



1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)
2.	Agency Contact:	Rupa Sameer, rupa.sameer@illinois.gov
3.	Announcement Type:	Competitive, one year plus one renewal option
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Grant
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	N/A
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	FY27 Adult Education Basic Competitive
7.	CSFA Number:	684-01-1625
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	Adult Education - Basic Grants to States - Federal and State Funding
9.	CFDA Number(s):	84.002
10.	Grant Period	July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028
11.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	70
12.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$55,000,000
13.	Award Range:	Formula-based
14.	Source of Funding:	Federal Pass-through, State
15.	Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement:	No
16.	Indirect Costs Allowed Restrictions on Indirect Costs	Yes Federal up to 5% of the total federal award on administrative costs, including Indirect Costs. Adherence to EDGAR 2 CFR 200; WIOA Section 233 (b) (a) (2) State: Indirect cost rate elected through the State of Illinois Grantee Portal
17.	Posted Date:	February 27 th , 2026
18.	Closing Date for Applications:	May 1, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CST
19.	Intent to Apply Notice:	No
20.	Technical Assistance:	Optional Bidder's Conference on March 9, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. CST. and Technical and accessibility assistance will be provided throughout the grant period to grant recipients.

BACKGROUND

This Notice of Funding Opportunity stipulates the requirements for submitting a Request for Proposal for Adult Education funding for State Fiscal Year 2027 (SFY27) to carry out the following programs under the State Adult Education Act as well as WIOA Title II: (1) Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 231) and (2) Adult Education in Correctional Institutions (Section 225).

Required deliverables, allowable activities, performance measures, and requirements for submitting an application in Euna/Amplifund through a combination of federal and state adult education funding in accordance with CFR §463.20 are described throughout this NOFO.

All funding is contingent on State and Federal appropriations.

Eligible applicants must address the activities and requirements set forth in this document. The Table of Contents will guide you through the document. The application will be submitted via the grant management system Euna/Amplifund. Additionally, a resource packet which provides detailed explanations, definitions of key terms, and application submission details are available for reference at: <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....	4
ELIGIBLE AGENCIES AND DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS.....	5
ELIGIBLE SERVICES AND ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES.....	6
INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES	7
PRIORITY POPULATIONS.....	7
GRANT DELIVERABLES	8
PERFORMANCE	9
Program Considerations.....	10
GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA) NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS.....	11
STATE OF ILLINOIS UNIFIED PLAN.....	12
BUDGET AND FINANCE	12
AREA PLANNING COUNCIL (APC) DISTRICT FUNDING ESTIMATES.....	14
MONITORING.....	15
REPORTING, DATA COLLECTION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY.....	15
RESOURCES	15
OPTIONAL BIDDER’S CONFERENCE.....	16
APPLICATION DIRECTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION	16
GENERAL INFORMATION	18
APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION.....	18
Appeal Process	20
AWARD INFORMATION	20
TERMS OF THE GRANT.....	20
GENERAL ASSURANCE FOR TERMS OF THE GRANT.....	21
CONTACT	23

PURPOSE

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is offered to solicit applications for federal and state adult education funds. The purpose of adult education services is to assist:

1. adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency.
2. adults who are parents or family members in obtaining education and skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family.
3. adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in transitioning to post-secondary education and training, including through career pathways; and
4. immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in a. improving their:
 - a. reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English. mathematics skills; and
 - b. acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

Through this competitive process, ICCB seeks to strengthen Area Planning Councils through accountability, improve regional coordination, and ensure adult education services are aligned with career pathways, workforce demand, and measurable outcomes. (Illinois Policy)

Federal and state funds are braided to support these programs. Funding for each program is described below.

	Program	Funding Opportunities
1.	Adult Education and Literacy (Section 231)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WIOA Funding (Federal Basic + 25% State Match• Remaining State Basic + State Performance) *
2.	Adult Education in Correctional Institutions (Section 225)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WIOA Funding (Federal Basic + 25% State Match• Remaining State Basic + State Performance) *

*Performance funding is only available for funded programs after 1 year of Title II funding.

*Title II-funded programs with a minimum of two (2) full years of data in the Illinois State Data System will be funded in accordance with the funding formula outlined in the Illinois Adult Education and Literacy Provider Manual.

*New applicants and programs without two full years of historical data in the State Data System will be funded using a cost-per-student calculation methodology until at least one full year of performance data has been collected and validated in the State Data System. Funding determinations remain subject to availability of State and Federal appropriations.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for funding under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) are organizations that meet the definition of an “eligible provider” under Section 203(5) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Eligible providers include, but are not limited to:

- Local educational agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Volunteer literacy organizations
- Institutions of higher education
- Public or private nonprofit agencies
- Libraries
- Public housing authorities
- Nonprofit institutions that are not described above and have the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities
- Consortia of eligible providers

Eligible applicants must demonstrate the capacity to deliver adult education and literacy activities in accordance with WIOA Title II requirements, applicable state and federal regulations, and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Adult Education and Literacy Provider Manual.

As this is a competitive funding opportunity, eligible applicants must demonstrate fiscal, administrative, and programmatic capacity; past effectiveness as required by WIOA; and the ability to coordinate services within the Area Planning Council (APC) structure.

