FY24 IBT Grant FAQ

Updated 11/1/23

1. Q: There seems to be an issue with the Cover Page for the IBT application. The description of the program doesn't show up even after we fill that out unless one clicks in that field (but then it disappears after you close and reopen the document). If I print it as a pdf, the description shows up, but it's cut off partially due to space limits (we can write up to 400 words). Should I submit the pdf that is cut off or the version where the description doesn't show up unless you click on that field?
    A: You will want to submit the version where the description appears once it is clicked on.

2. Q: Is a Performance Measure Chart required for the FY24 IBT Application?
    A: Yes, a Performance Measure Chart, with complete planned numbers for each measure, is required upon submission of the FY24 IBT Grant Application.

3. Q: I am currently writing for our FY24 IBT Grant and would like pre-approval to include construction costs for additional wiring for one of our classrooms. I would like to convert a standard classroom to an Artificial Intelligence Lab. We are currently waiting on a quote, but the last time I converted a classroom to a lab it was around $15,000 for parts and labor. Can College X have pre-approval to proceed with our submission?
    A: Since this type of project is not technically categorized as construction, you would not need to seek ICCB's prior approval. However, the AI Lab must render services specifically to IBT students during the grant cycle.

4. **Q:** If we supply incoming students with a scholarship in fall 24, can that scholarship be applied to both fall (2024) and spring (2025) terms, or does the scholarship amount have to be applied to their tuition and fee costs accrued before 12/31/24?
    A: The grant funds must be utilized during the grant period between January 1, 2023-December 31, 2024, so the tuition and fee costs must be utilized during this time.

5. **Q:** The FY23 IBT grant required a contingency plan. I do not see that requirement in FY24. Am I missing the requirement, or has it been eliminated for FY24?
    A: The Contingency Plan was removed from the FY24 IBT Grant.

6. **Q:** We would like to know if tables need to be double-spaced, or if those can be single-spaced?
    A: Yes, text within tables may be single-spaced.

7. **Q:** Do I put money amounts on the Performance Measure document at all?
    A: No, dollar amounts are not required on the Performance Measures Chart.

8. **Q:** We have collaborated with institutional partners to build in course and exam fees for our planned IBT Bridge and ICAPS in our IBT FY24 Application. Would Course fees and exam fees be appropriately listed in supplies (currently budgeted per individual student), or would we designate those fees as a Miscellaneous/other line expense?
   A: Course/Exam fees can either be categorized under Supplies or Miscellaneous.

9. **Q:** Would "educational costs" be an appropriate title to refer to those costs when covering tuitions, fees, and books of eligible participants (students) to this grant?
   A: They are categorized in the budget template as miscellaneous costs. Refer to them as you do in the budget.

10. **Q:** Is SURS an allowable expense for this grant?
    A: If this is a fringe benefit for someone paid through the grant then yes for the grant period only.

11. **Q:** We are planning to reapply for the IBT grant this year, but we had a question about a line item. We are currently building out Salesforce for better data tracking which will tie into one of our planned goals to track student ICAPS completion through a partner agreement. Would the contract costs for such a build-out be considered an allowable expense?
    A: Yes, this would be an allowable expense as long as there is adequate evidence of the Salesforce data tracking's impact on the overall project demonstrated in the application narrative.

12. **Q:** If we chose objective 2 could we use funds to help with the development of a writing center and English Tutor services. I thought it might be somewhat like what was included in the ICCB Early School Leaver Transitions Program. It would be one of the areas we would address under objective 2. We have other training programs that would include in the Objective 2 also.
    A: It seems a better fit for Objective 3. However, regardless, you may only charge off dollars to the IBT grant that directly serve IBT students. In other words, you can't serve other students in the center – it can't be campus wide while the grant is funding it.

