The Metallica Scholars Initiative (MSI) is managed by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) with funding from the Metallica’s All Within My Hands (AWMH) Foundation. ([https://allwithinmyhands.org/](https://allwithinmyhands.org/)) with the purpose to:

- upskill Americans using community colleges which are the most affordable, flexible, and industry-relevant applied-learning training providers in the country

- reinvest in the communities that supported Metallica by connecting students to skill-building opportunities while growing the local tax-base of those regions, and bridging the talent needs of the American workforce all while utilizing the community college system

- leverage the staggering influence of the leadership of Metallica to elevate the importance of career and technical education

AACC intends to work with eight (8) new locations during June 2021 – May 31, 2022. Each of these sites will identify their unique labor market needs and target student populations. Given AACC’s workforce and economic development efforts with over 1,100 community colleges, industry associations and affiliated industry partners, AACC will coach each site through monthly conference calls, site visits where necessary, and provide customized technical support for each college. As a collective group, AACC will convene the eight (8) sites twice annually, the first virtually in the fall of 2021 and the second in conjunction with AACC’s annual Workforce Development Institute (WDI 2022) in Jacksonville, Fl.

The technical assistance provided by AACC will be gleaned from previous national efforts and will involve subject-matter experts where necessary. Working in partnership with AACC and AWMH Foundation, these best practices will be documented and disseminated for scaling to the wider network of AACC’s membership and other channels as AWMH Foundation sees as appropriate. Each of the colleges will be tasked with promoting their efforts to build the branding for career and technical education (e.g. local, regional, or statewide media) to elevate the visibility of the initiative as a whole. AACC and AWMH Foundation will coordinate to identify and support the selected colleges with templates and strategies on how to design and disseminate appropriate messages nationally.

AACC intends to work side-by-side with AWMH Foundation to revolutionize the branding of career and technical education using the power and skills of a multi-media campaign designed together with the foundation. Without question, the leadership of the foundation and the channels that are available to engage new partners is astounding. AACC will work with the eight (8) selected colleges to ensure consistent alignment and transparency throughout the year of working together. Please note that all print, broadcast and online communications, including various elements of social media must be approved in writing prior to use and are subject to a media embargo date.
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS**

Applications are invited from only the following entities. Applications from organizations that do not fall into this category will not be reviewed.

Applicants must be current AACC member community colleges and ensure membership within AACC during the period of performance of this initiative. If you are unsure if your community college is currently an AACC member, please go to the AACC’s community college finder page at https://www.aacc.nche.edu/college-finder/

If you have any questions about these requirements, please contact Jen Worth at jworth@aacc.nche.edu.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND FORMAT**

Applications should be submitted electronically in one e-mail to Jen Worth at jworth@aacc.nche.edu by **Friday, June 4, 2021 by noon ET**.

The subject line of your e-mail should be: AACC_AWMH_METALLICA SCHOLARS [INSERT YOUR COLLEGE NAME HERE]

Applicants will submit their responses to the RFP in a 100 point-valued application. Ten pages maximum on 8.5”x11” paper in single-spaced Calibri font 11-point.

**REQUIRED RESPONSE ELEMENTS**

- Section 1. President or CEO Support Letter (5 Points)
- Section 2. Sector Specific Need and Capacity (10 Points)
- Section 3. Target Population and Impact Strategy (10 Points)
- Section 4. Partner Leveraging and Industry Engagement for Sustainability Planning (30 Points)
- Section 5. Media/Communication Capacity (20 Points)
- Section 6. Evaluation. Metrics on Student Participation and Outcomes (20)
- Section 7. Project Budget and Narrative (5 Points)

**Note:** Incomplete and late applications will not be reviewed.

**REVIEW CRITERIA AND BENEFITS**

AACC and AWMH Foundation will review all applications and score them on the 100 point scale. At least three reviewers will score every application. The final colleges will be selected with the funder’s approval. **AACC intends to notify applicants (selected and non-selected) by June 2021 with a coordinated and approved public press release by July 2021.**

Selected sites will receive:
- Regular technical assistance by AACC on identifying, implementing and leveraging collaborative opportunities with local and national partners. This technical assistance will be conducted through collective phone calls, video conference meetings, individual regular touch-points with
each college engaged, and mobilizing of colleges with associated national partners at virtual and in-person convenings.

