Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Continuation Grant

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

DUE JUNE 1, 2018

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education	
Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas – Fort Smith (UAFS)	
Title of Project:	UAFS Robot Automation Program	
Project Partners:	1. Fort Smith Public Schools 2. Greenwood Public Schools 3. Charleston Public Schools 4. ABB 5. Hickory Springs Manufacturing (HSM)	6. Walmart Technologies 7. Trane Custom Commercial 8. Western Arkansas Planning and Development District 9. Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board 10.
Requested Budget:	$997,891.96	
Date Submitted:		
Applicant Contact:	Dr. Edward Serna	
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Authorized Signatures for Institution

University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
Lead Institution

Authorized Official

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Application

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2018**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that only projects that were awarded an implementation grant are eligible to apply for a continuation grant.*

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED — 20 Points

Proposals will include a thorough description of the labor needs, as determined by the Local Workforce Development Board, and specifically identify the skills gap employers face in the selected region and will continue to face in the future. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed program and/or equipment needed and how continuation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

Essential Components:

- Regional data demonstrating the need for action - provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.

- Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs- clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations, and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas. **Applicants must also submit letters of support from at least two area employers for the proposal, citing need and outlining benefits for local industry.**

- Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals- describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Need (20 Pts)	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11-14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Program Need

Regional Data Demonstrating Need for Action

Purpose: The intention of this grant is to continue a program of concurrent credit study in robot automation to meet the existing and emerging need for middle-skill employees within the manufacturing industry of western Arkansas. By leveraging the expertise of our partners, UAFS developed an industry-driven program that matches the demand for a skilled automation and robotics workforce with a supply of fully-trained candidates. UAFS is confident that the skills developed and continuing to be developed in this program transcend a single sector and provide additional employment opportunities outside of manufacturing.

History: Western Arkansas experienced significant employment loss following the 2008 economic downturn. Organizations that survived the decline did so by efficiently utilizing labor resources, including implementation of advanced manufacturing systems. The skills required in these more automated environments have also evolved such that employers seek workers with advanced technological skills. Additionally, America's aging workforce creates additional pressure on the labor ecosystem as well trained and highly knowledgeable individuals from the baby boomer generation exiting the workforce. Underemployed or unemployed workers, whether seasoned workers or high school graduates desiring to enter the workforce, are finding gainful employment more and more difficult to attain. Seen as part of a larger national trend, many manufacturing and service sectors have labeled this difficult employment search as technological unemployment. Many companies made capital investments in technology to boost productivity without adding to existing workforce. The ideal candidate for the advanced manufacturing environment possesses an evolved skillset that includes a propensity towards automation and robotics.

Opportunity exists with projections for significant job creation among middle-skill workers. In an August 2013 report, Material Handling & Logistics predicted as many as 1.5 million jobs related to robotics would require a new set of "middle skills," or jobs requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree. A report through Harvard Business School (2014) claimed 25 million jobs or approximately 47% of all new job openings from 2010-2020 will fall into the middle-skills range. Additionally, 73% of employers expect to see the need in the middle skill range grow in the next two to three years. The authors stated that the growth not only impacts the competitiveness of U.S. companies but influenced key decisions, such as location of operations.

For western Arkansas regional economy to retain and attract new middle-skill jobs, partnerships with industry employers, educators, and policymakers are critical to match labor supply with industry demand. UAFS partnerships shape the curriculum to develop a talent pipeline that matches qualified workers with jobs. In order to remain effective, the training provided by UAFS is industry-driven and focuses on jobs of strategic importance to regional businesses and provides career opportunities for employees served.

Clear Linkages Between Grant Activities and Local Needs

According to Western Arkansas Planning and Development District (2014), the Fort Smith metropolitan area, comprised of Sebastian and Crawford counties in Arkansas and Sequoyah County in Oklahoma, is home to more than 25,000 residents engaged in manufacturing enterprises in the region. Wages for the population exceed $800 million and represent 30% of enterprise payrolls. Per WAPDD, Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) lists business sectors targeted for growth including Administrative and Support Services, Advanced Food Manufacturing and Packaging,

Management of Companies and Enterprises, Distribution and Logistics Services, and Paper and Timer Products - all of which are represented by industries in the region.

A number of initiatives were established by WAPDD to support economic resilience of the region. Included in those efforts is Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) which ultimately seeks to increase the economic viability of the industry in the region. Strengthening the existing labor pool with individuals offering skills aligned with careers in advanced manufacturing is actionable support of BRE efforts. UAFS Robot Automation supports BRE by providing innovative concurrent technical instruction allowing high school students to obtain middle level skills and prepare for careers in advanced manufacturing.

Current and Emerging Skill Gaps

As technology continues to evolve and employers require a more skilled labor force to remain competitive, projections call for continued erosion in the traditional manufacturing jobs such as those located in western Arkansas. Employers in advanced manufacturing enterprises are experiencing two employee-related challenges. First, advancement in technology is displacing workers whose skills are no longer appropriate to the tasks. Second, an estimated 10,000 baby boomers exit the workforce each day taking with them technical skills and expert knowledge. The lack of existing skilled workers within the enterprise and the mass departure of the baby boomer generation creates significant workforce gaps. Such shortage was reported during conversations with the Western Arkansas Human Resources Association (WAHRA) members and indicated as a significant threat to the sustainability of their organizations. The skillset most frequently cited by WAHRA members to be in short supply is advanced manufacturing including proficiency in electronics, electricity, PLC, industrial controls and robotics. The shortage in western Arkansas of job seekers with these skills has forced WAHRA members to seek job applicants outside the region and ultimately puts the viability of local organizations at risk. Additionally, WAHRA members indicated a need to attract females and minorities to this job category.

Recognizing this trend, UAFS worked with local industry partners to develop a program of study to produce graduates with skills well-suited to in-demand occupations. UAFS utilized data from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services to identify the ten industry sectors with the largest net employment growth. Leveraging the data, UAFS facilitated a series of robust discussions with local industries in these sectors regarding current and emerging labor needs. Bearing in mind the changing national labor market landscape and the needs within western Arkansas, UAFS partnered with the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board, the Fort Smith Manufacturing Executives Association, the Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Western Arkansas Human Resource Association to identify a shortage in robotics and automation skills.

Robotics and automation is the use of industrial robots in the automation of industrial processes to achieve organizational objectives that improve efficiency through reduced cost, increased speed, accuracy and consistency, and improved quality and scalability of production. Economists and industry experts alike predict manufacturing will rebound with technology advances creating demand for workers possessing new, middle-skill talent in robotics and automation. The UAFS Robot Automation Program directly links career education with critical skills for in-demand jobs.

