



## **Request for Applications Career Coach Continuation and Expansion Grant**

### **Background and Overview**

Funding for “a career coaching program to support middle schools and high schools as students are exposed, prepared and connected to career avenues within and beyond the classroom setting” was originally approved through House Bill 1388 (Mississippi Legislature, 2022). Enabling legislation calls for strong partnerships with economic and business leaders, in viable relationships with school districts, to deploy career coaches to target the alignment of students’ strengths with intentional academic and work-based learning in pursuit of meaningful professional employment. The priority of the Career Coaching Initiative is to increase student knowledge of and access to quality jobs measured by student enrollment and completion of aligned programs and employment in aligned occupations and sectors.

The Office of Workforce Development, known commonly as Accelerate Mississippi (AccelerateMS), requests applications for grant funding from Local Workforce Development Areas, non-profit organizations with proven accountability for federal and state funds, economic development foundations, and/or local community-based organizations with experience managing federal grants to support career coaches in local public secondary schools.

The intent of this Request for Applications is to both continue and potentially expand coaching efforts through partnerships that may be eligible for additional funding in the future. To continue the program, it will be necessary to reduce associated costs and acquire additional local support. Grant funds shall be awarded to serve July 1, 2024, until June 30, 2025, with the potential of extending until June 30, 2026, pending available funds and satisfactory performance.

### **AccelerateMS will provide:**

- Funding for approved costs, including career coach wages and fringe benefits, travel expenses in accordance with State of Mississippi travel policy, program management, and reasonable expenses for equipment and materials necessary to deploy coaching supports.
- Regular support and coordination of coaching activities through AccelerateMS’s Youth Programs Manager, and with coordinators as needed.
- Memorandum of Understanding that must be executed by the Grant Intermediary and Partnering School District prior to placement of coach in a school.

### **Priority may be given to eligible applicants based on the following criteria:**

- Existing sub-recipients operating in partnership with schools showing a proven, positive career coach performance record.
- Proposals detailing expanding access to partnering schools without a career coach.
- Proposals detailing the enhancement of coach to student ratio in regions of documented need.

- Proposals identifying within the application narrative how the career coaching initiative will impact priority sectors and AccelerateMS priority occupations, including interactions with associated companies/leaders for tours, internships, classroom engagements, mentoring, etc.
  - Applications must include what data will be collected from career coach engagements to show mitigation of identified gaps.
- Evaluation of existing sub-recipients from key stakeholders (i.e. schools, community stakeholders, participants, etc.); and/or
- Proposals detailing leveraged, local funds from sources other than state or federal sources.

Documented evidence of need and partnerships must be provided detailing, at a minimum:

- Existing Memorandum of Understanding between the applicant, superintendent(s), and participating school(s).
- Strong connection with the local community.
- Data detailing the proposed region’s student population that will benefit, and
- Priority sector industry participation (e.g. student and career coach tours, industry engagement through classroom speakers, paid internship or work-based learning experiences for students; in-class, hands-on engagement, career fairs, etc.).

**Eligible Costs:**

- Coach wages and approved fringe benefits.
- Appropriate travel expenses in accordance with State of Mississippi travel policy.
- Reasonable program management expenses (i.e. coach manager wages and approved benefits; justified percentages of time for accounting, information technology, and other pertinent support personnel).
- Approved equipment and materials.

**By submitting an application, potential Awardee understands, as a condition of approval and continued funding, it must ensure:**

- Recipient proposes and operates a quality career coaching initiative focused on providing exposure to all occupation opportunities while strengthening the understanding of priority sectors and AccelerateMS identified priority occupations to ensure students are aware of local opportunities paying at or above the local workforce development area or state’s average wage that may or may not require post-secondary education.
- Recipient educates school and community stakeholders on the local labor market, including priority occupations identified by AccelerateMS and promotes the alignment of the College and Career Readiness course and Work-Based Learning course with local constituent needs.
- Career coaches will be seen as partners in the education of students and will work collaboratively with local school counselors to ensure the success of students and the program.
- Career coaches will participate in a minimum of one statewide face-to-face convening each year organized by AccelerateMS.
- Workspace for career coaches that includes:
  - Privacy for meetings
  - Ease of access for students and
  - Access to school Wi-Fi