13. **Q:** Objective 1 is based on creating new and greatly expanding Bridge and ICAPS programming which we plan to do. However, we also would like to continue offering our current bridge and IET programming as a wrap-around service for students who need these support courses to help with academic barriers. Is this allowable to pay part or all of instructor wages and provide tuition assistance for students who participate in an established Bridge and IET program under Objective 1?
    A: Staff salaries and tuition assistance are both allowable expenses under the IBT Grant. However, if the funds are to be utilized toward a pre-existing bridge and IET program,

there must be evidence that the pre-existing program is being expanded upon with this utilization of funds. This information would need to be included within the application narrative.

14.   **Q:** Would the cost to produce a new report on what are the current drivers of upward mobility trends and salary growth in the markets we serve be considered an eligible cost for this grant? I am referring to a study that would be produced by someone such as Lightcast (Emsi Burning Glass) that specializes in analytics to help educators make decisions that are used to inform proactive traditional and nontraditional student programs. College X would like to update the last study we had done for more current labor market data. I think the cost is around $30,000.
A: Yes, this would be an allowable expenditure as long as An explanation in the application narrative illustrates how the study will impact the overall grant project and outcomes and can only be used for IBT purposes while being funded by the grant.

15.   **Q:** Are the objectives from FY23 IBT NOFO the same as FY24 IBT NOFO?
A: The only change to the FY24 IBT Grant objectives was Objective 2. For FY24, Objective 2 was split into four different options due to the inclusion of Out-of-School Youth Activities.

16.   **Q:** Are there only 4 objectives for the FY24 IBT Grant?
A: Yes, there are only 4 objectives to choose from.

17.   **Q:** Objective 3 of the FY24 IBT says services can include supplemental instruction. Can supplemental instruction be included in ICAPS programming? In other words, can we apply under objective 3 with our application including wrap around services, bridge and ICAPS program development, and ICAPS implementation (student tuition, direct instruction, etc.)?
A: For Objective 3, if the ICAPS is already implemented, and a program is looking to add wrap-around services, this would be an allowable project. However, if a program is seeking to build a completely new ICAPS program through IBT, they would want to choose Objective 1: Adult Education Bridge and ICAPS Programming. Under Objective 1, providing wrap-around supports to students is still an allowable activity.

18.   **Q:** Can we use grant funds to pay tuition for clients? If so, can we pre-pay tuition for students who will not actually "use" the funds until after the official grant period has ended?
A: Grant funds can be used to pay for student tuition. However, grants funds cannot be utilized outside the grant period, so pre-paying student tuition to be utilized after the grant period ends is unallowable.

19.   **Q:** Our college is finalizing its budget for FY24 IBT proposal. We are electing to use a smaller rate than our federally-negotiated rate. We are looking to electing a 10% indirect cost rate. Can this be applied to all direct costs, or only MDTC (excluding equipment)?
A: You can apply the total direct costs in this situation.

20.   **Q:** In terms of planned deliverables and performance measures, I will write those and then determine which quarter I hope to achieve those measures? I just want to verify I'm completing this correctly for the FY 24 IBT grant submission.
A: Yes, that is correct. Use the performance measures that was sent out with the initial funding announcement.

21.   **Q:** You can't do both objective 1 and an option in objective 2?
A: No, you cannot choose multiple objectives. However, for Objectives #2, you can choose multiple options.

22.   **Q:** Is it possible for one school to have multiple applications?
A: No, only one application per program/institution is allowable.

23.   **Q:** Just to clarify, we cannot submit a proposal that includes multiple objectives (for example, Objective 1, 2 and 3?)
A: Correct, each application can only have one objective.

24.   **Q:** Do mental health services count as "Wrap-around Support"?
A: Yes, psychological services count as wrap-around support.

25.   **Q:** Would English as a second language be allowed in this?
A: Yes, but the ESL program must be tied to either a Bridge or ICAPS program.

26.   **Q:** Can programs apply individually and as part of a consortium but not as the lead?
A: No, if a program applies as a part of consortium, they are not able to apply individually.

27.   **Q:** Can you send the 5 hallmarks of a quality apprenticeship program?
A: Yes, resources regarding the 5 Hallmarks of a Quality Apprenticeship can be found here: https://www.workforcegps.org/events/2020/08/27/14/58/Hallmarks-of-High-Quality-Apprenticeships.