Alignment with Arkansas Economic and Workforce Goals

Working with industry and K-12 partners, UAFS defined cost-effective programming and the necessary equipment to satisfy the educational requirements to provide middle-level skills to students and connect the students to careers in the advanced manufacturing industry. UAFS identified several instruction and equipment elements to leverage in the implementation phase of the program.

By including corporate and industry partners in the development of industry-driven programs of study, UAFS ensured programming and equipment fully met their requirements for a skilled workforce. The learning environment developed mirrors existing skill needs while remaining flexible as requirements change and work environment evolves. UAFS anticipate that the program will address the skilled worker shortage in robotics and automation. Further, skills learned through the program will transcend this particular industry sector to support career options outside of manufacturing. For instance, robot automation is used in transportation and logistics as well as in healthcare and aerospace. The foundational knowledge and skills learned in the UAFS Robot Automation program are transferable to a number of sectors.

Diversity: STEM career paths have long been regarded as the most lucrative for individuals. High regard for STEM employment is expected to continue throughout the foreseeable future as more and more processes are automated and, when possible, shifted to cyber administration. Unfortunately, efforts to narrow the gender gap in STEM have produced little change. Additionally, some minority populations are underrepresented in STEM careers. By providing access to concurrent credit robot automation education in the traditional high school environment, UAFS has the opportunity to engage females and minority students in a STEM career pathway.

References

Burrowes, J., Young, A., Restuccia, D., Fuller, J., and Raman, M. (2014). *Bridge the gap: Rebuilding America's middle skills.* Retrieved from https://www.hbs.edu/competitiveness/Documents/bridge-the-gap.pdf

Western Arkansas Planning and Development District. (2014). *Comprehensive economic development strategy.* Retrieved from http://www.wapdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CEDS.pdf

SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN **25 Points**

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program as well as the following Essential Components:

- Detailed project timeline and overview- provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the project.

- Measurable objectives for each phase of the project- detail the metrics utilized throughout the project to track how credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers will be provided.

- Project governance and accountability plan- clearly describe the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director; and identify members of a project steering committee that will maintain oversight throughout the project period.

- Pathways articulation and support- clearly describe the educational pathway(s) and support services that will be developed, or existing pathways that will be enhanced, to meet the identified workforce needs. Pathways should incorporate all appropriate student outcomes from short-term industry-recognized credentials through the highest certificate or degree programs appropriate to the identified career goals and include career step-out points at the completion of each credential.

- Role of equipment request- required only for those proposals seeking equipment purchases. Outline how equipment purchase will specifically address local labor market needs; provide detailed description of equipment, educational value of equipment in preparing workforce, and justification for purchase.

- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through continuation of the plan and strategies to measure and report achievement of those outcomes. Priority will be given to programs which prepare candidates for high wage jobs or which create capacity to move candidates from unemployment to employment.

- Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program. At a minimum, the plan must include a detailed project timeline and overview, measurable objectives for each phase of the project, a project governance and accountability plan, pathways articulation and support, the role of any equipment requested, and a performance assessment.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Program Plan (25 Pts)	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Program Plan

Detailed Project Timeline and Overview

	Purpose	Participants
July	Issue Purchase Orders for equipment	RWG Director/Administrative Assistant
	Complete Enrollment	RWG Director
August	New Student Orientations	RWG Director
	Industry Partner/Mentor Workshop	Industry Partners, UAFS faculty, deans, RWG director
	Faculty Development	UAFS: faculty, deans, RWG Director
	OSHA-10 non-credit class	RWG FS students
	Classes begin	UAFS faculty
October	Advisory Board Meeting	K-12 superintendents, Industry partners (2), UAFS deans, RWG director
	Counselor Meeting	K-12 counselors/principals, UAFS deans, RWG director
November	Enrollment for Spring 2019	RWG director
December	Advisory Board Meeting	K-12 superintendents, Industry partners (2), UAFS deans, RWG director
	Classes conclude	RWG students
January	Faculty Development	UAFS: faculty, deans, RWG Director
	Industry Partner/Mentor Workshop	Industry Partners, UAFS faculty, deans, RWG director
	Classes begin	RWG students

	Recruitment	RWG Director/K-12 Partners
February	Recruitment	RWG Director/K-12 Partners
March	Advisory Board Meeting	UAFS: faculty, deans, RWG Director
April	Enrollment for Fall 2019, Summer 2019	RWG director
May	Classes conclude	RWG students
	Networking Dinner	RWG students/K-12/Industry Partners
June	Summer I classes	RWG students
	Summer camps	Area students
	OSHA-10 non-credit class	RWG students
	Faculty professional development	UAFS faculty
August	Industry Partner/Mentor Workshop	Industry Partners, UAFS faculty, deans, RWG director
	New Student Orientation	RWG students
	Faculty Development	UAFS faculty
	OSHA-10 non-credit class	RWG FS students
	Classes begin	RWG students
October	Advisory Board Meeting	K-12 superintendents, Industry partners (2), UAFS deans, RWG director
	Counselor Meeting	RWG director
November	Enrollment for Spring 2020	RWG director
December	Advisory Board Meeting	K-12 superintendents, Industry partners (2), UAFS deans, RWG director
	Classes conclude	RWG students
January	Faculty Development	UAFS: faculty, deans, RWG Director
	Industry Partner/Mentor Workshop	Industry Partners, UAFS faculty, deans, RWG director
	Classes begin	RWG students
	Recruitment	RWG Director/K-12 Partners
February	Recruitment	RWG Director/K-12 Partners
March	Advisory Board Meeting	K-12 superintendents, Industry partners (2), UAFS deans, RWG director

April	Enrollment for Fall 2020, Summer I 2020	RWG director
May	Classes conclude	RWG students
	Networking Dinner	RWG students/K-12/Industry Partners
June	Summer I classes	RWG students
	Summer camps	Area students
	OSHA-10 non-credit class	RWG students
	Faculty professional development	UAFS faculty

Measurable Objectives

The RWG director will work closely with the UAFS College of Applied Science and Technology and K-12 advisors to ensure that students are advised intentionally and appropriately into specific concurrent and AP coursework that will benefit the student most. Throughout the Implementation Grant, the project director hosted meetings and worked diligently with the UAFS Associate Registrar for Concurrent Enrollment to align pathways and provide students and counselors with critical advising information. Additionally, the RWG director will track students through the UAFS database and National Student Clearinghouse to determine graduation statistics. Upon completion, program graduates will be partnered in their job search with career service professionals for guidance in resume development, practice interviews, and other placement-focused activities. UAFS strives to maintain contact with alumni, including participants and graduates of the UAFS Robot Automation program. The UAFS Alumni Association is the gatekeeper for all alumni information and will aid in monitoring career milestones of program participants.

