



SWP 2.0 Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions were gathered from webinars and help desk requests over the past months. If you have a question not covered by this document, please submit a help desk request in NOVA or email strongworkforcehelpdesk@cccco.edu.

General Questions

1) How can feedback and ideas be shared regarding SWP and WEDD?

strongworkforcehelpdesk@CCCCO.edu

2) Where can we find the legislation that outlines how the SWP grant should be used?

You can access the Ed Code [Click here](#):

3) What will be done with the success stories? If we complete them, it would be nice if they were shared publicly to support the program.

The goal of the success stories is to provide examples to the legislature about the successful outcomes of the SWP program. We will utilize these stories in the legislative report that is presented every year to the legislature.

4) Can we connect with our Monitor ahead of submitting our plan for feedback?

We encourage interaction between our staff and our stakeholders in the field. If you have any questions regarding your plan, please reach out to your monitor and they will provide the necessary feedback.

5) When can we expect a memo with our SWP allocation amount for 2020-21?

[Click Here to view the memo.](#)

6) Is there a statewide job placement/tracking system being considered by the Chancellor.

No there is no system currently in use for job placement tracking. We are exploring various platforms to identify a system that allows us to track this more effectively.

NOVA Planning Process

7) Is there a way to forecast expenditures in quarters 5-8?

If you indicate your plan will span 2 fiscal years in section 1, then you will be asked to complete forecasting for Q1-4 of each fiscal year.

8) If we change the name of a continuation plan will it also change the name for the previous reports?

Yes, if you change the name on a project all references to that project get changed to the new name.

9) If the project is uncertified and recertified during the life of the project, will the recertification require all levels of approval?

Yes. However, some minor changes like updating contacts or modifying success stories are allowed without re-submitting a plan.

10) Are the partner institutions only community colleges, or do they include k12, CBO's, etc. grant

Partner Institutions are those who will receive funding through your regional project.

11) Will employer partners receive notifications from NOVA anytime a project is submitted, certified, approved, reported on, etc. as is the case with other NOVA programs (specifically K12 SWP all partners receive notifications from NOVA).

No. Employer partners entered into SWP 2.0 will not receive notifications on plan status updates.

12) Do we have to have a letter of commitment from employers before they can be entered into NOVA?

You can enter employer partners into NOVA prior to uploading the verification letter or letter of commitment. However, you will not be able to fully complete the Employer Partners section and submit the plan until a signed letter is uploaded with the legislatively mandated information on vacancies and target estimates.

13) Will the monitor have to certify and uncertified plans if there are any changes to the plan?

Minor changes such as adding contacts can be done without having to re-certify. However, other changes impacting the budget, activities, or more material sections of the plan will require plans to be uncertified.

14) Is it possible to include links to websites or add attachments to the success stories?

Links and websites can be included in your stories. The system is not currently set up to accept attachments or upload for success stories.

15) LMI, under Supporting Evidence, if we select evidence other than the Supply and Demand data, does this mean we do not complete the Demand and Supply data sections which then come after the Supporting Evidence upload? In other words, we only complete the Demand and Supply sections if this is the Supporting Evidence that we are selecting—correct?

Yes. NOVA will allow supporting evidence uploads to complete the LMI section in place of inputting COE Supply and Demand data. Please note that colleges who submit other data sources will be reviewed by their monitors to ensure the data is appropriate for the funding request.

16) What is the difference between the objective and activity? They seem a bit redundant. Can they be the same?

Objectives define the target impacts of your plan and how those relate to your region's overall strategy. Activities are the tangible steps your plan will take and are connected to specific budget items.

- **Activities** define the actions you intend to take – the “What” of your plan.
- **Objectives** define the impacts those actions are intended to have – the “Why” of your plan.

17) Are regions now signing off on our use of local SWP \$?

No. While regions do not “approve” plans, it is required that regions acknowledge that plans align to regional priorities. College whose plan's do not align with regional priorities can expect to receive inquiries from their Monitor about the discrepancy and provide sufficient evidence related to why funds are being used in support of a sector that is not a regional priority but may be a micro-region priority.

