

Short-Term Certificate Grant Program – Application

Short-Term Certificate Grant Program Application Release: February 9, 2018 Application Due: March 30, 2018

I. Program Purpose

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) will distribute funding to support need-based financial aid to students enrolled in a state institution of higher education to obtain a certificate that may be completed in less than one year and for which the certificate leads to an industry-recognized credential for an in-demand job. The investments will support the ability of the state of Ohio to retain and expand existing businesses, attract new investments and talent, and further entrepreneurship.

II. Eligible Applicants, Certificates, Students, and Expenses

- A. ODHE will distribute funds to a state institution of higher education, as defined in section 3345.011 of the Ohio Revised Code. The funds must be used by the institution to make grant awards to eligible students. Eligible students are students enrolled in a qualifying certificate program.
- B. Qualifying certificate means the certificate can be earned in less than one year (less than 30 semester hours or 900 clock hours) and leads to a credential (e.g. certification or license) required to qualify for an in-demand job. Institutions are encouraged to select qualifying certificates that received technical certificate designation by the Chancellor and can lead to an occupation with a median wage of \$13.47/hour (OhioMeansJobs criterion).
 - 1. In-demand job means a job that is determined to be in demand in Ohio and its regions under section 6301.11 of the Ohio Revised Code.
 - 2. A list of in-demand jobs is found at:
<http://omj.ohio.gov/OMJResources/InDemandRegional-All.stm>
- C. Qualifying certificate cannot be Pell eligible.
- D. Grant covers tuition and approved fees only.
 - 1. Grants will be issued directly to the institutions. Institutions will credit funds to the student's account.
 - 2. Fees – already in place for services provided to those students where the amount charged relates to the costs of those services for the approved certificate.
- E. Need-based aid is defined as the financial need after a student's expected family contribution (EFC) is subtracted from his or her cost of attendance (COA).
- F. Maximum award– up to \$1,000 per student.
 - 1. Course(s) must be required for the certificate.
- G. The funds may be used only to support grants to eligible students.

III. Project Term.

The work covered by the grant will begin in July, 2018 and continue through July, 2020, with a final grant and expense report due in September, 2020. A desk and/or site audit will occur prior to the final closeout of the grant (24 months).

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IV. Anticipated Institutional Awards

The funds will support awards made by eligible institutions to eligible students completing a qualifying certificate for an in-demand job. The source of funding for this program is up-front licensee fees paid by the casino facilities, with the Ohio Constitutional requirement that the fee shall be used to fund state economic development programs that support regional job training efforts to equip Ohio's workforce with additional skills to grow the economy.

V. Proposal Review Process and Timeline

ODHE staff will initially screen proposals for completeness. Any deficiencies must be addressed by the applicant within a time period set by the Chancellor's staff.

- A. Accepted proposals will be evaluated by ODHE following the rubric approved by the Chancellor.
- B. The schedule below may be revised by the Chancellor due to circumstances; any changes will be communicated to the applicants.
 - 1. Release of Application – February 9, 2018
 - 2. Proposals Due – March 30, 2018
 - 3. Review & Evaluation of Proposals – April-May, 2018
 - 4. Chancellor's Award Decisions – May-June, 2018
 - 5. Grant Agreement Preparation and Execution – July, 2018
 - 6. Funds Disbursed to Applicants – July-August, 2018
 - 7. Grant starts – July, 2018
 - 8. Grant ends – July, 2020

VI. Proposal Submission

Applicants are responsible for timely submissions of proposals. Proposals become property of the Chancellor and are subject to public record laws of the state. Proposals containing all the required elements will receive careful consideration, but cannot be guaranteed funding. The Chancellor will provide an opportunity for potential applicants to seek assistance regarding their application through the submittal of questions to shortterm@highered.ohio.gov by March 23, 2018. Responses to questions will be posted online to provide the information to interested parties. Additional assistance may be requested from ODHE via phone or e-mail.

- A. Proposals must be received by March 30, 2018 and must be submitted in the following manner:
 - 1. One electronic PDF file sent electronically to shortterm@highered.ohio.gov.

VII. Proposal Contact:

Any questions or concerns regarding this application should be sent to John Magill, Assistant Deputy Chancellor, Economic Advancement, at 614-752-9530 or jmagill@highered.ohio.gov.