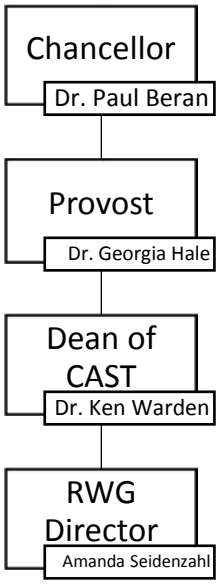
During the Implementation Grant, UAFS established a unique tracking code for UAFS Robot Automation participants to monitor success throughout concurrent education as well as undergraduate studies. The RWG Director will monitor local employment trends via program partners Western Arkansas Planning and Development District (WAPDD), Manufacturing Executive Association (MEA) and the Western Arkansas Human Resource Association (WAHRA). The RWG Director will continue to nurture existing relationships with industry partners through active engagement with the mentoring component of the program and continue to cultivate new partnerships. Collectively, the efforts will enable the RWG Director to ensure appropriateness of coursework and adequacy of equipment with respect to employer needs.

At the completion of the program, 70% of students will have attained a certificate of proficiency, OSHA 10 certification and completed a minimum of two industry tours.

Program Governance and Accountability Plan

A project director was hired in August 2016 and continues to lead all project activities. All academic decisions follow UAFS policies and procedures aligning with the academic hierarchy listed detailed below. All grant funding decisions are approved through the Vice Chancellor of Strategic Initiatives and Grant Activities per university policy.

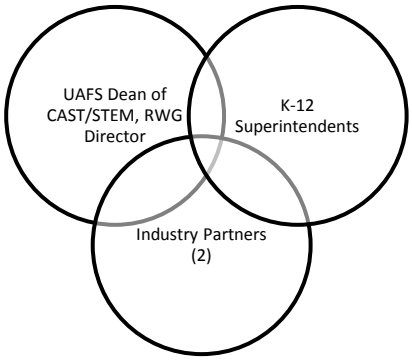
Governance and Decision-Making Structure



Advisory Board

UAFS engaged an advisory board for planning and oversight consisting of six K-12 school district superintendents/administrative professionals, two industry representatives, one director of regional workforce grants, and two UAFS deans representing the College of Applied Science and Technology and the College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Advisory Board activities as well as the UAFS Robot Automation program are facilitated by the RWG Director. The Advisory Board meets quarterly to review program activity and updates.

All efforts of the continuation grant are accountable to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Career and Technical Education, and the laws of the State of Arkansas.



Pathways Articulation and Support

Program Pathways

UAFS aligned required programming with a student's prerequisite knowledge and ability-to-benefit as discovered through use of the college-administered entrance exam. The program of study is as follows :

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Year 1	ELEC 1233 Foundations of Electricity	ELEC 1242 Introduction to Electronics Technology ELEC 290V(1) Special Topics: Robot Automation
Year 2	ELEC 1263 Industrial Electricity	ELEC 1353 Electrical Circuits and Components
Year 3	ELEC 2513 PLC Applications	ELEC 2403 Introduction to Robotics

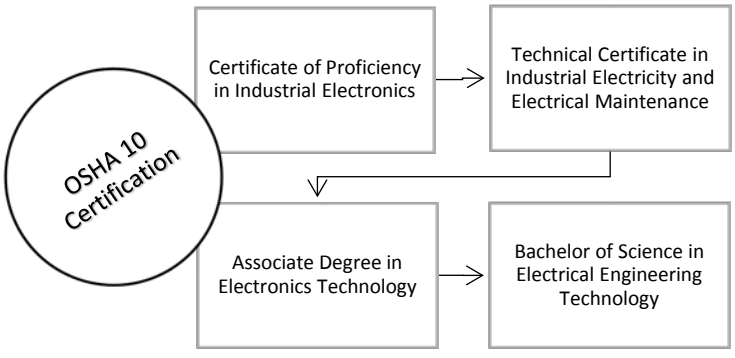
Throughout the planning and implementation grants, UAFS developed an automation/robotics program to establish a manufacturing career path for individuals with technical skills, also referred to as middle-level skills. Our approach for meeting goals and addressing core requirements was to design a comprehensive education framework to award concurrent credit for program-related courses during a student's high school experience.

Students entering the 10th grade may enroll in career and technical education courses while continuing to develop basic skills through their standard high school curriculum. The delivery format includes instruction at the home high school campus by a university faculty member. Providing coursework at the high school campus enables students to participate in traditional social experiences and activities, such as clubs and extracurricular activities, while also engaging in concurrent curriculum.

The only exception to instruction provided at the home high school is in the Fort Smith School District. The Robot Automation courses will be held off-site at an industry partner location. Students from both high schools in the Fort Smith School District will be eligible to apply and attend classes at the industry partner site. The school district has committed to providing transportation to and from the location and the industry partner has committed to providing space for students and faculty.

The design is linear with instructional methods that accommodate multiple learning styles. Students will not be penalized for entering and exiting at different times and their accumulated hours will all apply toward the next degree level.

Our design is constructed upon the concept of an education/career ladder to accommodate multiple entry and exit points for students. Successful completion of courses results in the award of college credit and cumulatively moves the student towards degree attainment. Coursework mirrors degree plans for a Certificate of Proficiency in Industrial Electronics, Technical Certificate in Industrial Electricity and Electrical Maintenance, Associate of Science in Electronics Technology, and Bachelor Degrees in Electrical Engineering Technology, Applied Science and/or Organizational Leadership.



Career mapping will be provided to participants by their industry mentors to aid in the student's understanding of career choice with quality of life afforded by different career paths and the education and training necessary for success in such careers.

UAFS Robot Automation delivers the instructional model with a blend of university faculty, K 12 faculty and staff, and industry-based subject-matter-experts. This collaboration ensures the content is industry driven by current practitioners and the delivery model is tailored to meet the needs of the students. We believe this approach best serves students and lends the flexibility needed to make the program most successful.

A ten-hour Occupational Safety and Health Accreditation course will be offered to participants each summer. The two day, non-credit course is a value-add certification option to provide students a marketable job skill. The OSHA-10 safety course is critical to local and regional industry. Students understand the value and importance of this certification due to industry tours and discussions with mentors.

In addition to the program of study listed above, summer coursework will also be made available to students in the summer after they graduate from high school. This critical 'bridge' summer is a valuable opportunity to continue college access and retention for students in the RWG program as they matriculate to undergraduate students. A total of six hours of coursework listed on the Technical Certificate of Industrial Electricity and Electrical Maintenance will be available to students.

Program Support
Cross-curricular, one-week summer camps will be continued throughout the continuation grant. Day and residential camp options will be provided to introduce students to regional high demand career fields and build a pipeline to RWG programs. The camps will introduce career and workforce opportunities in the region. UAFS instructors will create and facilitate the curriculum in the camps.

