

# Illinois Community College Board



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TO: Illinois Community College Board  
Adult Education and Family Literacy Providers

FROM: Jennifer Foster  
Senior Director for Adult Education and Family Literacy

DATE: September 28, 2009

SUBJECT: **Request for Proposal -  
FY2010 Adult Education Bridge Program Development Project**

## BACKGROUND

Illinois is not producing enough workers with the skills needed to enter and advance in well-paying jobs that are crucial to the Illinois economy. This action research project will examine student transitions from adult education to postsecondary education and the workforce. This initiative will also seek to enhance educational and work opportunities for low-wage and low-skilled workers that support state economic growth. To achieve this outcome, this project will allow programs to develop an adult education bridge program to assist students in the successful movement into three occupational areas: Health Care, Manufacturing, or Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics.

Through these projects, the Illinois Community College Board Adult Education Division will develop best practices and processes that encourage programs to provide contextualized instruction designed to assist students in making successful transitions into employment and/or postsecondary education, without the need for remediation.

### **Purpose:**

The intent of the proposal is to conduct action research designed to:

- assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;
- provide adults with contextualized instruction with an occupational specific content that will enable students to successfully transition into postsecondary education or

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- employment;
- assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education, and
- assist adults in learning the English language.

This project will target those individuals who meet the definition of adult education. Adult Education means instruction and support services below the postsecondary level for individuals (A) who have attained 16 years of age; (B) who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and (C) who:

- lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individuals to function effectively in society;
- do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

Adult Education has an audience of students who are in need of basic skills enhancement as well as a link to career sector specific knowledge and skills along a career pathway. The goal of the project is to identify and document methods to better prepare students to successfully transition into postsecondary education and employment.

**Bridge Program Definition: (Appendix B)**

Bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading to career-path employment in high-demand, middle- and high-skilled occupations. The goal of bridge programs is to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and what they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and career-path employment.

- **Core Elements**

Bridge programs assist students in obtaining the necessary academic, employability, and technical skills through three required components—contextualized instruction, career development, and support (transition) services. These three areas as defined below are essential in the design and success of a bridge program:

- Contextualized instruction that integrates basic reading, math, and language skills and industry/occupation knowledge.
- Career development that includes career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work (specific elements depend upon the level of the bridge program and on whether participants are already incumbent workers in the specific field).
- Transition services that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial course work to credit or occupational programs. Services may include (as needed and available) academic advising, tutoring, study skills, coaching, and

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referrals to individual support services, e.g., transportation and child care.

Programs applying for funding should use the statewide definition for Bridge Program in the development of instruction that better prepares adult education students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and employment. Programs will assist students in obtaining the necessary academic, employability, and technical skills through the above mentioned core elements. In addition to the Bridge definition, programs should also consider the following:

**A. Bridge programs are designed to:**

- serve those who meet the definition of adult education, including those who are low skilled, low-income adults unprepared to enter-postsecondary education.
- provide instruction to those with basic skill level at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level equivalency and above
- accelerate advancement through short-term, intensive classroom components
- offer training at times and places convenient to working adults
- offer academic and personal support services
- partner with community colleges, the workforce, community-based organization, etc.

**B. Bridge programs should include the following elements:**

- Contextualized instruction that integrates basic reading, math, and language skills and industry/occupation (career cluster) knowledge.
- Career development that includes career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work
- Transition services that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education to occupational programs or employment.

**Targeted Sectors:**

The Grant Proposal must target one of the following sectors:

- Health Care
- Manufacturing
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

**Target Population:**

The target population for this project is adult education students who fall into one of the following categories:

- Adult Basic Education (6.0 -8.9 grade level equivalency)
- Adult Secondary Education (9.0 grade level equivalency and above)
- English as a Second Language (Intermediate level and above)



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**Please Note:** A question and answer session will be held in Springfield on:

**Monday, October 5, 2009**  
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
ICCB Springfield Office  
Conference Room  
Springfield, IL

Please note that this is not a mandatory meeting. Although not required, as a courtesy please email Nora Rossman, Adult Education Secretary, [Nora.L.Rossman@illinois.gov](mailto:Nora.L.Rossman@illinois.gov), if you will be attending.

### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is requesting proposals from currently funded ICCB adult education programs to develop bridge programs in the targeted sectors. The proposals must be designed to educate and train current workers and potential workers in healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation, distribution and logistics.

#### **Allowable Activities:**

The adult education bridge project should focus on the development of a bridge program using contextualized curricula designed to move students into one of the targeted sectors below:

- Health Care
- Manufacturing
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

These activities must be designed to:

- Improve students basic workplace skills/bridge programs leading to a career pathway
- Promote new approaches to the delivery of instruction
- Provide occupational specific basic skills contextualized instruction

Funds may be used to support development activities related to curriculum design and development, staff salaries and benefits, contractual, travel, training, training support services, supplies and materials, and marketing/recruitment activities.

#### **Partnerships/Collaboration**

Evidence of partnerships and/or collaborations with community colleges and/or employers is required. These collaborations are important in making linkages to postsecondary education and employment, as well as providing the framework for student success. Programs will assemble appropriate partners in the development of a Bridge Program to ensure a successful project. We also strongly encourage programs to work with experts in the targeted sectors to ensure that instruction is relevant and leads to postsecondary enrollment or employment in the designated sector/cluster area.

## **II. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIONS**

The proposal should be no more than six pages. This does not include the project abstract and the attachments.

### **Cover Page: (Attachment A)**

- Identify Targeted Sector
- Identify where the project will take place
- Identify Project Director and Project Contact, if applicable
- Signature of Chief Executive Officer or the President. No other signature will be accepted.

### **Project Abstract:**

Provide a brief summary of overall activities. This should not exceed one page.

