



**Workforce Safety**  
Innovation Center®

# Grant Application

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November 8, 2024

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## Ohio Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Application

The Workforce Safety Innovation Center® (WSIC), within the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC), seeks to advance safety through research and development grant opportunities for Ohio-based not-for-profit higher education institutions and stand-alone research organizations. WSIC's funding opportunities are modeled after the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) Program.

WSIC grants are available to all science and engineering disciplines, enabling recipients to conduct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) research, develop cutting-edge Personal Protective Technology (PPT), and establish impactful partnerships that accelerate the transition of results from laboratories to the workforce marketplace. By supporting these initiatives, WSIC aims to address the unique safety needs of Ohio's workforce and improve the economic welfare of the people of the state.

### Application overview

This application pertains to project period from July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027. A total of \$30 million is available for funding, with \$15 million allocated for fiscal year (FY) 2026 and \$15 million for FY 2027. Each approved WSIC project, grants up to \$2 million in base funding (dependent on the project track), with a reimbursement schedule based on deliverables rather than a pre-set budget. The maximum duration of each project is limited to twenty-four (24) months.

Applications must be submitted electronically via the Oracle Intelligent Advisor (OIA) through the online [Ohio BWC Grant Management Portal](#). All required application components must be completed and submitted by the application due date and deadline of 5:00 p.m. ET on February 7, 2025. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Determinations on successful applications approved for awards will be made in late spring of 2025, contingent upon appropriations and meritorious applications.

### Pre-Application requirements

**Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding (NOIAF) (WSIC-1):** Submit a NOIAF (WSIC-1) and a Project Abstract (2-page limit) by **December 13, 2024**, to gain access to the application in OIA. Refer to Project Abstract instructions on pages 7-8 of this document. Once the NOIAF is reviewed and processed, WSIC will provide the Principal Investigator with a link to set up an account in the [Ohio BWC Grant Management Portal](#).

Applicants must also provide proof of nonprofit status and liability coverage specific to their institution to accompany the NOIAF (WSIC-1). Current supplier information is required to be maintained and up-to-date in the State of Ohio [Supplier Portal](#). This includes, but is not limited to, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), W-9 forms, and current address.

### Policy and procedures

Submission of the application in OIA constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of the **WSIC Grant Administration Policies and Procedures (GAPP) Manual**, state rules, and any other grant-specific requirements as outlined in this application or the Grant Agreement.

Upon entering the requested amount in OIA, a **Project Budget Justification (WSIC-2)** will be automatically generated. This document, which becomes Exhibit B in the Grant Agreement if the application is approved, includes the following:

- The WSIC GAPP Manual has been read and is understood.
- Applicant's budgeted costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable under WSIC GAPP Manual and state rules and regulations.
- Applicant understands and agrees that costs may be disallowed if deemed unallowable or in violation of the WSIC GAPP Manual and state rules and regulations.
- Applicant agrees and understands that costs incurred in the fulfillment of the grant deliverables must be allowable under the WSIC GAPP Manual and state rules and regulations to qualify for reimbursement.

### **Eligibility guidelines and restrictions**

Eligibility for the Workforce Safety Innovation grant is limited to not-for-profit higher education institutions and research organizations located in Ohio, including hospital-affiliated, standalone, not-for-profit research organizations. To qualify, a research organization must be in existence for at least five (5) calendar years prior to the date of the application and must operate with its own tax identification number and insurance coverage. Applications may be rejected without detailed review for the following reasons (in no particular order) include, but are not limited to:

1. The higher education institution (college/university) or research organization is not based in Ohio.
2. The complete application is not received by the 5:00 p.m. ET submission deadline on **February 7, 2025**.
3. The proposed project does not adhere to the specified format requirements.
4. The proposed project lacks a clearly defined scope or objectives, resulting in an unfocused approach.
5. The application does not include a primary Ohio industry partner.
6. The proposed project significantly overlaps with existing or previously completed research and development projects in terms of objectives, methodologies, or expected outcomes, and does not offer substantial advancements or differentiations.
7. The proposed project research and development plan or budget is not feasible or reasonable (e.g., budget plan, timelines, resource allocation, justifications), making execution impractical.
8. The project focuses on areas that are excluded from funding during any given funding cycle (see *Research and Development Focus Areas Excluded from Consideration for Funding* section for further details).
9. The applicant owes funds more than \$1,000 to BWC.
10. The application requests less than the minimum award amount or more than the maximum award amount.
11. The applicant was out of compliance on a prior BWC grant at the end of a previous project period.
12. The applicant was a prior WSIC grant recipient who did not validate a previous track.
13. The applicant has documented performance issues from prior BWC grants, such as multiple non-compliance issues, special conditions at the end of a previous project period, or failure to meet project deliverables.
14. The principal Investigator (PI) is currently applying for, funded by, or assigned to another BWC grant within the same project period of this application.

## Available tracks for submission of applications

This application offers three tracks for projects aimed at reducing injury risks, enhancing workforce safety, and improving the economic welfare of the people of the state of Ohio.

- **Track 1 – Research:** This track is designed to support investigations into new approaches, technologies, and practices aimed at enhancing safety, reducing injuries, and improving overall health outcomes in various occupational settings. It seeks to generate actionable insights and evidence-based solutions that address pressing workplace safety challenges, particularly with PPE/PPT. A component of this track includes the identification of commercialization potential. The focus is on systematically identifying barriers and challenges to workforce safety and investigating potential strategies and solutions to inform subsequent design and development of PPE/PPT innovations.
- **Track 2 – Proof-of-Concept:** This track is designed to test the feasibility of PPE/PPT innovations by applying research and using design factors to develop solutions that effectively reduce occupational morbidity, mortality, injury, and risks. The focus of this track is on exploring emerging technologies and evaluating both technical and commercial viability. Upon conclusion of this track, the goal is to validate the feasibility of the innovation, with a commercialization strategy outlined to guide the next steps for bringing the product to market.
- **Track 3 – Prototype:** This track focuses on advancing PPE/PPT innovations through prototype development. Recipients will refine the design, conduct rigorous testing with Ohio users by obtaining feedback from the target workforce, and develop a validated, market-ready prototype. The goal of this track is to demonstrate the effectiveness and readiness of the innovation for market entry, with a comprehensive commercialization plan for successful deployment. As applicable, ADA compliance is integrated throughout this stage to ensure the product meets the needs of diverse workforces.

The proposed applied research and development project should identify knowledge and technology gaps that must be addressed to advance the innovation toward commercialization. The knowledge gained in each track is crucial for advancing discoveries from the lab to the market, with each project contributing to the continuum of innovation and commercialization.

## Research-to-Practice (r2p)

Successful project applications to be funded by WSIC must demonstrate:

- **High Impact Potential:** A high probability for short- or long-term impact for the proposed applied research project (basic or applied).
- **Effective Dissemination:** A commitment to achieving optimal dissemination of research products, including knowledge, interventions, recommendations, and technologies.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** A commitment to engaging internal and external partners throughout the process.

BWC encourages applicants to consider the following combined r2p elements, established by NIOSH, as they develop their research applications:

1. **Partnerships.** Along with the required primary Ohio industry partner, list external partners involved in the research and development project and their expected contributions, including roles and responsibilities. Researchers are encouraged to engage external partners in the research process.

However, if no partners outside of the required Ohio industry partner, are expected to be involved, indicate/state “no external partners expected” in the project proposal or project plan.