In the continuation grant, an additional career-based opportunity will be added for students in the Fort Smith Public School District. A targeted effort will be made to engage with students currently enrolled in career planning to connect with industry tours prior to matriculation to the RWG program. First generation students lack the support and opportunity to explore career options and pursue job shadowing opportunities in the high demand fields. The career program will be a prelude to application to the RWG program and will consist of four days of regional industry tours throughout the program. A final day of advising and career planning with university staff will be held at UAFS.

With the option to advance straight to the workforce after high school graduation, participants must have both interpersonal and social etiquette skills to progress in the work environment. For this reason, UAFS plans to host a networking dinner each year. Participants will interact with industry, postsecondary, and secondary partners in a more formal environment and learn to navigate the intricacies of social skills prior to a work function.

Role of Equipment Request
To effectively teach robot automation, specific hardware must be readily available for use. The UAFS Robot Automation program has replicated UAFS classroom and laboratory at three area high schools. The equipment is the same brand and model to ensure consistency in program delivery and to create economies of scale where possible. Representative equipment requirements for developing such a capability include soldering, frequency drives, function generators, software license updates. The delivery method of some courses are via virtual simulation due to the high technical aspect of the information. UAFS has upgraded some infrastructure to support the program and additional upgrades are needed. Most equipment was purchased during the Implementation grant period and additional purchases are supporting existing coursework.

Performance Assessment
Student success is ultimately the measure of program success. Enrollment is anticipated to range from 40-60 in each layer. A retention rate of 50% is standard though retention for this program is

expected to be considerably higher. To meet critical enrollment numbers, classes for layers two and three will be offered on a rotating basis.

Upon graduation from high school, students may seek job placement or matriculation toward degree attainment. The RWG director will assist students who wish to continue in the program to navigate the enrollment process including help with applications to grant scholarships as well as with course registration.

SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP **20 Points**

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, in a meaningful role.

Essential Components:

- Detailed description of role of each partner in continuation of the project- describe how each partner will continue to carry out components of the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project; describe the integration of each role into the overall project; and describe the process for implementing fully articulated pathways from K-12 through a baccalaureate degree, as appropriate.

- Capabilities of each partner in ensuring project success- discuss the unique strengths of each partner in continuing the implemented project; describe how each partner is qualified to continue to participate in the project and how each partners strengthens the overall partnership.

- Consideration of all potential partners in the region – describe the process for identifying each selected partner, including the consideration of regional community colleges, universities, public schools, education service cooperatives, businesses and industries, career and technical education programs, multidistrict vocational centers, and private partnerships.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Detailed Description of Role of Each Partner
UAFS Robot Automation is intended to provide a program of study in robotics and automation that meets existing and emerging needs for middle-level skill employees in the manufacturing industry of numerous employers in western Arkansas. By leveraging the expertise of our partners, an industry-driven program that matches the demand for a workforce skilled in automation and robotics with a supply of fully trained candidates has been developed. UAFS is confident that the skills developed by participation in UAFS Robot Automation surpass the standard in advanced manufacturing and provides additional employment opportunities in economic sectors across the board.

Industry partners are providing mentors to work with students in the classrooms. Mentors commit time and resources to assist students in exploring career and employment options. Mentor roles vary from group presentations to individual meetings depending on the grade level and year in the program of the student. In the continuation grant, topics are assigned for mentors to discuss with students each month. Either mentors come up with the activities and conversation questions or the RWG director will help facilitate activities.

Anticipated Roles for Partner Organizations
UAFS Robot Automation is comprised of four groups or partners: UAFS, K-12 Education, Industry and Other. Partners are actively engaged with students and with other partners in delivering the UAFS Robot Automation coursework in an innovative environment utilizing industry experts as mentors. The Regional Workforce Grant (RWG) is implemented by the RWG Director who is an employee of UAFS. K-12 education partners will be the first line of contact in student recruitment using marketing materials supplied by UAFS. UAFS supplies the high school advisors with student packets containing a student guide, application instructions, participation agreement and registration forms to be distributed to interested students. UAFS admits and registers students and monitors student success. UAFS faculty provide instruction to program participants with industry representatives serving as mentors to link classroom instruction and real-world application.

UAFS Partners
All partner groups were queried and engaged by UAFS and ultimately identified a skills gap in the area of medium- and high-skills roles in robotics and technology. UAFS committed to developing a program of study in automation and robotics to address the emerging workforce development needs. UAFS assembled a mix of industry and education partners to determine the scope of the program, desired outcomes, and then worked to close the gap between the present labor shed and the desired workforce of the future.

UAFS Robot Automation is a collective effort led by the College of Applied Science and Technology in tandem with the College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Additionally, the UAFS academic groups engaged significant support from Student Services (Testing, Admissions, Records, etc.). UAFS presently offers three concurrent programs to high school students: Smart Start which offers general education courses at the high school location, RWG Robot Automation and Cyber Systems, and Western Arkansas Technical Center (WATC) which offers career and technical courses on the UAFS campus.

Academic advising for career path choice will exceed standard student advising, utilizing a team advising approach with the RWG director and partnering high school counselors to ensure efficiency in course enrollment. The partnership will mitigate any unnecessary course work, reduce cost of degree,

and shorten time to degree completion. In addition to team advising, UAFS enlisted industry partners for the purpose of mentoring and providing real-world connectivity to classroom topics. Human resource professionals from industry partners and the Western Arkansas Human Resource Association will aid by providing information about career paths in robots and automation, benefits of these specialized career tracks, and appropriate workplace behaviors that support a good work ethic.

Academic leadership at UAFS is working diligently to place diverse faculty in the teaching roles at the high schools participating in UAFS Robot Automation. The faculty search is ongoing as UAFS anticipates additional faculty needs in the continuation grant.

Education Partners

UAFS Robot Automation experienced wide support from the region's K-12 school districts. The education partners worked with the RWG Director to identify prerequisite concerns and remap course sequencing to avoid limitations. The education partners accepted responsibility to recruit from their student body, administer the first step of enrollment (forms dissemination and collection) and to support student engagement. The education partners were instrumental in developing a best practice for engagement of college faculty in a K-12 environment to better acclimate the faculty to the nuances of today's high school culture, which ultimately will allow the faculty to better serve program participants.

Initially, proximity between high schools was used to determine the schools best suited to engage in UAFS Robot Automation. Adjustments were completed during the implementation grant to now include Charleston High School, Fort Smith School District, and Greenwood High School in the continuation grant. School districts engaged in the Guy Fenter Educational Services Cooperative at County Line (Arkansas) were invited to participate if the classes at the four partnering schools are not at capacity. This outreach enables very small school districts to participate with nearby schools should they have student interest and can navigate the logistics of attending.