Consortia and partnerships with Area Planning Councils are strongly encouraged and applicants proposing consortia arrangements must identify a lead agency responsible for fiscal, programmatic, and data accountability on behalf of all consortium partners. They must also identify the role and responsibilities of each partnering agency.

Demonstrated Effectiveness

To be eligible for funding under this NOFO, the applicant must meet demonstrated effectiveness per 34 CFR §463.24. To be eligible for a full grant review, submitting applicants must have a minimum three-year rolled-up Measurable Skill Gain rate of 25% that illustrates effectiveness in improving reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition skills.

Applications that fail to meet Demonstrated Effectiveness requirements will not be reviewed or scored.

ELIGIBLE SERVICES AND ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

Adult Education means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increases an individual's ability to

- read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
- transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- obtain employment.

Below are the eligible services and allowable activities for applicants under Section 231 – AEFLA and Sections 225 - Corrections Education as well as other requirements as designated by the Illinois Community College Board per CFR §463.175.

WIOA Funding (Section 231 – AEFLA):

Funding available under this section will be used to fulfill the requirements under this section with the exception of those identified as state-only activities.

- a. Adult education and literacy (including ABE, ASE, ESL/ELA)
- b. Bridge Programming, an instructional strategy to provide learners with on-ramps to postsecondary education, training, and Integrated Career and Preparation System programming. (Illinois Policy)
- c. Workplace adult education and literacy activities, workplace preparation activities and career awareness/development
- d. English Language Acquisition and Civics instruction and activities
- e. Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System, ICAPS, (Federally Referred to as
- f. Integrated Education and Training) Support and/or Training Courses

WIOA Funding (Correctional Education - Section 225 - AELFA):

Funding is available to carry out corrections and education for other institutionalized individuals. The funds shall be used to cover costs of education programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for:

- a. Adult education and literacy activities
- b. Special education, as determined by the eligible agency
- c. Secondary school credit
- d. Integrated education and training
- e. Career pathways
- f. Concurrent enrollment
- g. Peer tutoring; and
- h. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism

Non-Match State Funding:

State Basic and State Performance funding, not utilized toward the 25% match, is to be used in accordance with WIOA Section 231, the Illinois Adult Education Act. Foreign Language High School Equivalency is an allowable use of fund non-match state funding. (Illinois Policy)

29 USC 3331. SEC. 241. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS. (a) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT. Funds made available for adult education and literacy activities under this title should supplement and not supplant other State or local public funds expended for adult education and literacy activities.

INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

An eligible individual to receive Adult Education and Literacy services is an individual:

- who has attained 17 years of age.
- who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and
- who:
 - is basic skills deficient.
 - does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
 - is an English language learner.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

The ICCB is committed to serving the populations that are most in need of the services as identified under the Illinois Unified Workforce Plan and the [ICCB Goals](#) for members of special populations. [WIOA Resources WIOA 2024 - 2028 Workforce Development Strategic Plan \(illinoisworknet.com\)](#)

Applicants, in collaboration within their Area Planning Council, will be required to develop strategies for the delivery of instructional services targeting the following populations: Low literacy adults, including those without a high school diploma

- Low skilled adults
- English language learners
- Long-term unemployed
- Low-income adults
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
- Those receiving public assistance
- Out-of-school youth
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
- Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces and is on active duty
- Veterans and Veterans with disabilities
- Migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Re-entry individuals (ex-offenders)
- Older individuals
- Homeless individuals
- Single parents
- Displaced homemakers
- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians

GRANT DELIVERABLES

Under this Notice of Funding Opportunity, the ICCB envisions a comprehensive Adult Education Career Pathway Program that will provide an array of instructional and support services designed to help students make smooth transitions within adult education and into postsecondary education, training, and employment. The expectation is that applicants will propose services for all students, at all levels, beginning at low literacy and all English Language levels through preparation for postsecondary education and employment.

A core objective of this NOFO is to strengthen Area Planning Councils (APCs) by promoting accountability, coordinated service delivery, shared data review, and alignment with regional workforce and education priorities (Illinois Policy). Programs are expected to actively participate in APC structures to support regional planning, reduce duplication of services, and improve learner transitions across providers.

A key strategy to address the needs of adult learners and meet performance accountability indicators of WIOA is the implementation of Bridge and ICAPS (Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System) programming (CFR §463.35), which are required offerings for all AEFLA-funded programs (Illinois Policy). This strategic decision is grounded in the understanding that these programs play a crucial role in enhancing participants' academic progress, career readiness, and credential attainment. To ensure accountability and assess the effectiveness of these initiatives, all programs must offer, with enrolled eligible adult learners, Bridge and ICAPS programming throughout the academic year (Illinois Policy).

