2021-2022 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund
Workforce Training Grant Proposal

Proposal Instructions: Please read this document carefully and provide the information requested below. Some questions may request that a separate narrative be completed. If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.

Entity Information

Name of Entity: _____ St. Petersburg College _____

Federal Employer Identification Number (if applicable): _____

Primary Contact Name: _____ Belinthia Berry _____
  Title: _____ Acting Dean, Workforce Development _____
  Mailing Address: _____ 13805 58th St. _____
  _____ Clearwater, FL 33760 _____
  Phone Number: _____ 727-341-4279 _____
  Email: _____ Berry.Belinthia@spcollege.edu _____

Secondary Contact Name: _____ Jason Boys _____
  Title: _____ Director, Workforce Education _____
  Phone Number: _____ 727-302-6472 _____

Workforce Training Grant Eligibility

Pursuant to 288.101, F.S., the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund was created to promote economic opportunity by improving public infrastructure and enhancing workforce training. This includes workforce training grants to support programs offered at state colleges and state technical centers.

Eligible entities must submit proposals that:

- Support programs and associated equipment at state colleges and state technical centers.
- Provide participants with transferable and sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.
- Are offered to the public.
- Are based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.
- Prohibit the exclusion of applicants who are unemployed or underemployed.

1. Program Requirements:

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

Each proposal must include the following information describing how the program satisfies the eligibility requirements listed on page 1.

A. Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed workforce training.

See Attached

B. Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.

See Attached

C. Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.

See Attached

D. Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public?

See Attached.

E. Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.

See Attached

F. Does this proposal support a program(s) that will not exclude unemployed or underemployed individuals?

⊙ Yes   ◯ No

SPC's EPIC initiative supports individuals at all stages of employment, from workers needing additional certificates or degrees to advance in their career to unemployed individuals seeking training for job eligibility and new students seeking a first career path.

G. Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training. Please include the number of program completers anticipated to be created from the proposed training. Further, please include the economic impact on the community, region, or state and the associated metrics used to measure the success of the proposed training.

See Attached.

2. Additional Information:

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

A. Is this an expansion of an existing training program?　　　⦿ Yes　　　◯ No
If yes, please provide an explanation for how the funds from this grant will be used to enhance the existing program.

See Attached.

B. Does the proposal align with Florida's Targeted Industries?
(View Florida's Targeted Industries here.)　　　⦿ Yes　　　◯ No

If yes, please indicate the specific targeted industries with which the proposal aligns.
If no, with which industries does the proposal align?

See Attached.

C. Does the proposal align with an occupation(s) on the Statewide Demand Occupations List and/ or the Regional Demand Occupations List?
(View Florida's Demand Occupations Lists here.)　　　⦿ Yes　　　◯ No

If yes, please indicate the specific occupation(s) with which the proposal aligns.
If no, with which occupation does the proposal align?

See Attached.

D. Indicate how the training will be delivered (e.g., classroom-based, computer-based, other).
   If in-person, identify the location(s) (e.g., city, campus, etc.) where the training will be available.

   If computer-based, identify the targeted location(s) (e.g. city, county, statewide, etc.) where the training will be available.

   See Attached.

E. Indicate the number of anticipated annual enrolled students and completers in the proposed program.

   See Attached.

F. Indicate the length of program (e.g., quarters, semesters, weeks, etc.), including anticipated beginning and ending dates.

   Begin Date:01/01/22_____   End Date:12/31/24_____

   See Attached.

G. Describe the plan to support the sustainability of the program after grant completion.

   See Attached.

H. Identify any certifications, degrees, etc. that will result from the completion of the program. Please include the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and the percent of completers in each code, corresponding with Section E.

   See Attached.

I. Does this project have a local match amount?   ○ Yes   ⦿ No

   If yes, please describe the entity providing the match and the amount. (Do not include in-kind.)

J. Provide any additional information or attachments to be considered for the proposal.

See attached.

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3. Program Budget
(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

Estimated Costs and Sources of Funding: Include all applicable workforce training costs and other funding sources available to support the proposal.

1.) Total Amount Requested $ 2,004,182
Florida Job Growth Grant Fund

A. Other Workforce Training Project Funding Sources:

City/County	$
Private Sources	$
Other (grants, etc.)	$ Please Specify:
Total Other Funding	$ N/A

B. Workforce Training Project Costs:

Equipment	$ 66,158.00
Personnel	$ 663,511.00
Facilities	$
Tuition	$ 307,440.00
Training Materials	$ 21,413.00
Other	$ 945,661.00 Please Specify: Contract, Marketing, Travel, Indirect
Total Project Costs	$ 2,004,182.00

Note: The total amount requested must be calculated by subtracting the total other workforce training project funding sources in A. from the total workforce training project costs in B.

C. Provide a detailed budget narrative, including the timing and steps necessary to obtain the funding, how equipment purchases will be associated with the training program, if applicable, and any other pertinent budget-related information.

See Attached

4. Approvals and Authority

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

A. If entity is awarded grant funds based on this proposal, what approvals must be obtained before it can execute a grant agreement with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (e.g. approval of a board, commission or council)?

See Attached.

B. If approval of a board, commission, council or other group is needed prior to execution of an agreement between the entity and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:

    i.   Provide the schedule of upcoming meetings for the group for a period of at least six months.
    ii. State whether entity is willing and able to hold special meetings, and if so, upon how many days' notice.

See Attached.

C. Attach evidence that the undersigned has all necessary authority to execute this proposal on behalf of the entity. This evidence may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to: a delegation of authority, citation to relevant laws or codes, policy documents, etc.

Please see attached documented evidence of signing authority, Attachment B.

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have express authority to sign this proposal on behalf of the above-described entity and to the best of my knowledge, that all data and information submitted in proposal is truthful and accurate and no material fact has been omitted.

Name of Entity: _____ St. Petersburg College _____

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: ___ Tonjua Williams, Ph.D. _____

Representative Signature: ___ *Tonjua Williams* _____

Signature Date: _____ 9/15/21 _____

1. Program Requirements

A. Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed workforce training.

Title: *Enhancing Pathways to IT Careers (EPIC)*

Detailed description of proposed training:
As more and more companies look to digitize and automate business processes, there is a fast growing demand within the Information Technology (IT) industry for professionals with specialized skills in cloud computing and related experience. St. Petersburg College (SPC) is seeking funding from the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund for its **Enhancing Pathways to IT Careers (EPIC)** initiative to provide workforce training opportunities that address the regional, state and global demand for talented candidates with cloud computing knowledge and related IT skills.

The recent pandemic has transformed business operations across the globe as companies were forced to adapt to online environments. Cloud computing quickly became a way of life for businesses across all sectors as they shifted to remote work. Cloud computing – or, the delivery of computing services such as servers, storage, databases, software, etc., over the internet, or "the cloud" - allowed businesses to move operations online safely and efficiently. **As of 2020, six out of 10 businesses moved their work to the cloud**.[1] As a result, 46% of companies reported lower costs. Organizations discovered the many benefits of cloud services, including pay-as-you-go service. Since organizations only pay for could service based on usage, cloud services have been shown to improve business efficiency and allow businesses to scale as their needs change. Consequently, adoption of cloud services, such as Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google Cloud and Microsoft Azure, is expected to grow by almost 15% by 2024.[2] Many industries, from technology to retail to media, are expected to increase spending on these cloud-based services to sustain their business. In fact, according to a recent report by Markets and Markets research company, the global **Cloud Computing Market is expected to grow from $371.4 billion in 2020 to $832.1 billion by 2025**.[3]

Virtually all areas of Information Technology are being influenced by the emergence of cloud computing. A key shift has been how cloud computing has enabled the integration of software development and operations. DevOps, as this new practice is called, merges these two functions so that software developers and system administrators work as an integrated unit from design to build to deployment. This is just one reason why IT professionals across disciplines, from software developers to systems administrators, need to become proficient on cloud computing platforms like AWS and Google.

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[1] Jacquelyn Bulao, "How Many Companies Use Cloud Computing? [33+ Stats For 2021]," TechJury, August 6, 2021, https://techjury.net/blog/how-many-companies-use-cloud-computing/.
[2] Ibid.
[3] "Cloud Computing Market," Market Research Firm, accessed August 31, 2021, https://www.marketsandmarkets.com/Market-Reports/cloud-computing-market-234.html.

To meet this global demand, companies are in desperate need of IT professionals with cloud computing and related IT skills. This emerging technology fuels the ongoing demand for workforce training to keep up with the ever-evolving needs of the IT industry, which already struggles to keep up with the constant need for skilled talent.

With approximately 11,500 employees working for roughly 1,000 IT companies, Pinellas County's IT industry continues to grow exponentially.[4] Home to global industry leaders such as Tech Data, Vology, Nielsen and more, the county continues to attract large and small IT companies. The demand for IT professionals, from software developers to database and network administrators, affects all industry sectors, including Financial, Defense and Homeland Security and Advanced Manufacturing industries. **Computer Occupations account for the most in-demand job openings in Pinellas County**, with approximately 6,336 job openings per year, and 18,474 annual job openings statewide.[5] Table 1 shows high demand, high wage computer occupations in the county, most of which require knowledge of cloud computing skills.

Table 1: Regional Demand Occupations					
Computer Occupations		**Pinellas County**		**2019 Pinellas County Hourly Wage**	
SOC Code	Occupational Title	Annual Percent Growth	Annual Job Openings	Mean	Entry
151121	Computer Systems Analysts	1.45	165	$43.23	$26.21
151122	Information Security Analysts	1.80	565	$43.26	$26.49
151131	Computer Programmers	2.17	1,169	$41.69	$23.31
151132	Software Developers, Applications	1.37	238	$48.04	$30.62
151133	Software Developers, Systems Software	1.56	116	$48.04	$30.62
151134	Web Developers	1.68	868	$34.50	$20.68
151141	Database Administrators	1.52	669	$45.51	$27.69
151142	Network and Computer Systems Administrat	1.08	109	$39.43	$25.96
151143	Computer Network Architects	1.57	979	$51.96	$34.03
151151	Computer User Support Specialists	1.50	340	$25.21	$15.76
151199	Computer Occupations, All Other	1.49	1,118	$37.67	$17.86
Source: *Florida Department of Economic Opportunity 2021-2022* Regional Demand Occupation *- WDA 14 Pinellas County*					

In addition to Pinellas County, the demand to fill these IT positions spans the entire region. With 69,000 tech occupations in the Tampa Bay region[6], tech jobs in Tampa Bay are

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[4] Talcott, Scott, "Information Technology" (Pinellas County Economic Development), accessed September 9, 2021, https://www.pced.org/page/information_tech.

