



Fiscal Year 2026

Innovative Bridge and Transitions Program
Grant Application Notice of Funding
Opportunity (NOFO)

Application Due Date/Time: October 3, 2025, 3:00 p.m.

Submit Application To:

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/4724ba62-8079-425d-938d-7f2e4217518a>

UNIFORM NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

SUMMARY INFORMATION

1.	Awarding Agency Name:	<i>Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)</i>
2.	Agency Contact:	<i>Emma Godwin emma.godwin@illinois.gov 217-558-2441</i>
3.	Announcement Type:	<i>Initial announcement</i>
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	<i>Grant</i>
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	<i>1670-2031</i>
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	<i>FY2025 Innovative Bridge and Transitions</i>
7.	CSFA Number:	<i>684-01-1670</i>
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	<i>Innovative Bridge and Transitions</i>
9.	CFDA Number(s):	<i>N/A</i>
10.	Grant Period	<i>January 1, 2026– March 31, 2027</i>
11.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	<i>30-70</i>
12.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	<i>\$9,300,000</i>
13.	Award Range	<i>\$75,000-\$375,000</i>
14.	Source of Funding:	<i>State</i>
15.	Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement:	<i>No</i>
16.	Indirect Costs Allowed	<i>Yes</i>
	Restrictions on Indirect Costs	<i>No</i>
17.	Posted Date:	<i>August 14, 2025</i>
18.	Closing Date for Applications:	<i>October 3, 2025, 3:00 p.m.</i>
19.	Technical Assistance:	<i>Technical and accessibility assistance will be provided throughout the grant period to grant recipients.</i>

A. Background and Purpose

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is inviting eligible applicants to apply for the Innovative Bridge and Transition Program Grant program. The ICCB will provide approximately \$9.3 million in grant funding opportunities to be administered to support innovative bridge and transition programs and initiatives that support the seamless transition of students between education systems as well as employment. Supporting and scaling effective and equitable education and career programming is essential for targeted populations.

The purposes of this grant are to:

- Create or support programs that improve student transitions to and through postsecondary education (up to baccalaureate) and into employment;
- Support these transitions for individuals with disabilities; and
- Scale programs that promote equity and diversity among those served.

B. Eligible Applicants

The ICCB is inviting eligible applicants, listed below, to submit proposals under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The eligible applicants are as follows:

- Institutions of higher education
- Community-based organizations
- Local education agencies
- Public or private nonprofit agencies
- Comprehensive rehabilitation facilities associated with a university or institutions of higher education
- Other applicants of demonstrated effectiveness in serving the eligible target populations

Successful applicants must be the provider of the direct services; however, applicants may subcontract for supportive services that enhance program services or reduce barriers for eligible participants. Subcontracting is subject to ICCB approval.

C. Target Population

This grant is intended to provide services to targeted populations identified below. The intent of the grant is to serve individuals who are 16 years of age or older, and prepare:

- **Adults who are not enrolled in high school** with limited academic or basic skills, underemployed or unemployed to enter and succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading to employment in high skill, high wage, and in-demand occupations; and/or
- **Out-of-school youth** (ages 16-24)
- **youth who are in-school** (16 or older). Serving in-school youth is an allowable activity only if the service to this population prepares them to enter postsecondary education and training following graduation.

D. Grant Objectives

The objectives of this grant are intended to increase access and persistence along career pathways for the targeted populations to be served. See Resource Guide, which has a list of resources for each objective, starting on page 16 for more information. **Grantees are to select one objective from the following four objectives for their grant focus.** Each objective and subobjective is held to a maximum cost per participant. Please see Section J for more details on cost per participant.

- **Objective 1: Adult Education Bridge and ICAPS Programming:** Create new or greatly expand bridge or integrated education and training programming (ICAPS), which shall include contextualized basic reading, math, and language skills, occupational competencies, and employability skills. This objective shall not supplant required bridge and ICAPS activities under WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Literacy implementation. *For example, your program needs 20 textbooks for a Welding ICAPS. **Supplanting** would be having 10 textbooks in your Adult Education grant*

budget. Then, moving that money to personnel and putting the cost of all 20 textbooks in the IBT grant budget, which is not allowable.

