



FY2026 PERKINS LEADERSHIP GRANT BIDDER'S CONFERENCE

September 11, 2025
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Senior Director for CTE



QUESTIONS?



- If you have a question during the meeting, **please type it in the chat feature** so it can be answered in the FAQ. Questions will not be answered during the meeting.
- There will be a FAQ posted on the [ICCB Grant Opportunities webpage](#).
- Please send all other questions to ICCB.cte@illinois.gov.
- Questions will not be answered to individuals, but will be posted to the FAQ page.

Purpose of the Grant

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is inviting eligible applicants to apply for the **FY2026 Perkins Leadership Grant**. This grant package is designed to support the improvement and innovation of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming throughout the Illinois community college system.



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Community colleges
in the State of Illinois
are invited to submit
proposals under this
Notice of Funding
Opportunity (NOFO).

Funding Overview

- The ICCB will provide approximately \$1,000,000 Federal Perkins Title I Leadership funds to be administered for the purposes of this grant.
- Award scale is \$50,000 - \$150,000
- Anticipated number of awards: 6-20, dependent on budget requests
- Grant period: January 15, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Grant Objectives

Grant Objectives

- The objectives of the grant are intended to support the improvement and innovation of CTE programming.
- The three grant objectives align with initiatives outlined in the Illinois State Plan for Perkins V, as well as national initiatives in CTE.
- All applicants **must select one** grant objective as their area of focus.

Objective 1

Incentivizing the Alignment of the College and Career Pathway Endorsements (CCPE) framework and Postsecondary Programs of Study

Because of the natural and intentional alignment of the State's Perkins V Plan, the Model Programs of Study Guides, and [College and Career Pathway Endorsement \(CCPE\) framework](#), this Objective seeks to strengthen the incentives for colleges and high school districts to partner on pathway design and jointly maximize the currency and benefit of students who complete the requirements and earn CCPE. Applicants for this section of the grant must establish and provide currency to students earning CCPE, to incentivize them to enroll in an ICCB-approved Program of Study at your institution.

Note: Perkins funds cannot be directly given to students.

Objective 2

Enhancing Student-Centered Support Services for CTE Students

Community colleges serve a diverse group of students with varying needs. Student support services and related projects can help assist students, particularly those with barriers to success, persist and complete their program.

Note: Perkins funds cannot be directly given to students.

Objective 3

Expanding Innovative Delivery Models

Innovative delivery models help meet the varying needs of learners and expand access to CTE by providing flexible learning opportunities that prepare individuals for careers. By selecting Objective 3, applicants can use grant funds to infuse creativity to deliver CTE beyond traditional instruction models. Innovative delivery models may include, but are not limited to: competency-based education, enhanced credit for prior learning processes, distance learning, blended learning, flipped learning/classrooms, Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) programming, early college opportunities, simulated workplaces, etc. Additionally, under this objective, applicants may also work to consciously braid their Perkins Leadership Grant funding with one of the following state-led grant initiatives to expand innovative delivery models:

- Advanced Manufacturing Grant
- Pipeline for the Advancement of the Healthcare Workforce Grant (PATH)
- Rev Up EV Electric Vehicle Technology Grant Initiative
- Taking Back the Trades! Trades School Program Grant

Note: Equipment and technology may only be purchased if it directly ties to the innovative delivery model. The application must detail how the equipment or technology directly supports the innovative delivery model.

Allowable Activities

Allowable Activities

- Examples of allowable activities are provided according to the three objectives.
- Applicants are not limited to the allowable activities.
- Applications that utilize the allowable activities may constitute exemplary applications.

Objective 1

Allowable Activities

- Pilot the development and implementation of a currency/incentivization model whereby earners of a CCPE would also earn a unique “currency” in the postsecondary space as a result of their efforts.
- Employer subsidies for providing work-based learning experiences for students (internships, trainings, wages, etc.) that fulfill CTE Programs of Study and the secondary districts pathway endorsement requirements.
- Fees associated with industry credential testing that are embedded in CTE Programs of Study courses and the secondary districts pathway endorsement requirements.
- Books and course material costs for courses that are included in CTE Programs of Study and the secondary districts pathway endorsement requirements.
- Increasing student support services that begin with dual credit high school students for courses embedded in CTE Programs of Study and the secondary districts CCPE course sequence.
- Utilize the [Model Programs of Study Guides](#) to strengthen institutional programs of study. The Models were developed to intentionally align with the CCPE, creating a seamless pathway for students.
- Create and cultivate intentional early college credit including dual credit coursework in core program content (i.e. more than just general education) and career awareness activities like work-based learning experiences.
 - Activities may include planning and implementing dual credit offerings in new or existing disciplines or locations; developing and utilizing innovative instructional models that have not been attempted in dual credit classrooms in the applying district; and engaging secondary and postsecondary faculty in curriculum alignment, articulation activities, and professional development related specifically to dual credit offerings.
- Targeted scholarships or financial support for students earning CCPE upon enrollment at your institution (*will need to be supported by matching funds*)

Note: A similar project was conducted by EdSystems Center. For additional information on the results of the project, see [this blog post](#).