To accomplish this, a successful applicant proposes the following services and activities:

Required Services

1. Provide direct instruction leading to increases in education functioning levels to eligible adult learners across National Reporting System (NRS) levels in Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English Language Acquisition with paid and qualified instructors. Instructional services must be designed and delivered in coordination with Area Planning Council (APC) priorities to support regional alignment and learner transitions. (Illinois Policy)
 - Build on the Illinois Adult Education ABE/ASE and ELA/ESL Standards/ and the Illinois Career Cluster Framework to ensure students are college and workplace ready.
 - Integrate distance learning programming to address barriers to in-class participation and include technology focused instruction to improve learning and the skills necessary for success of students in adult education, and their transition into postsecondary education and employment. This includes, but is not limited to, digital literacy, specific instructional software, distance education (i-Pathways), and the development of other technological skills needed for student success. (Illinois Policy)
 - Utilize evidence-based and integrated teaching methodologies that may include multi-lingual approaches that are based on research to improve English Language Acquisition and prepare students for college and career readiness.
2. Ensure 100% of adult learners receive the required NRS pre-assessments within the ICCB assessment policy (Adult Education Provider Manual) and ensure post-testing rates meet the expected targets outlined below in the Performance Section.
3. Scale effective strategies including the required bridge programs and Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (I-CAPS) or other approved integrated models that meet the

required guidelines for the ICCB. It is expected that Adult Education programs will expand on current ICAPS offering and strengthen this career pathway strategy in FY26 (Illinois Policy).

- 4 Implement contextualized Career Pathways and Industry-focused curricula that are aligned with State and regional labor market information and developed in coordination with Area Planning Council (APC) partners to ensure alignment with regional workforce demand and pathway opportunities. (Illinois Policy)
- 5 Utilize data from the state Management Information System to improve instruction and services to ensure performance accountability.
- 6 Prioritize transitioning students to postsecondary training and degree attainment, industry recognized credential attainment, and/or employment.
- 7 Develop a career pathways system with multiple entry points for all adult learners, including One-Stop and American Job Center locations.
- 8 Establish partnerships with core and required partners, including those identified through the Area planning Council (APC), to ensure coordinated student support services that improve retention, persistence and transitions to education, training, and employment. (Illinois Policy)
- 9 Collaborate with core and required partners as well as other stakeholders identified in approved Area Planning Council plans to implement regionally agreed-upon strategies, meet APC deliverables, and support shared accountability for student outcomes. (Illinois Policy)
- 10 Participate in regular APC data review and planning activities, including shared analysis of enrollment, persistence, and outcome data, to inform regional continuous improvement and coordinated service delivery. (Illinois Policy)
- 11 For renewal and continuation years, develop and implement a continuous improvement plan (Illinois policy) using the renewal narrative and scope of work. This plan addresses:
 - o Actions targeting Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs), High School equivalency attainment, and ICAPS completion.
 - Milestones and track performance improvement through data integrity
 - Describe how APC partnerships and LWIAS contribute to student retention and programmatic success.
 - If applicable, programs must detail workplace literacy initiatives.

PERFORMANCE

Federal law requires that states demonstrate continuous improvement in achievement of the outcomes negotiated. (CFR §463.35) Applicants will be required to meet and/or exceed all targets as set by the ICCB, according to Federal National Reporting Systems (NRS) guidelines. At the time of posting this NOFO, the Federal targets for SFY27 have not been determined. Below are SFY26 targets for reference. Once the Federal Targets are determined, they will be disseminated widely. Eligible applicants funded will be required to use data to improve program service and delivery.

The ICCB will determine professional development and corrective action for programs failing to meet the guidelines determined by the ICCB. All Programmatic Watch and Probation guidelines are outlined in the Adult Education Provider Manual. The following primary indicators of performance are required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and CFR §463.170. The negotiated targets shown are for Fiscal Year 2026.

Performance Measure	Target
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit): Percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.	31.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit): Percentage of program participants who are unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exiting from the program.	34.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit): Median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.	\$6,150.00
Credential Attainment: Percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program; providing they obtain or retain employment or enter postsecondary education.	32.0%
Measurable Skill Gains: Percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads those who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.	41.5%

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving and enhancing the literacy skills of adults and families is a strong factor in the delivery of adult education instruction and supportive services. The ICCB will consider the success of a funded provider in meeting or exceeding such performance measures as identified by the Federal National Reporting System (NRS). The ICCB also recognizes the need to build a career pathway system for adult learners that will enhance education and employment opportunities. To accomplish this, the eligible applicant must address the following federal considerations as well as one state consideration, as listed below.

Through this RFP, the applicant must demonstrate how the program will fulfill each of the considerations per CFR § 463.22, how they will assist students in achieving literacy skills, and how they will set up career pathway frameworks that will lead students to postsecondary education and training and/or employment.

1. The eligible applicant has documented the need to serve individuals in the community who are most in need of adult education and literacy services and those who are in need of career pathway services, including individuals who have low literacy skills or who are English language learners (i.e., literacy statistics, regional and local needs as identified under the Unified State Plan, area plans, etc.).
2. The applicant demonstrates the ability to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities.
3. The applicant demonstrates past effectiveness in improving the literacy skills of adults, including those with low literacy levels; and demonstrates the ability to meet or exceed the levels of performance.

