

# INNOVATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

## Call for Proposals

### V-TOP Institution-led Regional Partners



VIRGINIA  
TALENT +  
OPPORTUNITY  
PARTNERSHIP

CREATING PATHWAYS TO PROFESSIONS



Issued: 2025



STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA



# Webinar Agenda

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- **Introductions**
- **V-TOP Background**
- **Regional Approach with Institutional Partners**
- **Eligibility**
- **Application Requirements**
- **Q&A**

# MEET THE TEAM

- **Alisha Bazemore:** Director of Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives
- **Stacey Garnett:** Financial Services Specialist (Grant POC)
- **Courtney Hagan:** Work-Based Learning Analyst
- **Sam Ratcliffe:** Work-Based Learning Specialist
- **Carolyn Sutphin:** Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives
- **TBD:** Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives



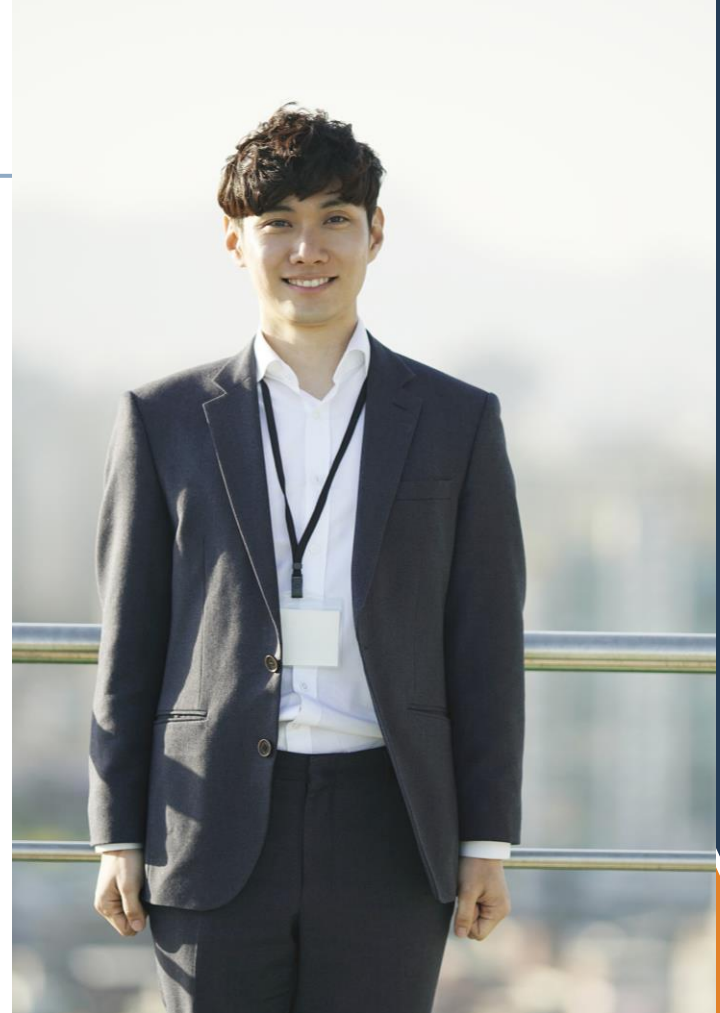
## § 23.1-903.4. Innovative Internship Fund & Program

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- “B. ... The purpose of the Program is to **expand paid or credit-bearing student internships and other work-based learning opportunities in collaboration with Virginia employers.**”
- The Program is comprised of institutional grants and a statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions of higher education to participate in internships and other work-based learning opportunities.

# What Is V-TOP

**V-TOP is publicly funded through the statutorily-created Commonwealth Innovative Internship Fund (\$8.5 million in FY2026 and \$20.5 million over the biennium).**



# What Is V-TOP: Partners

- **The Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) is operated by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) as an established collaboration between SCHEV, the Virginia Chamber Foundation (VCF), Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), and the Virginia Business-Higher Education Council (VBHEC).**



# Goals of V-TOP

- Distinguish the Commonwealth as the leading state for higher education and talent pathways.
- Have the most internship-ready students, employers, and institutions of higher education.
- All Virginia graduates will have a high-quality work-based learning experience.





# 2025 Budget Language

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## V-TOP funding for FY26

### Funding (\$14.5M total)

- \$8.5M → SCHEV
- \$6M → VEDP

### SCHEV's Roles & Responsibilities

- Award Institutional grants to expand internships and work-based learning opportunities.
- Engage stakeholders from business, education, economic development, and state agencies that effectively involve employers or operate successful internship programs.
- Develop internship readiness educational resources, delivery methods, and outreach and awareness activities for students and institutional career development personnel.