28.   **Q:** Are FY23 funds rolling over into FY24?
A: No, each grant is only for one year.

29.   **Q:** We offer scholarships where we cover some of the costs for certification programs that students move on to after our Bridge class. Were you stating that scholarships are not allowed for this grant starting in FY24? Or is a scholarship something completely different from what I described?
        A: No, scholarships are an allowable activity.

30.   **Q:** Can we do a modified continuation of a current or past grant, or do they need to be completely unique ideas?
        A: Yes, but in your project narrative, you will have to explain how the current amount of funding will be used to expand and build upon the previous grant project.

31.   **Q:** If we do not receive the amount we request, will we know why, so we can write a stronger grant in the future?
        A: Yes, after the review and selection process is complete, you may email iccb.ibt@illinois.gov to receive individual feedback on your project score.

32.   **Q:** Are direct stipends or payments to support students' basic needs an allowable cost?
        A: Yes, the services that would be allowable may vary by the grant funding but typically stipends could be used for: income replacement, transportation subsidies, childcare subsidies, housing costs, food benefits, educational costs such as tuition, books, school supplies including appropriate technology (laptops, tablets, etc.), end-of-program employment assistance and legal barrier assistance (criminal record sealing/expungement fees), driver's license reinstatement fees, liability insurance fees), etc.

33.   **Q:** Is there a recording of the virtual webinar that was held on 9/15/23?
        A: Yes, the recording of the FY24 IBT Bidder's Conference can be found at this link: https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/.

34.   **Q:** Is there a direct link to the FAQ?
        A: Yes, the FY24 IBT FAQ can be found at this link: https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/.

35.   **Q:** Can we hire a new position before the grant period begins and then partially fund the position with grant funds awarded?

        A: You may not go back, if awarded a grant, and pay for that person's pre –award time and activities. You may only pay for the person's time that is legitimate to the grant. You may put them on the grant if awarded and pay for the time and work they do only during the grant period.

36. **Q:** Would an apprenticeship coordinator/caseworker be allowable?

    A: This is allowable so long as it aligns with your grant objective and is clearly detailed in both the programmatic and budget narrative.

37. **Q:** Does the application have to focus on one project, or could we have multiple projects under the same objective?

    A: You may have more than one project under one of the four objectives. However, the projects MUST all align with ONE Objective of your choosing.

38. **Q:** What does "other indicators of performance for the intended targeted population" mean?

    A: It is possible that you may collect other variables and set other goals not identified in this grant.

39. **Q:** Are student incentive payments an allowable cost? Ex: if they achieve an industry credential or reaching an employment retention milestone.

    A: No. Financial services cannot be provided to a client once they have completed the program or the grant ends. If using gas cards, etc., you must document by having the client sign for them and can only be offered while in the program. Do not use terms such as "incentives" or "rewards" as they are not allowable activities.

40. **Q:** If we are using this grant for a Bridge, can we use some of the money for the cost of training programs for the students after the class is finished? If yes, are there any training programs that would not be allowed for this type of student assistance?

    A: Training is an allowable component of the grant.

41. **Q:** Are we allowed to use this grant for student stipends?

    A: Yes, while in the education and training program.

42. **Q:** Is the grant made available through reimbursement or regular payments?

    A: IBT is state funding, so a payment will be made in the total amount when the grant is executed.

43. **Q:** Can the IBT FY2024 be used to fund tuition for participating students?

    A: Yes.

44. **Q:** Can the IBT FY2024 pay for credit faculty salary?

    A: Yes.

45. **Q:** Can the IBT 2024 pay for adult ed. faculty salary, materials, and supplies related to the bridge and possible ICAPS?

    A: Yes, this would be an allowable expense. If the students are eligible adult education learners, they should be pre and post tested according to Adult Education and Literacy policies. These classes should be placed in DAISI under the course category of 4910 – Other Restricted. NOTE: The Adult Education and Literacy Grant requires that recipients have both a bridge and IET program. IBT funding can support scaling of those required programs or support the development of any additional programs.

