

California Apprenticeship Initiative New and Innovative Grant (CAI N&I)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. In previous years, applicants could download a template of the application and then upload it once completed. Is this an option for the current set of grants?**

Answer: This is not an option currently.

- 2. Are there any recommendations you can make regarding best practices (activities and outcomes) that you would like to see in a regional consortium Planning Grant?**

Answer: Each region is unique, and the ultimate goal is to see more registered apprenticeships. Activities that will lead to the development and registration of new and innovative apprenticeship programs that are achievable during the grant period would be ideal. It is also important for grantees to ensure long-term sustainability for their programs.

- 3. Can you have primary and secondary occupations for each grant type?**

Answer: You must select one primary occupation for scoring purposes. The grant may support apprenticeship program development of any number of occupations.

- 4. How does a college determine how much to allocate to instructional expenses?**

Answer: The cost of instruction will vary from institution to institution. The costs should factor the hourly rate that includes salary and benefits for the actual instruction.

- 5. Can LEAs partner with relevant nonprofits on the planning grants? (Understood that the LEA would be the applicant)**

Answer: The LEAs may contract with outside partners to complete grant activities following their institutions' subcontracting requirements. All activities are subject to the Chancellor's Office for approval through grant work plans.

- 6. We are a K12 LEA. How might we partner with an outside nonprofit as a collaborator?**

Answer: LEAs may subcontract with an outside partner provided they adhere to their institution's subcontracting requirements.

- 7. Is there a scenario where one of the classes could be offered in a California Community College (CCC) and other coursework happening at a California State University (CSU)? I have a CSU campus interested in aligning on a program that has an introductory class offered at a CCC.**

Answer: Yes. The LEAs may contract with outside organizations to complete grant activities following their institutions' subcontracting requirements.

- 8. Is there a list of allowable expenditures for each of the available grants? Are admin/indirect costs allowed (if so, at what percentage)? Are employer incentives allowed? Are any expenses specifically not allowed?**

Answer: Grant funds are allowed to be expended to support the purposes included in the RFA, to the extent that expenditures are allocable to grant objectives, are necessary, and are not supplanting other funding sources. Grant funds may not be used to pay apprentices or pre-apprentices (wages) while they are receiving related and supplemental instruction, or while they are receiving on-the-job training. Grant funds may not be used as a gift of public funds—for example, non-disposable supplies and materials purchased with grant funds may not be given to apprentices or pre-apprentices. Non-disposable supplies and materials may be issued to apprentices and pre-apprentices for their use during the training program but must be returned to the program. Indirect costs may not exceed 4% of the overall direct costs. Please see [this document](#) for a detailed list of allowable expenditures.

- 9. If there will be in kind contributions, can/should those be specified, and a dollar value assigned?**

Answer: Activities not-at-all funded by grant dollars should not be included in the application. However, activities may be partially funded by grant dollars. In which case, applications should only include the portion of the cost of the activity that will be funded by the grant in the application.

- 10. For a registered apprenticeship, can the employer hire their own employee (for example a medical assistant) to cover the additional training costs of moving them into a more advanced occupation (e.g. a registered nurse)?**

Answer: Current employees may participate in apprenticeship programs, and receive training funded by grant dollars, to the extent current employees are eligible to participate in the apprenticeship program.

- 11. If a program is in the process of having its standards approved, or needs to develop standards, can it still apply for the Implementation grant?**

Answer: Yes. However, please keep timelines in mind to ensure the number of registered apprentices committed in the application is realistic and achievable.

12. How many grants can an eligible institution apply for? We have a pre-apprenticeship grant and would like to apply for implementation funding.

Answer: Entities may apply for any number of grants—multiple implementation, multiple expansion, or any mix—however, an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship occupation may only be supported by one CAI grant at a time and may only be included in one CAI application per application window. If a lead LEA manages/plans to manage multiple occupations and/or programs, the lead LEA may choose to combine occupations and programs within applications (assuming they are funding the same purpose) or split them between applications.