***Supplementing** is having 10 textbooks in the AE grant budget, leaving them, and paying for the additional 10 textbooks from the IBT grant budget, which is allowable.*

- **Objective 2: Seamless Transitions for College and Career Pathways:** Implement programs that provide seamless transitions from high school to college or between postsecondary institutions, including but not limited to:
 - 2a:** Curriculum alignment between secondary and postsecondary institutions, curriculum alignment and articulation efforts between postsecondary institutions (2 +2 agreements, up to graduate level work),
 - 2b:** Dual credit programming, CTE program of study development and implementation, or college and career pathway endorsement activities, or
 - 2c:** Pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship partnerships and implementation.
 - 2d:** Out-of-School Youth Career Activities: The program is specifically aimed at helping out-of-school youth (ages 16-24) to become reoriented and motivated to complete their education by allowing students to participate in adult education instruction as well as career training activities. Career training activities could include job-shadowing, workplace in-person tours, workplace virtual tours, career/job fairs, volunteer time at local events, ICAPS enrolment, etc. Applicants applying under this objective will be required to utilize the VEDA system for entering student-level data and case management in addition to quarterly programmatic and performance reporting.
- **Objective 3: Wrap-around Support Services:** Utilize transition/wrap-around services which provide students with the information and assistance they need to equitably access and persist along their career pathway. This may include providing wrap-around services for students transitioning from adult education or remedial coursework to credit or occupational programs, or from credit or occupational programs to the workforce. Services may include academic advising, career pathway navigation, tutoring, supplemental instruction, study skills, coaching, and referrals to individual support services (e.g., basic needs including housing, transportation, and childcare).
- **Objective 4: Seamless Transitions for Students with Disabilities:** Create comprehensive programming for individuals with disabilities that provides vocational, psychological counseling, transitional and educational services, and job placement activities in order for them to live and work independently in the community. These programs may include transitions from high school to college as well as college to employment.

Priority Activities to be carried out in all Grant-funded Projects:

- **Engage in partnerships** with other entities that may strengthen the ability of students to persist through the education and training provided. Systemic

change efforts are encouraged. Partners may include community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, advocacy groups, local one-stops, and employers, among others.

NOTE: A letter of support from at least one partner will be required. The letter(s) need to include the role(s) that partner will play in the grant. For example, roles could include shared funding, guest presenters, or facility tours. Letters must be submitted (uploaded in AmpliFund) at the time of application submission. Late letters will not be accepted. Letters will be part of the application scoring process.

- **Develop and implement career activities** which may strengthen career development and exploration, career planning, understanding the world of work, and integration of essential employability skills. This may include work-based learning opportunities (e.g. internships, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, etc.).
- **Implement and integrate equity-driven, evidenced-based practices**, strategies, and pedagogy throughout programming. Grantees should utilize data-informed decision-making in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programming to identify equity gaps and address inequities appropriately. Programs should aim to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion is adequately supported in programming. Specifically, programs should aim to advance equitable access and outcomes for racially and ethnically minoritized communities as well as others marginalized by education and workforce systems.
- **Participate in Professional Development Opportunities** provided by the ICCB and its partner, Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support. These professional development meetings will occur monthly. Attendance will be required at quarterly operational meetings and any other necessary meetings as they arise.

E. Allowable Activities with various Objectives:

The expectation is that applicants will propose activities that will align with statewide priorities around [career pathway](#) opportunities and activities that **promote equity and diversity**. Key definitions are included at the end of the NOFO. Applicants may develop or expand programming to align with priority sectors as identified in their local or regional WIOA plans including but not limited to work-based learning activities. These activities may include but are not limited to:

- **Developing or Aligning Curriculum:** Furthering the alignment of coursework by contextualizing and integrating basic skills or academic and career and technical education offerings. This may also include articulation agreements between community college and four-year institutions, curricular alignment activities up to post-baccalaureate level, and competency mapping throughout the pathway (Obj 1 or 2).
- **Creating short-term training programs** that support minority students' transitions into postsecondary education and employment (Obj 2).
- **Developing African American History programs** that teach cultural awareness and historical perspectives (Obj 2).