4. The applicant's proposed adult education services and activities demonstrate an alignment with local plans and services and with local one-stop partners.
5. The applicant demonstrates the use of instructional practices and activities that research has proven to be effective in teaching to achieve learning gains, is of sufficient intensity and duration, are built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practices and includes the essential components of reading.
6. The applicant demonstrates effectiveness in providing instruction in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition and is based on best practices, scientific valid research and the state standards.
7. The applicant proposes program activities that effectively employ advances in technology including the use of computers as a part of instruction including distance education to increase the quality of learning which leads to improved performance.
8. The applicant proposes activities that provide contextualized learning including integrated education and training as well as bridge programs to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace, transition to postsecondary education and training, advance in employment and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
9. The applicant proposes activities that are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, support staff and administrators who meet state guidelines, and have access to high quality professional development.
10. The applicant's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions/ institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways
11. The applicant offers flexible schedules and supportive services (such as childcare and transportation) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.
12. The applicant maintains a high-quality information management system, as determined by the ICCB and has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance measures.
13. The local communities to be served by the applicant have a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs and civic education programs.
14. The proposed budget is consistent with the eligible provider's activities, is cost efficient within administrative guidelines and places emphasis on serving the target populations. (Illinois Specific Consideration)

GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA) NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) requires all applicants for federal grant awards to ensure equitable access and participation in their federally funded programs. As part of the application, applicants must provide a brief description of the steps they will take to identify and address barriers that may prevent equitable access for students, educators, and other beneficiaries. Barriers may include, but are not limited to, those based on gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, age, language, economic status, or other factors.

Applicants may reference existing policies or initiatives that promote the ICCB Priorities or describe specific actions planned for the proposed project. Responses should be included in the grant narrative, ensuring compliance with GEPA requirements.

For further details, refer to OMB Control Number 1894-0005 and the official GEPA guidance: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2020-title20/html/USCODE-2020-title20-chap31subchapII-part2-sec1228a.htm>

STATE OF ILLINOIS UNIFIED PLAN

Under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State of Illinois is required to submit a Unified Plan that is a partnership of core partners including, Title I and III, through the Department of Labor, and Title II and IV through the Department of Education.

ICCB is seeking eligible adult education providers that will fulfill the requirements of the WIOA as outlined in the State Unified Plan which includes –Title II: Adult Education. Information on the Unified State Plan can be found here: [WIOA Resources](#)

BUDGET AND FINANCE

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will result in two grant agreements to a single applicant selected for award. While a single application is required, for those applicants selected, the ICCB will issue two awards and two separate grant agreements based on the funding sources identified below. Applicants selected for funding will receive awards from both funding sources.

- 1. WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)**
This award consists of federal AEFLA funds authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), together with the required 25% non-federal match in accordance with 34 CFR § 463.60 and 2 CFR § 200.306. Funds awarded under this opportunity are subject to all applicable federal statutes, regulations, Uniform Administrative Requirements (2 CFR Part 200), and state pass-through entity requirements. Funds awarded under the WIOA Title II opportunity, including the required non-federal match, must be used for allowable adult education and literacy activities consistent with 34 CFR Part 463 and 2 CFR Part 200.
- 2. Non-Match State-Supported Adult Education Programs.** This award consists of State of Illinois appropriations for adult education and literacy activities that are not utilized toward the 25% match and State Performance Funds. State funds are governed by applicable Illinois statutes, administrative rules, grant agreement terms, and ICCB policy. These funds are to be used in coordination with WIOA Grant Deliverables. (Illinois Policy) For the purpose of this submission, applicants are only submitting their non-match State Basic budget. Upon release of State Performance Funding, applicants will amend their budget to include Performance funding when applicable.

Participation eligibility, allowable activities, reporting requirements, and monitoring expectations may differ between the WIOA grant award and the GRF grant award.

Funding under this NOFO is subject to annual appropriation, availability of funds, performance, compliance, and ICCB policy determinations.

ICCB reserves the right to modify funding structures, allocation methodologies, reporting requirements, and grant conditions in subsequent fiscal years, including during renewal periods, as necessary to ensure compliance with federal or state law, regulatory changes, data system modifications, or Board-approved policy revisions.

Federal funds are appropriated by Congress and are allocated to each state through the U.S. Department of Education. State funding, appropriated through the Illinois State Legislature, is allocated to support the Adult Education and Family Literacy programming.

Funds are allocated to local programs through a formula outlined in the [Adult Education Provider Manual](#).

In general, the funding allocation is calculated using the Index of Need which determines the funding for an Area Planning Council. From there, base funding is calculated using three years of prior enrollment plus three years of Instructional Hours (Units of Instruction). The Index of Need is an evidence-based calculation based on Census Data and the American Community Survey to identify the local needs within a specific Area Planning Council Boundary.

State performance awards are based on outcomes such as Secondary and High School Completions, Education Level Gains based on post-test assessments, and citizenship completions from completed, finalized, and audited data from the previous three years. Newly funded providers are not eligible to receive State performance funding until they have at least one full year of reportable data available for inclusion in the performance funding calculation.

Current providers will use a variety of resources to provide Adult Education and Literacy instructional and support services. We encourage institutions to support Adult Education within their organization.

