

SECTION ONE
GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUESTED PRODUCTS/SERVICES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is the intent of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to solicit responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) in accordance with the statement of work, proposal preparation section, and specifications contained in this document. This RFP is being posted to the Commission’s website (<http://www.in.gov/che/3171.htm>). Neither this RFP nor any response (proposal) submitted hereto are to be construed as a legal offer.

1.2 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following are explanations of terms and abbreviations appearing throughout this RFP.

IAC	Indiana Administrative Code
IC	Indiana Code
Commission	Indiana Commission for Higher Education
Contract Award	The acceptance of the Commission’s Award Recommendation
Proposal	An offer as defined in IC 5-22-2-17
Respondent	An offeror as defined in IC 5-22-2-18. The State will not consider a proposal responsive if two or more offerors submit a joint or combined proposal. One entity or individual must be clearly identified as the respondent who will be ultimately responsible for performance of the contract.
State	The State of Indiana
State Agency	As defined in IC 4-13-1, “state agency” means an authority, board, branch, commission, committee, department, division, or other instrumentality of the executive, including the administrative, department of state government.

1.3 PROGRAM TITLE

Indiana Adult Promise Grants

1.4 SYNOPSIS OF PROGRAM

The goal of the Indiana Adult Promise Grants are to significantly increase the number of adult Hoosiers with a postsecondary credential by developing easy-to-use resources and identifying and sharing best practices to serve adult students – particularly those who are participating in Indiana’s “adult promise” financial aid program, the Workforce Ready Grant.

1.5 POINT OF CONTACT

Indiana Commission for Higher Education
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Finance@che.in.gov
Sean Tierney, Associate Commissioner for Policy and Research
STierney@che.in.gov

2.1 AWARD SUMMARY

2.1.1 Available Funding

The Indiana Adult Promise Grant is funded by the Lumina Foundation, which will provide grant awards (“Grant”) to support the development of pilot programs or expansion of existing programs that support adult learners at eligible Indiana colleges and universities.

Fiscal Impact Statement

State Expenditures - Total state expenditures for the Program Development Grants are estimated to be \$250,000.

2.1.2 AWARD AMOUNTS AND NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS

2.1.2.1 **Award per Pilot Program/Program Expansion.**

Maximum award amount is \$250,000, awarded in one disbursement for the development or expansion of a pilot program/service for adult learners.

2.1.2.2 **Maximum Number of Awards.**

The maximum number of Indiana Adult Promise Grants is contingent upon the amount of funding available.

2.1.2.3 **Maximum Number Submissions.**

An eligible applicant may request awards for multiple qualified pilot programs.

2.1.2.4 **Prioritization of Award Selection.**

These grants will help Indiana institutions identify areas to improve their adult supports, to sustainably scale best practices, and to

better connect adult students with employers. Priority will be given to applications that focus on:

- Increasing the enrollment of adult students on their campus(es)
- Enhancing life and career planning resources for adult students
- Piloting emergency aid programs for students
- Expanding service hours to provide flexibility of delivery
- Creating adult-friendly study/support spaces
- Developing peer-to-peer/mentor support programs for adult students

Priority will also be given to:

- Institutions/campuses who have participated in the CAEL Adult Learner 360 Surveys during Phase I of the grant.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education will use the following rubric to evaluate applicants:

Evaluation Criteria	Possible Points	Applicant Score
Innovation of the expansion/pilot program	25	
Impact on adult student success (based on the CAEL metrics)	45	
Ability of the student success model to be scaled and replicated at other institutions	15	
Dedication to cross-sector collaboration within the region	10	
Commitment to expand and sustain the program by working with other institutions and assist with implementation	5	
Total Points	100	

2.1.3 COST SHARING OR MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for the grant will not be required to meet any cost-sharing or matching requirements.

2.1.4 GRANT LENGTH

The Indiana Adult Promise Grant period will end in March 2020. Funding must be expended by February 14, 2020. Grantees must submit final report by February 28, 2020.