- Creation of programs and services that assist individuals with disabilities (i.e., those who are on the autism spectrum) to access educational services that will help support their independence and reduce barriers to their success (Obj 4).
- Creating a program of study, inclusive of dual credit, for an in-demand industry sector, from high school to postsecondary education (Obj 2).
- Developing an ICAPS program that allows those who are basic skill deficient to earn industry recognized or college credentials, college credit, and credits toward an in-demand occupation (Obj 1).
- Expanding or developing models that link participants in adult education programs including all provider types to community colleges (Obj 1 or 2).
- Developing models that promote service integration with partner programs (Obj 1-4).
- Developing a bridge program in an in-demand sector (Obj 1).
- Developing a process for using prior learning assessment to evaluate and grant credit for prior learning (Obj 2).
- Developing a student support center model that will enhance services to underrepresented populations, including but not limited to the following: wrap-around services for basic needs including but not limited to housing, financial literacy, and other services that will reduce barriers to educational success for all students including those who are homeless and those individuals with disabilities (Obj 3 or 4).
- Enhancing or developing institutional career pathways. Applicants may engage in career pathway development, alignment, and/or evaluation activities to ensure the inclusion of multiple entry and exit points, rigorous and integrated content, or focus on strengthening components which make up a successful bridge or transition program (i.e., ICAPS program development, curriculum alignment, stackable credentials) (Obj 1 or 2).
 - Working with employers to develop a career pathway program that is designed for incumbent workers.
 - Creating career pathway activities for those youth in their senior year of high school that smooth their transition into postsecondary education or a training program.
- Developing work-based learning or apprenticeship models (Obj 2).
- Developing comprehensive programs and services for those with disabilities that provide assessment of work strengths, abilities and limitations through an evaluation process which may include but not limited to interviews, testing and observation. These services may consist of providing living center programming such as life skills including budgeting, meal preparation, job placement into compatible competitive employment, professional training and research, driver's rehabilitation services, essential work skills with an emphasis on employer expectations, and other daily living skills that offer residents an opportunity to live and learn new skills and work toward personal independence (Obj 4).
- Other activities of statewide significance that expand career pathways and are aligned with labor market information as identified by local or regional needs (Obj 1-4).

F. Unallowable Activities:

- International travel
- Complete duplication of previous grant activities – see required application template for explanation of last year’s activities. If your program did not receive this grant last year, this template is not required and will not impact your score. This template is in Section G.3.III of this NOFO.

Mandatory Grant Deliverables

Carry out deliverables of the proposed scope of work.

1. Submit required programmatic/performance and fiscal reports on a quarterly basis.
2. Participate in all required Operational Meetings. Participation in professional development and technical assistance events is encouraged but not required. Dates will be shared at the **January 13, 2026**, new grantee meeting.
3. Submit an annual demographic data report via JotForm to ICCB. The form will be shared later with funded programs.

G. Application Package

Applications submitted under this grant program will undergo a merit-based review process. All parts of the application package must be completed in **AmpliFund** by the deadline to be considered. Lack of registration or technology issues will not be sufficient for consideration of late applications. Applicants should ensure that all elements are clearly addressed and are strongly encouraged to use headers to address all elements or some consistent form of response delineation. **Requested award amounts should match across all parts of the application (Uniform Application, Cover Page, Budget).** Applicants will not be notified if there are items that are missing from their application.

All Grantees:

- Must submit all required information in the AmpliFund system to be eligible for funding.
- Must register through the State of Illinois General Accountability and Transparency Act portal: <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>.
- Must include a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) or show proof of registration.
- Must adhere to the General Assurances and Terms of Grant as outlined in this application.

1. Uniform Application

Applicants must complete each section of the Uniform Application in its entirety. If a question is not applicable, please enter NA. *A template is provided.*

2. Cover Page and Grant Summation Template

The applicant must complete the Cover Page and Grant Summation Template (*template provided*) which encompasses applicant information and a synopsis of the grant, including but not limited to:

- Organization background
- Summary of the project activities and how they align with the goals of the Innovative Bridge and Transition grant.
- Target population(s) and geographic communities to be served (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, educational/workforce levels).
- Projected number of unduplicated individuals to be served.
- Cost per number of students to be served.
- Measurable Goals and Objectives.

