



## Special Request for Choose Ohio First (COF) Proposals in Computer Science and Related Areas Question & Answers

### Question 1

Computer Science is an eligible major in our current COF award. Are we still eligible to apply for this COF award?

Yes, even if computer science and other related CIP codes are a part of a current COF award at your institution, you are allowed to include them in this proposal as well.

### Question 2

Is this the general COF RFP?

No, this RFP is not replacing the general Choose Ohio First RFP cycle that is planned for December 2019. This is an additional RFP cycle with a computer science focus.

### Question 3

Is preference given to programs that have transfer programs from community colleges to 4 year universities, or is that a requirement?

It is not a requirement. It is one of the criteria listed in Ohio Revised Code (ORC). Your proposed COF program does not need to meet all criteria listed ORC; it must only meet at least one of the ORC requirements listed in the RFP.

### Question 4

Is there a requirement that colleges and universities provide some matching funds for the program?

Yes, the COF scholarship program requires a minimum 1:1 match from the institution.

### Question 5

Are all students eligible to receive these awards, or are the awards targeted for Ohio residents who are female or underrepresented students?

All Ohio residents, who meet the eligibility requirements on page 2 of the pdf version of the RFP, are eligible to receive a COF scholarship. A proposal that focuses on increasing the number of women and underrepresented students participating in the COF scholarship program is one of the many ORC criteria options that your program can choose to meet. You are not required to meet all ORC criteria.

### Question 6

What criteria would define underrepresented?

In this RFP, 'underrepresented students' refers to any underrepresented group in a particular STEM field. You can identify the types of students that will be targeted, and why they are considered underrepresented, in your proposal.

### Question 7

Can a CIP code not on the attached CIP code list be eligible for this proposal?

No, only the CIP codes listed on the RFP attachment are eligible for this RFP, with the exception of the computer science endorsement for K-12 teachers which will use CSTEND in place of a 6 digit CIP code.

### Question 8

The website references a Choose Ohio First Scholarship of \$7689. For the matching funds does that mean the \$7689 is split evenly between the State of Ohio and the institution?

No, matching funds refers to the total amount awarded to the institution. Matching funds must equal or exceed the total amount awarded to the institution.

### Question 9

Could the institutional match come from institutional merit scholarships or would a specific "Choose Ohio First Scholarship" need to be created and funded by the Institution for the recipient?

The institution is required to provide a match in a 1 to 1 ratio for each ODHE dollar received. All reasonable institutional, operational, and capital costs that are directly associated with delivering the project outcomes identified in the institution's Choose Ohio First proposal may, in ODHE's discretion, be counted as eligible institutional match. Institutional match may exceed the total amount awarded to the institution. The value of institutional, public, or private industry cooperative work experiences and internships shall count toward the statewide aggregate amount of other institutional, public, or private money. Institutional match can be accounted for on a yearly, rather than term-by-term, basis, and must take place in the fiscal year in which the COF funding was provided. Examples of Institutional match include but are not limited to:

- Scholarship/Tuition Assistance
- Salaries- Key Personnel (project director/coordinator, faculty, mentors, and others) as it relates directly to the project outcomes including approved CIP codes and the percentage of COF scholars served
- Benefits- Key Personnel (project director/coordinator, faculty, mentors, and others) as it relates directly to the project outcomes including approved CIP codes and the percentage of COF scholars served

- Salaries- Support Personnel (staff from financial aid, accounting, and, other areas that support COF but do not have programmatic oversight) as it relates directly to the project outcomes including approved CIP codes and the percentage of COF scholars served
- Benefits- Support Personnel (staff from financial aid, accounting, and other areas that support COF but do not have programmatic oversight) as it relates directly to the project outcomes including approved CIP codes and the percentage of COF scholars served
- Contractual Services
- Equipment/Rental, Lease, Purchase
- Supplies and Materials
- Employee Travel
- Student Travel

Matching funds provided by institutional partners (public or private) may also be counted toward institutional match. Examples of partnership matching funds include, but are not limited to:

- Paid co-op or internship experiences
- Equipment donated to the program
- Donated time (salaries and benefits) for external partners contributing to the educational program

#### **Question 10**

If selected to participate in the program, what is the first academic year our students would be awarded the Choose Ohio First Scholarship?

Funding notifications will be disbursed annually by October 1 of the upcoming academic year to allow for students to enroll as early as January 1, 2020.

