MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

One Step Away
Complete College Maryland
State Grant Program

Technical Assistance Workshop

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Agenda

College Completion in Maryland

Near-completers Projects in Other States – Promising Practices

The One Step Away Grant Program
- – Content
- – Application Components

Grant Review Process and Awarding

Statewide Completion Goals

- Governor O'Malley has set a statewide goal that by 2025 at least 55% of Marylanders age 25-64 will hold at least one degree credential – either an Associate or Bachelor's.

- To attain the number of degrees necessary to meet the completion goal, Maryland must produce 58,000 degrees per year, an increase of 20,000 – 23,000 annually.

- Many will come from "natural" enrollment growth, but close to 15,000 must come from "new initiatives."

Current Statewide Completion Initiatives

ADAPTS (Associate Degree Award for Pre-degree Transfer Students) – Reverse Transfer Program funded by Complete College America and Lumina/USA Funds grants to MHEC

Course Redesign – Gateway and developmental course redesign based on NCAT model to improve academic success funded by Carnegie & Lumina Grants to the USM

Developmental Math Course Redesign - Accelerated, modular and/or computer-based course redesigns to move students more quickly into credit bearing math courses funded by Complete College America grant to MHEC

Higher Education Student Persistence Grant – Retention and academic success support for low income college students supported by the federal College Access Challenge Grant to MHEC

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State funded competitive grant program to provide seed monies to Maryland public and non profit associate and bachelor's degree granting institutions to:

Identify,

Contact,

Re-engage,

Re-enroll, and

Graduate

STOP OUT and/or DROP OUT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (12 months or more)

Increase
associate and bachelor's degree
attainment rates
for
near-completers

Undergraduate students who….

1. have completed at least 75% of the credits required to earn an associate or bachelor's degree (45 credits or more for a 60 credit program; 90 credits or more for a 120 credit program); *or* have earned enough credits for an associate or bachelor's degree but have not been awarded the degree;

2. are in good academic standing;

3. have dropped-out or stopped-out for at least 12 months; and

4. Targets students enrolled 2009-2010 or later but may serve earlier initial enrollments too

Types of Near-Completers

Degree-Eligible – accumulated sufficient credit, completed course requirements, in good academic standing but have not received degree.

> **How does that happen?** Student may not realize he/she has sufficient credits for original degree or a similar different degree; didn't meet residency requirements; failed to comply with non-academic testing requirements; has outstanding fines, fees owed, etc.

Degree-Potential – completed 75% or more of credits needed for degree, in good academic standing

> **How does that happen?** Student stops or drops out for financial, personal or other reasons.

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Grant Program
At a Glance

Eligibility: All accredited Maryland public and non-profit independent associate and bachelor's degree granting colleges and universities may apply

Grant Period: July 14, 2014 through July 14, 2016. See Grant Program Timeline page 4 of the RFP

 Award Amount: Up to $75,000 dependent upon the scope of the project

Institutional Match: Institutions must provide matching funds – cash or in-kind - in an amount equal to at least 1/3 of the total project cost (e.g. $25,000 in match for a $50,000 award for a total project cost of $75,000)

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Grant Program
At a Glance (cont.)

Application Due Date: **Monday, June 16, 2014 no later than 4 p.m.**

Deliver to: Dr. Benee' Edwards, Coordinator, Outreach and Grants Management, Maryland Higher Education Commission

6 North Liberty Street, 10th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201

Notification of Award/Projects Begin: July 14, 2014

Why Participate? Benefits

1. Students – complete a recognized employment credential which may lead to promotion in existing job or to more career opportunities. Intrinsic degree value

2. Institutions – improved graduation rates, increased graduate alumni base, increased tuition revenues

3. State – increased pool of college educated, credentialed workforce to meet New Economy demands. Improved return on state investment per FTE with increased number of graduates

Promising Practices

1. Successful initiatives have efficient mechanisms for identifying near-completers

2. Successful initiatives include student support systems to facilitate near-completers return to the academic environment