- a. A “partner” is an individual, group, or organization actively involved in the project. Involvement may include, but is not limited to, identifying workforce safety issues, project planning, providing access to worker populations, data collection, implementing and assessing recommended work practices, disseminating project findings, and evaluating the impact of the innovation on reducing the frequency and severity of on-the-job injuries and enhancing safety in the workforce.
2. **Target workforce.** Identify the primary target audience/workforce for the project and determine how the target audience/workforce may interact with/use the results generated by the project (i.e., knowledge, intervention, recommendations, technology, PPE/PPT innovation).
  - a. An “audience” is an individual, group, or organization who will use the findings generated by the project to reduce the frequency and severity of on-the-job injuries and enhance safety in the workforce. Audiences may include, but are not limited to, workers, employers, industry leaders, academicians, researchers, policymakers, standard-setting organizations, professional associations, safety and health professionals, labor unions, other government agencies, and not-for-profit organizations.
3. **Outputs/Products.** Identify relevant outputs/products that will be used to effectively communicate project results to the target audience/workforce.
  - a. “Outputs” are products of the project activities. Outputs may include but are not limited to peer-reviewed journal publications, trade journal publications, technologies, patents, recommendations, reports, website content and other electronic media, workshops and conferences, presentations (Ohio Safety Congress & Expo®, etc.), databases, educational and informational materials.
4. **Dissemination.** Describe the methods/channels of communication that will be used to disseminate the project results and associated outputs to the target audience/workforce. Channels of communication may include but are not limited to peer-reviewed journals, trade journals, workplace solutions, information circulars, web and other social media platforms, partner organizations, workshops and conferences, presentations, educational and informational materials, proceedings, and media outlets.
5. **Intermediate outcomes.** Identify intermediate outcomes that could potentially occur due to the research findings (i.e. knowledge intervention, recommendations, technology) and related outputs. **Please note** intermediate outcomes may occur throughout the duration of the research project, a few months after the project concludes, or several years afterward. Including ‘projected intermediate outcomes’ in the application provides the applicant and BWC a mechanism for tracking potential impacts and guides the follow-up and assessment of impact later, as appropriate. Intermediate outcomes may include, but are not limited to, the development of or a change in policy, citations in scientific literature, adoption of recommendations into training materials, implementation and adoption of a new technology or workplace practice, and the development of a standard or regulation.
6. **Impact assessment.** Outline methods that may be used to capture the potential impact that the research findings (i.e., knowledge, intervention, recommendations, technology) have on improving worker safety and health. For example, what methods could be used to determine whether a stakeholder adopted the recommendations or how they will utilize the innovation from this project. Methods of capturing intermediate outcomes may include but are not limited to conducting an internet search to assess who is using a particular output; conducting citation searches; contacting partners and key stakeholders to determine use of research results, project outputs, etc.; assessing production and sales of new technologies; and reviewing reference lists in new regulations.

### Priority research and development focus areas

This program supports research and development across Ohio's workforce and industries. Specifically, funds are intended to advance PPE/PPT research, proof-of-concept, and prototype development to improve worker safety, reduce the frequency and severity of employee illness or injury, thereby enhancing the economic welfare of the state.

Priority will be given to the applications that target the industries and hazards outlined in the table below, based on BWC claims data:

<b>Industry/Sector</b>	<b>Causation</b>
<b>Service</b> (restaurants and healthcare)	Cuts and pierce injuries, overexertion, falls.
<b>Manufacturing</b> (plastics manufacturing, machine shops)	Overexertion, cuts and pierce injuries, caught/crush/pinch injuries.
<b>Commercial/High risk commercial</b> (automobile service, repair center, wholesale)	Overexertion, cuts, and pierce injuries, falls.
<b>Construction</b> (HVAC/refrigeration service, electrical wiring, plumbing)	Overexertion, cuts, and pierce injuries, falls.
<b>Transportation</b> (trucking and mail, parcel, or package delivery)	Overexertion, falls, assault-related injuries.
<b>County, city, schools</b> (clerical & drivers)	Overexertion, falls, assault-related injuries, cuts, and pierce injuries.

Priority focus areas for this grant also include:

- Prevention of musculoskeletal disorders typically caused by overexertion, especially those associated with back, knee, neck, shoulder, and wrist.
- Reduction of injury rates, illness rates, and duration of disability using redesigned or enhanced PPE with technological interventions or accessories to improve PPE design and effectiveness.
- Prevention of long-term disability among injured workers after their injury; promotion of faster recovery and reducing the likelihood of prolonged or permanent disability.

### Additional research areas of interest

In addition to the priority areas listed above that will be prioritized for funding, proposals addressing broader challenges in worker safety will also be accepted for review and evaluation, including projects that generate measurable outcomes, such as the following areas:

- Addressing and meeting a specific workforce safety need.
- Reducing workplace accidents and injuries.
- Preventing disability among injured workers.
- Demonstrating commercialization potential of innovative safety solutions.

**Potential topics may also be informed by the NIOSH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Healthcare Personal Protective Technology Research Targets for 2020 – 2030](#).**

Several critical areas of national interest in PPE/PPT include:

- Improved fitting of respiratory protective devices.
- Innovative technologies to alert a user when a fit is compromised.
- Integration of sensor-based technologies in respiratory protective devices.

- Development of new materials for enhanced efficacy, sustainability, and manufacturability.
- Solutions addressing the psychosocial, usability, and comfort aspects of prolonged PPE use.
- Human-centered design issues related to PPE usage.

**Research and development focus areas excluded from consideration for funding**

Applications submitted to BWC that were not funded for the following fiscal years and funding cycles may be excluded for consideration at BWC’s discretion:

- Workforce Safety Innovation Grant fiscal years: 2023, 2024, and 2025
- Any previous Ohio Occupational Safety and Health Research Program funding cycles.

**Funding limits by track and number of grants**

Any Notice of Award (NOA) made through this grant is contingent upon the availability of BWC funds within the 24-month budget period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027) and the quality of applications received.

Track	Award floor	Award ceiling
Track 1 – Research	\$150,000	\$300,000
Track 2 – Proof of Concept	\$500,000	\$1,500,000
Track 3 – Prototype	\$800,000	\$2,000,000

A total of up to \$30 million is available in funding for the project period (\$15 million allocated for FY 2026 and \$15 million for FY 2027), which includes both direct and indirect costs. This funding may be awarded across three tracks, with awards ranging from \$150,000 to \$2,000,000, allocated in various combinations based on priorities and scores.

The recipient agency must be prepared to cover project operating costs until deliverable reimbursement funds are disbursed, or in the event of a delay in grant payments.

**Limit on number of applications per organization**

There is no limit to the number of applications eligible organizations may submit by the deadline of this application. However, applicants are limited to one track per application.

**Project Proposal format and guidelines**

**Font and type density:** Use Arial or Times New Roman typeface in black, with a font size of 11 points or larger. The Symbol font may be used for Greek letters or special characters, though these must still meet the font size requirement. Text should be single-spaced, with no more than 15 characters per inch and the typeface no more than six lines per inch.

**Paper size and page margins:** Use standard paper size (8 ½" x 11"). Maintain at least one-half inch margins on all sides (top, bottom, left and right). Include page numbers.

**Figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes:** Text in footnotes and graphics may use a 10-point font. Figures may be in color, but all text within figures must be in black, legible, and clear for readability.

**Grantsmanship:** Use clear language and avoid jargon. Refrain from using abbreviations or specialized terms unless they are known to the broader scientific community or defined. When introducing an acronym, spell out the full term followed by the abbreviation in parentheses; the acronym may be used thereafter.



**Appendices:** Appendices should be numbered with Roman numerals and may include up to five supplementary publications (e.g., submitted or accepted manuscripts, unpublished materials not publicly available, questionnaires, etc.) that supplement the main project proposal. Avoid including essential *Project Plan* information in appendices; applicants are prohibited from using appendices to circumvent page limitations specified for the main proposal.

**Cover sheet:** Accurately provide the following information for the applicant agency on the cover sheet. This information is crucial for communication between the applicant and BWC and must align with project information in OIA to support clear communication throughout the application process and project duration:

- **Project information:**
  - Project title, Project track, Project period (start and end dates), Requested funding amount.
- **Applicant information:**
  - Name and address of sponsoring institution, Name, title, and affiliation of the PI, PI contact information (address, phone number, email address).

**Table of contents:** Provide a detailed table of contents for the entire submission, including all documents and headings in the Project Proposal and appendices. Hyperlink each section for easy navigation. There is no page limit for the table of contents.

### **File format requirements**

**Project Proposal:** Upload a PDF-text searchable file format (not a scanned copy) to OIA.

**Project Budget:** Complete using the provided Project Budget Template (in MS Excel file format) and upload to OIA.

These format requirements help streamline the review process and ensure that your application is clear and accessible to reviewers.

### **Structure of Project Proposal**

Project proposals must include the seven **required** sections described below, each with a specific page limit.

**Visuals:** Include all tables, graphs, figures, diagrams, and charts within the specified page limits. Ensure all required information is fully contained within these limits, as adherence will be verified during the review process.

**URLs:** Do not use internet website addresses (URLs or external links) to provide essential information necessary for the review. Reviewers are not obligated to view content outside of the application. URLs may be included in the **Biographical Sketch Template** (Biosketch), and the Bibliography and References Cited appendix.

