



**PATHWAYS TO INCLUSIVE
HIGHER EDUCATION**

Inclusive Higher Education Opportunities (HB22-1107) Grant Program

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Deadline for submission: **April 15, 2024 11:59 pm**

Grant Program Website: inclusivehighered.org/expansion

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I. Grant Program Description

Background

The Inclusive Higher Education Grant Program was created as a result of the passing of HB22-1107. *Inclusive Higher Education Opportunities (HB22-1107)* was signed into law, allocating \$450,000/year for five years to expand college pathways for students with intellectual disabilities (ID) at state institutions of higher education across Colorado.

Historically, the education, employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities have often been dismal. Further, challenges exist when accessing high-quality postsecondary education and training designed to meet their individual needs. These challenges add to poor outcomes with regard to employment and independence.

While students with ID have historically been denied college options, inclusive higher education has proven that when given the opportunity, students are reaping the benefits from post-secondary education, including, increased access to competitive employment, increased socialization, community belonging and greater independence. Nationally, with over 300 programs, inclusive higher education programs have continued to improve services and support for students with ID in postsecondary settings and have demonstrated their success through improved employment and independent living outcomes.

In 2014, advocates for persons with ID began working to create inclusive opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities as Colorado was one of only four states that did not have an inclusive higher education pathway. As a result, in 2016 the general assembly enacted a five-year inclusive higher education pilot program at Arapahoe Community College, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and the University of Northern Colorado. Today, approximately 80 students are enrolled at these institutions, participating in traditional classes and coursework, living inclusively on campus, participating in college social life and preparing for their careers.

Inclusive higher education pathways are designed to focus on four primary pillars:

- Academic Growth
- Social Development
- Independent Living
- Career Advancement

Since 2016, many advancements have been made in Colorado for inclusive higher education including the ability to earn an approved credential, access to federal financial aid and the development of state partnerships to support vocational goals. The success of the pilot programs created a demand for more opportunities throughout Colorado.

Purpose

The purpose of the Inclusive Higher Education Grant Program is to allow colleges across Colorado to apply for needed funding to develop, expand and solidify inclusive higher education pathways that

enable students with ID to have all the rights, responsibilities, privileges, benefits and outcomes that result from higher education to the greatest extent possible, including academic growth, social development, career advancement and increased independence.

IN! is interested in leveraging the resources offered by Colorado state legislation to promote access to higher education, competitive integrated employment and independent living outcomes for students with ID. This grant program provides an amazing opportunity to expand the availability of high-quality transition and postsecondary education programs that result in increased numbers of individuals with ID who are prepared to obtain and retain employment while living independently as active members of their community.

The upcoming grant cycle will focus on funding the development of new inclusive higher education programs to address accessibility needs throughout Colorado. Institutions applying for this grant must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be a community college that is a part of the Colorado Community College System
- Be an institution of higher education located in a rural region of Colorado (i.e. outside of the front range urban corridor)
- Be an institution of higher education located on the Western Slope

Duration and Funds

This is a multi-year grant program with the Colorado Department of Higher Education as the overseeing state department and IN! as the administering entity. The duration for each award will be a 5-year term beginning July 2024. The five years of grant funding allows for one year of program development and planning with technical assistance from IN!.

The anticipated range of awards for each institution will be between \$200,000-\$400,000 over five years, though applicants may request up to \$500,000. Startup costs vary by institution and will be determined in accordance with a provided budget template.

Eligibility

The Inclusive Higher Education Grant Program will ***provide grants to state institutions of higher education across Colorado***. HB22-1107 defines a state institution in the following manner: "STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" MEANS A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102 (10). The following defines CRS 23-18-102 (10) and must be true to be eligible to receive grant funding as a result of HB22-1107:

(a) "State institution of higher education" means a public postsecondary institution that is governed by:

- (I) The board of governors of the Colorado State University system;
- (II) The board of regents of the University of Colorado;
- (III) The board of trustees of the Colorado School of Mines;
- (IV) The board of trustees of the University of Northern Colorado;
- (V) The board of trustees of Adams State University;
- (VI) The board of trustees of Western Colorado University;
- (VII) The board of trustees of Colorado Mesa University;
- (VIII) The board of trustees for Fort Lewis College;

- (IX) The board of trustees for Metropolitan State University of Denver; or
- (X) The state board for community colleges and occupational education.