3. Projects to look at:
   - **Project Win-Win** – Institute for Higher Education Policy
   - **Non -Traditional No More** – Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
   - **Project Graduate** - Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

Identification of
One Step Away Students

1. Review institutional data — generate list of near-completer students for target years

2. Compare institutional near-completer list to National Student Clearinghouse data to eliminate students who completed degrees elsewhere

3. Forward "scrubbed" list to MHEC no later than August 15, 2014 -- for check against MVA records. MHEC returns updated address list September 15, 2014

4. Initiate contact with One Step Away students by October 31, 2014 for spring 2015 or later re-enrollment

Address Three or More of the Objectives

1. Develop and/or improve existing near-completer outreach
2. Enhance student support systems – e.g. academic, financial, advising, student life
3. Develop/advise/implement specific plan of study/track for individual students
4. Establish/implement prior learning assessment and/or competency based testing for academic credit
5. Develop general studies or other generalist type of undergraduate degree program
6. Offer sustainable campus-based financial aid options

May add additional institutional objectives in addition to the required objectives

Examples: Fundable Activities

Degree audit infrastructure – software enhancements, computer aided and/or automated report development

Develop Degree Completion Plans – individualized, generalized pathways to completion with supporting advising

Enhancement/Redesign of Degree Program – customizable or general degree programs such as general studies degree or organizational leadership degree such as Oklahoma University System (Non-Traditional No More)

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Examples: Fundable Activities

Implement Concierge Model – dedicated counselor/advisor for near-completers, one stop center

Faculty and Staff Development – professional development to encourage understanding and role of faculty and staff in supporting completion

Marketing and outreach activities targeting near-completers such as direct mail, phone call, targeted media

Student Financial Support – e.g. text book discounts, fee waivers, installment tuition plan, financial aid

Application Components

1. Cover Page
2. Abstract
3. Needs Assessment
4. Objectives and Projected Outcomes
5. Management Plan
6. Operation Plan
7. Project Evaluation
8. Data Reporting Requirement
9. Budget and Cost Effectiveness
10. Assurance
11. Appendix

See checklist Appendix A

Use institution-specific data, limit use of national data

Central focus – near-completer population at your institution

Provide baseline data – what is known about the near-completer population at your institution

Explain current institution completion goals and efforts – where does One Step Away fit in?

Need not be long, but must be compelling

Objectives & Projected Outcomes (10 pts.)

Discuss how your project will contribute to the overarching goal

Identify the objectives to be addressed

Identify one or more outcomes projected for each of the objectives you plan to address

Projected outcomes should be quantifiable and measurable

Reference baseline data

Management Plan (15 pts.)

Identify key personnel, roles and responsibilities in managing the project – include short CVs/resumes in appendix

Show organizational structure and timeline for management activities

Table, narrative or both may be used to articulate the management plan

Examples of management activities:

Convene team meetings, set benchmarks, prepare reports, establish timeline, monitor progress

Management Plan (cont.).

Link management activities to budget, link to grant time table on page 4 of RFP

Demonstrate adequacy of project team and sufficiency of timeline to complete goals

Who is going to be on your management team? Assemble a team to address the entire scope of the near-completer issue (e.g. student advising, financial aid, Registrar)

IMPORTANT…Include sustainability plan as part of the management plan

Operation Plan (30 pts.)

Implementation and detail oriented!

Describe activities that will achieve project objectives

Explain student recruiting/retention plan

Describe who/what/when/where/how of project activities

Provide activities timeline.

Table, narrative or both appropriate format

Link to budget and to grant time table on page 4 of RFP

Evaluation (20 pts.)

Formative and summative purposes -- Discuss assessment of project implementation as well as assessment of achievement of objectives

Collect quantitative and qualitative data

Map directly to objectives and projected outcomes

Reference baseline data

Discuss data collection and analysis

Discuss how you will work with institutional research to gather required performance data

Evaluation (cont.)