- Indirect Costs for Non-Match State Basic and State Performance are limited to the indirect cost rate elected through the State of Illinois Grantee Portal.
- Indirect Costs for Federal Basic and State Match are limited pursuant to provisions limiting local administrative costs in WIOA Sec. 233 restricting certain administrative costs and indirect costs. Administrative costs are capped at 5%, which include direct costs for planning, administration (including performance and accountability), professional development, activities in alignment with local workforce plans, supporting one-stop operations and indirect costs. If an entity does not have a restricted indirect rate, they can use 8% (34 CFR 76.564). If they have a restricted rate, that must be used unless that rate exceeds 8%. The administrative costs (direct admin costs plus the indirect costs) must come under the 5%.

Direct Student Support: Reclassification in Grant Exclusive Line Item

Beginning in FY2027, for ICCB grants that permit student support as an allowable expenditure, direct student support should be categorized in the Grant Exclusive tab of the Uniform Budget. Direct student support is when a student directly (ex. tuition assistance, stipends) or indirectly (ex. childcare,

transportation, examination fee assistance) receives grant funds. Exclusive Line Items are not included in the indirect base.

Student Support Subsidies, paid directly to or on behalf of participants, include but are not limited to the following. Note that tangible items that the institution *maintains control or ownership of* (lending libraries, loaner laptops, etc.) should remain in the applicable tab, and not in the Grant Exclusive tab.

- Income replacement
- Transportation subsidies (gas cards, public transit passes, etc)
- Childcare subsidies
- Housing costs
- Food benefits (vouchers, gift cards, institutional food bank, etc)
- Tuition assistance and fees
- Books
- Student supplies (field specific supplies/uniforms, laptops, tablets, etc)
- End-of-program employment assistance
- Legal barrier assistance (criminal record sealing, expungement fees, etc)
- Driver’s license reinstatement fees
- Liability insurance fees

If you have any questions regarding Student Support Subsidies, please refer to ICCB’s Guidance for Student Support Subsidies or submit a question through the general application question process and the answer will be posted in the FAQ.

Review the Resources provided here <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/> for explicit guidance on completing the AEFLA budgets.

Funding is contingent upon availability of funds, effectiveness in serving the target population, and ability to meet the grant requirements. Existing instructional and/or support activities may not be duplicated pursuant to Section 231(d) Special Rule and 241 (a), Supplement Not Supplant, of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

AREA PLANNING COUNCIL (APC) DISTRICT FUNDING ESTIMATES

The following funding *estimates* for FY2027 are based on prior state and federal allocations. **All are subject to change pending final state and federal appropriations.**

Non-Match State Funds	\$28,825,000
WIOA (Federal Basic + 25% State Match)	\$22,375,000
State Performance	\$11,798,500

According to 105 ILCS 405/2-4, the Area Planning Council shall provide for the development and coordination of adult education programs in an Area Planning Council Region. These regions are established within the boundaries of each of Illinois’ Community College Districts.

Funding estimates per each APC will be provided at a later date. Please use your FY26 allocation as a guide in creating your budget. Once the United States Department of Education releases state estimates, the ICCB will release the APC Estimate Tables.

MONITORING

All funded programs will be reviewed either on-site or by desk review to ensure compliance with federal, state, and ICCB policies, regulations, and procedures. Each applicant must complete the financial and administrative risk assessment (also known as the internal control questionnaire (ICQ)) through the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) portal. This assessment will determine risk conditions as outlined in GATA. The GATA requirements are posted at: <https://gata.illinois.gov>

Programs are expected to meet all performance targets as established by the ICCB. When examining program performance, it is expected that, at a minimum, programs will meet the state targets for level completion rates for Education Functioning Levels. The ICCB will specifically look at the number of NRS reportable students, the required Bridge and ICAPS Programming, the overall percentage of students obtaining a level gain as determined by post-testing conducted within test publisher guidelines, and the credential attainment. Students pre-testing at and classified as ASE High students are excluded from this calculation.

REPORTING, DATA COLLECTION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All required reporting obligations for AEFLA funded programs will be outlined in the Adult Education and Literacy Provider Manual. Funded providers must adhere to these reporting requirements to maintain compliance with State and Federal regulations.

It is required that all funded programs acquire the necessary hardware to meet ICCB specifications for data reporting. All programs will also be required to have internet access with a valid e-mail address. All programs funded and those who work with program data will be required to sign off on a data confidentiality agreement.

RESOURCES

The following resources are referenced throughout the Notice of Funding Opportunity and have been organized here for your convenience.

- Ability to Benefit
<https://www2.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/adulted/atb/Illinois%20Ability%20to%20Benefit%20Alternative%20State%20Plan.pdf>
- Adult Education Area Planning Council Census/Index of Need Data
<https://www2.iccb.org/data/research-tools/district-census-data/>
- Adult Education and Literacy Provider Manual
[FY25 AEFLA and IELCE Provider Manual .pdf](#)
- Adult Education Data Dashboard https://www2.iccb.org/adult_ed/adult-education-title-ii-wioa-data-outcomes-dashboard-beta-release/
- Bridge and ICAPS sources <https://www.icapsillinois.com/>
- Evaluation Resources <https://ilworkforceacademy.com/evaluation-toolkit/>
- Section 10-22.20 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-22.20)