Courses will be taught at three of the partnering high schools with the education partners providing classroom, lab and storage space. High school administrators and advisors will continue to be engaged in a supporting role with the students. Local high school counselors are the student's first contact for enrollment in UAFS Robot Automation and continue to monitor students throughout their high school experience. Classes for the fourth school district, Fort Smith Public Schools, will be held at an ABB location to foster the relationship with industry partners and allow students to make an even broader connection to real-world impacts. The Fort Smith Public School District has committed to providing transportation for students attending the ABB location. As the program moves forward, UAFS anticipates increasing partnerships of this nature.

Industry Partners

Industry partners with a legacy of supporting UAFS endeavors hold core leadership roles in the economic and workforce development needs for the community. The engagement of these organizations ensures that UAFS Robot Automation is industry-driven and will grow the talent pipeline needed to remain competitive. Initially, two key partners assisted in building the Robot Automation program during the planning phase of the grant. Currently, five industry partners are involved with the program.

Professional members (e.g. plant managers, engineers, project managers, operations managers) of each organization will provide mentoring services to the classes via Skype or Google Hangout or in person when practical. In this capacity, the professionals will review current course subjects and link the topic to real-world practice. Using technology, the mentor can stream live demonstrations in robotics and automation practices to students in the classroom. Human resource professionals from industry partners will mentor students and provide consumer science instruction to engage students in the comparison of wages earned to anticipated standard of living. Human resource professionals will mentor students on

key topics such as work ethics and standards of behavior as well as consumer science. Finally, a collective effort is underway to engage female mentors from industry partners when possible.

As with the education partners, the industry partners participated in course selection and endeavored to develop course sequencing befitting of advanced manufacturing while considering the inexperience of potential students. Industry partners have aided the RWG director in the career mapping process which includes providing job titles, brief descriptions and salary information to aid program mentors in teaching consumer science topics that enable students to project a quality of life to the various career paths. Industry partners will lead the mentoring component meeting with classes at least twice monthly to review their current lessons and demonstrate how the lessons directly relate to activities in the workplace.

One of the industry partners has committed to hosting courses for the Fort Smith School District and providing space for the students and faculty. Over the past several months, space was renovated to accommodate hosting students at the site each day. The facility will assist with connection and networking of classroom laptops to allow students an innovative and enlightening learning opportunity. The students attending the classes will have a unique opportunity to connect classroom skills to real-world application each day.

Other Partners
Western Arkansas Planning and Development District (WAPDD) serves as the administrator for this region's Workforce Development Board as required by the State of Arkansas Workforce Investment Act. WARDD is a catalyst for economic development for the region. UAFS relied upon input from the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board in developing degree to job "crosswalks". The Manufacturers Executive Association (MEA) of Fort Smith supports this initiative as it directly aligns with their need for a skilled workforce.

Capabilities of Each Partner in Ensuring Project Success
Education Partners
All four of the school districts serving as educational partners are eager to continue the program. All have identified classrooms that can be secured during off-hours and have adequate infrastructure to support the equipment and students. All partners agreed that should any remaining seats be available, those openings would be offered to members of the Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative.

Industry Partners
When conducting an environmental scan, a number of enterprises highly engaged in information technology are located in the region. For primary partnership, UAFS directed its attention to organizations with a history of strong community leadership. ABB was approached because it manufactures one of the two lines of robotics most commonly purchased including the robots utilized by UAFS. UAFS faculty includes members who have extensive training by ABB on the operation of its robots. Additionally, ABB is an organization with significant community involvement including educational support of K12 and higher education programs. Like ABB, Hickory Springs Manufacturing (HSM) is a community leader whose work process is representative of advanced manufacturing environments. Each of these primary partners has committed their people resources to provide mentors for professional technical expertise as well as human resource expertise.

ABB (dba Baldor) is a leader in the manufacture of robot technology. Like all branded technology companies, ABB offers its own in-house certification to individuals who have extensive industry experience; faculty from College of Applied Science and Technology (CAST) are credentialed. The engagement of credentialed faculty with ABB as industry partner ensures that program participants will receive instruction, coaching and mentoring second to none as it pertains to ABB robots. ABB is a local partner in education with the Fort Smith School District. ABB volunteered to be the lead industry

partner and mentor with all three schools: Charleston, Greenwood and Fort Smith School District. Additionally, ABB offered to host the Fort Smith School District courses at their location and has renovated space for the training classroom. ABB's IT department will assist with networking and connection of required hardware and computers to ensure students have access to campus resources.

ArcBest Corporation Founded more than 90 years ago as a less-than-truckload carrier branded ABF (Arkansas's Best Freight), ArcBest Corporation (ArcBest) is a logistics company that creatively solves customers' challenges through its well-known operating companies and brands: ABF Freight®, ABF Logistics®, Panther Premium Logistics®, FleetNet America® and U-Pack®. From Fortune 100 companies to small businesses to families on the move, customers trust and rely on ArcBest brands for supply chain needs and logistics solutions. ArcBest coordinates business through ArcBest's in-house technology company, ArcBest Technologies, citing ease of doing business and the importance of engaging a logistics company that performs more as a partner than as a vendor. With more than 13,000 employees, ArcBest delivers knowledge, expertise and a can-do attitude with every shipment and supply chain solution, residential move and vehicle repair. ArcBest joined the initiative and will serve in the mentoring function.

Hickory Springs Manufacturing (HSM), is an American company globally manufacturing discrete components and integrated solutions for transportation, furniture, bedding and other markets. The company operates 50 plants employing nearly 2,500 workers in 17 states. It also operates a plant in the Guanlan industrial park area of Shenzhen, China, that produces recliner mechanisms. HSM's Fort Smith facility employs approximately 240 people in an advanced manufacturing facility with automation ranging from first generation robots to the current state-of-the-art ABB IRB 120s. HSM's operational leaders are engineers eager to introduce students to the possibilities of robots. Anticipating robot program success, HSM indicated their long-range strategic goals may be shifted to incorporate scholarships directed to high school graduates who complete the UAFS Robot Automation program. At the very least, the leadership team at HSM has expressed their unwavering desire to grow the next generation of skilled workforce for the Fort Smith region to impact the efficiency of their local operation and to increase the viability of their facility.

Pernod Ricard (formerly Hiram-Walker) is a French company that produces distilled beverages. It employs approximately 19,000 people in 80 countries with annual global revenue typically exceeding $9 billion. The Pernod Ricard production facility in Fort Smith employees approximately 220 people in spirits blending operations often hailed as one of the most automated facilities in Arkansas. The facility's chief operating and executive officer is an engineer who encourages community leadership at all levels of her organization.

Trane, Inc., is a world leader in air conditioning systems, services and solutions. Trane systems and services have leading positions in premium commercial, residential, institutional and industrial markets. Trane products are regarded as innovative products that are of high quality and reliable. The company's logistics support a powerful distribution network. Trane has experienced a shift in recent years to the production of large commercial air handlers and does so with lean manufacturing processes. To continue operating their facility in western Arkansas, it is imperative that they combine their expertise in environmental technology and energy conservation to make a difference in energy efficiency around the globe through the collaborative efforts of a technical workforce. Trane employs 180 at its location in Fort Smith. Trane recently introduced their first robotic operated production process.