The application must include the following seven section headings, each designated with Roman numerals:

#### **I. Project Abstract** (Page limit: 2)

The *Project Abstract* section requires a clear and concise summary of the proposed work to include the following:

1. **Purpose:** A brief statement of the primary goal of the proposal.
2. **Innovation description:** Clearly describe what the PPE/PPT innovation is using simple terms.
3. **Industry:** Select the primary industry the innovation targets from the following BWC Industry groups: Transportation, Construction, Manufacturing, Commercial/High Risk Commercial, Utility, Agriculture,

Public Employers, Service, Office. Clearly define the problem the industry faces and how your innovation will offer a targeted solution.

4. **Priority research and development focus area:** Specify the priority focus area that the project addresses from the list on page 5.
5. **Audience:** Define the target workforce for the innovation.
6. **Proposed track:** Select the project track (Track 1- Research, Track 2- Proof-of-Concept, or Track 3 - Prototype).
7. **Need:** Explain the need for the proposed innovation and what it seeks to address.
8. **Challenges:** Describe key challenges needing to be overcome.
9. **Aims:** State the specific aims of the project.
10. **Expected outcomes:** Describe the anticipated results and benefits of the proposed innovation and how its intended to be applied.
11. **Scope:** Provide a concise description of the *Project Plan* with methods and approaches that will be used to achieve the project aims.

This summary should accurately represent the proposed project independently of the full application. Provide information that is relevant and valuable to others working in the same or related fields. Present the material in a way that is understandable to a scientifically or technically literate reader. Avoid focusing on past accomplishments and using first-person language. Do not include any proprietary, personally identifiable, sensitive, or confidential information.

**Relationship to the review:** The **Project Abstract** provides BWC and the reviewers with an overview of the project, serving as preliminary insight prior to evaluating the *Project Budget* and the *Project Plan*.

## II. **Performance site(s), resources, and equipment** (Page limit: 3)

The *Performance site(s), resources, and equipment* section evaluates the adequacy of the resources available to support the proposed project. Applicants must include an aggregated description of the internal and external resources, including physical resources, technology, and equipment that the organization and its collaborators will contribute.

- **Performance site(s):** Indicate the primary site (must be located In Ohio), secondary, and any additional sites where the work will be performed. Include a brief description of each performance site, including the resources and facilities available at that location.

**Primary site name:** [Include the name of the performance site]

**Location:** [City, State (Ohio)]

Description:

- Describe the facilities, equipment, and other resources available at the primary site necessary for the proposed project.
- Outline the specific work to be performed at this site and explain how the resources and facilities support the project's goals.

Secondary and additional sites (if applicable):

- Repeat the format for each site, providing the site name, location, and a brief description of the facilities and resources.
- Provide justification for any out-of-state performance sites.
- Out-of-country sites are not permitted.

- **Resources:** Describe the scientific and engineering environment in which the project will be performed,

focusing on how it contributes to the project's success. Include aspects such as institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport. Discuss how the project will benefit from the unique features of the scientific and engineering environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements with industry partners. Detail resources directly applicable to the project (e.g., machine shop, electronic shop, onsite clean room, etc.), and their availability. Include details on special facilities for working with biohazards or other potentially dangerous substances.

- **Equipment:** List major items of equipment (with a minimum unit cost of \$5,000 unit) already available for this project, including the location and relevant capabilities of the equipment.

Ensure this section focuses on the practical and technical infrastructure required for the project, rather than the financial or operational aspects, which are covered in the Project Budget and Project Plan. Avoid repeating content from those sections or including specific financial details.

**Relationship to the review:** This information is used to assess the capability of the organizational resources available for successful completion of the proposed project and will answer questions such as:

- Will the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?
- Are the institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the proposed project?
- Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific, engineering, and public health environments, or subject populations?

### III. **Key personnel** (Page limit: 3)

In the *Key Personnel* section, the applicant must provide a comprehensive staffing plan detailing all key personnel required for project execution, along with their specific responsibilities related to the project. Key personnel include individuals who significantly contribute to the scientific and engineering aspects of the project, regardless of whether their salaries are requested in the **Project Budget**.

- Include a diagram showing the project's structure, including key personnel and their reporting relationships (table of organization).
- List each Key Personnel, and qualifications for their specific role within the project.
- Describe the PI's qualifications, motivation, relevant experience, and ability to lead the project successfully.
- Outline the checks and balances to explain the oversight and accountability mechanisms for managing the project team.
- List the industry partner(s) and any collaborators outside of the proposing institution; describe their roles and the value they add to the project.
- If applicable, explain the role of technology commercialization experts or co-PIs, particularly in terms of technology development and commercialization.
- Discuss how the partnerships assembled for participation and user-led design will support the achievement of the project's aims.

#### *Grant administrator/project manager*

A grant administrator and/or project manager must be designated and funded as 100% "project administration" in the Project Budget for the entire 24-month project period. Their responsibilities must be exclusively related to project administration tasks, not other project activities. Their duties include serving as the primary point of contact to alleviate administrative burdens on the PI, coordinate team meetings, preparing agendas and minutes, compiling project progress and fiscal reports, and managing other administrative tasks (e.g.,

deliverable submissions, scheduling). This dedicated administrative support enables the PI to effectively manage the project's logistics, timelines, and reporting requirements, ensuring timely completion and submission of deliverables and technical reports in OIA.

#### *Other significant contributors (OSCs)*

OSCs are individuals who contribute to the project's scientific development, engineering, or execution but do not commit specified measurable effort (in person-months). They are typically listed with an "effort of zero person-months" or "as needed." Individuals with measurable effort cannot be listed as OSCs.

Describe the roles of non-paid collaborators and volunteers, including those with critical expertise, even if the effort is minimal. Consultants who meet these definitions should be included in the **Key Personnel Table**.

#### *Key personnel table*

List the PI first, followed by co-PIs, and other key personnel in alphabetical order. Add a row for each key person using the following format:

NAME/TITLE	ORGANIZATION	MAJOR ROLE ON PROJECT

#### *Substitution of key personnel*

Selection for an award is partially based on the credentials of key personnel. Any substitution or key personnel during the agreement constitutes a material breach unless the credentials of substituted individuals are submitted to and approved by BWC prior to substitution. Substituted personnel cannot commence work on the project in any capacity until BWC approval is granted.

#### *Biographical Sketch template (Biosketch)*

All project personnel listed (PI, co-PI, Key Personnel) must submit a **Biosketch** of no more than four single-spaced pages. Include short bios (two pages maximum) of graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, industry partners, technology commercialization experts, OSCs, etc. Highlight their expertise and experience in research, technology development, and/or commercialization. **Biographical sketches attachments will be uploaded separately into OIA.**

#### *Conflicts of interest*

All key personnel on the project must disclose any potential conflicts of interest with BWC or the project (e.g., involvement in other BWC grant-funded projects or any potential for personal profit). If there are no potential conflicts of interest, state the following: "[Applicant Agency Name] declares there are no potential conflict of interests with the personnel identified in the Key Personnel table regarding this project".

**Relationship to the review:** In conjunction with the **Biographical Sketch Template**, reviewers will use this information to evaluate the qualifications of key personnel for their specific roles in the project, as well as to assess the overall qualifications of the project team. This information will help reviewers determine suitability of the project leader, team members, and the industry partner for the proposed work. Reviewers will consider questions such as:

- For project leaders who are in the early stages of their work in this area, do they have appropriate experience and training and/or will they receive appropriate mentoring and supervision?
- Have established project leaders demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s) of work?

- Do the key personnel and project collaborators have complementary and integrated expertise, and is the project's leadership approach, governance, and organizational structure conducive for project success?

