATOR:

Western Technical College is requesting the external developmental evaluator to provide all tasks required by the US Department of Labor, including the following:

- Support the grantee's communication with the national evaluator.
- Support the grantee in documenting outcomes and providing real-time feedback to inform the development of the intervention and identifying potential adaptations to the intervention to address systemic barriers and dynamic environments. This support could include setting up dashboards for internal use to identify grantee progress toward program goals and use grantee's performance data to inform project implementation, helping the grantee identify and evaluate data sources, developing data analytics for the grantee for metrics or timeframes outside the scope of the national evaluation (e.g., setting up Tableau tables), advising on the data infrastructure necessary for the national evaluation and/or other grant metrics, and other such activities that build the grantee's capacity to improve its data reporting capacity.
- Support the grantee in instituting a Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process, which must occur at least once annually in Years 2, 3 and 4.
- Assist with development of interim and final versions of 5-10 briefing slides that provide an overview or summary of grant accomplishments, particularly as they relate to reducing or closing the equity gap(s) at the heart of the project; lessons learned; the systems change(s) that the college will sustain post-grant; and any other grant highlights. Slides will be developed using a template provided by the Department of Labor.

Western is also requesting the external developmental evaluator to provide the following optional services:

- Develop and implement 1) feedback mechanisms that ensure that students' lived experience informs program design and development, and 2) a process for incorporating engagement with students into feedback loops/continuous improvement efforts to remove systemic institutional barriers throughout the grant.
- Develop two written reports (e.g., briefs or more extensive reports) to serve the grantee's internal purposes for reporting and sustainability.

Western requests that the external developmental evaluator package data in such a way that will enhance future grant applications.

Western and sub awardee staff members will participate in evaluation activities by providing access to program data and information to the third-party external evaluator. Faculty may participate by providing information about their experiences with grant programs. Students will participate in surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups to support evaluation of program offerings and outcomes. Faculty and staff will assist with recruiting student participants in evaluation.

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS

PART 2: WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE

Strategic Actions and Implementation Steps	Milestones	Entity(ies) Responsible	Start Date	Milestone Due Dates
Prepare the evaluator’s Interim Developmental Evaluation Report to the grantee’s Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office using the suggested format or similar layout, provided after grant award.	Interim Developmental Evaluation Report Submission to the grantee’s Federal Project Officer (FPO) and Program Office	Western PM, Data Assistant & Evaluator	Y2, Q4	Y3- No later than November 30, 2026
Prepare the evaluator’s Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.	Final Developmental Evaluation Report using the suggested format or similar layout.	Western PM, Data Assistant & Evaluator	Y4, Q2	Y4 – No later than February 28, 2028
Provide accurate data products and consistent participant data collection	Grant Assistant hired, data points identified, sub-awardee POCs identified	Western PM, College Contacts, Data Assistant, & Evaluator	Y2, Q1	Y1, Q4, Ongoing
Conduct student and recent graduate focus groups and surveys	Annual analysis conducted, Final analysis conducted, Final report assembled and shared with pertinent partners	Western PM, College Contacts, Data Assistant & Evaluator	Y2, Q1 Y4, Q3 Y4, Q3	Y2, Q1 Y4, Q3 Y4, Q3
Develop feedback mechanisms in collaboration with the contracted Developmental Evaluator to ensure best practices are being use and quality data is collected	Annual student feedback collected via surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q1	Annually through Y4, Q4
Conduct student and recent graduate focus groups	Analyzed feedback incorporated into programming	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q1	Annually through Y4, Q4
College consortium contacts will ensure the navigation and coaching services are made known to students in the advanced manufacturing programs, working with program faculty to share information with students	Yearly data will be pulled to determine what services program students receive and are shared with the evaluator for analysis.	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q2	Y4, Q4
College consortium contacts will ensure the wrap around services are made known to students in the advanced manufacturing programs, working with program faculty to share information with students	Yearly data will be pulled to determine what services program students have and shared with the evaluator for analysis.	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q2	Y4, Q4

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS

The <i>Smarts & Parts</i> project manager (PM) will work with consortium partners to identify CBOs beyond Coulee Cap who provide employment training services to ensure students in every service area have access to resources to ensure their success	Additional CBOs and services identified	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q2	Y2, Q3
At least one of the consortium colleges will build IET programming into advanced manufacturing programs for adult education students, keeping the PM updated on progress to share with other consortium colleges if they want to emulate it.	Student data is collected and shared with PM and evaluator	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y3, Q1	Y4, Q4
Pilot data collection system tools	Data collection tools ready for implementation	Western PM, Data Assistant & Evaluator	Y2, Q2	Y2, Q3
Intake Participant tracking (at time of Participant enrollment as defined by the project)	Intake data collection completed for each enrollment cycle during the grant period of performance	Western PM, Data Assistant, College Contacts & Evaluator	Y2, Q4	Y4, Q4
With evaluator support, undertake a Good Jobs and Equitable Employment Outcomes data review and analysis process at least once annually during Years 2, 3, and 4	Year 2 Data review and analysis Year 3 Data review and analysis Year 4 Data review and analysis	Western PM, Data Assistant & Evaluator	Y2 Y3 Y4	Y2 - Year 2 Data review and analysis by October 30, 2025 Y3- Year 3 Data review and analysis by October 30, 2026 Y4 - Year 4 Data review and analysis by October 30, 2027
With evaluator support, develop interim version of 5-10 briefing slides	Interim version of slides submitted	Western and Evaluator	Y3, Q1	Y3- No later than November 30, 2026
Submit any optional written reports produced by evaluator for grantee to DOL	Reports submitted to DOL	Western and Evaluator	Y3 and Y4	As completed
With evaluator support, develop final version of 5-10 briefing slides	Final version of slides submitted	Western and Evaluator	Y4, Q1	Y4, Q3 - No later than February 28, 2028

ATTACHMENT B: PROPOSAL RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Response Format and Evaluation Criteria:

Submit the following information as your proposal response using your own pages and formatting. The proposer must state and answer the questions in the order in which they were asked to facilitate comparisons between proposals. Failure to do so may disqualify your proposal.

A. Plan for Project Evaluation– 50 points

- 1) Provide a detailed plan not to exceed 20 pages that outlines plans for evaluating the Smarts & Parts project. Firms are encouraged to expand upon the expectations of the external evaluator detailed in Attachment A: Scope of Work. Include ability to meet project requirements/deliverables:
 - a. The scope will include monthly phone conferences for evaluation and data collection plans and quarterly phone conference to review formative evaluation.
 - b. Annual site visits each project year.
 - c. Post visit analysis of data for preparation of a year-end summative evaluation due by end of November of each project's year.
 - d. The external evaluator will assess project impact of project's goals, efforts to sustain/institutionalize project activities, progress, weaknesses, compliance with applicable regulations, and alignment and contribution to Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) measures.
 - e. The external evaluator will deliver final documents of the assessment within six weeks after each project period. (If possible, provide example of a past project)
 - f. Ability to meet project timeline (Further defined in Attachment A Part 2).

B. Experience and Qualifications – 35 points

- 2) Companies Credentials: Provide a brief statement of Qualifications that includes the firm's size and geographic location to Western.
- 3) Principle Credentials: List the experience of each principle within the firm assigned to this project. Include current job description, resume, education/college degrees, licenses, and professional certifications. Designate number of years with the company and if all experience is while employed by the proposer's firm.
- 4) Project Personnel: Indicate any other persons that will be assigned to this project. For each of the project personnel, provide the following information:
- 5) Current References: Fill out Attachment D: Proposer References Form (as listed below in other forms required) with minimum three (3) clients proposer has or is providing successful evaluation services that are consistent with the requirements and the scope set forth in this RFP. Proposer must use the provided Attachment D: Proposer References Form, and proposer may include an additional list. The listing must include the name of the client, the name of the contact person, address, e-mail, and telephone number and brief explanation of the services that were provided.

C. Cost—15 points

Complete Attachment C: Cost/Fee Structure Matrix. Must use the form provided and may include additional documentation as necessary.

E. Other Forms Required:

- **Attachment D: Proposer References Form** *(as requested in #5 above so please include in that section)*
- **Attachment E: Qualified Supplier Certification Form**
- **Attachment F: Request For Proposal Signature Form**
- **Attachment G: Cooperative Purchasing Form**
- **Attachment H: Vendor Information Form**
- **Current W-9**

ATTACHMENT C: COST / FEE STRUCTURE MATRIX

INSTRUCTIONS

1. All lines on these forms must be completed.
2. If a service cannot be met by the proposed vendor, then the term "No Proposal" should be entered on the line.
3. If the proposed vendor will not charge for a service, then the term "No Cost" should be entered on the line.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Base hourly or annual wage <i>(please indicate which used)</i>			

Prices quoted shall not include federal or state tax. The Western Technical College Wisconsin sales tax exempt number will be furnished to successful applicant. Prices quoted should also include all services as identified in the specifications.

Provide details of your proposed bid to the College. A detailed plan of how the awardee intends to invoice the college, and a deliverables schedule that can be used by the Colleges to approve the invoices for processing, is expected. Use the space below for explanation and provide additional documentation as necessary.