Walmart Stores, Inc., (Walmart) is an American multinational retail corporation comprised of three segments: Walmart U.S., Walmart International and Sam's Club with total sales of $482 Billion in FY16. Principal offices are maintained in Bentonville, Arkansas. Walmart Stores, Inc., is the top ranked organization by the Fortune group. Walmart Stores, Inc. operates the largest grocery retailer in

the US. Walmart employs 2.3 million worldwide. A division of Walmart Stores, Inc., Walmart Technology engages more than 3,500 associates in corporate security, financial controls, merchandise, replenishment and logistics, using advanced analytics to provide customers with the products they want, when they want them, and for the lowest possible price. Walmart Technology utilizes advanced technologies such as sophisticated networking, advanced cloud and data centers, and support applications and software in a variety of languages (both code and spoken linguistics) to engage customers in a variety of shopping formats. The leadership team at Walmart agreed to have a mentoring function.

Consideration of All Potential Partners in the Region

Simmons Foods is located in Fort Smith and Van Buren, AR. As one of Arkansas' principal contractors for poultry related pet food components, Simmons Foods is an innovative leader in the region. Interested in pursuing workforce initiatives, Simmons Foods administration is interested in developing mentoring opportunities and educating students about potential career opportunities available tomorrow.

SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN **15 Points**

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan that maximizes efficient use of existing resources and a completed budget template.

Essential Components:

- Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities- detailed discussion of how each component of the grant budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the program.
- Institutions may request up to $1 million over two years that will provide resources to continue approved Phase 2 projects.
- Local match of at least 10% of the total request, with a maximum cap of $50,000- all proposals will include a plan for local funding to match 10% of the total grant proposal. For example, a grant requesting $400,000 in funding would be required to provide $40,000 in matching funds. However, the local match is capped at $50,000, meaning grants in excess of $500,000 will have the same match as a $500,000 project.

Note: With a submitted written commitment and payment guarantee from an industry partner, internship wages paid during the initial twenty-four (24) months of this program may be used to offset the local match amount on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Additionally, wages paid to incumbent workers of the employer while enrolled in academic training may be deducted from the match as well. Any entity wishing to utilize this method of funding the match must include the appropriate documentation with their proposal and, if selected for funding, will be monitored to ensure compliance.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Budget Plan (15 Pts)	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)

Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail
Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

Clear Alignment between funding request and grant activities

The budget plan included in this packet features several categories of expense:

Program Leadership Support Costs
Personal/stipend includes all salary expense of the director, administrative specialist, faculty, summer camp personnel and all associated fringe benefit costs. Travel expense refers to the mileage reimbursement paid to faculty who travel from the home station (UAFS campus) to the partner high schools to teach UAFS Robot Automation. The travel subcategory also includes related expenses to attend workforce development conferences, such as the one hosted annually by the American Association of Community Colleges, as well as professional development opportunities for program staff and faculty.

Other Direct Costs
Equipment expense refers to all essential components to effectively teach robot automation. The purchase is reflective of the inventory necessary to equip the classroom and lab located on the UAFS campus. UAFS Robot Automation utilizes an e-learning systems subscription service for online coursework rather than traditional hardcopy textbooks. The subscription e-learning service used for UAFS Robot Automation is compatible with smart phones, notebooks and computers which ultimately results in learning on-demand for students regardless of time of day or location. Materials and supplies refers to office supplies such as printer ink, paper, and contract printing as well as food service and facilities fees. Publication costs include marketing activities, workshops, summer camps, etc. Other expenses in this category include financial aid expenses for tuition and fees as well as admission exams necessary for program entry. Tuition and fees will be paid on a sliding scale so that school districts assume 100% of costs by year five.

Local Match		
UAFS	Waived per UAFS federally negotiated rate (52% for indirect)	$519,513
K12 Partners	132 students at $75/student/credit hour	$59,400
Industry Partners	3 schools at 2 sessions/month; 2 hours of prep and 1 hour of mentor contact per site/month; 4 months duration; @ $50/hour (6 sessions/month @ 3 hrs each @ $50/hr for 4 months)	$6,300
	Total	$582,513

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input. Institutions may request up to $1 million in grant funding for Phase 3 Projects.

Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
Title of Project:	UAFS Robot Automation

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS	
1. Personnel/Stipend	$486,887.05
2. Travel	$95,000.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	$5,000
Development workshops for partners	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	$586,887.05
B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS	
1. Equipment	$128,653.71
2. Materials and Supplies	$48,000.00
3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	$0.00
4. Consultant Services	$0.00
5. Other (Explain Below)	$234,351.20
Scholarships	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	$411,004.91
C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B)	$997,891.96
D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to $50,000)	$582,513.00
Total Continuation Grant Budget	$1,580.404.96

Other Notes

3. Other – development workshops for partners

5. Other – tuition/fees

SECTION 5 - SUSTAINABILITY **20 Points**

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation period. Equipment requests will clearly specify how purchased equipment will continue to be linked to addressing labor and workforce needs beyond the grant period.

Essential Components:

- Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation grant funding period- describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period; outline the roles and funding sources of each partner after the grant period.

- Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period;

- Identify availability of long-term resources to maintain and/or repair any equipment requested.

- Describe plan for redistribution of equipment to meet additional workforce needs once the employer needs addressed by the proposal have been satisfied.

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Sustainability (20 Pts)	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Sustainability Plan

Detailed Plan for Sustaining Program

Current interest in the program is robust. Class sizes are capped at 22 but may be as small as ~~ten~~ fifteen. The program has launched successfully and has gained the interest of other school districts. Some attrition is expected; student retention goal is set at 50%.

After the initial capital outlay to equip the classrooms and labs, the cost for classroom sustainability is estimated at $3500 per school to replenish/replace tools and $3500 for e-learning access. A total expense per location for equipment and supplies is estimated at $7000.

Memorandums of Understanding with partner schools articulate a progressive shift of tuition and fees. In year one, utilizing grant funds, UAFS fully covered all tuition and fees (currently $4695/semester). In year two, partner schools contributed 25% of standard concurrent credit tuition. For years three and four, the partner schools will increase their contribution by an additional 25% each year until they reach 100% of concurrent credit rates in the year after the second phase expires. It is important to note that UAFS concurrent credit tuition rates are half of standard rates. Thus, once the grant funding has ended, the tuition burden will be shared. 50% of full tuition will be covered by UAFS and 50% of full tuition will be paid by the partner school. All other fees will be waived. This gradual tuition cost shift is an effective plan for sustaining this effort beyond the Regional Workforce Grant's period of performance. Should tuition rates change, the amounts expressed here will be adjusted accordingly.

