



California Community Colleges

Request for Application

California Apprenticeship Initiative New and Innovative Grant Program Fiscal Year 2025-26 Request for Applications

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Information Details

Funding Years	2025-26
Release Date	Nov. 14, 2025
Initial Application Deadline	Jan. 30, 2026, at 5 p.m.
Funding Source	California Apprenticeship Initiative New and Innovative Grant Program
Bidders' Conference	Please visit the CCCCO CAI webpage for information regarding the bidders' conference.

The FY25-26 CAI grant applications may be accessed following the links below:

[Apprenticeship Implementation Grant](#)

[Pre-Apprenticeship Implementation Grant](#)

[Apprenticeship Expansion Grant](#)

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INTRODUCTION

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 73 districts and 116 colleges serving more than 2.1 million students per year. California community colleges provide college and career education to all in achieving education and employment pathways through workforce training, certificates, and degrees; transfer to four-year universities; and basic skills education in English and math. As the state's engine for social and economic mobility, California Community Colleges support Vision 2030, a strategic plan designed to improve student success outcomes, increase transfer rates, and eliminate achievement gaps.

The Workforce and Economic Development Division (WEDD) is responsible for managing a portfolio of programs to support community colleges in advancing economic growth and the global competitiveness of the State of California and to prepare California's workforce for the 21st century. WEDD oversees several streams of state and federal funds, including Perkins V: Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, Strong Workforce Program (SWP), K12 Strong Workforce Program, Economic and Workforce Development (EWD), California Adult Education Program, California Apprenticeship Initiative, and Nursing Program Support, among others. Through these funds, WEDD aims to support colleges in closing the skills, employment and equity gaps, to enable wage and employment progression, to foster student success and completion, and to prepare students for the future of work.

Workforce and Job Recovery with Equity

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, in support of the state's efforts, is focused on a broad-based approach to post-pandemic workforce recovery. The recovery efforts target regional investments to serve greater numbers and diverse populations of Californians and the delivery of flexible workforce training and education for career pathways that result in high-skill and high-wage employment. Specifically, investments should expand and enhance proven workforce training models and support systems that focus on equity, access and inclusion, and deeper participation by individuals and employers.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This section provides a summary of key program attributes and dates. This information will be extrapolated further in subsequent sections of this document.

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Sponsoring Division:	Workforce and Economic Development Division
Funding Opportunity Title:	California Apprenticeship Initiative New and Innovative Grant Program Fiscal Year 2025-26 Request for Applications
Total Funds Available:	Up to \$30,000,000
Maximum Award per Application:	Implementation Grant: \$1,500,000 Expansion Grant: \$1,000,000
Closing Date for Submissions:	Jan. 30, 2026, at 5 p.m.
Intent to Award Announcement Date:	April 3, 2026
Project Start Date:	July 1, 2026 (Report dates to follow)
Funding Period:	Implementation Grant: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029 Expansion Grant: July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2028
Questions:	Apprenticeship@CCCCO.edu

BACKGROUND

As part of the California Community Colleges ongoing efforts to meet the state's need for an educated and skilled workforce and the Governor's goal of serving 500,000 earn-and-learn apprenticeships by 2029, the Chancellor's Office is pleased to announce the availability of Proposition 98 funds for the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) New & Innovative Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Grant Programs (N&I). Apprenticeship is the model of the future as a mechanism to eliminate the barrier between education, training, and employment to create a seamless pathway. While the goal is to serve 500,000 apprentices, California has currently served roughly 100,000, and the state has a need to create innovative ways to scale the growth of registered apprenticeships. The CAI N&I seeks 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.

GOALS, PURPOSE, AND PRIORITIES

Goals

The goal of the CAI N&I Grants Program Fiscal Year 2025-26 Applications is to create new and innovative apprenticeship opportunities in priority and emerging industry sectors. New and innovative apprenticeship programs are in sectors other than the building, construction, and fire trades. Programs should tap into CAI N&I funding throughout the life cycle of the program and use the different grant purposes to create sustainability beyond grant duration.

Purpose

Although applicants may submit any number of applications, each application must be either a Program Implementation Grant or an Apprenticeship Expansion Grant and application must be specific to one apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program, although multiple occupations may be

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included per application.

1. Program Implementation Grant

- a. Up to 3-year grant term
- b. Up to \$1,500,000 per award
- c. 20% advance, quarterly payment thereafter contingent upon achieved outcomes and actual costs.
- d. To be used to implement a recently DAS-registered pre-apprenticeship program or apprenticeship program.

