



The Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA)

The Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA) distributes funds to qualified companies across the Commonwealth for workforce training. The training gives employees an opportunity to advance their skills and productivity, and also helps businesses remain competitive. WEDnetPA has developed a job training network with 25 partners, including nine universities in the Pennsylvania State System of High Education, 14 community colleges throughout the commonwealth, Pennsylvania College of Technology and North Central PA Regional Planning & Development Commission.

Overview

Workforce training is an invaluable tool for a strong business. A [report](#) produced by the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania concluded that there is a ripple effect associated with improving the skills of incumbent workers. According to the report, workers become more productive, and in some cases promoted to higher positions within the company; thus, creating new employment opportunities for other workers. In general, recipients of this training program support this claim, as exhibited by a feedback survey in 2018/19. Of the 413 companies that received WEDnetPA training funds and that responded to the feedback survey:

- 85 percent described improved product/ service quality within their workplace
- 72 percent saw an increase in employee moral
- 37 percent reported that the training aided in job retention
- 35 percent attributed training to employee pay raises
- 34 percent noted that the training led to employee promotions

Since the inception of WEDnetPA, 1.23 million workers have been trained, 20,683 companies have been served and 33,525 contracts have been completed. As displayed in Figure #1, 30,460 employees were trained and \$7,896,801 in funds were invested in 2018/19.

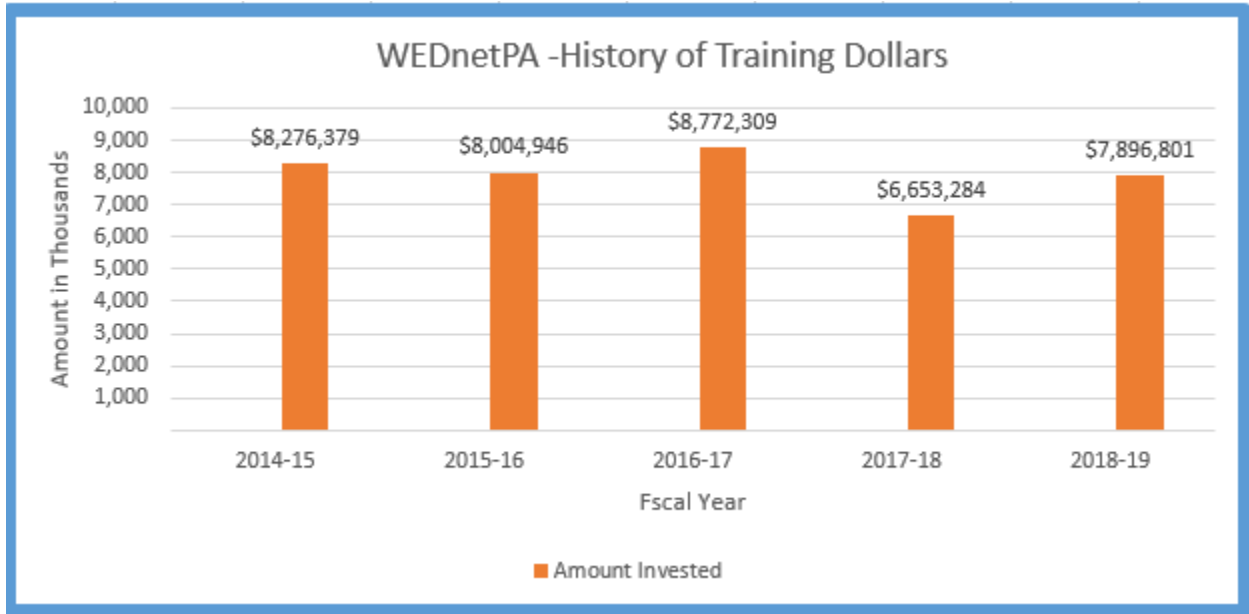
Figure #1

FY 2018/19 Company Size	Funds Invested	%	Employees Trained	%	Companies	%
Less than 100 employees	\$2,578,247	32.6%	7,677	25.5%	403	54.1%
101 to 250 employees	\$1,831,769	23.2%	8,030	26.4%	157	22.4%
251 to 500 employees	\$1,483,910	18.8%	7,802	25.6%	102	13.7%
More than 500 employees	\$2,002,875	25.4%	6,951	22.8%	73	98%
Total	\$7,896,801	100%	30,360	100%	745	100%

Source: <http://www.wednetpa.com/pubs/2020/WEDnetPA-AnnualReport.pdf>

In recent years, WEDnetPA has invested a consistent amount of funding into businesses throughout the commonwealth, as demonstrated in Figure #2. The decrease in training dollars in 2017/18 can be attributed to the overall decrease in the program’s funding source, as illustrated in Figure #3.

