

## **Future Ready Iowa**

### **Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

#### **FUTURE READY IOWA - GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **What is Future Ready Iowa?**

Future Ready Iowa is a workforce initiative that connects Iowans to the training and education required for good-paying jobs.

##### **Why?**

Education and training beyond high school is the new minimum. By 2025, 68% of Iowa jobs will require training and education beyond high school. Currently, 57.6% of Iowans in the workforce have education and training beyond high school.

To have the most future ready and capable workforce, we have to connect Iowans with opportunities to obtain training and education. This will help employers and the economy, but most importantly, it will help Iowans earn higher incomes and improve quality of life.

Iowa is experiencing a large skilled worker gap, especially in occupations that require education and training after high school. In Iowa, 54% of the jobs needed require this amount of training. However, only 34% of Iowans in the workforce have this type of technical training.

Future Ready Iowa is an initiative to address this skills gap and develop the workforce with the necessary technical and non-technical skills.

##### **What is the Future Ready Iowa goal?**

That 70% of Iowans in the workforce (ages 25-64) have education and training beyond high school by 2025.

##### **Who are we trying to reach?**

Adults with no previous education and training beyond high school, adults in the current workforce who need to upskill, underrepresented populations (minority populations, re-entering citizens, people with disabilities, refugees and immigrants) and traditional students.

#### **HIGH-DEMAND JOBS**

##### **What is the high-demand job list?**

The high-demand job list is a list of occupations approved by the State Workforce Board. It identifies jobs in Iowa that have a high number of annual openings, a high future growth rate, require some type of postsecondary education and training, and have a starting wage of \$14 per hour or higher.

##### **What is the purpose of the list?**

One purpose is to create awareness of the critical workforce shortages facing Iowa employers.

A second purpose is to identify the occupations for which the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship and Future Ready Iowa Grant programs will support for tuition assistance. This funding supports tuition for Iowans who will obtain education and training in fields experiencing critical shortages. It helps fill Iowa's high-demand jobs and allows individuals to make a good wage from the start.

#### **Why is truck driving not on the high-demand list?**

The occupations that require a CDL certificate are not on the list because the State Workforce Board only listed occupations where the training is eligible for federal Pell Grants. This is not the case with CDL certificates. The opportunity to provide training for this career path exists through the Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund (see below).

#### **Why are childcare and CNA occupations not on the list?**

While both of these occupations are in high demand across the state, the starting wages fall well below the \$14 per-hour requirement. The Future Ready Iowa Alliance (see below) recommended that scholarship- and grant-supported programs provide training for Iowans in higher-wage occupations.

Efforts are underway in many communities to address shortages in both of these occupations.

### **FUTURE READY IOWA FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **What is the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship?**

The goal of the Last-Dollar Scholarship program is to increase the number of Iowans with education or training beyond high school (up to a two-year degree) to fill high-demand jobs across the state. The scholarship will cover tuition – after all other non-repayable federal and state financial aid – for Iowans who enroll in one of numerous eligible programs leading to high-demand jobs. This effort is geared toward getting Iowans trained and in great careers (starting at a minimum of \$14 per hour), meeting the needs of Iowa employers and growing Iowa's economy.

How much funding has been allocated for this program? \$13,004,774

For more information, go to [www.futurereadyiowa.gov](http://www.futurereadyiowa.gov) and click on "Last-Dollar Scholarship."

#### **What is the Future Ready Iowa Grant program?**

The Future Ready Iowa Grant program provides tuition support to Iowans who have earned two years or more of a four-year degree in a high-demand field. Iowa has experienced employee shortages in several occupations requiring a four-year degree. This program will provide a minimum of \$1,000 for tuition support for individuals who finish four-year programs in high-demand fields.

How much funding has been allocated for this program? \$1 million

For more information, go to [www.futurereadyiowa.gov](http://www.futurereadyiowa.gov) and click on "Future Ready Iowa Grants."

#### **What is the difference between the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship list and the Future Ready Iowa Grant list?**

The primary difference is that funding is available for either a certificate/two-year degree program or four-year degree program.

The Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship list includes high-demand occupations that are approved by the State Workforce Board. Tuition will be covered for Iowans who pursue training and education (up to a two-year degree) in these fields.

The Future Ready Iowa Grant program list includes the high-demand occupations that are approved by the State Workforce Board. The program provides tuition support for Iowans going back to school to obtain four-year degrees in high-demand fields.

### **What is the Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund?**

The Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund is a grant opportunity for community partners to work together and carry out creative initiatives to address local workforce issues. This matching grant is available to qualifying applicants.

How much funding has been allocated for this program? \$1.2 million

## **APPRENTICESHIPS**

### **What is a registered apprenticeship?**

A registered apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with related classroom instruction. This model allows the registered apprentice to earn a paycheck from day one.

### **How do I find out more about these opportunities?**

For more information, visit [www.earnandlearniowa.gov](http://www.earnandlearniowa.gov).

### **I thought apprenticeships were only for construction jobs?**

There are registered apprenticeship programs in more than 1,000 occupations, including fields such as energy, information technology, health care, transportation, advanced manufacturing, food and beverage preparation, and the building trades.

### **Do I have to be in a union to be in a registered apprenticeship?**

No. Registered apprenticeships are widely used across all industries, both union and non-union programs.