SWP Timelines and Deadlines

18) Is there a one-page sheet with all the deadlines or will it be posted on the website?

[Click here for a list of Program deadlines.](#)

19) When are all of our projects expected to be entered into NOVA.

January 31, 2021

20) Can we request an extension to submit projects in NOVA for FY21?

This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please request an extension with your monitor. The monitor will then get final approval from the program dean.

21) Does the 1/31/21 date require that all projects be entered and approved by all levels or simply entered in NOVA by this date (with approvals coming later)?

1/31/21 is the date by which all plans should be submitted in NOVA. Please certify no later than 5pm on February 26th. Your grant monitor will then review and approve or reach out with questions.

22) Different spending timelines for base and incentive funding?

No, the base and incentive funding has the same spending timelines.

SWP 2.0 Funding Year Changes

23) Can the NOVA system allow revision of existing projects or to enter new projects with a beginning date of 7/31/2019 funded with 2019 round funds?

NOVA users are currently able to create new plans with FY 2019-20 or FY 2020-21 funds. However, these plans will only cover expenditures planned during FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22. Existing plans may also be revised to change budgets or work plan details. It's important to note that adjusting substantive details such as budgets will require an existing plan to be re-certified.

24) We've regularly been receiving allocations on a delayed timeline. Incentive allocations for round 5 are scheduled for November 2020, so when does the clock start for those allocations?

The time frame for planning and spending funds will remain the same in SWP 2.0 - 6 months to plan 18 months to spend.

25) Will plans prior to FY 2020-21 continue to be reported and maintained in the current NOVA system vs. NOVA 2.0? Or will all plans transfer to NOVA 2.0? And if all into NOVA 2.0, does this mean any missing information needs to be updated prior plans (i.e. 1920 PY)?

NOVA now supports two types of SWP plans for the past and current four-year cycles (what we call 1.0 and 2.0). This latest update did include some changes to the 1.0 planning process, however the process to create these plans remains mostly the same.

There will not be a need to update or change any 1.0 plans unless users wish to make changes requiring unsubmission and recertification.

26) Since projects are limited to maximum of 2 years, if an expenditure is ongoing is the college expected to then cover expenditure in future years?

Projects are not limited to 2 years. You can have ongoing projects which continue beyond 24 months as long as you can demonstrate outcomes are being achieved. The 2-year limit applies only to the funding source and NOVA has the ability to “Continue” plans using future allocations. Projects that cannot demonstrate outcomes will be subject to review by the monitor and may be rejected.

27) Does the 24-month new requirement also apply to K12 Strong Workforce?

No. SWP K-12 will retain its 30-month spending window.

28) Will the 2020-21 SWP grant period be 07/01/2020-06/30/2022? Or Will 24 month period starting with the date grant is approved?

The Allocation Year 2020-21 SWP grant period be 07/01/2020-06/30/2022.

29) Please clarify how to tie project plans to an allocation year now that FIFO isn't applicable

NOVA will allow you to select an allocation year for SWP 2.0 plans. The duration of plans tied to a selected allocation year will be limited in duration to 24 months from the start of the associated fiscal year. If you wish to continue a plan past the allowable 24 months, you will have the option to “Continue” the plan into another allocation year and update the plan with a budget specific to the new funding source. In addition, you will need to show outcomes achieved for the 24 month cycle and those will be used to set new goals for the next 24 month cycle.

30) For FY 20-2021 plans created and currently in progress for approval, are we allowed to update in NOVA 2.0 or do we need to create these plans again?

All plans which use funding from the FY 2020-21 allocation should be completed in SWP 2.0. There are specific legislative requirements addressed by the new workflow that apply to those funds. The "Continue Plan" option is meant to continue existing plans from the first SWP 4-year cycle which colleges wish to continue using FY 2020-21 funds.

Use of SWP Funds

31) If Criminal Justice and Fire Academies are not included in our Region's Priority Sectors, does this mean we cannot fund these programs with SWP allocations?