The best evaluation plans demonstrate cooperative planning amongst the units involved in the completion / project agenda.

Annual Progress and Final project reports will include evaluation and outcome data

There are specific data reporting requirements for this grant (more on that in a minute)

Degree-Eligible Near-Completers

- The number of degree-eligible students identified to include gender, race, age and degree program aggregated demographic data

- The number of degree-eligible students successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned)

- The number of degree-eligible students awarded degree during the grant reporting period by degree program

Degree-Potential Near-Completers

- # degree-potential students identified to include gender, race, age and degree program aggregated demographic data

- Average number of credits toward degree

- Average length of time (in months) that degree-potential near-completers have been stopped-out or dropped-out

- # degree-potential near-completers successfully contacted (email and/or snail mail that is not returned)

Degree-Potential Near-Completers (cont.)

- # degree-potential near-completers that re-enroll to include gender, race, age, and degree program aggregated demographic data

- # credit hours earned by degree-potential near-completers upon re-enrollment for the grant reporting period

- # credit hours awarded to degree-potential near-completers via prior learning assessments or competency-based credits (where applicable)

- # degree-potential near-completers awarded an associate or bachelor's degree during the grant reporting period by degree program

- # re-enrolled degree-potential near-completers who received financial aid through the One Step Away grant program and the average amount of aid received through the grant

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Budget & Cost Effectiveness (15 pts.)

Provide Budget Request Summary and a Budget Narrative

Institutions provide 1/3 of total project cost as match

- In-kind or cash

- Example: $75,000 total project cost - $25,000 match - $50,000 grant funds requested

Grant funds may not support indirect costs; *however* up to 8% of total project costs may be claimed as in-kind indirect costs match (e.g. $6,000 in indirect costs may be claimed as match in example above).

Budget Request Summary

Use excel spreadsheet provided

Submit electronic copy of budget

Management, operation and in some cases evaluation plan activities should map to budget request

Budget Narrative

Present narrative in same order as Budget Request Summary

Justify proposed expenditures by line item for each funding source (grant request, matching fund)

Detailed – show how amounts were derived e.g. cost per unit, number of units, fringe benefits at 33% of salary, 200 hours at $25 an hour

See page 18 of RFP for category explanations

Assurances

Use form provided

Indicates agreement to abide by state, federal statute, grant stipulations, etc.

Signed by President or Provost

Appendix

1. Include short curriculum vitae or resumes for ALL key personnel

2. Include any additional materials to support grant application

3. Be selective about what to include. Reviewers may or may not spend much time on appendices.

4. Appendix does not count toward page total

General Format Reminders

12-point font -- Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman or similar, 10-point for tables

1" margins all around

Number pages

Narrative may not exceed 15 single spaced pages --Cover, abstract, budget summary request, budget narrative, assurances. Appendices do not count toward 15 page limit.

Standard bullets, indents recommended

RFP and forms located at:
http://www.mhec.state.md.us/Grants/CCM/OneStepAway.asp

Application Submission

Submit ONE original and FIVE copies to Benee' Edwards.

DUE June 16, 2014 by 4 PM at MHEC Baltimore Office

Acknowledgement email will be sent to listed project director by midnight June 16.

Application Review

At least four qualified reviewers will read your application

Review panel meets to debrief and place applications in recommended priority funding order. Review panel may recommend changes to budget or project

Recommendation forwarded to Secretary of Higher Education who makes final funding decision

Preliminary notification of awards by midnight, July 14, 2014 to project director listed.

Formal award letters issued after any recommended changes negotiated/agreed to – probably by August 5

Post Award Meeting

Grantees required to attend post award meeting/conference call

- Discuss procedures for submitting near-completer student list to MHEC and return of list with updated addresses

- Discuss post award procedures (Appendix C in the RFP)

- Meeting likely to be held in Baltimore, Columbia or Annapolis

- This meeting can be a budgeted item in the Budget Request Summary

QUESTIONS?

We look forward to receiving your application!

Contact

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