



Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund (GO Virginia) Talent Pathways Initiative Program- Planning FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Talent Pathways Initiative Planning Program?

House Bill 29, approved by the 2022 General Assembly, provided \$2.5 million to the GO Virginia State Board for planning grants to support analysis of the workforce needs of regional businesses and the identification of the skills and training that can help prepare Virginians to fill available jobs in regional markets. It is anticipated that regional councils will focus this analysis on prioritized industry clusters identified in their approved 2021 Growth and Diversification plan. Using this analysis, it is anticipated that the Board, with subsequent funding, will be able to support implementation projects for talent pathways initiatives. Such efforts will seek to align training curricula with the needs of business through collaboration incentives as well as facilitate increased work-based learning experiences (internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job upskilling, and re-skilling programs) and to develop entrepreneurial talent.

Regional Councils may apply for up to \$250,000 for a TPI-Planning grant. The TPI-Planning grant program requires a 2:1 match and the match must come from non-state sources of revenue. No local match is required. All GO Virginia projects require the participation of two or more localities. If no local match (cash or in-kind) is provided, letters of endorsement from two or more localities or a public body representing the interest of two or more localities will be required and the project must demonstrate meaningful participation of those public bodies (See [GO Virginia Regional Collaboration and Local Participation](#) memo for additional guidance).

This planning grant program shall last no longer than a year from its start date, and represent a one-time regional allocation of funds for this purpose. The Board will accept applications for Talent Pathways Planning Initiative through December 2024. Any unobligated funds not obligated to projects will be returned to the statewide competitive pool.

Please find more detail at the following links at the DHCD [GO Virginia Regional Materials](#) page:
[Talent Pathways Initiative Planning Guidelines](#)
[Talent Pathways Initiative Planning Application Questions](#)



How should regions select “priority” priority industry sectors?

The selection of priority clusters for this initiative should be first and foremost informed by which industry clusters from the region’s latest Growth and Diversification Plan support the highest growth opportunities within a region. The TPI-Planning effort is an opportunity for a regional council to reflect on the industries that present the greatest economic impact to the region in terms of number of jobs created and/or highest percentage growth in jobs. Emerging industry clusters (i.e. offshore wind, advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing, etc.) should be considered for their potential percentage growth of jobs created. Other factors to consider include how ready an industry sector is to dive deep into any issues around talent development specific to their industry.

What is the recommended order of operations in developing the TPI-Planning application?

First, the regional councils should identify the priority industry sectors. Second, the regional council should take the steps necessary to identify a coordinating entity(ies) for the planning effort (See question below about requests for proposal). Third, the coordinating entity completes the application in partnership with the regional council through the established GO Virginia process.

How should Regional Councils be engaged?

Before an TPI-Planning grant application is approved, the council should be heavily engaged in the process of selection of the priority industry sectors and the coordinating entity in addition to the actual review of the application to ensure the TPI- Planning guidelines are met. After approval by the State Board, the council should be engaged in the recruitment of industry coalition members and support the coalitions’ direction and advising of the TPI-Planning effort. Private sector Regional Council members can also join the industry coalitions, if appropriate.

How will the Virginia Office of Education Economics be a part of the TPI-Planning effort?

VOEE staff are willing and eager to be a part of the planning process once the applications are approved by GO Virginia. VOEE has a wealth of gap analysis data to share and will consult with each region. DHCD will facilitate the discussions with VOEE staff upon approval of the application and during contract negotiations. During the TPI-Planning application review, VOEE staff will participate in the GO Virginia application workgroup and be able to provide feedback.

Can a regional council submit more than one TPI-Planning application?

Each regional council is allocated up to \$250,000 for this planning effort and there is no restriction on limiting the TPI-Planning allocation to one application. A single application does not have to be limited to one industry cluster and could instead identify more than one industry cluster to prioritize and involve several industry coalitions. Attention to the capacity of the coordinating entity to manage any such planning effort is crucial.



Can one coordinating entity be selected to manage more than one industry cluster?

Yes, the coordinating entity must demonstrate the capacity for the planning effort and a council may choose to contract with an entity that is more specific to the industry sector(s).

Can two or more regions collaborate on a TPI-Planning application?

Two or more regions may collaborate on planning efforts for a common industry cluster. While there is no statewide competitive fund for planning efforts, regions may combine their TPI allocations for this purpose. A lead region and partnership regions must be identified and each participating council must approve the application.

Is the Regional Council required to do a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select the TPI-Planning coordinating entity?

An RFP is encouraged but not required. However, even if an RFP is not completed, the Regional Council must utilize a selection process that is inclusive and encourages competing organizations to apply in order to strengthen regional collaboration through this application process. The process of selecting the coordinating entity needs to be described as part of the application (see [Application Question 4](#)).

Can the Support Organization be selected as the Talent Pipeline Coordinating Entity?

Yes, the Support Organization can be selected. The Regional Council must provide clear justification for the selection and be assured that the entity has the needed capacity for the planning effort and any future implementation efforts. It is advised that the Regional Council coordinate a workgroup to review the application with members other than the Support Organization staff to avoid any conflict of interest.

Is a TPI-Planning effort required for any future TPI-implementation effort or future regional per capita workforce development applications?

Right now in the current proposed Governor’s budget amendment, the TPI-Planning effort is required for future TPI Implementation efforts. This guidance will be amended upon finalization of the budget.

Is a TPI-Planning effort required for any future regional per capita workforce development application?

The TPI-Planning effort is uniquely designed to drive smart investments in workforce development broadly and to help regions think critically about developing new industry-driven workforce development systems. Although not required for future regional per capita workforce development applications, the planning effort is a good opportunity and its creation of industry leader insight would be a valuable contribution to future per capita application.

* Please note that this is a working document and may be updated periodically.