#### IV. **Industry partner collaboration** (Page limit: 1)

**All three (3) tracks require a mandatory Ohio Industry Partner.** In this section narrative, applicants are required to address key points that explicitly identifies the primary industry partner and their involvement in the project. Key points to address:

- **Primary industry partner identification:** While multiple partners are allowable for project collaboration, the primary industry partner must be from an external entity, not a sister agency or part of the applicant organization. Clearly state the name of the company, that they are the primary industry partner, and confirm their Ohio-based status.
- **Workforce focus:** Describe how the project's innovation specifically targets a workforce within Ohio. Emphasize the active involvement of both employers and workers through collaboration with the industry partner during the design and development process. Highlight how this collaboration ensures that the needs and expectations of the workforce are integral to the innovation, fostering a practical and impactful solution.
- **Connection to target workforce:** The applicant must partner with a minimum of one industry partner based in Ohio who is directly related and well connected to the target workforce the innovation aims to serve. Explain how this industry partner is well connected, detailing their involvement in associations, partnerships, workgroups, teams, advisory boards, consortiums, or other relevant networks, as well as their direct interactions with the target workforce. Highlighting this connection is essential for the project's success.  
**Role and value:** Industry partners provide crucial subject matter expertise and resources to the project, which may be paid or unpaid and included in the budget or not. Describe the specific contributions the industry partner will make, including their subject matter expertise, any additional resources they will provide, and how these contributions will enhance the project. Emphasize how their involvement will help address use-inspired research problems, accelerate the translation of basic research to the market, and support the development of workforce resources for the academic community.
- **Benefits of the partnership:** Describe the mutual benefits of the partnership, focusing on how industry partners gain access to the academic talent pool and leverage intellectual property from funded activities to accelerate the transition from discovery to practice. Highlight the advantages of pooling public and private resources, sharing the risks associated with early-stage research and development, and how this collaboration creates a synergistic effect where the collective contributions lead to greater outcomes than individual efforts alone.
- **Importance of the partnership:** Emphasize the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration in advancing innovations in personal protective equipment (PPE) and personal protective technology (PPT). Highlight how effective research translation into practical applications requires collaboration among diverse investigators, institutions, and industries. Collaboration with NIOSH intramural scientists, programs, and the National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) is encouraged.
- **Additional partners:** List any other industry or support partners involved in the project. Describe their roles and contributions, including how they will enhance the project's objectives and overall impact. Highlight any unique expertise or resources they bring to the collaboration.

### Primary industry partner letter requirements

An industry partner letter **must** be submitted as an attachment in OIA, clearly identifying the primary Ohio-based industry partner involved in the project. The letter must include the following details:

- **Letterhead:** The letter must be on the entity's letterhead and identify that the industry partner is Ohio-based, including their name and location.
- **Background and operations:** Provide information on the number of years the industry partner has been in business and details about their operations, such as the number of employees and locations (e.g., satellite offices, headquarters, warehouses, manufacturing facilities).
- **Connection to the target workforce:** Clearly describe the target workforce that the industry partner is well connected to, detailing their level of engagement.
- **Collaboration and support:** Detail the nature of the collaboration between the applicant and the industry partner, including specific support activities the industry partner will provide. Highlight the significance of the partnership in achieving project outcomes.
- **Project goals:** Address how the partnership will help achieve the project's overarching goal of advancing technology development toward commercialization.
- **Time involvement:** Specify the industry partner's percentage of time involvement during the project period, and the methods of their involvement.
- **Intellectual property policies and agreements:** The applicant organization must discuss the appropriate intellectual property policies, including patent disclosures, filings, and any potential conflicts of interests with project partners. BWC is not responsible for the type of agreement between grantees and project partners. If applicable, include a statement that an executed cooperative research agreement will be provided upon recommendation of the award.
- **Signature:** The letter must be signed by an authorized representative of the industry partner. This individual should have the authority to commit the organization to the project, approve necessary agreements, and allocate resources.

In addition to the primary industry partner letter, letters of support and/or collaboration from other industry partners and support agencies may also be submitted to enhance the project's impact. These should detail the partner or agency's role and commitment, explaining how their involvement will complement and enhance the project.

### V. **Project Plan** (Page limit: 20 pages)

The *Project Plan* must clearly identify the track (1- Research, 2- Proof of Concept, or 3-Prototype) and include the structure and elements outlined below, adhering to the page limits for each section. All tables, graphs, figures, diagrams, and charts must be included within the *Project Plan* page limit. The *Project Plan* must use the exact headings, subheadings, and order specified below.

#### *Specific aims (Page limit: 1)*

- **Goals and expected outcomes:** State the main goals of the proposed project, summarize the expected outcomes (both intermediate and final), and highlight the impact the results of the project will have on the industry and target workforce.
- **Objectives:** List the specific objectives of the project proposed (e.g., evaluating and redesigning existing PPE, creating novel PPE designs, developing new technology, solving specific problem with PPE/PPT, reducing the frequency and severity of on-the-job injuries, or enhancing workforce safety, etc.).

Organize the Project Strategy in the specified order, using the headings provided. Cite published experimental details in this section and provide the full reference in the submission of a Bibliography and References Cited appendix.

**1) Significance**

- Explain the relevance of the proposed project and identify critical barriers to the advancement and/or improvement of Ohio workforce safety that the project addresses.
- Describe existing competitive technologies, and their shortcomings.
- If present in the literature, describe and analyze prior research that supports the proposed project, including its limitations.
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or worker safety.
- Describe how achieving the proposed aims will change concepts, methods, technologies, services, or preventative interventions impacting Ohio's workforce.
- If applicable, explain the proposed project's potential to lead to a marketable product, process, or service.

**2) Impact on the workforce**

- Discuss how the proposed project will impact workers and how the project activities or findings contribute to a safer, healthier, workforce in the near- or long-term.
- Describe the target market segment addressed by the proposed project and who will benefit from the project activities. Elaborate on how preliminary market research or workforce discovery informs the target market and how the innovation addresses the unmet needs.
- Outline the future commercialization potential (Track 1), strategy (Track 2) or plans (Track 3) envisioned beyond the duration of the proposed project.
- Describe the partners and stakeholders involved in ensuring successful transfer of the findings to the end users/target workforce.

**3) Innovation**

- Identify the key differentiators of the proposed technology from current state of the art and other competing technologies.
- Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of emerging technologies, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- Describe the knowledge gaps and technical barriers to translating the technology into a product, process, or service. Discuss which of these gaps and barriers are most significant.
- Describe the unique challenges faced by employers and workers and which are most significant to the proposed project.
- Explain how the project challenges and seeks to shift current PPE/PPT research or workplace practice paradigms.
- Discuss if there are concepts, approaches, or safety interventions for the proposed project that are novel to one industry or broadly to the workforce.
- Describe the next steps envisioned for successful technology development toward commercialization and societal use.

**4) Approach**

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to accomplish the *Specific Aims*. Explain how data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

- Detail the plan to address the knowledge gaps and technical barriers, including specific objectives and tasks/activities to close these gaps so that the proof-of-concept, prototype, or technology can be demonstrated.
- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success to achieve the aims.
- Provide a list of success metrics, either qualitative or quantitative, that will be used to assess the progress and outputs of the project. Apply the SMART Methodology (i.e., specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based) to define these metrics. Ensure the metrics are aligned to the project's timeline (i.e., aims, phases, etc.), and distinguish them from administrative requirements and deliverables. This alignment will facilitate easy tracking and reporting of progress throughout the project period.
- Provide a comprehensive list of testing and/or certification standards relevant to the innovation. This should include detailed information on required testing regulations and mandatory certifications for technical specifications and regulatory compliance for market entry. Descriptions of tests, current statuses, results, and progress, will be reported throughout the project period. These standards are essential to ensure that the product meets the necessary requirements for successful commercialization.
- Include an evaluation plan, describing the design for evaluating project success.
- Outline the complementary and integrated expertise of the key personnel and the project's leadership approach, governance, and organizational structure.
- Identify the target workforce groups for the innovation.
- Describe the outputs/products to be developed and methods for disseminating findings to the target workforce. Include details on the communication strategies and channels that will be used to share the project's proposed outputs and results.
- Specify external partners that will be engaged in the project and their primary roles.
- Identify all project deliverables, including BWC deliverables, major vendor/contractor deliverables (if applicable), and Specific Aims.

**Bibliography and reference cited:** Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. Include only bibliographic citations. Applicants should be especially careful to follow scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the application. Citations that are publicly available in a free, online format may include URLs or PubMed Central Identifier numbers along with the full reference (note that copies of publicly available publications are not accepted as appendix material). The references should be limited to relevant and current literature. While there is not a page limitation, it is important to be concise and to select only those literature references pertinent to the *Project Plan*. **Upload a bibliography of all references cited as a supplementary appendix with the Application in OIA.**

**Note:** At the end of the project, a final report is required and should identify new knowledge to solve a significant technical challenge and move the technology closer toward commercialization and societal benefit.