[5] "2021-22 Regional Demand Occupations List," n.d.

[6] "2021 Tech Industry Job Market & Salary Trends Analysis (CompTIA Cyberstates), accessed September 9, 2021, https://www.cyberstates.org/#interactiveMap?geoid=45300__tampa-st.-petersburg-clearwater%2Cfl.

projected to grow by more than 8.5% by 2025, outpacing the national average by 2%.[7] Tampa Bay's leading IT jobs include Software Developers and Applications, Computer Systems Analysts and Network and Computer Systems Administrators, all of which are becoming more integrated with cloud computing and require cloud computing skills. This regional demand for IT professionals in Pinellas County and across Tampa Bay indicates a strong need for workforce training to increase the local talent pool of IT candidates and ensure regional economic growth and development. The difficulty in filling these positions starts with a strong pipeline of IT professionals. Providing training at the local level trickles up to the state demand. Developing a strong talent pool of IT candidates from recruitment and enrollment to ongoing professional training ensure sufficient candidates to move into advanced level and management positions, locally and statewide.

In order to strengthen the talent pool of highly qualified IT professionals in the region to fill high demand occupations, **SPC has developed its *EPIC* initiative to answer the call of local, regional and statewide IT workforce needs**.

Design:
The goal of SPC's *EPIC* initiative is to create a pipeline of qualified candidates for key targeted occupations in the **Information Technology** industry. To accomplish this, the project has three objectives: 1) expand short-term training and degree pathways in cloud computing, 2) work with industry partners to identify and address skills gaps for targeted high growth tech careers, and, 3) work with industry partners to develop a formal IT internship program and connect students to high demand IT jobs.
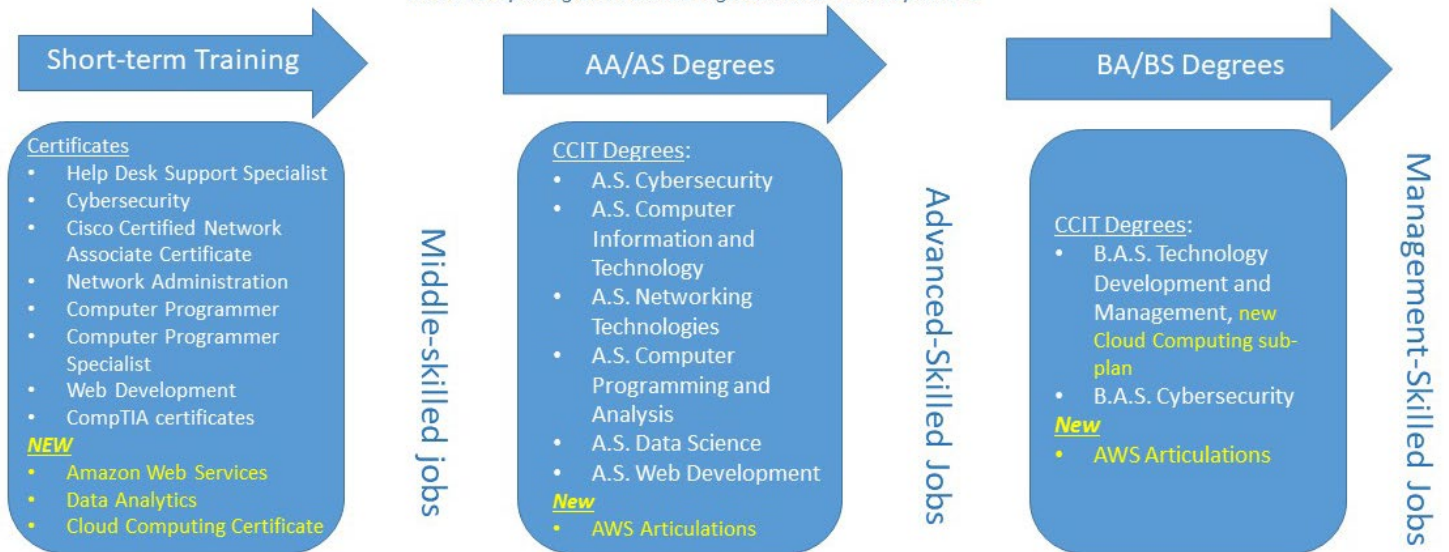
A.1. Expand short term training and degree pathways in cloud computing

SPC'S *EPIC* initiative will enhance both short-term training in cloud computing *and* existing degree tracks within the College of Computer and Information Technology (CCIT). To start, SPC will hire program staff to oversee the development and implementation of programming that will ensure a strong pipeline of talent, from outreach to enrollment to job placement, in targeted high-demand IT careers. Program staff will develop and oversee all grant activities, from robust partnerships to ample outreach to programmatic success for both short-term training and degree pathways.

SPC's education pathways in IT allow students on and off ramps as they gain credentials and advance through various programs. Some students may start out in short-term certificate courses and then move into degree programs. Others may complete an Associate's degree and return for workforce training to obtain industry certifications. The *EPIC* project will support enrollment and success in short-term training and degree pathways that lead to cloud related occupations, supporting all entry points - from certificates through to a bachelor's degree. Figure 1 shows related IT certificate and degree pathways that will be emphasized:

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[7]"Information Technology" (Tampa Bay Economic Development Council), accessed September 2, 2021, https://tampabayedc.com/target-industries-2/information-technology/.

Figure 1. SPC pathways to IT certificates, industry certifications and A.S. and B.A.S. degrees associated with cloud computing and related high demand IT occupations

Short-term Training

Certificates
- Help Desk Support Specialist
- Cybersecurity
- Cisco Certified Network Associate Certificate
- Network Administration
- Computer Programmer
- Computer Programmer Specialist
- Web Development
- CompTIA certificates
NEW
- Amazon Web Services
- Data Analytics
- Cloud Computing Certificate

Middle-skilled jobs

AA/AS Degrees

CCIT Degrees:
- A.S. Cybersecurity
- A.S. Computer Information and Technology
- A.S. Networking Technologies
- A.S. Computer Programming and Analysis
- A.S. Data Science
- A.S. Web Development
New
- AWS Articulations

Advanced-Skilled Jobs

BA/BS Degrees

CCIT Degrees:
- B.A.S. Technology Development and Management, new Cloud Computing sub-plan
- B.A.S. Cybersecurity
New
- AWS Articulations

Management-Skilled Jobs

a. Short term training

SPC's Workforce, Community & Corporate Partnerships (WCCP) department offers an array of short-term workforce training options for those seeking continuing education, career growth, industry certifications, licensures and career pathways. To address the need for workforce training in cloud computing, the *EPIC* initiative will expand WCCP's current course offerings in Amazon Web Services (AWS), thereby expanding short-term training options in IT that lead to significant industry certifications and high wage careers.

As businesses across all sectors look to lower costs and move toward cloud services, SPC's proposal to expand training in cloud computing will provide individuals with the skills needed for high demand IT positions. According to EMSI data, there were 11,962 postings for cloud related jobs in the Tampa-St. Petersburg MSA from July 2020 to June 2021, of which 2,213 were unique.[8] The high number of postings per job (5 to 1) indicates a high posting intensity, showing that companies may be trying harder to fill these positions.

Cloud computing services are offered by a handful of large providers including AWS, Google Cloud Platform (GCP) and Microsoft Azure, with AWS being the most widely used across businesses and organizations, from startups to large enterprises and government agencies. Of the vast adoption of cloud services in 2020, AWS had a 76% share of that market, and that trend is expected to continue.[9] With millions of active customers and tens of thousands of partners globally, AWS serves customers across virtually every industry and of every size. The AWS Partner Network (APN) includes

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[8] "Job Posting Analytics", (ESMI, 2021).
[9] Jacquelyn Bulao, "How Many Companies Use Cloud Computing? [33+ Stats For 2021]," TechJury, August 6, 2021, https://techjury.net/blog/how-many-companies-use-cloud-computing/.

thousands of systems integrators who specialize in AWS services and tens of thousands of independent software vendors who adapt their technology to work on AWS.

Hence, AWS training is critical to help individuals gain jobs in this rapidly growing field, for both individuals looking to start a career in IT, and those in the profession who need to up-skill. Recent data shows that AWS skills appeared in 46% of cloud related job postings in 2020/21.[10] To meet this growing demand, **the *EPIC* project will increase awareness, outreach and marketing to boost enrollment in SPC's existing AWS courses**, which were added this year: AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner and AWS Solutions Architect – Associate. Enrollment in these courses will provide foundational cloud computing skills on the AWS platform and can also introduce students to academic pathways in cloud computing that can lead to associate's and bachelor's degrees in IT

SPC's WCCP will also **build on these entry level courses by expanding its cloud related offerings** to prepare individuals for specialized AWS industry certifications and provide related data analytics skills. The following **new courses will be added: AWS Certified SysOps Administrator; AWS Certified Developer; AWS Solutions Architect, and, a data analytics course/s such as CompTIA Data+ and/or Google Data.** These courses will enhance SPC's short-term training options for those looking to upskill and advance their IT career.

The following course descriptions provide an overview of each of the short-term workforce training courses to be emphasized:

AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner - Entry-level AWS course that provides an introduction to Cloud Computing and AWS. Participants gain a basic understanding of IT services and their uses in the AWS Cloud platform; knowledge of core AWS services and use cases; billing and pricing models; security concepts; and how cloud impacts business. The course prepares students to take the AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner exam.

AWS Solutions Architect – Associate – Provides hands-on experience using compute, networking, storage and database AWS services, and hands-on experience with AWS deployment and management services. The course prepares students to take the AWS Solutions Architect – Associate exam, which validates participant's knowledge, such as ability to identify and define technical requirements for an AWS-based application; knowledge of recommended best practices for building secure and reliable applications on the AWS platform; and, an understanding of the basic architectural principles of building on the AWS Cloud, AWS global infrastructure, network technologies as they relate to AWS and security features and tools that AWS provides and how they relate to traditional services.

