



California Community Colleges

California Apprenticeship Initiative High Road Training Partnership Grant

Workforce and Economic Development Division

Request for Application

California Apprenticeship Initiative High Road Training Partnership Grant

RFA Release Date:	June 16, 2021
Questions Deadline:	Written questions about specifications in the Request for Applications must be received by 5:00 pm on Thursday, July 16, 2021 via email to: apprenticeship@cccco.edu .
Bidders' Conference:	Pre-recorded session released on Thursday, July 1, 2021
Application Deadline:	Applications must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, August 16, 2021 in NOVA

Administered by the California
Community College's Chancellor's Office
Workforce and Economic Development
Division
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Request for Applications (RFA) Instructions

A. Introduction

As part of California Community Colleges ongoing efforts to meet the state's need for an educated and skilled workforce, and achieve the goals outlined in the *Vision for Success*, the California Community College Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office) is pleased to announce the availability of Proposition 98 funds under the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) New and Innovative Grant Program (as provided for in section 79148.1 of the Education Code and the funding year's annual Budget Act) for phase one of a two phase RFA.

Phase one is a short-term planning grant to expand on existing High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP), an initiative and framework for industry-led regional partnerships first developed by the California Workforce Development Board (CWBD).

In this first phase, applicants may apply for funds to strengthen and advance existing H RTPs, and begin planning for the second phase of the RFA, which will provide funds for the direct implementation of new and innovative apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs based on needs identified by the H RTP in phase one.

B. Background

The ultimate goal of the CAI grant funds is to create new and innovative apprenticeship opportunities in priority and emerging industry sectors or areas in which apprenticeship training is not fully established or does not exist.

While apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships have historically played an important role in the state's workforce development, they are particularly important today. California has experienced an unprecedented time battling a global pandemic with serious impacts to livelihood. More than one million Californians have filed new unemployment claims since the pandemic began sweeping across the country. As vaccinations roll out across the state, recovery is within reach. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the economic inequality that is deeply ingrained in our society, making it clear that we cannot return to business as usual. Similarly, California's community colleges are also faced with creating a new normal, with a clear "Call to Action" by the Chancellor's Office to help design and innovate for an equitable recovery and post-pandemic economy.

We envision a future where everyone has an opportunity to advance economically, and achieving that goal will take more than workforce development initiatives and



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efforts to improve education. An inclusive future requires cross-sector collaboration and solid relationships to co-design new roles for employers, educational institutions, governments, workers, foundations, community-based organizations, and intermediaries in regional ecosystems.

Tackling economic inequality and mobility at scale requires a network approach to systems change—an approach that requires cross-sector actors to put mission above organization; develop authentic, trusting relationships; and serve specific functions in the ecosystem. No one sector can do this alone. Regions and communities must continue to prototype the roles of community-based organizations, employers, educational institutions, and intermediaries in activating civic leaders, removing barriers for the untapped workforce, providing opportunities for the lifelong learning that workers will need in a rapidly-changing economy, and priming regions for beneficial investment.

Inclusive economic development is about both process and outcome, mobilizing cross-sector collaboration and focusing on approaches to shared prosperity that are customized and place-based; the outcomes from such economic growth can be greater and more mutually beneficial to businesses, communities, and workers, including the black, Latinx, and Asian Pacific Islander communities and other historically underinvested groups.

C. What is an H RTP and how is it different from other employer partnerships?

H RTPs are industry-led regional partnerships that align with the High Road framework to create regional collaborations driven and guided by the following four essential elements:

1. Industry-Led Problem Solving: Foundational is that the industry – including leaders representing employers, as well as those who ensure worker voice is incorporated – lead the problem solving for the workforce demands unique to that industry. Industry representation will look different for each partnership, and projects focused on unique regional and industry-specific issues may form partnerships led by a variety of stakeholder groups, including employee groups, community organizations, and local government.
2. Partnerships as a Priority: Strong and durable industry partnerships are a goal in and of itself. These partnerships are formal relationships that are neither loose nor ad hoc, but form the basis of sustained long-term problem-solving.
3. Worker Wisdom: These partnerships have developed innovative ways to



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explicitly bring the worker voice into their strategies and tactics as a core value undergirding the partnership, to inform the future of work design.