#### **Question 11**

May we offer a computer science certificate to students in non-STEMM degree-seeking programs for this RFP?

Yes. For example, an IHE could design a COF proposal for students to pursue a bachelor's degree in education and simultaneously earn a certificate in computer science. A proposal along these lines would be eligible for this RFP.

Similarly, an IHE promoting technology entrepreneurialism might design a program for students enrolled in a business school to pursue a certificate in a particular software programming language to startup their own tech company.

Additionally, the IHE proposal does not need to be specific to a particular degree pathway. An institution's proposal could be to offer a Java programming certificate to all students at the institution, without regard to the degree they are pursuing. This proposal would also be eligible for funding during this RFP.

#### **Question 12**

Are graduate students eligible for Choose Ohio First funding in this RFP? For example, a master's degree in computer science?

Yes, but only if the student was an Ohio resident who attended an out-of-state school for his/her undergraduate education and returned to Ohio for graduate school in a computer science or a related area, or who transferred in graduate school into computer science or related area, or is seeking a certificate in computer science, even if the graduate program is not STEMM related, or if they are a teacher seeking a computer science endorsement. To be eligible for graduate students, the student cannot have attended an Ohio IHE for their undergraduate education.

#### **Question 13**

Are we able to submit more than one proposal?

Yes, a university or college may submit multiple proposals and other entities may be included in multiple proposals.

#### **Question 14**

How long can a student receive a COF scholarship?

It is our intention to fund scholars to completion, however this will be dependent on continued support from the General Assembly and program funding. We also expect students to complete their programs in a reasonable amount of time.

#### **Question 15**

In regard to the 1 to 1 match, can an institution count the salary and benefits of a faculty member that is already being paid by the institution toward the match, do they need to add to faculty member's salary, or only count a portion of the faculty member's salary and benefits that matches their duties with COF?

If faculty salary and benefits are being counted toward the 1 to 1 match, the portion of the faculty member's salary and benefits that matches their duties with COF should be used.

**Question 16**

Are we able to have access to the scoring rubric for the RFP?

The scoring rubric has been built into the RFP. The point breakdown is posted in blue font in next to the each section's headline. (E.g. [Recruitment Plan \(25 points\)](#))

**Question 17**

Can an association partner with multiple campuses to submit a proposal?

Yes. However we understand that the RFP is structured in a manner that limits the number of partners in an RFP. If your proposal will have more than 3 partners, please contact Corey Dixon ([Cdixon@highered.ohio.gov](mailto:Cdixon@highered.ohio.gov)) for assistance in completing the RFP form in this circumstance.

**Question 18**

COF supports undergraduate students in a non STEM major to receive an undergraduate certificate in Information Technology. In addition to undergraduate certificates, we also have an undergraduate Minor in Information Technology. The requirements for the Minor is similar to the certificates. Would an undergraduate student in a non STEM major who is enrolled in the Minor in Information Technology program be eligible for COF? The Minor in IT program has an eligible CIP code.

No, COF funds can only go toward majors and certificate programs.

**Question 19**

Are adult learners enrolled in part-time undergraduate IT program eligible?

Yes, COF scholars can be full-time or part-time degree or certificate seeking students.

**Question 20**

Are Ohio residents enrolled in the Online IT programs of study eligible? I assume the answer to the previous question on part-time status will hold for online students as well.

Yes, however, student support is a weighted part of the RFP so that should be taken into account when creating a proposal for online students.

### **Question 21**

Are current students enrolled in the IT programs of study eligible? For example, first year students going on to second year and so on.

No, COF is a recruitment scholarship. This scholarship is only eligible to first-time enrollees at an institution or current students who are recruited to transfer internally from a non-computer science or related major to a computer science or related major. Also, students who are recruited to add computer science and related certificates to their degrees are also eligible.

### **Question 22**

We have partnerships with two-year institutions with pathways to our four-year program. There are signed MOUs between our institutions. Can we use COF for the portion of the program that the student will be with us only, or do we need to include the partner institution in our proposal and pay for the students' time at the partner institution as well.

Both are eligible options for a proposal.

### **Question 23**

When we apply for multiple programs (Bachelor, Certificate, Minor, etc.), do we need to create exclusive activities for each population of students or can we have exclusive activities for all COF scholars regardless of their specific program of study? Similarly, do we need to match the fund for each program of study separately or can we match on the overall annual fund?