2.1.5 PROPOSAL DEADLINE

September 17, 2019.

2.1.6 NOTIFICATION OF AWARD SELECTION

Applicants selected to receive Indiana Adult Promise Grants in 2019-2020 will be notified by September 20, 2019.

3.1 PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Indiana Adult Promise Grants are designed to pilot, expand and enhance promising practices for supporting adult students at colleges and universities across Indiana.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) relates to Proposals from organizations intending to develop or expand new/existing programs and services that address the needs of adult students on Indiana college campuses.

Additional information is provided in Section 4.1, Eligibility Information.

4.1 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Entities in the following categories and located in the State of Indiana are eligible to apply for funding under the Indiana Adult Promise Grant:

- Indiana Institutions that are eligible to administer State Financial Aid
- Community-based organizations focused on educational attainment

The Applicant (i.e., college, university, ...) applying for this grant is required to document that the funds are used only for programmatic needs related to the proposed adult-focused program. (Please Refer to Section 8: Use of Award Funds)

5.1 INQUIRIES

All inquiries shall be directed to the Point of Contact per RFP Section 1.5.

Any information deemed by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to be important and of general interest or which modifies requirements of the RFP shall be sent in the form of an addendum to the RFP to all Applicants that have submitted a proposal. All applicants must acknowledge receipt of all addenda, if any, to this RFP by an email to STierney@che.in.gov and Finance@che.in.gov.

6.1 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Each Applicant has the option to submit their completed formal response, including the required attachments, electronically to Sean Tierney at STierney@che.in.gov and Finance@che.in.gov.

6.10 SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Each Applicant must submit their completed formal response, including the required attachments, on or before, September 9, 2019.

6.11 FORMS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION

A formal response to the requirements of this RFP is the grant Proposal.

6.12 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

If Applicant is submitting their formal response electronically, including any required attachments, it must be sent to the following email addresses: STierney@che.in.gov and finance@che.in.gov.

Applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that Applicant's complete electronic response is sent to and received by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in a timely manner. Applicant should retain proof of timely submission.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education will email confirmation of response to Applicant within three state business days of receipt by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Applicant must consider a response not received by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education until Applicant has received an email confirmation from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. If Applicant has not received such confirmation from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education within three state business days of submission, contact the Point of Contact. Applicant will be requested to provide proof of timely submission.

7.1 GENERAL APPLICANT INFORMATION

A formal response to the requirements of the RFP is the grant Proposal must include the elements described in Subsections 7.1.1 through 7.1.10 of this RFP.

In completing the Proposal, it is important to provide sufficient information to allow reviewers to clearly evaluate the Proposal based on the selection criteria described in Sections 9.1.2.1 and 9.1.2.2 of this RFP.

7.1.1 GENERAL APPLICANT AND PARTNER INFORMATION

Provide general information on the Applicant, and partner(s), if any, including:

- Name of Applicant Organization. This is the entity that will serve as the fiscal agent for the project.
- Location of Applicant.
- Applicant Contact Information.
- Program Director Information, if available.
- Program Partner(s) Information, if applicable.

7.1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY

The summary should highlight key points of the Proposal, including the defined goals and objectives and a brief rationale for selected strategies to achieve the goals and objectives

7.1.3 DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT AND PARTNERS

Description of Applicant and Partners should include:

- Description of Applicant and partners expected to participate in the planning and development process.
- Description of the services and programs currently available for adult-learners.
- For Applicants that are not educational institutions, information relating to the community/institution's educational culture.
- Information relating to other environmental conditions in the campus that could be conducive to the planning, development, and operation of adult-learner focused programs and services.
- Additional information deemed by the Applicant to be pertinent to Applicant's suitability the proposed programs/services.
- Commitment of the Applicant and partners to Indiana Adult Promise.