Figure #2



Funding

Funding for this program is provided by the Pennsylvania First appropriation within the Department of Community and Economic Development’s budget. As demonstrated in Figure #3, the funding level for the PA First appropriation has been reasonably consistent. In the 2020/21 executive budget, Governor Wolf proposed a new \$10 million WEDnetPA appropriation, which would be achieved by shifting the current \$8 million in funding from the PA First appropriation and increasing the overall funding to the program by \$2 million. As of now, the commonwealth has implemented a five-month stop-gap budget for Fiscal Year 2020/2021. Consequently, WEDnetPA was not funded as a separate appropriation, as proposed by Gov. Wolf. Instead, WEDnetPA continues to receive funding through the PA First appropriation, which was funded at \$13.33 million (5/12ths of the amount appropriated in 2019/20).

Figure #3

WEDnetPA Funding History								
Fiscal year	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Executive Budget 2020/21	5/12 Budget
Pennsylvania First	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$32,000	\$12,000	\$13,333
WEDnetPA*	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$10,000	\$0

FY 2020/2021 Guidelines

The guidelines for WEDnetPA have changed significantly in comparison to previous years. In accordance with the new guidelines, the training grant amount has increased to \$2,000 per employee and up to \$100,000 per company. Previously, employers only received up to \$450 per employee for essential training and \$850 per employee for advanced technology training.



Employers are able to choose their training, the trainer and the training method. Trainings can be conducted in a classroom or online. In addition, trainings can be provided by a private sector trainer, any of the 25 certified WEDnetPA partners, or the business' own qualified in-house staff.

WEDnetPA's 25 certified partners serve as a point of contact for businesses seeking funding. Partners are strategically located throughout the commonwealth to ensure that every company has equal access to providers. Partners include:

Certified Partners		
1. Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania	10. Edinboro University of Pennsylvania	19. Northampton Community College
2. Bucks County Community College	11. HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College	20. Pennsylvania College of Technology
3. Butler County Community College	12. Indiana University of Pennsylvania	21. Pennsylvania Highlands Community College
4. Clarion University of Pennsylvania	13. Kutztown University of Pennsylvania	22. Reading Area Community College
5. Community College of Allegheny County	14. Lehigh Carbon Community College	23. Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
6. Community College of Beaver County	15. Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania	24. West Chester University of Pennsylvania
7. Community College of Philadelphia	16. Luzerne County Community College	25. Westmoreland County Community College
8. Delaware County Community College	17. Montgomery County Community College	
9. East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania	18. North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission	

Eligible entities
Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture and Food Production, Bio-Medical, Building and Construction, Business Services, Energy, Healthcare, Logistics and Transportation, Manufacturing, Real Estate, Finance and Insurance, Wood, Wood Products and Publishing
Bank Headquarters
Healthcare facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted living and personal care facilities, Home healthcare services, Hospice services, Mental health facilities, Nursing homes, Primary-care hospitals, Rehabilitation hospitals
Some unions and labor organizations may qualify



Company Eligibility	Employee Eligibility	Training Eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is limited to two years in a row or three out of the past five years • Must be in Pennsylvania • Must be an eligible industry • An annual full- time employee turnover rate less than 25 percent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a resident of and employed in Pennsylvania • Earn at least \$10.88/ hr., excluding benefits • A full- time employee and eligible for full- time benefits • Be an employee of the specific company location that receives the award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be skill building training for current job, advancement or promotion • Must state on or after July 1, 2020 and be completed on or before June 30, 2021 • Each training session must be a minimum of 30 minutes in length

For DCED's official guidelines and the application process, please visit: <https://dced.pa.gov/download/wednet-company-guidelines/?wpdmdl=58765>