*Human subjects (Page limit: 1)*

- **Statement of non-involvement:** Clearly state if the project will not involve human subjects and is exempted from IRB review and regulations. The following sections can be omitted if not applicable.
  - **Protection and compliance:** If the project involves human subjects at any point during the performance period, provide details on how their protection will be ensured. Clearly outline how human subject protection and compliance with ethical standards will be ensured, even if exempt from regulations. Discuss ethical considerations, consent processes, and measures to protect participant confidentiality.



- **IRB approval:** Projects involving human subjects are required to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Summarize your institution’s IRB process and specify whether initial IRB approval, an amendment, or continuation of an existing study will be sought for the project. Disclose if the project will involve multiple IRB protocols.
- **Incentives:** If offering reasonable incentives (i.e., gas cards, etc.) for participants’ recruitment, include a detailed plan for their use. Include the associated cost in the Project Budget under the Other Direct Costs category. Incentives for an individual participant cannot exceed \$300.

## VI. Budget

The *Budget* section outlines the financial framework for the grant, including budget allocation, budgetary requirements, and allowable costs. Applicants must provide a detailed budget that reflects both direct and indirect costs, specifying clear allocation to project deliverables and administrative activities.

**Base funding:** The grant model is 100% base funding with a non-budgeted deliverable schedule for reimbursement. All projected costs must be budgeted by line item, including personnel, travel, other direct costs (e.g., supplies, project poster boards, etc.), equipment with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more, and contracts. Funding is tied 100% to actual costs.

**Non-budgeted deliverables:** Each non-budgeted deliverable is assigned a percentage of the total award. The total percentage/value of all deliverables listed in the **Project Budget Justification (WSIC-2)**, automated in OIA, will equal the total funding requested in the **Project Budget**. This percentage represents the maximum reimbursement amount for each deliverable. Reimbursement will be based on actual expenses reported in expenditure reports and invoices. If a deliverable is not successfully met, its value will be deducted from the total invoiced amount in the budgeted categories. Once a deliverable is resubmitted and approved, the expense can be included in the final expenditure report and reallocated to the original budget category where the original reduction occurred.

### Budget narrative

The Budget Narrative explains how the proposed costs are derived, justified, and allocated and should detail the rationale behind each cost category, ensuring clarity and transparency in your financial planning. Include a detailed Budget Narrative with the following information to effectively communicate the financial aspects of the project:

- **Cost explanation:** Provide a detailed budget narrative in the *Project Plan* that explains how each cost category is derived. Clearly detail the basis you used for calculating costs and provide a breakdown of the percentage of each cost category from the total budget amount to illustrate how costs are allocated (e.g., Personnel 40%, Travel 5%, Equipment 15%, Contracts 20%, Other Direct Costs 10%, Indirect 10%)
- **Fringe rates:** Identify approved fringe rates and calculations by appointment types.
- **Cost justification:** Describe the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs. Justify all costs, including those for personnel, consultants, contracts, and collaborators/industry partners as applicable.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** Explain the roles and responsibilities of all grant-funded personnel in the “Justification” column in the Project Budget template.
- **Expense justification:** Justify equipment, travel, (including plans for no more than three presenters for out-of-state travel), supplies, and training costs.

- **Multi-year budget submission:** Complete an itemized two-year budget covering FY26-27 project period: July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027. Ensure the budget is itemized with actual funding figures to support all associated costs. Complete the MS Excel **Project Budget Template** uploaded separately in OIA.

**Budget narrative format:** Arrange the Budget Narrative by the following categories: Personnel, Travel, Equipment, Contracts, Other Direct Costs, and Indirect Costs. Itemize equipment in the Project Budget Template (minimum \$5,000 unit cost value) to be purchased with grant funds. Funds may be used to support personnel, staff training, travel (see the Ohio Office of Budget Management [OBM] website (<https://obm.ohio.gov/areas-of-interest/agency-overview/obm-travel-rule>), and supplies directly related to project activities.

- **Contracts:** For each proposed contract, applicants must obtain prior approval from BWC. To obtain prior approval, the Contracts category in the **Project Budget** must include a line item for each specific contract. The contract justification must include a brief description of the services to be performed along with the budgeted amount for the contract. Three supporting quotes (or one quote and a sole source letter) are required for each contract listed. The quotes/sole source letter must be submitted with the application. The sole source letter must be on official letterhead with an authorized signature that justifies the information provided in the budget justification.

In addition to the cost breakdown, the quote must contain a detailed justification, scope of work, method of accountability, contract deliverables, and deliverable timeline. Vendors can only contract with eligible applicants for one project applying for WSIC funding. The total combined amount for all contracts within the Contracts Category must not exceed 25% of the total project budget being requested in the application. Subcontracts are unallowable costs and will not be authorized under this grant agreement.

A copy of all fully executed contracts obtained by the recipient on behalf of the project must be submitted to BWC within 10 business days of execution of the contract. Recipients have forty-five (45) calendar days from the start of the grant to secure signatures from all contracting parties. **Note:** Please refer to the WSIC GAPP Manual for additional rules regarding contracts and equipment.

- **Indirect:** Applicants may charge up to 10% of total direct costs, with the exception of contracts and equipment, which are restricted to the first \$25,000; no more than \$2,500 can be charged for each line item in these categories under indirect costs.

### **Project budget line-item associations**

The **Project Budget Template** requires all budget line items to be associated with either a deliverable or project administration (100% only). Each line item must indicate the proportion of the budget that supports deliverable completion or administrative costs. The following definitions and instructions clarify how to report budget line items based on their category:

#### **Administrative personnel**

Personnel whose roles and responsibilities are administrative in nature. Administrative personnel spend 100% of their time on activities not directly tied to a specific project function. Examples include:

- Planning, directing, and coordinating project operations at the highest level (e.g., agency directors, grant administrator, project manager, etc.).
- Providing day-to-day staff assistance or clerical duties in support of the individuals described above.

When entering administrative personnel line items in the project budget, after name and job title are filled in, applicants must enter 100% in the “Project Administration”. Administrative personnel should not be associated with any deliverable percentages.

### **Project personnel**

Personnel whose roles and responsibilities are directly tied to a specific function or activity necessary to meet the project requirements, and whose roles and responsibilities are not administrative in nature. These individuals are actively involved in project implementation. Examples include:

- Planning, implementing, and maintaining project activities.
- Directly managing activities in the project plan.

When entering project personnel line items in the project budget, after name and job title are filled in, applicants must enter the percentage of time the position devotes to implementing the *Project Plan* activities that contribute to deliverable completion.

**Other object class line items:** Similar to personnel, all line items in each budget category (e.g., travel, equipment, contracts, and other direct costs) must be distributed across deliverables totaling 100%. Each line item must clearly indicate the percentage allocated to either deliverable completion.

### **Unallowable costs**

Grant funds cannot be used for the following:

- a. Food and beverages, including meals and alcoholic beverages)
- b. Release time for professors (including sabbaticals and academic leave)
- c. To advance political or religious points of view, or for lobbying
- d. Fundraising and investment management costs
- e. To disseminate factually incorrect or deceitful information
- f. Consulting fees for salaried WSIC personnel to perform grant-related activities
- g. Contributions made to WSIC personnel.
- h. Contracts, for compensation, with BWC board members or other BWC staff/fiduciaries
- i. Payments to any person for influencing or attempting to influence members of the Ohio General Assembly in connection with awarding of grants.
- j. Advertisement other than for human subject recruitment
- k. Bad debts of any kind
- l. Contributions to a contingency fund
- m. Entertainment
- n. Fines and penalties (including late fees, past due balance)
- o. Legal fees incurred in defense of any civil or criminal fraud proceeding
- p. Membership fees – unless related to the grant and approved by BWC
- q. Loans or mortgage payments
- r. Costs to rent equipment or space owned by the funded agency
- s. The purchase or improvement of land; the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building
- t. Utilities
- u. Lodging, travel, and meals over the current state rates. (See Ohio Shared Services [OSS] Website for per diem rates at: <https://obm.ohio.gov/areas-of-interest/agency-overview/obm-travel-rule>)
- v. Tips and gratuities
- w. International travel

- x. Out of state travel costs, unless prior BWC approval is obtained
- y. Training costs exceeding one week, unless prior BWC approval is obtained
- z. Tuition
- aa. Course buyouts
- bb. Personal expenses, including goods or services regardless of whether reported as taxable income
- cc. Grant-related equipment costs greater than \$5,000, unless justified and approved by BWC
- dd. Promotional items (includes items with slogans, logos, agency name/address, messaging)
- ee. Furniture/furnishings
- ff. Sales tax
- gg. Subgrants/subawards/subcontracts
- hh. Award costs incurred pre-or post-project period

WSIC will not review or reimburse expenditures for quotes or invoices in currencies other than U.S. dollars. All documents must be translated into English and converted to U.S. dollars.