Please describe how travel time will be calculated and charged: _____

SUBMITTER INFORMATION:

COMPANY: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

TITLE: _____ EMAIL: _____

ATTACHMENT D: PROPOSER REFERENCES FORM

Indicate below a listing of at least three (3) current or recent client references, either commercial or governmental, that your company is servicing, has serviced, or has provided similar goods or services.

REFERENCE #1	
COMPANY:	
CONTACT:	
PHONE:	
E-MAIL:	
SERVICES PROVIDED:	
DATES OF SERVICE:	

REFERENCE #2	
COMPANY:	
CONTACT:	
PHONE:	
E-MAIL:	
SERVICES PROVIDED:	
DATES OF SERVICE:	

ATTACHMENT D: PROPOSER REFERENCES FORM

REFERENCE #3	
COMPANY:	
CONTACT:	
PHONE:	
E-MAIL:	
SERVICES PROVIDED:	
DATES OF SERVICE:	

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE (Optional)	
COMPANY:	
CONTACT:	
PHONE:	
E-MAIL:	
SERVICES PROVIDED:	
DATES OF SERVICE:	

****This document must be completed & returned with proposal submission.***

ATTACHMENT E: QUALIFIED SUPPLIER CERTIFICATION

In submitting this proposal, I certify that I am / we are a "Qualified Supplier" for providing the items and/or services outlined in this Request for Proposal. I agree to the following by initialing the Qualifications identified.

Initial Below:

- A. _____ The company has been in business for at least 3 years.
- B. _____ The company is an authorized sales and servicing dealer for any and all equipment or items provided under the RFP.
- C. _____ The company maintains a permanent place of business and is licensed to do business in the United States.
- D. _____ The company is not presently debarred or disqualified by any Federal Agency, the Wisconsin Department of Administration or by any other State Agency for noncompliance with any equal opportunity, tax related or affirmative action requirements.
- E. _____ Our company is authorized to sell the products being proposed in the RFP, with no claim or suspicion of any kind as to any patent or copyright infringements, or claims of actions pertaining thereto, that would be of a legal concern or issue to your company or to this public agency as it relates to laws regarding patents, copyrights, royalties, infringements, etc.
- F. _____ In connection with the performance of any work covered by this RFP, we agree not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, handicap, sex, physical conditions, developmental disability, sexual preference, or national origin.
- G. _____ This project is being funded with Federal money. Prospective proposers must acknowledge that funding is contingent upon compliance with all terms and conditions of the funding award.
- H. _____ Recipients must comply with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The highest rated proposer will be evaluated with the government wide exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR part 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR part 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension."

ATTACHMENT F: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 2025-004

SIGNATURE PAGE

By submitting a proposal in response to this Request for Proposal process, the Proposer agrees that they have read, fully understand, and agree to all terms, conditions and specifications and acknowledge that Western RFP document on file shall be the controlling document for any resulting contract. We certify that we have not either directly or indirectly, entered into any contract or participated in and collusion or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competition, that no attempt has been made to induce any other persons or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal, that this proposal has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other proposer, competitor or potential competitor, that this proposal has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of proposals to any other proposer or competitor, that this statement is true and accurate under penalty of perjury. I certify that the information I have provided in this proposal is true and I understand that any false, misleading, or missing information may disqualify the proposal.

By submitting a proposal, the proposer certifies that no relationship exists between the proposer and Western that interferes with fair competition or is a Conflict of Interest, and no relationship exists between the Proposer and any other person or firm that constitutes a Conflict of Interest. Further, the Proposer certifies that no employee of Western whose duties relate to this Request for Proposal assisted the Proposer in preparing this proposal in any way other than in his or her official capacity and scope of employment.

The Proposer certifies by submission of the proposal that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this Proposal Process by any Federal or State Department or Agency.

Company Name (Print)

Your Name (Print)

Your Title/Position (Print)

Your Signature (Sign)

Date

Email Address

Telephone

Fax

Website

ATTACHMENT G: COOPERATIVE PURCHASING FORM

Wisconsin statutes establish authority to allow Wisconsin Municipalities to participate in cooperative purchasing when the Contractor agrees to extend the Contractor's terms to the Municipalities identified. Participating in Cooperative Contracting gives Contractors additional opportunities for increased sales volume without additional proposing. Municipalities use Cooperative Contracting to expedite purchases. A "municipality" is defined as any county, city, village, town, school district, board of school directors, sewer district, drainage district, vocational, technical, and adult education district, or any other public body having the authority to award public contracts (s. 16.70(8), Wis. Stats.).

Interested municipalities will contact the contractor directly to place orders and are responsible for receipt, acceptance and inspection of products or services from the contractor, and making payment directly to the contractor. Western, in serving as the lead agency initiating this cooperative purchasing program on behalf of other Wisconsin Technical Colleges, is not party to any disputes arising from purchases made by any Municipality or not-Western Customer, and is not liable for payment for purchases made by any other Customers using this contract.

_____ / *Agree* to make the products or services of this proposal available to Wisconsin municipalities with all of its Terms and Conditions including pricing offered in the RFP response :

_____ Wisconsin Technical Colleges (Western Members)

_____ University of Wisconsin System

_____ Wisconsin K-12 Schools

_____ Wisconsin Municipalities (Non Educational)

Note any conditions or exceptions for acceptance to the cooperative purchasing groups identified above.

_____ / *Do Not Agree* to make the products or services of this proposal/proposal available to other Customers outside Western Technical College

Signature		Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	
Name (Type or Print)		Title	
		Email:	
Company		Tel: ()	
		Fax: ()	
Address (Street)	City	State	ZIP + 4
Commodity/Service		Request for Proposal/Proposal Number	

ATTACHMENT H: VENDOR INFORMATION FORM

Western
Technical College
VENDOR INFORMATION FORM

All parts of the form must be completed. This is a fillable form, but you may also print the form and fill by hand--please make sure it is legible for avoidance of errors . Include a completed and signed W-9 (or W-8ECI) along with this form. If you have any questions please call 608-789-6226 or email purchasing@westernnc.edu .

**All invoices for Western Technical College should be sent to
accounts payable@westernnc.edu**

SECTION 1 –VENDOR INFORMATION		
LEGAL BUSINESS OR INDIVIDUAL NAME: (MUST MATCH W-9 OR W-8ECI FORM)		
BUSINESS NAME, TRADE NAME, DOING BUSINESS AS: (IF DIFFERENT THAN ABOVE)		
SECTION 2 – VENDOR PHYSICAL ADDRESS		
ADDRESS:		COUNTY:
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:
SECTION 3 – VENDOR REMIT TO ADDRESS (IF MORE THAN 2 ADDRESSES, PLEASE INCLUDE A SEPARATE SHEET)		
ADDRESS:		COUNTY:
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:
SECTION 4 – CONTACT INFORMATION		
NAME:		
WEBSITE:		
PHONE:	FAX:	EMAIL:
SECTION 5 – PAYMENT TERMS (PLEASE CHECK ONE – IF NONE IS SELECTED THEN NET 30 WILL APPLY)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 2/10 NET 30	<input type="checkbox"/> NET 30	<input type="checkbox"/> NET 60
Other (please specify)		
SECTION 6 – PURCHASE ORDER DISTRIBUTION		
EMAIL <u>OR</u> FAX:		
SECTION 7 – PLEASE SIGN & DATE		
PRINT NAME:		
SIGNATURE:		DATE:

Note: This document contains sensitive information. Sending via non-secure channels, including e-mail and fax can be a potential security risk.

ATTACHMENT I: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1.0 SPECIFICATIONS: The specifications in this request are the minimum acceptable. When specific manufacturer and model numbers are used, they are to establish a design, type of construction, quality, functional capability and/or performance level desired. When alternates are proposal/proposed, they must be identified by manufacturer, stock number, and such other information necessary to establish equivalency. Western shall be the sole judge of equivalency. Proposers/proposers are cautioned to avoid proposing alternates to the specifications which may result in rejection of their proposal/proposal.

2.0 DEVIATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS: Deviations and exceptions from original text, terms, conditions, or specifications shall be described fully, on the proposer's/proposer's letterhead, signed, and attached to the request. In the absence of such statement, the proposal/proposal shall be accepted as in strict compliance with all terms, conditions, and specifications and the proposers/proposers shall be held liable.

3.0 QUALITY: Unless otherwise indicated in the request, all material shall be first quality. Items which are used, demonstrators, obsolete, seconds, or which have been discontinued are unacceptable without prior written approval by the State of Wisconsin.

4.0 QUANTITIES: The quantities shown on this request are based on estimated needs. Western reserves the right to increase or decrease quantities to meet actual needs.

5.0 DELIVERY: Deliveries shall be F.O.B. destination freight prepaid and included unless otherwise specified.

6.0 PRICING AND DISCOUNT: Western qualifies for governmental and education discounts. Unit prices shall reflect these discounts.

6.1 Unit prices shown on the proposal/proposal or contract shall be the price per unit of sale (e.g., gal., cs., doz., ea.) as stated on the request or contract. For any given item, the quantity multiplied by the unit price shall establish the extended price, the unit price shall govern in the proposal/proposal evaluation and contract administration.

