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NCFL Launches RFP to Pilot Innovative Multigenerational STEM Learning

Three \$50,000 seed grants will be awarded to selected pilot programs.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOUISVILLE, KY (May 18, 2026) – Today, the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) is launching **Family Learning Pathways to In-Demand STEM Careers**, a new initiative that expands access to STEM-focused workforce learning and credentialing for middle and high school students and their parents. Grounded in the power of multigenerational learning, this effort reflects NCFL’s unique approach to engaging families as partners in education and ensuring that parents and children build skills, confidence, and opportunity across generations.

In support of this initiative, NCFL will issue three seed grants of up to \$50,000 per eligible community to pilot a multigenerational workforce learning program that supports relevant STEM-related education and credentialing for secondary school students (grades 6-12) and their parents. In addition to funding, award recipients will receive NCFL-led, in-depth training, resources, and technical assistance to effectively integrate the four components of family literacy into STEM-focused workforce learning. At the conclusion of the pilot, award recipients will be invited to share their learning on the national stage at NCFL’s 2027 Families Learning Conference.

“This new effort reflects what we know to be true: that when families learn together, they build stronger pathways to opportunity,” says NCFL President & CEO Dr. Felicia C. Smith. “Through Family Learning Pathways to In-Demand STEM Careers, we are expanding access to critical skills and credentials, investing in the power of multigenerational learning to drive lasting change, and providing a coordinated approach that links education and economic mobility. By equipping both students and their parents with the tools to succeed in today’s workforce, we are helping entire families—and ultimately whole communities—thrive together.”

Today’s economy demands industry-recognized skills and credentials, digital fluency, and preparation beyond high school attainment or traditional “workplace readiness” programs. According to the [Chamber of Commerce and the College Board](#), 84% of employers say high school graduates are not workforce-ready, citing a disconnect between the skills employers need and the preparation that young people receive. Additionally, many middle and high school students are being prepped for future careers

while their parents, especially those impacted by poverty or low literacy skills, are stuck trying to catch up in an economy that keeps racing ahead.

For many students and parents, credentials of value that are aligned to specific jobs or fields—such as certifications, licenses, and microcredentials—can provide strong alternatives to traditional education, especially among adults [without a college degree](#). In this model, high school students can graduate with strong academic and durable skills, industry-specific experience and credentials, and greater confidence to navigate education and career pathways. At the same time, their parents can develop the skills that can provide on-ramps to new careers and long-term, life-changing earnings and advancement.

Proposed programs or initiatives must provide education and credentialing opportunities for a minimum of 25 families, including at least one secondary student (grades 6-12) and their parent or caregiver, and meet **five eligibility requirements** to be considered:

1. Applicants must be a school or school district, adult education program, community or technical college, nonprofit organization, government agency, or library with established career-connected learning and credentialing pathways.
2. Offer **credentials of value** for secondary school students that align to local workforce or industry needs in STEM-related professions leading to wage and job security.
3. Demonstrate strong **cross-sector partnerships** that can create or increase access to adult career-connected learning, workforce development, and/or credentials of value for parents whose children are participating in aforementioned programs.
4. Commit to integrating (or continue to integrate) the **four-components of family literacy** in order to strengthen career learning and credentialing, and participate in NCFL-led training and technical assistance sessions.
5. Be **geographically-based** within 50 miles of one of the following cities: Huntsville, Alabama; Chandler, Arizona; Long Beach, California; Alpharetta, Georgia; Princeton, Indiana; Georgetown, Kentucky; Lexington, Kentucky; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Blue Springs, Mississippi; Troy, Missouri; Liberty, North Carolina; Jackson, Tennessee; Dallas, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; or Buffalo, West Virginia.

Interested partners that meet the above eligibility criteria can find additional information and application materials [here](#). Applications **must be received by Thursday, June 18th at 11:59PM ET**. For questions or to request additional information, [register for NCFL's upcoming informational webinar](#) on June 2, 2026 at 2:00PM ET. Or contact NCFL directly at scacicio@familieslearning.org.

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About the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL)

NCFL is a national nonprofit that has worked for more than 35 years to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families. We believe education is a shared, nonpartisan responsibility and that collaboration among families, schools, and community members can lead to powerful learning experiences. NCFL's vision is to establish coordinated and aligned family learning systems in 60 communities, built with and for families, to increase education and economic outcomes and create thriving communities. For more information on NCFL, visit familieslearning.org. To learn more about our vision or become a Family Learning Community™ partner, visit familieslearning.org/flc.