3. **Application Narrative**

The eligible applicant must submit a narrative of no more than twelve pages (charts and graphs are a part of the page limitation), double-spaced, 12-point font that must include the following information in the order listed below and utilizing a header for each numbered section.

Narrative Sections

- I. **Statement of Need:** a description of the target population of students to be served (*e.g., ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, educational levels–high school equivalency/GED/HiSET, workforce status, etc.*). For career pathway or employment-based programs, the organization should identify the targeted industry sector, if applicable. Organizations should utilize and present data as evidence of need.
- II. **Project Goals:** identify a) projected *unduplicated* number of individuals to be served, b) other indicators of performance for the intended targeted population, and c) programmatic/system goals or deliverables. (*Note: goals and objectives must be measurable.*) Displaying this information in clearly delineated format such as a chart is encouraged.
- III. **Non-duplication chart:**
Did your program receive an FY25 IBT grant? If not, leave this chart blank and continue to part “IV. Project Work Plan.” If your program did receive the FY25 IBT grant, complete the chart below. For clarification, programs may choose the same objective each application period. However, something needs to change within the program offering to ensure duplication has not occurred. If you are selecting the same objective as the last grant period, please complete the following chart identifying the changes you propose.

Which objective did you select in FY25?
Which objective are you selecting in FY26?
If you are continuing the same objective from FY25, describe how you are not duplicating previous work in bulleted format.
If you are building on or enhancing last year’s work, describe the substantive changes in bulleted format. (<i>Examples of</i>

<i>substantive changes are but not limited to; increasing number of students served, creating a new cohort, serve existing population gaps, or a new program offering, or add a provider).</i>

- IV. **Project Work Plan:** Clearly describe the project activities and associated timeline for each activity to be carried out during the grant period. The activities should clearly relate to the goals of the grant. A chart or table is encouraged.
- V. **Partnerships:** Description of any partnerships and the role each partner plays in the grant project.
NOTE: A letter of support from at least one partner will be required. The letter(s) need to include the role(s) that partner will play in the grant. For example, roles could include shared funding, guest presenters, or facility tours. Letters must be submitted (uploaded in AmpliFund) at the time of application submission. Late letters will not be accepted. Letters will be part of the application scoring process.
- VI. **Impact:** Description of the impact of the project on students, the community, the institution, employers, etc.
- VII. **Scalability, Replicability, and Repeatability:** Description of how the project could be scaled or replicated by others in the State. *All resources and products developed with grant funds will be provided from the grantee to the ICCB to share with the field.*
 - Scalability example: A program that builds a CNA ICAPS and then builds additional ICAPS offerings to construction, culinary, or IT is scaling their initial project.
 - Replicability example: A program whose structures can be shared with other providers across the state to achieve similar outcomes demonstrates replicability.
- VIII. **Applicant Capacity and Effectiveness:** Description of the applicant's capacity to execute the project including a description of previous experience in implementing successful Bridge or Transition Programs and related activities such as wrap-around services for the target population. Also, include if performance measures were met. *Applicants should demonstrate past project performance as evidence of successful implementation and capacity. The ICCB will consider success of past project implementation and ability to carry out deliverables, including reporting requirements for IBT and any other previous grant received by the applicant (ICCB or otherwise) as indicators of capacity and effectiveness.*
- IX. **Sustainability:** Description of the applicant's plan to sustain the project. This must include identifying resources, timelines, and goals following the close of the grant.

4. Performance Measures Chart

List and describe the planned performance measures and deliverables included in the attached document. Also include at the top the cost per

participant amount. **Applicants must use the template provided.** *This does not count as a page in the twelve-page narrative section.*

5. Uniform Budget

All applicants must submit a proposed budget on the State of Illinois Uniform Grant Budget Template (*template provided*). Applicants should submit budgets based upon the total estimated costs for the project. Costs should be in line with allowable costs under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act. For information on allowable uses of funds and other administrative requirements:
<https://gata.illinois.gov/resources.html>.

6. Programmatic Risk Assessment

All applicants must submit a Programmatic Risk Assessment form for each grant program. Download the Programmatic Risk Assessment from the application forms found on the opportunity in AmpliFund, complete it, and upload the completed form. The form must remain an Excel file.