- Career coaches will have access to relevant student data in the district student information system data via login or through the school counselor, depending on local policy and terms of the annual MOU (Appendix A) signed with the district.
- Career coaches must be housed in a location where the general student population has regular and convenient access, preferably not at a career and technical center.
- School leadership and career coaches should collaborate with other schools that are assigned career coaches to improve use of best practices.
- By submitting an application, the potential Awardee herein acknowledges and understands that AccelerateMS is not required to award any or all of the amount requested. Moreover, AccelerateMS, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to issue awards based on any criteria it deems relevant and on the overall programmatic needs within the State of Mississippi relative to the illustrated capacities and abilities of the Awardees, and in order to ensure broad geographic distribution of coaches to support local community needs.
- NOTE: Awardees may not claim more than 10% of the grant award in indirect cost/administrative fees.

**By submitting an application, potential Awardee understands, as a condition of approval and continued funding, it must ensure the career coach understands his or her duty to carry out the following tasks and is provided the necessary resources, access, and authority to do so:**

- Share data with AccelerateMS as needed to meet reporting requirements.
- Meet one on one with students to determine academic and career goals.
- Have students review <https://mspathfinder.org> (or other current websites) as directed by AccelerateMS in order to determine interests and learn about postsecondary options.
- Screen and assist students in applying for priority sector internships and apprenticeships in their area.
- Have students create an online profile on the Wings website (commonly known as Mississippi Works).
- Plan, develop, and implement exploration opportunities, including college campus visits, industry visits, parent sessions, and similar activities.
- Work directly with the local community college(s) and university(ies) to connect students to applicable programs as identified by AccelerateMS and the state workforce plan.
- Connect priority industry representatives to participants through job shadowing and mentoring opportunities for further career exploration and to build interest in local workforce opportunities.
- Assist students in understanding durable skills and how they are important to being successful in the workplace.
- Improve participant resume writing and interviewing skills.
- Work with economic developers, businesses, associations, and local and state agencies to promote the program and build connections to local industries.
- Plan, develop, and implement programs, working directly with parents of participants to educate them on workforce opportunities and educational opportunities (including available financing of these) for their children.
- Plan, develop, and implement strategies to reach high school graduates who have not obtained a higher education certificate, diploma, or degree and assist them in obtaining post-high school certification.
- Maintain accurate and complete records of participant interactions, events, and all other work assignments.
- Ensure appropriate data collection and prepare reports on students and activities as required.

- Become a contact for parents and students.

**Career Coach Program Intended Outcomes:**

- Increased percentage of students participating in high-quality, priority sector work-based learning opportunities.
- Increased percentage of non-traditional learners exposed to CTE programs (where non-traditional learners are defined in Perkins V as learners who are enrolled in CTE programs that are preparing for them for career fields that are non-traditional for their gender, meaning that individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of those employed in that occupation or field).
- Increased percentage of students enrolling in, and completing, priority sector CTE programs.
- Increased percentage of students obtaining jobs in priority sectors or occupations.
- Increased percentage of students placed in priority sector aligned postsecondary opportunities, workforce opportunities, and/or military opportunities.
- Increased percentage of priority sector and occupation guest speakers.
- Increased percentage of students receiving priority occupation and sector certificates.
- Decreased percentage of students who leave high school without a diploma or plan.

**Program Metrics to Support the Outcomes of Career Coach Program:**

- Beginning of school year CTE enrollment numbers by program (one time report)
- Post class scheduling CTE enrollment numbers by program (one time report)
- One-on-one interactions with students
- Number of students assisted with making career plans (total and in priority sectors)
- Number of students provided assistance with college and financial aid applications (total and in priority sectors)
- Number of students exposed to career opportunities in group sessions with business and industry guest speakers and/or through site visits to local employers and community college CTE/workforce programs (total and in priority sectors)
- Number of parent workshops and activities
- Number of referrals to outside support service (WIOA, community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, etc.)

