



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Perkins Nontraditional Occupations by Gender CTE Programs of Study Grants 2026 – 2027 Request for Proposals



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Grant Information	3
Application Details	5
Scoring Rubric	5
Notice Regarding Marketing Materials	6

Perkins Nontraditional Occupations by Gender CTE Programs of Study Demonstration Grants

Purpose and Overview

To create career awareness, recruit, and retain students within a career and technical education (CTE) program of study (**secondary + post-secondary**) that leads to a high skill, high wage, or in demand occupation that is nontraditional by gender. The term “nontraditional occupations” means occupations or fields of work for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in each such occupation or field of work. This one-time award is available to support CTE initiatives with a clear impact on students pursuing nontraditional programs.

Montana utilizes data from the Perkins Collaborative Resource Network Nontraditional Crosswalk for determining program eligible for nontraditional funding. You can visit the complete list here: <https://cte.ed.gov/accountability/linking-data>

The following are priority nontraditional occupations for the purpose of this RFP*:

Males

Nursing/Allied Health
Early Childhood Education/Teaching K-3

Females

Science, Technology, Engineering, Math
Manufacturing & Trades
Construction and Architecture
Culinary

*Please note, this list is not exclusive, you may apply for funds to support any specific career fields identified as nontraditional in the Nontraditional Crosswalk or with other substantial supporting data.

Grant Requirements at a Glance

Awards	Up to \$12,000
Eligible Entities	Only Perkins Eligible entities (school districts, two-year programs, tribal colleges, community colleges or consortia) in good standing are eligible to apply.
Grant Period	July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
Program Contact	Ciera Franks-Ongoy, Program Manager, Perkins Compliance & Student Success cfranksongoy@montana.edu (406) 449-9132
Allowable use of funds	Funds MAY be used to (list is not inclusive): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a pathway for earlier exposure to nontraditional careers at an earlier age

	<p>(middle grades)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit and rewrite curriculum in nontraditional programs to remove gender biases and be more inclusive • Purchase materials that create a more gender inclusive learning environment (i.e. smaller/female-sized equipment) • Assemble a Gender Equity Advisory Committee • Develop and implement a non-traditional after-school work experience or internship • Create engaging virtual career exploration activities, virtual mentoring experiences or intrastate nontraditional affinity/support groups • Provide or attend training about nontraditional careers and nonbiased counseling for CTE teachers, advisors, student services staff, instructors, and faculty • Bring nontraditional role models to high schools with CTE programs of study to describe their experiences to students • Pay for field trips to events, jobs or training centers featuring nontraditional workers • Provide secondary/postsecondary instructors with collaboration time to review and revise curriculum, program environment, or teaching strategies designed to recruit and retain nontraditional students • Implement new recruiting or retention strategies within a CTE Program of Study • Develop a mentor system using former students and/or current practitioners • Launch a nontraditional, field-specific newsletter or landing page (such as a woman in STEM newsletter)
Intrastate Collaboration	Collaboration between secondary and postsecondary institutions or between two or more postsecondary institutions is highly encouraged. Applications demonstrating intrastate partnerships will be given preference.
Nonallowable use of funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay for college tuition or fees • Pay for promotional materials such as T-shirts, cups or keychains • Pay for school-specific recruitment activities
Important Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application open period: June 2026 – May 1, 2027; or until funds are allocated, whichever is sooner. • Grant winners notified: Ongoing • Grant funds available: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027 • Final Narrative Report deadline: June 15, 2027 • Final Fiscal Closeout Report Due: August 15, 2027
Submission	Complete the 2026-2027 Montana Perkins Nontraditional by Gender application using the Excel application in your campus Perkins’ folder and inform Ciera Franks-Ongoy via email at cfranksongoy@montana.edu .

Application Details

Commitment of Participation, Reporting and Evaluation:

Full participation includes providing necessary reports, including quarterly and final reports that documents project activities, populations served, and outcomes achieved, as well as a final expenditure sheet at year end.

Application Materials and Instructions:

Application and budget forms are available in each institution's Perkin's folder.

Application Submission Process:

To be considered for funding, an **electronic version of the complete application must be uploaded to the campus Perkin's OneDrive folder or submitted via email to cfranksongoy@montana.edu.**

Application Scoring:

Grants will be considered starting June 2026 and approved on a rolling basis. An application must score 75 to receive approval.

Points	Category
35	Project Description A. Proposal identifies a CTE Program of Study that meets nontraditional occupations as defined by the RFP B. Timeline is clear and responsible parties are identified C. Major activities are described and meet the intent of the RFP D. Relationship between the project activities and the secondary and postsecondary components of CTE Program of Study are addressed
40	Outcomes & Evaluation A. Secondary or/& Postsecondary goals and outcomes are clear and match project activities B. Targeted student population is sufficient to meet project goals/outcomes C. Current project builds on previously funded activities (if applicable) D. Evaluation plan and activities are described E. Responsible parties for evaluation activities (data collection, final report) are identified
25	Budget A. Explanation for budget in the project description matches budget line items B. Budget details are thorough and accurate C. Proposed budget is reasonable D. Budget items are allowable pursuant to RFP guidelines
100	Total Maximum Points

Funds will be disbursed throughout the year on a first-come, first-served basis for eligible projects until all available funds have been spent.

Questions: For questions about the submission process, please contact Ciera Franks-Ongoy at cfranksongoy@montana.edu.

Notice Regarding Educational Marketing Materials

Please keep a couple things in mind with the educational marketing materials. When using federal funds, videos and any associated materials can't promote your college specifically in any way. Here are a few examples of what you can and can't do:

You can...	You can't...
Interview students or faculty wearing Gallatin College clothing	Have students or faculty identify as being "from Gallatin College" unless you are including other Montana schools in video as well.
Interview students or faculty with a Great Falls College sign in the background	Show a standalone shot/view of the front of Great Falls College (unless showing other Montana schools in video as well)
List/Show <u>all</u> schools in Montana where students can enroll in the highlighted programs	State that students are enrolled in highlighted programs at Helena College (without mentioning other schools)

A good rule of thumb is to remember that these videos will need to be made available for any Perkins schools in Montana to use to promote nontraditional careers if they want to, so the videos should be general enough that a college in Havre or a high school in Libby could also use it.

OCHE will need to review videos before we can reimburse for any video-related expenses. If you have any questions about content don't hesitate to give me a call and we can run through it.