AWS Certified SysOps Administrator – This course will prepare participants to take the AWS Certified SysOps Administrator – Associate exam, which validates the following skills: experience deploying, managing, and operating workloads on AWS as well as implementing security controls and compliance requirements; familiarity with using both the AWS Management Console and the AWS Command Line Interface (CLI); and, understanding of the AWS Well-Architected Framework as well as AWS networking and security services.

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[10] "Job Posting Analytics", (ESMI, 2021).

AWS Certified Developer – This course will prepare participants to take the AWS Certified Developer – Associate exam, which validates the following skills: in-depth knowledge of at least one high-level programming language; understanding of core AWS services, uses of the services, and basic AWS architecture best practices, including the AWS Shared Responsibility Model, application lifecycle management, and the use of containers in the development process; proficiency in developing, deploying, and debugging cloud-based applications using AWS and writing code for serverless applications; ability to identify key features of AWS services and use the AWS service APIs, AWS CLI, and SDKs to write applications; ability to apply a basic understanding of cloud-native applications to write code; and, ability to author, maintain, and debug code modules on AWS.

AWS Solutions Architect – This course will prepare students to take the AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate exam, which validates the following skills: ability to design secure and robust solutions by using AWS technologies, including ability to design a solution by using appropriate AWS services and by following architectural principles based on requirements, and provide implementation guidance based on best practices to the organization throughout the workload lifecycle.

Data Analytics – TBD – A data analytics course, such as CompTIA Data+ and/or Google Data Analytics, will be developed to provide students with the ability to analyze and process data to gain key business insights.

The addition of these specialized courses will help individuals gain the skills needed to earn highly sought industry certifications, as well as allow them to build on that knowledge, continue their progress and expand their skills and proficiency in cloud computing. This progression provides a pathway to advanced level careers, helping participants earn high demand, high wage jobs in IT and fulfilling industry needs.

b. Degree programs
In addition to short-term training courses, SPC's *EPIC* initiative will enhance cloud computing pathways in its IT degree programs through articulations, and a new certificate and new degree sub-plan. The project will include establishing crosswalks for AWS certifications to articulate into credit, offering stackable credentials towards associate and bachelor's degrees within SPC's College of Computer and Information Technology (CCIT). Often, students in SPC's CCIT degree programs are adult students in the IT industry who need a degree in order to advance into more skilled or management positions. By establishing articulations for AWS certifications, students enrolling in non-credit AWS courses and earning industry certification may be able to apply that experience towards a needed degree.

SPC will also establish a Cloud Computing Sub-plan within the CCIT Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Technology Development and Management, as well as a credit Cloud Computing Certificate. As the work being done by database administrators, software developers, network architects, systems administrators and other technology professionals has shifted to the cloud, it is critical to ensure these skills are incorporated into IT pathways that lead to these professions. Using the resources provided through the *EPIC* initiative, CCIT will evaluate current courses,

curriculum and learning objectives to establish clear pathways within CCIT that will enable students to gain the skills needed for high demand jobs that increasingly require a solid understanding of cloud platforms. Students in the existing BAS Technology Development and Management program can choose between several sub-plans. Sub-plans are made up of five courses that allow students to conduct focused study in a particular technical discipline. Currently sub-plans available are Data Science, Cybersecurity Management, Software Assurance, Project Management, and Cyber Security Defense and Risk Mitigation. The targeted deliverables from the *EPIC* initiative will include a new Cloud Computing sub-plan, which will also be available as a standalone Cloud Computing Certificate. The Cloud Computing Certificate will allow current students, as well as working professionals who need to reskill, to be prepared to meet the growing workforce need for cloud savvy employees.

To increase awareness of new cloud computing programs (short-term training and degree programs) and ensure enrollment in these and related IT certificate and degree programs, the *EPIC* project will include a **comprehensive outreach and marketing plan**. Working with the local workforce board CareerSource Pinellas, and other community partners, the project team will target outreach to unemployed and underserved individuals to help students gain an understanding of education and career options in IT, and connect them to training that leads to high demand, high wage IT careers. Current partnership activities, such as joint career events and the mass distribution of information related to career exploration activities and training, will be expanded to include and emphasize targeted IT programs. Information will also be distributed directly through CareerSource, including at their One Stop Centers located on SPC Campuses. Scholarships for cloud computing plans will be provided to eligible students to increase enrollment of underrepresented populations in IT program. The project team will work with SPC's Financial Assistance Services staff, as well as Career Source Pinellas, to identify and recruit need-based students. The project will include scholarships for tuition and vouchers for exam fees, with priority given to low-income and/or underrepresented students.

SPC will also deploy internal outreach strategies throughout the College. These efforts will include equipping current Career Advisors, Academic Recruiters, Career Outreach Specialists and related staff with information on the grant funding and supported programs, opportunities for students and steps for enrollment. SPC's *EPIC* team will communicate opportunities to other college programs including St. Pete Works and PITCH, which connect underrepresented populations to short term training.

Other outreach efforts will include extensive marketing to increase awareness of new and existing courses, such as promoted social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc., which have shown to have a considerable and timely return on investment.

c. Mobile Classroom

The *EPIC* initiative will include support for the development of a mobile classroom to deliver courses and/or technology workshops in the community and at business locations. SPC will obtain a mobile trailer to develop into a mobile classroom/computer lab for the purposes of delivering in-demand workforce training such as cloud computing, as well as outreach events and workshops, in the community. The popularity of AWS in the corporate world shows a demand to bring this training to businesses. A mobile computer lab will allow SPC to offer cloud computing training and related IT training directly at business locations. The *EPIC* initiative will provide financial support to transform a trailer into a mobile computer lab to fill that need. Outfitted with laptops, iPads and other technology, the mobile classroom will allow for in-demand training to be offered at various times and locations based on the needs and demands of businesses and community organizations throughout the county. The mobile lab will also be used to provide outreach events and skills workshops in the community, providing access to computers and WIFI in underrepresented areas where many households lack computers and internet service. Outreach will target unemployed and underemployed individuals in underrepresented areas, such as South St. Petersburg, to help individuals gain computer and IT skills and learn more about IT academic and career pathways.

A.2. Identify and address skills gaps for targeted high growth tech careers

To ensure success of students entering cloud computing and related IT programs, the *EPIC* initiative will employ strategies to enhance existing CCIT infrastructure, to include partnering with organizations and businesses to identify needs, implementing support activities to address gaps and increase success, and developing a mentoring program, IT Orientation and student skills assessment.

SPC's *EPIC* project will partner with the St. Pete Innovation District, Pinellas County Economic Development and other industry experts to identify skills gaps in hiring needs for high growth tech careers, such as computer programmers and software developers, with a goal of developing immediate solutions to address any gaps in creating a pipeline of local talent.

The St. Pete Innovation District (SPID) is a 501(c)6 public-private partnership with a mission to develop St. Petersburg into an environment that fosters job growth, economic development, learning and inspiration by bringing innovative people and organizations together. Established in 2016, the District's membership exceeds 30 organizations in the Life Science, Marine Science, Education, Data Analytics, Art and Technology sectors. Member organizations include Bayfront Health St. Petersburg, the City of St. Petersburg, the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership and the University of South Florida. These organizations are predominantly located within a designated boundary just south of downtown St. Petersburg, and strive to foster business growth in the downtown area. SPID will soon be opening the **St. Petersburg Maritime and Defense Technology Hub** to bring together industry, government and academia under one roof, providing unique opportunity for innovation and collaboration. Located adjacent to downtown St.

Petersburg and managed by SPID, the goal of the Hub is to create a curated cluster of collaborative organizations **aligned with Pinellas County's target industries**, with particular emphasis on marine science and defense technology. With 12 companies already committed to moving into the space, including Aveshka, The DarkStar Group and Pole Star Space Applications, the Hub is intentionally focused on small to mid-sized technology companies with the agility to engage in the local community and be innovative collaborators. Many of these companies are re-locating from other states and/or expanding operations to St. Petersburg and have proven experience and active contracts in the maritime and defense/intelligence technology industries. As these businesses and others move into the space, **the Hub's workforce is anticipated to triple over the next five years**. Companies moving into the Hub have already identified the need to hire multiple IT positions related to cloud computing, including systems administrators, cloud practitioners and software developers. Many positions have average salaries of $100,000-$125,000/year. To help fulfill their hiring needs, the District is partnering with SPC to help address employers' training needs.

SPC and the District will partner to leverage the collective input from Hub companies, as well as Pinellas County Economic Development (PCED) and other industry partners, to identify any skills gaps in local hiring needs in the coming years. SPID and PCED will connect SPC to hiring companies in order to assess CCIT curriculum to ensure alignment with upcoming business hiring opportunities. SPC's CCIT leadership and faculty will assess areas of opportunity and growth. In addition to direct feedback on curriculum, SPC will also leverage business partnerships to develop and launch out-of-classroom opportunities for SPC's IT students, such as soft skills workshops, industry guest speakers, mentoring, job shadowing and internships.

While companies need candidates with hard skills such as programming and cloud computing, successful candidates for IT jobs are also required to have solid soft skills, such as the ability to communicate, analyze and stay organized.[11] Based on direct input from employers, the *EPIC* project team will work with CCIT faculty and staff, and partner organizations including SPID, PCED and CareerSource Pinellas, to design and implement soft skills workshops to address any gaps identified by employers as well as provide support for student success. Workshops will include industry partners as hosts and/or guest speakers, allowing students to make industry connections and gain valuable insider knowledge.

The *EPIC* initiative will also utilize this assessment process to foster business partnerships and relationships and create a formal mentoring program. Most companies and organizations want to foster student development as it allows them to help cultivate a talent pool responsive to industry needs. This initiative will support program staff to create a robust mentoring plan and put processes in place for long term sustainability.

