

**Women in Skilled Careers (WISC)
Abstract**

Applicant Name: Hampton Roads Workforce Council (HRWC)

Purpose of the Project: The Women in Skilled Careers (WISC) program will increase the number of women in Hampton Roads who begin skilled careers in burgeoning local industries, such as ship building, ship repair, manufacturing, and cybersecurity.

Grant Activities: WISC is informed by the success of a 2019 WANTO-funded pilot of the same name and will focus on the following activities:

- Increase the general awareness of nontraditional occupations for 1,100 women through information sessions, a regional branding campaign, and industry tours
- Develop an inclusive recruitment network to connect women to skilled careers
- Guarantee employment interviews for women enrolled in the training programs
- Enroll 100 women in skilled career training programs
- Provide wraparound supportive services to women who enroll in training programs
- Provide performance-based incentives to women participating in training programs
- Provide education and technical assistance to employers seeking to increase the participation of women in their workforce
- Develop a system of support groups to encourage the retention of women in skilled careers
- Research and support the implementation of retention-focused best practices through focus groups, surveys, and the review of existing research and practice data.

Expected Outcomes of the Project: The HRWC estimates that 80% (80) of WISC participants will be complete training programs. 80% (64) of those individuals who participate in employment interviews after training completion will be employed in local industries. At least 80% of participants who complete training will achieve a significant increase in wages as a direct result of their participation in WISC.

Intended Beneficiaries of the Project: Understanding the intersectional nature of inequity in the Hampton Roads community, we anticipate that WISC participants will likely be facing at least one equity-related barrier, such as low-income status or lack of transportation, as they begin the program. As such, the following categories do not stand independent of each other and will not add up to 100%. The anticipated demographic breakdown of training participants is: 100% (100) will be women, 70% (56) will qualify as ALICE, 60% (48) will be individuals of color, 10% (10) will be disconnected youth, 10% (10) will have differing abilities, 10% (10) will be veterans or military spouses. An additional 1,000 women representing the above categories will receive general awareness of non-traditional occupation opportunities in Hampton Roads.

Subrecipient Activities: The HRWC will outsource the hiring of two full-time positions, WISC Navigators, to the Community College Workforce Cooperative (CCWC) to support the exploration and enrollment needs of women seeking to enroll in targeted training programs at Paul D. Camp, Thomas Nelson, and Tidewater Community College. They will also support regional outreach and recruitment efforts, helping identify and encourage women to enter training and apprenticeship programs for skilled trades. WISC Navigators will also support program coordination, data collection, and reporting.