2. Apprenticeship Expansion Grant

- a. Up to 2-year grant term
- b. Up to \$1,000,000 available per award
- c. 20% advance, quarterly payment thereafter contingent upon achieved outcomes and actual costs.
- d. To be used to complete one-time activities that an Apprenticeship Program Sponsor or LEA Partner otherwise does not have funding to support—such as activities related to refining curriculum, or purchasing additional training materials and equipment, or recruiting, training, and onboarding additional program instructors—and that will allow the program to permanently expand its annual capacity.

If funding remains available after the second application deadline, additional application deadlines will be determined and publicized, one at a time throughout fiscal year 2025-26, until all available CAI funds are awarded.

OUTCOMES

Outcomes Measures

The degree of success of CAI N&I-funded programs will be evaluated on the series of metrics described below. Outcomes will be evaluated to guide future use of CAI funds to affect the greatest increase in apprenticeship opportunities.

1. Implementation Grant

- a. At least one apprentice is registered for every \$15,000 awarded or one pre-apprentice for every \$2,500 awarded. At least 80% of participants retain and progress through the program according to the planned schedule, including completing the program for apprentices whose schedules call for completion within the grant term.
- b. Participants who complete apprenticeship programs receive living wages as compared to the local cost of living.
- c. A five-year plan, starting at the culmination of the grant, to demonstrate the program's long-term sustainability.
- d. An active system to provide-or direct participants to-accessible, comprehensive academic, and nonacademic student support services (including, but not limited job readiness coaching and career guidance, case management, success

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coaching, and financial aid) which should remove barriers to entry and completion for any program participants.

2. Expansion Grant

- a. The program can register at least one additional apprentice annually, beyond what it was previously capable to register, for every \$15,000 awarded.
- b. A five-year plan, starting the year after the culmination of the Apprenticeship Program Expansion Grant, which demonstrates the program's long-term sustainability
- c. An active system to provide—or direct participants to—accessible, comprehensive, academic, and nonacademic student support services (including, but not limited to, job readiness coaching and career guidance, case management, success coaching, and financial aid) which should remove barriers to entry and completion for any program participants.

GENERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Funding and Performance Period

This is an open competition and there is no limit to the number of applications one single entity may submit per submission deadline.

For **Implementation Grants**, the maximum award amount is \$1,500,000 per award.

Implementation Grants will be awarded for up to (36) months, with terms specified on the grant agreement. **Extensions beyond the initial grant term will not be provided.** All performance under this allocation shall be completed by June 30, 2029. All grant invoices must be submitted no later than Aug. 31, 2029, to be processed for payment.

Invoices submitted after Aug. 31, 2029, are ineligible for payment and may be rejected by the Chancellor's Office if submitted.

For **Expansion Grants**, the maximum award amount is \$1,000,000 per award.

Expansion Grants will be awarded for up to (24) months, with terms specified in the grant agreement. **Extensions beyond the initial grant term will not be provided.** All performance under this allocation shall be completed by June 30, 2028. All grant invoices must be submitted no later than Aug. 31, 2028, to be processed for payment. Invoices submitted after Aug. 31, 2028, are ineligible for payment and may be rejected by the Chancellor's Office if submitted.

Awards shall be based on the merit and reasonable cost for the anticipated outcomes and performance of the project. The Chancellor's Office reserves the right to adjust awards based upon the availability of funds, or fund applications at a lesser amount than requested if it is determined that the application can be implemented with less funding, or if funding is not sufficient to fully fund awards. The Chancellor's Office will monitor grant progression towards deliverables based on fiscal reports. If deliverables are not met, the Chancellor's Office may meet with grantees to discuss circumstances and offer support to the extent possible. If deliverables may not be met within the grant term, the Chancellor's Office may explore termination of the grant agreement and may hold

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the grantee liable for repayment of funds provided to the grantee to that point. The Chancellor's Office reserves the right to invoice the grantee for any or all of any grant advance if apprenticeship metric targets are not met.

Notification of Awards

Intent to award notification will be made via an official Intent to Award Memo. All award notifications will be posted on the WEDD website. Selection of an applicant to be awarded does not constitute approval of the grant application as was submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, the Chancellor's Office may request adjustments or modifications to the proposal and/or budget to be reflected in the grant NOVA work plan and agreement as necessary. The Chancellor's Office reserves the right not to fund any application related to this RFA. Chancellor's Office Board of Governors' approval is required before any grant may be awarded. **No applicant may make a public statement regarding the award of grant funds until after the Board of Governors' approval.**

Certain Awards Exclude Awardee's Receipt of RSI Reimbursement Funding

Programs that are receiving CAI funding through Implementation or Expansion grants may not also receive reimbursement for RSI hours, either via RSI or FTES funding, that program reports through NOVA reporting. Once the program is no longer supported by CAI funding, the program may pursue RSI or FTES funding if eligible.