7.1.4 ASSESSMENT OF NEED FOR AN INDIANA ADULT PROMISE PROGRAM

In the assessment of need for the Indiana Adult Promise, Applicant should discuss at least the items listed below:

- Characteristics of Applicant's community, service area, and region.
- Proposed impact from the establishment/expansion of a new adult-focused program/service on campus.
- Challenges Applicant is facing in supporting adult-learners, if any.
- Other topics that Applicant considered in the assessment of need for an adult-friendly program.

7.1.5 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Program Description should detail specific goals of the project, the strategies and activities identified to accomplish the goals, and the process and metrics for measuring progress toward and attainment of the goals.

Applicant must include at least the following goals:

- Leadership commitment to the project from within Applicant's organization.
- Community commitment, such as from government and business leaders in the community. (optional)
- Identification of the Applicant's and partners' sites that will provide educational experiences or services for adult-learners on campus.
- Identification of Sponsoring Institutional Partner.
- Identification of an individual designated as Program Director, who will guide the project.

7.1.6 PROGRAM ACTION PLAN AND TIMELINE

The PROGRAM Action Plan and Timeline should include the strategies and activities that support the achievement of the goals identified in Subsection 7.1.5. Generally, each goal would be supported by more than one strategy and/or activity. If the Applicant is selected for an Award, it is expected that the Project Action Plan and Timeline will be more fully developed and expanded over the course of the grant funding period.

7.1.7 PROGRAM EVALUATION

Applicants must provide an evaluation plan that is aligned with project goals and includes outcomes and appropriate measures for assessment of those goals. The evaluation plan should allow for qualitative and quantitative progress toward the identified goals. After the end of the funding period, the Indiana Adult Promise Committee may conduct an evaluation to assess the statewide effectiveness of the Indiana Adult Promise Grant program across all participating sites. Applicants must also participate in such evaluation.

7.1.8 BUDGET

A separate budget must be submitted by the Applicant that will participate in the project funded by Indiana Adult Promise Grant funding. The budget must include a reasonable estimate of funds expenditures over the Grant Period. The budget must include amounts and justification of allowable funds expenditures (as further discussed in Section 8.1). The Indiana Adult Promise Committee shall negotiate a final budget with each Awarded Applicant.

7.1.9 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Provide a financial statement (i.e., a summary of an income statement and or balance sheet) for the Applicant for the previous three fiscal years. This may

be in the form of Applicant's most recent audited financial reports. Public institutions are exempt from this requirement.

7.1.10 CERTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL INFORMATION

The Proposal must be certified by an individual who is legally authorized to submit the Proposal on behalf of the Applicant. Completion and submission of the Proposal Certification Page fulfills this requirement.

8.1 USE OF AWARD FUNDS

8.1.1 ALLOWABLE COSTS

Funds awarded under the Indiana Adult Promise Grant must be spent only on activities directly related to the Indiana Adult Promise Grant program(s). All reasonable costs in the budget categories below are allowable:

- Personnel Compensation: Compensation would generally encompass a portion of salaries, wages, and benefits of personnel, including, but not limited to, Project Director, and support staff.
- Travel: Mileage expenses must be consistent with State of Indiana guidelines.
- Equipment and Supplies: Funds expended on Equipment and Supplies must not exceed 5% of total project budget.
- Fees to External Consultants: Consulting assistance would generally include, but not be limited to, activities such as strategy development, financial modeling, affiliation agreements, and faculty identification/engagement.
- Other Direct Costs: Approval of expenditures for Other Direct Costs is at the discretion of the Indiana Adult Promise Committee. These costs must be specifically identified and justified in the Proposal budget or must be subsequently approved by the Indiana Adult Promise Committee via a Budget Change Request.

Salaries/stipends and benefits that are calculated at a higher pay rate than that which an individual (or similar position) normally receives are not allowed.

8.1.2 BUDGET CHANGES

Over the life of the grant, no more than a total of \$10,000 may be transferred across the allowable budget categories listed in Subsection 8.1.1 without prior Indiana Adult Promise Committee (at CHE) approval.

A budget change request must be received, approved, and an amendment to the grant agreement must be executed before funds may be spent outside of the original budget categories.

