

Agenda Item III -- For Information

(Revision approved on February 2, with change -- to incorporate flow chart, highlight changes from initial policy/process, and incorporate requirement to acknowledge CWI funding.)

Council on Workforce Investment Workforce Investment Act Statewide Activity Funds CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR PROJECT FUNDING, REVISED

Each year, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) earmarks Governor's Reserve Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Statewide Activity funds for use by the Council on Workforce Investment (CWI). WIA law and U.S. Department of Labor guidance provide states and, by extension, the CWI, some flexibility in how these funds can be used. The DWD intends that the CWI will use this flexibility to support the Governor's "Grow Wisconsin" plans to create high-wage jobs and build a high-skilled workforce. The CWI is requested to consider and adopt revisions to the funding process it approved in December 2004. The proposed revisions are intended to:

1. strengthen the connection of projects to the CWI's strategic vision, mission and goals and Committee-specific objectives for advancing them;
2. clarify and improve the consistency and transparency of the process used to determine how funds will be used, including the roles of the CWI and DWD;
3. incorporate established efforts of the CWI; and
4. address concerns raised by the CWI as a whole during 2005 funding discussions and by the Executive Committee during follow-up discussions of process changes.

Key Changes Proposed

Attachment A provides a flow diagram to visually represent the proposed funding process. Attachment B provides a comparison of the CWI's existing process for project development and fund distribution and proposed revisions to that process. Key changes are as follows, with Attachment B page numbers noted for reference:

Page 3 --Funding Criteria. The Criteria for funding are expanded and more specific. In particular, they add:

- o CWI objectives, organized by the Committee that developed them. *(These objectives and related strategies and action steps are detailed in the 2005 Report to the Governor, Appendix A.)*
- o Regional or statewide approach or best practices applicable across regions/state.
- o Quantifiable outcomes (regional metrics, system dashboard metrics, program-specific performance metrics)
- o Threshold (minimum) requirements, among them: Additions of consistency with WDB and GROW grant plans; connections to Job Centers when job seekers, workers, or employers are served; and CWI funding recognition in public communications and documents.

Page 5 -- Timetable. The current policy's "open-ended" funding period is eliminated and a specific timeframe for developing projects and making funding recommendations (March-June) and developing grants (July-September) are incorporated to ensure funds are obligated in a timely manner and expended at the level expected by U.S. DOL. In addition, it will ensure time for the CWI to focus on its policy/oversight role.

