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Nurse Support Program II

Request for Applications for Competitive Institutional Grants Phase 4

**Response Date: March 25, 2009
4:00 p.m.**

**Administrator: Maryland Higher Education Commission
839 Bestgate Road, Suite 400
Annapolis, MD 21401
www.mhec.state.md.us**

**Health Service Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) in collaboration
with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)**

Summary Timetable

Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2008 RFA for NSP II Phase 4 Competitive Institutional Grants

Monday, Nov. 10, 2008 Technical Assistance Meeting
10:00 am – 2:00 pm
The Charles I. Ecker Business Training Center – Room 1
(Gateway Business and Technology Training Center)
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive
Columbia, MD 21046 (410-313-6340)
For directions, see:

http://coned.howardcc.edu/business_and_workforce_development/meeting_facilities/gateway.html

This meeting will consist of technical assistance in the morning session, a networking lunch, and an afternoon session in workshop format. Prospective applicants are encouraged to bring their grant preparation team. Professional staff from MHEC will meet informally with teams to discuss projects being developed and to provide feedback on those plans.

RSVP Deadline: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2008
RSVP by e-mail to moconnor@mhec.state.md.us

Wednesday, February 25, 2009 Proposals due by 4:00 p.m. at MHEC

Week of April 6, 2009	Notification of grant awards made
July 1, 2009	Projects begin; initial grant payment requests submitted to the Comptroller's Office
July 31, 2010	Annual report due
July 31, 2011	Annual report due
July 31, 2012	Annual report due
July 31, 2013	Annual report due
October 1, 2012	Final report due for 3-year grants
October 1, 2013	Final report due for 4-year grants
October 1, 2014	Final report due for 5-year grants

The RFA and relevant forms are available at www.mhec.state.md.us/Grants/NSPII/NSPII.asp

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NURSE SUPPORT PROGRAM II

INTRODUCTION

Grant proposals for Phase 4 of the Nurse Support Program II (NSP II) Competitive Institutional Grants are being solicited. The NSP II is distinct from, and in addition to, the NSP I hospital-specific program. As with NSP I, the goal of NSP II is ultimately to increase the number of bedside nurses in Maryland hospitals. *The NSP II, however, focuses on the education of nurses and, therefore, concentrates on the nursing educational system, including university, college and community college schools of nursing and hospital and school consortia.*

BACKGROUND

In July, 2001, the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) implemented the first phase of the Nurse Support Program (NSP I) to address the issues of recruiting and retaining nurses in Maryland hospitals. The design of NSP I was to allow individual hospitals to submit proposals to address issues specific to their institutions. A large component of NSP I has been scholarship funding to further the education of hospital nurses. The NSP I exposed the inability of nursing programs to accept large numbers of students because of limited capacity due to nursing faculty shortages.

While the critical demand for registered nurses increased, Maryland registered nursing (RN) programs were admitting and enrolling less than half of the qualified applicants seeking admission. In Fall 2005, 2,357 qualified applicants were denied admission to RN programs. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the RN programs reported that they had met or exceeded their enrollment capacity in Fall, 2005. The shortage of qualified nursing faculty is the fundamental obstacle to expanding the enrollments in nursing programs, thereby exacerbating the nursing shortage in future years.

The Health Services Cost Review Commission proactively created the NSP II to address the barriers to nursing education. At its May 4, 2005, public meeting, the HSCRC unanimously approved an increase of 0.1% of regulated gross patient revenue for the use in expanding the pool of nurses in the State by increasing the capacity of nursing programs in Maryland. This funding represents approximately \$8.8 million devoted to NSP II on an annual basis for ten years.

In FY 2008 for Phase 2 of NSP II, twenty-three proposals for the Competitive Institutional Grants were received by the due date. A ten-member review panel, consisting of nursing administrators and nursing faculty from neighboring states, former HSCRC commission members, and State agency staff members, evaluated each proposal based on the criteria set forth in the request for applications, the comparative outcomes of each initiative, geographic distribution across the State, and the diversity of the program participants. The review panel unanimously agreed to recommend nine of the twenty-three proposals for funding to the HSCRC. The nine recommended projects were deemed to best address the multiple aspects of the nursing shortage by accelerating the number of Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) graduates, expanding the pipeline of ADN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students,

and creating pathways to nursing faculty positions through Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and doctoral programs. The nine projects included an additional twenty-two hospital and higher education institution partners and consortium members. On May 2, 2007, the HSCRC approved the funding of the nine recommended projects. The year-one funding for the nine Competitive Institutional Grant projects was \$1,603,082, with a five-year total of \$5,933,393. Abstracts for both the funded and the unfunded proposals are included in Appendix G.