### VEDP's Roles & Responsibilities

#### **Business Engagement & Marketing responsibility transferred to VEDP**

- Coordinate regional VEDP Intermediaries for employers seeking to initiate or expand internships in a region.
- Facilitate employer matching grants for small to mid-sized Virginia-based employers.
- Develop and implement a statewide marketing plan to increase engagement of student interns.

### SCHEV + VEDP Collaboration

- Collaborate through a formal **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**.
- Establish statewide goals aligning with **Students, Institutions, and Employers**.

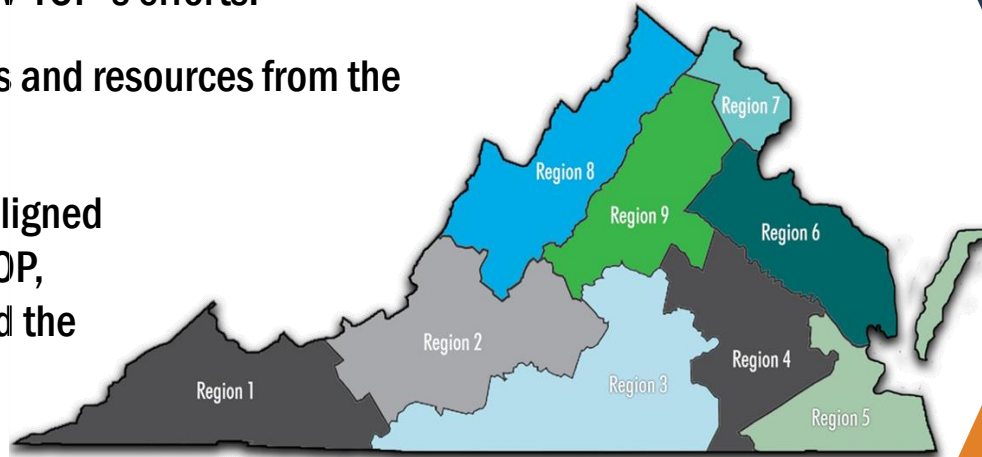
Source: [SCHEV-Specific Legislation](#) and [VEDP-Specific Legislation](#)



# Institution-led Regional Partners Approach

**Through a regional approach, institutional partners will:**

- Be an extension of SCHEV and V-TOP's efforts.
- Enable us to broaden initiatives and resources from the central office.
- Ensure regional practices are aligned with the mission of SCHEV, V-TOP, SCHEV's Council members, and the administrators.
- Achieve shared goals, improve efficiency, and leverage collective resources to benefit the Commonwealth.



# About This Grant

## The purpose of this grant is to:

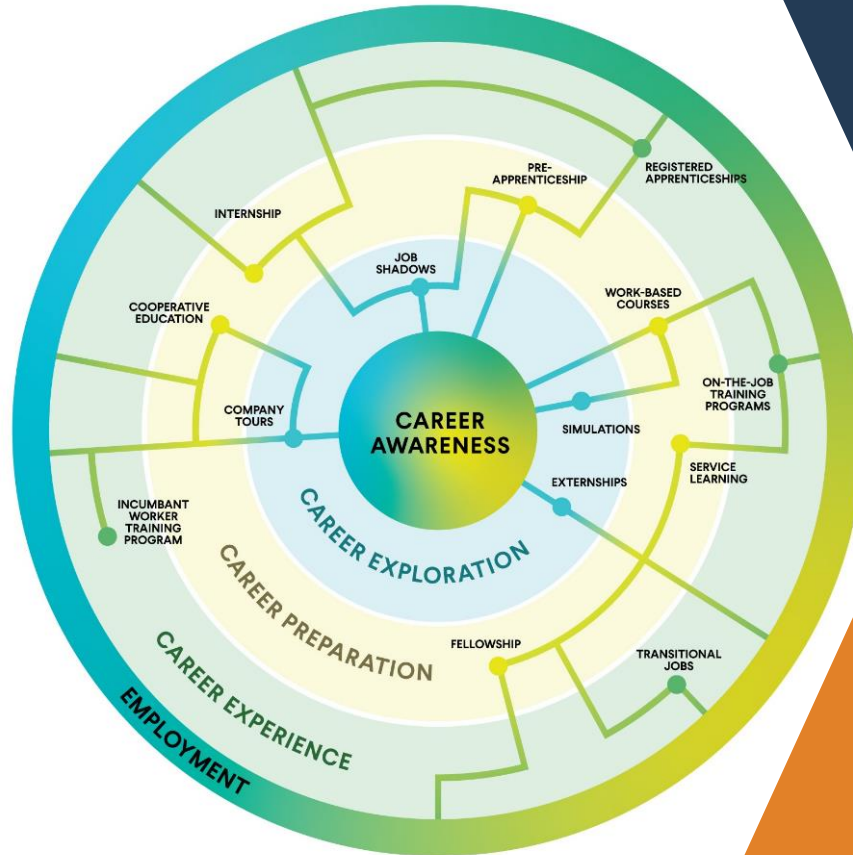
- Encourage the development of regional work-based learning (WBL) opportunities.
- Enhance the internship and career readiness of students.
- Assist institutions in preparing students, faculty, and staff for success.
- Foster collaboration between higher education institutions and regional employers.
- Ensure that every student completes at least one WBL experience before graduation.