46. **Q:** Would Program X be eligible to apply for ICCB Innovative Bridge and Transition's program RFP on behalf of partner organizations who opt in from our Financial Opportunity Center Network? We noted the requirement in the RFP that the applicant must be the provider of the direct services, so we wanted to confirm the possibility of Program X applying on behalf of several network organization partners delivering the service using the shared Financial Opportunity Center model for their bridge programming.

    A: No, while consortia are allowable, only direct providers can apply.

47. **Q:** Can an institution submit more than one application to this program?

    A: No.

48. **Q:** If funded, is it allowable to amend the grant agreement to allow for the payment of funds on a reimbursement basis.

    A: No.

49. **Q:** Are we allowed to use any part of this grant for direct dollars to students?

    A: Yes, stipends are allowable.

50. **Q:** Are equipment costs allowable for the IBT grant, not a large sum, but for a smaller trainer for a program?

    A: Yes, equipment costs are allowable.

51. **Q:** Is childcare an allowable activity?

     A: Yes, as a supportive service while the person is in class and/or training.

52. **Q:** Do I need to include a reference page that lists sources I mention in the proposal?
     A: No.

53. **Q:** May I have a copy of the webinar PowerPoint slides?
     A: The PowerPoint slides are on the website. Here is the link:
     https://www.iccb.org/grant-opportunities/.

54. **Q:** I am partnering with a municipality to service the needs of youth in that area. I would like to know if the municipality (village) can apply for the grant, although they are not considered a nonprofit agency. If not, can we start a nonprofit agency and still be eligible to apply for the grant as a newly established nonprofit agency?
     A: No, as they are not a direct provider of services. As for the second question, you would still not be eligible as you would not be a direct provider of services.

55. **Q:** Can IBT grant funds be used for marketing/recruitment supplies? Ex.) bottle of water with info about program or pens?
     A: All consumable supplies would be accounted for in the supplies line item. Items such as water and pens are consumable.

56. **Q:** I am inquiring about the definition used in the grant for students with disabilities. Specifically, Objective #4 Seamless Transitions for Students with Disabilities**.** For purposes of the grant does this include all students with IEP's or Individual Education Plans as disabilities? Or is there a grant specific definition?
     A: First, there is no grant definition for disabilities. Secondly, there is no delineation on this grant regarding which disabilities count. Remember that the purpose of this grant is to improve student transitions to and through postsecondary education (up to post baccalaureate) and into employment including those programs that support these transitions for individuals with disabilities to postsecondary education or employment.

57. **Q:** If we choose option 2: Seamless Transition for College and Career Pathways are we limited to only high school age transitioning students? We would like to incorporate our high school tech academy, but we also do not want to exclude adult learners who would greatly benefit from this career path.
     A: Youth are considered 16-24, and you may serve in- and out-of-school youth**.** The only adult learners to benefit from your description are adult education students, and they fit into Objective 1. Remember that the purpose of this grant is to improve student transitions

to and through postsecondary education (up to post baccalaureate) and into employment. This is a grant focused on transitions. The definition for adults is as follows: adults who are not enrolled in high school with limited academic or basic skills, underemployed or unemployed to enter and succeed credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading employment in high skill, high wage jobs. Through Objective 1, you can still build out a transitions path for them. Ultimately, you will have to decide which Objective on which to focus.

58. **Q:** Will this grant cover employer reimbursement for on-the-job training?
    A: Yes, as long as it is part of the transitions plan in your grant. It cannot stand on its own. It must be part of the student's training.

59. **Q:** Are large equipment purchases allowable?
    A: Yes, they are allowable. However, they must be relevant to and aligned with your program and training activities.

60. **Q:** Can I apply on behalf of 2 school districts to meet the $75,000 minimum? Both districts would provide direct instruction and work with the college in our APC.
    A: Yes, a consortium of direct providers is allowable and described in the NOFO. For a program to apply as a consortium, the program also must be a direct provider for the grant.