There are alternative methods of demonstrating labor market need beyond your region's priority sectors. A list of examples is included on the Labor Market Information tab of the SWP 2.0 Planning Workflow.

- More than 50% of students attained a living wage as evidenced within the LaunchBoard
- LMI library of curated labor market research compiled by the Centers of Excellence and Statewide and Regional Directors for Business Engagement.
- Validated employer input via Employer Survey or Employer Advisory (local or regional)
- Labor market need has been verified through a regional program approval process
- Labor market need has been verified through a regional planning process where this need was an identified regional priority
- The local biannual program review process was completed within the last two years and provides a justified labor market need to expand as well as demonstrates greater than 75% program completion and greater than 70 % employment of program graduates.
- Supply and demand data provided by the Labor Market Research Centers of Excellence

32) For SWP subsidized employment via Internships can spend down our current 3rd and 4th-year encumbrances?

Subsidized employment is not an allowable activity under SWP, paying the support staff to assist students in obtaining employment is allowable. Student workers supporting an SWP project is an allowable expense. If you are currently subsidizing internships, where the student is working for an employer and you are using SWP funds to pay the student, please terminate those agreements immediately as this is not an allowable activity. If you have additional questions regarding this please submit those to strongworkforcehelpdesk@CCCCO.edu.

33) When does the "no more than two funding cycles active at one time" start? Until the 19/20 funds end in 12/31/21?

Yes. This will take effect at the expiration of FY 2019-20 funds on 12/31/21.

- **From 1/1/21 – 6/30/21:** You will be able to use FY 19/20 and FY 20/21 funds.

- **From 7/1/21 – 12/31/21:** You will be able to use FY 19/20, FY 20/21 and FY 21/22 funds.
- **Starting on 1/1/22:** The 24-month limit on spending from each allocation year will mean that only 2 funding cycles will be available at any one time

[Click Here](#) for funding deadlines.

34) Can SWP local and/or regional funds be used to lease new space (supporting new training)? If so, could the term of the lease go across funding allocation years as long as it is included in an ongoing budget plan?

As with all CTE investments, colleges should judge the appropriateness of investment by assessing the extent to which it supports the Strong Workforce Program goals. As 888824(5) states, districts must certify that the use of Strong Workforce Program funds meets the following requirements:

- i) Increase the number of students in quality CTE courses, programs, and pathways that will achieve successful workforce outcomes
- ii) Increase the number of quality CTE courses, programs, and pathways that lead to successful workforce outcomes, or invest in new or emerging CTE courses, programs, and pathways that may become operative in subsequent years and are likely to lead to successful workforce outcomes.
- iii) Address recommendations from the Strong Workforce Task Force, including the recommended provision of student services related to career exploration, job readiness and job placement, and work-based learning.

Colleges should also take into consideration the requirement that these funds not supplant. Assuming that there is a documented strong labor market demand for the program and that the program is the sole beneficiary of the renovation, then this could be a very appropriate expenditure. If the building renovation would also benefit programs that are not CTE or are serving occupations that are not in demand, it would be appropriate to fund the renovation with SWP funds in proportion to the in-demand CTE program’s share of the overall costs and benefits of the renovation.

35) You said SWP funds can’t be used to pay for student internships or subsidized wages. To clarify, does that only refer to students working for external employers? Can colleges continue to pay students to serve as tutors, peer mentors, assistants for college help desk, etc.?

SWP funds can be used to pay student interns or subsidize wages only if those positions are in support of the administration or execution of a SWP program. For example, if you hired student workers to support your Strong Workforce Programs or if there is a tutoring component in one of your projects, that is an allowable expense.

What is not allowed is the subsidizing job placements or internships not tied to the administration or execution of your plan. For example, SWP funds should not be used to subsidize student internships with local employers or campus activities that are required by the institution. Funding activities that would have been funded by the college historically or are not specific to CTE is considered supplanting. Even though the internship may be through a SWP funded program, the work the intern will do is not in support of the program.

36) Can we spend down our current 3rd and 4th-year encumbrances through SWP subsidized employment or Internships?