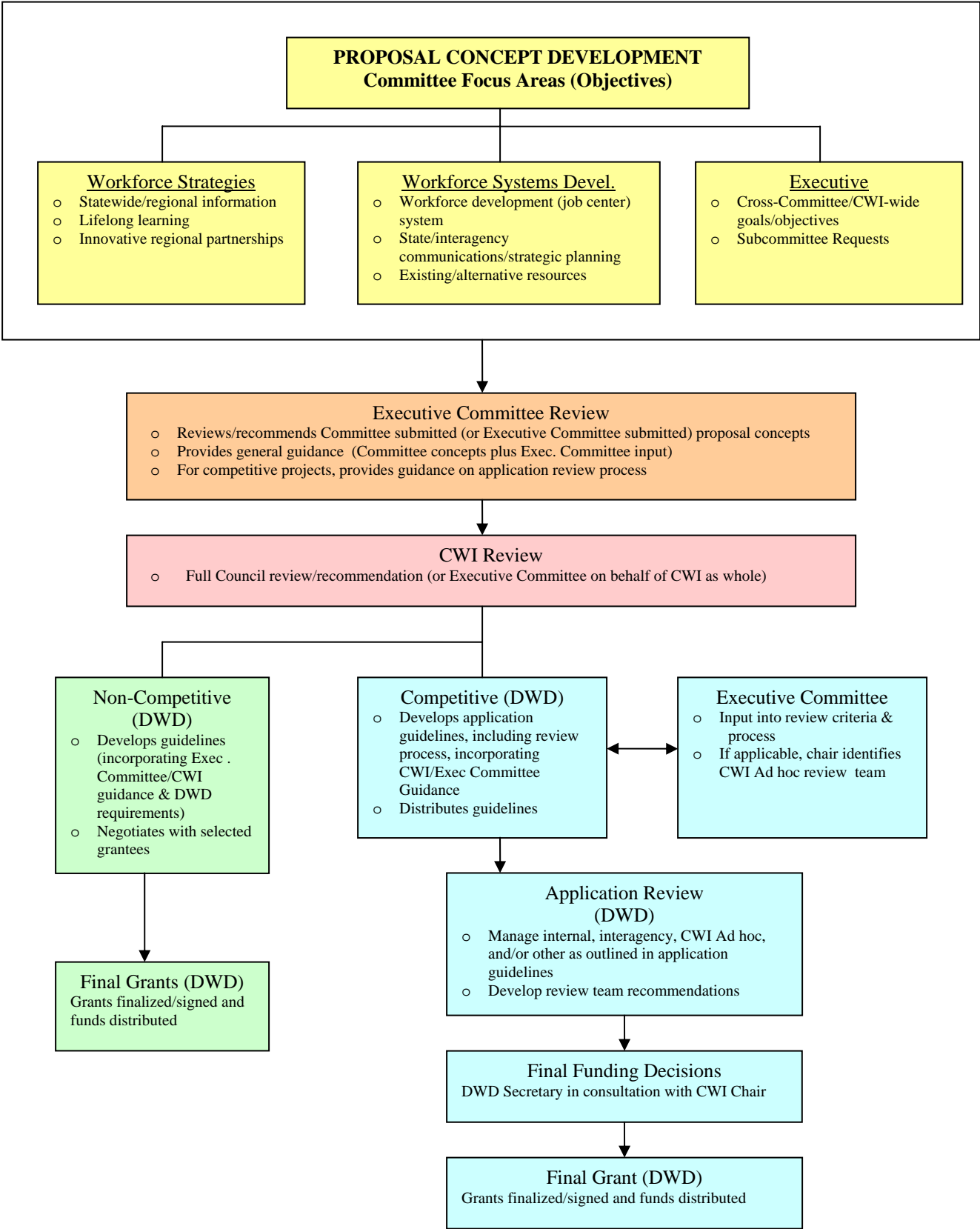
Page 6 -- Submission Process. The roles of the Committees in generating/submitting project concepts are clarified. This includes specifying that the Executive Committee (or its subcommittees) may generate proposal concepts for consideration.

Pages 6 & 7 -- Review Process. The general review process and flow from the CWI to DWD, as well as respective roles, have been clarified. This includes incorporating review by the CWI as a whole in the process. Also added are distinctions between non-competitive and competitive grant application reviews, including clarification of the roles for the CWI and DWD.

Page 7 -- Final Funding Approval. This is an addition to clarify that final funding decisions will be made by the DWD Secretary (as the legally accountable entity) in consultation with the CWI Chair.

- Attachments: A. Proposed Funding Process At a Glance (Flow Diagram)
B. Comparison of 2004 and Proposed 2006 Funding Process

CWI PROPOSED FUNDING PROCESS AT A GLANCE



Side by Side Comparison of 2004 and Proposed 2006 CWI Funding Process

	Approved December 2004	Proposed March 2006
Funding Criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposals must demonstrate that the project will advance the Governor's Grow Wisconsin Plan, the CWI mission/vision, and related Committee goals. 2. Proposals must have clear goals and measurable outcomes. 3. Proposals should also leverage or maximize other available resources, at the national, state or local level. 4. Proposals must comply with legislative requirements for use of WIA set-aside funds as follows in section B. 	<p>A. Priorities for Use of Funds</p> <p>The CWI Statewide Activities funds are intended to support the CWI's strategic direction (mission, vision, goals) and advance the Governor's "Grow Wisconsin" plan. The following priorities reflect this direction, while recognizing WIA legislative requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contributes to the achievement of the CWI's objectives, which in 2006 are the following (organized by CWI Committee responsible) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Workforce Strategies Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Improve statewide and regional information (and methods for its ongoing collection and distribution) about workforce preparation and skill needs, employer demand, and industry/occupational growth, in forms readily usable in public and private decision-making. ii. Advance and enrich lifelong learning for Wisconsin citizens through innovative PK-16 education and employer-based training systems, with special attention to under-served and special needs populations. iii. Increase opportunities for innovative regional partnerships that support career opportunities and advancement in key occupational sectors. b. Workforce Systems Development Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increase flexibility and efficiency of <u>Wisconsin's workforce development (Job Center) system</u> and the quality of services to employers, job seekers, and employment and training partners. ii. Increase and improve state and local interagency communications and strategic/program planning to ensure alignment and effective implementation of CWI goals. iii. Increase collaborative use of existing resources and use of new alternative resources, including discretionary federal grants. 2. Encompasses a regional or statewide approach and/or incorporates model/best practice strategies that can be applied across regions or the state as a whole. 3. Leverages or maximizes other available resources (match) from the national, state or local level to the extent possible. 4. Demonstrates quantifiable outcomes related to the regional/state economy (CWI Regional Metrics); the overall workforce investment system (CWI System Dashboard Metrics), and/or the wages, skill attainment or other measure of workforce success for job seekers or employers (program performance measures).