Training and resources regarding the Programmatic Risk Assessment can be found at <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/>

H. Submission Information

No later than 3:00 p.m. (CST) October 3rd, 2025.

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted regardless of the reason as the deadline is set within the AmpliFund system. Even if submitted on time, applications from applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria or that are incomplete will not be considered for review. All required information and attachments must be included as part of the plan to be considered for review.

Attendance at the August 21, 2025, Bidders' Conference is not mandatory. A recording of the information will be available. The link for this Bidders' Conference is below:

August 21, 2025, 10:00 -11:30 a.m. <https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/j/82187903401>

Because this is a competitive grant process, all questions **must** be submitted electronically to ICCB.IBT@illinois.gov. Phone calls will not be accepted. Include in the subject line: [**Organization's Name**] Innovative Bridge and Transition Program. All questions will be posted in an FAQ on the ICCB website.

All materials needed for the application are on the State of Illinois' grants application site at

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/4724ba62-8079-425d-938d-7f2e4217518a> All application submissions must come through the AmpliFund system.

No applications will be accepted outside of this system. Templates are also posted on the ICCB's website - <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/>

An AmpliFund specific training will be provided around how to access AmpliFund and

go through the application process. That training will be held immediately following the Bidders Conference at **11:30 a.m. on August 21, 2025**, with this link - <https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/j/82187903401>

New Grantee Meeting will be held on **January 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** on the following link. All new grantees are required to attend. <https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/j/81347867169>

Application Deadline: no later than **3:00 p.m. (CST) October 3rd, 2025.**

AmpliFund does not allow any application submissions after the deadline.

Applications from applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria or that are incomplete will not be considered for review. All required information and attachments must be included as part of the plan to be considered for review. Applications not received via the State of Illinois' grants application site at <https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/4724ba62-8079-425d-938d-7f2e4217518a> will not be considered.

I. Grant Pre-Qualification

Interested institutions may apply for a grant but will not be eligible for a grant award until the institution has pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal located at www.grants.illinois.gov.

During pre-qualification, the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) verifications are performed including a check of Debarred and Suspended status and good standing with the Secretary of State. The prequalification process also includes a financial and administrative risk assessment utilizing an Internal Controls Questionnaire.

If applicable, the entity will be notified that it is ineligible for award as a result of the UEI verification. The entity will be informed of corrective action needed to become eligible for a grant award.

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110 (d)) is required to:

- Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. If you are not registered in SAM, this link provides a connection for SAM registration: <https://governmentcontractregistration.com/sam-registration.asp>.
- Provide a valid UEI number in its application.
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information during which it has an active award.

ICCB will not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has fully complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements.

Grant recipients must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment.

J. Funding Information

Grant Period:

The grant period is January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027.

Funding Availability:

A total of \$9,300,000 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the ICCB for grants to eligible entities for educational purposes as outlined under this NOFO. Only one grant application per organization.

Funding Methodology— cost per participant ranges. Your participant cost is your total budget divided by the total participants you plan to serve (*see example below*). Enter your program's planned cost per participant amount on the Performance Measure Chart. Cost per participant funding is designed to ensure a more balanced approach for funding. Scores must have a connection to funding via cost per participant. Additionally, as this is state funding, this method aids legislators in understanding the data and success of the programs.

EXAMPLE:

Total Budget	Divided By	# of Participants	Equals	Cost per Participant
\$100,000	/	20	=	\$5,000 each

Objective 1 – Maximum cost per participant - \$4,500

Objective 2

2a – Maximum cost per participant \$4,500

2b – Maximum cost per participant \$4,500

2c – Maximum cost per participant \$5,000

2d – Maximum cost per participant \$4,500

Objective 3 – Maximum cost per participant \$3,500

Objective 4 – Maximum cost per participant \$9,000

These costs per participant caps were determined through past program practice and data on the cost of related activities. We understand that costs vary by program and activity and that additional funding sources or partnerships may supplement the work. The number of individuals to be served should be reasonable and attainable. A significant difference in number of students served versus goal will be considered for future funding opportunities.