# Grant Framework

## Following the Jobs for the Future (JFF) Work-Based Learning

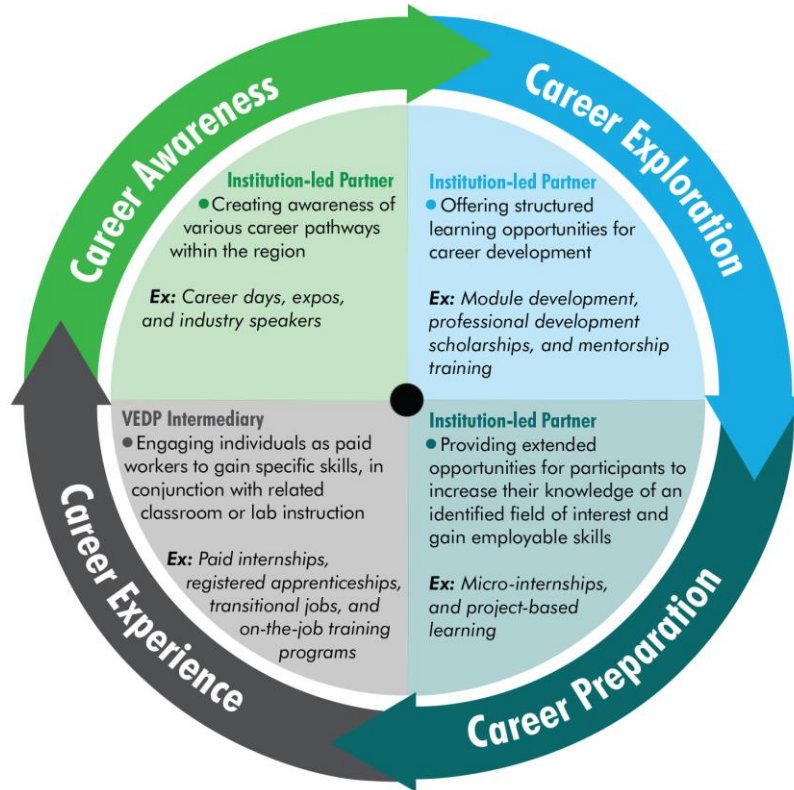
framework to align education and workforce priorities across regions.



# Grantees' Roles

| Awareness   | Exploration  | Preparation  | Experience  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Develop a strategy to increase student awareness of regional career pathways.</p> <p>Collaborate with other institutions to organize <b>career days</b>.</p> <p>Inform employers about <b>regional expos</b> and <b>arrange industry speakers or summits</b> at the institutional and regional levels.</p> | <p>Promote &amp; integrate V-TOP resources &amp; programs at institutions.</p> <p>Engage institutions and students through communication, outreach, and programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Readiness Modules</li><li>• Faculty &amp; Staff Readiness Modules</li></ul> | <p>Collaborate with V-TOP central office to support institutions in implementing <b>project-based learning, micro-internships</b>, and <b>short-term activities</b> that provide <b>real-world experiences</b> while building <b>career readiness skills</b> for students.</p> | <p>Inform and direct appropriate employers to the <b>Virginia Economic Development Partnership</b> to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internships</li><li>• Matching grants to small to mid-sized VA-based employers</li></ul> |

# Framework Application



Work done through this grant will be in collaboration with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)

# Other Responsibilities

**Define a Regional Vision and Strategy**

**Participate in Statewide Industry-Specific Research**

**Institutional Site and Employer Site Visits**

**Coordinate and Convene Stakeholder Groups**

# Goals & Metrics

Propose objectives and outcomes based on proposed work plans that align with the two V-TOP statewide goals stated below.

Objectives and outcomes must have targets that are proposed by the region and finalized in consultation with SCHEV/V-TOP.

1

Expand work-based learning opportunities in collaboration with Virginia institutions

2

Facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions to participate in work-based learning



# Deliverables

**Grantees must submit a regional implementation plan within 60 days of their award and consult with central V-TOP for final approval.**

- This plan should include clearly defined numeric targets for all objectives and outcomes, which should be established locally.
- The targets must be realistic and aligned with the state's annual goals and benchmarks.