6.2 Prices established in continuing agreements and term contracts may be lowered due to general market conditions, but prices shall not be subject to increase for ninety (90) calendar days from the date of award. Any increase proposed shall be submitted to the contracting agency thirty (30) calendar days before the proposed effective date of the price increase, and shall be limited to fully documented cost increases to the contractor which are demonstrated to be industrywide. The conditions under which price increases may be granted shall be expressed in proposal/proposal documents and contracts or agreements.

6.3 In determination of award, discounts for early payment will only be considered when all other conditions are equal and when payment terms allow at least fifteen (15) days, providing the discount terms are deemed favorable. All payment terms must allow the option of net thirty (30).

7.0 UNFAIR SALES ACT: Prices quoted to Western are not governed by the Unfair Sales Act.

8.0 ACCEPTANCE-REJECTION: Western reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals/proposals, to waive any technicality in any proposal/proposal submitted, and to accept any part of a proposal/proposal as deemed to be in the best interests of the College. The contents of the proposal/proposal of the successful contractor will become contractual obligations if procurement action ensues.

Proposals/proposals MUST be date and time stamped by the

soliciting purchasing office on or before the date and time that the proposal/proposal is due. Proposals/proposals date and time stamped in another office will be rejected. Receipt of a proposal/proposal by the mail system does not constitute receipt of a proposal/proposal by the purchasing office.

9.0 METHOD OF AWARD FOR PROPOSAL: Award shall be made to the lowest responsible, responsive proposer unless otherwise specified in the request.

10.0 METHOD OF AWARD FOR RFP: Award shall be made to the Proposer who, in the sole judgment of the College, best meets the RFP needs and is awarded the highest amount of points based on the identified scoring criteria. All Proposers shall be notified in writing by College of the awarded result.

11.0 CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT PRICE DETERMINATION: By signing this proposal/proposal, the proposer/proposer certifies, and in the case of a joint proposal/proposal, each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, that in connection with this procurement:

11.1 The prices in this proposal/proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other proposer/proposer or with any competitor;

11.2 Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this proposal/proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the proposer/proposer and will not knowingly be disclosed by the proposer/proposer prior to opening in the case of an advertised procurement or prior to award in the case of a negotiated procurement, directly or indirectly to any other proposer/proposer or to any competitor; and

11.3 No attempt has been made or will be made by the proposer/proposer to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal/proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.

11.4 Each person signing this proposal/proposal certifies that: He/she is the person in the proposer's/proposer's organization responsible within that organization for the decision as to the prices being offered herein and that he/she has not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to 2.1 through 2.3 above; (or) He/she is not the person in the proposer's/proposer's organization responsible within that organization for the decision as to the prices being offered herein, but that he/she has been authorized in writing to act as agent for the persons responsible for such decisions in certifying that such persons have not participated, and will not participate in any action contrary to 2.1 through 2.3 above, and as their agent does hereby so certify; and he/she has not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to 2.1 through 2.3 above.

12.0 DISCLOSURE OF INDEPENDENCE AND RELATIONSHIP:

12.1 Prior to award of any contract, a potential contractor shall certify in writing to the procuring agency that no relationship exists between the potential contractor and the procuring or contracting agency that interferes with fair competition or is a conflict of interest, and no relationship exists between the contractor and another person or organization that constitutes a conflict of interest with respect to a state contract. The Department of Administration may waive this provision, in writing, if those activities of the potential contractor will not be adverse to the interests of the state.

12.2 Contractors shall agree as part of the contract for services that during performance of the contract, the contractor will neither provide contractual services nor enter into any agreement to provide services to a person or organization that

ATTACHMENT I: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

is regulated or funded by the contracting agency or has interests that are adverse to the contracting agency. The Department of Administration may waive this provision, in writing, if those activities of the contractor will not be adverse to the interests of the state.

13.0 INDEPENDENT CAPACITY OF CONTRACTOR: The parties hereto agree that the contractor, its officers, agents, and employees, in the performance of this agreement shall act in the capacity of an independent contractor and not as an officer, employee, or agent of the state. The contractor agrees to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that each subcontractor of the contractor will be deemed to be an independent contractor and will not be considered or permitted to be an agent, servant, joint venturer, or partner of the state.

14.0 EMPLOYMENT: The contractor will not engage the services of any person or persons now employed by Western, including any department, commission or board thereof, to provide services relating to this agreement without the written consent of the employing agency of such person or persons and of the contracting agency.

15.0 ORDERING: Purchase orders or releases via purchasing cards shall be placed directly to the contractor by an authorized agent.

16.0 PAYMENT TERMS AND INVOICING: Western normally will pay properly submitted vendor invoices within thirty (30) days of receipt providing goods and/or services have been delivered, installed (if required), and accepted as specified.

Invoices presented for payment must be submitted in accordance with instructions contained on the purchase order including reference to purchase order number and submittal to the correct address for processing.

A good faith dispute creates an exception to prompt payment.

17.0 TAXES: Western is exempt from payment of all federal tax and Wisconsin state and local taxes on its purchases except Wisconsin excise taxes as described below.

Western is required to pay the Wisconsin excise or occupation tax on its purchase of beer, liquor, wine, cigarettes, tobacco products, motor vehicle fuel and general aviation fuel. However, it is exempt from payment of Wisconsin sales or use tax on its purchases. Western may be subject to other states' taxes on its purchases in that state depending on the laws of that state. Contractors performing construction activities are required to pay state use tax on the cost of materials.

18.0 GUARANTEED DELIVERY: Failure of the contractor to adhere to delivery schedules as specified or to promptly replace rejected materials shall render the contractor liable for all costs in excess of the contract price when alternate procurement is necessary. Excess costs shall include the administrative costs.

19.0 ENTIRE AGREEMENT: These Standard Terms and Conditions shall apply to any contract or order awarded as a result of this request except where special requirements are stated elsewhere in the request; in such cases, the special requirements shall apply. Further, the written contract and/or order with referenced parts and attachments shall constitute the entire agreement and no other terms and conditions in any document, acceptance, or acknowledgment shall be effective or binding unless expressly agreed to in writing by the contracting authority.

20.0 APPLICABLE LAW AND COMPLIANCE: This contract will be governed by Wisconsin State Statute and the provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC). Western Purchasing Consortium and other

public agencies participating on the contract are provided all rights and remedies of contract as afforded under the UCC for the State of Wisconsin, and include all rights and protections afforded public institutions under the laws of Wisconsin and any federal laws or statutes that apply.

21.0 ASSIGNMENT: No right or duty in whole or in part of the contractor under this contract may be assigned or delegated without the prior written consent of Western.

22.0 NONDISCRIMINATION/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: In connection with the performance of work under this contract, the Contractor agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, handicap, sex, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in s.51.01(5), Wisconsin Statutes, sexual orientation as defined in x.111.32(13m) Wis. Stats., or national origin. This provision shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Except with respect to sexual orientation, the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to ensure equal employment opportunities.

To the extent required by law, 41 CFR 60-1.4(a) and (b) are incorporated by reference in these Standard Terms and Conditions. Additionally, the Contractor certifies compliance with 41 CFR 60-1.8 and does not and will not maintain any facilities provided for employees in a segregated manner.

23.0 PATENT INFRINGEMENT: The contractor selling to Western the articles described herein guarantees the articles were manufactured or produced in accordance with applicable federal labor laws. Further, that the sale or use of the articles described herein will not infringe any United States patent. The contractor covenants that it will at its own expense defend every suit which shall be brought against Western (provided that such contractor is promptly notified of such suit, and all papers therein are delivered to it) for any alleged infringement of any patent by reason of the sale or use of such articles, and agrees that it will pay all costs, damages, and profits recoverable in any such suit.

24.0 SAFETY REQUIREMENTS: All materials, equipment, and supplies provided to Western must comply fully with all safety requirements as set forth by the Wisconsin Administrative Code and all applicable OSHA Standards.

25.0 WARRANTY: Unless otherwise specifically stated by the proposer/proposer, equipment purchased as a result of this request shall be warranted against defects by the proposer/proposer for one (1) year from date of receipt. The equipment manufacturer's standard warranty shall apply as a minimum and must be honored by the contractor.

26.0 INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITY: The contractor performing services for Western shall:

26.1 Maintain worker's compensation insurance as required by Wisconsin Statutes, for all employees engaged in the work.

Maintain commercial liability, bodily injury and property damage insurance against any claim(s) which might occur in carrying out this agreement/contract. Minimum coverage shall be one million dollars (\$1,000,000) liability for bodily injury and property damage including products liability and completed operations. Provide motor vehicle insurance for all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles that are used in carrying out this contract. Minimum coverage shall be one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence combined single limit for automobile liability and property damage.

ATTACHMENT I: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

26.2 Western reserves the right to require higher or lower limits where warranted.

27.0 CANCELLATION: Western reserves the right to cancel any contract in whole or in part without penalty due to nonappropriation of funds or for failure of the contractor to comply with terms, conditions, and specifications of this contract.

28.0 PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS: It is the intention of Western to maintain an open and public process in the solicitation, submission, review, and approval of procurement activities.

Proposal/proposal openings are public unless otherwise specified. Records may not be available for public inspection prior to issuance of the notice of intent to award or the award of the contract.

29.0 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION: Any restrictions on the use of data contained within a request, must be clearly stated in the proposal/proposal itself. Proprietary information submitted in response to a request will be handled in accordance with applicable State of Wisconsin procurement regulations and the Wisconsin public records law. Proprietary restrictions normally are not accepted. However, when accepted, it is the vendor's responsibility to defend the determination in the event of an appeal or litigation.