		<p>B. Threshold Criteria</p> <p>All projects will be expected to meet several basic requirements to be considered for CWI funding. At minimum, project concepts must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be an allowable activity under WIA (see Attachment A) 2. Address all CWI priorities in A above, including at least one of the objectives in A.1. 3. Have clear goals, objectives and measurable outcomes 4. If regionally based, demonstrate consistency with WDB regional workforce development plans and GROW grant plans. 5. Connect to area Job Centers if employers, current workers, and/or job seekers will be served. 6. Incorporate CWI funding recognition in all public communications and grant supported documents.
<p>Guidance for the use of WIA Set-Aside Funds</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIA Legislation State Required Activities¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluations of WIA activities, in coordination with local boards, for adults, dislocated workers and youth in order to promote continuous improvement b. Provide incentive grants to local areas for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Regional cooperation among local boards ii. Local coordination activities iii. Exemplary performance² c. Assisting in establishment and operation of the one-stop delivery system d. Additional assistance to local areas with high concentrations of eligible youth 1 WIA Legislation State Optional Activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capacity building and technical assistance to local areas, including staff development/training and development of "exemplary" program activities b. Research and demonstration projects c. Innovative incumbent worker training programs, which may include an employer loan program to assist with skills upgrading and programs targeted to empowerment zones and enterprise communities 	<p>Same -- these are WIA legislative requirements for fund use.</p>

¹ Does not include some required ongoing activities normally conducted by DWD/DWS, among them: rapid response activities; disseminating information on training providers, youth providers, and program costs; providing technical assistance to low-performing WDAs, operating a fiscal and management information system.

² Performance incentive awards currently provided under policy established by the CWI in 2002.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Providing support to local areas for identification of eligible training providers e. Innovative programs for displaced homemakers and programs that increase number of people trained and placed in non-traditional employment f. Carrying out adult and dislocated worker employment/training activities as needed to assist local areas g. Statewide youth activities 	
<p>Timeline for CWI Project Development and Funding Decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funds will be distributed on a first come, first served basis until all funds are dispersed. 2. Committee requests must be submitted at least three (3) weeks prior to an Executive Committee meeting. 	<p>To ensure timely development, distribution and expenditure of the CWI's WIA funds, the CWI will establish a timetable that ensures final decisions on proposal concepts are completed prior to the beginning of the year in which funds are available (July 1) and final grants are distributed before the end of the first quarter of the funding year (September 30). The suggested timetable is as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. March - June: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committees develop project concept proposals, which may include Committee-sponsored general solicitation of project ideas for development. 2. Executive Committee recommends project proposal concepts for consideration by full CWI. (See General Review Process, page 6, for exceptions.) 3. CWI forwards project concepts for funding to DWD. B. July - September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For competitive funds DWD develops application guidelines, solicits proposals, completes review process, and makes funding awards. 2. For non-competitive funds, DWD develops guidelines, negotiates with grantees, and makes grant awards. 3. DWD reports to full Council on final awards.
<p>Project/Project Concept Proposals</p>	<p>Project Proposals</p> <p>Project submissions must provide a summary of no more than three (3) pages that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief summary of project concept, including key goals and objectives 2. Identification of specific CWI mission statement(s) and Committee goals that the project will address and how the project will advance the mission and goals 	<p>Project Concept Proposal</p> <p>The CWI will consider project <i>concept</i> proposals for consideration. Concept proposals will provide a basic summary/guidance for use of the CWI Statewide Activity funds, including at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project title 2. Amount of funds requested and period for which they are requested 3. Purpose/priorities of the project, including identification of the key CWI objective(s) (in I.A.1. above) that will be addressed/advanced 4. Key project goal(s), objectives, program activities, and key outcomes expected