**Note:** Recipients are ineligible for reimbursement of BWC grant funds if used for prohibited purposes. BWC reserves the right to recover funds paid to recipients for prohibited purposes.

#### **Programmatic budgetary or commitment overlap**

Applicants must disclose any current involvement in other BWC grant projects, to include funding cycle, project name, and project #). In addition, applicants must report if the application will result in any potential programmatic, budgetary, or commitment overlap with another application or award, including federal and non-federal resources.

- **Programmatic overlap** occurs when 1) substantially the same project is proposed in more than one application or is submitted to multiple funding sources for review and funding consideration or 2) the same or closely related objective and the project design appear in two or more applications or awards, regardless of the funding source.
- **Budgetary overlap** occurs when duplicate or equivalent budgetary items (e.g., equipment, salaries) are requested in an application but are already provided by another source, or when the same items are requested in multiple applications or submitted to different funding sources for review and funding consideration.
- **Commitment overlap** occurs when an individual's time commitment exceeds 100%, whether salary support is requested. Overlap in any form - programmatic, budgetary, or commitment - of an individual's effort greater than 100 percent, is not permitted and must be resolved prior to award.

#### **VII. Timeline**

Applicants must include a detailed timeline of the project, presented as a Gantt chart or schedule table, to include:

- **Projected start and end dates:** Specify the start and end dates for each high-level task, including project milestones (significant events or achievements that indicate project progress) and deliverables (such as quarterly progress reports, interim and final progress reports). Dates should be indicated within project months, quarters, or other relevant periods.
- **Specific aims:** Clearly outline the specific aims or objectives to be achieved.
- **Technology/Product design and development:** Include timeframes for technology or product design, development, and testing.
- **IRB approval process:** Indicate the timeframe for obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, if applicable.
- **Responsible party:** Assign a responsible party for each item listed in the timeline.

**Note:** The specific dates for contracts and project deliverables may need to be adjusted based on the timing of the selection process and negotiation of the funding agreement.

To conclude the Project Plan section, ensure that all elements are meticulously addressed and aligned with the outlined requirements to facilitate a comprehensive and effective evaluation of your project proposal.

### **Review criteria and scoring system**

Applications will be evaluated and scored by NIOSH researchers and BWC experts specializing in safety, ergonomics, and industrial hygiene. Reviewers are required to evaluate each application using the following review criteria and scoring system.

#### *Review criteria influencing the score*

All evaluations will be based upon the quality, clarity, and completeness of the submitted application focusing exclusively on the following criteria. Reviewers are instructed to score the application based on the following criteria, weighing the criteria for the following sections as they deem appropriate.

- Performance site(s), resources, and facilities
- Key personnel
- Significance
- Impact on the workforce
- Innovation
- Approach

Reviewers will assess each application by addressing the following questions for each criterion:

1. **Performance site(s), resources and facilities:** Does the work environment contribute to the probability of project success? Are the institutional and industry support, equipment, and other physical resources adequate? Will the project benefit from unique aspects of the scientific environment, public health context, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?
2. **Key personnel:** Is the PI (and any co-PIs) well-suited to conduct this work? For key personnel who are new to or inexperienced in their field, do they have appropriate experience and training, or will they receive necessary mentoring and supervision? Has the PI demonstrated significant and ongoing accomplishments that have advanced their field of work? Is a well-connected Ohio-based industry partner identified? Do the key personnel offer complementary and integrated expertise, and is the project's leadership approach, governance, and organizational structure appropriate?
3. **Significance:** Does the project address the relevance of the innovation and identify critical barriers to advancing or improving Ohio workforce safety? Are existing competitive technologies and shortcomings described? Is there prior research supporting the project, and does the proposal analyze this research, including its limitations? If the project's aims are achieved, how will it improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or worker safety? Is how successful completion of the aims will change or impact the concepts, methods, technologies, services, or preventative interventions for Ohio's workforce described? Does the proposal explain the potential for the project to lead to a marketable product, process, or service, including aspects such as market demand, competitive advantage, and commercialization strategies?

4. **Impact on the workforce:** Does the applicant describe how the proposed activities and PPE/PPT innovation (e.g., knowledge, interventions, or technologies) will lead to a safer, healthier workforce in either the near- or long-term? Does the applicant describe the target workforce that will benefit from the project activities? Does the project proposal address unmet market needs and inform the target market based on preliminary research or workforce discovery? Are appropriate collaborations and partners included to ensure successful transfer of the findings to the end users/ target workforce? Is the overall future commercialization potential (Track 1), strategy (Track 2), or plan (Track 3) explained beyond the duration of the proposed project?
  
5. **Innovation:** Are the key differentiators of the proposed technology compared to the current state of the art and other competing technologies identified? Are refinements, improvements, or new applications of concepts, approaches, methodologies, or interventions explained? Are challenges identified? Does the project proposal challenge and seek to shift current research or workplace practice paradigms by using novel concepts, approaches, PPE/PPT, and/or safety interventions? Are knowledge gaps and technical barriers that must be overcome to translate technology into a product, process, or service discussed, including next steps for successful development of the technology toward commercialization and societal use?
  
6. **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodologies, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are unique challenges, potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success clearly presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, does the strategy establish feasibility, and will particularly risky aspects be managed? Does the proposal provide a qualitative or quantitative list of the success metrics using the SMART methodology (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based)? Do these success metrics align with the project timeline, aims, and phases? Is there a comprehensive list identifying testing and certification standards for the innovation, including required regulations and mandatory certifications for market entry? Does the project proposal include an appropriate evaluation plan to assess project success? Does the PI include appropriate partners throughout the project, and are their roles well-defined? If an additional track will be necessary, are there clear, appropriate, measurable specific aims that should be achieved prior to initiating the next track?

**Note:** Administrative reviewers will score content and compliance, while technical reviewers will evaluate the *Project Plan* content and budget reasonableness. These reviews will be conducted independently; the *Project Plan* scores will not be influenced by the administrative evaluation of the budget.

#### Scoring definitions

The application review team will use the scoring definitions outlined in the table below, adapted from the National Institutes of Health [NIH], to assess the overall merit of each application.

Overall merit	Score	Descriptor	Additional guidance on strengths/weaknesses
High	9	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	8	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	7	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium	6	Very good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	4	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also moderate weaknesses
Low	3	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	2	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	1	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

**Minor weakness:** An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen the overall merit of the work.

**Moderate weakness:** A weakness that lessens the overall merit of the work.

**Major weakness:** A weakness that severely limits the overall merit of the work.

### **Deliverables**

All deliverables must be completed using templates provided by WSIC to approved applicants, where applicable. Documentation for all deliverable objectives must be submitted through OIA.

#### **Deliverable – Objective 1: Attendance at the FY26-27 Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Kick-Off Meeting**

**Description:** The FY26-27 Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Kick Off-Meeting is intended to review the goals, objectives, and recipient expectations for the project period. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with the WSIC team, network with other project teams, gain a comprehensive understanding of the grant process and requirements, and seek clarification for outstanding inquiries.

**Meeting date:** The Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Kick Off Meeting will be held in person on **July 17, 2025**.

#### **Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. The PI and project manager/grant administrator are required to attend the FY26-27 Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Kick-Off Meeting in person.
2. The PI and Project Manager/Grant Administrator must sign the BWC sign in sheet to verify meeting attendance.

