

TECHNICAL REVIEWERS' RATING SUMMARY

G-020-C

Commercial Drivers License Training

Submitted by TrainND-Northwest Williston State College

Executive Director: Deanette Piesik

Request for \$165,480; Total Project Costs \$373,980

Rating Category	Weighting Factor	Technical Reviewer		Average Weighted Score
		<u>20C-03</u> Rating	<u>20C-04</u>	
Objective	9	5	3	36.0
Availability	9	5	3	36.0
Methodology	7	5	4	31.5
Contribution	7	3	2	17.5
Awareness	5	5	3	20.0
Background	5	4	4	20.0
Project Management	2	3	3	6.0
Equipment Purchase	2	5	3	8.0
Facilities	2	5	4	9.0
Budget	2	5	3	8.0
Average Weighted Score		227	157	192.0

Maximum Weighted Score

250

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

FUND

X

FUNDING TO BE CONSIDERED

X

DO NOT FUND

Section B. Ratings and Comments:

- 1. The objectives or goals of the proposed project with respect to clarity and consistency with North Dakota Industrial Commission/Oil and Gas Research Council goals are: 1 – very unclear; 2 – unclear; 3 – clear; 4 – very clear; or 5 – exceptionally clear.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

This project meets all five of the goals & purposes of the Oil and Gas Research Council. It promotes efficiency in use of oil and gas resources, creates jobs, ensures economic growth, encourages use of new technology and would promote public awareness of the safety benefits employed by the industry.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

The goals of the project are marginally consistent with the ND Industrial Commission/Oil and Gas Research Council Goals. The grant would support:

- Promote efficient, economic and environmentally sound exploration, development and use of North Dakota's oil and gas resources;*
- Preserve and create jobs involved in the exploration, production and utilization of ND's oil and gas resources;*
- and possibly, Promote Public Awareness of the benefits and opportunities provided by the ND oil and gas industry, although the grant application does not address whether there would be any specific steps to support this last goal.*

Educational activities are specifically included in NDCC 54-17.6, the legislation setting up the Oil and Gas Research Council, including the power to make grants for educational projects.

Reviewer 20D-03 (Rating: 3)

- 2. With the approach suggested and time and budget available, the objectives are: 1 – not achievable; 2 – possibly achievable; 3 – likely achievable; 4 – most likely achievable; or 5 – certainly achievable.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

Although the timetable provided in the grant application has passed the need for this type of training is ongoing and will continue in the future. As well the staff in place and the equipment is readily available. I believe that the implementation of the grant objectives could be easily attainable.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

The objectives are likely achievable based on the experience and history of TrainND and the Northwest Williston State College. The application includes a request for funding for equipment. The application indicates there is a curriculum, trainers and facilities with opportunities to provide training at multiple sites. However, the application does not clearly address why the former training partnership was not renewed, whether it may have been for lack of demand or financial difficulties of the providers. Without this information, the Reviewer cannot determine whether such circumstances may affect this training venture.

In 2005 TrainND Northwest partnered with a Colorado company to provide CDL training in the northwest area. In 2009, the company had financial issues and the quality and the consistency of their program declined, as well as the number of individuals passing the CDL exam. Train ND then developed and implemented a CDL training program.

- 3. The quality of the methodology displayed in the proposal is: 1 – well below average; 2 – below average; 3 – average; 4 – above average; or 5 – well above average.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

The information provided by the applicant as to the needs assessments and the objective are on point with the needs of the industry.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 4)

The use of current technology simulators has proven beneficial for scenario training in other types of equipment and would likely be beneficial for truck driver training as a supplement to “hands on” operation of a real truck. The option for training at multiple sites is also an advantage.

- 4. The educational contribution of the proposed work to specifically address North Dakota Industrial Commission/Oil and Gas Research Council goals will likely be: 1 – extremely small; 2 – small; 3 – significant; 4 – very significant; or 5 – extremely significant.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 3)

Although the implementation of this project will not offer any scientific or technical contributions to the exploration side of the industry, the use of a driving simulator has been a hot topic in the trucking industry statewide. Although the discussion has led to the belief of significant improvements in safety there is no practical data to support this in the state as this project will be a first of its kind in North Dakota. I believe

many programs and business around the state will watch closely as this project is implemented to see the benefits it can provide for training and safety in trucking

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 2)

The contribution here is anticipated to be small as it is only for one occupation which typically used well established technologies.

On average, Doron Precision Systems, INC. business customers have reported a 10 -20 % decrease in injuries and accidents after implementing the CDL simulator.

- 5. The principal investigator's awareness of other current educational efforts being conducted by other persons or entities related to the proposal is: 1 – very limited; 2 – limited; 3 – adequate; 4 – better than average; or 5 – exceptional.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

As stated above the use of driving simulators in the industry has been discussed at length, especially by programs in the eastern part of the state. The hang up has been the experience and the understanding of the issues, research, literature and implementation of the program. The grant applicant displayed great knowledge of the information surrounding the issue and implementation of the solution.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

Principal Investigator is experienced and respected in the training arena in ND. This training proposal advocates the use of truck driving simulators but otherwise does not appear to be dependent upon current research activity.

- 6. The background of the investigator(s) as related to the proposed work is: 1 – very limited; 2 – limited; 3 – adequate; 4 – better than average; or 5 – exceptional.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 4)

Better than average. The Investigator has experience in developing and delivering workforce training beneficial both to the enrollees (current and future employees) and employers.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 4)

The background of the principal investigators seems better than average. One omission is a principal investigator with experience completing integrated field studies. While expertise in data acquisition is necessary, the expertise required to achieve the proposed objectives is in the integration of all the datasets and interpretations.