ELIGIBILITY

Entities are eligible to apply for CAI N&I-funded grants as described below. All applications are required to demonstrate an innovative means to scale registered apprenticeship programs in order to support progress toward serving 500,000 apprentices by 2029, as set by the Governor.

1. **Program Implementation Grant** – Only the lead LEA of apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs who are already or will be registered with the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) are eligible to apply. Registration with the United States Department of Labor (DOL) is also strongly encouraged, and registration with the DAS is mandatory. If the program is not yet registered with DAS, please take program registration timelines into account to ensure deliverables are realistic and achievable. Please refer to the "Support Available" section for additional resources. (Note: Existing implementation grantees cannot reapply for implementation grants for the same program)
 - a. Eligible Institutions
 - i. Community College Districts (CCDs)
 - ii. County Offices of Education (COEs)
 - iii. K-12 Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)
 - b. Required Eligible Application Content
 - i. Documentation supporting when the program initially became or will become registered with DAS.
 - ii. Anticipated annual number of program participants during the grant period, in alignment with the outcomes expectations included in this RFA.
 - iii. Responses to all the questions within the NOVA application.

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- iv. All documents requested within the NOVA application.
 - v. A plan to provide—or direct participants to—accessible, comprehensive, academic, and nonacademic student support services (including, but not limited to, job readiness coaching and career guidance, case management, success coaching, and financial aid) which should remove barriers to entry and completion for any program participants.
- 2. **Program Expansion Grant** – Only the lead LEA of a DAS registered Apprenticeship Program is eligible to apply. (Note: Existing implementation grantees are eligible to receive expansion grants as long as there is no overlap in the performance periods)
 - a. Eligible Institutions
 - i. Community College Districts (CCDs)
 - ii. County Offices of Education (COEs)
 - iii. K-12 Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)
 - b. Required Eligible Application Content
 - i. Demonstration of DAS registration.
 - ii. Letters of commitment from employer partners that demonstrate identified demand for additional apprentices.
 - iii. Anticipated annual number of additional program participants the program will be able to serve in the first three years after the completion of the program expansion, in alignment with the outcomes expectations included in this RFA.
 - iv. A plan to provide—or direct participants to—accessible, comprehensive, academic, and nonacademic student support services (including, but not limited to, job readiness coaching and career guidance, case management, success coaching, and financial aid) which should remove barriers to entry and completion for any program participants.
 - v. A grant work plan that does not include activities that result in ongoing costs beyond the grant term.
 - vi. Responses to all questions within the NOVA application.
 - vii. All documents requested within the NOVA application.

APPLICATION DUE DATE

The complete application, including any required forms and supporting documentation, must be submitted via the Chancellor’s Office NOVA system **on or before Jan. 30, 2026, by 5 p.m.**, at which time the application system will close. No other forms of submission will be accepted. Incomplete and late applications will not be accepted.

APPLICATION CRITERIA

One hundred points are available for each application purpose based on the criteria included in the application. Applications will be selected for an award in order of highest review score to lowest review score, until available funding is depleted. Applications must receive at least 75 points to be eligible for award consideration.

Priority Consideration

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Priority consideration will be provided to the following applicants:

1. Programs which are already registered or in the process of obtaining registration with the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards
2. Programs which demonstrate a lower cost per apprentice, thereby serving a greater number of apprentices
3. Include strong, valid labor market demand information to demonstrate the need for apprenticeship programs within an occupation and/or industry sector. Applicants are required to submit labor market demand information obtained from the Occupational Projections Demand Tool from the Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Technical assistance and support will be available to awarded entities through the Chancellor's Office and two of its partners: the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FoundationCCC) and the LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network (LAUNCH).

- FoundationCCC serves as the California Community College Apprenticeship statewide technical assistance provider supporting the planning, implementation, and sustainability of apprenticeship programs. They lead efforts to build capacity across the state through a Community of Practice approach, along with individualized technical assistance, grantee administrative support, peer learning, best practice sharing, and resource development.
 - FoundationCCC will support in tracking grant progression in meeting required deliverables and spending down funds. FoundationCCC may work with the grantee and Chancellor's Office if progression is unsatisfactory to form a plan to address concerns.
- LAUNCH creates and serves as the statewide apprenticeship hub and manages eight regional hubs to expand and strengthen regional partnerships and employer engagement on behalf of the Chancellor's Office. They offer technical assistance for program coordination and funding, employer engagement, program sponsorship support, and standardized program tools to streamline adoption and scale growth.