4. Industry Driven Education and Training Solutions: Partnerships can tap into existing education and training programs, develop and deliver their own programs or use a hybrid approach specific to their particular workforce needs.

Additional information about how High Road partnerships work, their core components, and essential elements can be found on the CWDB website: <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>

D. How is this RFA different?

Sustainable apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs rely on strong regional partnerships. Therefore, phase one of this RFA is intended to ensure a solid foundation for creating new and innovative apprenticeship opportunities by first building on a different type of regional partnership engagement model that is both sustainable over time and focuses on the four H RTP essential elements described above.

E. Eligibility

This RFA is intended for community college districts that meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) Community colleges participating in a H RTP funded by the CWDB
- 2) Community colleges with a H RTP funded by the CWDB in their region that wish to establish a partnership with the H RTP

Project profiles for CWDB-funded H RTPs can be found at the following link: <https://cwdb.ca.gov/highroadprojectprofiles/>

All applicants must demonstrate: 1) extensive regional ecosystem engagement and prior successful efforts; and 2) how a deepening of collaboration with H RTP elements will lead to long-term sustainable relationships that expand training access for Californians, including the creation of new and innovative apprenticeship opportunities in priority and emerging industry sectors.

Note: Please note that another CAI Apprenticeship/Pre-apprenticeship RFA will be forthcoming for those entities that are not associated with an H RTP, but still want to apply for the CAI New and Innovative Grant Program to create new and innovative apprenticeships.



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F. How much is available for this initial planning and building phase?

Each applicant may receive up to \$125,000 for this first phase. Successful grantees will have up to nine months from the date a grant agreement is fully executed to complete their objectives, and develop a full program implementation plan. Existing HRTPs with community college partners may accelerate their timeline to advance to phase two if nine months are not needed to complete their objectives.

G. What are the outcomes expected of a grantee?

During the first phase, the grantee is expected to work with regional entities within the regional ecosystem (e.g., industry representatives, business associations, community representatives, regional consortia, partner community colleges, local economic and workforce development entities including the Workforce Development Boards, intermediaries, community based organizations, small business technical assistance providers, etc.) to expand and align existing efforts to incorporate the H RTP model.

By the end of the planning phase, the grantee should be able to demonstrate that it is part of a sustainable H RTP in the following ways:

- Documentation of formalized long-term commitments from its partners;
- A plan to sustain the partnership over time;
- Concrete investments made to sustain the partnership;
- Specific steps to grow jobs, including the workforce training necessary to do so

Workforce education and training should not be limited to credit or non-credit, but also incorporate not-for-credit and contract training models where appropriate to meet partnership needs. The applicant should consider strategies for how credit could be given for prior learning and work experience.

In addition, the partnership should have identified a clear set of priorities and strategies around the work that it would like to do, including creating new and innovative apprenticeship opportunities in priority and emerging industry sectors or areas, which should form the basis of its application for the second phase of the grant.

The focus of the work that the partnership has prioritized must be on the jobs that are central to industry growth, barriers to maintaining a high-skilled high-demand workforce, barriers that prevent underrepresented and underemployed members of the community from becoming employed, and strategies that lead to economic



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recovery and address disparities in the region.

An end result of this two-phase grant process is the promotion of economic mobility through job creation and job placement from new and innovative apprenticeships. To that end, applicants must be able to identify the specific industry sectors the partnership will target, the related high-skills high-demand jobs and associated career pathways, the necessary skills identified by employers to be successfully employed and retained in the industry sectors, and applicable industry credentials, if any.

If the applicant intends to serve low-to-middle skilled, high-demand jobs, a strategy to develop a clear path to high-skill high-demand jobs should be included.

