

Questions and Responses:

1. Does the OTC need to be a Title IV eligible institution to participate in the Short-Term Certificate Grant Program?
  - a. No, but if you are Title IV eligible you can align Pell to the students as applicable.
2. Does the short-term certificate program have to be an ODHE approved program?
  - a. No, however, the program(s) must align to credentials for an in-demand job/occupation as determined by local / regional needs.
3. Can books/supplies be included in Fees? We currently advertise some programs as a total cost, which we also disclosed to the student the breakdown of Tuition & Books/Supplies.
  - a. Yes, if books and supplies are part of your published tuition and fees.
4. Can you expand on the credit versus non/credit for a clock hour school?
  - a. For the OTC's it is clock hours only.
5. Do these programs need to have ODHE approval?
  - a. No, however, the program(s) must align to credentials for an in-demand job/occupation as determined by local / regional needs.
6. Can we get a copy of this PowerPoint please?
  - a. A copy of the PowerPoint can be found on the Short-Term Certificate Grant Program webpage. <https://www.ohiohighered.org/short-term-certificate-grant-program>
7. Certificates of completion from the college is acceptable, correct?
  - a. Yes
8. Are we no longer required to pull in-demand occupations from the top jobs list? Also, credentials do not need to be from the approved list, correct?
  - a. That is correct, a list is not required. The program must align to credentials for an in-demand job / occupation as determined by local / regional needs.
9. Can the student receive Pell and the short-term grant for the same courses?
  - a. Yes. The Short-Term Certificate grant funds can be applied with other financial aid awards.
10. How much detail is needed for "in-demand job info"?
  - a. Each institution will determine what is "in-demand" for the local / regional area. Information about the "in-demand" jobs / occupation will be noted in a narrative format with submitted metrics.

11. The college award of a short-term certificate (with or without a certification) would qualify? For example, some certificates help to prepare students for an eventual certification, but it is not required. Would this be ok?
  - a. It can be a certificate of completion from the institution.
  
12. To clarify: how much detail for in-demand in EXCEL doc.? (separate from proposal element 1c 'regional needs')
  - a. Each institution will determine what is “in-demand” for the local / regional area. Information about the “in-demand” jobs / occupation will be noted in a narrative format with submitted metrics / reports.
  
13. We're writing for a 2-year project, but will there be another RFP next year, for a separate grant?
  - a. Yes, that is correct. This year’s award is for FY22 in the amount of \$3.5 million. An additional \$3.5 million will be awarded in FY23.
  
14. Can a student take advantage of the Foster Youth Short-term funding and this short-term funding at the same time?
  - a. Yes, a student receiving funding from the Foster Youth grant can also receive funds from this short-term grant certificate program.
  
15. Could students use these grant funds and use the Pell for textbooks?
  - a. If the student is eligible for Pell, they can apply the short-term certificate grant program funds for tuition and approved fees and apply Pell to the textbook fees.
  
16. Is there an emphasis on which funding (ODHE vs federal) hits an account first? That's a challenge for schools to coordinate sometimes and removing that barrier would be so helpful.
  - a. We defer to the institution on how they apply funding.
    - i. Will this stacking of funds topic be addressed in the agreements, should we be approved?
      1. The institutions determine the need-based financial aid criteria and process for applying funds to student accounts.
  
17. Does it matter if it is credit or non-credit training? Is there more weight given to one or the other?
  - a. Both credit and non-credit short-term certificate programs are eligible. We do see benefits to credit if there are stackable pathways for continued education and training if that is the student’s goal.
  
18. For previous grantees, is there a fund balance threshold at which ODHE would recommend waiting to apply for the next round? (i.e. if you have a certain amount of funds remaining, would you be less likely to receive an additional award?)
  - a. Applicant’s past performance with the Short-Term Certificate Grant program will be taken into consideration (this applies to community colleges only).