Objective 2

Allowable Activities

- Assistance as it relates to transportation, childcare, textbook loans/lending library.
 - Supplemental instruction
 - High touch academic advising and career guidance including hiring a CTE Navigator(s)
 - Testing and assessment preparation for CTE-related certifications and licenses
 - Assistance for students transitioning into employment or seeking additional education and training.
- Services and activities to assist special populations CTE students, as defined by the Perkins Act, including ensuring program accessibility to special populations students and assisting them in overcoming barriers that may limit their opportunities for success. Exemplary projects may include developing specific support strategies to assist these individuals in overcoming barriers to success; strategizing innovative approaches for identification and collection of applicable data; advising/outreach of these students to identify their needs and develop supports based on those specific needs; and working with community partners to formulate comprehensive support strategies. *Colleges may utilize findings from their Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and information pulled from the PODS 2.0 Data Dashboard to determine priority population(s) and existing equity gaps.* Special Populations students as defined by the Perkins Act, as well as other populations that are underrepresented are as follows:
 - Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
 - Homeless individuals (as described in Section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
 - Students with parents who are a member of the armed forces and are on active duty
 - Out of workforce individuals
 - English learners
 - Individuals with disabilities
 - Individuals with economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults
 - Individuals preparing for nontraditional fields
 - Single parents, including single pregnant women
 - Underrepresented racial/ethnic groups
 - Juvenile justice/departments of corrections involved individuals

Objective 3

Allowable Activities

- Purchasing or upgrading equipment to meet or exceed current industry standards. Equipment must be required to facilitate the innovative delivery model.
- Improving technology and instructional materials to align with current industry standards and expectations. Technology must be required to facilitate the innovative delivery model.
- Enhancing work-based learning through simulated workplaces that allow for immersive, hands-on learning experiences to prepare for careers.
- Supporting professional development that promotes effective teaching pedagogy.
- Curriculum redesign to incorporate a new delivery method or approach (e.g. blended learning, online learning, competency-based education).
- Engagement with professional organizations that support the development of the innovative delivery method.
- Incorporating flipped learning into a new or existing course.

Use of Funds

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

- Grant recipients must adhere to the Education Department General Administrative Rules- <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200?toc=1> - and the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)- <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ224/PLAW-115publ224.pdf>.
- **Specific to Objective 1:** Perkins funds cannot be directly given to students. However, colleges are encouraged to use State CTE match funds to fulfill this need. All funds are subject to state appropriation.
- **Specific to Objective 3:** Equipment and technology may only be purchased if it directly ties to an innovative delivery model. The application must detail how the equipment or technology directly supports the innovative delivery model.

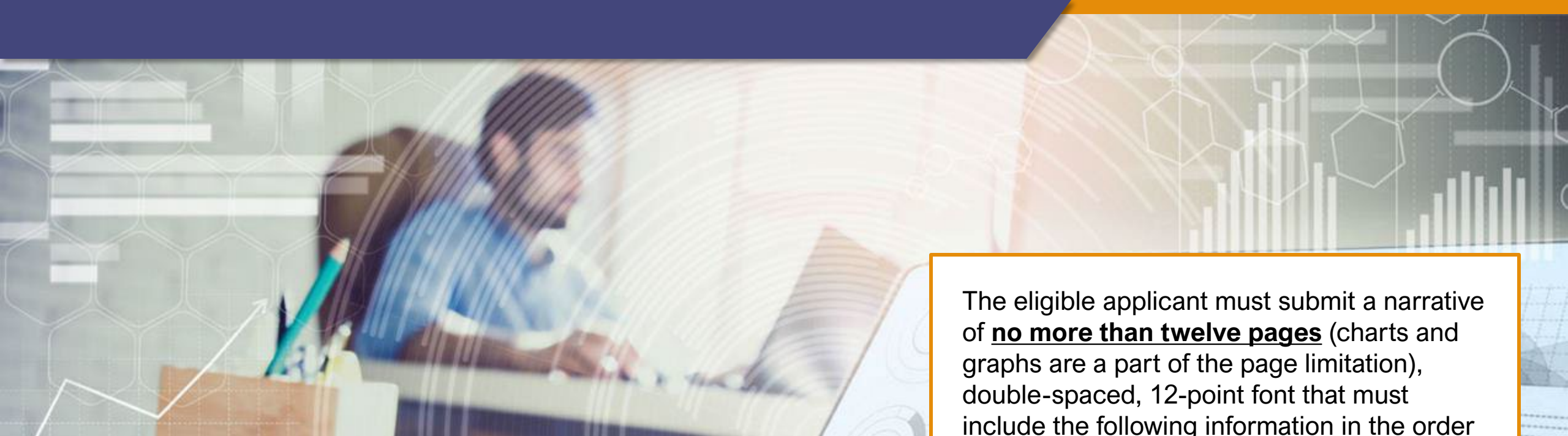
Application Package

Application Package Overview

- Applications submitted under this grant program will undergo a merit-based review process.
- All parts of the application package must be completed by the deadline to be considered.
- 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.
- Applicants will receive a receipt of application.
- Applicants will **not** be notified if there are items that are missing from their application.
- Applicants must use the templates provided on the ICCB website:
<https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/>
- Applications are due, no exceptions, by **October 24, 2025, 11:59 p.m.** and must be emailed to ICCB.cte@illinois.gov.