(b) “State institution of higher education” does not include a local district college that is part of a local college district organized pursuant to article 71 of this title, which districts shall continue to be eligible for direct grant funding from the general assembly pursuant to section 23-71-301.

Requirements

Grantees must propose programming that supports students with intellectual disability (ID). A student with an intellectual disability means a student:

- A. With a cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in:
 - a. Intellectual and cognitive functioning.
 - b. Adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills.
 - c. Who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for free appropriate public education under IDEA.

Grantees must propose to create a high quality, inclusive model that would be eligible to receive comprehensive transition and postsecondary program (CTP) status at a future date. CTP is defined as: The term “comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities” means a degree, certificate, or non degree program that meets each of the following:

- A. Is offered by an institution of higher education.
- B. Is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education in order to prepare for gainful employment.
- C. Includes an advising and curriculum structure.
- D. Requires students with intellectual disabilities to participate on not less than a half-time basis as determined by the institution, with such participation focusing on academic components, and occurring through one or more of the following activities:
 - a. Regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution.
 - b. Auditing or participating in courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution for which the student does not receive regular academic credit.
 - c. Enrollment in noncredit-bearing, non degree courses with nondisabled students.
 - d. Participation in internships or work-based training in settings with nondisabled individuals.
- E. Requires students with intellectual disabilities to be socially and academically integrated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent possible.

For further CTP information, visit the [thinkcollege.net CTP resource page](https://thinkcollege.net/ctp-resource-page).

NOTE: For purposes of this grant, preference will be given to program models that follow regular enrollment guidelines in credit-bearing courses as indicated in section (a) above.

Applicants will need to demonstrate a plan to develop an inclusive program that includes commitment to the following:

- Receiving program approval from president and top leadership.
- Establishing alternative admission standards that do not require applicants to take a national assessment test as an admission requirement and allows for modified coursework.
- Demonstrating how students with ID fit into the broader university plan for diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Developing programmatic support within the four pillars of inclusive higher education represented in the Program Model & Pillars graphic below.
- Providing person-centered planning and peer mentoring services for students to ensure normative support across campus.
- Creating and offering an institutionally approved credential for students to earn upon program completion.
- Taking necessary steps to become a Certified Transition Program (CTP)
- Participating in monthly [Colorado Inclusive Higher Education Consortium](#) meetings, facilitated by IN!, to obtain guidance, evaluation and program development support.
- Participating in annual evaluation requirements
- Ensuring program outreach and enrollment that meets the needs of your region with a focus on reaching black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), rural and low-income communities.
- Completing a budget and financial sustainability template (template and guidance provided by IN! as needed).

Attention will be given to increasing diversity and accessibility within expansion efforts. While expanding inclusive higher education pathways, program development should also look to focus on creating opportunity and increasing equity for students with ID potentially facing barriers to accessing inclusive higher education in rural, low-income and BIPOC communities.

While all applicants will be expected to pursue model standards as listed above and as depicted in the model graphic below, it is valuable for each applicant to propose unique program options that meet the specific needs of each institution and offer diverse choices for students with ID across the state. This can include, but is not limited to, concurrent enrollment plans, trade certification programs, etc.

Program Model & Pillars Graphic

[Click here](#) to download a PDF copy of the Program Model & Pillars Graphic for further review.



II. Application and Submission Details

Key Dates

- Application open: January 17, 2024
- Applications due: April 15, 2024 by 11:59 pm
- Finalist Q&A with Grant Review Committee: April 30, 2024
- Deadline for review and selection: May 15, 2024
- Grant funding disbursed: July 1, 2024

Submission Format and Process

- Applications must include completion of application cover page (pg. 8), application narrative that answers the grant application questions and utilizes the corresponding headings, an attached budget and presidential approval letter.
- Use 11 point or larger font on 8.5x11 with 1" margins at top, bottom and both sides
- Applications must be no more than 20 pages, not including cover page, budget or any attached addendums.
- Please number all pages in application submission
- Applications must be submitted and received in PDF format by the deadline via email to info@inclusivehighered.org. *Your submission is not complete until you receive email confirmation verifying the date of receipt.*

Required Elements

- Application Cover Page
- Narrative Questions
- Presidential Letter of Support
- Five Year Proposed Budget