**Important Dates and Deadlines:**

Event	Date/Deadline
Release of RFA	April 1, 2024
Deadline for Submission	May 3, 2024
Intent to Award Notification	May 15, 2024
Final Deadline for Signed MOUs	June 14, 2024
Final Award Notification	June 21, 2024

Applications must be submitted via email to [bwheeler@acceleratems.org](mailto:bwheeler@acceleratems.org) by 5:00 p.m. CT on May 3, 2024.

Questions should be directed to Bree Wheeler at [bwheeler@acceleratems.org](mailto:bwheeler@acceleratems.org) by 5:00 p.m. CT on April 12, 2023. Responses will be posted online no later than April 19, 2024.



**Career Coach Grant Application**  
**Deadline for Submission: Friday, May 3, 2024, 5:00 pm CT**

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): \_\_\_\_\_

A UEI 12-character, alpha-numeric code assigned by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to individual businesses applying for grant money, or government assistance.

Is this organization a new applicant for the AccelerateMS career coaching program, or is this an application to sustain and expand career coach activities launched in the 2022-23 school year through the AccelerateMS career coach grant?

New

Sustain / Expand

**ALL applicants complete 1 – 6. Please answer the following questions on a separate document.**

1. Provide a list of schools (not districts) with which you plan to partner. Include the total number of coaches (AMS funded and any others, including funding source) that will be working the school.
2. Name of the community college(s), university(ies), and/or apprenticeship sponsor(s) with which you plan to partner.
3. Define the needs within the local workforce and describe how career coaches will be deployed to meet AccelerateMS Priority occupations.
4. Describe the intended outcomes for the community of the applicant that career coaches intend to address. Detail how data will be collected, reported, and shared to ensure local outcomes are met.

5. Complete the attached memorandum of understanding (to be signed by the superintendent and principal of each participating school).
6. Submit a funding amount request along with a project schedule and budget, a budget narrative must be included detailing the request and associated costs.

**NEW applicants complete 1-6 & 7 – 10.**

7. Describe your organization’s experience carrying out projects funded by state and/or federal grants, including previously awarded grants by funder and amount. Include statements regarding how your organization will adhere to state and/or federal guidelines governing the proper use of award funds, proper internal controls, and adherence to record keeping requirements and reporting.
8. Describe your community in terms of demographics for the school(s) that the career coach will serve. Include information regarding students receiving free or reduced lunches as well as English language learners. Be sure to include this information for each school being identified in the application for career coach support.
9. Describe how the school is utilizing the College and Career Readiness course and Work-Based Learning course. How will the applicant and local school district collaborate to enhance these efforts?
10. What challenges do you anticipate in implementing the career coaching program and what are some ways you plan to overcome them?

**ALL Applicants:** Add more relevant information that you would like to share with the selection committee regarding your application and associated anticipated outcomes that will be measured.

**All applicants complete the Program Schedule and Project Budget.**

**Program Schedule:**

<b>Program Dates</b>	
Date of Program Launch	Key Deliverables by Date: projects are 0funded for one (1) year (through June 30, 2024) with the option to renew for a second year pending acceptable outcomes.

**Project Budget:**

<b>Amount Requested:</b>			
\$			
	<b>AccelerateMS Award</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Project Total</b>
Personnel (salary + fringe)	\$	\$	\$
Travel	\$	\$	\$
Contractual	\$	\$	\$
Project Management	\$	\$	\$
Equipment	\$	\$	\$
Supplies	\$	\$	\$
Indirect Cost / Admin. Cost	\$	\$	\$
Other	\$	\$	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

**Budget Line Items-Please provide a budget narrative for each line item below, including detailed costs for each line item:**

**Personnel (Salary + Fringe)**

- **Salary** - compensation for personal services includes all remuneration, paid currently or accrued, for services of employees rendered during the period of performance. If paying for incumbent, please identify by title and name detailing current salary. If proposed position, please identify by title and detail proposed salary. If proposing increase, a justification beyond simple cost of living increase must be provided.
- **Fringe** - the cost of fringe benefits in the form of employer contributions or expenses for social security; employee life, health, unemployment, and worker's compensation insurance, pension plan costs, and other similar benefits are allowable, provided such benefits are granted under established written policies. If paying for incumbent, please identify by title and name detailing current benefits. If proposed position, please identify by title and detail proposed salary.