Other out-of-classroom support will include the development and launch of an IT Orientation and Skills Assessment for first year IT students. Often, students entering into

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[11] "10 Skills You Didn't Know Could Land You an IT Job," CompTIA, accessed August 31, 2021, https://www.comptia.org/career-change/exploring-it/skills-for-it.

an IT certificate or degree program lack knowledge and understanding of the various pathways within IT. SPC's CCIT will utilize support from the *EPIC* project to implement a new orientation specifically for IT students to introduce them to many options within their chosen field. A new skills assessment will also be developed to help new IT students choose a pathway or degree sub-plan that would best suit them. The assessment would provide students an understanding of skills needed for various IT jobs, such as programmer, software developer, web developer, systems analyst, etc. so they can choose a pathway based on their strengths, interests and skill set. Together, a skills assessment and IT Orientation will provide students an understanding of the pathways, certificates, industry certifications and degree sub-plans available, as well as requirements necessary to obtaining high demand IT jobs. This understanding will help students create realistic goal plans, setting them up for success and developing a strong talent pool for area employers.

A.3. Develop formal IT internship program and connect students to high demand IT jobs

In order to further strengthen the bridge between education and employment, SPC's *EPIC* initiative will support the development and launch of the St. Pete Innovation District's **Technology Internship Program**. This new program will be a collaborative effort among businesses in the District's Maritime and Defense Technology Hub, and will focus on opportunities for targeted, high-growth IT occupations, such as programmers, developers and network architects and administrators.

Based on feedback from Hub employers, small to mid-size companies often struggle to establish internship programs given their size. The St. Pete Innovation District will work with Hub employers, and other technology companies, to create a combined, single internship program. The program will be modeled after a successful partnership between small companies and the University of Maryland (UM) for computer science interns. That program placed students into teams and then tasked each team to address real-world challenges faced by companies and their clients. Similarly, SPID will develop a team-based internship model, utilizing Hub employers to provide content and curriculum. SPID will recruit and hire interns, and place them in teams to work on current challenges provided by partner companies. Each team will work on developing solutions to these real-world scenarios, working with company mentors along the way to refine their solutions. At the end of the internship period, the student teams will "pitch" their solutions to business partners. Students who stand out during this internship may be asked to participate in a follow-up internship and/or have an opportunity to be hired by one of the participating companies following graduation. As part of this second phase, students will be processed for security clearance, allowing them to immediately step into employment. This will be a key benefit to Defense Technology companies looking for immediate hires.

A company representative who participated in the UM program stated, "*We had >30% of our company graduate from that program so we had direct access to their former professors who would push us their top talent each semester. Once we got the first 1-2 semesters of proven pipeline, the students would sing our praises from there and it was like fishing in a bucket.*"

The Innovation District Technology Internship Program will be approximately three months (180 hours) each summer (June – August). Students who are asked to stay by individual companies will then work directly for that company. Additional cycles may be added in the fall and/or spring semester as the program grows. This program will fulfill internship graduation requirements for SPC students in select IT Associate's programs. Initial pilot of the program will recruit interns directly from SPC Associate's programs, with the intent to help SPC students gain employment in high demand IT positions upon graduation. Recruitment may include other educational institutions as the program grows.

Support for the District's Technology Internship Program is just one way SPC will ensure that students are prepared to be placed in high demand IT jobs. From recruitment and enrollment through workshops and internships, SPC's *EPIC* project will embed opportunities for students to connect with employers through cloud computing and related programming. SPC will work to engage employers throughout IT education pathways through guest speakers, soft skills workshops, resume development, career fairs, mentoring, job shadowing, etc. SPC will also work with Pinellas County Economic Development, St. Pete Innovation District, business partners and the local workforce board, CareerSource Pinellas, to directly place students completing training programs into open positions. The *EPIC* project team will work with partners to develop methods for tracking and reporting job placement.

Through all of these combined efforts to expand cloud computing, recruit and enroll students, enhance student support in cloud computing and related CCIT programs, and work directly with employers to connect students with jobs, **SPC's *EPIC* initiative will make a significant impact in putting qualified candidates into high demand, high wage jobs, and keeping Pinellas County, and Florida, at the top of the IT industry**.

B. Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.

SPC's *EPIC* initiative supports programs at state colleges by enhancing SPC's workforce training and degree pathways and offering real-world skills that lead to employment in Computer and Information Technology.

Established in 1927, SPC was the first two-year accredited institution of higher education in the state of Florida, and the first to become a baccalaureate degree-granting institution in 2001. As the primary post-secondary provider in Florida's most densely populated county, SPC was now boasts an average of more than 40,000 students per year, 11 educational sites, and more than 180 degree and certificate programs, including nearly two dozen bachelor's degrees and many high-demand, industry-recognized workforce certifications. The College's career-focused curriculum is created with input from industry experts to give students the skills they need to meet the needs of today's employers. SPC career pathways provide students a clear roadmap to success to ensure they are taking the right courses – in the right sequence – to meet their goals.

Students represent a broad base of individuals--from those unemployed seeking quick training in order to enter the job market, to those pursuing an undergraduate degree prior to moving into a career, to those needing continuing education to maintain credentials or seek promotion. By offering multi-level options in a variety of fields, SPC provides students the flexibility to achieve their goals within their own self-paced timeframe, anywhere from a few weeks in an online environment to a two-year degree based in the classroom.

SPC's *EPIC* initiative is focused on training that addresses the immediate needs of employers in the region. As the IT industry continues to grow, SPC's Workforce, Community, & Corporate Partnerships and its College of Computer and Information Technology needs to stay current in offering relevant, cutting edge training in new emerging technologies to meet industry demands. Adding new classes, articulations, certificate and sub-plan options in cloud computing will enhance SPC's portfolio of training. As the program is established, program income such as tuition and fees will generate revenue in SPC's workforce development department to support program expenses, including staff, and enable the College to continue to offer relevant short-term training options for those looking to upskill and advance in an IT career. In addition, recruitment efforts for related IT programs will bolster enrollment in workforce and credit IT programs and allow SPC to keep pace with industry needs in providing a pipeline of talent for regional employment demands.

C. Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.

SPC's *EPIC* initiative to expand cloud computing training and boost enrollment in related IT programs will provide participants with sustainable workforce skills that are in high demand across multiple industries and employers, from technology companies to financial institutions to multi-national corporations to government agencies. Large and small companies and organizations across the globe are adopting cloud technology for an array of business needs, including infrastructure, software, storage and security. The demand for cloud computing and related IT skills will only continue to multiply as the need for occupations from programmers to network architects and administrators continue to intensify among an array of employers.

Students in SPC's AWS courses and other cloud computing courses learn foundational cloud architecture, which can translate to other platforms, such as Google Cloud and Azure. As students gain skills and learn cloud computing language, they're able to move into various areas of expertise within the IT industry, providing them sustainable skills that lead to career growth and economic mobility.

Further, SPC's direct partnership with the St. Pete Innovation District, as well as the commitment from many businesses, show strong support and need for the proposed training. Multiple employers, including KnowB4, Aveshka, the DarkStar Group, Pole Star USA and more, have expressed the need to mentor and hire students in the proposed training. This commitment represents a sustainable need in the industry.

D. Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public?

All certificate and degree programs are open to the public, with eligibility for certain programs determined by completion of prerequisite courses or equivalency of training in another state.

E. Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.

The Florida State College system is responsive to the needs of both the public and private sectors in the state of Florida, and strives to align programs with industry-recognized certifications and credentials. The Florida Department of Education coordinates all industry certification alignment and provides oversight on federal or state regulatory agency, industry, proprietary, and third-party developed assessments leading to certification. SPC follows these regulatory guidelines to ensure that academic programs are responsive to employer needs and demand, resulting in students appropriately trained for high-wage, high-demand employment. Based on employer demand and advisory board feedback, SPC integrates industry-driven competencies into college curricula to ensure that students can obtain credentials valued by the labor market.

Each of the cloud computing certificate and B.A.S. sub-plan developed under the *EPIC* initiative will be aligned with state curriculum frameworks determined by the Florida Department of Education and supported by the Florida College System. These frameworks define the content to be learned, clear standards and benchmarks for achievement and assessments tied to those standards. Frameworks are assessed every three years to maintain compliance with industry standards and labor market needs. All programs of study within these frameworks must also include a pathway leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e. certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree, industry certification, or licensure).

F. Does this proposal support a program(s) that will not exclude unemployed or underemployed individuals?

☒ **Yes**   ☐ No

G. Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training. Please include the number of program completers anticipated to be created from the proposed training. Further, please include the economic impact on the community, region, or state and the associated metrics used to measure the success of the proposed training.

SPC's proposed training to enhance workforce training in cloud computing and related IT programs will promote economic opportunity by providing individuals with the skills to get started or advance in high demand, high wage IT careers. Many of the proposed targeted IT occupations require only some post-secondary education or an associate's degree to

obtain high wage, high skills jobs.[12] SPC's short-term AWS courses and Cloud Computing Certificate can provide students with the skills needed to enter this high demand field while providing the credentials to continue their education in degree programs and/or advance into higher wage positions, creating economic opportunity.

Success of the proposed training will be shown through those completing proposed training programs. Metrics will include:
- Number of completers of AWS courses
- Number of completers of the Cloud Computing Certificate
- Number of completers of the BAS in Technology Development and Management with a Cloud Computing Sub-plan
- Number of completers of the Innovation District Technology Internship Program

SPC anticipates approximately 338 will complete the proposed trainings. EMSI data showed a median salary of $120,000/year for cloud related job postings in the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA from July 2020 to June 2021.[13] St. Pete Innovation District Maritime and Defense Technology Hub business partners also indicate salaries of cloud related positions will average from $100k - $125/year.

SPC's proposed cloud computing and related training will provide participants the opportunity to gain these high demand, high wage positions, promoting economic opportunity for individuals in the Tampa Bay region. With approximately 338 completers earning $120,000/year, the economic impact could be upwards of $40,560,000/year in earnings in the region and/or state, a significant return on investment for the program.

2. Additional Information:

A. Is this an expansion of an existing training program?

☒ **Yes**   ☐ No

If yes, provide an explanation for how the funds from this grant will be used to enhance the existing program.

SPC will enhance **two existing programs**:
- Existing **short-term workforce training** will be enhanced by adding cloud computing course in Amazon Web Services (AWS) and data analytics to its schedule.
- Existing **College of Computer and Information Technology degree paths** will be enhanced by establishing articulations for AWS industry certifications, adding a

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[12] "Employment Projections - FloridaJobs.Org." *Florida Department of Economic Opportunity*, www.floridajobs.org/economic-data/employment-projections. Accessed 10 Sept. 2021.
[13] "Cloud Related Jobs in Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL" (EMSI, 2021).