Funding Deadlines

- Grant funds must be obligated by the end of the grant period
- Good/products must be ordered by the end of the grant period/received by 60 days after the end of the grant period

- Services must be rendered by the end of the grant period
- Grant funds must be expended by 60 days after the end of the grant period
- Final budget modifications are due by 60 days before the end of the award term

Cost Sharing or Matching

- No cost sharing or matching is required.

Indirect Cost Rate

To charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA).

- **Federally Negotiated Rate.** Organizations that receive direct federal funding may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. ICCB will accept the federally negotiated rate.
- **State Negotiated Rate.** The organization must negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate or elect to use the De Minimis Rate. The indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted to the State of Illinois within 90 days of the notice of award.
- **De Minimis Rate.** An organization that has never received a Federally Negotiated Rate may elect a De Minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDS annually in order to accept the De Minimis rate.

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

- Grant recipients must adhere to the Grant Accountability Transparency Act (GATA) unless otherwise permitted.
- Do not use Grant Exclusive line in the budget document.

K. Review Criteria and Selection Process

The ICCB staff will use the criteria listed in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to review the applications and will award points accordingly. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined per application based upon compliance with the requirements of this NOFO and the grant proposal. Applications will be scored and ranked using a merit-based review points-based rubric.

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet all requirements under this NOFO as described throughout.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the Application Narrative and other documents submitted under this NOFO.

- **Project Need (20%)**
 - The applicant clearly identifies both programmatic and financial need for the grant. Compelling data are utilized to support project need.
 - The applicant clearly identifies the target population(s) of students to be served including disaggregated demographic data, as appropriate (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, educational levels – high school equivalency/GED/HiSET, workforce status, etc.).

- The applicant identifies a projected unduplicated number of students to be served that is reasonable based on the projected scope and budget.
- Targeted industry sector is identified, if appropriate.
- **Project Development and Activities (30%)**
 - The applicant activities, as outlined in the proposal, are thoroughly described and supported by evidence and/or data, including specific tasks and timelines and how they relate to the identified objectives.
 - The applicant describes the collaboration with key partners, both internal and external, and clearly details each partner's role. A letter is included for at least one partner listed which details roles and support of the grant. Identifies internal partners.
 - The applicant clearly indicates the objective of focus, and the activities align with the objective area.
 - The applicant has addressed each of the four priority activities for their chosen objective (see section D of the FY26 IBT NOFO):
 1. Engage in partnerships
 2. Develop and implement career activities
 3. Implement and integrate equity-driven, evidence-based practices
 4. Participate in Professional Development opportunities
- **Project Impact (20%)**
 - Performance Measures Chart: The applicant has described the project outcomes, and they are well-defined, measurable, reasonable, and relate to the identified activities, goals and objectives.
 - The cost per participant and objective have been completed correctly in its entirety on the Performance Measures Chart.
 - The goals and projected impact of the grant align with the overarching purpose of this NOFO.
 - The applicant clearly identifies and completes in its entirety the projected unduplicated numbers to be served on the Grant Cover Page.
 - The applicant clearly describes the potential impact on students and their achievements, the community, the institution, employers, etc. and the impact is meaningful and significant.
- **Project Effectiveness, Capacity and Sustainability (15%)**
 - The applicant documents that they have sufficient capacity to execute the project including a description of previous experience in implementing successful related projects or activities, appropriate staffing and expertise, and institutional commitment to the project, etc. *Applicants should demonstrate past project performance as evidence of successful implementation and capacity. The ICCB will consider success of past project implementation and ability to carry out deliverables, including*

reporting requirements for IBT and any other previous grant received by the applicant (ICCB or otherwise) as indicators of capacity and effectiveness:

- Demonstrated effectiveness:
 1. The applicant met deliverables.
 2. The applicant expended funds appropriately.
 3. The applicant submitted reports in a timely manner.
 - The applicant describes a clear vision for scalability and replicability in the future, where appropriate.
 - Scalability example: A program that builds a CNA ICAPS and then builds additional ICAPS offerings to construction, culinary, or IT is scaling their initial project.
 - Replicability example: A program whose structures can be shared with other providers across the state to achieve similar outcomes demonstrates replicability.
 - The applicant has a sustainability plan that is detailed and feasible. The plan must include identifying resources, timelines, and goals following the close of the grant.
- **Completion and Submission of All Required Documents Through AmpliFund (15%)**

The applicant submits an application that is accurate, complete, and cost-effective by uploading the following documents into AmpliFund.