COF scholars must have access to exclusive activities, but the activities do not need to be separate for each student population. Matching funds can be combined across student populations in your proposal. (Please note that minors are not eligible to be covered by COF funding.)

### **Question 24**

Are there examples of how exclusive co-op opportunities can be set up? Would it be sufficient to have a special event for COF Scholars with a company or send COF Scholars resumes independently to a company. Or do we need to find a partner company that will only hire COF scholars as co-ops?

You do not need to find a partner company that will only hire COF scholars. The options that you listed are great examples of ways to promote co-op opportunities for your COF scholars. You are able to be creative with how you can help these students obtain workforce experience.

### Question 25

Per the RFP – “Please note ORC 3333.64 requires the Chancellor to monitor the choose Ohio first scholarship program in such a way that at least fifty percent of the students receiving the scholarships are involved in a co-op or internship program in a private industry or a university laboratory.”

The language there is sort of funny. Does “monitor...in such a way” mean that 50% of COF students in this program are required to perform work-based learning of some type? And will this information be confirmed at any time other than the annual report?

The Chancellor endeavors to have 50% of all scholars participate in a form of work-based learning such as an internship or co-op, which is why it is a part of the proposal evaluation process. This information will be confirmed via site visits and the annual report.

### Question 26

The existing COF grant has a requirement that each student be awarded at least \$1,500. I don't see that mentioned in the RFP, but will that also be a requirement? We've settled on the degrees and certificates we'd like to award but we need to know what the minimum funding requirement is in order to plot out how many students we think we'll be able to recruit and award.

With the passing of HB166, scholars, who have received their COF scholarship toward a baccalaureate or associate degree, must receive a minimum per student award of \$1,500.00 per academic year. Scholars, who have received their COF scholarship toward a certificate program, must receive a minimum per student award of \$500.00 per academic year.

### Question 27

The RFP discusses a minimum award of \$100,000. I assume that though you need us to write this for a multi-year project. As we'll be able to award beginning in January 2020, and Summer is considered the lead term for each year, I'm wondering about what the initial allocation would be. Please let me know if you can speak to that.

Yes, it is a minimum award of 100,000 over a multiyear project. You are correct, it can begin in January 2020 and Summer is considered the lead term for each year. We do not have an answer about the initial allocation at this time as the amount will be determined based on the proposals that are accepted from the RFP process. Because there is a substantial increase in COF funds allocated under the new administration, we are encouraging campuses to apply for as much funding as necessary to support students in these programs.

**Question 28**

Can we use current practices and support services extended to current COF students for this cohort of COF Comp Science students?

Yes, you are able to extend current COF support services to be a part of your new proposal, as long as the institution ensures they have a separate and different 1 to 1 match for each program. The institution cannot double count the expenses on each program.

**Question 29**

Do we need any additional letters of support in addition to the letters of commitment from Career Services and Admission?

No, the RFP only requires letters of commitment from the Office of Admissions and the Office of Career Services from all participating campuses.

**Question 30**

If we are submitting two proposals, can they be submitted in one form or do they need to be submitted separately?

If you are submitting two proposals, they will need to be submitted using separate forms.

**Question 31**

Can COF funds be used for any overhead costs?

No, COF funds can only be used toward student scholarships.

**Question 32**

The eligible students' portion of the RFP says that we can award to licensed k-12 teachers seeking a computer science endorsement. May we include students working on licensure who are getting the computer science endorsement?

No, COF is a recruitment scholarship. If a student is already in the process of getting the computer science endorsement, they cannot be awarded a COF scholarship. However, if a student is working on licensure and you recruit him or her to add a computer science endorsement, then that student would be eligible.

**Question 33**

May we include students earning a certificate in computer science who are in a non-STEMM major?

Yes, a student with a non-STEMM major is eligible to receive COF funding for an added computer science or related area certificate.

**Question 34**

Can a minor in computer science be considered a certificate?

COF funds cannot go toward a computer science minor. A student must be seeking a bachelor or associate degree in a computer science or related major or a computer science or related certificate to receive COF funding.

**Question 35**

The RFP asks for the total amount of funds requested, do you want the total amount requested for the first year or throughout the entire program term?

The total amount requested for the entire program term.

**Question 36**

Can we leverage current programs on campus for COF exclusive programming?