Cloud Computing Certificate, and adding a Cloud Computing Sub-Plan for the B.A.S in Technology Development and Management.

Funds will be used to hire **staff, including a Program Manager and Project Coordinator,** to oversee and direct all project activities that will enhance existing short term training and degree programs. Program staff will help facilitate and build partnerships, assist in implementing new programming, including new courses, certificates, IT Orientation and skills workshops, develop and implement recruitment and enrollment activities for cloud computing and related IT programs, and track and report all activities and progress towards deliverables. ; the addition of a **mobile classroom** to provide off-sight training and workshops; significant outreach and **marketing for recruitment and enrollment**, especially among unemployment/underemployed; **tuition and exam fees** for participants; and, support for the development and implementation of a unique, collective **internship program** through the St. Pete Innovation District.

B. Does the proposal align with Florida's Targeted Industries?

☒ **Yes**   ☐ No

If yes, please indicate the targeted industries with which the proposal aligns. If no, with which industries does this proposal align?

SPC's proposal aligns with Florida's targeted industry of **Information Technology.** As shown in Figure 2, the **Tampa/St. Petersburg region is a major contributor to the state's more than 237,000 tech workforce.** As shown on this map from Enterprise Florida, the high concentration of tech companies in the area indicate that the Tampa/St. Petersburg region is a hub for leading tech company headquarters, such as Tech Data, Raytheon, Jabil and more, that fuel Florida's economy. As the region continues to attract large and small tech companies to the area, including those committed to SPC's partnership with the St. Pete Innovation District, the need to train the region's IT workforce on the latest emerging technologies will continue to grow. SPC's *EPIC* initiative will provide training to fuel the area's ongoing and growing demand for IT professionals.

Figure 2. Florida's Information Technology Cluster

Source: https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/information-technology-industry-profile.pdf
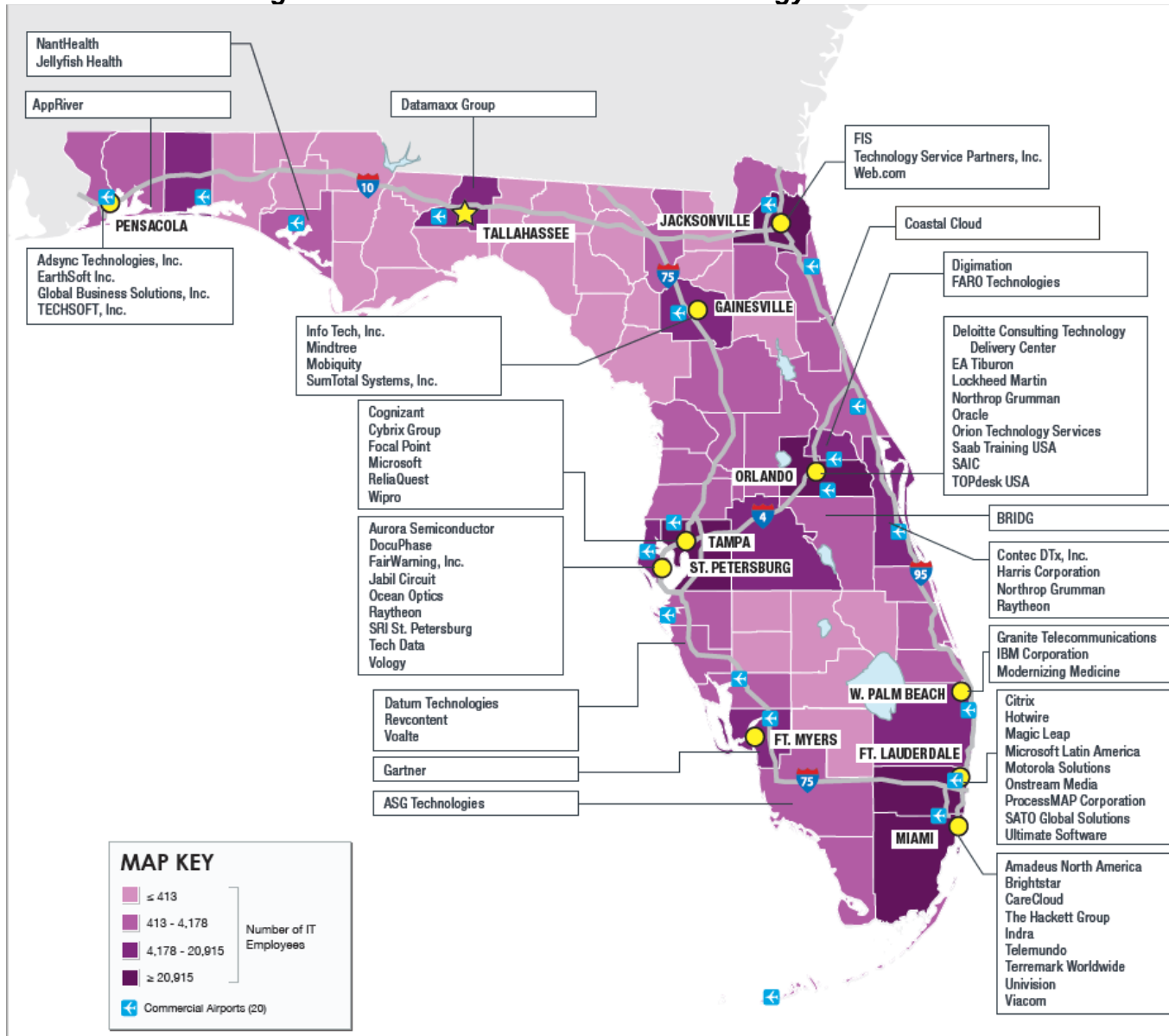
SPC's EPIC initiative also aligns with and supports the **Defense and Homeland Security Industry** through partnership with St. Pete Innovation District's Maritime and Defense Technology Hub. Companies such as Pole Star USA and The DarkStar Group have established contracts with government agencies and security entities, including the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security. These companies have committed to SPC's proposal to enhance workforce training that ensures a strong talent pool for the region's IT and Defense industries.

C. Does the proposal align with an occupation(s) on the Statewide Demand Occupations List and/or the Regional Demand Occupations List?

☒ **Yes**   ☐ No

If yes, please indicate the occupation(s) with which the proposal aligns. If no, with which occupation does the proposal align?

The program aligns with the following targeted Regional Demand Occupations for WDA 14 - Pinellas County:

➢ Computer Systems Analysts
➢ Computer Programmers
➢ Software Developers, Applications
➢ Software Developers, Systems Software
➢ Database Administrators
➢ Network and Computer Systems Administrators
➢ Computer Network Architects

Table 2 shows the growth projections of the targeted occupations, each of which shows considerable growth over the next several years in both the county and statewide.

Table 2: Growth Projections of Targeted Occupations									
		Pinellas County				Florida			
SOC Code	SOC Title	2020	2028	Percent Growth	Total Job Openings	2020	2028	Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	1,818	2,029	11.6	1,323	27,480	31,628	15.1	21,221
15-1131	Computer Programmers	596	655	9.9	410	11,930	13,999	17.3	9,345
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	2,704	3,000	10.9	1,903	41,520	47,935	15.5	31,613
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	1,284	1,444	12.5	928	18,972	21,734	14.6	14,228
15-1141	Database Administrators	486	533	9.7	336	7,403	8,301	12.1	5,350
15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	1,305	1,418	8.7	873	19,767	22,100	11.8	14,023
15-1143	Computer Network Architects	780	875	12.2	556	10,916	12,290	12.6	7,834
Sources: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Employment Projections Data - Statewide and WDA 14 Pinellas County (Jobs by Occupation)									

D. Indicate how the training will be delivered (e.g., classroom-based, computer-based, other). If in-person, identify the location(s) (e.g., city, campus, etc.) where the training will be available. If computer-based, identify the targeted location(s) (e.g., city, county, statewide) where the training will be available.

AWS courses will be offered both online and in a blended format. The blended format will include both instructor-led live online training and in-person hands-on training in labs at

SPC's EpiCenter. In person classes and workshops will also be offered in the community and at business locations through the new mobile classroom.

SPC's CCIT BAS in Technology Management and Development is on online degree program. Enhanced cloud computing degree pathways, including the Cloud Computing Certificate and subplan courses, will be offered in an online format, making the program accessible for a wide range of students both throughout Pinellas County and the region.

E. Indicate the number of anticipated annual enrolled students and completers in the proposed program.

The number of anticipated students enrolled in Cloud Computing courses/programs will increase each year of the grant period as the program grows. Table 3 shows the anticipated number of students enrolled, and number of completers, in each of the supported courses/programs:

Table 3: Number Enrolled and Completers*					
	# Enrolled			Total	# of Completers
Workforce Training Courses	Year One	Year Two	Year Three		
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	40	50	55	145	125
AWS Solutions Architect – Associate	20	25	30	75	52
AWS Certified SysOps Administrator – Associate *New*	10	15	20	45	32
AWS Certified Developer *New*	10	15	20	45	32
AWS Solutions Architect – Professional *New*	10	15	20	45	32
Data Analytics (TBD) *New*	10	15	20	45	32
Total Non-Credit	**100**	**135**	**165**	**400**	**305**
Credit Programs					
Cloud Computing Certificate *New*		5	10	15	13
BAS in Technology Development and Management, with Cloud Computing Subplan *New*	5	10	15	30	20
Total Credit	**5**	**15**	**25**	**45**	**33**
Internship Program					
Innovation District Technology Internship Program *New*	15	20	20	55	50
Total Other	**15**	**20**	**20**	**55**	**50**
Total	**120**	**170**	**210**	**500**	**388**
Number of completers indicates the number of those enrolled during the three year grant period who complete, including those who start certificate or degree programs in the third year and may take years to complete. Numbers based on course enrollees and course completion.					

In addition to enrollment in these cloud computing programs and courses, SPC's EPIC initiative will promote enrollment and student success in related IT programs that support regional high demand occupations in IT. With an average of more than 1,600 students

enrolled annually in related certificate and degree programs, the *EPIC* initiative will expand opportunities for all prospective and current CCIT students.