The purpose of the Implementation grants is to start a pre-apprenticeship or an apprenticeship program/new occupation within a program. Consequently, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program occupations that have already received a CAI implementation grant in past years to support its start-up may not be included in another implementation grant. They may apply for an expansion grant.

13. Do we qualify as a nonprofit organization?

Answer: No, these are Proposition 98 funds and therefore only a California Community College or K-12 LEA partner for the program is eligible to apply for these funds.

14. Are independent charter schools eligible for applicants for a California Apprenticeship Initiative New and Innovative Grant?

Answer: The lead LEA partner for the program is required to submit the application. If that is an independent charter school, it should identify the K12 district or county office of education (COE) it generally falls within when opening the application but use its own contact information as appropriate within the Details, Contacts, and Grant Agreement Information sections/sub-section. Please start the application title with the name of the charter school.

15. Are adult schools able to apply?

Answer: The lead LEA partner for the program is required to submit the application. If that is an adult school, it should identify the K12 district or the COE it generally falls within when opening the application but use its own contact information as appropriate within the Details, Contacts, and Grant Agreement Information sections/sub section. Please start the application title with the name of the adult school.

16. If an adult school seeks to develop a pre apprenticeship class that is a pathway to the local college registered apprenticeship program, should we co-apply or complete a planning grant application on our own?

Answer: Either option is fine.

17. Do existing US DOL registered programs count for either the implementation grant or expansion grant or only those already DAS approved?

Answer: Programs must be DAS registered.

18. If we are a district with multiple colleges that want to collaborate on an apprenticeship program, does one college have to be the lead? Or do they each have to apply separately?

Answer: The lead LEA should apply for the grant and include other entities as partners.

19. My college is not registered with DAS but our third-party intermediary/employer partner is, is my college still eligible to apply for the implementation grant, or do we have to submit for DAS registration?

Answer: Yes, as long as the program is approved by the DAS.

20. Is it possible to apply for both an Implementation and Expansion grant in order to register for an apprenticeship and implement?

Answer: A single LEA cannot apply for multiple grants that support the same occupation at the same LEA.

21. Who can apply?

Answer: Please see the eligible entities in the RFA.

22. We are a sponsor/employer on a previously awarded CAI pre-apprenticeship grant that includes our IT Helpdesk non-traditional apprenticeship program. We are looking to work with a new LEA to apply for an expansion grant for this apprenticeship program, which has not been funded by CAI in the past. Is this permissible?

Answer: In this circumstance, the new lead LEA would be eligible to apply for an implementation grant to support the costs of bringing the program to its campus(es).

23. Since we are a private post-secondary institution (approved by the California Bureau for Private Post-Secondary Education), are we eligible to participate in this program? Or could we partner with a Community College as an education partner?

Answer: Only Community Colleges and K-12 LEA's eligible to receive proposition 98 funds are eligible to apply.

24. What would be qualifiers of whether a DAS registered program should be under Program Implementation or Expansion?

Answer: Please see the RFA which describes the purposes that the Implementation grant and Expansion grants are meant to address. Please also review the guidance and objectives included within the apprenticeship implementation and apprenticeship expansion purpose applications in NOVA. Please select the grant purpose that aligns with your stage of program development and the activities you plan to support.

25. We are UCR University Extension and have an H1-B Closing the Skills Gap Grant. We are in the final evaluation period to become DAS registered as well. What should we select for "Lead Institution Type" if we are a University Extension?

Answer: Please work with a K-12 LEA or California Community College to apply for the grant.

26. Can pre-apprenticeships apply for an expansion grant?

Answer: No, not at this time.

27. Can employment occur out of state, or online/remote? Does the Apprenticeship Program have to be in person, or can it be online/virtual?

Answer: Programs and employer circumstances must meet DAS standards and requirements in order to be eligible to be supported by a CAI grant.