19. You indicated that there is \$7 million available, with \$3.5 million dispersed the first year. Should we base our submission on two-year performance?
  - a. Yes, these funds will be used for 24 months, from January 2022-December 2023.
20. Is there a rubric for scoring the applications to determine award amounts?
  - a. This is a non-competitive grant. Final award allocations will be determined by how many institutions submit eligible applications.
21. If previous awardees do have a balance, how should we address the overlap. (Community colleges only)
  - a. Please report the remaining balance on the appropriate Excel spreadsheet. The expenditure of those funds will follow the approved application when those funds were awarded.
  - b. Do not include that money in the planned activities for the FY22 Short-Term Certificate Grant program application.
22. If a student is dually enrolled in degree program that has embedded short-term certificates that are NOT title IV eligible itself, can the student still get Pell grant and STC grant for those classes?
  - a. Regardless if the student is eligible for Pell, the Short-Term Certificate grant funds can be used jointly with other financial aid awards; you can align Pell to the students, as applicable.
23. I understand the students can't be awarded any grant funding until the school would see if they were awarded the funding. If we were awarded grant dollars, would we be able to apply to any current students already enrolled in a short-term program or would it be effective for the upcoming programs and students?
  - a. Funds can be awarded only after the award agreement has been fully executed. We anticipate award agreements to be sent in November-December, 2021 with funds being sent to institutions in December, 2021-January, 2022. Only students enrolled in programs at the time of the executed award agreement would be eligible for this funding.
24. Was the webinar recorded or is there any additional information that may be available?
  - a. The recordings from the webinars and other resources can be found on the Short-Term Grant Certificate Program webpage; <https://www.ohiohighered.org/short-term-certificate-grant-program>.
25. Does the program have to be "less than 30 credits" or "30 credits or less"?
  - a. Less than 30 credit hours and less than 900 clock hours.
26. In the criteria it says that the class leads to a credential. Does the student need to receive the credential during the course, or can they receive it after the class?
  - a. The course must prepare the student for an industry-recognized credentials that are aligned to an in-demand job / occupation as determined by local / regional needs.

27. Does the credential cost need to be embedded in the cost of the course?
  - a. No, the cost of the credential does not need to be embedded in the cost of the course.
28. Is there a need-based criterion we need to follow e.g. low income?
  - a. The institution determines the need-based financial aid criteria for documentation purposes.
29. We have health care programs that are taught through a second party- Condense Curriculum International. Would those students qualify?
  - a. The Short-Term Certificate Program Grant funds can be awarded to any in-state student who receives a bill from the institution for education/training.

Updated FAQs: December 2021

30. How will an institution know if they received funding for the Short-Term Certificate Grant program?
  - a. On Tuesday, November 2, 2021 the Chancellor sent an email to each institution regarding the award notification. All institutions that applied were awarded funding.
31. Is there a way to add a program to the approved list?
  - a. Yes. The institution must submit an updated credential list using the *Updated Short-Term Certificate Programs Template* (available on the webpage <https://www.ohiohighered.org/short-term-certificate-grant-program>). The credential list can be updated as often as needed. The institution must receive a responding email from ODHE indicating approval of the added program before funds can be awarded to students in the program.
32. If a program is exactly 900 clock hours, is it eligible for funding?
  - a. No. All programs must be **less** than 900 clock hours and **less** than 30 credit hours.
33. When can institutions begin awarding short-term certificate funds?
  - a. The institution can determine who will be awarded funds as award amounts are known. It is up to the institution to determine when funding will be awarded to students.
34. Can the eligibility requirements for funding be changed from what was submitted in the original grant application?
  - a. An institution can change the eligibility requirement **before** the start the program. The institution can use whatever criteria it establishes, as long it follows the guidelines in section II of the RFP (Eligible Applicants, Certificates, Students, and Expenses). The important thing is to follow the eligibility requirements and have the documentation available for a monitoring visit / audit.