- <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs5.asp?ActID=1032&ChapterID=17>
- Title II, Adult Education and Literacy, of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014
<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW->
- Illinois Adult Education and English Language Content Standards.
<https://excellenceinadulthood.org/resources/iccb-statewide-contextualized-curricula>
- Illinois Adult Education and Literacy, Public Act 91-830
<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/pubact91/acts/91-0830.html>
- Illinois Career Pathway Dictionary <https://pathwaysdictionary.org/>
- Illinois Community College Board Workforce Education Strategic Plan
<https://www2.iccb.org/iccb/wp-content/pdfs/workforce/WESP.pdf>
- Illinois Unified State Plan [WIOA Resources WIOA 2020 - 2024 Workforce Development Strategic Plan \(illinoisworknet.com\)](#)
- Professional Development Resources: <https://excellenceinadulthood.org/>

OPTIONAL BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

An informational meeting will be held via web conference. **Registration for the webinar is not required.** See the information listed below. It is **not** mandatory that an eligible program attend an informational meeting, but it is highly encouraged. The informational meetings will begin and end promptly at the times designated below. An opportunity for questions will be provided.

In the case of unexpected problems, visit the ICCB website <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/> for cancellations and/or rescheduled sessions.

Time: March 9th, 2026, 12:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/96621876191?pwd=Hu8bDzO8CUuL4e9BuD7sdoLwCtoGat.1>

It is recommended you test your connection to zoom, including your microphone and camera settings (if applicable), at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

NOTE: Applicants must submit all questions in writing no later than two weeks prior to the application submission deadline. Responses to submitted questions will be compiled and posted in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on the ICCB Adult Education webpage.

APPLICATION DIRECTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

ICCB is issuing a single Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY27 Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Competitive Grant. However, applications will apply through two separate funding opportunities within the Amplifund system, which correspond to distinct program components and funding streams.

Applicants seeking funding under both opportunities must submit the same application narrative and associated programmatic documents under each applicable Amplifund opportunity. However, each opportunity will have a separate budget. Additionally, the WIOA application will require the completion of the FFATA.

Applicants must ensure that all required fields, budgets and attachments are completed and submitted within each Amplifund application.

Application Deadline: Friday, May 1st, 2026, at 5:00 PM CST.

Applications received after the deadline or not received via Euna/Amplifund will not be considered.

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

WIOA Title II AEFLA:

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/202ce732-0caf-4e63-b7d8-0eb989a31de4>

Adult Education and Literacy Basic Grants- State:

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/74c189f5-7dca-41be-b16b-852098233c9d>

Please go to <https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/> to access resources that will guide you through the Amplifund process.

Amplifund Support:

- Email: contact@amplifund.com
- Phone (216) 377-5500

Application Materials

All required information and attachments must be included as part of the application to be considered.

Application materials include

1. **Demonstrated Effectiveness:** Complete applications that meet demonstrated effectiveness eligibility requirements will be reviewed and scored by ICCB using criteria aligned with the FY27 grant Narrative and Scope of work. Applications will be evaluated for clarity, alignment, feasibility, and consistency across submitted materials, including alignment with Area Planning Council (APC) priorities and Illinois policy requirements. Scoring criteria are used to ensure a fair, consistent, and transparent review process.
2. **Uniform Grant Application:** This is a form in Amplifund and must be submitted for both opportunities.
3. **Uniform Budget:** The template is provided in Amplifund. Download the template and upload each of the budgets.
 - a. The Chief Executive Officer or authorized signature must sign the Certificate worksheet within the Uniform Budget.
 - b. You must submit a unique budget for each opportunity. Once grants are scored, funded applicants will submit an additional Performance Budget in the Non-Match State category.
4. **Grant Narrative:** All applicants must complete the required narrative fields within Amplifund and upload the narrative into both grant opportunities (WIOA and Non-Match State) Failure to provide complete and detailed responses may result in application disqualification.
 - APC Alignment and Regional Coordination
 - Performance Improvement Strategy (two-year cycle)
 - Retention and Persistence
 - APC Aligned Career Pathways (Bridge and ICAPS) and Workplace literacy

- Data Management and Continuous Improvement
- Instructional Services and Program Design

Applicants are required to align their narrative and proposed activities to the applicable Area Planning Council (APC) Plan.

Applicants not currently funded under ICCB Title II Adult Education and Literacy may request a copy of the applicable APC Plan by contacting Rupa Sameer at rupa.sameer@illinois.gov no later than April 13, 2026. Requests submitted after this date may not allow sufficient time for review and alignment.

5. Scope of Work: Programs must also complete the Scope of Work and submit in both grant opportunities (WIOA and Non-Match State) within Amplifund to ensure compliance with ICCB reporting and performance monitoring requirements.
6. Programmatic Risk Assessment: Programs must submit a Programmatic Risk Assessment.
7. FFATA: In the WIOA Opportunity, all applicants must submit the FFATA.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The initial period is July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

- Complete the pre-qualifications under Grant Accountability and Transparency Act portal. <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>
- Complete the FY26 Internal Control Questionnaire (ICQ), also known as the financial risk assessment, on the GATA portal for grantees.
- Submit the FY26 Programmatic Risk Assessment
- Submit all required documents and complete all required portions of the application process outlined in this NOFO.
- Meet all deadlines and other elements as specified.
- Meet all eligibility requirements.