F. Indicate the length of program (e.g., quarters, semesters, weeks, etc.), including anticipated beginning and ending dates.

SPC's *EPIC* initiative is expected to be three years in duration to effectively develop, launch and establish proposed programs. The anticipated start date will be January 2022 and ending in December 2024.

The length and duration of each proposed component will vary by program. Table 4 shows the estimated length and start dates of each component:

Table 4: Length of Programs			
Workforce Training Courses	**Length of Program**	**Beginning Date**	**End Date**
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	6 Weeks (32 Hours)	Spring 2022	Each semester
AWS Solutions Architect – Associate	10 Weeks (60 Hours)	Spring 2022	Each semester
AWS Certified SysOps Administrator – Associate *New*	8 Weeks (40 Hours)	Spring 2022	Each semester
AWS Certified Developer *New*	8 Weeks (40 Hours)	Spring 2022	Each semester
AWS Solutions Architect – Professional *New*	10 Weeks (60 Hours)	Spring 2022	Each semester
Data Analytics (TBD) *New*	TBD	Spring 2022	Each semester
Credit Programs			
Cloud Computing Certificate *New*	1 year	Fall 2022	Varies by student
BAS in Technology Development and Management, with Cloud Computing Subplan *New*	4 years	Fall 2022	Varies by student
Internship Program			
Innovation District Technology Internship Program *New*	9-12 weeks (180 hours)	Summer 2022	Each summer

The length of the credit programs are estimated based on full-time attendance. However, time to completion varies by student as some students may attend part-time and take longer to complete.

The Innovation District Internship program is anticipated to begin in Summer 2022, and will run each summer thereafter. The length of the program is anticipated to be approximately 180 hours over 9 – 12 weeks.

G. Describe the plan to support the sustainability of the program after grant completions.

SPC's *EPIC* initiative will allow SPC to launch a comprehensive cloud computing initiative. Leveraging industry partnerships to help evaluate existing IT pathways will ensure

alignment with current best practices in emerging technologies, resulting in sustainable curriculum. While the IT industry is always evolving, the growth of this industry is clear. Investment in training for high demand industry certifications and degrees will, in turn, help establish the program. As the program grows, aspects of the program will be sustained through program revenue. Scholarship support will be reduced in Year Three in order to provide tuition revenue for program sustainability following the grant period. Support from enrollment, program offerings, and partnerships, will provide a stream of financial support through tuition, income and program fees.

Investment in staff to develop and launch the initiative will help put these programs in place, analyze areas of opportunity and make adjustments to existing programming. This investment will also help build dynamic partnerships with industry employers to sustain components such as workshops, mentoring and internships, long after the end of the grant period. The College is committed to institutionalizing any administrative costs following the grant period to keep all out-of-classroom programs in place, such as IT Orientations and IT skills assessments.

Funding for the investment in the mobile classroom will provide multi-use space for long-term educational purposes well into the future. Any ongoing maintenance and upkeep will be integrated into the College's regular operating budget.

H. Identify any certifications, degrees, etc. that will result from the completion of the program. Please include the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code and the percent of completer in each code, corresponding with Section E.

The following shows anticipated completion rates for certificates and degree programs that will be supported through the EPIC initiative:

FL CIP Code	Credential	Title	% Completers
11.0902	SPC Certificate	Cloud Computing Certificate	87%
11.1005	Bachelor of Applied Science	BAS in Technology Development and Management, with Cloud Computing sub-plan	66%

Students who enroll in workforce training programs will also be prepared to earn the following industry certifications:

- AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner
- AWS Solutions Architect – Associate
- AWS Certified SysOps Administrator – Associate
- AWS Certified Developer
- AWS Solutions Architect - Professional

Those enrolled in AWS courses, and degree-seeking students in select cloud computing courses, are provided a voucher to take the corresponding AWS certification exam.

Other industry certification and/or certificates that may earned include data analytics such as CompTIA Data+ and/or Google Data, depending on the short-term data analytics course/s to be added.

This initiative will also support enrollment and success in the following related certificate and degree programs:

- ➢ Help Desk Support Specialist
- ➢ Cybersecurity
- ➢ Cisco Certified Network Associate Certificate
- ➢ Network Administration
- ➢ Computer Programmer
- ➢ Computer Programmer Specialist
- ➢ Web Development
- ➢ CompTIA certificates

- ➢ A.S. Cybersecurity
- ➢ A.S. Computer Information and Technology
- ➢ A.S. Networking Technologies
- ➢ A.S. Computer Programming and Analysis
- ➢ A.S. Data Science
- ➢ A.S. Web Development

I. Does this program have a local match amount?

☐ Yes ☒ **No**

J. Provide any additional information or attachments to be considered for the proposal.

Please see attached Letters of Commitment, which demonstrate a broad base of support from community partners, industry, and government agencies, including:

- St. Pete Innovation District
- Pinellas County Economic Development
- Career Source Pinellas
- KnowB4
- Aveshka
- The DarkStar Group
- Pole Star USA

3. Program Budget

Estimated Costs and Sources of Funding: Include all applicable workforce training costs and other funding sources available to support the proposal.

Total Amount Requested from Florida Job Growth Fund: **$2,004,182**

A. Other Workforce Training Project Funding Sources:

N/A

B. Workforce Training Project Costs:

Equipment:	$ 66,158
Personnel:	$ 663,511
Facilities:	N/A
Tuition and exam fees	$ 307,440
Training Materials:	$ 21,413
Other	
Contract Services	$ 381,651
Marketing	$ 90,000
Travel/Prof. Development	$ 15,300
Other Services	$ 10,000
Indirect	$ 448,710
Total Project Costs:	**$2,004,182**

C. Provide a detailed budget narrative, including the timing and steps necessary to obtain the funding, how equipment purchases will be associated with the training program, if applicable, and any other pertinent budget-related information.

See Attachment A – Budget Narrative

4. Approvals and Authority

A. If entity is awarded grant funds based on this proposal, what approvals must be obtained before it can execute a grant agreement with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (e.g., approval of a board, commission or council)?

All grant opportunities for which St. Petersburg College applies are submitted for pre-approval by the President and the Board of Trustees (BOT). Therefore, they are pre-approved even before the College receives notification of an award or rejection. This approval process allows the College to accept the funding without delay, and enter into any amendments, extensions or agreements as necessary, within the original intent and

purpose of the grant. Applications also are reviewed by the College's General Counsel Office. A second or follow-up approval by the BOT is not needed if and when an award is made. These measures, part of the College's grant policy, will be followed for the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity agreement, should the agency fund the College's proposal.

B. If approval of a board, commission, council or other group is needed prior to execution of an agreement between the entity and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:

i. Provide the schedule of upcoming meetings for the group for a period of at least six months

The St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees meets every third Tuesday of the month. Upcoming meetings will be: September 21, 2021, October 19, 2021, November 16, 2021; January 18, 2022, February 15, 2022; March 15, 2022; April 19, 2022; and May 17, 2022.

ii. State whether that group can hold special meetings, and if so, upon how many days' notice.

The Board of Trustees can hold special meetings, but they are approved at the board's annual Organizational Meeting, held in August. All meetings require a seven-day notice.

C. Attach evidence that the undersigned has all necessary authority to execute this proposal on behalf of the entity. This evidence may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to: delegation of authority, citation to relevant laws or codes, policy documents, etc.

See Attachment B - Board of Trustee Rule, as documented evidence of signing authority.

ATTACHMENT A - BUDGET NARRATIVE				
FUNDING CATEGORY	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Total**
Salaries and Wages				
Program Manager - Full-time Program Manager (Grade IV $53,707) to oversee all grant project activities and ensure program success and deliverables. Responsibilities will include hiring and managing staff, facilitating industry partnerships, and working with faculty, staff, marketing, partners, etc. to develop cloud computing programs and recruit, enroll and track student enrollment in select CIT programs. Calculated at 8 months in Year 1, 12 months in Years 2-3s; and 2% COLA in Years 2 and 3	$ 40,280	$ 54,781	$ 55,877	$ 150,938
Project Coordinator - Full time project coordinator (Grade I, $43,248) to assist with implementing and coordinating grant activities, to include outreach, coordinating workshops and mentors, tracking, reporting, etc. Calculated at 7 months in Year One, and 12 monthsi in Years 2 and 3, and 2% COLA in Years 2 and 3	$ 25,228	$ 44,113	$ 44,995	$ 114,336
Student Support Specialist - Student Support Specialist (OPS Career Level 4 @ $14.18/hr x 29 hrs/week) to assist with outreach, recruitment and enrollment of students in targeted IT programs. Calculated at 7 months in Year One, and 12 months in Years 2 and 3	$ 13,159	$ 19,739	$ 19,739	$ 52,636
Full-time Cloud Computing Instructor - Full-time instructor ($50,000) to teach cloud computing (Amazon Web Services) courses, as well as assist with devloping curriculum and launching new courses. Calculated at 8 months in Year 1; 12 months in Year 2; 2% COLA in Year 2.	$ 33,333	$ 51,000	$ 52,020	$ 136,353
Faculty Deliverable for Curriculm Development - Faculty deliverable estimated at 60 hours @ $48.07/hour for currciulm development for new short-term training courses to be added in data analytics, such as CompTIA Data+ and/or Google Data.	$ 2,884			
Faculty Deliverables to Enhance CCIT Programming - Faculty deliverables to develop curriculum for cloud computing certificate, sub-plan and articulations (2 deliverables estimated at $1,045 each in Year One); development and delivery of IT Orientations (1 deliverable estimated at $1,045 each in Years 1 - 3); and, development and implememtation of IT skills/aptitude assessment for first year IT students (1 deliverable estimated at $1,045 each in Years 1-3), for a total of 4 deliverables in Year One, and 2 deliverables in Years 2 and Year 3.	$ 4,180	$ 2,090	$ 2,090	$ 8,360
Subtotal	**$ 119,064**	**$ 171,723**	**$ 174,721**	**$ 462,623**
Fringe Full-time fringe benefits calculated at 48% to include health benefits, retirement, Social Security, FICA and Medicare				
Program Manager - Calculated at 48%	$ 19,334	$ 26,295	$ 26,821	$ 72,450
Project Coordinator - Calculated at 48%	$ 12,109	$ 21,174	$ 21,598	$ 54,881
Instructor - Calculated at 48%	$ 16,000	$ 24,480	$ 23,929	$ 64,409
Support Specialist - Calculated at 7.65% for Social Security, FICA and Medicare	$ 1,007	$3,750	$3,750	$ 8,507