 - Uniform Application
 - Cover Page
 - Application Narrative
 - Uniform Budget
 - Performance Measures Chart
 - Partner Letters of Support
 - Programmatic Risk Assessment

L. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Emma Godwin
Assistant Director of Workforce Education
Illinois Community College Board
401 E. Capitol Avenue Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 558-2441
Email: emma.godwin@illinois.gov

Resource Guide

Objective 1 Resources

Create new or greatly expand bridge or ICAPS programming, which shall include contextualized basic reading, math, and language skills, occupational competencies, and employability skills.

- IET/ICAPS: <https://www.icapsillinois.com/> - Provides multiple resources about building, implementing, and maintaining ICAPS.
- What is an ICAPS vs. Bridge?:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOCPdEs7vjE&t=1s> - Provides an overview of the differences between Adult Education Bridges and ICAPS.
- Summer Bridge Program Research:
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc_summerbridge_071916.pdf - Provides an overview of the function and structure of summer bridge programs.
- ICSPS Special Populations: <https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/accessible-practices/special-pops> - Provides detailed descriptions of the various special populations such as low-income, non-traditional fields, disabilities, etc.
- Career Pathways Dictionary: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IL-Career-Pathways-Dictionary.PDF> (Being updated)
- IL Worknet:
<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/ApprenticeshipIL/Pages/default.aspx> - Provides a detailed description, and additional resources, for apprenticeship structures in Illinois.
- Workforce GPS: <https://www.workforcegps.org/> - Technical assistance website designed to aid workforce professionals, educators, and business leaders.

Objective 2 Resources

Implement programs that provide seamless transitions from high school to college or between postsecondary institutions.

- **Objective 2a Resources**-Curriculum alignment between secondary and postsecondary institutions, curriculum alignment and articulation efforts between postsecondary institutions.
- **Objective 2b Resources**-Dual credit programming, CTE program of study development and implementation, or college and career pathway endorsement activities.
 - ICCB CTE Webpage: <https://www2.iccb.org/cte/> - go to the “Programs of Study” tab at the top for more detailed information.

- **Objective 2c Resources**-Pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship partnerships and implementation
 - IL Worknet: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/ApprenticeshipIL/Pages/default.aspx> - Provides a detailed description, and additional resources, for apprenticeship structures in Illinois.
 - Workforce GPS: <https://www.workforcegps.org/> - Technical assistance website designed to aid workforce professionals, educators, and business leaders.
 - <https://www2.iccb.org/workforce/apprenticeship-information/apprenticeships-at-work-convening-july-9-2025/>
 - <https://apprenticeshipsforamerica.org/>
- **Objective 2d Resources**-Out-of-School Youth Career Activities: program is specifically aimed at helping out-of-school youth (ages 16-24) to become reoriented and motivated to complete their education by allowing students to participate in adult education instruction as well as career training activities.
 - IET/ICAPS: <https://www.icapsillinois.com/> - Provides multiple resources about building, implementing, and maintaining ICAPS.
 - Out-of-School Youth Career Activities: <https://www2.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/adulted/esltp/fy2024/IBT%20Out%20of%20School%20Youth%20Career%20Activities.pdf> – Provides sample program design for Out-of-School Youth Career Activities program
 - <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Work-Based-Learning-Manual.pdf> - ISBE's manual with ideas and descriptions of Work-Based Learning Activities. While based on K-12 information, topics can be transferred to any level.
 - <https://www.bls.gov/k12/students/careers/career-exploration.htm> - Provides information about various careers with details about pay, employment rates, details of daily operations, etc.

Objective 3 Resources

Utilize transition/wrap-around services which provide students with the information and assistance they need to equitably access and persist along their career pathway.