35. Is there any documentation out there on how the District applies for reimbursement and when the District will be reimbursed?
- a. The institutions will receive the award funds once the award agreement is fully executed. Award agreements are scheduled to be distributed in December. The institution will sign the agreement and send back to ODHE for the Chancellor's signature. Once the award agreement is fully executed, ODHE will award the funds to the institution. It is anticipated that institutions will receive awarded funds in December-January via EFT.
36. If the student drops from the program, doesn't pass the program, or doesn't receive a certificate due to attendance, grades, etc. will the district still receive the grant money for that student?
- a. Once the award agreement is fully executed, the institution will be issued the funds, there will not be any need to request or refund money to ODHE. However, ODHE will be collecting completion data for grant fund recipients. An institution should follow its refund policy when determining if it will expend funds for a withdrawn student.
37. Are there any guidelines in preparing a Grant Application for students to apply for this grant? Or are the criteria for determining eligibility solely determined by each institution?
- a. The institution determines eligibility for the awarding of grants following the guidelines in Section II (Eligible Applicants, Certificates, Students, and Expenses) of the RFP.
38. How are funds distributed to the institution?
- a. The institutions will receive the award funds once the award agreement is fully executed. Award agreements are scheduled to be distributed in December. The institution will sign the agreement and send back to ODHE for the Chancellor's signature. Once the award agreement is fully executed, ODHE will award the funds to the institution. It is anticipated that institutions will receive awarded funds in December-January via EFT.
39. If the student does not finish the program for whatever reason, what is the guidance on how schools handle the grant funds? Do they stay with the student (giving the student a refund check) or is the school able to reallocate unused grant funds to another student, etc.? Can the student keep whatever grant funds needed to pay for the portion that was attended, or do they only get the grant if they complete meaning that if a student withdraws before the program is finished, they become fully responsible for any tuition/fees and receive \$0 in grant money?
- a. The Short-Term Certificate award is to be applied to the student's account toward their tuition. This program is not meant to provide the student with excess funds; only the funds needed for their eligible instructional expenses. The student is not to receive the award as a refund, in the case they withdraw. The institution's process on awarding of financial aid dictates if the student needs to pay the award amount back to the institution. If the student does not use the money, the institution can reallocate those funds to another student meeting the institution's award criteria.
40. Is the grant awarded to students \$2000 or \$3000?
- a. Grant awards are a maximum of \$2000 for a short-term certificate program. The institution can grant up to 3 awards to the same student for different short-term

certificate programs. The student must successfully complete one short-term certificate program before another award can be granted.

41. In the spreadsheet submitted with the application was a list of the programs that we planned to award scholarships. Is the expectation that we award scholarships in each program or are those listed programs considered those that are eligible for scholarships?
  - a. The list provided are eligible programs in which scholarships can be awarded.
42. Do we need to submit a plan on how many scholarships we plan to award in each program listed on the spreadsheet?
  - a. Institutions do not have to submit a plan on how many scholarships will be awarded in each program. The institution can award funds for any student deemed in financial need based on the criteria established by the institution. . The institution can grant up to 3 awards to the same student for different short-term certificate programs. The student must successfully complete one short-term certificate program before another award can be granted.
43. Is the award agreement considered fully executed once we receive the award agreement and return with signature?
  - a. The award agreement will be considered fully executed once the Chancellor signs the document. The institution will receive the fully executed award agreement via email.
44. When may we begin awarding funding to students?
  - a. The institution can begin to determine who will be awarded funds now that award amounts are known. The institution can determine when funding will be awarded to students.
45. Students enrolled in programs that have begun their program, but have a need may they be awarded funds? Or must the student not have started attending the certification program?
  - a. Only students who are enrolled in eligible programs during the timeframe noted in the fully executed award agreement can be awarded funds.
46. For community colleges that received previous Short-Term Certificate Grant awards: Can funds from the existing grant be awarded to support the new programs that were added to the FY22 application? Also, our current award expires in June 2022, will this new award extend the period for all funds to be expended to June 2023?
  - a. The funds for the two grants were awarded under different grant agreements. Therefore, each fund of awards will need to be awarded following the guidelines in the respective grant agreement. If you want to add programs to the previous grant award, you will need to fill out the “blue form” and send it. We will then update the list of eligible certificates for funding. That agreement was extended in July 2021 and ends on June 30, 2022. You are highly encouraged to expend those funds in a timely manner.

47. For community colleges that received previous Short-Term Certificate Grant awards: An institution had quite a bit of funding remaining, from the previous grant for different programs. Can those programs that had been funded in past year's grant be funded with this new pot of money? Can the new funds be added to the old funding, or do they need to be accounted for separately?
- a. The funds for the two different grants need to be accounted for separately. They are not to be combined. You can only award funds to students in the respective programs submitted and approved for each respective grant.