H RTP partnerships should ultimately strive to:

- Connect workers to high-quality jobs or entry-level work with clearly defined pathways to advancement that lead to wage increase
- Increase skills and opportunity for those at the lower end of the labor market while expanding career pipelines within key industries for priority populations, individuals with barriers to employment, and under-represented workers to address equity disparities in the communities
- Support both labor and management in improving health, safety, and professionalization of jobs
- Address worker, employer, and industry needs as they respond and adapt to climate change and environmental sustainability, changes to technology, changes in demand due to unforeseen events such as containment of COVID-19, and/or building community and economic resilience
- Build partnerships to connect dislocated workers to existing resources and services, and to plan for long-term retraining (focusing on industries, workers, and communities excessively impacted by COVID-19)
- Develop regional strategies that support workers and communities in adapting to and creating new pre-apprenticeship training programs, apprenticeship training programs, or sustained Enhanced On the Job (OJT) training programs, or other training models that are ultimately identified to meet the needs of the region.

Note that the H RTP model is guided by industry, and, as a result, employer engagement must be designed to go beyond providing advising and input into curriculum revision or creation. Rather, employer engagement must include ongoing active engagement during the learning phase that incorporates work-based learning elements, competency-based education, credit for prior learning, a process for



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employer feedback and continuous improvement of the workforce training provided, and a process of how employer partners will select and hire program completers. The applicant must also provide a plan on how the partnership will leverage regional consortia relationships, and other workforce programs in the region such as the Strong Workforce Program, Adult Education, etc.

H. Phase two information

Additional funds of up to \$500,000 may be available to HRTPs to develop pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, or Enhanced OJT programs that will clearly address the outcomes listed above and the H RTP's identified priorities. Phase two would require applicants to demonstrate how workforce education and training development can be accelerated to support an individual's rapid return to work. This would include providing a comprehensive set of supports, including job readiness coaching and career guidance to program recipients from day one of entry to program until completion and credential attainment. Applicants are encouraged to consider these potential phase two goals while creating their proposal for the planning phase. Additional information and application requirements for phase two of this grant, including details on a 20 percent employer match requirement, will be forthcoming.

I. Proposal requirements for planning phase

Proposals for phase one funding should include a description of the following:

- Stakeholders and partners
- Roles, responsibilities and commitments of stakeholders and partners, and their expected contribution to the H RTP
- Process for formalizing the long-term engagement of stakeholders and partners
- Process for and anticipated results of ongoing engagement of stakeholders and partners
- How partnership sustainability will be ensured beyond the planning grant period
- Key factors or steps the applicant will incorporate to ensure partnership success, and the metrics the applicant will use to gauge that success, including early indicators of success
- How the applicant will use/is using qualitative and quantitative regional and/or local data to help guide the H RTP priorities
- Identify and provide current student outcomes data relevant to the industry



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sector and how the partnership fits into the applicant's overall strategy to improve student outcomes

- Identify and provide current data on equity gaps and disparities in the regions and the populations to be targeted
- Evidence that demonstrates the applicant's likelihood of successfully developing and sustaining a H RTP
- A detailed timeline, workplan, and budget for achieving the RFA outcomes, a justification for the total amount of funding requested, and a description for how the timeline, workplan, and budget integrate and support vision goals currently underway at the applicant institution

J. Application Format and Instructions

This application will be submitted via NOVA (nova.cccco.edu). Each section below provides an overview of required components of the application in NOVA. Applicants may be required to make adjustments in the budget, workplan, or other aspects of the application prior to distribution of funds.