- ICSPS Equity Resources: <https://ilequity.com/special-pop/special-populations-resources> - Provides multiple resources around disabilities, accessibility, and mental health.
- ICSPS Special Populations: <https://ilequity.com/special-pop> - Provides detailed descriptions of the various special populations such as low-income, non-traditional fields, disabilities, etc.
- Career Pathways Dictionary: [https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IL-Career-](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IL-Career-Pathways-Dictionary.pdf)

[Pathways-Dictionary.PDF](#) (Being updated)

- ICSPS Support for Trauma-informed Education in Post-Secondary Systems (STEPS)-
https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/images/pdfs/Equity/Check_In_Progress_Meter-Support_for_Implementation_of_Trauma_4.29.21.pdf - Provides guidance on the implementation of trauma-informed education in the classroom.
- ILWorknet:
<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/ApprenticeshipIL/Pages/default.aspx> - Provides a detailed description, and additional resources, for apprenticeship structures in Illinois.
- Workforce GPS: <https://www.workforcegps.org/> - Technical assistance website designed to aid workforce professionals, educators, and business leaders.

Objective 4 Resources

Create comprehensive programming for individuals with disabilities that provides vocational, psychological counseling, transitional and educational services, and job placement activities for them to live and work independently in the community.

- Autism Training and Technical Assistance: <https://autismcollegeandcareer.com/>
- ICSPS Special Populations: <https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/accessible-practices/special-pops> - Provides detailed descriptions of the various special populations such as low-income, non-traditional fields, disabilities, etc.
- Career Pathways Dictionary: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IL-Career-Pathways-Dictionary.PDF> (Being updated)
- ICSPS Support for Trauma-informed Education in Post-Secondary Systems (STEPS)-
https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/images/pdfs/Equity/Check_In_Progress_Meter-Support_for_Implementation_of_Trauma_4.29.21.pdf - Provides detailed guidance on the implementation of trauma-informed education in the classroom.
- ICSPS Equity through Website Accessibility-
https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/images/Equity/Equity_Through_Website_Accessibility.pdf.pdf - Provides guidance on promoting equity to individuals with disabilities through website accessibility.
- Workforce Empowerment Initiative (WEI): <https://www.illinoiswei.org/> - Provides an overview of the WEI model in Illinois.
- Workforce GPS: <https://www.workforcegps.org/> - Technical assistance website designed to aid workforce professionals, educators, and business leaders

Key Definitions

Apprenticeship - An employer-driven, “learn while you earn” model that combines structured on-the-job training (OJT) with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards and leading to an industry credential. The OJT is provided by the employer, who hires the apprentice at the commencement of the program and pays the participant during the program.

- Registered Apprenticeship - An apprenticeship registered with the U.S. Department of Labor meeting the standards defined by USDOL, which includes the five required components: 1) Business Involvement; 2) Structured On-the-Job Training; 3) Related Instruction; 4) Rewards for Skill Gains; and 5) Industry Credentials.
- Pre-Apprenticeship - A program that has a documented partnership with an employer and is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship which includes all the following:
 - Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region and that has been designed to prepare participants to meet the minimum entry-level requirements of the apprenticeship.
 - Access to educational and career counseling, and other supportive services as needed by participants.
 - Hands-on meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as Career Exploration and Career Development Experiences, and that reinforce foundational professional skills including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework.

Upon successful completion of the program, participants are supported to apply for a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship program and may receive preference for enrollment.

ICAPS (Models 1 & 2) - The Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) is a quality instructional framework in Illinois for the implementation of Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs, as defined by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). ICAPS provides an accelerated pathway to an industry-recognized credential through training partnerships— such as Career and Technical Education or an approved training provider- to serve adult education students, including English Language Learners, at the same time that they are completing their Illinois High School Diploma and/or improving their English Language. Instruction and training are supplemented by support courses, comprehensive student support services, and augmented by collaborative teaching practices between workforce training instructors and basic skills instructors.

Required elements include:

- Adult Education classwork
- Workplace Preparation
- Workforce Training

Bridge Programming - Bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or basic 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.

Required elements include:

- 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
- Transition services that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial coursework to credit or occupational programs. Services may include academic advising, tutoring, study skills, coaching, and referrals to individual support services like transportation and childcare.

Transition Programming/Wrap-Around Services – Services in conjunction with partners that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of transition to and through postsecondary education and training. Services may include academic advising, navigators, tutoring, study skills, coaching, and referrals to individual support services like transportation and childcare.