UAFS Robot Automation is expected to generate full-time equivalency (FTE) as follows:

	Students	Student Generation Credit	FTE Generation
Year 1	45-66	270 - 396	18- 26.4
Year2	90-132	540 - 792	36-52.8

Detailed Plan for Maintaining Communication

Effective communication is critical in a project of this size and scope. The program engages a myriad of communication means including email, program webpage, marketing flyers, faculty retreats, and advisory board meetings.

A webpage for regional workforce development has been developed in conjunction with other concurrent programs offered at UAFS. The webpage provides introductory information to the public as well as program information and a list of faculty and staff affiliated with UAFS Robot Automation program. Concurrent enrollment information is also available to participants as well as information for counselors.

Marketing materials have also been created to ensure potential participants have access to and understand program information.

Faculty in-service or professional development is conducted twice annually to keep faculty apprised of programmatic and employment news and to conduct formative and summative assessments of courses. Additionally faculty will be engaged in professional development in the courses to which they are assigned.

The UAFS Robot Automation Advisory Board meets regularly at the start of each quarter. The advisory board assists in guiding the program throughout implementation and into the continuation portion of the grant.

Identify Availability of Long-Term Resources

Short-term repairs will be covered under standard warranties. Long-term plans for equipment repairs are reflective of craft worker cultures as well as in technical learning environments. Damaged or obsolete equipment is removed from commission, reworked by tradesmen (i.e. faculty and technology students in academia), and reintroduced to the lab.

Describe Plan for Redistribution of Equipment

The shortage of technology-skilled workers is anticipated to worsen in the coming years. UAFS Robot Automation is not expected to completely alleviate the labor shortage. Rather, the program has the potential of producing technology-skilled students for a multitude of careers in a variety of settings. Given the overwhelming response, UAFS anticipates the program popularity to continue and student interest to remain high.

SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2018

Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu

Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded an implementation grant.

CONTINUATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11-14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Program Plan	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Budget Plan	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	15 Pts
Sustainability	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding. period (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding. period (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant. funding period (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)	20 Pts
				Total Points Possible	**100 Pts**

Greenwood School District

May 14, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express support for the continuation of funding for the Regional Workforce Planning Grant being submitted by the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. The Greenwood School District worked collaboratively with UAFS during the conceptual phase of this grant and is proud to witness the achievements of the students in this regional endeavor. It is encouraging to see business, higher education, and public schools come together to place students on a pathway to success.

I continue to be amazed at the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students enrolled in Robot Automation and Cyber System programs acquire as they progress through their program of study. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to have UAFS instructors and state of the art equipment physically present on the Greenwood High School campus. I truly believe this model of delivering concurrent credit course offerings will transform education as we know it. This model allows students to still enjoy the "high school" experience, while granting them access to the training necessary to be productive in their chosen endeavors following graduation from high school.

The member schools of the Guy Fenter Service Cooperative have enjoyed a long-standing partnership with the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. This is evidenced by the success of programs such as the Western Arkansas Technical Center and now the Regional Workforce Grant. I look forward to the possibilities moving forward as we prepare students for the workforce and college.

Feel free to contact me at 479-996-4142 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John Ciesla
Superintendent

420 North Main Street • Greenwood, AR 72936 • PH: (479) 996-4142 • Fax: (479) 996-4143

FORT SMITH
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ginni McDonald, Ed.D.
Director of Secondary Education

May 17, 2018

Dr. Ken Warden, Dean
College of Applied Science and Technology
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649

Re: Regional Workforce Grant

Dear Dr. Warden:

The Fort Smith Public School District is pleased to support the Regional Workforce Grant being submitted by the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith. This program has a continued bright future through the partnership between local school districts and the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith as they collectively address the needs of our region in supporting job growth and economic development.

This is a continuation of the relationship which the Fort Smith Public Schools have established in the past as FSPS and UAFS to address educational needs PreK-16. FSPS staff members have been working collaboratively with UAFS in the conceptual phase and look forward to continued partnership. The opportunities which this Regional Workforce Grant provides students in our secondary schools and higher education builds a highly skilled workforce for the region.

Sincerely,

Ginni McDonald, Ed.D.
Director of Secondary Education

3205 JENNY LIND ROAD
P.O. BOX 1948
FORT SMITH, AR 72902-1948

479-785-2501
479-784-8105 FAX
FORTSMITHSCHOOLS.ORG

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BATTERY A, 2D BATTALION, 142D FIELD ARTILLERY
BUILDING 7075 GATE 19 ROAD, BOX 8
BARLING AR 72923-2505

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

May 8th, 2018

Regional Workforce Robot Automation Grant

University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
Department of Regional Workforce Grants
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649

To whom it may concern:

The Arkansas National Guard's mission is to support surrounding communities in time of domestic emergencies or need. Our mission is also to maintain properly trained and equipped units, available for prompt mobilization for war, national emergency, or as otherwise needed to support the federal Government.

The purpose of this letter is to support the Regional Workforce Robot Automation Grant being submitted by the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith (UAFS). Community support is a collaborative effort that I am proud to be a part of with UAFS and other community partners. The regional workforce development team mission to support academic achievement and eventual careers for River Valley area will allow young adults to support their community and the Arkansas National Guard. The students' knowledge in Cyber Systems and Robot Automations will result in a force that is ready to support the local community, the great State of Arkansas and the United States of America at any time.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Drost
SSG, AR ARNG

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 188TH WING
FORT SMITH AR

23 April 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR ARKANSAS DEPT. OF HIGHER EDUCATION

FROM: 188 WG/CC

SUBJECT: Letter of support for the Regional Workforce Grant Proposal

1. The 188th Wing is an Air National Guard organization consisting of nearly 1,000 airmen who directly support a 24/7 combat mission from home station. The 188th's primary missions are Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, space-focused targeting, and flying the MQ-9 Reaper via remote split operations.

2. This letter serves to express my support for continued funding of the Regional Workforce Grant in collaboration with the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. The 188th Wing has been an advocate of UAFS' program since its inception and has an ardent interest in its continuance. We have several 188th members who mentor students in this program by actively working with them in the classroom on a frequent basis. The 188th Wing, and the greater Fort Smith region for that matter, requires a talent pool of highly-skilled, critical thinkers for the innovative work that we do. This program helps ensure we cultivate local talent in support of regional requirements.

3. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone (479-573-5188) or via email at robert.i.kinney.mil@mail.mil.

ROBERT I. KINNEY, Colonel, AR ANG
Commander

HSM
Transportation & Specialty Manufacturing Company

Tradition. Innovation. Performance.