29.1 Data contained in a proposal/proposal, all documentation provided therein, and innovations developed as a result of the contracted commodities or services cannot be copyrighted or patented. All data, documentation, and innovations become the property of the State of Wisconsin.

29.2 Any material submitted by the vendor in response to this request that the vendor considers confidential and proprietary information and which qualifies as a trade secret, as provided in s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats., or material which can be kept confidential under the Wisconsin public records law, must be identified on a Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information form (Proposers/proposers may request the form if it is not part of the Request for Proposal/Request Proposal package). Proposal/proposal prices cannot be held confidential.

30.0 RECYCLED MATERIALS: Western desires to purchase products incorporating recycled materials whenever technically and economically feasible. Proposers are encouraged to proposal products with recycled content which meet specifications.

31.0 MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET: If any item(s) on an order(s) resulting from this award(s) is a hazardous chemical, as defined under 29CFR 1910.1200, provide one (1) copy of a Material Safety Data Sheet for each item with the shipped container(s) and one (1) copy with the invoice(s).

32.0 PROMOTIONAL ADVERTISING / NEWS RELEASES: Reference to or use of Western any of its departments, agencies or other subunits, or any state official or employee for commercial promotion is prohibited. News releases pertaining to this procurement shall not be made without prior approval of Western. Release of broadcast e-mails pertaining to this procurement shall not be made without prior written authorization of the contracting agency.

33.0 HOLD HARMLESS: The contractor will indemnify and save harmless Western and all of its officers, agents and employees from all suits, actions, or claims of any character brought for or on account of any injuries or damages received by any persons or property resulting from the operations of the contractor, or of any of its contractors, in prosecuting work under this

agreement.

34.0 FOREIGN CORPORATION: A foreign corporation (any corporation other than a Wisconsin corporation) which becomes a party to this Agreement is required to conform to all the requirements of Chapter 180, Wis. Stats., relating to a foreign corporation and must possess a certificate of authority from the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, unless the corporation is transacting business in interstate commerce or is otherwise exempt from the requirement of obtaining a certificate of authority. Any foreign corporation which desires to apply for a certificate of authority should contact the Department of Financial Institutions, Division of Corporation, P. O. Box 7846, Madison, WI 53707-7846; telephone (608) 261-7577.

35.0 FORCE MAJEURE: Neither party shall be in default by reason of any failure in performance of this Agreement in accordance with reasonable control and without fault or negligence on their part. Such causes may include, but are not restricted to, acts of nature or the public enemy, acts of the government in either its sovereign or contractual capacity, fires, floods, epidemics, quarantine restrictions, strikes, freight embargoes and unusually severe weather, but in every case the failure to perform such must be beyond the reasonable control and without the fault or negligence of the party.

36.0 RECORDKEEPING AND RECORD RETENTION: The contractor shall establish and maintain adequate records of all expenditures incurred under the contract. All records must be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures. All procedures must be in accordance with federal, state, and local ordinances.

The contracting agency shall have the right to audit, review, examine, copy, and transcribe any pertinent records or documents relating to any contract resulting from this proposal/proposal held by the contractor. The contractor will retain all documents applicable to the contract for a period of not less than three (3) years after final payment is made.

A. STATEMENT OF NEED

i. Labor Market Area, Sector, and Employer Demand

Manufacturing has been a part of Wisconsin’s economy since the 1790’s. Wisconsin’s industry has grown over the years and the technical college system in Wisconsin grew along with it. In 1911, Wisconsin became the first state to establish a system of state support for vocational, technical, and adult education and that same year the state Legislature established Apprenticeship programs. The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) is made up of 16 technical colleges and provided training to over 287,951 students in FY23 (System, November 2023)¹. The technical colleges offer a variety of opportunities for students to enter the field of manufacturing, including emerging programs in Industry 4.0, automation, and robotics.

Wisconsin’s economy is dependent on a strong manufacturing base. It is a \$70 billion dollar contribution annually to the state’s economy with over 9,242 manufacturing firms that employ 574,469 individuals². Wisconsin is considered a hotspot for this kind of job.

Manufacturing employment is continuing to grow as well. Lightcast Economic Modeling software predicts a 7% increase in jobs in Wisconsin through 2027, compared to a national average of 2.9% during the same time period³. For the jobs tied to advanced manufacturing careers, such as electromechanical and mechatronic technicians, industrial engineering technicians, and mechanical engineering technicians, the growth rate is 7% through 2028.

Table 1: Labor Market Demand ⁴			
Occupations	Job Growth rate	Prevailing wage	Labor Market Area (WI Counties)

¹ Fact book: Student data. WTCS. (2023, October 27). <https://www.wtcsystem.edu/impact/publications/fact-book-student-data/>

² Aronson, D. (2023, October 23). Wisconsin’s Manufacturing Landscape: The heartbeat of Wisconsin. Fortifi Bank. <https://www.fortifibank.com/wisconsins-manufacturing-landscape-the-heartbeat-of-wisconsin>

³ Lightcast Industry Snapshot Report: Manufacturing in Wisconsin. Q4 2023 Data Set

⁴ Ibid

Electromechanical and mechatronic technician	1.4%	\$55,695/year	St. Croix, Pierce, Dunn, Pepin, Buffalo, Trempealeau, Eau Claire, Chippewa, Taylor, Clark, Jackson, Kenosha, Racine, Walworth, Calumet, Manitowoc, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Adams, Juneau, Marathon, Portage, Waushara, Wood, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Washington, Lincoln, Price, Langlade, Menominee, Shawano, Waupaca, Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, Barron, Rusk, Sawyer, Burnett, Polk, Washburn, Waukesha, Jefferson, Vernon, La Crosse, Monroe, Juneau, Crawford, Richland, Sauk
Industrial engineering technicians	10.1%	\$55,646/year	
Mechanical engineering technicians	3.4%	\$56,227/year	

At the same time, manufacturing is changing in response to critical workforce shortages.

Solutions include training **incumbent** employees in need of upskilling, incorporating emerging technology in robotics, automation and artificial intelligence, and integrating operational technology (OT) to address risks around the security of systems and infrastructure used in industrial settings that control automation production.

In Wisconsin, manufacturing employment related to “smart” manufacturing and Industry 4.0 initiatives are critical emerging occupations that are struggling to be filled. *Smarts & Parts* is a statewide effort designed to build capacity within our system to meet the emerging technology and workforce training needs to recruit, train, and prepare individuals for Industry 4.0, while also focusing on addressing existing equity gaps that are preventing widespread access to educational and economic opportunities. Nine of the 16 WTCS colleges are participating in this consortium project led by Western Technical College (Table 2) with the intention to share the developed curriculum and outcomes with the rest of the system colleges. This project will also build capacity to train individuals to work in smart manufacturing environments by implementing innovative methods designed to utilize fully integrated systems and machines, bringing the physical and digital worlds together.

Table 2: Participating WTCS Colleges	
Chippewa Valley Technical College	Moraine Park Technical College

Gateway Technical College	Northcentral [Technical College
Lakeshore Technical College	Northwood Technical College
Mid-State Technical College	Waukesha County Technical College

ii. Equity Gap Analysis

The *Smarts & Parts* project will focus on closing equity gaps for **individuals of color** in manufacturing programs throughout the state. The gaps to be addressed will be disparities in credential attainment, job placement, and earnings for these populations. According to Lightcast data, racial diversity is low in Wisconsin for manufacturing careers. Of the jobs available in the sector, only 19.3% are filled by non-white individuals⁵. Manufacturing jobs in Wisconsin average \$82,510 per year with benefits, implying that closing the racial equity gap is not just critical for employers, but also critical for the individuals and their families.

According to demographic information shared in the Wisconsin Technical College System’s (WTCS) 2021 Equity Report, by 2026, people of color will comprise over half the workforce, and by 2044 there will be no single demographic majority⁶. According to the report, “the proportion of System-wide technical college enrollments who are people of color increased from at least 16.7 percent for the 2010-11 academic year to at least 22.1 percent in 2019-20”⁷. For the technical college education programs that are part of the *Smarts & Parts* project, the colleges have some work to do in closing equity gaps. The chart below illustrates the programs related to advanced manufacturing and the corresponding enrollments for individuals of color.