Yes, you are able to leverage current programming from your campus for your COF exclusive events.

**Question 37**

How many cohorts is the grant paying for? Since the grant is for five years does that mean all students need to have graduated within that five year time frame?

This program term is 5 years. Our intention is to fund the recruitment of a cohort each year of the program term, however this is dependent on the continued support from the General Assembly and program funding. We also intend to fund scholars to completion, however this will also be dependent on continued support from the General Assembly and program funding. We also expect students to complete their programs in a reasonable amount of time.

**Question 38**

Can a chair can be the lead for the grant?

Yes, you are able to have a chair as the lead for this RFP.

**Question 39**

Can tables and/or graphs be uploaded using the electronic submission template (Qualtrics)?

Yes, you are able to upload tables and graphics for the questions that have document uploading capabilities.

**Question 40**

Is it acceptable to include other attachments not related to Career Services/Admissions into one of those two upload locations in the Qualtrics RFP form? I am thinking letters of support demonstrating commitment of external partners and graphics/tables that can't be entered into the Qualtrics survey text boxes.

Yes, you may include additional documents when uploading your Career Services and/or Admissions letters of commitment. Please note, that you can only upload one file for each of these questions, so you will need to combine all of your documents/files if you wish to submit more than one.

**Question 41**

Can students get support for summer?

Yes, summer semester is the leading semester of the academic year. New cohorts can be recruited to start in the leading semester of summer or fall, depending on when you choose to start your new cohort.

**Question 42**

CIP code 15.1302 is not on the list of approved CIP codes, can it be added to the list of approved CIP codes due to its similarity to CIP code 15.1301 which is approved?

Yes, CIP code 15.1302 has been added to our list of approved CIP codes for this RFP.

**Question 43**

The RFP notes that the program term is five years and that it runs from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2025. That includes six spring terms and five fall terms. Is it ok to plan for funding students in all of those terms (and possibly summer depending on the answer above)?

Yes, you will be able to recruit scholars throughout the academic year. However, this will be dependent on the continued support from the General Assembly and program funding.

#### **Question 44**

What does RFP mean by “proposed CIP codes/academic program in place by 10/21/2019”. Does that mean the program has to be both approved by the college and ODHE by that date? We are in the process of adding a new AAB program in the computer science area, however, it most likely will not be completed by 10/21/19 with both approvals. Would we still be able to add this degree to this RFP?

If you have a new program in an eligible field but it may not be in place by the 10/21/19 deadline, you will be able to include it in your proposal if the program is expected to be in place before January 1, 2020. In your application, please attach documentation that demonstrates you are in the process of implementing this new program.

#### **Question 45**

My question refers to the second prompt at the top of page 12 of the RFP. PROMPT: “Describe workforce engagement opportunities available to COF scholars and any company collaborations (3000 characters).” Specifically, I need clarification (possibly examples) for what is meant by “workforce engagement opportunities”.

To expand on Question 24 on this Q & A document, workforce engagement opportunities refers to opportunities where COF scholars would be able to interact with employers and gain skills that will help them to enter the workforce post-graduation. Some examples include: networking opportunities, resume review sessions, professional speakers, work-based projects with employer input, etc.

#### **Question 46**

Is there flexibility with the funding that if we had funding from the spring cycle, it could be used to award in the fall cycle?

At this time it is not an option to move funding between academic years and ODHE is open to reevaluating in the future.

#### **Question 47**

The RFP states that “...private institutions participating in Choose Ohio First are required to submit Student Enrollment files and Graduation and Certificate Earned files to HEI once ODHE has the infrastructure in place. They may be required to submit such data in an alternative manner prior to the availability of the HEI system.” What does this mean? Do you know if such an infrastructure or an alternative solution is in place for privates participating in Choose Ohio First to submit requested data?

Currently public IHEs report this information to ODHE. ODHE is in the process of creating such infrastructure for private institutions for the collection of comparable data. Once this infrastructure is in place, we will send notice to our participating private institutions with directions on how to submit this data for their COF scholars.

#### **Question 48**

COF allows graduate students to receive COF dollars if they are Ohio residents recruited back to Ohio after attending undergrad in another state or country. You are allowing licensed teachers to receive COF funds to receive a computer science endorsement in this new RFP. Could a graduate student receive COF funds for the teaching computer science endorsement if they had not left the state for undergrad – can a teacher use this computer science endorsement as graduate credit?