A. Application Cover Page

Applicant Information			
Institution Name			
Mailing Address			
Primary Phone			
Region		Eligibility	
Indicate which region of CO this program will most directly impact		Identify the governing body of institution	
<input type="checkbox"/> Metro <input type="checkbox"/> Pikes Peak <input type="checkbox"/> North Central <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest	<input type="checkbox"/> West Central <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast		
Primary Contact		Authorized Representative <small>*Contract/MOU Signing Authority</small>	
Name		Name	
Title		Title	
Email		Email	
Phone		Phone	
Applicant Commitments			
If awarded grant funding, do you commit to satisfying the following: (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will take the necessary steps to become a Certified Transition Program (CTP). <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will appoint the appropriate program staff to join the Colorado Inclusive Higher Education Consortium. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will integrate students academically and socially into the normative offerings of the institution. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will establish an alternative admission process that allows for modified coursework. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will develop an approved credential. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my institution will participate in annual evaluation requirements including collecting data, surveying stakeholders, and assessing student and graduate growth.			
Requested Funding			
Provide the total requested funding amount for five years and indicate the amount allocated per year. Ensure amounts match and are supported by the attached budget.			
Total		Year 3	
Year 1		Year 4	
Year 2		Year 5	

B. Narrative Questions

Commitment to Inclusion

1. Describe your institution's plan for diversity, equity and inclusion and how individuals with intellectual disability (ID) fit into that plan. Include your institution's experience and commitment to serving this population (include any trainings or supports faculty and staff receive).
2. How do you define inclusion in higher education for students with intellectual disabilities?
3. Describe how your proposed program model will address gaps or weaknesses in services at your institution to successfully meet the needs of students with ID.

Program Pillars

4. Please describe how you envision supporting students with intellectual disabilities within each of the four pillars of inclusive higher education at your institution:
 - a. Academics: Consider how students will have inclusive access to courses across campus and in their area of study with use of accommodations and modifications. How will your program address the academic needs of students with ID accordingly?
 - b. Social: Consider how students will be integrated across campus activities and what supports will be in place to help develop integrated social skills.
 - c. Career: Consider how students will engage in career readiness opportunities both on and off campus. How might students receive career preparation, career readiness skill development and employment support in order to achieve employment outcomes?
 - d. Independent Living: Consider how your program will help students develop critical life skills including independent living skills, person-centered planning, budgeting/financial literacy, and self-advocacy. Consider how students will access residential on-campus living if applicable.

Foundational Elements

5. Describe how your proposed program will establish an alternative admission process for students with ID to be traditionally enrolled. Consider program requirements and application process.
6. Understanding that students in inclusive higher education programs require access to modified curriculum, how does your program intend to develop the process and support needed to ensure this requirement?
7. Describe your program's intent to develop an institutionally approved credential and the anticipated coursework/requirements.

Supportive Elements

8. Describe how you will utilize person-centered planning to support enrolled students.
9. Identify how your proposed program will utilize peer mentor services to ensure normative support across campus.
10. Describe partnerships that might be utilized in the development of this program (internal and external).
11. Describe any barriers you foresee in developing the program over the next five years.
12. Provide an anticipated timeline of key program milestones by year.

Equity, Access and Outreach

13. Describe how your program will address the needs of students with ID within your region by ensuring program outreach and enrollment with a focus on reaching BIPOC, rural and low-income communities.

Staffing

14. Describe your hiring process and plan to staff the program. Please indicate your intent to appoint key staff positions and your commitment to diverse, equitable, and inclusive hiring efforts.

C. Leadership Approval

Please attach a signed letter indicating program support from the president of your institution.

D. Budget

Please attach a 5-year budget for the proposed program. A budget template has been provided for your use and is available on the grant website, if needed. The budget must demonstrate how the program will attain sustainability over time without grant funding.

Applicants may attach a one-page budget narrative as necessary.

Information and budget guidance sessions will be available during grant writing timeline, prior to application due date.

III. Application Review Process

All submissions will be initially scored by a multidisciplinary review team in accordance with the rubric found on the grant website and attached to this packet.

Finalists will then be asked to participate in a brief virtual Q&A session with the grant review committee on April 30th. All applicants should plan accordingly.