Technical College	Areas of Instructional Focus	Total Enrollment 2022	Individuals of Color Enrollment	Individuals of Color Enrollment %
Chippewa Valley	Automation Systems Electromechanical Maintenance	142	14	10%

⁵ Lightcast Industry Snapshot Report: Manufacturing in Wisconsin. Q4 2023 Data Set

⁶ 2021 WTCS Systemwide Equity Report <https://www.wtcsystem.edu/assets/Uploads/Publications/Report/2021-WTCS-System-wide-Equity-Report-FINAL-WEB.pdf>

⁷ Ibid

	Industrial Mechanical			
Gateway	Advanced Manufacturing Electromechanical Maintenance Industrial Mechanical Mechatronics	117	48	41%
Lakeshore	Electromechanical Technology Manufacturing Engineering Industrial Maintenance and Robotics Mechatronics	161	38	24%
Mid-State	Industrial Mechanical Automation Systems	55	4	7%
Moraine Park	Electromechanical Technology Industrial Mechanical	49	5	10%
Northcentral	Automation Systems Technology Electromechanical Technology Industrial Manufacturing Engineering	120	16	13%
Northwood	Automation Systems Mechatronics	24	2	8%
Waukesha County	Automation Systems Manufacturing Engineering Mechatronics	151	17	11%
Western	Automation Systems Electromechanical Technology Industrial Machine Controls	50	2	4%
Total⁸		959	161	17%

The chart above illustrates that statewide enrollment in the program areas related to the *Smarts & Parts* project for individuals of color is 5.1% below the 22.1% overall enrollment in WTCS programs. Considering that these jobs represent some of the most high-demand, family-sustaining employment opportunities needed to support Wisconsin’s very near future, this project plans to focus on increasing enrollments in advanced manufacturing careers for individuals of color to quickly close the existing equity gap for our students, which in turn will increase economic opportunities across the entire state.

B. Expected Outcomes and Outputs

i. Theory of Change - See *Attachment: Theory of Change*

ii. Strategy Options Chart

⁸ Retrieved from WTCS Tableau data from 2022 Client Reporting

Table 4: <i>Smarts & Parts</i> Proposed Strategy Options		
Strategy Number	Proposed Strategy Option	Funding Source
A1	Advanced Manufacturing employers will play a key role in informing the curriculum redesign to ensure students and incumbent workers have access to relevant, shorter-term, industry recognized credentials to move the sector forward, meeting employer demand for skilled employees to support consumer demand for goods and services in an accelerated manner.	Grant funds
A6	Many of the participating institutions benefit from employer donated robotics and machinery on which students will be educated through this grant.	Leveraged funds
B1	The participating colleges will leverage college and Perkins grant dollars to provide non-academic services to ensure student success such as, but not limited to: case management, counseling, career navigation, college navigation, or other one-on-one or group support designed to help students succeed throughout the career pathway.	Leveraged funds
B2	The participating colleges will leverage college and Carl D. Perkins grant dollars to provide non-academic services to ensure student success such as, but not limited to: wrap-around/support services or benefits, which may include stipends, emergency assistance, food assistance, internet, tutoring assistance, child/dependent care assistance, transportation assistance, healthcare (including mental health services), advising on public benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, among other services.	Leveraged funds
B3	The consortium will partner with regional community-based organizations currently engaged with the underserved populations and communities of the service area regions to promote educational and employment pathways into the advanced manufacturing industry, with a special focus on non-white and/or female participants to actively address racial and gender equity gaps within the industry.	Leveraged funds
C3	As a result of the curriculum redesign, the colleges will then offer hands-on training on the identified industry-recognized credentials and microcredentials to offer shorter term trainings resulting in employment sooner than finishing the entire two-year program, allowing students to earn a livable wage while continuing their education to attain higher level credentials (two-year associate degree) and subsequently, higher wages. The programs are based on hands-on learning labs to teach core competencies.	Leveraged funds
C4	Leveraging the Integrated Education and Training (IET) program framework already established through Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds, the grant will develop an additional, industry-specific program for students transitioning from Adult Education (AE) courses	Grant and Leveraged funds
C6	As part of the work to integrate identified industry-recognized credentials into the curriculum design, the consortium faculty will cross-walk the competencies of the credentials to the competencies of the programs to	Grant funds

	embed the credentials where they make sense and determine the map by which to award credit for prior learning for students who enroll in the program with the industry credentials already attained.	
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iii. Career Pathways Program(s) Participant Estimate and Tracking Plan

The programs of study used for participant tracking in *Smarts & Parts* will include both new and established advanced manufacturing career pathways leading to industry-recognized credentials awarded by the consortium colleges (see Table 5). Enrollment into a program of study will be defined as students who enroll into one of the grant-impacted programs listed during the grant period and after the program has been modified, expanded, or developed using grant funds.

Identifying characteristics and demographic information, such as whether the student resides in a rural county or is a student of color, is attached to the student’s record in the college’s student information system and will accompany participant enrollment data for disaggregation. Participant cohorts will be established by each college’s Institutional Research (IR) office and reported through the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Client Reporting System, whereby all college data is submitted annually for central analysis and reporting purposes. Participant cohort data will be pulled from the WTCS data cubes by college IR offices as part of the project’s annual and ongoing evaluation throughout the project period.

As many of the participating colleges are open-access institutions, all students are able to enroll in the listed programs. All nine colleges offer academic and non-academic supports to ensure student success including tutoring, case management, and access to resources to address basic needs. As such, students will not be screened for program enrollment other than to complete the application process for college enrollment.

Table 5: Total Participant Estimate		
College	Career Pathways Program	Estimated Total # of Participants During

EXHIBIT 1: SMARTS & PARTS PROJECT NARRATIVE

US Dept of Labor/ETA CFDA 17.261
Project Narrative

Smarts & Parts
Western Technical College Consortium

		the Grant Period of Performance
Chippewa Valley	Smart Manufacturing Certificate	45
	IT-Cybersecurity Analyst	30
Gateway	Advanced Manufacturing Technology / Electromechanical Maintenance Technician	120
	IT-Cybersecurity Specialist	560
	IT-Data Analytics Specialist	60
	IT-Network Specialist	120
	Advanced Manufacturing Specialist Certificate	included in AMT #
	Introductory Industry 4.0 Certificate	included in AMT #
NTC	IT-Cybersecurity Specialist Associate Degree	240
	Data Analytics Associate Degree	51
	IT-Information Security Certificate	3
	Automation Systems Technology Associate Degree	104
	Smart Manufacturing Technology Associate Degree	6
Northwood	IT- Cybersecurity Specialist Associate Degree	20
	Automated Packaging Systems Technician	30
	Automation for Industrial Systems	30
Mid-State	Advanced Manufacturing	100
	Automation & Instrumentation Engineering	50
Lakeshore	Manufacturing IT Associate Degree	10
	Electro-Mech Automation Associate Degree	150
	Electro-Mech Maintenance Associate Degree	85
	Manufacturing Engineering Tech Associate Degree	10
Moraine Park	Quality and Advanced Manufacturing Technology	130 30
	Automated Manufacturing Technician Program	150 35
	Manufacturing Fundamentals Certificate	150 30
	Quality/Supervision Certificate	26 5
WCTC	Metal Fab/Welding Adv Man Tech	84
	Mechanical Design Technology	39
	Mechanical Engineering Tech	82
	Manufacturing Engineering Technician	25
	Electrical Engineering Tech	68
	Electronic Systems Technology	18
	Automation Systems Technology	93
	CNC Setup Technician	37
	Welding Technician	116
	Machine Tool Operation	21
	Metal Fabrication/Welding	55
Western	Electromechanical Technology	48

	Mechatronic & Robotic Engineering Technology	30
	IoT Integration Specialist	15
	Cybersecurity	30
	Welding & Fabrication	90
Total number of student participants across all programs and years		3,131 2775

iv. Sustainable Systems Change

Smarts & Parts project’s key innovations and systems changes are grounded in existing structures and relationships, relying on the strength of the consortium’s previous work and success to guide its new work. This model ensures the partners are in a strong position to absorb the grant-end state to be achieved during and after the project period of performance. Table 6 outlines several key aspects of *Smarts & Parts* to be sustained following the grant period, how they will be institutionalized or continued following grant funding, how they align with the required partners’ priorities, and evidence for sustaining such systems.

v. Project Work Plan and Annual Milestones – See Attachment: Project Workplan

C. Project Design

i. Institutions of Higher Education Selection

The *Smarts & Parts* institutions of higher education are an affinity-focused consortium. Many of the consortium colleges are Qualified Institutions as they meet eligibility requirements under Part A of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Strengthening Institutions Program, SIP) in FY 2023.

The lead institution (Western) has a current SIP grant. The nine participating colleges are part of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). Collaborating as part of the same system will allow for a strong connection to share data and provide easier dissemination of results to the state. The consortium has partnered in multiple other grant projects, including three successful rounds of TAACCCT funding, one focused on manufacturing; one focused on information technology and led by NTC; another of which was healthcare-focused and led by CVTC, both of whom are participating in *Smarts & Parts*. Several of the partners have contiguous geographic boundaries and share similar needs: large districts, similar regional demographic characteristics,