**Objective 1.1:** By July 25, 2025, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must attend the FY26-27 Workforce Safety Innovation Grant Kick-Off Meeting, as evidenced by their signatures on the BWC sign-in sheet, via OIA. **(3%)**

#### **Deliverable – Objective 2: Bi-monthly project team meetings**

**Description:** Active participation in bi-monthly project team meetings is essential for information exchange and collaboration among the PI, Co-PIs, industry partners, and other project team members. These meetings help align planning efforts, build relationships, and foster effective communication, and should include a review and discussion of the Risk Log to track and manage identified risks. It is important for BWC to maintain a comprehensive operating picture of the project team and project progress. The Project Manager/Grant Administrator will serve as liaisons between BWC and the project team.

#### **Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Project Schedule Planning Tool using the provided template.
2. Submission of the completed Meeting Minute template using the provided template.
3. Submission of the completed agendas and meeting minutes, along with any presentations or supporting materials for bi-monthly project team meetings.

**Objective 2.1:** By July 25, 2025, the recipient must submit a Project Schedule Planning Tool, including projected bi-monthly team meetings for the project period, via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.2:** By September 12, 2025, the recipient must submit a copy of the following July/August Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the July/August Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.3:** By November 14, 2025, the recipient must submit a copy of the following September/October Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the September/October Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.4:** By January 9, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following November/December Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the November/December Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.5:** By March 13, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following January/February Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the January/February Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.6:** By May 8, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following March/April Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the March/April Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.7:** By July 10, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following May/June Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the May/June Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.8:** By September 11, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following July/August Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the July/August Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.9:** By November 13, 2026, the recipient must submit a copy of the following September/October Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the September/October Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.10:** By January 15, 2027, the recipient must submit a copy of the following November/December Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the November/December Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.11:** By March 12, 2027, the recipient must submit a copy of the following January/February Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the January/February Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**



**Objective 2.12:** By May 14, 2027, the recipient must submit a copy of the following March/April Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the March/April Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

**Objective 2.13:** By June 18, 2027, the recipient must submit a copy of the following May/June Project Team Meeting documents via OIA as separate files: (1) the May/June Project Team Meeting attendance verification, (2), the meeting agenda (3) the meeting minutes, and (4) any presentations or supporting materials. **(1%)**

### **Deliverable – Objective 3: Workforce Safety Innovation quarterly grant meetings**

**Description:** The Workforce Safety Innovation Quarterly Grant Meetings provide a platform for BWC to deliver updates to the PIs and their teams, support collaboration, and share knowledge. Agendas will include administrative and technical updates, as well as discussions of upcoming requirements and due dates.

**Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Attendance by the PI, or designated Co-PI, and the Project Manager/Grant Administrator at each scheduled meeting.
2. Verification of attendance through MS Teams login.
3. A brief project update presented by the PI, or designated Co-PI.

**Meeting dates:** The Workforce Safety Innovation Grant meetings will be held virtually on:

*Quarter 2:* October 23, 2025

*Quarter 6:* October 22, 2026

*Quarter 3:* February 26, 2026

*Quarter 7:* February 25, 2027

*Quarter 4:* June 18, 2026

*Quarter 8:* June 17, 2027

**Objective 3.1:** By October 24, 2025, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 3.2:** By February 27, 2026, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 3.3:** By June 26, 2026, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 3.4:** By October 23, 2026, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 3.5:** By February 26, 2027, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

**Objective 3.6:** By June 25, 2027, the PI and project manager/grant administrator must demonstrate representation at the quarterly grant meeting as evidenced on the MS Teams attendance verification and submitted via OIA. **(1%)**

#### **Deliverable – Objective 4: Project Management Plan**

**Description:** The Project Management Plan (PMP) outlines the comprehensive framework for executing, monitoring, and controlling the project throughout its lifecycle. It provides a detailed summary, scope, and management strategies, offering more comprehensive information than the initial staffing plan submitted with the application. It serves as a crucial guide for project stakeholders and clarifies project team roles and responsibilities. Additionally, the plan details the work breakdown structure, maintains accountability, and describes the project's organizational structure. By aligning with organizational goals, the PMP facilitates effective decision-making and mitigates risks to ensure successful project delivery.

#### **Successful completion of the deliverable(s) Includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Project Management Plan using the provided template.

**Objective 4.1:** By August 29, 2025, the recipient must submit the completed Project Management Plan, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(10%)**

#### **Deliverable – Objective 5: Project Risk Mitigation Plan**

**Description:** The Project Risk Mitigation Plan outlines strategies to manage and mitigate risks throughout the project's lifecycle. This plan involves identifying potential risks, analyzing their likelihood and impact, and developing effective mitigation strategies to minimize exposure and manage consequences. By detailing these strategies, the Project Risk Mitigation Plan helps the PI and project team make informed decisions and address risks proactively, ensuring smoother project management and reduced impact of potential issues.

#### **Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Project Risk Mitigation Plan using the provided template.

**Objective 5.1:** By September 30, 2025, the recipient must submit the completed Project Risk Mitigation Plan, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(8.0%)**

#### **Deliverable – Objective 6: Project Communication Plan**

**Description:** The Project Communication Plan outlines the strategies for effectively disseminating project information, results, and key outcomes. It provides a structured approach for the PI to communicate with BWC, the project team, and other relevant stakeholders. This plan ensures timely and clear communication, defining roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in each communication and dissemination effort.

#### **Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Project Communication Plan using the provided template.
2. Provide evidence of all dissemination activities for project results through various forms of media, including dissemination to various audiences across both academic and public platforms and channels on the template provided.

**Objective 6.1:** By October 24, 2025, the recipient must submit a completed Project Communication Plan, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(8.0%)**

**Objective 6.2:** By May 28, 2027, the recipient must submit the evidence of dissemination tool of project results through academic and public platforms and channels, and postings on agency and BWC websites and social media, via OIA. **(3.0%)**

#### **Deliverable – Objective 7: Quarterly Progress Reports**

**Description:** The Quarterly Progress Report provides a comprehensive update on project activities each quarter, reflecting alignment with project goals and advancements. These reports are used to document accomplishments, challenges, and other significant information for each quarter. They enable BWC to assess progress against the approved Project Plan and Budget, ensuring the project is on track for successful completion.

**Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Quarterly Progress Reports using the provided template.

**Objective 7.1:** By October 10, 2025, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report, for the first quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Objective 7.2:** By January 9, 2026, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report, for the second quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Objective 7.3:** By April 10, 2026, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report, for the third quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Objective 7.4:** By October 9, 2026, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report for the fifth quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Objective 7.5:** By January 15, 2027, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report, for the sixth quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Objective 7.6:** By April 9, 2027, the recipient must submit a completed Quarterly Progress Report, for the seventh quarter, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(4.0%)**

**Deliverable – Objective 8: Interim Progress Report**

**Description:** The purpose of the Interim Progress Report is to document a comprehensive update of the project at the mid-point. It includes a detailed summary of achievements, challenges and progression during project implementation, along with significant information and next steps. This report will also encompass a thorough review of the fourth quarter’s progress and performance.

**Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the completed Interim Progress Report Template using the provided template.

**Objective 8.1:** By July 17, 2026, the recipient must submit a completed Interim Progress Report, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(8.0%)**

**Deliverable – Objective 9: Final Report and Project Presentation**

**Description:** The Final Report provides a comprehensive overview of the project’s achievements, findings, short- and long-term impacts, and outcomes. It evaluates project performance against the approved Project Plan and Budget, validating success metrics and summarizing commercialization strategies or plans. The report will also highlight necessary next steps for continuing project work and any lessons learned. The Final Report will also encompass a thorough review of the eighth quarter’s progress and performance.

Additionally, a Project Presentation must be developed to summarize the project's key elements and evaluate its final outcomes. This presentation is a recorded executive-level briefing intended for WSIC, state leaders, and federal partners providing a high-level overview of the Final Report.

**Successful completion of the deliverable(s) includes:**

1. Submission of the Final Report using the provided template.
2. Submission of final presentation slides (e.g., PowerPoint format) in OIA.
3. Submission of an executive level recorded final project presentation.

**Objective 9.1:** By June 30, 2027, the recipient must submit the completed Final Report, in accordance with the template, via OIA. **(12%)**

**Objective 9.2:** By June 30, 2027, the recipient must submit the final presentation slides and the recorded presentation detailing the final project results to BWC via OIA. **(5%)**

**Post submission requirements**

**Note:** Failure to ensure quality reporting, such as submitting incomplete or late deliverables or expenditure reports will result in delays or withholding of future payments.