Application Format

- The application must be organized as listed below and applicants must use the templates provided on the ICCB [Grant Opportunities webpage](#) when provided.
 1. Uniform Grant Application (template provided)
 2. Application Narrative
 3. Uniform Budget (template provided)



More About the 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. *A template is not provided. Each applicant must use the information below to craft their own Narrative.*

Please note that there may be Narrative components that may not be applicable to your chosen objective. Deviations are noted below- O.1, O. 2, O. 3- so please read carefully.

Application Narrative Sections

I. Basic Project Information

- a. The objective (1, 2, or 3) of choice.
- b. Concise summary of your grant project, including the goals of your grant project.
- c. Population to be Served: Provide a description of the target population of students to be served, if applicable (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status of community, high school district). Applicants should use data as evidence for their selection. This may include but is not limited to dual credit courses, local unemployment rate, income status of community, racial and ethnic representation of the community being served.

Application Narrative Sections

II. Statement of Need: The objective (1, 2, or 3) of choice.

- a. Identify both the programmatic and financial need for these grant funds.* For example, you could identify the program of study focus; provide evidence (i.e. labor market information, state of current equipment/technology, faculty training needs, etc.) for why you selected that program of study; describe the target population of students to be served (e.g., ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status of community, high school district). Your needs will vary based on your chosen objective. Please include any information that would be helpful for grant reviewers to know.

Application Narrative Sections

III. Overall Project Goals and Outcomes/ Indicators of Performance

- a. Identify the anticipated number of students to be supported by this grant (O. 1).
- b. Identify at least one other indicator of performance (system, programmatic, or participant- level) (O. 1, 2, 3).
- c. Identify project goals and expected outcomes of this grant at your institution. These goals and expected outcomes should be reflective of the activities relayed in the Project Work Plan portion of this Narrative (O. 1, 2, 3).

Application Narrative Sections

IV. Project Work Plan

Clearly describe 1. the project activities and 2. the associated timeline for each activity to be carried out during the grant period. *A chart or table is encouraged.* It may be helpful to engage in backwards mapping- begin with your goals and outcomes in mind, and craft activities to help you achieve those goals and outcomes. Timelines help to keep activities focused and on track. They also allow you to visualize the internal and external partners you will need to engage while working on this project.

- a. Required activity for Objective 1:** Implement at least one currency/incentivization model.

Application Narrative Sections

V. Partnerships

Description of all partnerships that will be party to the project. The description must include the name of the individuals engaged, which partner they represent, why their partnership is important to the project, and the specific role each partner will play. Encouraged partners include the local high school district; employer(s); community-based organization(s); labor organization(s); area career centers and workforce intermediaries; high school and college counselors and advisors; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Offices; Career Services; as well as Access/Disability Coordinators; and members of current CTE Advisory Committees. (O. 1, 2, 3- as needed)

- a. **Required partnerships for Objective 1:** [Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University](#); at least one high school in your district.

Application Narrative Sections

VI. Applicant Capacity and Effectiveness

Description of the applicant's capacity to execute the project. Points of consideration- what faculty/staff capacity is to execute the project, what resources or training will need to be done to make the project successful, have similar projects been successful at the institution and any barriers that were encountered.

Application Narrative Sections

VII. Contingency Plan

Description of the action plan and budget if the program plan must change, and funds are not able to be spent as defined in the original narrative and budget. An example of this could be that most of the grant funds are allocated for hiring personnel to manage the project but halfway through the grant cycle no one has been hired, and now the applicant isn't sure that it can execute the project. With a contingency plan in place, the applicant will have a better idea of what to do with the funds and how to see the project through to completion. *No more than one page.*

Grant Deliverables

Grant Deliverables

1. Carry out deliverables of the proposed scope of work.
2. Submit required programmatic and fiscal reports on a quarterly basis per the schedule below to:
 - Programmatic: ICCB.cte@illinois.gov
 - Fiscal: ICCB.grantpayments@illinois.gov

Reporting Schedule (6 Quarters)		
Quarter	Period	Date Due
1	January 15, 2026 – March 31, 2026	April 30, 2026
2	April 1, 2026 - June 30, 2026	July 30, 2026
3	July 1, 2026 - September 30, 2026	October 30, 2026
4	October 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026	January 30, 2027
5	January 1, 2027 – March 31, 2027	April 30, 2027
6	April 30, 2027 – June 30, 2027	July 30, 2027

Grant Deliverables

3. Participate in any required Operational Meetings or learning workshops.
4. Submit at least one student success story. A template is provided under Grant Resources or Guidance on the ICCB website: <https://www.iccb.org/grants/grant-resources/>.
5. Provide to the ICCB copies of any documents, toolkits, modules, etc., that are developed because of these grant funds.

Questions?

Add them in the chat or email

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