Table 6: <i>Smarts & Parts</i> Sustained Work				
Grant Objectives	Existing State	End State	Planned Sustained State	Alignment with Partner Priorities
Use of embedded industry-recognized credentials within advanced manufacturing programming	Inconsistent application of embedded industry credentials within advanced manufacturing programs across WTCS colleges resulting in disparate expectations and pathways into advanced manufacturing careers	Uniform application of embedded industry credentials within advanced manufacturing programs across WTCS colleges resulting in comparable pathways into advanced manufacturing careers to meet industry need and close equity gaps across the state.	Maintain use and application of the embedded industry credentials within advanced manufacturing programs to increase access to education and careers; training opportunities for incumbent workers; decrease equity gaps across the service regions.	<p>Colleges: With increasing connectivity, WTCS colleges are looking for ways to align shared programming across colleges to meet regional employer need as well as mobility options for students and workers. Identifying and sharing best practices to increase access to programming and employment while reducing equity gap is a key element of the mission statements of all WTCS colleges.</p> <p>Employers: Portable credentials recognized by the industry is an increasing need employers are sharing as more people are switching jobs. The credentials indicate a standardized level of competency that make it easier for employers to hire workers for their needs.</p> <p>Workforce System: The use of embedded micro-credentials in academic programs aligns with the priorities of workforce development systems by promoting targeted skill development, flexibility, agility, stackable credentials, competency recognition, enhanced employability, alignment with industry standards, lifelong learning, customization of learning paths, and credential transparency.</p>
Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) competency crosswalk to	Inconsistent application of credit for prior learning opportunities without uniform	Uniform application of credit for prior learning competencies within advanced	Maintain and update application of the credit for prior learning crosswalk for advanced manufacturing programs as the field advances to increase access to education, reducing time to	<p>Colleges: All WTCS colleges actively work to make higher education more accessible for students. CPL is one strategy as it accelerates student progress to completion within a program, saves students money by not having to take a class they already know the competencies of, increased</p>

<p>award program credit</p>	<p>pathways into advanced manufacturing programs across WTCS colleges resulting in disparate expectations and pathways into advanced manufacturing careers</p>	<p>manufacturing programs across WTCS colleges resulting in comparable pathways into advanced manufacturing careers to meet industry need and close equity gaps across the state.</p>	<p>completion for students, increasing credit opportunities for incumbent workers, and decreasing equity gaps across the service regions.</p>	<p>retention by making college accessible for people who would otherwise not attend, provides flexibility for non-traditional students, and meets workforce demand by awarding an industry-recognized credential or credit class for the skills the students already possess. Employers: CPL is important to employers as it contributes to a more skilled, adaptable, and diverse workforce, ultimately benefiting businesses by improving productivity, reducing training costs, and aligning with industry needs. Workforce System: CPL is essential to workforce development systems as it enhances efficiency, addresses skill gaps, promotes lifelong learning, aligns with industry needs, increases access and equity, fosters collaboration with employers, and contributes to cost-effectiveness. These factors collectively support the development of a skilled, adaptable, and inclusive workforce.</p>
<p>Development and deployment of OER to support lower cost of programming</p>	<p>Like the embedded credentials, OER use is inconsistent across the participating colleges with some colleges using them and some not.</p>	<p>The consortium will identify 1-2 OER materials to be developed based on industry and workforce system partner feedback to reduce textbook costs for students, using a model similar to CVTC’s Open Textbook Pilot grant project. Participating</p>	<p>As part of the development of the OER materials, a specific sustainability plan will be developed to ensure the materials are updated on a regular basis to ensure the information is current and applicable to the competencies of the class/credentials.</p>	<p>Colleges: Reducing textbook costs is a priority across higher education, particularly in Wisconsin, where CVTC is leading a statewide Open Textbook Pilot grant project through the Department of Education to develop OER Nursing textbooks and associated virtual reality scenarios. Employers: Since OER content is online and dynamic, it can be easily updated to meet industry’s standards. Workforce System: Workforce partners are invested in making career pathways more affordable for populations served through WIOA.</p>

		<p>faculty will work with the identified OER champions on their campuses to align work to other OER strategies.</p>		
<p>Strategies for closing equity gaps for students of color.</p>	<p>As outlined in Table 3, all colleges are facing equity gaps within the advanced manufacturing programs.</p>	<p>As a result of the strategies to reduce equity gaps for students of color by focusing marketing efforts on non-white students and engaging in academic and non-academic services to promote success, <i>Smarts & Parts</i> will reduce the overall equity gaps by 2% by project end.</p>	<p>The efforts initiated within <i>Smarts & Parts</i> to decrease equity gaps for students of color will be analyzed carefully throughout the grant period to measure effectiveness. Successful strategies will be maintained and, if possible, taken to scale or disseminated across the state. The consortium’s SCC4 Evaluation project will endeavor to identify the most impactful methods for closing equity gaps across Wisconsin and extend their reach beyond the consortium. Such strategies may be disseminated, scaled, and sustained through statewide conferences (C3, WISCORE, etc.) and state-required reports such as the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA).</p>	<p>Colleges: Increasing graduation rates and closing equity gaps are key performance indicators of all nine consortium colleges and critical to their strategic outcomes and accreditation. Employers: Addressing equity gaps is critical to employers not only to meet the needs of marginalized workers, but also to increase the supply of qualified employees available for advanced manufacturing occupations. Workforce System: Closing equity gaps is a key priority of WIOA.</p>

strong manufacturing employer partners, a willingness to share designs and innovative concepts, large rural populations, and shared advanced manufacturing sector characteristics and challenges. The colleges’ shared dedication to the project is expressed in the attached documentation of commitment by each participating college.

ii. Career Pathways Programs

As outlined in Tables 6 & 7, *Smarts & Parts* will serve over 2,000 participants over the project timeline using eight of the strategy options. Table 7 outlines how the options align with the selected career pathways.

Table 7: Justification of Strategy Options		
Strategy Option	Career Pathways	Justification (address the workforce needs of the identified sector(s) through credentialing and other skills gains demonstrations, direct entry in employment for participants, and earnings gains)
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Manufacturing Certificate • IT-Cybersecurity Analyst • Advanced Manufacturing Technology / Electromechanical Maintenance Technician • IT-Cybersecurity Specialist • IT-Network Specialist 	Incorporating ongoing input and feedback from advanced manufacturers through regular meetings and updates (quarterly or bi-annually in the first year and annually for subsequent years to check and adjust the implementation) will inform and determine which industry-recognized credentials <i>Smarts & Parts</i> will be embedded within the listed programs in addition to SACA credentials. Ongoing sector-wide employer input on the curriculum redesign ensures that the academic programs in advanced manufacturing are relevant to the current and future industry demands, it’s customized to the needs of manufacturers across Wisconsin while creating consistency across multiple colleges, validates the skills needed and corresponding credentials as evidence of competency, and responsive to industry needs.
A6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Manufacturing Specialist Certificate • Introductory Industry 4.0 Certificate • Data Analytics Associate Degree • IT-Information Security Certificate 	Participating employers will support the work of <i>Smarts & Parts</i> in the following ways: Industry Expertise in Curriculum Development: Employers will contribute their industry expertise to the development of curricula. Access to Specialized Equipment: Advanced manufacturing requires specialized machinery and equipment. Many of the participating institutions will be providing hands-on skills training on equipment donated by participating employers, allowing students to train on industry-standard equipment and enhancing their readiness for the workforce.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation Systems Technology Associate Degree Smart Manufacturing Technology Associate Degree Automated Packaging Systems Technician Automation for Industrial Systems 	<p>Upskilling the Incumbent Workforce: Employers will contribute to the development of their employees by using the developed curriculum to offer upskilling for their incumbent workforce, providing opportunities for earning gains within the industry.</p> <p>Networking/Awareness Building: Employer partners will participate in Career Fairs, Industry Spotlights, and other networking opportunities for students to build connections, explore career opportunities, and gain insights into the expectations of the advanced manufacturing workforce.</p>
B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing Automation & Instrumentation Engineering Manufacturing IT Associate Degree Electro-Mech Automation Associate Degree 	<p>All the participating colleges provide a level of systems navigation to assist students on their journey through higher education, with a particular focus on first-generation students who may not have a social/familial support system to help them navigate the steps required. Advanced Manufacturing faculty regularly collaborate with admissions and enrollment staff to ensure students are moving through the pathway to attain the level of credentialing desired. Students are also connected with career services to support their job search and application process.</p>
B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electro-Mech Maintenance Associate Degree Manufacturing Engineering Tech Associate Degree 	<p>Like the navigation systems, many of the colleges also provide wrap around services to support the non-academic needs of students. Too often, students are derailed on their academic journey due to non-academic reasons such as housing, finances, or health. Many of the consortium colleges have services to connect students to in-house and/or external resources to address these needs.</p>
B3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and Advanced Manufacturing Technology Automated Manufacturing Technician Program 	<p><i>Smarts & Parts</i> will leverage (CBO) who offer skills enhancement training for community populations who would otherwise not pursue careers in advanced manufacturing. The project manager will collaborate with CBOs to share information about and pathways to advanced manufacturing careers and engage with populations who are underrepresented in manufacturing programs and employment.</p>
C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing Fundamentals Certificate Quality/Supervision Certificate Electromechanical Technology Mechatronic & Robotic Engineering Technology 	<p>Programming developed through the curriculum redesign will offer hands-on training for the identified industry-recognized credentials and microcredentials to offer shorter term trainings resulting in employment sooner than finishing the entire 2-year program, allowing students to earn a livable wage while continuing their education to attain higher level credentials (two-year associate degree) and subsequently, higher wages. All of the programs use hands-on learning labs to teach and assess the skills development of core competency.</p>
C4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IoT Integration Specialist 	<p>Leveraging the Integrated Education and Training (IET) program framework already established through Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds, the grant will</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welding & Fabrication 	develop an additional, industry-specific program for students transitioning from Adult Education courses.
C6		The consortium faculty will crosswalk the competencies of the credentials to the competencies of the programs to embed SACA credentials and the other identified credentials based on the work of strategy A1 and determine the map by which to award credit for prior learning for students who enroll in the program with the industry credentials already attained.