- $100,000 for initiative support. To be clear, funds are intended to be used primarily for direct student support. Funds may be used for college personnel time, and staff travel expenses in conjunction with the two convenings, however, the majority of the funds are intended to ensure students receive skills that will make them competitive in the marketplace. Purchase of student safety gear, learning materials, scholarships or tuition offset, etc. are all eligible.
- Coordination on national level showcasing of how this work is elevating the dignity of career and technical education across the country.

**SECTION 1. PRESIDENT OR CEO COVER LETTER (5 POINTS)**

Applicant must provide a cover letter stating the president or CEO’s support for the college engaging in this initiative with a statement of the leader’s a commitment to engage with this national initiative. Please note that the college president or CEO will be the individual informed if the application is selected.

Please provide the following:

- Assurance that the college agrees to accept AACC’s and funder’s media and publicity policies and abide by the media embargo and may not publish, post, broadcast or distribute embargoed news releases or details of the award prior to the end of the embargo.
- Commitment to be engaged with this initiative together with AACC and AWMH Foundation.
- Commitment to capture individual student stories and employer stories for larger communication plan across all sites.
- Commitment to participate in the national AACC Workforce Development Institute showcasing these practices to the wider AACC membership.
- Any additional hopes you would like to achieve during your time as one of eight (8) sites if selected to elevate the importance of career and technical education.

**SECTION 2. STATEMENT OF SECTOR SPECIFIC NEED AND CAPACITY (10 POINTS)**

Please provide the following:

- Local community and labor market needs - Summarize the geographic region to be served and describe the current labor market your college is operating within.
- Sector specific needs - Identify what sector-specific education and training pipeline you will choose based on industry need. Include local labor market data from any source that supports your argument that you may have, such as the primary industry or sector that does or would employ the region and current education levels, unemployment rates, annual earnings, etc., as compared to the state or national averages relative to sector focus.
• External capacity – Summarize your existing industry partners that you might draw into this work, or new ones that you might bring into this work, as you use these funds to support new networks of students going through training, education, upskilling and job placement or advancement.

• Internal capacity – Provide a brief bio of key program staff currently capable to manage this work for your organization and their expertise as well as what percentage of their time would be focused on it. If multiple people, include multiple bios and approximate time from each person. If you do not have any current staff in place and are likely to hire a new person, please share the typical timetable for hiring at your institution, and send a sample of a recent job description that is as close to a project manager for review.

**SECTION 3. TARGET POPULATION AND IMPACT STRATEGY (10 POINTS)**

Please provide the following:

• General population at your institution (average size annually, credit and non-credit students, and general demographic breakdowns).

• Within the larger student body, please describe the cohort of students you are seeking to serve as part of this initiative by “type” (e.g. single-mothers, veterans) or “focus-area” (e.g. welding students).

• How will having additional funds for these students enable these students to be more effectively engaged, supported to persist, and help them complete their programs?

• Specific activities for college to conduct for each of the students involved showing individual student impact (versus infrastructure impact) of the college.

• Project milestones and successes during each of the four quarters of the 1 year grant.

• Define how many students you see these funds impacting in a direct fashion. The following are used only as examples and are not meant to limit the applicant’s ideas. Again, the bulk of the funds are intended to go to student supports directly, not to the infrastructure of the college, so please do show metrics that will become goals for your work during this timeframe:
  o ### students would receive the 4 critical textbooks for [insert course here] which is approximately $XXX in value and often a cause for students stopping out of the program, or having to share, so all students don’t always come prepared for exams.
  o ### students would receive their personal protective equipment which is required for them to purchase as part of their coursework. Because this is a cost of $XXX, several students come with unsafe/aged/or no equipment and cannot proceed through class.
  o ### students would receive a scholarship of $XXX which is approximately 50% off of the full cost of the program thereby allowing them to still participate while having “skin in the game” with their own funds.
  o ### students would have their XXX industry exam paid for out of these funds to support them getting a license to practice.
**SECTION 4. PARTNER LEVERAGING AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING (30 POINTS)**