Awarded entities are **strongly encouraged** to participate in various technical assistance activities provided by FoundationCCC and LAUNCH. Anticipated activities include quarterly in-person convenings, bi-annual CCCAOE conference sessions, webinars, virtual office hours, guidance documents, and one-on-one virtual meetings. Applicants are also encouraged to include travel for in-person events and conferences for up to (3) members of their project teams in their program budgets.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Submitting the Application In NOVA

To submit the application, please login using your existing NOVA account at <https://nova.cccco.edu/>.

- If you are new to NOVA and would like to have an account created for you, please use the Access Request Wizard (<https://nova.cccco.edu/request-access>) to provide your contact information and details for the access you need.
- If you already have a NOVA account and require a modification to your access permissions,

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please submit a NOVA Support Request through the support portal.

- For additional support and technical assistance, please visit: <https://nova.cccco.edu/help> to submit a NOVA Support Request ticket.

After logging into NOVA: Go to the sidebar menu; select “Programs” then “CAI New & innovative” and “Applications.”

Click “Create Application” button to begin. You will be directed to choose your purpose in order to create the application.

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:

- It is received late or incomplete.
- The Chancellor’s Office determines the application is otherwise ineligible.

CALENDAR OF KEY DATES

Information Details

RFA Released: Nov. 3, 2025

Bidders’ Conference: Please visit the [CCCCO CAI webpage](#) for information regarding the bidders’ conference.

Deadline for Application Submission: Jan. 30, 2026, at 5 p.m.

Notification of Intent to Award: April 3, 2026

Appeal Deadline: April 14, 2026, at 5 p.m.

Board of Governors Approval of Award: To Be Determined

Grant Commencement: July 1, 2026

Grant Work Plan End: June 30, 2028 (Expansion Grants)
June 30, 2029 (Implementation Grants)

BIDDERS' CONFERENCE WEBINAR

The Chancellor's Office staff will host an informational Bidders' Conference Webinar to provide an overview of the application submission process and offer potential applicants an opportunity to ask additional clarifying questions. Failure to attend the webinar will not preclude the submission of an application. The webinar will be recorded for posting on the Chancellor's Office website.

Date and Time: Please visit the [CCCCO CAI webpage](#) for information regarding the bidders' conference. Registration will not be required to attend the bidders' conference.

RFA Clarification

If any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in this RFA is discovered, immediately notify WEDD and request a written clarification. Any addendum to the RFA will be posted on the WEDD RFA website at <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/WEDD-RFA>.

Applicants are responsible for checking the WEDD RFA website for any updates to the RFA or FAQ. Applicants will not be notified via any other manner.

Written questions concerning the specifications and instructions in this RFA must be submitted by email to Apprenticeship@CCCCO.edu.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document will be posted on the WEDD RFA website at: [California Apprenticeship Initiative | California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office](#)

AWARD ADMINISTRATION

General

All funds granted by the CCCCCO under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable cost principles, CCCCCO assistance regulations, and other relevant provisions.

Reporting

Grantees will be required to report on performance metrics and expenditures quarterly in NOVA. Please refer to the grant agreement for the reporting dates.

AWARD APPEALS

Applicants who wish to appeal a grant award decision must submit a letter of appeal to the Chancellor's Office. The Chancellor's Office must receive the letter of appeal, with a signature by the authorized person, no later than seven (7) days after the publication of the awardees. The final decision will be provided in writing within two weeks from the date that appeals are due. The Chancellor's Office decision shall be the final administrative action afforded the appeal.

Appeals shall be limited to the grounds that the Review Committee failed to correctly follow the specified processes for reviewing the application. The applicant must file a full and complete written

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appeal, including the process(s) in dispute. Incomplete or late appeals will not be considered. The applicant may not supply any new information that was not contained in the original application. Appeals should be submitted to the Chancellor's Office at the following email address Apprenticeship@CCCCO.edu.

ACCESS AND EQUITY

The grantee will comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. (These include but are not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [P.L. 88-352], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended [20 U.S.C. 1681-1683 and 1685-1686], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [29 U.S.C. 794], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended [42 U.S.C. 6101-6107], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008 [P.L. 110-233], 29 CFR 635.10 (c)(1), which prohibits the use of genetic information in making employment decisions, restricts employers and other entities covered by Title II (employment agencies, labor organizations and joint labor-management training and apprenticeship programs – referred to as “covered entities”) from requesting, requiring or purchasing genetic information, and strictly limits the disclosure of genetic information.)

Appendix

Link to information on allowable expenditures:

<https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/allowable-exped-cai-doc-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=111A6529B63BAA30C89471B7FF362D7D5316676B>