EWD Statewide Center and Regional Centers of Excellence Request for Application Frequently Asked Questions

EWD State Center and Regional COE RFA FAQ – 8/31/2023

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

General Questions

1. Who's eligible to apply?

The RFAs are open to the following organizations:
* California community colleges as defined by the California Education Code;
* Public or private non-profit agencies;
* Community-based or faith-based organizations focused on workforce education and training and/or economic development missions;
* Non-profit institutions not described above that have the ability to provide leadership to the Regional Centers of Excellence and elevate their delivery of regional student-centered LMI and career mobility analyses, technical assistance, network coordination, needs assessment services for Bachelor's Degree Programs, and continuous improvement planning;
* Partnership between an employer and an entity described above that has demonstrated effectiveness in the services required for funding; and
* Economic development agencies or development corporations that are local or regional.
* A nonprofit organization that meets the requirements of this RFA must provide verifiable evidence of its recognition by the California Secretary of State as a nonprofit, or other verifiable documentation, such as Internal Revenue Service certification (as applicable), either as an attachment to its response or prior to being awarded a grant.

The preferred Community College applicant will collaborate and partner with at least one external organization to fulfill all the requirements of this RFA. The preferred non community college applicant will collaborate and partner with at least one community college in the development of their proposal.

2. **When is the application due?**

The complete application, including any required forms and supporting documentations, must be submitted via the Chancellor's Office NOVA system on or before **September 11, 2023, by 5:00 PM PDT**, at which time the application system will close. No other forms of submission will be accepted. Incomplete and late applications will not be accepted.

3. **Where can I find assistance with NOVA?**

Applicants can use one of the following links below to assist them in their application process:

NOVA Resources

- New to NOVA? Request an account at https://nova.cccco.edu/request-access
- For additional NOVA questions, utilize the helpdesk at https://nova.cccco.edu/help
   - If you don't have access to the NOVA Nursing Enrollment application, use the help desk to request permission.
- NOVA Program Training video library: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbnKxCuUjTq1eKNWZRPpbsA

4. **Where can I find a copy of the PowerPoint for both the Bidder's Conference and NOVA application presentation?**

All documents and PowerPoint presentations can be found on EWD RFA website: https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/WEDD-RFA/EWD-RFA-2023-24

5. **What is the performance period?**

The grant duration for both RFAs is for five years (60 months), and is expected to begin January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2028. The performance period will use a phased approach.

Phase 1 activities and scope of work proposed is for 36 months (Year 1-3). Phase 1 as a performance period includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities.

Phase 2 activities and scope of work proposed is for 24 months (Year 4-5). Phase 2 as a performance period includes expansion of services as outlined in this RFA in Goals, Expectations, Roles, and Functions of Career Mobility Accelerator Center.

Note: To be granted into Phase 2, awardees for both RFAs will be evaluated in Year 3. Movement into Phase 2 will only be upon satisfactory performance, and achievement of outcomes in Phase 1. The evaluation will be conducted by the Chancellor's Office.

6. **Is there a match requirement?**

There is a 25 percent match requirement for these funds.

There are two kinds of cost sharing permitted for this application: cash and in-kind.

7. Can Strong Workforce Program (SWP) funds be used in the match requirement?

Yes, SWP funds may be utilized to meet the 25 percent match requirement. It is important to know that match dollars must be under the direct control of the centers leadership in order to claim them as match. For in kind or cash match, (if using staff) must either directly report to the center leadership or a transfer of regional dollars to the center must be documented for the explicit use by the center to achieve the outcomes listed in the RFA.

8. Can indirect cost be charged to these funds?

Yes. Indirect costs should not exceed 4 percent and should be calculated as follows:
- Grant Amount ÷ 1.04 = Grant Operating Budget × 4 percent = Indirect Costs

9. How is the funding dispersed?

<u>State Center:</u>
One grant in the amount of $5,000,000 will be awarded. Funds will be distributed annually in the amount of $1,000,000 with an 80 percent advanced allocation and 20 percent reimbursement.

<u>Regional Centers of Excellence:</u>
Eight grants in the amount of $4,000,000 each will be awarded. Funds will be distributed annually in the amount of $800,000 per grantee with an 80 percent advanced allocation and 20 percent reimbursement.

10. Reporting requirements

The grantee is required to submit regular reporting, including an end-of-project final report in the NOVA system by **February 28, 2029**. The required report will demonstrate the grantee provided program deliverables in pursuant to the grant agreement.

Phase 1: Jan. 2024 – Dec. 2026 (36 months) NOVA Reporting Dates

Date	Details
July 31, 2024	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024.
January 31, 2025	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.
July 31, 2025	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of January 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025.
January 31, 2026	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of July 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.
July 31, 2026	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of January 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026.
January 31, 2027	End of Term Report covering Phase 1 (Years 1-3).