Endorsements are usually similar to certificates or minors. Yes, they can count toward both continuing education requirements (because they are credit bearing) and graduate programs if designed so by the institution and if the student is a licensed teacher.

#### **Question 49**

If an institution already has COF awards on campus, do their current awards need to be counted toward the \$10 million limit listed in the RFP?

No the current awards do not count toward the limit. A reminder, ODHE is focused on maximizing the COF scholarship program to serve students from across Ohio attending a variety of institutions.

#### **Question 50**

Please clarify what is expected for the 'Official Legal Notice' contacts and the Authorized Signatory.

The Authorized Signatory refers to your institutions President, Provost, or VP of Research. The Official Legal Notice is the individual(s) responsible for the administration and implementation of the agreement.

#### **Question 51**

For those we're able to award beginning in January 2020, will there be a reduced minimum scholarship amount, i.e., since that's only one of possible three terms in a year will we only be required to award \$500 and \$166 per degree or certificate seeker respectively?

No, the minimum per student award amount each academic year is \$500 for certificate scholarships and \$1,500 for associate and bachelor degree scholarships.

### Question 52

Alternately, should we just consider Spring 2020 a planning term and not award any students?

No, institutions are encouraged to make awards to eligible students, for spring semester 2020.

### Question 53

Our institution will receive a large grant from the US Department of Labor for our Apprenticeships program. Included in this grant are funds allocated for student scholarships. We are wondering if the ODHE permits federal/DOL funds like these to be used as matching funds for the Choose Ohio First program. Would you please let us know if this is permissible?

Yes, the DOL funds may be used as match. ORC 3333.64 allows for “public and private money pledged to the proposals” to meet the 1 to 1 match. Examples of matching funds include paid co-op or internship experiences, scholarships, and salaries and benefits. Other examples can be found in the answer to Question 9 in this Q & A document.

### Question 54

Do the high school teachers count towards the percentage of COF students required to perform co-ops or internships? In a case where a proposal is seeking to recruit undergraduate students into a bachelor’s degree as well as high school teachers to complete the endorsement, and all the undergraduate students will be required to do a co-op experience. Would the answer to the question about the percentage of students performing co-op be 100% or the actual ratio between the number of students vs teachers? For instance, if we plan to recruit 10 undergraduate students who will all do co-op and 20 high school teachers who will not do co-op, will the percentage be 33% ( $10 / (10+20)$ ) or 100% ( $10/10$ ).

In the case described, ODHE would anticipate that undergraduate students would participate in internship and co-op opportunities as described in the RFP. If there are opportunities, licensed teachers are also encouraged to participate in a co-op or internship.

### Question 55

It is noted a minimum of \$1,500 per AY must be received even if the student attends only one term. I suspect, then, if we know a student is graduating in December, we would award our full amount, for the AY, in the one term. Is this correct? So if we award \$5,000 annually and a student graduates early, we must award \$5,000 in that term?

No, institutions must provide at least the minimum \$1,500 scholarship an academic year and the institution may adjust each semester based on the student’s situation and financial aid package.

### Question 56

General fees: US Department of Education allows an institution to build their COA based upon tuition and fees, thus, a student fee assessed to all students is allowable. COA is determined by federal statute and is not subject to regulation. Institutions must determine the appropriate and reasonable amount for each line-item within the COA. Having said that, the law does allow for institutions to incorporate certain fees, even if not assessed to all students, so long as the fee is incurred while the student is enrolled and when required by the program. Your example of an insurance fee is understandable (and so would a parking fee). My question becomes what about a course/instructional fee? This would fit the definition as outlined by ED and noted above (assess when required by the program). Is this a permissible/allowable charge for the COF scholarship?

Based on COF guidelines, beyond instructional and general fees, book vouchers, and meal plans are approved as an eligible use of COF funds. However, there must be a notification on the student's tuition bill indicating this use. The entire grant must be used for scholarships, fellowships, grants, or other monetary or nonmonetary incentives to students, and not for administration.

General fees are defined as those assessed uniformly to all students and those that do not allow for a waiver to be offered to any student(s). For example, a fee charged to students to provide health care coverage would not be considered to be uniformly assessed if students can opt out, and therefore would not be considered a general fee.

Please award scholarships at your institution based on these guidelines.