# Additional Expectations

## V-TOP Specific Events

- Onboarding, regional training, & annual refresher training.
- Monthly regional meetings
- Bi-weekly meetings with the Associate for Innovative WBL
- Regional coordinator events and trainings
- VACE conference each April
- One+ professional development conference or webinar

## Virginia Intern Day Events

- Promote Virginia Intern Student Ambassador Program
- Promote Virginia Intern Day in your region
- Plan and host a Virginia Intern Day Event for Interns, Supervisors, and Employers to attend

# Joint Regional Strategy with VEDP Intermediaries

## Regional Convenings

Facilitate, with VEDP intermediaries, the planning & documentation of multi-stakeholder meetings to share best practices & promote collaboration.

## Shared Reporting Metrics

Advise on standard metrics and reporting templates to be used by both SCHEV/V-TOP and VEDP to track engagement and outcomes.

## Internship and Work-Based Learning Showcases

Help curate content and plan logistics for events or campaigns that showcase successful internships and work-based learning experiences.

# Eligibility & Funding

## Eligible Institutions

Virginia institutions of higher education (public, private **[TAG]**, two & four year)

## Award Amount

Up to \$150,000

## Number of Awards

Nine Awards – One **institution per** region

# Required Contents: Cover Sheet

**The cover sheet should include the following information:**

- Title of proposed project
- Name and contact information for lead organization
- Name and contact information for the fiscal agent (if different from the lead organization); must be a public institution of higher education in Virginia
- Total amount of funds requested
- Printed name, title and signature of authorized signer for lead organization
- Printed name, title and signature of authorized signer for fiscal agent (if different from the lead organization)



# Key Personnel Leading the Grant

## Full-Time Effort

- 100% of time dedicated to the grant
- No split roles / "as needed" effort not allowed

## Qualifications

- Experience in higher education, career services, workforce training, or Human Resources
- Strong planning, coordination, public speaking, and writing skills

## Recruitment

- SCHEV/V-TOP involved in the selection and recruitment process, including job description development and interview panel participation

# Proposal Narrative

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## **Required Sections (order & headings must match)**

### **Table of Contents**

### **Executive Summary (2 pts)**

- Will be published on the website and used for the press release

### **Members of the Collaborative (5 pts)**

- Committed organizations and potential contact names/titles
- Organizations contacted/considering participation.
- Potential organizations to recruit during the grant period



# Proposal Narrative Cont'd

## **Project Description (10-page limit)**

### **Brief History (3 pts; 1.5 pages)**

- History of regional work-based learning collaboration (not individual efforts)

### **Work Plan (25 pts; 5 pages)**

- One-year plan for convening partners and completing tasks in the initiative

### **Metrics**

- Required metrics and any additional objectives/outcomes

### **Milestones & Timeline (3 pts; 1–2 pages)**

- Show milestones, activities, progress measures

### **Conclusion (2 pts; 1 page)**

# Budget and Budget Narrative

## Budget Requirement

- Brief description of planned expenditures (2 pages max)
- Costs must directly support project implementation (not replace existing funding)

## Format

Institutions **must provide** a line-item budget either in Excel or Word and use standard direct cost categories:

- Salaries/Wages
- Benefits
- Travel (staff/participants - professional development)
- Supplies essential for the project
- Events/activities facilitated to advance the project

\*May use the SCHEV/V-TOP budget template, institutional system/format, or Excel spreadsheet

## Subawards

- Institutions must provide a separate line-item budget for each sub-awardee (if applicable).

## Restrictions

- No indirect costs allowed

# Allowable vs Non-Allowable Expenditures

## Allowable Examples:

- Personnel (initial costs; plan for sustainability)
- Travel (e.g., PD events)
- Supplies essential for project
- Events dedicated to promote the advancement of the project

## Limitations

- Consultant services  $\leq 10\%$  of budget
- Avoid any one category consuming excessive funds

## Non-Allowable

- Indirect Costs
- Entertainment costs (e.g., decorations, alcohol, etc.)



# Scoring

- **40 Points** – Narrative Criteria
- **+20 Impact Points** – Reviewer discretion (total possible: 60)
- **Impact points awarded for: overall value to Virginia and other factors, including partnership with SCHEV/V-TOP.**



# Submission & Award Timeline

**Submissions  
Due**

**October 3, 2025**  
(by 11:59pm)

**Awards  
Announced**

**October 17, 2025**

**Grant Term  
Begins**

**November 3, 2025**

# Follow V-TOP

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# QUESTIONS

**For questions following this session, contact  
Stacey Garnett ([staceygarnett@schev.edu](mailto:staceygarnett@schev.edu))**