

# STUDENT-READY RELIEF

## Using HEERF to Fund Equitable Student Success

### ABOUT TOOLS GRANTS

An often overlooked college cost is that students, especially in technical programs, must purchase expensive equipment in order to master the skills necessary to enter their desired career. These tools include things like electrical testers, dental cleaning tools, and chef's knives, each of which can cost hundreds of dollars outside of tuition. **Institutions that provide these tools free of charge are more student-ready because they acknowledge and address that students need high-quality tools to learn their trade, but this expense is often a barrier.**

### IN THE PANDEMIC

Unemployed and furloughed workers impacted by COVID-19 are increasingly looking to higher education as a path to a better and more stable career, and many are seeking shorter-term technical credentials that lead to high-demand, well-paying jobs. HEERF's direct student funding can cover any educational costs, and therefore can be used to cover the cost of expensive tools that currently stand in the way of students entering these critical fields. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and Council for Community and Technical Colleges created an innovative approach to these grants, called Tools of the Trade. While not funded by HEERF, these grants will accelerate student success and can be used as a model.

### EQUITABLE DESIGN

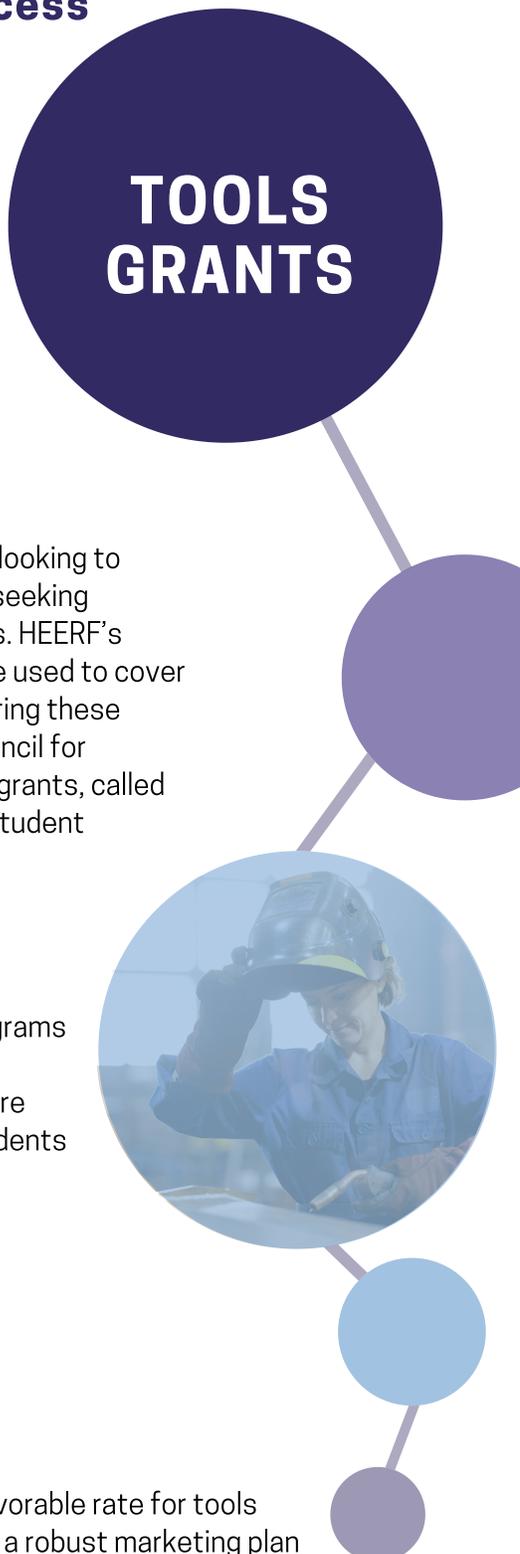
Use these tactics to design an equitable and effective tools grant program:

- Set a broad definition of eligible tools to allow a wide variety of programs and institutions to participate
- Prioritize students who are experiencing financial need if supplies are limited, or create a safe process for in-class sharing to allow all students to benefit
- Communicate this incentive to currently-enrolled and prospective students, and trust and empower faculty to be key partners in its implementation

### HOW HEERF CAN HELP

Use HEERF to fund these activities:

- Create a tools grant fund to provide students with aid
- Use the institution's leverage as a bulk purchaser to negotiate a favorable rate for tools
- Engage communications experts to develop program materials and a robust marketing plan



**TOOLS  
GRANTS**

### ABOUT STUDENT-READY STRATEGIES

Student-Ready Strategies (SRS) is a woman-owned consulting and technical assistance organization that believes every student can succeed and supports transformative efforts to ensure they do. Learn more at <http://studentreadystrategies.com>