



California Community Colleges

SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY: Using Federal Grants and Resources (Nov. 2024)

This [webinar](#) focused on demystifying federal advocacy, covering federal grant opportunities and other options for collaboration with federal officials and agencies to support the work of our colleges. It also included an update on CCCApply. Guest presenters included Michele Beyer from the Foundation for CCC, Laura Metune from Lake Tahoe Community College, and Annie Koruga from the Student Senate for CCC.

How Does the Chancellor's Office Engage at the Federal Level?

- The CCCCO leads [direct advocacy](#) with federal officials around CCC interests. Four current priorities include:
 - Creating a federal-state partnership to focus on affordability.
 - Supporting the needs of diverse students (e.g., veterans, older adults).
 - Career and workforce investments (e.g., WIOA, apprenticeship).
 - Institutional support and stability for colleges serving underrepresented students (e.g., HSIs and tribal colleges).
- Government Affairs staff aim to help colleges learn about federal grant opportunities and resources. They assist colleges to engage in partnerships with federal agencies involved in education, health, energy and other issues related to college missions and programs. Examples of opportunities related to [workforce education](#) include the Department of Education's [Perkins V](#) state grants for career education; [High School Equivalency Program](#) awards to help migrant and seasonal farm workers complete high school; [Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education](#) grants for basic needs and student success programs; and [Minority Science and Engineering Improvement](#) grants for greater access to STEM programs.
- The CCCCO encourages college leaders to get to know their federal congressional representatives in order to help them understand the issues and challenges colleges are facing and their needs for support from the federal government.

What Resources Help Colleges Leverage Federal Resources?

- Some colleges partner with [FoundationCCC](#).
 - FCCC staff have expertise in securing and managing philanthropic, corporate, and government grants. FCCC aims to be a partner to colleges in using grants to achieve Vision 2030 goals, often bringing in grants to pilot something new that could be brought to scale across the system.

- The [California Resilient Careers in Forestry](#) is an example of a collaborative college effort to access federal funding to promote forestry and fire safety programs and support economic and climate resiliency across the state. FCCC can serve as a central convener and grant manager across multiple colleges, regions, industries, and stakeholders on collaborative grants.
- Some colleges have in-house grant support.
 - Lake Tahoe Community College created an administrator position to diversify funding to support robust services. The [administrator](#) identifies opportunities that match college priorities and uses outside grant writers or internal teams to develop competitive proposals. Total grant funding to the college increased from about \$2 million in the year prior to creation of the position (2019-20) to about \$5 million over the last couple of years.
 - Key recommendations for colleges from LTCC include:
 - Get a good understanding of college needs, priorities, and programs by meeting with campus leaders, and share those with local foundations and funders who can help identify opportunities.
 - Review prior grant applications, including all reviewer comments.
 - Closely monitor grant prospects (e.g., grants.gov and grants.ca.gov along with local foundation websites) and identify earmark opportunities through Congressional member websites.
 - Read the full grant notice to ensure you understand its requirements and competitive preference priorities. Don't chase funding opportunities that are not clearly aligned to college priorities.
 - Build a cross functional team and identify a grant writer who can ensure your proposal is aligned to all components of the RFP. Partner with institutional effectiveness around data requirements.
 - Keep partners and funders informed of both successes and setbacks.

What is Happening with the Reimagination of CCCApply?

- The goal of the [project](#) is to reshape the application system to make it a more accessible, more streamlined, and simpler process for students.
- Beginning in early 2023, working groups gathered and analyzed information from stakeholders and students on the challenges with the current system. Since early 2024, a task force has worked on developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a technology vendor that reflects a vision and roadmap for a reimagined system.
- An 11-member RFP review committee, with input from an extended committee of about 75 CCC stakeholders and a large advisory committee of external stakeholders, will evaluate proposals. Recruitment for the committees is ongoing.
- A vendor will be selected by March 2025, with implementation of the new system occurring in 2025-26 (including a pilot program for up to 15 districts in Feb. 2026).