Phase 2: Jan. 2026 – Dec. 2028 (24 months) NOVA Reporting Dates

Date	Details
July 31, 2027	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of January 1, 2027, through June 30, 2027.
January 31, 2028	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of July 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027.
July 31, 2028	Expenditure and Progress Report due covering the period of January 1, 2028, through June 30, 2028.
January 31, 2029	Progress Report due covering the period of July 1, 2028, through December 31, 2028. **Note:** The performance period of July 1, 2028, through December 31, 2028, will focus on grant close out activities.
February 28, 2029	End of Term Report covering Phase 2 (Years 4-5).

11. **What is the definition of "career mobility"?**

"Career mobility" means strategic efforts that aligns, communicates, and intentionally connect the system's learning infrastructure to prepare and maximize the talents and abilities of all students while they are with the college. This assumes a role for the system for upskilling and reskilling students through-out their working careers. Career mobility fundamentally recenters the system on activating college learning and supports across the student learning journey from enrollment, to completion, to career and economic mobility in the labor market.

12. **For Regional COE applicants: Who are the "regional stakeholder leadership" in this statement: "Provide support for regional stakeholder leadership growth through technical assistance and training that can help college and local industry leaders understand and use data in support of equity"?**

The term "**Regional**" pertains to the specific area served by the Regional COE. Please refer to this map for information on the eight designated regions at https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/ewd-regional-sector-investments.

"**Stakeholder leadership**" refers to the leadership roles held by stakeholders within the geographical region being served. In the Request for Application (RFA), applicants are required to submit their workplan with strategies that involve active engagement with at least five categories of essential stakeholders. These categories encompass:

- All community colleges within the region.
- Employers and representatives from various industries.
- Regional or local economic development agencies.
- The public workforce system.
- Philanthropic organizations, business-affiliated and other nonprofit entities, community-based organizations, and labor associations.
- Business and industry partners.

As such, "**regional stakeholder leadership**" signifies the leadership ensemble of stakeholders that the Regional COEs intend to involve.

13. **For Regional COE applicants: Who are the "communities" mentioned in the "Support communities accomplish their goals related to community college student retention, completion, and transition to the workforce" deliverable?**

Each of the 8 EWD regions is comprised of sub regions and communities within those 8 regions. Understanding the diverse needs of the surrounding communities in a college's service area is important to providing the appropriate services for the members of that community and the region as a whole. This includes understanding the population demographics, the services available in the region to serve diverse needs of current and future students and the employers in the region. Understanding the community and its needs, helps colleges understand how they are or are not contributing to perpetuating a cycle of poverty. Having a greater understanding of the community helps colleges diversify their offerings to ensure that their students have access to educational opportunities that lift them out of poverty and to support local economic development ecosystems to ensure that new employers or entrepreneurs are recruited to or seeded within the communities they serve.

We want colleges to understand that in demand does not always mean high wage in a region and if we are only funneling students into "in-demand" occupations in a region, we may inadvertently be contributing to a cycle of poverty in that region. To change this, colleges need to have a larger understanding of the communities that they serve so they can disrupt these inequities.

14. **Are applicants expected to include a technology platform to gather the appropriate data and connect students to resources?**

There is no expectation that a technology platform will be used. Regional COEs must work with colleges in their regions to ensure that the colleges have the information needed to serve students well. Building strong partnerships with the colleges in the regions is required to ensure that the information and resources the COE has are shared region wide to build greater capacity within the colleges to serve students.

15. **Can applicants apply to work with any of the consortiums?**

No. The consortium must be in the region that the applicant is applying for.

16. **Do you have to specify which consortium you have expertise to work with?**

While expertise would be good to mention, please keep in mind that applicants will need to work with the consortiums located within the region they are applying for.

17. **Will each consortium evaluate the proposals and make the selection?**

No, the Chancellor's Office will review and evaluate the submitted applications using a review committee and the metrics mentioned in RFA under Application Criteria section.

18. **Is there an opportunity for a single proposal to be selected by multiple consortiums?**

No, because the Chancellor's Office is evaluating the applications, not the consortium. Only one applicant will be awarded in each region.

19. **Should the provider have experience with Registered Apprenticeships?**

Applicants are not required to have experience with Registered Apprenticeships.

20. **Is there an expectation that they will help contribute to the PIRL?**

No, this is not a requirement for this funding. The grant dollars for the Statewide Center and Regional COE are State funded so the PIRL does not apply.

21. **Do the colleges have access to LMI data or will the provider be expected to provide licenses?**

The Regional COEs are being positioned as the key resource for LMI data and support to the colleges in a region. A college may or may not have access to their own LMI data. There is an expectation that the Regional COE will be the provider for LMI and community data contextualized for use by the colleges to establish a standard way colleges receive information with relevant analysis provided for use by the colleges.

22. **What expectation is there for providers to use existing California workforce tools?**

There is an expectation that the Regional COE's will be the regional support to colleges and provide technical assistance for the use of the tools and the primary resource that colleges go to when they have needs related to the tools. Applicants are strongly encouraged to be familiar with California workforce tools but is not required.