All grantees are subject to monitoring as determined by risk and other assessments. In addition to a detailed fiscal review, this includes a programmatic review of compliance files and supporting documentation for courses, service sites, and data security protocols.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION

In reviewing and scoring applications, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) will evaluate the extent to which proposed services demonstrate effective regional coordination through the AREA Planning Council (APC), alignment with regional workforce needs and career pathways, use of data to inform continuous improvement, and strategies that support student retention, persistence, and transitions to postsecondary education, training, or employment. These factors reflect Illinois priorities and are considered in conjunction with the Federal considerations outlined in 34 CFR 463.22.

Merit-Based Review and Selection Process

This funding opportunity will be awarded through a competitive, merit-based review process. All complete and eligible applications will be evaluated using established scoring criteria aligned with the WIOA Title II requirements, state priorities, and the objectives of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Applications will be reviewed and scored by a review team using a standardized review rubric. Each application may receive a maximum of 100 points.

Scoring Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria in the Narrative and Scope of Work:

1. **APC Alignment and Regional Accountability – 20 Points.** Evaluation of the applicant’s alignment with Area Planning Council (APC) priorities, evidence of active APC participation (governance, coordination, data review), and clear staff accountability for APC-related responsibilities. Note: If applying as a consortium, all partner roles and responsibilities must be identified.
2. **Performance Strategy (Two-Year Cycle) – 15 Points.** Evaluation of baseline performance analysis, realistic and data-informed improvement strategies, and a structured plan for sustaining or scaling effective practices across the two-year grant period. Note: If applying as a consortium, all partner roles and responsibilities must be identified.
3. **Retention and Persistence Strategies – 10 Points.** Evaluation of identification of student retention barriers, implementation of early intervention strategies, and alignment of retention efforts with measurable skill gains and student outcomes.
4. **APC Aligned Career Pathways (Bridge, ICAPS, and Workplace Literacy) – 15 Points** Evaluation of coherent career pathway design aligned to APC priority sectors, coordination with postsecondary and workforce partners, and support for student transitions to postsecondary education, training, or employment.
5. **Data Management and Continuous Improvement – 10 Points.** Evaluation of data ownership and accountability, routine performance data review processes (including use of DAISI and Pentaho reports), and documented continuous improvement strategies.
6. **Instructional Services and Program Design – 5 Points.** Evaluation of clarity, alignment, and feasibility of the proposed instructional model, including instructional types offered, projected enrollment, class structure, instructional intensity, and alignment to measurable skill gains and career pathway goals.
7. **Scope of Work Plan – 25 Points.** Evaluation of the alignment between the Grant Narrative and Scope of Work, including clearly defined goals, instructional activities, deliverables, responsible roles, timelines, and measurable outcomes across the two-year grant period.
8. **Budget –** Budgets are not scored but must be reasonable and include only allowable expenditures.

Total Possible Points: 100

Review and Selection Process

Application review will undergo the following steps:

1. Eligibility Screening – Applications will be reviewed for completeness, eligibility, and compliance with submission requirements.
2. Merit-Based Scoring – Eligible applications will be independently scored using the approved review rubric.
3. Funding Recommendations – Final recommendations will be based on application scores, regional considerations, funding availability, demonstrated need, and ICCB priorities.

ICCB reserves the right to:

- Request clarifications or additional information from applicants
- Require budget adjustments
- Adjust award amounts

- Make funding determinations based on overall programmatic balance and statewide needs

All funding decisions are final and subject to approval by the Illinois Community College Board.

APPEAL PROCESS

Merit Based Review, 2 CFR 200.204 outlines the appeals process.

1. Competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal.
 - a. An appeal must be submitted in writing in accordance with the grant application document.
 - b. An appeal must be received within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published.
 - c. The written appeal shall include at a minimum the following:
 - i. the name and address of the appealing party
 - ii. identification of the grant
 - iii. a statement of reasons for the appeal

AWARD INFORMATION

- An award shall be made pursuant to a written determination based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the grant application and successful completion of requirements.
- A Notice of State Award (NOSA) will be issued to grant awardees.
- Upon acceptance of the grant award, announcement of the grant award shall be published by the awarding agency to Grants.Illinois.gov.

TERMS OF THE GRANT

1. Programs may be asked to clarify or revise certain aspects of their proposals. Awardees will ensure that they possess legal authority to enter into a grant agreement with the ICCB and, by doing so, will certify that they are in compliance with applicable State and Federal rules and regulations as stipulated in the grant agreement. False assurances or certifications will cause the grant to be voided.
2. Programs will submit request for payment on a reimbursement basis according to the instructions in the grant agreement. Payments may be stopped or reduced if the funded provider fails to meet the conditions of the grant as listed in the grant agreement, Federal law, State law, or ICCB policy and procedures.
3. All state and federal funds shall be subject to the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act (30 ILCS 705), the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708) and applicable federal regulations (2 CFR 200). 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.
4. WIOA Funds may not be used to support HSE Testing Administration or to pay for test taker testing fees. GRF Funds may be used to support HSE Testing.
5. Funded programs are 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.