**Travel** - the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees who are in travel status on official business. Such costs may be charged on an actual cost basis, on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs incurred, or on a combination of the two, provided the method used is applied to an entire trip and not to selected days of the trip, and results in charges consistent with those normally allowed in like circumstances in accordance

with State of Mississippi travel policy. Travel must be detailed by event/need for the proposed year, including detailed mileage, per diem, etc.

**Contractual** - costs of professional and consultant services rendered by persons who are members of a particular profession or possess a special skill, and who are not officers or employees of the grantee. If utilizing contractual to pay coaches, each position must be listed with the actual or anticipated remuneration detailed, including the proposed work hours or months.

**Project Management** – grant intermediary may hire additional personnel to assist with management of coaches but may not exceed a 1:20 ratio, unless fewer than 20 coaches are employed by the subrecipient.

**Equipment** - tangible personal property (including information technology systems, computers, peripherals, and similar devices) having a useful life of more than one year. A detailed equipment replacement policy must be included to ensure an accurate understanding of annual costs by the organization and AccelerateMS.

**Supplies** - tangible personal property other than those described in the definition of *equipment* in this section. Generally speaking, supplies are consumable in nature, and equipment has a useful life of greater than one year.

**Indirect Cost** - costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

**Administrative Costs** - grant expenses associated with administering the grant. These costs can be both personnel and non-personnel, and both direct and indirect. Therefore, the limitation applies to the combined claims for indirect costs and direct administration costs. Generally, direct administrative costs differ from indirect charges in that the latter are considered organization-wide costs.



## Appendix A

### AccelerateMS Career Coach Grant Administered by <GRANT RECIPIENT> Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding is between the <<GRANT RECIPIENT NAME>> (the "Grant Intermediary") and the <<SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME>> School District (the "District") in support of the AccelerateMS Career Coach Initiative.

In consideration of the Legislature's desire to create a career coaching program to support middle schools and high schools as students are exposed, prepared, and connected to career avenues within and beyond the classroom setting, the Grant Intermediary and the District will employ strong partnerships with economic and business leaders, leveraging career coaches to target the alignment of students' strengths with intentional academic and work-based learning in pursuit of meaningful professional employment.

1. The Intermediary agrees to provide specified career coaching service as outlined in the *Career Coach Job Description* (Appendix B) to the District through Career Coach Program funded through AccelerateMS.
2. The District agrees to use the career coach and any funds, if provided, as intended and expressed through Appendix B.
3. If for any reason, the District fails to utilize career coaching services as defined in Appendix B to the satisfaction of the Grant Intermediary and has not resolved any such failure within 20 days of the written notice by the Grant Intermediary of the failure, the Grant Intermediary may terminate career coaching services through written notice.
4. The District shall comply with any and all applicable laws and statutes of the United States and the State of Mississippi.
5. The District shall provide an acceptable workspace for the Career Coach.
6. The Grant Intermediary, in conjunction with AccelerateMS Youth Programs Manager, will provide training for the Career Coach on job activities, reporting requirements, student privacy, and the educator code of ethics. The District may provide additional training on these topics if desired.
7. The Grant Intermediary will either provide or reimburse the District for the cost of a digital device such as an iPad or laptop computer for use by the Career Coach.
8. The Career Coach will adhere to the job description outlined in Appendix B and are the sole employee of their associated employer. The Career Coach will not serve as a substitute, perform supervision duties, or complete other miscellaneous tasks that are assigned to regular school staff.
9. The District will determine the method of Career Coach access to student-level data, either by means of student information system login or through the school counselor. If electronic access is granted, the District will provide training related to data access.

10. To the extent applicable, the Grant Intermediary shall protect and maintain all records, information, and data collected pursuant in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including without limitation, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99 ("FERPA"). To the extent applicable, the district is deemed a "school official" as defined by FERPA. The District retains exclusive ownership and direct control of all records subject to FERPA ("Education Records"). Specifically and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the District shall protect and maintain any and all Personally Identifiable Information from Education Records of the District's students consistent with applicable FERPA regulations and shall fully cooperate with the District in any request for such information.
  