- a. **WSIC Grant Agreement:** The applicant’s Agency Leader must sign a WSIC Grant Agreement upon approval of the application submitted in OIA. Refer to **WSIC Grant Agreement Template**.
- b. **Monitoring:** Recipients must complete and submit an Internal Control Questionnaire (ICQ) **by August 15, 2025**. WSIC will review the ICQ and schedule a desk review for a designated quarter of the project period. Recipients will be required to submit supporting documentation as evidence for the identified quarter. An email notification will be sent detailing the required documentation and submission deadlines. Supporting documentation may include but is not limited to receipts, contracts/agreements, invoices, and time & effort verification, etc.
- c. **Deliverables:** Recipients must complete and submit deliverables by the specified due dates. WSIC will provide deliverable templates upon award, which must be utilized where applicable. Requests for deliverable extensions must be submitted in writing with a justification and action plan at least 5 business days prior to the deliverable deadline. All requests for deliverable extensions must be approved by the WSIC.
- d. **Recipient expenditure reports and invoices:** Recipients must submit quarterly expenditure reports and invoices in OIA and OSS by the following deadlines:

Quarterly report period	Expenditure report and invoice due dates
<i>July 1 – September 30, 2025</i>	<i>October 31, 2025</i>
<i>October 1 – December 31, 2025</i>	<i>January 30, 2026</i>
<i>January 1 – March 31, 2026</i>	<i>May 1, 2026</i>
<i>April 1 – June 30, 2026</i>	<i>July 31, 2026</i>
<i>July 1 – September 30, 2026</i>	<i>October 30, 2026</i>
<i>October 1 – December 31, 2026</i>	<i>January 29, 2027</i>
<i>January 1 – March 31, 2027</i>	<i>April 30, 2027</i>
<i>April 1 – June 30, 2027</i>	<i>July 30, 2027</i>

**Note:** Recipients may invoice for remaining outstanding unobligated balances after the fourth quarterly expenditure report and on the Final Expenditure Report, provided these obligations were incurred prior to the end of the project period and fall within the unobligated balance on the expenditure report. Specific requirements for Quarterly Invoices and Quarterly Expenditure Reports can be found in the WSIC GAPP Manual.

- e. **Final Expenditure Report and invoice:** The recipient Final Expenditure Report reflecting total expenditures for FY26-27 must be completed and submitted in OIA by 5:00 p.m. ET on or before September 17, 2027. The

report must reflect the recipient’s accounting records and include supporting documentation for any deliverables not previously approved. Unused funds must be returned with the final expenditure report, which also serves as an invoice for returning these funds.

- f. **Equipment Inventory Report:** The recipient must complete and submit the final Equipment Inventory Report, reflecting all equipment purchases for FY26-27 (including equipment purchases from previous WSIC grant periods if applicable) in OIA by 5:00 p.m. ET on or before September 17, 2027.
- g. **Non-Compliance:** Recipients must respond to a notice of special conditions within 5 calendar-days and submit a corrective action plan for resolution within 15 calendar days. Additional conference calls or site visits may be scheduled as needed to review all records related to the grant. Subsequent payments will be withheld until the special conditions are resolved.
- h. **Proof of IRB approval:** If applicable, recipients must provide proof of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, including submitted application and certification, within 10 business days of receiving approval. Any amendments to the IRB certification must also be submitted within 10 business days of their approval.
- i. **ADA compliance:** Track 3 – Prototype projects must address any applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements in progress reports.
- j. **WSIC updates:** Recipients are required to review the BWC WSIC Projects MS Teams Group quarterly for updates about the WSIC grant, including deliverable templates, supplemental grant documents, meeting presentations, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).
- k. **Project presentation:** All recipients must develop a project posterboard for the Ohio Safety Congress & Expo® and provide project team representation. Additionally, Track 3 – Prototype recipients must submit a call for presentation to present their project and results at the Ohio Safety Congress & Expo® according to WSIC’s scheduling requirements.

**Submission of application**

To comply with application requirements, agencies must submit the **NOIAF (WSIC-1)**, Project Abstract (2-page limit), and supporting documents **via e-mail to WSIC ([BWCWSIC@bwc.ohio.gov](mailto:BWCWSIC@bwc.ohio.gov)) by 5:00 p.m. ET on December 13, 2025**. Initial authorization for internet submission of the application will be provided after the application is posted on the BWC website and the **NOIAF (WSIC-1)** is approved.

<b>Application process timeline</b>	
<b>TASK</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Application posted	Nov. 8, 2024
NOIAF (WSIC-1) and Project Abstract due	Dec. 13, 2024
Applications Due	Feb. 7, 2025
Notice of Award/WSIC Grant Agreement	July 1, 2025

Applicants must **complete and submit the full application with all required uploads in OIA by 5:00 p.m. ET February 7, 2025**. An automated confirmation will be sent upon receipt of the application submission in OIA. If a confirmation e-mail is not received or for any additional questions, please contact [BWCWSIC@bwc.ohio.gov](mailto:BWCWSIC@bwc.ohio.gov).

**Application submission in OIA**

The Project Proposal must be uploaded in OIA as a PDF text searchable file format (not a scanned copy) with all components except for the Project Budget to be uploaded separately. Refer to the requirements for submission of the Application below:

Project Proposal element requirements	Page limit/notes
Cover Sheet	1
Table of Contents	No page limit. Must include hyperlinks to each element.
I. Project Abstract	2
II. Performance Site(s), Resources, and Equipment	3
III. Key Personnel	3
IV. Industry Partner Collaboration	1 page narrative. The Primary Industry Partner Letter and any additional letters of collaboration/support must be uploaded in OIA separately following the Industry Partner Letter Requirements.
V. Project Plan	20
VI. Budget	1 page budget narrative. The itemized Project Budget Template (MS Excel) must be completed and uploaded separately in OIA.
VII. Project Timeline	No page limit.
Additional application requirements	Notes
Application Information in OIA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency Information</li> <li>Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency information must be verified in OIA, to include the agency address and contact information for the applicant Agency Leader, Agency Fiscal Leader, and PI.</li> <li>Project information must be verified in OIA, to include contact information for the Project Fiscal Contact and Project Manager/Grant Administrator, project title, project address, project start and end dates, project track, and total amount requested for the project.</li> </ul>
Bibliography and References Cited	Must complete and upload separately in OIA.
Biographical Sketch(es)	4-page limit/per person. Must be uploaded separately into OIA.

**Notice of Award (NOA)**

The overall point value of applications scored will determine the recipients selected for awards, as outlined in the **Application Review Form** scoring rubric. Applications will be categorized as Approved, Approved with Special Conditions, or Disapproved. BWC will not release NOA information until the official announcement of the final selection decisions.

- Notification:** All applicants will receive a letter notifying them of provisional approval, or disapproval, before the grant agreements are issued. This letter will outline the provisional status and any special conditions or issues to be addressed.

- **Successful applicants:** BWC will issue a grant agreement that includes terms from the **WSIC Grant Agreement Template**. This agreement must be signed by the applicant’s Agency Leader and submitted to BWC. Upon signature of the BWC Administrator, the WSIC Grant Agreement will serve as the official notification of award and authorize expenditure of grant funds.
- **Unsuccessful applicants:** Within 30-days after a decision to disapprove or not fund a grant application that was submitted in OIA, WSIC will issue written notification to the disapproved applicant.

### Acronyms

All acronyms in the associated document are listed and described below. For a complete lists of terms and definitions refer to the Glossary in the WSIC GAPP Manual.

Acronym	Description
ADA	The Americans with Disabilities Act
BWC	Bureau of Workers' Compensation
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FY	Fiscal Year
GAPP	Grant Administration Policies and Procedure
ICQ	Internal Control Questionnaire
IRB	Institutional Review Board
NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NOA	Notice of Award
NOIAF	Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding
NPPTL	National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory
NSF	National Science Foundation
OIA	Oracle Intelligent Advisor
OSC	Other significant contributors
OSS	Ohio Shared Services
PFI	Partnerships for Innovation
PI	Principal Investigator
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPT	Personal Protective Technology
r2p	research to practice
WSIC	Workforce Safety Innovation Center

**ATTACHMENTS**

**[Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding](#)**

**[Project Budget Template](#)**

**[Biographical Sketch Template](#)**

**[Application Review Form](#)**

**[WSIC Grant Agreement Template](#)**

**[WSIC Grant Administration Policies and Procedures Manual](#)**