28. The application appears to be written to specify metrics a college would accomplish. For a regional consortium wanting to apply, would/could those metrics be completely different than those referenced or would the consortium list those outcomes which are called out in the application for its partner colleges that would achieve them as a result of the consortium's services/support?

Answer: The consortium lead applicant is responsible for ensuring it's subgrantees (partner colleges) meet the outcomes stated in the grant application. Those partner colleges may not also apply for planning grants to support the same work. Outcomes may not overlap between a regional consortium grant and a college/district grant.

29. If a program finds that they are unable to meet the 80% pre-apprenticeship transition or completion, will the program lose its funding or need to return funding?

Answer: Funding may be withheld if outcomes are not achieved. Grantees who fail to meet the contracted outcomes may be required to return funds. The Chancellor's Office will work with grantees to ensure that required outcomes are achieved on a case-by-case basis, if needed.

30. For a registered apprenticeship, may a current employee be counted towards the required number of registered apprentices?

Answer: Current employees may participate in apprenticeship programs, and be counted towards grant outcomes, provided the current occupation that the employee is in is not the same occupation that the employee is training in during the apprenticeship program. There must be a salary increase to the employee upon completion of the training program to count as an apprenticeship.

31. Can programs use other Labor Market Information (LMI) sources besides the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE LMR) to complete the application?

Answer: No. It is important that all application use the same data source so that scoring is standard and fair.

32. What if there are not any COE LMR reports, or no recent ones, or ones for all occupations the apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship will cover?

Answer: You can find the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research Occupations Projections Demand Tool at the bottom of this web page: <https://coeccc.net/our-resources/>. Please only include data for the program's primary occupation. If the specific occupation is not included in the tool, please provide data for the most relevant occupation. If there is not a relevant occupation, you may request a report from the COE LMR by connecting with your Regional Consortium Chair for assistance in making the request to the local Center of Excellence.

33. If we see that the LMI data is not telling the whole story for an occupation in a specific geographic area. for example, we know some specific demand that LMI is not capturing, can or should we elaborate after citing the LMI data?

Answer: The LMI data will be used for grant scoring purposes. Please feel free to provide applicable details within the appropriate grant narrative sections.

34. If you miss a CAI RFA deadline, when will you be able to apply again?

Answer: Future application rounds are dependent on the availability of grant funds. If another round opens, information will be posted in a WEDD Memo once determined.

35. If we move through the 2 types of grants (implementation, expansion), are there funds available after that to sustain the program?

Answer: Education Code establishes that CAI funds are meant to create new apprenticeship opportunities. There are other funding sources, such as RSI reimbursement and FTES apportionment, which may support programs after the use of CAI funds. Please review the [funding matrix](#) for additional funding opportunities.

36. Regional Occupational Programs (ROPs) are not listed as a lead institution type in NOVA, so I am unsure how to create an application.

Answer: The lead LEA partner for the program is required to submit the application. If that is an ROP, it should identify the K12 district or COE it generally falls within when opening the application but use its own contact information as appropriate within the Details, Contacts, and Grant Agreement Information sections/sub section. Please start the application title with the name of the ROP.

37. What is the difference between a new program and a new occupation?

Answer: An apprenticeship program may serve multiple occupations. A new program would involve creating a new joint apprenticeship training committee (JATC) or similar committee; a new occupation would be registered under an already existing DAS registered program. Implementation grants are meant to address both new programs and new occupations within programs.

38. What are the requirements to register a pre-apprenticeship with DAS?

Answer: Please reach out to a DAS consultant for guidance.

39. How do I access a recording of the Bidders Conference?

Answer: Please visit [California Apprenticeship Initiative | California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office](#).

40. Please advise how to access and which year wage scale we should be using from ETP.

Answer: Please visit [Trainee Wages | Employment Training Panel](#)

41. Are tuition and stipends for apprentices an allowable use of funds?

Answer: Grant funds may NOT be used to pay apprentices or pre-apprentices wages while they are receiving RSI or on-the-job training. Grant funds may not be used to pay apprentices or pre-apprentices (wages) while they are receiving related and supplemental instruction, or while they are receiving on-the-job training. Please see this document for a detailed list of allowable expenditures.