For FY 2009 for Phase 3, four proposals were submitted for the Competitive Institutional Grants by the due date of March 12, 2008. The proposals were reviewed by an eight-member evaluation committee consisting of nursing educators, hospital administrators, a former commissioner, and MHEC and HSCRC staff. Six of the members served on the evaluation committee in the previous year and the two additions were recently retired faculty. The review panel recommended three of the four proposals. On May 14, 2008, the HSCRC approved funding of the three recommended proposals. The three projects will bring a nursing program to a previously underserved county, will convert a doctoral nursing program to a hybrid distance learning format, and will bring graduate students into a certificate program in teaching nursing. The year-one funding for the three Competitive Institutional Grant projects was \$486,504, with a five-year total of \$2,801,137. Abstracts for both the funded and unfunded proposals can be found in Appendix G.

MHEC and HSCRC staff took several steps to address the issues that may have contributed to only a small number of proposals being received for FY 2009 for the NSP II Competitive Grant program. The deans and directors of the colleges and universities who have not yet been awarded a NSP II Competitive Grant were visited to discuss ways to improve proposals that were submitted but were not funded, ideas for new proposals, and other specific barriers that could be addressed.

A survey was distributed to 104 deans/directors of nursing, hospital administrators, NSP II project directors, policy makers, and other interested parties to solicit input on ways NSP II can be made more responsive and effective. Twenty survey responses were received; ten respondents were from campuses and ten from hospitals. The responses have been used to make modifications to the Competitive Institutional Grant RFA and Statewide Initiatives applications.

In prior funding rounds, the review panel identified a number of common themes that contributed to the decision not to recommend the proposals. Those themes have remained relevant through all three review cycles. They are:

- Delayed timeline for implementation and outcomes (such as student enrollment 18 months in the future)
- New degree programs that had not progressed sufficiently in the approval process
- Appearance of using grant funds to supplant institutional funding
- Objectives that were extremely vague and lacked concrete performance measures

- Little or no discussion of a transition to sustainability
- Excessive cost per graduate
- Excessive expenses for equipment, surveys, consultants, and/or administration
- Project outcomes that were not realistic
- Job descriptions for newly created positions that appeared overly ambitious (such as hiring one staff member to screen all applicants, advise all students, and mentor in excess of 100 students)
- Applications for multiple grant categories that seemed poorly defined and coordinated or overly ambitious
- Large number of new faculty requested for relatively few additional students
- Portions of proposal missing

As part of the proposal review process, the review panel members are asked to give concrete, specific comments to assist in the development of future proposals. The unsuccessful applicants are each sent a compilation of the review panel's comments to help them strengthen proposals for resubmission. These common themes are shared here to help guide future applicants in developing proposals.

ADMINISTRATION OF NSP II

HSCRC contracted with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to administer the Nurse Support Program II. Monthly NSP II payments are transferred from Maryland hospitals to MHEC and distributed by MHEC to institutions of higher education, hospitals, faculty, and students selected to receive NSP II funding. On behalf of HSCRC, the Maryland Higher Education Commission is also responsible for (1) the development of applications and guidelines, (2) overseeing the review and selection of applicants, and (3) the monitoring and evaluation of recipients of NSP II awards.

MHEC provides the programmatic and administrative support necessary to successfully administer the NSP II program. As the coordinating board for all Maryland institutions of higher education, MHEC contributes its extensive experience and expertise with (1) the management of institutional grants, (2) the administration of student financial aid, and (3) the collection, review, and evaluation of programmatic and financial data from Maryland's higher education institutions. In addition, MHEC is responsible for working collaboratively with Maryland's colleges and universities to address Maryland's workforce needs, including the State's critical nursing shortage.

GOAL

The goal of the HSCRC's Nurse Support Program II is to increase the number of qualified bedside nurses in Maryland hospitals.

NSP II FUNDING

Funding for NSP II is provided through a 0.1% increase to the rate structure of all Maryland hospitals beginning July 1, 2005. Through this, approximately \$8.8 million is generated annually for NSP II.

Under the Nurse Support Program II, funding supports two types of initiatives:

1. Competitive Institutional Grants
2. Statewide Initiatives

This document relates to Competitive Institutional Grants that are awarded to Maryland institutions of higher education and hospitals through a Request for Applications (RFA) process. Statewide Initiatives are awarded through separate application processes. [Appendix H](#) contains detailed information about Statewide Initiatives.

The two types of initiatives—Competitive Institutional Grants and Statewide Initiatives—work together. Institutions seeking Competitive Institutional Grants are encouraged to coordinate their proposal with the financial support available through NSP II Statewide Initiatives. Statewide Initiatives assist individual students and faculty through the following: (1) Graduate Nursing Faculty Scholarship and Living Expenses Grants for students to complete the graduate education necessary to become faculty at Maryland nursing schools, (2) Fellowships for new nursing faculty hired by Maryland nursing programs to expand their enrollments, (3) funding for the Workforce Shortage Student Assistant Grant Program for scholarships for students enrolled in registered nursing programs at Maryland institutions, and (4) the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program, which helps nursing faculty repay their student loans.