For the first three rounds of this work, AWMH/AACC has incrementally reduced the amount of grant funds to each site after their first year of work while also increasing the expectations of the college to bring sustainable resources to their local MSI work. As a potential MSI partner, please briefly describe the companies that you would desire to incorporate into your MSI work for future years. If no companies are appropriate, what sustainability plan would you consider to incorporate those financial expectations to remain in the MSI in future years (e.g. seek an external foundation, incorporate into the institution, utilize alumni network, etc.)?

Additionally, please indicate methods to engage local industry in your MSI plans. Historically, colleges have coordinated with industry partners on any of the following, or others as you might find effective in your community:

- High-impact virtual and in-person job fairs or recruitment events for the trades;
- Specialized celebration events promoting student skills in career and technical education;
- Unique methods to elevate role models and/or champions to draw in new students to a profession.

**SECTION 5. MEDIA/COMMUNICATION CAPACITY (20 POINTS)**

Please provide the following:

- If one exists, please describe the communications team at your college, and if there is a point person, please share their name and contact information.
- Marketing opportunities to leverage the visibility of the initiative in local markets
- Describe how your college has done successful local, regional or statewide media approaches in the past. What channels are the most effective of late for you and your partners (websites, print, radio, social media)?
- What additional ideas, methods or venues do you think would be valuable to elevate the initiative in your community?
- Confirmation that your college understands and agrees to use the customizable media templates, student success stories and structures, and other frameworks to discuss and elevate consistent visibility throughout this grant. Please acknowledge that local stories will be provided to AACC and from AACC to AWMH Foundation offices prior to release for approval.

**SECTION 6. EVALUATION. METRICS ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND OUTCOMES. (20 POINTS)**

Applicants will outline the targets for this project to show progressive goals are being met and quarterly reporting will occur. Targets must be sound and relevant to the local labor market and result in the achievement of the overall project objectives. These include individuals gaining relevant skills in demand by employers; employers gaining access to qualified program completers becoming employed in areas of training and certification. These areas are aligned with the goals of MSI to demonstrate student access and attainment of industry specified skills training, support services, certifications, and employment. Please project annual goals below in chart form as part of your proposal (see sample).
**Student-Specific Outcomes:**

Please indicate total numbers of:

a. Participants to be served
b. Demographics of participants to be served (e.g. Gender, Ethnicity, Age)
c. Participants receiving occupational skills training and specify the key occupational areas participants will focus within (program of study)
d. Participants receiving wraparound supports (assessment and career counseling services, food pantry, childcare, financial literacy)
e. Specific credential(s) or certifications to be gained

**Employment Outcomes:**

Please indicate total impact on:

a. Full or part time job placement of participants to be served
b. Estimated hourly salary of participants pre and post-MSI
c. As possible, worker retention information at 30, 60, 90 days
d. Key industry partner/s in the community to whom the MSI will provide talent pipelines

**SECTION 7. PROJECT BUDGET AND NARRATIVE (5 POINTS)**

Applicants must provide a budget and budget narrative for $100,000 for 1 year of work starting in June 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022. This cycle will allow the colleges to wrap their final financial statements for 30 days prior to AACC having to submit final reporting to the funder.

The intent of this grant is to directly benefit students. Please again remember, the majority of the funds are to be focused on student impact, not college infrastructure.

Please plan for:

- Required travel – colleges should plan for a minimum of two consistent staff participating in the in-person meetings at AACC’s annual Workforce Development Institute (3-days/2-nights) meeting.
- Required personnel – colleges should plan to have presence on regular group and individual calls, video conference meetings, webinars, as well as to contribute to shared products and be receptive to technical assistance and modification of their activities based on findings from the shared group.

*Please use the template provided below for submission of budget and budget narrative.*

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