42. Can UC/CSUs and/or private universities be paid apprentice tuition using these funds?

Answer: The LEAs may contract with outside organizations to complete grant activities following their institutions' subcontracting requirements. A full list of allowable expenditures can be found here: <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/allowable-exped-cai-doc-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=111A6529B63BAA30C89471B7FF362D7D5316676B>

43. For pre-apprenticeship implementation grants, are nonprofits eligible to apply as the lead applicant?

Answer: No, these are Proposition 98 funds and therefore only a California community college or K-12 LEA partner for the program is eligible to apply for these funds.

44. Follow-up question:

So, a nonprofit could work with a K-12 school and apply?

Answer: Yes, a nonprofit can partner with a K-12 LEA, and the LEA can apply as the lead. Nonprofits just cannot serve as the applicant themselves.

45. We are a high school creating an apprenticeship on our site for community college students to serve as teaching aides. So, we're a LEA but for the purposes of this grant we're the employer. Are we eligible to apply for this round of CAI? If so, can we take the lead or do we need to apply in consortium with the local community college and/or intermediary placement organization?

Answer: Since you will be collaborating with a CCD, it will be up to you to decide who will be the lead applicant. In this case, it is permitted for the LEA to serve as the employer.

46. Do you anticipate any future CAI grants supporting Construction apprenticeship expansion in the future?

Answer: Not at this time.

47. What is the allowable indirect cost rate?

Answer: Indirect costs may not exceed 4% of the overall direct costs.

48. Can you define pre-apprenticeship?

Answer: California Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) registered Pre-apprenticeship programs prepare individuals to enter and succeed in DAS Registered Apprenticeship programs. A DAS registered Pre-Apprentice program must be formally associated with at least one DAS Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor. Together, they expand the participant's career pathway opportunities with industry-based training coupled with classroom instruction.

49. We applied for CAI funds last FY and were not awarded because we had previously received CAI funds. Will that be the case again for this RFA?

Answer: If you did receive Implementation CAI funds, you would not be able to apply for another implementation grant; however, you could apply for an expansion grant.

50. We applied for CAI funds last FY and were not awarded because we had previously received CAI funds. Will that be the case again for this RFA?

Answer: If you did receive Implementation Cai funds, you would not be able to apply for another implementation grant; however, you could apply for an expansion grant.

51. Can we apply for CAI funds if our program is awaiting DAS approval? The program is Paramedic and has been with DAS for some time now.

Answer: Yes. However, please keep timelines in mind to ensure the number of registered apprentices committed in the application is realistic and achievable.

52. Can the applicant also be the employer partner providing a letter of commitment?

Answer: Yes, the LEA may also employ apprentices for the apprenticeship program.

53. Can an entity apply for a pre-apprenticeship implementation grant if it will be linked to an existing registered apprenticeship, but the pre-apprenticeship is not developed yet. The language in the RFA is confusing.

Answer: Yes. An entity may apply for a pre-apprenticeship implementation grant even if the pre-apprenticeship is not yet developed.

54. Is there a per pre-apprentice cost? In the past, this was LESS than the apprentice number.

Answer: The maximum cost per pre-apprentice cannot exceed \$2,500.

55. If you are a registered pre-apprenticeship and your RAP already receives CAI funding, does that make you ineligible for funding?

Answer: An apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship occupation may only be supported by one CAI grant at a time and may only be included in one CAI application per application window.

56. What do you mean staff salaries are allowed? In addition to their FTE salary?

Answer: You may charge a portion of an employee's existing salary and benefits to the grant, based on the percentage of time they spend on grant activities

57. Do we have to have an existing apprenticeship program or pre for the implementation grant or can this be used to create and register a new one in partnership with Launch?

Answer: No, you do not need to have an existing program. Implementation grants are intended to support start-up and the development and registration of new apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs.