1. Details

- a. Abstract- summarize how the workplan and associated timeline and budget integrate and support vision goals currently underway at the applicant institution, and a justification for the total amount of funding requested

2. Lead Institution & Partners

- a. Partner/Employer Agency- all partners listed should provide a partner commitment letter as an attachment to the application. Letters should detail the partner's purpose for engagement and their proposed contribution

3. Narrative- Need/Problem Statement

- a. Describe the existing regional partnerships that are in place and will be expanded in this phase of funding. Include the following:
 - i. Who are the partners and stakeholders, and what organizations do they represent?
 - ii. What are the roles and commitments of current partners and stakeholders?
 - iii. What local or regional needs is the partnership currently addressing?
- b. Provide evidence that demonstrates likelihood of successfully enhancing and/or sustaining a H RTP. Describe what expertise is currently being



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drawn upon and how it will lead to the success of the HRTP. Consider the following:

- i. Applicant's existing networks and partnerships, and experience in apprenticeship training programs or other workforce training and Career Technical Educational (CTE) programs
 - ii. Major accomplishments pertaining to bringing educational systems and/or industry/employer groups into alignment
 - iii. Quantifiable outcomes (job placement outcomes, number of students served, demographics, completion rates, industry certifications awarded, etc.) and impacts for any workforce partnerships and programs cited
 - iv. Past successes in: convening stakeholders towards the purpose of collaborating regionally; creating or supporting apprenticeship programs; curriculum development and approval; work-based learning partnerships; bringing employers together for common training purposes to fill employer needs; and/or workforce preparation
 - v. Applicant's leadership role in working with partnerships collaboratively to create a vision, identify opportunities, and acquire resources to develop educational and/or training programs, including support services provided to participants to increase employment success
- c. Describe the strategy and plan for sustaining the HRTP partnership. This should include:
- i. Process for formalizing the long-term engagement of stakeholders and partners
 - ii. Process for ongoing engagement of stakeholders and anticipated results of this process
 - iii. How partnership sustainability will be ensured beyond the planning grant period
 - iv. Description and rationale of any requested technical assistance necessary to enhance and support sustainability of the partnership
- d. Describe how the HRTP will successfully meet the outcomes described in Section G, including the following:
- i. Evidence of data-driven decision-making to identify the needs and gaps the HRTP will address (comprehensive economic and labor market analysis; market intelligence particularly related to the impact of automation and digital transformation on jobs and required skillsets; skills and career pathways mapping)



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- ii. Identify career and education pathways, and student supports that are in place or will be organized and leveraged to address achievement of economic mobility for all individuals served in the form of wage increases, particularly for the part-time adult learners population in the region where equity disparities exist
- iii. Leveraging of existing workforce development assets in the local and regional communities and within colleges such as not-for-credit workforce training, contract education, adult education programming, Strong Workforce Program, Perkins program investments, etc.
- iv. Identify innovative approaches the partnership plans to incorporate into any workforce training and education plans to ensure student success including:
 - 1. Integration of basic and 21st Century digital skills necessary for success into technical instruction and how targeted academic support for struggling participants will be done
 - 2. Additional contextualized basic skills courses that may be needed to help participants focus on nontechnical areas where necessary, including academics and job readiness
 - 3. Comprehensive student support services (access to academic and nonacademic supports, such as career guidance, case management, success coaching, financial aid, etc.)
 - 4. Pathways (stackable credentials that are aligned to labor market needs and help qualify participants for jobs that pay family-supporting wages)
- v. Describe applicant's readiness in moving to phase two of the project including what components are already in place, additional components that will be implemented, and timeframe to readiness.
- e. Describe the applicant's evaluation plan to gauge successfulness of the partnership itself as well as its impact on the region and student outcomes. Consider the following:
 - i. Which specific metrics will be utilized to measure success of the partnership?
 - ii. How will success be monitored and tracked throughout the grant performance period?
 - iii. What are potential leading and lagging indicators? Explain their rationale, who collects them and how they will be used.