61. **Q:** Can you please tell me if a citation (about demographics, in the section on organizational background) in a grant application to ICCB is considered "dated" and inappropriate if it is 3 years old?
    A: We do not have a specific "cut-off" date for citations of demographic information – within limits. Within three years is still relevant if you are unable to obtain more current demographic information.

62. **Q:** In reviewing the NOFO for the Innovative Bridge and Transition Program, I would like to inquire if this grant would allow for the employment of a Planning and Development Coordinator of a new career program. The goal would be for this position to develop the pathways from high school to a new certificate and degree program during the grant period. The program would then begin after the grant end. This program development coincides with the renovation of a new campus where this program will be housed.
    A: Yes, this type of cost is allowable as curricula and program development are allowable activities under the grant. However, it must align with bridge and transitions and must be completed and ready to implement by the end of the FY24 grant period. See Section E of the NOFO: Bullet - Enhancing or developing institutional career pathways.

63.   **Q:** Is the attached "Uniform Budget Template" okay to use on proposals for the Innovative Bridge and Transitions Grant Program? I've tried several methods, however I'm not able to open the attached "FY2024 Uniform Grant Budget" document.
        A: Yes, the "Uniform Budget Template" is the same template for the FY24 Innovative Bridge and Transitions Grant. Some programs have noted they are unable to open the "Uniform Budget" listed under the IBT, and we are working on a way to fix that now.

64.   **Q:** Are recruitment, outreach, and tuition assistance costs allowable for non-credit courses or must the courses be credit-bearing?
        A: Yes, they are allowable expenses for non-credit.

65.   **Q:** Can you please tell me if expenses for meals/food are allowed under the IBT grant? For example, we piloted a bridge program last summer that we want to expand under the application we are soon to submit. We would like to add food so that the bridge can have longer days than it did last summer (they ended all sessions before lunch last summer because we didn't have funds for lunch.
        A: Food for students to allow for more education and training is allowable such as lunch during the education and training time.

66.   **Q:** I have an additional question regarding allowable expenses. In one component of the bridge program that we are proposing, high school students will take a COL 101 course (1 credit hour @ $174 for tuition) to help orient them to the college experience. Although high schools normally pay the college the tuition associated with ECI coursework. The college has adopted a policy of covering the cost to students/schools for taking this course, rendering it an essentially free course to students. However, because we would like to use COL 101 as part of our bridge program, we would like to know if we can ask the grant to cover reimbursement to the college for the cost of tuition for the course that it is absorbing. It would be for approximately 160 students. In one alternative scenario, we would ask for reimbursement associated with the same number of students but ask for reimbursement for COL 101 as well as the Math bridge course for fall.
        A: Yes, you may reimburse the college for the cost of tuition for the course they are absorbing. This would be accounted for in the miscellaneous line item in the Uniform Budget template.

67.   **Q:** I understand from the IBT NOFO that large equipment purchases are allowed if they are relevant to and align with the grant and training activities. We currently have a request for large equipment purchases in our grant proposal budget. If we are awarded the grant, what are the stipulations for equipment purchased with grant funds? By "stipulations," just to be clear, I'm wondering what the stipulations for equipment are after the grant ends. Are we allowed to keep the equipment? And during the life of the grant, could someone who is

not part of the grant use the equipment, or would they have to be part of the program that is funded by the grant?

A: You may keep the equipment after the grant ends. However:

- It must continue to be used for purposes aligned with or similar to the purposes of the grant.
- You must keep record of the equipment and track depreciation until it is worth less than $5000.
- If you wish to dispose of it before it depreciates to under $5000, you must notify us for permission before doing so, by emailing:
  - ICCB.IBT@illinois.gov
  - ICCB.grantpayments@illinois.gov
  - Once it is worth less than $5000, you may dispose of it without our permission.
- you may NOT use the equipment for purposes other than the grant during the grant period.

68. **Q:** What is the minimum font size we can use for data and language represented in the charts and tables?

    A: There is no minimum font size.