Subsidized employment is not an allowable activity under SWP, paying the support staff to assist students in obtaining employment is allowable. Student workers supporting an SWP project is an allowable expense. If you are currently subsidizing internships, where the student is working for an employer and you are using SWP funds to pay the student, please terminate those agreements immediately as this is not an allowable activity. If you have additional questions regarding this please submit those to strongworkforcehelpdesk@CCCCO.edu.

37) Can a College use Strong Workforce funding to help pay faculty salaries for CTE courses that would have otherwise been dropped for low enrollment? Particularly, in essential industries. Would this be considered supplanting?

If the college is collecting apportionment for these classes then yes it is considered supplanting.

10% Limitation on “Across All Sectors”

38) If the goal is to track which sectors we are focusing on why not use a check list so that projects that reach across multiple sectors could just be made more specific?

Thank you for the suggestion. We are actively looking at refining the process to accommodate reporting requirements but better capture activities that impact multiple sectors. Expect to see updates in future system enhancements.

39) Does the 10% Across All Budget Cap apply to only regional applications, or local as well?

The 10% limit is a guideline. If you exceed 10% across all plans at your institution, your grant monitor may ask for additional details. And yes, the 10% guideline does apply to local and regional plans.

Allied Health Reporting (SB 1348)

40) Is the Allied Health Reporting section a response to SB 1348?

No this is specific to SWP legislation.

41) Do we only need to report the allied health data only if the project involves clinical site or with all health projects?

Yes. Only for projects that involve clinical sites.

42) Clinical training reporting: is this in addition to, or instead of the reporting on HWI for 1348?

SB 1348 reporting in NOVA will be in addition to reporting in the HWI SB 1348 data collection tool. Both are required to satisfy legislative reporting requirements. However, we understand the duplication of work this will require from the field and are exploring options to merge the two systems.

43) Our health programs have multiple clinical sites and students get spread out throughout the county. How do we account for that?

You will be able to enter information from multiple training sites. Legislation requires the Chancellor's Office to report the information collected by this section for each clinical training site.

Short-Term, Non-Credit, Not-for-Credit Courses

44) Will there be "incentive" funding for institutions to implement Not-for-Credit programs? Not-for-credit is not factored into our current funding formula. Non-Credit, as CDCP, is being funded, can we encourage the same for NOT for credit?

Not-for-Credit will not be involved in Round 5 of incentive funding as Not-for-Credit is not reported by college in MIS. However, the Chancellor's Office may choose to include Not-for-Credit in Round 6 of the funding formula.

45) Is the expectation that most of the SWP local and regional funding for 2020-21 address short term training or just expanding what we are already doing with SWP to include short term workforce training?

We expect colleges to judge the appropriateness of investment by assessing the extent to which it supports the Strong Workforce Program goals. In addition, we are hoping that the flexibility in the language allows colleges to assist the state in economic recovery efforts by working with employers to get people back to work.

46) How do we handle projects that are not considered short-term training?

There is a selection when you create a plan that will ask you if it will involve short-term credit, non-credit or not for credit. If this is not involved in you plan, you may select no. This will prevent the requirement to provide employer partners and training info.

47) Can you provide the difference with contract education vs. not-for-credit education? I'm not sure our employer partners would delineate the difference.

Contract Ed is a vehicle by which training and educational programs can be delivered. Contract training means that the college is being contracted to provide a training that can be for credit, non-credit, or not-for-credit.

Contract Ed is governed by different Ed Code sections and requires the program to be self-sustaining. The employer must cover the cost of the training including overhead associated with putting on the training. Contract Ed requires an employer or organization that needs to train incumbent workers or new workers to an industry.

Not- for- credit training is a training program designed by the college in partnership with an employer. The training does not have to be for credit. It can simply lead to training outcomes agreed to by the employer partner.

The ability to use Strong Workforce funds to subsidize not-for-credit training was designed to increase flexibility for colleges to work with local employers and encourage job training in light of COVID-19 impacts and to help with the state's overall economic recovery efforts that will lead to employment for individuals who participate in the training.