9.1 SELECTION FOR FUNDING

9.1.1 PROPOSAL SCREENING

The Indiana Adult Promise Committee will review Proposals to determine if they adhere to the Grant program requirements and the funding priorities contained in the RFP. A Proposal must meet the requirements of the RFP and be submitted with proper authorization before or on the day specified by in the RFP to qualify for further consideration.

9.1.2 SELECTION OF APPLICANTS FOR AWARDS

9.1.2.1 Evaluation. The Indiana Adult Promise Committee shall evaluate Proposals based upon the selection criteria below.

- (a) The defined goals, strategies, and activities are appropriate and reasonably achievable within the grant period.
- (b) Planned resources are adequate and their allocation is sufficient to achieve project goals and objectives.
- (c) Applicant's and partners' sites offer sufficient learning opportunities for resident training.
- (d) Applicant's Program Plan indicates the intent to fully implement the actions necessary in establishing/expanding an adult-learner program/service.

9.1.2.2 Priority for Funding. Priority will be given to Applicants that provide the following:

- (a) Institutions who completed the Adult Learner 360 assessments during phase one of the grant.
- (b) Eligible Institutions that administer the Workforce Ready Grant

The items listed above are not intended to be in order of importance.

9.1.3 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUNDING

The Indiana Adult Promise Committee shall make a recommendation of selected Applicants to be funded to the Commission for Higher Education. The Commissioner shall make the final funding decision and submit it to the Indiana Adult Promise Committee for their final approval.

10.1 DISTRIBUTION OF AWARD FUNDS

10.1.1 ISSUANCE OF GRANT AWARD

Following the announcement of awards and any negotiations between the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and each Awarded Applicant, the Awarded Applicants will receive an electronic notice of the Grant Award.

10.1.2 FUNDS DISTRIBUTION

- Grants are funded through funds from Lumina Foundation for Education, Inc. Awardees shall receive payments through the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.
- The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is not bound by any award estimates in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Funding may be reduced or terminated if funds allocated for either of the two years of this program should become reduced, depleted, or unavailable during the Contract Term.
- After making a finding that an awarded applicant has failed to perform or failed to conform to Grant Conditions, The Indiana Commission for Higher Education may retract or reduce the Grant Amount for the Awarded Applicant.

10.1.3 LAST DAY OF EXPENDITURES

- Grant Award funding must be expended by February 14, 2020.
- No-Cost Extension of Grant Period. At the discretion of the Indiana Adult Promise Committee, a one-time, no-cost extension of the Grant Period may be granted if the Applicant is in good standing with all reporting requirements.

10.1.4 RETURN OF UNEXPENDED FUNDS

Awarded Applicants shall return any unexpended funds at the end of the Grant Period.

11.1 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Program Director of the Grant must electronically submit the reports listed in Sections 11.1.1 – 11.1.2 below.

11.1.1 PROGRAM FINAL REPORT

A program Final Report will be required to be submitted to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education electronically by February 28, 2020. The report will provide a summary of progress to date, including a description of the project and its results as measured by the Project Evaluation Plan (including but not limited to, the evaluation metrics of goals and objectives provided in the grant Proposal).

11.1.2 FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

No later than February 28, 2020, a Final Financial Report shall be submitted electronically to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in a format specified by the Indiana Adult Promise Committee. The Final Financial Report must detail the actual expenditures for the Grant Term by purpose and amount. The report must also document the unexpended balance of Grants program funds as of February 14th. The Final Financial Report must include a statement certifying expenditures and unexpended balance signed by the authorized representative of Awarded Applicant. An Auditor's Report may be requested if deemed necessary by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

11.1.4 DELINQUENT REPORTS

Awarded Applicants with any required reports deemed to be delinquent may be required to return unexpended funds.

The Commissioner of the Commission for Higher Education or their designee will, in the exercise of their sole discretion, determine which proposal(s) offer the best means of servicing the interests of the State. The exercise of this discretion will be final.

-- End of Request for Proposal --