The options outlined in the table above will enhance the career pathways as described in Table 7 below.

Table 8: How Strategy Options Will Enhance Career Pathways			
Strategy Option	Career Pathway	Current State	End State
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Manufacturing Certificate • IT-Cybersecurity Analyst • Advanced Manufacturing Technology / Electromechanical Maintenance Technician • IT-Cybersecurity Specialist • IT-Network Specialist 	While each program obtains input from program advisory boards, there is no statewide approach to gaining employer feedback to inform a statewide approach to embedded industry-recognized credentials within manufacturing programs.	The 9 participating colleges will have shared curriculum within their advanced manufacturing programming to provide the same embedded credentials within their programs. The results of this work will be shared with the 7 other WTCS colleges who did not participate in the event they're able to apply the model to the programs.
A6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Manufacturing Specialist Certificate • Introductory Industry 4.0 Certificate • Data Analytics Associate Degree • IT-Information Security Certificate • Automation Systems Technology Associate Degree • Smart Manufacturing Technology Associate Degree 	There is no coordinated effort to how employers are supporting their regional technical college to support programming and increase awareness around and access advanced manufacturing careers.	<i>Smarts & Parts</i> will bring together employers from across the state to inform the programming of advanced manufacturing, creating more cohesive programming across the state with more career pathways at all of the colleges to promote work that increases the advanced manufacturing workforce and reduces equity gaps within it.
B1		The consortium colleges all offer navigation and/or	The consortium colleges will continue to work with

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated Packaging Systems Technician Automation for Industrial Systems Advanced Manufacturing 	<p>coaching services which will be leveraged for this grant. Intentional focus will be enacted to ensure program students are made aware of the resources available.</p>	<p>program faculty and students to ensure they're aware of and using offer navigation and/or coaching services.</p>
B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation & Instrumentation Engineering Manufacturing IT Associate Degree Electro-Mech Automation Associate Degree 	<p>The consortium colleges all offer wrap-around/support services which will be leveraged for this grant. Intentional focus will be enacted to ensure program students are made aware of the resources available.</p>	<p>The consortium colleges will continue to work with program faculty and students to ensure they're aware of and using offer wrap-around/support services.</p>
B3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electro-Mech Maintenance Associate Degree Manufacturing Engineering Tech Associate Degree Quality and Advanced Manufacturing Technology 	<p>Consortium colleges often collaborate with regional CBOs but not in a coordinated effort to support advanced manufacturing pathways by 1) connecting students to services or 2) recruiting from the CBO client base to encourage more individuals to pursue manufacturing careers.</p>	<p>With stronger relationships established, the colleges will continue to collaborate with regional CBOs to recruit students to programming and connect them with any services the CBOs can provide them.</p>
C3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated Manufacturing Technician Program Manufacturing Fundamentals Certificate Quality/Supervision Certificate Electromechanical Technology 	<p>The consortium colleges all provide hands-on learning as part of their advanced manufacturing programming but not all offer the hands-on training specific to the industry-recognized credentials that will be embedded in programming through this project.</p>	<p>The colleges will continue to provide the credential-specific hands-on learning as part of their advanced manufacturing programming.</p>
C4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechatronic & Robotic Engineering Technology IoT Integration Specialist Welding & Fabrication 	<p>Not all of the consortium partners offer IET programming for advanced manufacturing.</p>	<p>The colleges that develop IET programming as a part of this project will continue to do so after the grant end while also being a resource for colleges who decide to pursue the development of IET for advanced manufacturing post-grant.</p>
C6		<p>While all consortium colleges offer CPL on some level, it is</p>	<p>All colleges will award CPL consistently, in</p>

		not a consistent application across all the colleges as their programs all vary.	alignment with the developed CPL cross-walk map.
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iii. Demonstration of Sector Convener and Employer Engagement

For *Smarts & Parts*, Western will serve as the sector convener to bring together representatives from partnering colleges, regional employers, workforce development boards, and relevant industry associations, having extensive experience in leading sector strategy work within western Wisconsin. Western’s Business and Industry Services (BIS) department is charged with providing training for regional employers to keep their **incumbent** workers current in their skills, ranging from leadership development to highly technical mechanical maintenance skills. BIS can help build the structure and strength of an organization through strategic planning, performance improvement, or other technical services. In this role, BIS regularly convenes industry representatives to assess their regional training needs through events such as Community Input Sessions at our Regional Learning Centers and Manufacturing Luncheons every October to connect manufacturing industry partners with higher education, K-12, and students. Additionally, each of the participating colleges have similar departments who engage in similar roles and activities, giving this project the connections and expertise to the sector convener.

The *Smarts & Parts* consortium will develop a comprehensive sector strategy to engage employers partnering on the project through industry feedback loops. The consortium will assemble manufacturing employers from across the region but organize the activities and feedback around each technical college district and facilitated within these general geographic boundaries. The consortium group engaged in this work will feature employers, workforce development system representatives, technical colleges, and other educational institutions, both secondary and postsecondary. The cohesiveness and strength of this group is grounded in a

common need: manufacturers lack a robust workforce and seek solutions to the problem. The structure and organization of the group is familiar to manufacturing employers who serve on the consortium colleges' advisory committees; the consortium will mirror advisory committees in practice, but at a larger scale.

The 11 advanced manufacturing employers committing to support the *Smarts & Parts* project are primarily those employers already working closely with consortium colleges through manufacturing program advisory committees and work-based learning opportunities, curriculum development and program design, equipment donation, sharing of facilities and lab space, and more. Their commitment to this project reflects their trust in the colleges and their desire to continue working alongside them in the development of a future advanced manufacturing workforce. Documentation of employer commitment, roles, and contributions to the project is attached in the Documentation of Employer Commitment attachment.

iv. Demonstration of Workforce Development System Engagement

The *Smarts & Parts* colleges and workforce development system partners regularly collaborate and work together towards regional workforce and economic development system goals. The colleges and workforce system partners serve on one another's boards of directors and maintain strong connections to each other and area employers. For instance, the lead institution in this proposal, Western, has representation on the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (WWWDB). County economic development boards across the region also include technical college personnel and other workforce system representatives on their boards.

The workforce development system partners in the *Smarts & Parts* project have a long history of supporting various initiatives of the technical colleges and vice versa, including program and facility development, grant projects, regional industry alliances and networks, and

more. The technical colleges in Wisconsin are also stewards of WIOA funding for adult learning, giving the colleges and workforce systems a shared purpose through federal legislation.

In *Smarts & Parts*, the workforce development system partners will feature prominently in the collection of industry feedback, collaborating with employers and colleges to build regional talent pipelines, address skills gaps, and create meaningful sector strategies aligning with each partners' strengths. The workforce system partners will also provide local level assistance for participants to use by leveraging the administration of WIOA funded services and other workforce development resources. Western and the consortium partners have close working relationships with the regional providers of work-based federal and state funded workforce development programs which will also contribute resources to project participants such as case management, supportive services, tuition and book assistance, childcare assistance, gas vouchers, work-based clothing, etc. based on eligibility and co-enrollment status. Documentation of five different workforce system agencies' commitment and contributions to the project is attached in the Documentation of Workforce Commitment attachment.

v. Demonstration of Worker Organization, Labor-Management Organization, or Labor Union Engagement and Community-Based Organization Engagement

Smarts & Parts will leverage manufacturing associations such as The Upper Mississippi Manufacturing Alliance (TUMMA) alliance of manufacturers in the Upper Mississippi River Region. Their goals are to strengthen the region's manufacturing environment and create a skilled and competitive workforce by combining the efforts of business, education, and support agencies. All the members of TUMMA are regional manufacturing employers who use the alliance to build awareness for advanced manufacturing, offer scholarships for students, and work together to advance the industry. This alliance gives the project direct access to employees

who will inform the development of the curriculum redesign, the identification of credentials to embed and OER to develop, and the influence the hiring of trained workers as a result.

In addition to the worker representation informing the outcomes of *Smarts & Parts*, the project will leverage community-based organizations (CBO) such as CouleeCap who offer skills enhancement trainings for community populations who would otherwise not pursue careers in advanced manufacturing. In this way, the project will work with CBOs to engage with populations who are underrepresented in manufacturing programs and employment – namely women and non-white participants. By targeting these populations, *Smarts & Parts* will close known equity gaps across the regions of Wisconsin.

Additionally, Western has a program, Project PROVEN, designed specifically to support the education and employment of justice-involved individuals, providing education, employment skills, and wrap around services for people transitioning from incarceration (Table 8). The *Smarts & Parts* project manager will work closely with Project PROVEN staff to identify ways to present career pathways to PROVEN participants, sharing best practices with participating colleges who have similar programming.

Table 9: Project PROVEN Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the GED/HSED and/or enroll in college or certification programming • Gain or improve upon skills to assist in obtaining employment such as filling out applications, interviewing, resume development, job search, and networking • Gain or improve upon skills to help maintain a job such as interpersonal relations, conflict resolution, customer service, etc. • Identify community resources that may be useful • Budgeting and financial management • Basic computer skills training

vi. Student Voice

By partnering with local CBOs and manufacturing alliances, the project will have access to **incumbent** workers, current students, and potential students to provide ongoing feedback. The

opportunity to engage justice-involved students in particular will provide invaluable feedback on how to remove systemic barriers to access. Table 9 outlines the ways *Smarts & Parts* will solicit feedback and close loops. The feedback will be reviewed by the consortium team who will determine what is feasible and how to incorporate it into the project design.