Faculty - Calculated at 7.65% for Social Security, FICA and Medicare	$ 320	$ 160	$ 160	$ 640
Subtotal	**$ 48,770**	**$ 75,859**	**$ 76,258**	**$ 200,887**
Equipment				
Equipment - Purchase of computers for program staff (estimated at approximately $2,232 x 4 staff = $8,928). Purchase of trailer, technology and equipment for mobile classroom for the delivery of workforce training courses in cloud computing and other relevant IT courses/workshops in the community and at business locations. Multi-use mobile technology lab will include trailer (estimated at $6,000), solar power (estimated at $10,000), furniture such as tables, desks, chairs, etc. (estimated at $6,300), and technology such as Mac laptops and desktop (estimated at $21,000), iPads and iPad Pros (estimated at $8,655) and drones (estimated at $5,275). Mobile classroom equipment will provide access to IT career exploration activities through outreach workshops/events targeted towards underprepresented areas where households lack access to computers/internet to increase awareness of and enrollment in IT and cloud computing programs. Will also provide workforce training on-site for businesses to upskill their employees.	$ 66,158			$ 66,158
Subtotal	**$ 66,158**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 66,158**
Tuition				
Scholarships - Scholarships for tuition, fees and books for students in new AWS and new Data Analytics and Cloud Computing classes/programs to help establish new programs as well as provide participant support for underserved populations to get started and/or advance their career in IT.	$ 74,800	$ 117,240	$ 79,840	$ 271,880
Certification fees - Certification exam fees for students in AWS courses and CCIT Cloud Computing programs to help individuals completing coursework obtain AWS industry certifications, which will provide them credentials for obtaining high demand jobs in cloud computing and related IT positions.	$ 7,630	$ 11,920	$ 16,010	$ 35,560
Subtotal	**$ 82,430**	**$ 129,160**	**$ 95,850**	**$ 307,440**
Training Materials				
Instructor Certification - Certification fees for instructor training to be certified to teach cloud computing classes.	$ 2,000			$ 2,000
Materials and supplies - Materials and supplies, including refreshments, to support outreach events and related IT programming, such as partnership meetings, soft skills workshops, IT Orientations, guest speaking events, etc. to enhance CCIT programming. Other supplies may include items such as printer and projector (estimated at $5,000 in Year 1 and $3000 in Years 2 and 3), as well as projection equipment and printer for mobile classroom (estimated at $1,095 in Year 1) and software (estimated at $4,318 in Year 1).	$ 10,413	$ 3,000	$ 3,000	$ 16,413

Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Printing and postage - Printing and postage for marketing and outreach materials to boost enrollment in targeted IT programs	$ 1,000	$ 1,000	$ 1,000	$ 3,000
Subtotal	**$ 13,413**	**$ 4,000**	**$ 4,000**	**$ 21,413**
Contract Services				
Contract Services - Annual sub agreement with the **St. Pete Innovation District** to facilitate partnerships with companies in the Maritime and Defense Technology Hub, as well as to develop and implement an evidenced-based *Technology Internship Program* . Services will include a program coordinator to develop, launch and manage internship program, as well as track and report on progress deliverables. Partnership also includes equipment/technology for interns, stipends for interns to participate in work experiences, materials and supplies for internship projects and indirect administrative costs.	$ 122,887	$ 129,382	$ 129,382	$ 381,651
Subtotal	**$ 122,887**	**$ 129,382**	**$ 129,382**	**$ 381,651**
Other				
Outreach Marketing - Costs for marketing associated with outreach, recruitment and enrollment efforts, such as advertising and/or promoted posts on social media, radio, streaming, LinkedIn, etc.	$ 30,000	$ 30,000	$ 30,000	$ 90,000
Travel - Travel for Program Manager and Program Coordinator for recruitment, outreach and program activities, partner meetings, workshops, etc.	$ 900	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 3,300
Professional Development - Travel to conferences and/or workshops for IT faculty to attend professional development opportunities to stay current on best practices related to cloud computing and and related IT training topics such as AWS Summit, CompTIA Partner Summit + CompTIA Instructor Network Training Sessions, etc. Estimated at 2 - 3 trips per year for approximately two faculty/staff per year	$ 4,000	$ 4,000	$ 4,000	$ 12,000
Other Services - Supplies and materials, such as carpentry materials (estimated at $10,000), needed to build out a trailer into a mobile computer lab in Year One for the delivery of classes, outreach events and workshops in the community.	$ 10,000			$ 10,000
Subtotal	**$ 44,900**	**$ 35,200**	**$ 35,200**	**$ 115,300**
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	**$ 497,622**	**$ 545,324**	**$ 515,411**	**$ 1,555,473**
Indirect costs - Calculated at 33.41% of direct costs, less contract, other services and tuition and fees, for indirect and administrative costs associated with the grant.	$ 94,318	$ 182,193	$ 172,199	$ 448,710
TOTAL REQUEST FROM FDEO	**$ 591,941**	**$ 727,517**	**$ 687,609**	**$ 2,004,182**

ATTACHMENT B: 4.C. Evidence of Authority to Execute Proposal

Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College Rules and College
Procedures: 6Hx23-1.06 – Responsibility and Authority of the President:

RULE

		PAGE
SUBJECT	**RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDENT**	**1.06-1**
LEGAL AUTHORITY	**6Hx23-1.06**	**10/13/15** **Revision #15-10**

6Hx23-1.06   RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDENT

   I.   The Board of Trustees delegates to the President administrative authority over the College and holds the President responsible for the efficient direction and operation of the College pursuant to federal and state law, the rules of the State Board of Education, and the rules adopted by the Board of Trustees.

   II.   The President may delegate authority to the staff to perform administrative functions necessary to the efficient operation of the College. The responsibility for the performance of these functions shall remain with the President.

   III.   The President shall provide to the Board each year, for their review and approval, a legislative package with all attending materials and information in support of the College's written plan and requests for the upcoming Florida legislative session at least 120 days prior to the beginning of the session.

   IV.   The President is hereby authorized to sign, on behalf of the Board, all contracts and other documents reflecting action previously approved or authorized by the Board. In addition, all contracts including those involving expenditures not exceeding the amount as specified in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, for Category Five may be approved and signed by the President or designee. Contracts involving expenditures will be listed in an informational report to the Board quarterly.

   V.   Alternatively, at the discretion of the President, a Request for Contract may be:

          A. Considered by the President's Executive Committee prior to final approval; or

          B. Considered by the President in consultation with the Board Chair prior to final approval; or

          C. Presented to the Board for approval.

RULE

VI.   The President is hereby authorized to designate an individual to serve in place of the President during his or her temporary absence, incapacity or in emergencies when the President is unavailable. In the event that the President has not so designated, the chief academic officer, and if the chief academic officer is not available to serve, the chief administrative officer, shall temporarily serve in the President's place until such time as the Board can designate an acting president, if necessary.

VII. It shall be the responsibility of the President or a committee appointed by the President, where he deems such to be necessary, to ensure that all elections held within the College, except those held pursuant to Chapter 447, Florida Statutes, which are supervised by the public employees relations commission, are carried out in a fair and equitable manner.

Specific Authority: 1001.64(2) & (4), F.S.
Law Implemented: 1001.64, 1001.65, F.S.; Rule 6A-14.026, F.A.C.

History: This history reflects changes to the rule and procedure which were formerly combined. Formerly - 6Hx23-2.201; Adopted - 7/2/68; Readopted - 7/15/71, 10/25/77; Amended - 9/25/73, 2/27/77, 5/17/79, 11/20/79, 9/17/81, 3/3/82, 8/19/82; Filed - 8/19/82; Effective - 10/1/82; 11/21/00. Filed – 11/21/00. Proposed Date To Become Effective – January 1, 2001; 8/16/11. Filed – 8/16/11. Effective – 8/16/11; 10/13/15. Filed – 10/13/15. Effective – 10/13/15.

St. Pete
INNOVATION
DISTRICT

September 7, 2021

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for the *Enhancing Pathways to IT Careers* submission to the Florida
        Department of Economic Opportunity – Florida Job Growth Grant Program

Dear Mr. Eagle,

On behalf of the St. Petersburg Innovation District Board of Directors, I would like to share our
support for the *Enhancing Pathways to IT Careers* proposal from St. Petersburg College (SPC) for
the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Florida Job Growth Grant Fund. SPC's cloud
computing initiative and adjacent technology programs directly align to the Pinellas County and
City of St. Petersburg's targeted industry of Information Technology.

Our local IT industry is growing swiftly through the expansion of existing firms and the relocation of
established firms. All are looking to our local workforce for talented individuals to fill critical roles.
These roles range from software developers to data administrators.   The partnership of SPC and
the Innovation District is a creative and meaningful approach to identify and address the key skills
need so that the companies are hiring local and employing Florida's workforce.

The Innovation District fully supports the mission and vision of SPC and appreciates the quality of
IT training, degree opportunities and skills of its graduates. As part of our commitment to SPC's
proposal, the Innovation District will participate directly in several of the grant activities and engage
our local technology employers to participate in skills development workshops, and/or provide
mentoring and internship opportunities.

For years, SPC has demonstrated its commitment to training a diverse group of students for
careers in the IT industry. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal to offer current,
relevant training for a skilled IT workforce in the region.

Sincerely,

Alison Barlow
Executive Director
St. Petersburg Innovation District

PINELLAS COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
WWW.PCED.ORG

August 27, 2021

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street, Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity – Florida Job Growth Grant Program

Dear Mr. Eagle,

Pinellas County Economic Development (PCED) is thrilled to offer our support for the proposal from St. Petersburg College (SPC) for the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Florida Job Growth Grant Fund. SPC's *Enhancing Pathways to IT Careers (EPIC)* initiative aligns perfectly with Pinellas County's targeted industry of Information Technology.