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Geographic areas impacted (statewide versus regional) 4. Estimated costs 5. Recommendation on entities that might conduct the project and, if only one entity is recommended, the rationale for using the entity as a "sole source" provider. (Though competitive bids may be required, "sole source" bids may also be allowable in some situations. Proposals may suggest entities that should receive bid solicitations or provide justification for selecting a specific provider without a competitive bid process.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Key qualifying and administrative requirements, e.g., geographic areas to be impacted (statewide, GROW regions, WDAs, other), partnerships/collaborative efforts expected, match requirements, etc. 6. Recommended process for fund distribution (e.g., competitive request for application, allocation to specific entity or entities, etc.), entities/organizations that should be eligible to conduct the project/receive funds, and if applicable, the rationale for using a single entity as a "sole source" provider/fund recipient.
Submission Process	Committee requests must be submitted by Committees to the Executive Committee Chair and DWD Liaison staff.	Project concept proposals will be submitted through the CWI's standing committees - Workforce Strategies Committee, Workforce Systems Development Committee and Executive Committee. Executive Committee project concept proposals may come through its subcommittee structure or through the Executive Committee as a whole to address CWI goals/objectives that may cross Committee issue areas.
General Review Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Executive Committee of the CWI will make recommendations on the use of the funds based on proposals submitted by the CWI Committees. 2. Projects, and preliminary CWI staff review, will be reviewed at each Executive Committee meeting for which projects are submitted. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project concept proposals will be submitted to the Executive Committee for full Executive Committee consideration/recommendation. 2. Executive Committee recommendations will be brought to the full CWI for full CWI recommendation when possible. When time constraints or other issues preclude full CWI consideration, the Executive Committee will recommend proposal concepts for funding on behalf of the full CWI. 3. Final CWI recommendations of project proposal concepts (from the CWI as a whole or from Executive Committee acting on behalf of the full CWI) will be transmitted to DWD for development and implementation.
Non Competitive Grant Applications	Not addressed	Project concept proposals recommended by the CWI (Executive Committee) for non-competitive grants will be further developed by DWD staff and negotiated, as needed, with designated fund applicants into final grants. No further CWI action prior to grant finalization is expected, unless specifically requested by the CWI.
Competitive Grant Applications	Not addressed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project concept proposals recommended by the CWI (Executive Committee) for competitive funding will be expanded into project/grant application guidelines and distributed to appropriate entities by DWD on behalf of the CWI.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. DWD will develop a review process for each competitive application appropriate to the type of application/potential applicants. The proposed review process will be brought to the CWI Executive Committee for review and feedback. Types of reviews may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. DWD staff review of complete application b. Interagency review of complete application c. CWI Ad Hoc Review Committee review of complete application d. Executive Committee review of applications addressing key issues of interest to the Executive Committee and/or key issues for review teams to consider in review. 3. CWI Ad Hoc Committee Review, if appropriate, will include CWI members suggested by the CWI chair. Members appointed must show no conflict of interest related to proposals to be reviewed.
Final Funding Approval	Not Addressed	Final funding approval for CWI projects rest with the DWD Secretary in consultation with the CWI chair. The specific approval method is at the discretion of the DWD Secretary as the accountable administering agency, in consultation with the CWI Chair.
Miscellaneous Provisions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no limit on costs of proposed projects 2. Federal rules require that 70% of these funds be expended by the end of the program year (June 30, 2005). 3. DWD will follow state procurement rules for granting of projects, which may at times require competitive bid process. 	DWD may impose additional administrative requirements depending on the nature of the project concept(s) the CWI ultimately recommends. These may include assurances/plans for fund expenditures to ensure 70% of funds are expended in the year they are allocated, administrative fund limitations, reporting requirements, etc.