IV. Requirements if selected

If selected, grantees will be expected to participate in:

1. Monthly Inclusive Higher Education Consortium meetings.
2. Annual program evaluation. This evaluation will be completed by IN! and will include:
 - a. Collecting data for comparison with national standards.
 - b. Surveys of stakeholders (student, family, faculty, staff, peer mentors).
 - c. Assessments for students to demonstrate growth while in college.
 - d. Surveys of graduates (as applicable).
3. Quarterly progress reporting.

Unsatisfactory progress, program development or lack of participation in the above could result in termination of funding.

V. Application Technical Assistance

All applicants can submit written questions to info@inclusivehighered.org. Answers will be provided to each question and shared publicly on our grant webpage.

Additionally, there will be information sessions during the grant application period open to all interested applicants.

- Feb 1, 12-1pm: General Applicant Q&A Session ([register here](#))
- Feb 15, 12-1pm: Budget Template & Financial Planning Info Session ([register here](#))
- Mar 12, 12-1pm: General Applicant Q&A Session ([register here](#))
- March 28 , 12-1pm: General Applicant Q&A Session ([register here](#))

Updates, supporting documents, and helpful resources can be accessed on our grant website at: <https://inclusivehighered.org/expansion.html>

VI. Scoring Rubric

Grant Application Scoring Rubric		
Area of Focus	Criteria	Maximum Points Possible
Grant Qualification	<p>Institution applying for this grant meets one of the following criteria as identified in the Purpose section of the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a community college that is a part of the Colorado Community College System • Is an institution of higher education located in a rural region of Colorado • Is an institution of higher education located on the Western Slope 	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Will not accept proposal without this component</p>
Leadership Support/Approval	Schools must demonstrate their commitment to an Inclusive Higher Education program with a letter of approval and signature from the president of the institution.	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Will not accept proposal without this component</p>
Commitment and Requirements	<p>A commitment was made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Work to obtain a Certified Transition Program (CTP) designation *Join the Colorado Inclusive Higher Education Consortium *Integrate students academically and socially into the normative offerings of the institution *Establish an alternative admission process with access to modified curriculum *Offer students an approved credential *Participate in evaluation requirements 	10
Population Served	Applicants must clearly identify their commitment to serving students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) (i.e. students that require additional supports, including modified curriculum and alternative enrollment pathways, to access college).	5
Commitment to Inclusion	Schools must define inclusion in higher education and outline the broader university plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and specifically state how individuals with ID fit into their plan. Schools will identify how they will address gaps or weaknesses in services to successfully meet the needs of students.	5
Ability to support 4 pillars of Inclusive Higher Education Model	<p>Schools must demonstrate how they intend to provide supports within the 4 pillars (below) of a model Inclusive Higher Education program:</p> <p><u>Academics:</u> Schools must address how their program will ensure</p>	20

	<p>inclusive access to courses across campus and in their area of study, use of accommodations and modifications, and other academic support services while maintaining high standards of excellence in the classroom.</p> <p><u>Social</u>: Schools must address how students will be normatively included across campus activities and what supports will be in place to help develop integrated social skills.</p> <p><u>Career</u>: Schools must address how students will engage in career readiness opportunities both on and off campus. Students should receive career preparation, career readiness skill development and employment support in order to achieve employment outcomes.</p> <p><u>Independent Living</u>: Schools must address how students will develop critical life skills including independent living skills, person-centered planning, budgeting/financial literacy, and self-advocacy. Schools must identify how students will access residential on-campus living if applicable.</p>	
Foundational Elements	<p>Schools will describe their intent to develop systems that address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *An alternative admission process for students with ID to be traditionally enrolled. *Access to modified curriculum *An institutionally approved credential 	15
Supportive Elements (in groups?)	<p>Schools will discuss systems of support that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Person-centered planning for enrolled students *Peer mentoring services to ensure normative support across campus *Partnering with internal and external departments/agencies to coordinate student supports 	15
Implementation Timeline	Schools must provide an anticipated timeline that demonstrates achieving program milestones by year.	5
Equity, Access and Outreach	Schools must demonstrate intent to address regional needs of students with ID by serving BIPOC, rural, and low-income students through program outreach and enrollment.	10
Staffing	Schools must describe a hiring plan to fully staff the program.	5
Financial Commitment	Schools must complete a 5-year budget template and exemplify their long-term financial commitment to program sustainability.	10
Institution Name: _____		_____ / 100