Pinellas County's IT industry is rapidly growing, with 11,500 employees working for roughly 1,000 IT companies, including global industry leaders like Tech Data, Vology and Nielsen. From software developers to data administrators, the demand for IT occupations crosses all industry sectors, including Medical Technologies, Financial, Defense & Homeland Security, and Advanced Manufacturing. As businesses across all sectors look to lower costs and move toward cloud services, SPC's proposal to provide cloud-based training will fulfill the high demand for IT positions with these skills. In addition, SPC's partnership with the St. Pete Innovation District to identify skills needed by companies looking to re-locate to the area will ensure that new companies are hiring locally and bolstering Florida's workforce.

PCED fully supports the mission and vision of SPC and appreciates the quality of IT training, degree opportunities and skills of its graduates. As part of our commitment to SPC's proposal, PCED will participate in an advisory capacity to provide guidance and input on program development. Our staff will also connect local technology employers to the project team to participate in skills development workshops, provide guest speakers at related events and/or provide mentoring, job shadowing or internship opportunities.

For years, SPC has demonstrated its commitment to training a diverse group of students for careers in the IT industry. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal to offer current, relevant training for a skilled IT workforce in the region.

**PINELLAS
COUNTY**
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
WWW.PCED.ORG

Warmest Regards,

Andrea L. Falvey, CEcD
Business Development Manager

September 9, 2021

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity – Florida Job Growth Grant
      Program

Dear Mr. Eagle,

Career Source Pinellas is pleased to extend our support to St. Petersburg College's (SPC) application for the
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Florida Job Growth Grant Fund. This grant will have an
exceptionally positive impact on the unemployed and underemployed residents of Pinellas County by connecting
them to training opportunities in the high demand field of Information Technology.

With locations across Pinellas County, Fla., Career Source Pinellas strives to foster the economic development of
our county by connecting businesses with qualified, skilled talent and career seekers with employment and career
development opportunities. We provide a wide range of professional services, including employee referral and
recruitment, training and retraining, employability skills workshops, labor market statistics, targeted career fairs,
downsizing and retention support strategies, tax credit information and other customized support for a well trained
work force. We design workforce solutions that meet the needs of both businesses and job seekers in Pinellas
County.

At Career Source Pinellas, we recognize the importance of individuals trained in information technology. In
Pinellas County's rapidly growing IT industry, there is an overwhelming need to be trained in cloud-based
technology. We strongly believe that SPC's proposal to provide cloud-based training will fulfill the high demand for
IT positions with these skills. This proposal directly aligns with our commitment to help underserved and
underrepresented individuals in our communities, by providing access to quality training and employment
opportunities in high wage, in-demand industries.

As part of our commitment to this proposal, Career Source Pinellas will commit to assist with recruiting and
enrolling students in cloud computing and related IT classes/programs, particularly those unemployed and
underemployed individuals looking to start or advance their career in IT. Additionally, once these students
graduate, we will work to connect students to employers to place them in jobs.

Thank you for your review of SPC's proposal. We are excited to continue our partnership with SPC to ensure that
the residents of our community are prepared with the skills to succeed in the workforce and beyond.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brackney
Chief Executive Officer
CareerSource Pinellas

13805 58th St. North, STE 2-140
Clearwater, Fl 33760
727.524.4344

August 6, 2021

Re: Florida Job Growth Grant Fund from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
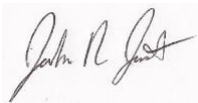
Dear Dr. Duff,

KnowBe4 would like to pledge our commitment to the proposal from St. Petersburg College (SPC) for the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity grant for Cloud Computing Initiative to expand credit and non-credit training in cloud-based technology at SPC.

KnowBe4, Inc. is the provider of the world's largest security awareness training and simulated phishing platform. We are consistently looking for, and currently have several openings for Network and Computer Systems Administrators, Computer Network Architects and Database Administrators. We currently employ just over 1,000 employees to serve nearly 41,000 clients and have grown exponentially in the last three years. We depend on the local Tampa Bay workforce to fill many of these critical positions, and, therefore, support innovative training and skill development programs that meet the ongoing need for individuals educated in cloud-based technology. Filling these positions are critical in our mission to help keep organizations safe from cybercriminals.

We have consistently found a strong ally in SPC in expanding and enhancing academic opportunities that provided us with a diverse workforce and cloud technologies are just another area that we hope to partner together for mutual success of our organizations and the community.

Sincerely,

John N Just, Ed.D.
Senior Vice-President Learning Innovation
KnowBe4

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Florida Job Growth
     Grant

Dear Mr. Eagle,

On behalf of Aveshka, I would like to provide our commitment to St. Petersburg College (SPC) for their proposal for the Florida Job Growth Grant. SPC's proposal to strengthen cloud computing training programs will undoubtedly provide job growth in the Information Technology (IT) arena in the Tampa Bay region.

Based in the Washington, D.C. area, with plans to expand to St. Petersburg, Fla., Aveshka provides consulting, innovation and technology solutions. Our clients continuously seek our expertise to provide comprehensive solutions that help them solve their most complex problems. Our work is applicable across industries, effectively and successfully serving numerous federal and commercial entities, including the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security.

Aveshka employs an arsenal of industry experts with extensive knowledge of leading-edge technologies, creativity and insight. Aveshka is always looking for talented individuals to join our team of industry experts and fill positions such as software engineers, DevOps, security engineers, and database developers. To help fulfill these needs, Aveshka strongly supports SPC's proposal to partner with local organizations including the St. Pete Innovation District to address skills gaps through internships, which will help build a pipeline to employment in Information Technology.

As part of SPC's proposal, Aveshka will commit to serving in an advisory capacity to provide guidance and input on program development; provide job shadowing, mentoring and/ or internship opportunities for students; provide guest speakers at related events; and/or provide announcements of job openings in the St. Petersburg region to help place graduates of related IT programs into careers.

Thank you for your consideration of SPC's proposal to expand workforce training opportunities that will cultivate skilled and talented employees for the areas's growing technology industry.

Sincerely,

SHANNON VAUGHN | CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER
svaughn@aveshka.com | Aveshka, Inc. | 571.814.5743

THE DARKSTAR GROUP

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Florida Job Growth Grant

Dear Mr. Eagle,

On behalf of The DarkStar Group, I would like to provide our commitment to St. Petersburg College (SPC) for their proposal for the Florida Job Growth Grant. SPC's proposal to strengthen cloud computing training programs will undoubtedly provide job growth in the Information Technology (IT) arena in the Tampa Bay region.

Based in St Petersburg, FL, with work additional work locations in the Washington, D.C. area, DarkStar provides technical services to our customers in the fields of Software Engineering, Cloud/DevOps, Analytics, and Cyber. Our Partners rely on us to deliver best-in-industry talent and innovative solutions in support of their highest technical priorities. With our primary focus on serving federal agencies, we work in partnership with other small, medium, and large business to ensure mission success for our Department of Defense and Intelligence Community customers.

DarkStar employs technical professionals across a wide variety of specialties and experience levels, with a focus on innovation, cross-functional skill development, and dedication to customer success. DarkStar is always looking for talented individuals to join our team of industry experts and fill positions such as data engineers, systems administrators, cloud practitioners, and software developers. To help fulfill these needs, DarkStar strongly supports SPC's proposal to partner with local organizations including the St. Pete Innovation District to address skills gaps through internships, which will help build a pipeline to employment in Information Technology.

As part of SPC's proposal, DarkStar will commit to serving in an advisory capacity to provide guidance and input on program development; provide job shadowing, mentoring and/ or internship opportunities for students; provide guest speakers at related events; and/or provide announcements of job openings in the St. Petersburg region to help place graduates of related IT programs into careers.

Thank you for your consideration of SPC's proposal to expand workforce training opportunities that will cultivate skilled and talented employees for the area's growing technology industry.

Sincerely,

Don "Abe" Abrams
President & Managing Partner, The DarkStar Group

POLE STAR

Pole Star Space Applications USA, Inc.
Ceridian Office Campus,
3201 34th St S, Suite A7
St. Petersburg, FL 33711

1 September 2021

Dane Eagle
Executive Director
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Re: Letter of Commitment for Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Florida Job Growth Grant

Dear Mr. Eagle,

On behalf of Pole Star Space Applications USA, Inc, I would like to confirm our commitment to St. Petersburg College (SPC) for their proposal for the Florida Job Growth Grant. SPC's proposal to strengthen cloud computing training programs will undoubtedly provide job growth in the Information Technology (IT) arena in the Tampa Bay region.

Currently based in the St. Petersburg, FL area, Pole Star USA provides comprehensive geospatial data technology solutions to mitigate growing threats to governments, financial institutions, ships, supply chains, cargo, territorial waters and most importantly, lives within the maritime infrastructure and beyond. Pole Star USA serves multiple government customers at a global level, with the United States Coast Guard and US Department of Homeland Security being our primary client in the US. Our clients continuously seek our expertise to create a transparent, secure, and compliant operating environment.

Pole Star USA requires a wide range of skills to develop, maintain, and support the high-quality products for which we have become renowned. As such, we are always looking for talented individuals to join our team. From tech to development to sales, every department is vital for the continued success of Pole Star USA and placement of qualified candidates in these areas will help our company continue its 20+ years of success. To help fulfill these needs, Pole Star USA strongly supports SPC's proposal to partner with local organizations including the St. Pete Innovation District to address skills gaps through internships, which will help build a pipeline to employment in Information Technology.

London: +44 20 7313 7400   **Hong Kong:** +852 2520 0951   **Australia:** +61 2 4254 1055   polestar@polestarglobal.com
Singapore: +65 6679 6280   **Panama:** +507 301 5748   **USA:** +1 727 610 9501   www.polestarglobal.com

POLE STAR

Pole Star Space Applications USA, Inc.
Ceridian Office Campus,
3201 34th St S, Suite A7
St. Petersburg, FL 33711

1 September 2021

As part of SPC's proposal, Pole Star USA will commit to serving in an advisory capacity to provide guidance and input on program development; provide job shadowing, mentoring and/ or internship opportunities for students; provide guest speakers at related events; and/or provide announcements of job openings in the St. Petersburg region to help place graduates of related IT programs into careers.

Thank you for your consideration of SPC's proposal to expand workforce training opportunities that will cultivate skilled and talented employees for the area's growing tech industry.

Sincerely,

Benjamin P. Minichino
President, Pole Star USA