48) The requirements of 88821(g) (1) to (4) only include noncredit but do not include not-for-credit, however, your PPT does include both. Can you clarify?

There was an error made in the legislative memos omitting not-for-credit that will be corrected in the next cycle.

49) Will contract education be able to provide not-for-credit training?

Yes, Contract Ed is a vehicle by which training and educational programs can be delivered. Contract training means that the college is being contracted to provide a training that can be for credit, non-credit, or not-for-credit.

Contract Ed is governed by different Ed Code sections and requires the program to be self-sustaining. The employer must cover the cost of the training including overhead associated with putting on the training. Contract Ed requires an employer or organization that needs to train incumbent workers or new workers to an industry.

50) You mentioned that we can upskill workers with the not-for-credit course, so those are incumbent workers. It is confusing.

Our goal is to support the state's economic recovery efforts. In cases where incumbent workers are in jeopardy of losing their employment and training would support them in obtaining a different position with an existing employer that would be an allowable activity. In other cases working with your Workforce Boards to support getting unemployed individuals the training that leads to gainful employment where companies have made commitments to hire, SWP funds could be used to support those efforts as well.

51) Please identify which sections of the Ed Code that describes "Contract Ed" and "Not-for-Credit" for more review by colleges.

[Click here](#) for the details. Additionally you can refer to California Education Code Section 78020.

52) Will a signed contract for contract education suffice for the letter from employer if the information is embedded in the contract?

As long as the verification document is signed and includes all the necessary information, it should work. For reference, the link to the recent memo with legislative language is included in the guide."

53) What is the law regarding the need for employer letters for each project?

The law was referenced in a recent Chancellor's office [memo here](#) -

Data and Reporting

54) What does the fiscal reporting look like? Same as NOVA 1.0?

On the fiscal side of reporting, there will not be many changes with 2.0. However, there will be additional questions related to the targeted metrics and goals included in SWP 2.0 plans.

55) Thanks for the semi-annual reporting. How will budget vs. actual work? Currently if actual exceeds budget on any account code (1000,200,3000,etc), we must change the budget. Now that will require 3 approvals, not 1. That's true even if we're under budget on the project as a whole.

When plans are submitted and certified, those budgets are agreed to and finalized by multiple levels of district/regional and Chancellor's office approval. That approval then becomes the legal authorization to spend the specified funds on the specified activities. Much like a contract would need to be amended and resigned by all parties prior to changing the cost or scope, plans require similar sign off from all parties.

There is some flexibility in changing plans without unsubmitting but they are limited to non-material plan elements such as contacts or success stories.

56) There was mention of semi-annual reporting. Does that apply to \$ as well as reporting on activities and objective attainment? Currently we report spending by quarter.

Yes, you will report a narrative update on the status of the project alongside the expenditure reports in NOVA.

57) How does "job Vacancies" info differ from LMI information? Aren't they the same?

The data sources for each would be different. In section 4, the job vacancies identified are specific to each Employer Partner. The Demand information reported in LMI is tied to SOC codes and should come from the data provided by the Centers of Excellence.

58) Can other data sources be used to get to more specific data as it is with curriculum approvals in the PCAH?

There are alternative methods of demonstrating labor market need beyond your region's priority sectors. A list of examples is included on the Labor Market Information tab of the SWP 2.0 Planning Workflow.

- More than 50% of students attained a living wage as evidenced within the LaunchBoard
- LMI library of curated labor market research compiled by the Centers of Excellence and Statewide and Regional Directors for Business Engagement.
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- Supply and demand data provided by the Labor Market Research Centers of Excellence

Training Resources

59) Are presentations and videos from past webinars available?

Yes, everything is posted on [Vision Resource Center](#).

60) Will Regional Directors be able to get some NOVA training so we can complete our Renewals, as well as the new reporting?

Please look through the training resources on the [Vision Resource Center](#) and the [NOVA YouTube channel](#).

If your institution would like to request additional training, submit a NOVA help desk request and your monitor will work with you to set it up.