58. Can you clarify the eligible activities for planning and program development costs? The RFP states that Implementation grants are "to be used to implement a recently DAS-registered pre-apprenticeship program or apprenticeship program."

Answer: The planning and program development costs include administrative costs which set up a program (i.e. curricula development, program standards development, etc.).

59. Does LAUNCH work with union-based apprenticeships?

Answer: Yes - Example is SEIU

60. Can you give clarification on the statement "priority and emerging industry sectors or areas in which apprenticeship training is not fully established or does not exist." What are the priority sectors?

Answer: The CAI grant may support non-traditional programs in sectors outside of the building, construction, and fire trades. Please work with the Centers of Excellence to retrieve labor market demand information pertinent to your application.

61. Can funds be used to support tuition for apprentices at a community college? And for a UC or CSU?

Answer: The LEAs may contract with outside organizations to complete grant activities following their institutions' subcontracting requirements. A full list of allowable expenditures can be found here: <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/allowable-exped-cai-doc-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=111A6529B63BAA30C89471B7FF362D7D5316676B>

62. Is there a cost to partner with LAUNCH as an LEA?

Answer: There is no cost for LAUNCH to sponsor an LEA's program at this time as the Chancellor's Office has entered into a formal agreement with them to support the field.

63. What is the best format to name your application?

Answer: This would be at the discretion of the lead applicant.

64. If an applicant has a COYA grant, can they also apply for CAI?

Answer: Yes, as long as multiple funding sources do not cover the same expenditures.

65. If we are a registered apprenticeship with one LEA can we apply with a different LEA for expansion?

Answer: Please consult with the DAS regarding LEA approval and reflection in the approved standards.

66. The RFA states multiple occupations are allowed with a primary apprenticeship designated. However, it also states later on that only one apprenticeship is allowed per application. How do we reconcile this conflicting language? We were told that we could submit for multiple occupations this time around and have multiple employers lined up expecting to start hiring in multiple job openings for their companies. Example: Manufacturer (mechatronics) needs accounting office positions filled (bookkeeper, clerk, accountant)

Answer: Multiple occupation codes may be included in the application, as long as the primary apprenticeship program is identified.

67. Is there a max allowable in the 5000 category?

Answer: No.

68. Can a single LEA apply for the apprenticeship and implementation grant for the same occupation? We are trying to expand an apprenticeship program that was registered not through CAI.

Answer: We would recommend applying for both grants, the implementation and expansion.

69. Can we apply for an implementation grant, whether pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship, that we are designing and getting ready to register in partnership with LAUNCH?

Answer: Yes.

70. Can we apply for a pre-apprenticeship Implementation grant; and an expansion grant for apprenticeship program?

Answer: Yes, you may apply for a pre-apprenticeship implementation grant and an apprenticeship expansion grant. The implementation restriction only applies within the same grant type, so applying for pre-apprenticeship implementation and apprenticeship expansion is allowable.

71. Are all administrative costs considered indirect costs, and thus subject to the 4% cap?

Answer: Indirect costs are costs incurred by an organization that are not readily identifiable with a particular project or program but are nevertheless necessary to the operation of the organization and the performance of its programs.

72. Does an apprenticeship have to be newly approved in order to apply for an implementation grant?

Answer: There is not a time duration in which a program would have had to receive approval to be eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

73. Do we need to submit the CLNA with our application? If so, what data do we submit for a pre-apprenticeship implementation grant?

Answer: The purpose of the CLNA is to better align labor market information, student access and success data, and program offerings to help local recipients make funding and

programmatic decisions based on the real-world needs of students, families, employers and communities. A CAI Pre-Apprenticeship Implementation Grant application should include a CLNA that demonstrates strong alignment with current labor market demand. This assessment should identify priority industries and occupations in the region, using reliable labor market data to show where workforce gaps, projected growth, or skill shortages exist. It should also connect these findings to the proposed pre-apprenticeship program's design—explaining how the curriculum, target populations, employer partners, and intended apprenticeship pathways directly respond to documented local needs. When considering which data to include, please consider the target population for the program included in the application as well.

