



**WIRED Innovation Fund Q&A
From Technical Assistance Meeting
Wisconsin State Fair Park
Youth Center
4 21 2008**

**Note: any additional content will be
continue to be added to the website:**

www.milwaukee7-rwa.org

1. What are the export driver industries?
The export driver industries are those identified in the strategic framework developed by the Milwaukee7 which can be found at this link: <http://www.milwaukee7-rwa.com/wiki/show/strategic-framework> The driver industries identified in 2006 and 2007 regionally are manufacturing, financial services, headquartered companies/management, information technology, acute health care, distribution, and educational services. Export driver jobs are generally defined as those that account for the sale or export of goods or services to outside the region in numbers greater than the region would otherwise support.
2. Does “acute health care” only mean hospital or doctor office? Or would non medical in-home providers meet criteria?
While valuable to the community, clients and their families, non-medical in-home providers would not meet the general definition of an export driver industry or the definition of acute health care.
3. Do I understand correctly that we are to target one industry? Usually we try to provide individuals with basic education and employability (soft) skills to prepare them to enter different areas of employment and/or employment training.
Proposals are ideally targeted to a specific industry, but there may be some projects that are able to serve more than one industry.
4. How secure should partners be for exploratory funds (i.e. can exploratory money be used to develop partnerships)?
Exploratory funds can be used to foster or expand partnerships. A proposal for exploratory funds should have prospective partners identified and willing to participate in the exploratory process.

5. Can partnerships submit multiple applications for different projects?
Yes, partners can submit multiple applications for different projects.
6. Are the three rounds each designed to allow for exploratory, demonstration, and implementation investments?
Round I is announcing exploratory and demonstration investments. We anticipate that rounds II and III will include implementation investments. Exploratory investments are anticipated to continue on an ongoing basis.
7. This (implementation level investment) may favor larger organizations because small organizations with great ideas might not have the capacity and/or scale to do a \$35,000 to \$100,000 10-month project. Would you consider additional small investments of \$5,000 - \$35,000 in later rounds? Would you consider a longer time frame for smaller grants?
The exploratory investments (\$5,000 to \$35,000) are limited to 6 months but are anticipated to continue into the later rounds. While the demonstration level investments are targeted between \$35,000 to \$100,000, an organization could potentially make a demonstration level proposal for a smaller amount of funds.
8. What does “substantial responsibility” with in projects look like for partners with in demonstration phase?
As stated in the application guide, partnerships must be active collaborations in which each partner has clear roles and responsibilities. Nominal partnerships, without demonstrable collaborative activity among organizations, are not acceptable. In other words, the project would be shared across organizations.
9. What is the ratio of leveraged resource to grant funding? Is there any specific level of expectation on this?
There is not a specific level or ratio of leveraged funding. WIRED will give preference to projects and activities with higher levels of leveraged resources (in-kind and cash match). Refer to the AMENDED BUDGET WORKSHEET to show leveraged resources.
10. Will Milwaukee support these initiatives in the future? After funding goes away?
The WIRED initiative Innovation Fund is designed invest in transformations of the system that can be self-sustained into the future. The projects need to build in a sustainability plan outside direct funding support.
11. Give more examples of how a proposal could demonstrate “sustainability”
An initiative might be sustained by having WIRED fund curriculum development and perhaps a pilot phase of training whereas the ongoing training expense is funding by other means (tuition, industry partners, etc.). Sustainability might also involve using existing funds in a more efficient manner after WIRED funds facilitated the transformation.

12. Will written feedback be provided?

Unsuccessful first round applicants will be given feedback in the form of a written summary. In addition, applicants will have access to their summary scores.

13. Will RWA apply for WIRED grants?

The Regional Workforce Alliance collectively will not apply for Innovation Fund investments. Organizations or individual institutions involved with the RWA may partner with others on a project.

14. Can we partner with Universities outside of the 7 counties?

The WIRED Innovation Fund is designed for activities and economic impact primarily within the 7-county region. There may be cases where a portion of a project involves a partner outside the region, however the overall impact and outcome of the project needs to be within the 7-county region.

15. Do you have an expected number of awards to be given during each round?

Round I will fund about \$500,000 in project investments. Given the wide range of possible funding amount requests, it is difficult to predict the number of awards that will be made.

16. Will you facilitate forums with institutional partners?

While a forum event is not planned at this time, an online discussion forum is being developed to allow potential partners to discuss projects and connect with one another.

17. What are some examples of traditional and non-traditional (innovative) preparation methods?

The WIRED Innovation Fund is not being prescriptive in defining a specific technology or methodology. The Innovation Fund is designed to support ideas that depart from or improve upon existing methods. Some success stories are shared nationally amongst regions via WIRED Nation, an online community forum for WIRED regions, at: <http://wired-nation.net>