

**Illinois Community College Board
Innovative Bridge and Transition Program Grant Application**

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

A. Program Description

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is inviting eligible applicants to apply for the Innovative Bridge and Transition Program Grants.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will provide grant funding opportunities to be administered in FY2019 (June 1, 2019 - May 30, 2020) to support innovative bridge and transition programs. The purpose of this grant is to create, support or expand bridge programs and transition program and services which prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading to employment in high skill, high wage, and in-demand occupations. Funding may also be used to support or create transition programs which improve student transitions to and through postsecondary education and into employment.

Grant Objectives:

- Create new or expanded bridge or transition program instruction which may include contextualized basic reading, math, and language skills, industry/occupation knowledge, or life skills.
- Develop Career activities which may include career development and exploration, career planning within a career area, understanding the world of work, and essential skills.
- Utilize transition services which 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, 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., transportation and child care.
- Engage in partnerships with other entities that may strengthen the ability of students to persist through the education and training provided. Partners may include community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, advocacy groups, local one-stops, and employers, among others.

Grant Activities may include:

- Curriculum development and alignment: Furthering the alignment of coursework by contextualizing and integrating basic skills or academic and career and technical education offerings.
- 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. integrated education and training program development, curriculum alignment, stackable credentials). Additionally, applicants may develop or expand programming to align with

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priority sectors as identified in their local or regional WIOA plans including but not limited to work based learning activities.

- Other activities of statewide significance that expands career pathways and is aligned with labor market information as identified by local or regional needs.

B. Eligibility Information

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, www.grants.illinois.gov. During pre-qualification, Dun and Bradstreet verifications are performed including a check of Debarred and Suspended status and good standing with the Secretary of State. The pre-qualification 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 Dun and Bradstreet verification. The entity will be informed of corrective action needed to become eligible for a grant award.

Eligible applicants of demonstrated effectiveness include:

- Institutions of Higher Education
- Community-Based Organizations
- Local Education Agencies
- Public or Private Nonprofit Agencies
- Other applicants of demonstrated effectiveness

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAMS)

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:

1. 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>;
2. Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award. ICCB may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has fully complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements.

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Grant recipients must comply with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

C. Application Package

1. Uniform Application

- The application packet must include all required information.

2. Cover Page

- Must include the institutions name, address, telephone number, website, as well as the contact information including email address, telephone number and extension, fax number of the President/CEO, Chief Financial Officer, and Project Coordinator/Administrator.
- Provide a statement that stipulates: “This application is being submitted on behalf of the <institution’s name> and if awarded, the applicant agrees to abide by the provisions and guidelines set forth in the application and by the ICCB. Furthermore, the individuals listed in the application are authorized to act on behalf of the institution.” This statement must be signed and dated by the President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

3. Abstract

Provide a one-page (or less) abstract that describes the following: (a) organization and communities proposed to be served, (b) principal objectives, (c) target population (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, educational/workforce levels), including projected number of individuals to be served; and (d) proposed project activities and services to increase student achievement in either a Bridge Program or Transition Program.

4. Application Narrative

The eligible applicant must submit a narrative that must include the following information. The narrative must be no more than an eight pages, double spaced, and 12 point type.

- Statement of Need including a description of the target population of students to be served including a breakdown (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, educational levels – high school/GED, workforce status, etc.);
- Projected unduplicated number of individuals to be served, if applicable;

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- Detailed description of the project including the measurable project goals and objectives;
- Describe the partnerships that will be engaged and the role of each partner;
- Project timeline and activities including how the activities will help to achieve the grant activities;
- Uniform Budget that includes all grant related activities;
- Describe the impact of the project on students, the community, the institution, etc.;
- Describe the scalability and replicability of the project;
- Describe the applicant's capacity to execute the project including a description of previous experience in implementing successful Bridge or Transition Programs and related activities for the target population; and
- Describe the applicant's plan to sustain the project.

5. Application and Submission Information

Each grant application must be submitted by May 1, 2019 to Jane.Black@illinois.gov. Grant application and materials may be found on the ICCB website: www.iccb.org/workforce.

Submission criteria:

- Application including cover page, abstract, narrative, project timeline and activities, and the Uniform Budget, are due by May 1, 2019.
- Application must be double spaced using 12 point type.
- Application is limited to no more than eight pages, not including the Uniform Budget, Cover Page, and Abstract.
- Submit the application and all questions electronically to Jane.Black@illinois.gov. Include in the subject line: [**Institution's Name**] Innovative Bridge and Transition Program.
- Paper copies are not permitted. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt.
- All applicants, funded or not funded, will be notified May 20, 2019.

