

Grant Questions & Responses

Overview

This document provides an ongoing list of grant questions posed by grant applicants and other constituents. Updated each Friday by IN! Staff, questions and responses are organized by grant cycle round and further categories below.

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ROUND 1 - NEW PROGRAM PROPOSALS

General Grant Questions

Q: Will there be a second grant cycle next year?

A: There will be a subsequent grant cycle for new program proposals launching January of 2024. This cycle will specifically be for rural, western slope, or community college institutions.

Q: Will there need to be a robust justification/literature portion of the grant application?

A: No - the justification is exemplified by the current programs in CO and the work of IN!. There will be no requirement for outside literature. However, you will need to address how students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) fit into the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work of the institution at large, how your institutions have or have not served students with IDD in the past, and how this program addresses gaps in services for this population.

Q: Do you think it would be best to prepare for this grant by addressing the four pillars of inclusive higher education or by reviewing past CTP applications in order to answer those questions?

A: While looking at the [CTP criteria](#) will help you strategize a robust program and provide some helpful benchmarks, this specific grant will be looking for a holistic program overview and how you plan to address expectations in the four pillars of the inclusive model.

Financial Questions

Q: Is indirect cost allowed for this grant? If so, what is the allowed rate?

A: This grant and budget template was not created with a fixed indirect cost percentage and therefore is not required for applicants. There is an indirect line item in the provided budget that applicants can adapt to their specific institutional needs with the expectation that overall indirect costs cannot exceed 10% of the requested grant amount. If your institution is going to charge for indirect costs, we recommend that you calculate 10% (or lesser identified percentage) of the requested amount for each grant year and update the line item accordingly.

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Q: What is the actual dollar amount awarded to institutions each year?

A: Of the \$450,000 annually provided by CDHE, \$360,000 will be divided amongst grant recipients each year. Amount of funding will be dependent upon program needs and will be determined by the grant review committee.

Q: What is the max amount of dollars that can be requested per institution?

A: Institutions can request in their application/budget proposal a maximum of \$500,000 over the course of 5 years. We anticipate an average award of about \$400,000 over the 5 years.

Q: Will grant funds be available for private institutions?

A: No - eligible applicants must be state institutions of higher education as defined in section 23-18-102(10), which does not include private institutions and some additional colleges. Please review the [Grant Eligibility Description](#) for more details.

Q: Do students pay for their tuition?

A: Yes - students pay the same cost per credit hour as other students, but they take fewer credits/semester. If living on campus, they also pay the same room and board rates. These costs to students go directly back to the institution and lead to an overall profit. On the financial pro forma, you can see under section (1) payments made by students.

Q: Is the grant funding breakdown on the pro forma template set in stone?

A: No - this template is a general example. The numbers do not have to be exact. Each institution will need to edit the pro forma template to match their tuition cost, housing, FTE, etc. and ultimately determine the amount of grant funding they are requesting over the course of 5 years.

Q: If a smaller college is unable to make high enrollment numbers for this program, could they hire less staff?

A: Yes - if you were only serving a small number of students, you could easily maintain a smaller staff. We are happy to work with schools that want to create programs that fit their population and regional needs. Sustainability can be adapted to each college. In the budget pro forma, you can adapt the number of students enrolled each year to see how it impacts your financial needs and therefore your overall funding request.

Q: How can we access the budget pro forma in order to know exactly what type of information will be needed?

A: [On the grant website](#), there is a resource list. The "Financial Model Template" is the downloadable pro forma that you are welcome to change to meet your institution's needs/requests. You'll notice that there are two tabs, one for community colleges and one for universities, so make sure to edit the tab that is appropriate to your institution.

Staffing Questions

Q: Does grant funding count towards needed FTEs? Can the grant continue to fund a full FTE after the first year?

A: Yes - a large portion of the funding will likely be dedicated to hiring program staff to support students directly. The 5-year funding of this grant allows for one year of program planning where the grant will fund an FTE or other staffing needs in order to get the program established. It can continue to fund FTEs beyond the first year. You can allocate the funding to whatever staffing you need throughout the duration of the grant with a clear tapering off after your program is making sustainable revenue.

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Q: If the program contracts with DVR in order to provide employment support, will that meet the qualification of hiring an employment coordinator in the grant?

A: Contracting with DVR is a great collaboration option. As long as the partnership would adequately address the employment support needs of each student during program enrollment, it would meet the qualification. Note: As the program develops and increases in size, it is likely a vocational coordinator would be necessary.

Q: The sample financial pro forma shows an example of a director FTE being partially funded by the disabilities service office. Do you require that a portion of the funding be tied to the disabilities office, or could the full-time position be solely for the inclusive higher education position?

A: This is just an example of how our community college pilot began, but it is not a requirement. There is flexibility to determine your staffing needs according to the culture of your campus.

Q: Are there example job descriptions for the necessary staffing roles?

A: While we don't have a one size fits all job description for the particular roles at inclusive programs, I will point you to a few posted ones that you can comb through and tweak as needed:

- [ThinkCollege Education Coach Example](#)
- [ACC Campus and Community Engagement Specialist Example](#)
- [UCCS Employment Coordinator Example](#)
- [National Job Postings for Inclusive Programs](#)

Q: Are there examples of training resources for specific staff roles?