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- iv. What indicators might signal to H RTP leadership that they are ready for phase two of the RFA?
4. Workplan- The workplan is broken into three components in NOVA: objectives; activities; and outcomes. Appendix A is a workplan template for reference. Objectives, activities, outcomes, and deliverables are clearly defined in this document. Student success metrics are not a required field in NOVA for this phase of the grant. However, at least one objective in the workplan must address how the H RTP will identify relevant student success metrics from which to base their phase two proposal.
5. Budget
 - a. Prepare a budget for how the grant funds will be distributed for each fiscal year of the proposed work. The total budget will populate based on the amounts entered.
 - b. Indirect Administrative Costs- Program funds are for direct services to the project only and are intended to supplement, not supplant, existing programs. An applicant may not propose to use grant funds to cover staff costs or to compensate outside individual(s) or firm(s) for services associated with preparing the grant application.
 - c. Travel- Only travel necessary for the project is allowed. List travel purpose and estimated cost. Under the current COVID-19 conditions where remote work is the norm, the Chancellor's Office will not approve travel expenses unless the necessity is fully justified.
 - d. Matching funds are not required for this phase of the grant, but will be required for phase two.
 - e. Resources and References
 - i. Appendix C – Guidelines, Definitions, and Allowable Expenditures
 - ii. Appendices B1 and B2 may be used as guidelines to assist in budget formulation.
6. Project Management
 - a. Description of management plan: List the individual(s), their title(s), and the department(s) or division(s) they represent (at the applicant agency) who hold(s) responsibility of ensuring the outcomes of the project are met.
 - b. Upload partner commitment letters here, from all partners listed in the Lead Institution & Partners section.
 - i. Partner commitment letters clearly outline the specifics the partners will contribute to the partnership in effort, time, and desired outcomes. Letters should detail the partner's purpose for engagement and their proposed contribution. A clear link should



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- exist between the partner commitment letters, the narrative report, and the workplan. Partner support letters will not be considered.
- ii. New partners should also contribute letters, stating their willingness to collaborate with the partnership, and possible accomplishments.
- c. Organizational Chart

K. Scoring Rubric

Grant applications are scored based on a 100-point scale as indicated in the table provided below. A minimum average score of 75 must be obtained during the review process, which includes multiple readers and scoring rubrics, in order to be considered for funding.

Application Component	Points
Narrative-Need/Problem Statement	25
Workplan	35
Extent of Partner Commitment	30
Budget	10

L. RFA Clarification

If any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in this RFA is discovered, immediately notify the Chancellor’s Office of the error and request a written modification or clarification of the document. A clarifying addendum will be given to all parties who have obtained the RFA, without divulging the source of the request. Insofar as practical, the Chancellor’s Office will give such notice to other interested parties, but shall not be responsible for failure to do so.

Written questions concerning the specifications and instructions in this Request for Applications must be submitted to apprenticeship@cccco.edu no later than 5:00 P.M. on **July 16, 2021**. To the degree possible, each inquiry should cite the RFA section and paragraph to which it refers. No phone calls regarding any aspect of this RFA will be accepted by the Chancellor’s Office.

M. Bidder’s Conference

The Chancellor’s Office will post a pre-recorded Bidder’s Conference presentation on July 1, 2021. It will be posted to the Workforce and Economic Development RFA



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website at the following link: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/WEDD-RFA>.

N. Application Procedures

Applications must be submitted electronically via NOVA by 5:00 p.m. on **August 16, 2021**. Submission via any other methods will not be accepted.

O. Rejection of Application

The Chancellor’s Office reserves the right to reject any and all applications received. A grant application shall be rejected prior to scoring if:

1. It is received at the Chancellor’s Office via electronic submittal in NOVA later than 5:00 p.m. on **August 16, 2021** or is incorrectly submitted.
2. The proposed budget amount exceeds \$125,000.
3. Any of the required components of the application are incomplete or not submitted.
4. Partner commitment letters are not provided by all partners listed in the Lead Institution & Partners section of the application or do not include the components listed in the Project Management section.

P. Calendar of Key Dates

June 16, 2021	RFA Released
July 1, 2021	Bidder’s Conference Pre-recorded Presentation Posted
July 16, 2021	Deadline for Submitting Questions
August 16, 2021	Deadline for Submitting Application
September 10, 2021	Notification of Intent to Award
September 23, 2021	Appeal Deadline
January 1, 2022	Grant Commencement



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Q. Reporting

The grantee is required to submit regular reporting, including an end-of-project final report in the NOVA system by September 30, 2022. The required report will demonstrate the grantee provided program deliverables pursuant to the grant agreement.