7. **The project management plan, including a well-defined milestone chart, schedule, financial plan, and plan for communications among the parties involved in the project . is: 1 – very inadequate; 2 – inadequate; 3 – adequate; 4 – very good; or 5 – exceptionally good.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 3)

Although the project management plan was not well-defined given the simplicity of the project, being comprised of primarily equipment purchase and ongoing training, the project management should be elementary.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

The project management plan is fairly simple although there were gaps that should have been addressed:

- Recruiting is not addressed. There are references to statistics regarding demand for truck drivers, but truck driver training can be expensive to deliver and more information in the proposal on the feasibility of this training for students and employers would have been helpful.*
- Are there assurances that employers would pay the tuition and costs for the training? Typically, because of the short nature of truck driver training, there are less financial aid options for students. This training can be expensive if the tuition cost is borne by the students. What are the proposed tuition costs and how does this compare with other truck driving trainer providers? Cost comparisons were lacking.*
- There is no explanation how tuition fits into the financial plan. What will the tuition fund and sustain? Is tuition an offset to the Train ND's match?*
- The proposal defines success by completion and pass rates and although the proposal states the program could train 72 individuals per year, there is no information as what minimum enrollment levels are needed to sustain the program.*
- The Oil and Gas industry has an interest in the ultimate number of trained drivers that successfully complete the program which goes beyond just measuring success on completion and pass rates. The ultimate benefit to the Oil and Gas industry would include a more comprehensive scope from recruitment of adequate class sizes, retention, completion, pass rates and ultimately the number connected to the industry in ND for employment.*

TrainND has contacted various trucking industries in the area. Many are interested in paying the fee for their employees to complete this training program. In the past, Student Loans of ND had a loan program. Senator Stan Lyson has been contacted to request

funds to reinstate that loan program. WSC Foundation is considering a loan or scholarship program for CDL students. WSC has developed a certificate of completion program that will be available in March. This will allow students to qualify for financial aid and use grant programs. The college has filed the necessary paperwork to have the CDL program approved for Veteran benefits, ND Job Service funds, and Voc Rehab. TrainND attends many job/recruiting fairs; many of our students are first contacted at these events. TrainND tracks all requests, tracks completion rates, and reports this information to the Industry Advisory Board. Companies are invited to speak to the students once they have completed the training to assist with placement of completers.

The simulator will also be used for refresher training for the trucking industry as well as to raise awareness of the driving conditions truck drivers face in the oil industry. The simulator will be used as a recruiting tool for individuals who may not be sure that this is the job for them.

- 8. The proposed materials and media to be developed or used are: 1 – very inadequate; 2 – inadequate; 3 – adequate; 4 – very good; or 5 – exceptionally good.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

The equipment proposed in the application is very much needed component to training in western North Dakota. The driving simulator will be a first of its kind in North Dakota and the air brake board will be a first in the northwest part of North Dakota and only one of a few in the state.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

Justified but there is no cost benefit information to support the selection of the particular equipment. Are there bids for the equipment? What is the plan for financial support for ongoing repairs and upgrades?

The grant funds will be used to purchase the equipment. Upkeep, upgrades, moving the simulator to other locations is covered by the training/tuition costs. Bids were received for the equipment. As an education institution we are required to get at minimum of two bids.

- 9. The materials and media available and to be purchased for the proposed educational effort are: 1 – very inadequate; 2 – inadequate; 3 – adequate; 4 – notably good; or 5 – exceptionally good.**

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

The learning from brake boards are the best option currently in practice and the driving simulator proposed is a sufficient simulator for the needs of the driver training being completed. Use of a higher grade simulator would be excessive.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 4)

Notably good based on the reputation of Northwest Williston State College, but not fully supported without comparisons.

10. The proposed budget value relative to the outlined work and the financial commitment from other sources is of: 1 – very low value; 2 – low value; 3 – average value; 4 – high value; or 5 – very high value. (See below)

Reviewer 20C-03 (Rating: 5)

Training like provided by the applicant is difficult to find in the state and adding the equipment proposed for purchase would make it the primer program in the state. The ability to allow for the program to be offered mobile would also make it one of a kind in the state.

Reviewer 20C-04 (Rating: 3)

Average value based on the marginal connection to the Research Program's Goals. The value provided is greater availability of a trained workforce for an industry in need of such. The type of work and outcome for this project is not typically done in a research setting and not as closely tied to the definition of value for these research grants. As mentioned earlier in this review, the amount and use of tuition is not addressed.

¹ “Value” – The value of the projected work and technical outcome for the budgeted amount of the project, based on your estimate of what the work might cost in research settings with which you are familiar.

Financial commitment from other sources – A minimum of 50% of the total project must come from other sources to meet the program guidelines. Support less than 50% from Industrial Commission sources should be evaluated as favorable to the application.

Section C. Overall Comments and Recommendations:

Reviewer 20C-03

This project is of great merit to driver training in the state and will provide for unique training for new drivers and re-training for existing drivers. I believe the success of this project will be showcased and emulated by others in the state.

Reviewer 20C-04

The proposal is to develop and deliver workforce training (truck driver training) that could meet current and future labor needs in the oil and gas industry. It is not a research project. May be considered for funding, possibly at a lesser amount if other resources can be leveraged to allow the training program to move forward.