74. Can CAI funds be allocated toward modest wage subsidies for apprentices and pre-apprentices? Providing partial wage support would reduce the financial burden on small- and medium-sized employers, strengthening participation and the long-term sustainability of the apprenticeship program. We have a CAI grant with funding ending on 6/30/2025. Can we apply for an expansion grant to serve more apprentices (another cohort) in the same way?

Answer: No. CAI funds cannot be used for wage subsidies of any kind for apprentices or pre-apprentices.

75. The lead applicant has to be a CCD or COE? My organization has a DAS planning grant, and it's in the process of approval. However, we are a 501c3, do we need to start a new apprenticeship program with a LEA or CCD?

Answer: Since this grant is using Prop 98 funds, the lead applicant needs to be a LEA or CCD. You could partner with an LEA, and they could be the LEA for the program.

76. Would a 10% increase in apprentices served qualify as an expansion?

Answer: Expansion grants are intended to support programs which have already received implementation funding and are looking to continue building their program's capacity. If this applies to you, you may apply for the expansion grant and indicate the proposed growth rate.

77. Since tuition is not charged - if we have apprentices in other states - how can we NOT charge tuition for those apprentices?

Answer: Per California Education Code, no apprentice student should be charged tuition fees for their apprenticeship courses, regardless of residency. Please work with your local Admissions and Records Department to address this matter.

78. Our Implementation grant ends 6/30/26 can we still apply for an expansion grant?

Answer: Yes, as the performance periods will not overlap.

79. Can an apprenticeship that received a CAI expansion grant before applying again under this RFA?

Answer: No.

80. I am confused by the language in the RFA. Does the pre-apprenticeship have to be developed, or can it be in development?

Answer: It can be in development.

81. If we have multiple occupations at different stages i.e. one ready for expansion and one needing implementation. Can we submit two separate applications?

Answer: Yes. An LEA may submit multiple CAI applications in the same cycle for different occupations. The only restriction is that each occupation can appear in only one application, so an implementation application for one occupation and an expansion application for another is allowed.

82. Can funds be used to support employer mentor wages? Can it be used to help employers meet minimum wage requirements for apprentices? Can funds be used to provide direct aid to the apprentices?

Answer: Program staffing may be included as an expenditure, not to compensate for apprentices' wages. Student support services may also be funded using the grant.

83. Can an apprenticeship that received a CAI expansion grant before applying again under this RFA?

Answer: No.

84. CAI can't be used to pay for pre-apprentice stipends, correct?

Answer: That is correct. Please disregard any previous guidance which may have been received suggesting pre-apprentices' stipends are a permitted expenditure. Inclusion of this expenditure in the application budget will not count against the applicant as a result of potential initial misguidance. However, once awarded, grantees will be asked to ensure their budget is updated to reflect this updated guidance.

85. If we have a CAI implementation grant for an apprenticeship program for a specific occupation, are we eligible to apply for a CAI implementation pre-apprenticeship grant to connect to that apprentice occupation?

Answer: Yes.

86. What if the LEA does not have a registered apprenticeship yet, but the Non-profit has the RA or is in the process of being approved through DAS? Does the LEA have to already be in an approved RA?

Answer: The program standards don't have to be fully approved to apply for the implementation grant. If they are an approved LEA through DAS or pending approval, they can partner with a non-profit.

87. If there is a 3-month overlap of an existing CAI grant and a new grant, could we delay start of the new CAI grant?

Answer: No, but you may end your existing grant early if you meet your grant deliverables early.

88. Is a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) required?

Answer: The CLNA document was intended for applicants to provide LMI data, but we are receiving multiple inquiries which have caused some confusion among applicants. As a result, we've made the CLNA optional and will still require the LMI data pertinent to the application questions, which may be uploaded as supporting documentation.