6. Funded providers may enter into a sub-grantee agreement with another eligible entity, which is not already funded, to provide additional services to support the adult education population served. However, all program responsibilities are retained by the funded program to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant. All sub-grantees must be listed on the Proposed Sub grantee's Attachment, comply with the terms of the grant agreements, and all information required on the Proposed Sub grantee's Attachment must be filled out completely. The ICCB reserves the right to review and approve all sub-grantee agreements.

GENERAL ASSURANCE FOR TERMS OF THE GRANT

By receiving funds under this grant award, I hereby agree, as grantee, to comply with the following terms and conditions:

7. Programs and projects funded in total or in part through this grant will operate in compliance with State and Federal Regulations (CFR) 34, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
8. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) may, as it deems necessary, supervise, evaluate, and provide guidance and direction to grantees in the conduct of activities performed under the grant. However, failures of ICCB to supervise, evaluate, or provide guidance and direction shall not relieve grantee of any liability for failure to comply with the terms of the grant award.
9. Grantee shall establish and maintain fiscal control and fund accounting procedures, as set forth in 2CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements and in other applicable to State law and regulation.
10. Grantee shall adhere to ICCB reporting requirements, including the submission of monthly, quarterly, mid-year, and annual financial and programmatic reports.
11. Entities expending \$750,000 or more federal funds need to have an annual financial and compliance audit in accordance with 2 CFR 200.
12. Grantee shall retain all records of its financial transactions and accounts relating to this grant for a period of five years or longer if required by federal regulation, after termination of the grant agreement. Such records shall be made available for inspection and audit by the ICCB and its representatives.
13. Budget records may be required to be submitted monthly, semi-annually, and annually.
14. Grantees must receive prior written approval and an executed amendment from the ICCB before implementing any programmatic changes with respect to the purposes for which the grant was awarded.
15. Grantee must receive prior written approval from the ICCB for any budgetary realignments meeting the modification criteria in the grant agreement. Grantee must support the request with reason for change. Budget modifications must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the end of the grant period.
16. If the grantee fails to fulfill its obligations under the grant agreement properly and on time, or otherwise violates any provision of the grant, ICCB may suspend or terminate the grant by written notice to the grantee. The notice shall specify those acts or omissions relied upon as cause for suspension or termination. Grantee shall repay ICCB for any funds that have been determined to have been misspent, unspent, misapplied, or otherwise not properly accounted for. The repayment may be made by an offset to funds that are otherwise due to the grantee.
17. Grantee shall not charge any fees to ABE or ESL Beginning or Intermediate learners for instructional services. However, a program may charge a nominal fee up to a \$3.00 fee per student, per unit of

instruction. An accounting of all fees collected must be maintained for each fiscal year. Additionally, an accounting of how the collected fees were used to provide services to ASE students must also be maintained. The fees collected during a fiscal year must be spent during that same fiscal year in alignment with the grant objectives. All records dealing with a fee charge are subject to monitoring and audit.

18. All program income is governed by 2CFR 200 and shall be documented and reported annually to the ICCB. All program interest and income generated shall only be expended on allowable adult education services per the grant agreement during the fiscal year it is generated. These fees and monies may not be used as a portion of the required local match nor to supplant local support.
19. Local matching funds must be accounted for in program records and used only for costs allowable under the Adult Education and Literacy Act (AEFLA)
20. Any proposed sub-grantee under this grant award shall be included in the original proposal's appendices. Failure to comply with this provision could result in denial of reimbursement for such non-approved sub-grantee services.
21. Fund use shall be limited to adult instructional services and shall not be used for individuals enrolled in Pre-K-12 services or activities. Grantees must ensure that all students under the age of 18 have been officially withdrawn from school.
22. Classes supported with grant funding shall begin and end within the grant award period.
23. The program must support the performance goals of the state by establishing appropriate program goals and outcomes. Valid accurate data from learner records must be entered into the Data and Information System, Illinois database as prescribed in the AEL Provider manual and reviewed on a regular basis by all staff members to ensure the program staff is cognizant of the program's efforts to meet outcome goals.
24. Reviews of MIS reports and self-evaluation must be conducted throughout the fiscal year to ensure that program is continuously monitoring its effectiveness and efficiency.
25. Grantee shall certify that they prohibit and covenant that they will continue to prohibit discrimination and certify that no person, otherwise qualified, is denied employment, services, or other benefits on the basis of: (i) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identification, race, color, creed, or national origin; (ii) sex or age, except when age or sex constitutes a bon fide occupational qualification; or (iii) the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability.
26. Grantee specifically agrees to comply fully with the non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq); the Nontraditional
27. Employment for Women Act of 1991; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR part 37 and 38.C.
28. Reports or other documents produced as a whole or in part with grant funds shall bear no copyright notice or indicate that the grantee and ICCB are joint owners of the copyright.
29. Grantee shall give due credit to the ICCB and the Department of Education on all marketing materials developed or produced under the scope of this award.
30. Grantee shall provide a minimum of 30 days' written notice from the CEO to the Executive Director of ICCB if the organization decides to cease providing services under this grant.

CONTACT

Rupa Sameer
Director for Adult Education and Literacy
Illinois Community College Board
401 E. Capitol Avenue
Springfield, IL 62701
Telephone: 217-785-0213
Email: rupa.sameer@illinois.gov