A: This is something that each school has really taken on independently, so we do not have a specified resource to share. I will however pass along some online training resources provided by UMass Boston and their concurrent enrollment programs: [Peer Mentor Training](#), [Educational Coach Training](#)

Institutional Support Questions

Q: Is there a resource we can share with institutional leadership regarding the benefits of inclusive higher ed?

A: Yes - we have included an [Impact of Inclusive Higher Education document](#) on our expansion website that is free to use when addressing institutional leadership. We often find it valuable to address the institution's specific strategic priorities and point out how they are fulfilled by the program. Our IN! Staff is also willing to coordinate meetings with leaders to discuss the mutual benefit of inclusive program development.

Q: How can we indicate to leadership the potential revenue stream that would come from inclusive programs?

A: The best resource for this is the pro forma budget that can be adapted to your particular institution's numbers. On the budget form, row 15 for the community colleges and row 20 for universities calculate the total revenue over the years being allocated to the institutions directly. Those numbers will adapt based upon how many students are enrolled and how many traditional credits they are taking each semester.

Program Model/Structure Questions

Q: Do current inclusive higher education programs share a statewide approved certificate or create individual institutional certificates? What standards or achievements do these certificates commemorate?

A: The current programs have created institutional certificates that would allow for transferred credits across programs. They are categorized as an interdisciplinary certificate that allows each student to identify an area of study (from the general course catalog) and then select a variety of courses to meet the credit requirements and their desired goals. The certificates themselves acknowledge the same level of achievement as any other student completing a course of study - they completed the courses, have graded transcripts, and are graduating with more tangible skills for their desired field. As we've mentioned, new programs don't have to follow the exact model of the current program certificates, rather the unifying component is that certificates are approved at the institution and offer a graded transcript upon completion. Elevate at ACC certificate example: [Certificate Overview](#), [Certificate PDF](#)

Q: Our program plans to offer stackable certificates. Would that be a supported model by the grant?

A: Yes - as long as the certificates are meaningful and recognized at the institutional level (i.e. credit-bearing, inclusive, grades, etc.), then offering strategic certificates would be another way to provide diverse program offerings.

Q: What is the expected number of students needed to participate in the program?

A: This number differs by institution, but we commonly see programs serving 20-30 students in order to be self-sustaining. With program development, it is likely that you will start with a smaller cohort of 5 students at a time and progressively increase throughout program development.

Q: How much planning time does the grant funding allow for and when will programs be launched?

A: The grant allows for one year of planning, so programs will likely launch with students in seats Fall of 2024. During the planning phase, institutions will have access to technical assistance from IN!.

Q: What is the criteria for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)?

A: The working criteria that we use for inclusive higher education programs is from ThinkCollege (provided below). Students that apply to these programs should already have received testing to have a diagnosis of IDD on either an IEP or other medical documentation. Program staff traditionally look at a variety of intake information (documentation, school history, interviews, etc.) to determine eligibility.

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.*

Q: Are there program examples for dual enrollment models?

A: Yes - while there are not yet dual enrollment programs in CO, they do exist nationally. [Click here](#) to see a list of school examples we received from ThinkCollege. You can also access this [example MOU from UMass Boston](#) between

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their inclusive program and the local districts.

Q: What is the curriculum most inclusive higher education programs use for their specialized course?

A: While we cannot provide the full curriculum content prior to grant selection, we are happy to share this [curriculum overview document](#). This addresses the key topics and goals incorporated into each semester of the curriculum.

Q: If our program model is focused on a particular area of study or trade at the institution, will we still qualify as an inclusive program?

A: There is value in offering different types of programs across the state. For example, an agricultural/trade-based program provides diverse options for students with IDD when considering their post-secondary path. Because of this, a specified area of study model would still be considered for this grant.

ROUND 2 - EXISTING PROGRAM EXPANSION PROPOSALS

Q: Are scholarships/financial aid supports acceptable components for this grant proposal?

A: In short, yes - scholarships and financial aid resources are acceptable components for this grant proposal. We will point out, the review committee will assess the sustainability and give priority to proposals that are more likely to be sustained after grant funding ends

Q: Does the required institutional letter of support have to come from an organizational signing authority?

A: The letter of support does not need to come from a formal signing authority. We default to each applicant to determine the most appropriate person in leadership, outside of their program office, to indicate campus support.

Q: Is indirect cost allowed for this grant? If so, what is the allowed rate?

A: This grant was not created with a fixed indirect cost percentage and therefore is not required for applicants. Applicants can adapt to their specific institutional needs with the expectation that overall indirect costs cannot exceed 10% of the requested grant amount. If your institution is going to charge for indirect costs, we recommend that you calculate 10% (or lesser identified percentage) of the requested amount for each grant year and update the line item accordingly.

Q: Is food an allowable expense category within our proposal?

A: Yes - There are no restrictions on including food costs as a budget line item in your proposal. We recommend ensuring that within the proposal (budget narrative or elsewhere) that you clarify its purpose/use.