D. Funding Information

Grant Period: The grant period is from June 1, 2019 through May 30, 2020.

Funding Availability:

The total \$3,994,400 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Illinois Community College Board for grants for educational purposes as outlined in this NOFO. Not less than 35.2% of which shall be allocated to bridge programs at community colleges.

- \$2,400,000 for bridge programs at community colleges
- \$1,594,400 for other providers

Recipients are not eligible to renew or extend existing grant-funded projects, but may supplement or scale current initiatives.

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Funding Deadlines:

- Grant funds must be obligated by May 30, 2020.
- Good/products must be ordered by May 30, 2020/received by June 30, 2020.
- Services must be rendered by May 30, 2020.
- Grant funds must be expended by June 30, 2020.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

- No cost sharing or matching is required.

Indirect Cost Rate:

- In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs: a) 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. b) 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. c) De Minimis Rate. An organization that has never received a Federally Negotiated Rate may elect a de minimis rate of 10% 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.

E. Review Criteria and Selection Process:

A team of 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.

The ICCB holds the authority to fund or not fund applications based on the above criteria and applicants may not appeal the ICCB's final funding decision based on their evaluation score. Applicants may, however, appeal the evaluation/selection process. This appeals process can be found within the *Merit Based Review Policy**.

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet all requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. Applications that fail to meet the criteria as identified in Section B, "Eligibility Information" may not be scored and considered for funding. Submissions that are late or are in any way incomplete will not be considered for funding. The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications submitted under this NOFO.

- ***Project Need (20%)***

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- The applicant should identify both programmatic and financial need for the grant.
- Supporting data and documentation should be provided to support said need.

- ***Project Quality (40%)***
 - Activities are thoroughly described, supported by evidence and/or data, include specific tasks and timelines, and relate to the identified objectives.
 - Integration with key partners, internal and external, and strength of those partnerships, as well as detailing each partner's role.
 - The submitted budget is accurate and reasonable.

- ***Project Impact (20%)***
 - Expected outcomes are well-defined, measurable, reasonable, and relate to the identified activities and objectives.
 - The innovative approach and potential impact on student achievement development. There is a clear vision for scalability and replicability in the future, where appropriate.

- ***Project Capacity and Sustainability (20%)***
 - The applicant has documented that it has the institutional capacity to effectively implement and sustain the project.
 - A sustainability plan is detailed and feasible,
 - Considerations will be taken into account for grant recipients who have previously received grant funding from ICCB in which grant deliverables were not met or where significant funds were left unexpended.

**Merit Based Review, 2 CFR 200.204. For competitive grants unless prohibited by Federal statute, the Federal awarding agency must design and execute a merit review process for applications. This process must be described or incorporated by reference in the applicable funding opportunity (see Appendix I to this part, Full text of the Funding Opportunity.) See also Section 200.203 Notices of funding opportunities. An appeals process must be described and incorporated with the merit based review process.*

F. Award Administration Information

State Award Notices: Successful applicants will be notified in writing by the ICCB (note that this notification is not an authorization to begin performance). Subsequently, a Notice of State Award (NOSA) will be distributed by the ICCB prior to the issuance of a grant agreement. The NOSA will specify terms and conditions added to the award based on the results of the fiscal and administrative internal control questionnaire and the programmatic risk assessment. All components as relayed above will be provided electronically to the email address provided by the recipient in the grant proposal. All applicants, funded or not funded, will be notified by **May 20, 2019.**

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Administrative and National Policy Requirements: Refer to Section B, “Funding Information”, and Indirect Costs for details on indirect rate requirements and limitations.

Required Programmatic and Financial Reporting: Recipients are required to submit quarterly programmatic and expenditure reports electronically to Jane.Black@illinois.gov. The reporting schedule is detailed below. Reporting templates and other instructions will be made available to grant recipients at a later date.

- Quarter 1 (June 1, 2019- August 31, 2019): Due September 30, 2019
- Quarter 2 (September 1, 2019- November 30, 2019): Due December 30, 2020
- Quarter 3 (December 1, 2020-February 28, 2020): Due March 31, 2020
- Quarter 4 (March 1, 2020- May 30, 2020): Due June 30, 2020

Quarterly Reporting: Awardees must prepare and submit electronically all quarterly reports to the ICCB. The quarterly report includes outcome, programmatic and financial reports which must demonstrate progress in achieving the proposed program goals and objectives. Quarterly reports must include:

- a narrative update on proposed activities, including the evaluation of the program progress;
- an updated financial report which provides details of how funds have been allocated and expended; and
- outcome and enrollment information, as applicable, including progress toward meeting goals and objectives as outlined in the application.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

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