### **Project Narrative:**

Project Narrative should be no more than six pages and should include a description of the proposed project and a specific description of planned activities and outcomes. This narrative must include at a minimum, the following:

- Project Need
- Project Purpose
- Goals of the project
- Targeted population
- Targeted Sector (Health Care, Manufacturing, Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics)
- Delivery Mode and Curriculum Development including the intensity and duration of the instruction
- Assessment Instruments, (i.e., TABE, CELSA, BEST Plus, Best Literacy)
- Recruitment/Retention/Support Services Activities
- Partnerships and Collaborations

### **Partnerships: (Attachment B)**

A program must indicate proposed partners who will participate as a part of this project and identify the role of each of the partners.

### **Project Activities, Outcomes and Timelines: (Attachment C)**

A program must provide a description of program activities including outcomes and the time frame for the completions of the activities. This form may be duplicated as needed.

### **Budget Form: (Attachment D)**

Programs must complete the budget form indicating the amounts that will be spent in each area. See Appendix A for a complete description of each line item.

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**Budget Narrative: (Attachment E)**

A program must provide a detailed description of how the funds will be used.

**Budget Category Definitions: (Appendix A)**

Appendix A provides a definition for each budget category.

**Statewide Illinois Bridge Definition: (Appendix B)**

Appendix B is the statewide definition used in the development of Bridge Programs.

**PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION**

The following provides a description of how the proposal should be organized.

- Cover Page (Attachment A)
- Project Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Partnerships (Attachment B)
- Project Activities, Outcomes, and Timelines (Attachment C)
- Budget (Attachment D)
- Budget Narrative (Attachment E)

**III. MONITORING, REPORTING, AND MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

This is an action research project for the development of a bridge program only. All grantees will be monitored under this project to ensure compliance with WIA guidelines. In addition, programs will be required to submit monthly expenditure reports on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the previous months' expenditures. Programs will also be required to submit quarterly reports as listed below.

- January 15, 2009
- April 15, 2009
- July 15, 2009

Those selected to participate as part of this project will be required to attend two meetings during the grant period. The first meeting has been tentatively scheduled for the week of November 10, 2009. 2009.

**IV. TERMS OF THE GRANT**

- A. Applicants may be asked to clarify or revise certain aspects of their proposals. Grantees will receive an award letter from the Illinois Community College Board that specifies the amount of the award.
- B. Requests for payment will be submitted to the Budget and Operations Office of the ICCB according to a negotiated payment schedule. Federal funds must be requested and must be dispersed by the program within 30 days of receipt. They may either be scheduled periodically or requested on an as needed basis. Payments may be reduced from scheduled amounts if periodic reports show excessive cash on hand. Payments may be stopped or reduced if the funded provider fails to meet the conditions of the grant as listed in the grant agreement.
- C. All funds granted for the operation of this program must be used exclusively for the purposes stated in the approved proposal and must be expended in accordance with the approved budget and the grantee's policies and procedures related to such expenditures. Funds may only be expended for activities occurring during the grant period.

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- D. Successful applicants will be subject to the provisions of Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the Stevens Amendment) due to the use of federal funds for the programs. All announcements and other materials publicizing the programs must include within the content a statement as to the amount and proportion of Federal funding involved.
- E. Applicants may operate their own programs or enter into a subcontract with another not-for-profit entity to implement the program. However, all program responsibilities are to be retained by the applicant to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant. The ICCB reserves the right to review and approve all subcontracting agreements.

**CRITERIA FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROPOSALS**

Proposal will be reviewed by staff of the Illinois Community College Board. Each applicant's proposal may receive a total score of up to 100 points. Below are the criteria that will be used in scoring proposals.

**Planning: (30 points)**

Criterion 1: The program has demonstrated the need for establishing a bridge program by including elements such as but not limited to economic trends, demographic information, and other pertinent factors.

Criterion 2: The program has clearly documented the target population to be served.

Criterion 3: The program has clearly documented the purpose of the project.

Criterion 4: The program has clearly documented the targeted sector for this project and the need it will fill in the area.

Criterion 5: The program has clearly documented the goals, activities and expected outcomes of the project.

**Assessment: (5 points)**

Criterion 1: The program has demonstrated that students will be assessed using the ICCB approved AEFL tests.

Criterion 2: The program has demonstrated that students will be pre and post-tested at appropriate intervals as prescribed in the AEFL provider manual.

**Curriculum and Instruction: (30 points)**

Criterion 1: The program proposes curricula that meets the need of the student population and is appropriate for the targeted sector.

Criterion 2: The program has identified the educational functioning level that curricula will address.

Criterion 3: The program has identified that the curriculum and the instruction will be of sufficient intensity and duration to promote appropriate learning outcomes.

Criterion 4: The program demonstrates that the curriculum enables students to transition and move along a career pathway in postsecondary education without the need for remediation.

Criterion 5: The program curriculum addresses the bridge definition and the three elements in the development of a bridge program.

**Recruitment/Retention/Support Services: (15 points)**

Criterion 1: The program proposes strategies to recruit the target population for enrollment in the bridge program.

Criterion 2: The program proposes strategies to retain students in the bridge program.

Criterion 3: The program proposes a wide range of support services to support the students in the proposed project.

Criterion 4: The program proposes strategies that will assist students in making successful

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transition to advanced education, training, or entry into employment.

**Partnerships/Collaborations: (20 points)**

Criterion 1: The program demonstrates its efforts and plans for collaboration with appropriate individuals in the development of the curricula.

Criterion 2: The program lists proposed partners and clearly defines the services that each will provide.

Criterion 3: The program demonstrates the development of partnership with either businesses and/or community colleges that will successfully transition students to employment and/or postsecondary education.