

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (“Triumph Gulf Coast”) has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: The Northwest Florida State College

Brief Description of Background of Organization: NWF State College started in 1964 and has become a premier two year state Florida State College who has earned a reputation for educational excellence and community involvement. As part of Florida's public system of 28 state and community colleges, NWF State College offers bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees, and certificates. The college delivers outstanding educational and career and technical workforce programs that are relevant, accessible, and engaging for students of all ages and provide exceptional cultural, athletic, and economic development activities for the communities served. The college is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Contact Information:

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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: Dr. Paul Hsu

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

Northwest Florida State College Regional Triumph Gulf Coast Trifecta Proposal

“An Economic Transformer-Skilled Workforce”

The devastating disaster of the Deep Water Horizon oil spill wreaked havoc on the region’s economy, as well as on its environment. Tourism dropped over 20% and over 1500 businesses filed loss claims, zero significant new businesses moved in the area, and families were abruptly left without income. The financial devastation to businesses and families conclusively demands that community leaders diversify the region’s economy and facilitate a skilled workforce pipeline. Therefore, Northwest Florida State College (the College) has collaborated with local economic and community leaders, along with workforce boards and the region’s elected officials, to produce the Triumph Gulf Coast Regional Trifecta Proposal (the Proposal). The Proposal will transform the region’s economy by creating a skilled, sustainable, growth-oriented workforce; implementing strategies to cultivate economic diversification and resilience; and generating a highly skilled, qualified workforce for new business ventures. Essential to this transformation are new career education programs, developed based on economic forecasting and industry input, which will develop this skilled workforce pipeline and thus stimulate economic growth. These programs will strengthen the regional economy while at the same time offering those whose lives were disrupted by the Spill an opportunity to rebuild. We envision that these educational programs and the resulting skilled workforce will attract industry to the area and offer existing businesses employees who hold the technical and soft skills that facilitate economic growth and development. These programs will

- ensure that graduates possess technological skills necessary for high skill, high wage jobs,
- provide affected citizens with pathways to industry certifications that result in higher salaries,
- equip graduates with transferable, sustainable employability skills that are not confined to a single employer,
- and increase the educational attainment level and the average income in the region.

Project Description: The proposal’s total budget of \$22.63M will enable Northwest Florida State College to create three Centers of Excellence and stand up 14 workforce training programs leading to 4 associate degrees and 24 certificates. The project will start 60 days from awarded funds received as a developmental phase as the centers expand to produce a ready workforce. The funding periods will be in a two-phase period. Infrastructure and facility construction will begin immediately upon funds awarded and equipment procurements will begin and continue with all assets being delivered during the first year set-up period. College leadership is already engaged in academic workforce programming and has identified the necessary resources to ensure that students are successful and that employer expectations

are met. The Centers of Excellence will be strategically located to leverage and enhance existing key regional assets such as regional workforce boards, employers, K-12 career and technical programs, economic development entities, local governments, non-profits, and the military. These key assets provide an effective, multi-pronged career pathway model to develop a skilled workforce. The first Center of Excellence, the Advanced Technology Center, will be located in Crestview at the Crestview Airpark and will house programs for Aviation Maintenance, Advanced Manufacturing (Mechatronics), Automation, Electronics, and Pneumatic Hydraulics Motors. The second Center, Simulated City, will be located in DeFuniak Springs and will replicate a small city environment and house training programs for Building Construction Management, Natural Gas Operations and Distribution, Waste Water Treatment, Agribusiness, and a first responders Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Systems operator's certification. The third Center, the Hospitality and Culinary Arts Training Institute, will be located at the College's Fort Walton Beach Campus and will house training for two Associate degree programs and 11 certificate programs. The Proposal spans 12 counties that include all 8 disproportionately affected counties, providing skills training to benefit the entire region.

The centers will house 14 workforce programs for 19 occupations in four targeted industries: Aerospace, CleanTech, Homeland Security, and Manufacturing and builds a higher skilled workforce in the hospitality and tourism industries. All 19 occupations meet current job demands and future business growth markets promoting job diversification. These occupations expand beyond the tourism and defense industry sectors, thus increasing the job market and providing a highly skilled multigenerational talent pool. Certified graduates will earn higher entry level wages and will look forward to income above the region's current average of \$48,567. Six occupations are classified as high skill/high wage, and another six exceed the region's median wages. Of the 22,124 job openings listed in Florida's Department of Economics (FDOE) 2017-2018 Regional Demand Occupational Listing, graduates will be trained to fill over one-quarter of the openings. Even though graduates would be able to fill aviation, advanced manufacturing, or building construction type jobs, these occupational skills also align with other commercial industries in logistics and supply chain operations. Initial return on investment in a five-year period is more than \$13M. The investment brings an increase in tax revenue, higher skilled wage jobs for families, and provides confidence to external business seeking to expand or relocate due to the resource pipeline available and in place. The project will also impact the hospitality and tourism sector. FDOE calculated that for every 76 visitors 1 new job is created, and the jobs are spread across diverse industries. As hospitality and tourism industry grow at a rapid rate, the project will produce skilled professional graduates whom are trained and approved through industry-based certifications to fill these immediate jobs.

The Proposal's 14 workforce programs will educate a multigenerational workforce through strategic recruitment practices. Marketing and recruitment will target multiple generations across populations including minorities, veterans, dislocated workers, and disabled workers. High school graduates and adult learners will be given the opportunity to succeed in workforce training programs that result in a meaningful career in any one of five high-demand industry sectors.

Current partnerships include Gulf Power, Chelco, Walton County Commissioners (\$1M), Crestview Technology Air Park (Dr. Paul Hsu-\$500K), Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council-Okaloosa, Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association, Okaloosa County Tourist Development Council, Dale Peterson Resorts (\$25K), Retired General Donald Litke (\$100K) and nine other committed partners. Supportive partnerships committed \$1.18M to date and the College has committed a match of \$5M. NWF State College is currently working with additional partners to obtain in-kind contributions for each of the academic programs.

NWF State College's effectiveness in producing a highly skilled workforce has been well documented. In 2013, an EMSI study noted that taxpayers see a rate of return of 14.0% on their investment in NWF State College and concluded that the accumulated credits earned by NWF State College students over the past 29 years translate to \$332.3 million in added regional income each year due to students' higher earnings and increased output of businesses' increased productivity. The College is ranked among the nation's best two-year colleges for adult learners in the 2017 Washington Monthly College Guide. In 2017, the College was once again named as one of the Top 150 community colleges from a pool of more than 1,200 colleges in the nation by the Aspen Institute, which recognizes high achievement and performance among America's community colleges, and the College is advancing to the next round of the 2017 competition.

The regional economy was devastated by the Deep Horizon Oil Spill; and since then, leaders have been trying to discover and implement methods to strengthen and diversify the economy. While some changes have been made, funds have just not been available in large enough amounts to be able to make a true and lasting positive impact. This project will build on the strengths existing in the tourism industry by stepping up the skills and qualifications to produce a strong workforce pipeline, and it will develop new programs to build a workforce to attract new business to the area through the Advanced Technology Center and the Simulated City. Regional labor market analysis and data reports clearly indicate the need and direction and confirm this proposal's intent and purpose. The Trifecta project will significantly contribute to the transformation of the Northwest Florida economy by diversifying the job market, increasing wages through producing a highly qualified multigenerational talent pool, and by enhancing the region by attracting new business/industry opportunities. The place is here. The time is now.