11. To the extent applicable to this MOU, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Data/Student Education Records, and other non-public data shall not be shared, sold, distributed, made available, or otherwise used for any purpose outside of those necessary for the performance of the MOU (e.g., student coaching support, postsecondary planning, financial aid application, analysis of program impact). PII includes but is not limited to: The name; Name of the student's parent, if student, or any family members; Address; A personal identifier, such as a social security number, Driver's License or if student, student number, or biometric record; Other direct identifiers, such as the date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name. The District will provide any necessary data privacy agreement for signature by the Career Coach.
  
12. Student safety is a priority of the Grant Intermediary and the District. The Grant Intermediary and the District agree that Career Coaches will be working directly with students and agree that such Career Coaches shall be pre-screened and have a background check and fingerprinting screening. The Career Coaches shall submit to fingerprint screening by the District which shall bill the Grant Intermediary for the fingerprint screening. The Grant Intermediary hereby acknowledges that until the District has notified the Grant Intermediary that the fingerprint and background check has been completed to the satisfaction, in its sole discretion, of the District, no MOU with the District may be approved. Further, Grant Intermediary agrees that if any disqualifying information is received by the District from a background check and fingerprinting, any contract with Grant Intermediary is rendered null and void.

**Signatures**

District Superintendent Name	District Superintendent Signature	Date
Local School Contact Name	Local School Contact Signature	Date
Grant Intermediary Contact Name	Grant Intermediary Contact Signature	Date

## Appendix B

# CAREER COACH JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

### POSITION SUMMARY

The Career Coach will assist students to identify career goals through personal and group consultation. Utilizing leadership, advocacy, and collaboration, career coaches will promote academic and personal success by implementing a comprehensive program that encompasses areas of personal and social development of students as well as academic and career needs. Coach will emphasize priority occupations within the proposed region and ensure students are exposed to these occupations and associated education and training pathways.

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Career Coaches will work with students to determine the appropriate assistance using activities such as those listed below:

- Meet one on one with students to determine academic and career goals while ensuring students are exposed to regional priority occupations.
- Ensure students review <https://mspathfinder.org> to determine interests and learn about post-secondary training and education options.
- Screen and assist students in applying for priority occupation internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities in their region.
- Assist students in creating an online profile on the Wings website (known commonly as MS Works) website.
- Plan, develop, and implement priority occupation exploration opportunities, including community college campus visits, which must include CTE priority occupation exposure, priority sector industry visits, parent sessions, and similar activities.
- Connect priority sector industry representatives (Construction, Information Technology, Healthcare, Logistics, and Manufacturing) to participants through in-class presentations, job shadowing and mentoring opportunities for further career exploration and to build interest in local workforce opportunities.
- Assist students in understanding durable/essential skills and how they are important to being successful in the workplace.
- Improve participant resume writing and interviewing skills
- Work with economic developers, businesses, associations, and local and state agencies to promote the program and build connections to local industries.
- Plan, develop, and implement programs, working directly with parents of participants to educate them on workforce opportunities and educational opportunities (including available financing of these) for their children and/or themselves.
- Plan, develop, and implement strategies to reach high school graduates who have not obtained a higher education certificate, diploma, or degree and assist them in connecting to potential priority occupation training or education programs.
- Maintain accurate and complete records of participant interactions, events, and all other work assignments.
- Prepare reports on students and activities as required.
- Serve a contact for parent and participant inquiries.
- Perform other duties as assigned by grant recipient

- Must abide the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics, as established by the Mississippi Department of Education.
- Must meet background check requirements. Before hire, the coach shall be fingerprinted to determine suitability for employment; If no disqualifying record is identified at the state level, the fingerprints shall be forwarded by the Department of Public Safety to the FBI for a national criminal history records check. If such fingerprinting or criminal history records check discloses a felony conviction, guilty plea or plea of nolo contendere to a felony of possession or sale of drugs, murder, manslaughter, armed robbery, rape, sexual battery, sex offense listed in Miss. Code Ann. § 45-33-23(g), child abuse, arson, grand larceny burglary, gratification of lust or aggravated assault which has not been reversed on appeal or for which a pardon has not been granted, the applicant shall not be eligible for employment.