Paul Mosley

4925 State Line Road, Fort Smith, AR 72916 | 479-646-6161 | pgmosley@hsmsolutions.com

May 21, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

HSM is focused on creating diverse solutions for our ongoing furniture and bedding customers, as well as for rapidly growing transportation, healthcare, packaging and government markets. We have decades of experience in the manufacture of foam, metal, wire, converting and fiber to the latest integrated assemblies and systems. Our Fort Smith, Arkansas Metal Plant work force consists of approximately 200 skilled workers who manufacture recreational vehicle entry steps, network power trays, school bus seat frames, industrial electric motor components, furniture components and many other metal parts and robotically welded assemblies.

I'm writing this letter to affirm HSM support for the Regional Workforce Robot Automation grant through the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. We are committed to continue our collaboration with the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith by providing in class student mentoring support at three local high schools (Fort Smith Southside, Charleston and Greenwood) that have excelled in this program. We have supported the program by hosting all the program participating high schools on plant tours demonstrating automation technology and expressing the need for qualified technicians to support this growing aspect of our business. HSM has a need for employees with the skill sets that are embedded in this Automation/Robotics program of study. Further, we feel that this effort will help create a talent pool that supports the high- skill, high-demand positions that HSM and other like industries in our region have available.

Sincerely,

Paul Mosley

Paul Mosley
Manufacturing Engineer

Walmart Technology
805 Moberly Lane
Bentonville, AR, 72716
(479) 277-5414
www.walmart.com

8 May 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Walmart continues to be a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity. It's all part of our unwavering commitment to creating opportunities and bringing values to customers and communities around the world. Each week, more than 260 million customers and members visit our nearly 11,695 stores under 59 banners in 28 countries and e-commerce websites in 11 countries. With fiscal year 2017 revenue of $485.9 billion, Walmart employs approximately 2.3 million associates worldwide.

I am writing this letter to express support for the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith's continued work with local high schools under the Regional Workforce Planning grant. Walmart has been working collaboratively with UAFS though the last two years and we continue to see amazing benefit for this program. The students in the classes are receiving the foundation of a top-notch S.T.E.M. education which will give them an immense lead on others entering college or the work force who did not have the advantage of this program. Walmart believes that skills taught in the RWG program are in high need across many industry sectors in our region and that this need will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. The result will be a talent pool that supports the high-skill, high-demand positions Walmart needs now and in the future. Further, this program can potentially help keep talented Arkansas high school and college students living and working in this great state.

Please feel free to contact me should you have questions.

Sincerely,

Jennie Pilcher
Senior Manager
@Walmart Labs

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES RATE AGREEMENT

EIN: 71-0394794

ORGANIZATION:
University of Arkansas at Fort Smith
5210 Grand Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72913

DATE:08/11/2014

FILING REF.: The preceding agreement was dated 05/21/2012

The rates approved in this agreement are for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government, subject to the conditions in Section III.

SECTION I: Facilities And Administrative Cost Rates

RATE TYPES: FIXED FINAL PROV. (PROVISIONAL) PRED. (PREDETERMINED)

	EFFECTIVE PERIOD				
TYPE	FROM	TO	RATE(%)	LOCATION	APPLICABLE TO
PRED.	07/01/2014	06/30/2018	52.00	On Campus	All Programs
PROV.	07/01/2018	06/30/2020	52.00	On Campus	All Programs

*BASE

Modified total direct costs, consisting of all salaries and wages, fringe benefits, materials, supplies, services, travel and subgrants and subcontracts up to the first $25,000 of each subgrant or subcontract (regardless of the period covered by the subgrant or subcontract). Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, student tuition remission, rental costs of off-site facilities, scholarships, and fellowships as well as the portion of each subgrant and subcontract in excess of $25,000.

ORGANIZATION: University of Arkansas at Fort Smith
AGREEMENT DATE: 8/11/2014

SECTION II: SPECIAL REMARKS

TREATMENT OF FRINGE BENEFITS:

The fringe benefits are specifically identified to each employee and are charged individually as direct costs. The directly claimed fringe benefits are listed below.

TREATMENT OF PAID ABSENCES

Vacation, holiday, sick leave pay and other paid absences are included in salaries and wages and are claimed on grants, contracts and other agreements as part of the normal cost for salaries and wages. Separate claims are not made for the cost of these paid absences.

Equipment Definition -
Equipment means article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than 1 year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

FICA	Retirement
Worker's Compensation	Life Insurance
Health Insurance	Disability Insurance
Unemployment Insurance	TIAA/CREF
Tuition Remission	Employee Assistance Program

The next indirect cost rate proposal based on actual costs for the fiscal year ending 06/30/17 is due in our office by 12/31/17.

ORGANIZATION: University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

AGREEMENT DATE: 8/11/2014

SECTION III: GENERAL

A. LIMITATIONS:

The rates in this Agreement are subject to any statutory or administrative limitations and apply to a given grant, contract or other agreement only to the extent that funds are available. Acceptance of the rates is subject to the following conditions: (1) Only costs incurred by the organization were included in its facilities and administrative cost pools as finally accepted: such costs are legal obligations of the organization and are allowable under the governing cost principles; (2) The same costs that have been treated as facilities and administrative costs are not claimed as direct costs; (3) Similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment; and (4) The information provided by the organization which was used to establish the rates is not later found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate by the Federal Government. In such situations the rate(s) would be subject to renegotiation at the discretion of the Federal Government.

B. ACCOUNTING CHANGES:

This Agreement is based on the accounting system purported by the organization to be in effect during the Agreement period. Changes to the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from the use of this Agreement require prior approval of the authorized representative of the cognizant agency. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changes in the charging of a particular type of cost from facilities and administrative to direct. Failure to obtain approval may result in cost disallowances.

C. FIXED RATES:

If a fixed rate is in this Agreement, it is based on an estimate of the costs for the period covered by the rate. When the actual costs for this period are determined, an adjustment will be made to a rate of a future year(s) to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and actual costs.

D. USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:

The rates in this Agreement were approved in accordance with the authority in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, and should be applied to grants, contracts and other agreements covered by this Circular, subject to any limitations in A above. The organization may provide copies of the Agreement to other Federal Agencies to give them early notification of the Agreement.

E. OTHER:

If any Federal contract, grant or other agreement is reimbursing facilities and administrative costs by a means other than the approved rate(s) in this Agreement, the organization should (1) credit such costs to the affected programs, and (2) apply the approved rate(s) to the appropriate base to identify the proper amount of facilities and administrative costs allocable to these programs.

BY THE INSTITUTION:

University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

(INSTITUTION)

(SIGNATURE)

Darrell R. Morrison

(NAME)

Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

(TITLE)

August 15, 2014

(DATE)

ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

(AGENCY)

(SIGNATURE)

Arif Karim

(NAME)

Director, Cost Allocation Services

(TITLE)

8/11/2014

(DATE) 7506

HHS REPRESENTATIVE: Theodore Foster

Telephone: (214) 767-3261