VIII. Proposal Format

- A. Proposals must include the following elements:

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1. Maximum length is 10 pages, including cover letter, executive summary, and budget narrative excluding certification forms. The budget and timeline are outside of the page limit; Arial font – 10-point minimum, double spaced is allowed.
 - a. **Cover Letter (one page):** Identify the primary contact by name, title, address, phone number, and email address. Identify the fiscal agent.
 - b. **Executive Summary (one page maximum):** Explain how the proposed Short Term Certificates address ODHE program goals.
 - c. **Short-Term Certificate Program Form**
 - i. Completion of a short certificate program form for each eligible certificate program seeking assistance.
 - d. **Budget & Budget Narrative (one page maximum):** In a narrative and summarized in the Excel spreadsheet, the budget & budget narrative will document:
 - i. Requested institutional award amount.
 - ii. Projected total number of students assisted.
 - iii. Provide estimated grant award for each certificate assisted by the grant, maximum value \$1,000.
 - iv. Describe other institutional financial support and the nature of assistance related to implementing the grant.
 - Nature of institutional support may include:
 - i. Assigned staff
 - ii. Dedicated space or resources, etc.
 - e. Project Schedule:
 - i. Provide a GANNT chart timeline with proposed activities, estimated completion milestones for each activity, and key dependencies.
 - f. Exhibits (All forms found at https://www.ohiohighered.org/content/short_term_certificate_program):
 - i. Cover page and snapshot; list of certificates and grant amount, implementation schedule (Excel Workbook)
- B. Attachments (if desired, do not count toward page length).
 - a. Letters of support from business partners.
 - b. Institutional support documentation.
 - c. Documentation of partnerships with other stakeholders, business groups, community organizations, etc.
 - d. Visuals or informational brochures.

IX. Reporting Requirements

- A. ODHE will monitor each initiative for which an award is granted to ensure that there is fiscal accountability, operating progress, and that the desired outcomes are achieved. Regular reports will be required from all awardees through a standard reporting template or system. All awardees will submit the required data and metrics, expenditures, and one-page briefings of project milestones and success stories.
- B. Describe how the institution plans to gather and analyze program data.
- C. Identify what, if any, additional data points will be monitored and how that data will be used.
- D. Discuss how any challenges that emerge will be (a) identified and (b) addressed.
- E. The following annual reporting schedule is subject to change:
 1. Semi-Annual Metrics – Due February.
 2. Annual Metrics – Due August.

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- F. Metrics and financials to be collected and reported by an institution will include the following. The non-credit short-term certificate data will be collected through the Higher Education Information (HEI) system in the near future.
1. Fiscal Report (based on approved budget).
 2. Description of activities and achievements for each certificate receiving grant support.
 - a. Number of students receiving assistance.
 - i. Total dollars provided to students.
 - ii. Demographic data.
 - Such as age, race, sex, and residency status.
 - b. Number of students completing the certificate program.
 - i. Disaggregated by demographics.
 - c. Number of students employed in an in-demand occupation.
 - i. List of businesses employing students.
 3. Other metrics determined by the Chancellor.
 4. Additional narrative questions.

X. Legal Notices

The applicant understands that if its application is accepted by the State, the applicant shall enter into an agreement with the State governing the use of the awarded funds. Such funding will not be provided until all statutory provisions under the Ohio Revised Code, including Section 126.07, have been complied with and until such time as all necessary funds are made available and forthcoming from appropriate state agencies. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws in the conduct of the work hereunder.

The State reserves the right to fund any application in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to require new applications from interested parties, to reject any or all applications responding to this announcement, or to reissue the announcement if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the State of Ohio. Issuing this announcement does not bind the State to making any awards. The State reserves the right to adjust the dates for this announcement for whatever reasons are deemed appropriate. The State reserves the right to waive any non-substantive infractions made by an applicant, provided that the applicant cures such infraction upon request.

All costs incurred in preparation of an application shall be borne by the applicant. Application preparation costs are not recoverable under an award. The State of Ohio shall not contribute in any way to recovering the costs of application preparation.

The funding decisions are final. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application(s) at the conclusion of the review process.

The applicant understands that the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. To the best of the State's knowledge, the information provided is accurate. However, the State does not warrant such accuracy, and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying application. The State retains the right to modify or

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withdraw this solicitation at any time. By submitting an application, applicants expressly agree to these terms.

XI. Trade Secrets

All applicants are strongly discouraged from including in a proposal any information that the applicant considers to be a “trade secret,” as that term is defined in Section 1333.61(D) of the Ohio Revised Code. All information submitted in response to this application is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release under the Ohio Public Records Act in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

If any information in the proposal is to be treated as a trade secret, the proposal must:

- a. Identify each and every occurrence of the information within the proposal with an asterisk before and after each line containing trade secret information and underline the trade secret information itself;
- b. Identify that the proposal contains trade secret information in the cover letter; and
- c. Include a summary page immediately after the cover letter that lists each page in the proposal that includes trade secret information and the number of occurrences of trade secret information on that page.
- d. To determine what qualifies as trade secret information, refer to the definition of “trade secret” in the Ohio Revised Code at 1333.61(D), which is reproduced below for reference:
(D) “Trade Secret” means information, including the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or improvement, or any business information or plans, financial information, or listing of names, addresses, or telephone numbers that satisfies both of the following:
 - (1) It derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.
 - (2) It is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.
- a. The Ohio Department of Higher Education requires non-disclosure agreements from all non-ODHE individuals who may have access to proposals containing trade secret information, including evaluators.