Table 10: Project Feedback	
Feedback Activities	Closing Feedback Loop Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups with CBO clients/PROVEN students on a yearly basis • Yearly surveys of current students • Survey/focus groups of incumbent workers • Community dialogue sessions in the first year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly report out of focus group feedback • Community presentation of feedback results in years 2-4 • Information sessions on how the project incorporates the feedback and the changes made as a result

vii. Advancing Good Jobs

As highlighted in Table 1 - Labor Market Demand, the prevailing wages of the occupations benefitting from *Smarts & Parts*, electromechanical and mechatronic technicians, industrial engineering technicians, and mechanical engineering technicians, all provide family-sustaining wages. According to the MIT Living Wage calculator, the livable wage for two working adults with one child is \$19.33/hour and \$25.20/hour with two children.⁹ According to Glassdoor.com, the average wage of an electromechanical and mechatronic technicians in La Crosse, WI, is \$64,000 - \$110,000/year (\$30.77/hr - \$55.88/hr); industrial engineering technician is \$70,000 - \$95,000/year (\$33.65/hour - \$45.67/hour); and mechanical engineering technicians make \$62,000 - \$85,000 (\$29.80/hr - \$40.87/hr).¹⁰ All of the employers who submitted letters of commitment for this project are ready to hire the students educated through *Smarts & Parts* at family sustaining wages.

⁹ <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/55>

¹⁰ https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/industrial-maintenance-technician-salary-SRCH_IM458_KO0,33.htm?clickSource=searchBtn

Collaborating with the contracted evaluator, the project manager will determine an annual feedback collection mechanism (surveys, phone calls, mailings, etc.) to collect information from students who are hired out of the programs impacted by *Smarts & Parts*. This work will align and supplement the already established processes of each college to collect graduate salary information. Information collected will ensure employed students are hired at family sustaining wages.

viii. Advancing Equitable Employment Outcomes

“Systemic barriers faced by students, and the resulting disadvantages, often overlap and compound.” For instance, the likelihood of living in poverty increases with other barriers commonly faced by college students, such as being a student of color or a student with a disability.¹¹ Due to the interconnected nature of race and ethnicity, income and poverty, and other factors impacting educational and economic success in the project’s target population, the *Smarts & Parts* project will address the gaps identified in the Equity Gap Analysis through a combination of strategies within the advanced manufacturing career pathways developed, expanded, and enhanced with grant funds.

The consortium colleges leveraged their Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments (CLNAs) to determine the best local and regional approaches to close equity gaps. The CLNAs, which are developed annually and submitted to WTCS in conjunction with the colleges’ Local Perkins Plans and Perkins grant applications, include extensive data analyzing equity gaps across student populations and program areas, and incorporate community and stakeholder feedback on addressing such gaps. The colleges also deferred to local equity plans,

¹¹ Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) (2021). WTCS System-wide Equity Report

strategic plans with specific Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals and action items, and other comprehensive institutional efforts to address disparities at the program and individual level.

Table 11: Strategies to Reduce Equity Gaps	
Strategy Option	Justification for Narrowing of Equity Gaps
A1	Reducing the time it takes to get an industry-recognized credential means students can get employed with livable wages sooner and use those wages to attain more education and credentials to increase their earning potential.
A6	Leveraging employer resources to provide students with networking opportunities to help increase access to employment and for them to learn on employer donated equipment increase their ability gain the competencies they need to attain credentials and, subsequently, employment.
B1	By focusing navigation services to assist students on their journey through higher education on marginalized populations, <i>Smarts & Parts</i> will ensure the systems of higher education are not a barrier for students that prevent them from succeeding.
B2	Often students lack in their basic needs - housing, food, clothing – to even concentrate on education. By addressing these needs through leveraged resources, students will have a higher likelihood of successfully obtaining credentials, and subsequently, employment with a family-sustaining wage, ensuring they no longer have challenge meeting their basic needs.
B3	By collaborating with CBOs, <i>Smarts & Parts</i> will engage with potential student populations who might not otherwise pursue careers in advanced manufacturing while supporting the participants journey of accessing the services of the CBOs for them to be successful.
C3	Hands-on learning as a cornerstone of advanced manufacturing education equalizes the academic playing field, ensuring all students, regardless of their race, gender, socio-economic status, are able to prove their competency in their skills.
C4	Integrated Education Training offers pathways into advanced manufacturing for students who are in Adult Education classes who are often disproportionately represented by students of color and/or lower socio-economic status.
C6	CPL can provide cost savings for students who don't need to retake courses for skills they already possess, accelerating the timeline for students to attain the necessary credentials to become employed.

These steps to reduce equity gaps throughout the project design are reflected in the Theory of Change (See Theory of Change Attachment). Table 10 above outlines the specific actions to support the strategy to remove systemic barriers to access for marginalized populations, leveraging the CLNA data to inform the chosen actions.

Collaborating with the contracted evaluator, the project manager and evaluator will establish the baseline data of the equity gaps within the identified programs at each consortium college working with the Institutional Research office from each college. From there, they will identify what information will be collected on each student (such as services they use, classes they are enrolled in, etc.) and how the data will be collected and shared with the evaluator. Data will be collected and reviewed on an annual basis to determine impacts the work is having on locally underrepresented student groups and adjust the project plan if needed.

D. Organizational, Administrative, and Fiscal Capacity

The Consortium Project Manager, at 80% time commitment, will be responsible for all outcomes, strategies, and activities described in the *Smarts& Parts* project narrative, work plan, and logic model. The Project Manager will dually report to Western's Dean of Integrated Technologies and the Director of Business and Industry Services which is Western's contract training department. The Project Manager will act as the primary point of contact for DOL. He/she will oversee all consortium project meetings, as well as coordinate with consortium partners to exchange data, best practices, and other resources. The other 20% of his/her time will be supporting the local initiatives of Western's project, supporting the Dean of Integrated Technologies and the Director of Business and Industry Services. The position will require a Bachelor's Degree in a related field with a Master's Degree preferred in Business Administration, Higher Education Administration, or a related field, with at least three years of strong project management experience. Preference will be given to individuals with experience in education, workforce development, grant management, federal regulations, manufacturing administration and/or diversity, equity, and inclusion. See Attachment: Organization Chart for an outline on the project's staffing plan.

To communicate expectations to partners and institutional leaders, Western will require that each consortium member identify a project manager, evaluation liaison, and financial liaison within the first quarter of the project. These three primary points of contact will work with the Project Director to ensure effective and consistent communication between the partners and Western. Each college will hold quarterly meetings with project teams and report to Western through a universal reporting template. Documents, files, and data will be shared via a password secured cloud-based site. Budget expenditures, time and effort forms, purchasing details, and receipts will be processed locally prior to being moved into Western's established financial reporting systems.

Western, nor any of the consortium members, has been delinquent in grant reporting to any federal agency in the past 10 years. Western abides by all federal and state regulations for financial borrowing, spending, auditing, and reporting. Western and all consortium members are obligated to meet specific statewide standards for general financial management, which include an annual audit and financial statement reporting. Western has established processes for fiscal compliance in grants, including dedicated Grants Accountants to prepare expense reports, process purchase requisitions and invoices, disburse funds, and work directly with the Project Director to effectively manage grant funds.

E. Past Performance – Programmatic Capability

Western has been a consortium member on four previously funded DOL TAACCCT grant projects totaling over \$65 million, directly managing \$4.46 million. Western is a current consortium member of a Strengthening Community Colleges Round 3 grant (*EduSTAT*) led by Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) totaling almost \$5 million. CVTC was also a lead for the DOL TAACCCT Round 4 grant (*ACT for Healthcare*).

In addition to the successful DOL grant funding, Western was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) grant to expand advanced manufacturing education in our rural regions in 2017, closing out the grant in July 2021. In *Project ADAPT*, Western served as the advanced manufacturing sector convener to bring together industry (Ashly Furniture, Kwik Trip), four rural K12 schools, higher education (Western, University of Wisconsin-Stout, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh), and workforce development (Western Workforce Development Board and The Upper Mississippi Manufacturing Alliance [TUMMA]) to develop a two-year Mechatronics program with pathways from K-12 to 4-year with exposure to industry and opportunities for industry recognized credentials built in. Western's work on *Project ADAPT* serves as a precursor for the broader, statewide scale and advancement of *Smarts & Parts*. Western was also recently awarded two grants from the Department of Education: Basic Needs for Postsecondary Students Program for almost \$1 million and Title III Part A Strengthening Institutions Program for almost \$2.2 million.

Leadership at each partnering organization of the *Smarts & Parts* consortium has committed resources to planning and executing the *Smarts & Parts* project and will support efforts and activities related to accomplishing its goals, including tracking and reporting of activities and outcomes, and managing financial resources. The *Smarts & Parts* colleges partner in state and regional collaborations with other stakeholders on a regular basis. Each college is represented on regional Workforce Development Boards. The colleges consistently work to innovate and develop responses to student and business needs throughout the state.

F. Budget and Budget Narrative – Please see *Attachment: Budget Narrative*