Statewide Initiatives are also administered by MHEC on behalf of the HSCRC. The centralized administration of nursing scholarships, fellowships, and loan assistance repayment maximizes access and participation by all eligible applicants throughout the State and minimizes the administrative burden placed on individual schools in Maryland. This process also provides uniformity in the amount and type of financial support provided to nursing students and faculty throughout the State.

COMPETITIVE INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS – NURSE SUPPORT PROGRAM II

GRANT AWARDS

Amount to be Awarded: The size of each Competitive Institutional Grant award will depend upon the grant project's ability to impact the nursing shortage in a timely manner, the depth and breadth of the initiative, and the feasibility of the budget. There is no maximum grant award amount. However, the entire annual \$8.8 million may not be awarded each year in Competitive

Institutional Grants to allow (1) proposals that were not funded in prior years to have an opportunity to receive funding in subsequent years, (2) funding of the year two through year five payments of the projects in subsequent years, and (3) funds to be held in reserve for initiatives that may emerge in the future. If the entire \$8.8 million were to be awarded in one year, there could be no new project awards for several years because in subsequent years the funds would be allocated to the those projects for a period of up to five years. In addition, the amount for Graduate Faculty Scholarships will continue to grow for several years as new students are added and students from the prior year are awarded for a second year.

Legislation was enacted to create a non-lapsing special fund for the NSP II program so that funds can be carried forward for awards in future years and can remain dedicated to increasing the number of bedside nurses.

Types of Grants: Funding is available for the following five types of competitive grants:

1. Initiatives to Expand Maryland's Nursing Capacity through Shared Resources
2. Initiatives to Increase Maryland's Nursing Faculty
3. Initiatives to Increase Nursing Student Retention
4. Initiatives to Increase the Pipeline for Nursing Faculty
5. Initiatives to Increase Capacity Statewide

Initial Grant Process: The following is an outline of the process and schedule for competitive grants for Phase 4:

- Proposals for the NSP II Competitive Institutional Grants will be due on February 25, 2009, by 4:00 pm. at the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), 839 Bestgate Road, Annapolis, MD 21401. If inclement weather causes either MHEC or the applicant institution to close that day, the proposal will be due the next full business day of both MHEC and the applicant institution.
- Applicants will be notified by phone, mail, or e-mail on or about April 9, 2008, as to whether their proposals were approved for funding.
- Projects will begin on July 1, 2009.
- Awards will be made on July 1 each year in accordance with previously approved budgets, assuming adequate progress.
- Grants will be funded for a period of three (3) to five (5) years.

Modifications and Renewals of Grants: Based on interim reports, MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC, reserves the right to request changes to the original plan for funded initiatives. MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC, also reserves the right to end the grant (see "Termination" in Appendix E).

Grantees may wish to request changes to the original plan. They may request such changes at any point during the grant but must receive approval from MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC,

before such changes are made. (For more information about making programmatic changes, see “Grant Management,” especially “Post-Award Changes” in Appendix F.)

After the initial three, four or five years of approved funding, applicants may reapply for additional funds to continue their existing initiatives, to modify their initiatives based on new information, or to develop new initiatives.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS FOR COMPETITIVE INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS:

Eligible applicants for competitive grants funded by NSP II are:

- Consortia of Maryland higher education institutions with nursing degree programs and Maryland hospitals;
- Individual Maryland higher education institutions with nursing degree programs; or
- Partnerships of Maryland higher education institutions with nursing degree programs.

ELIGIBLE INITIATIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR COMPETITIVE GRANTS:

NSP II may provide funding for competitive grant initiatives that will (1) increase the enrollment and graduation of nurses for practice in Maryland hospitals and (2) increase the supply of qualified nursing faculty required to expand the capacity of Maryland’s nursing programs. Priority will be given to proposals that include activities to attract minorities to nursing and nurse faculty careers and to retain minorities in nursing and nurse faculty careers throughout Maryland. The four types of competitive grants are identified below.

An applicant may apply for one or more types of Competitive Institutional Grants. An applicant may elect to submit separate proposals for each type of grant or provide a comprehensive proposal with components that address more than one grant category.

Within the grant proposal budget, an applicant is requested to reflect any offset to expenses from increased revenue due to additional tuition and fees from the enrollment of additional nursing students.

1. **Initiatives to Expand Maryland’s Nursing Capacity through Shared Resources:** NSP II funding will be available for consortia of Maryland higher education institutions and hospitals to implement sustainable strategies to combine and integrate their resources to allow for immediate expansion of nursing enrollments and graduates. These include initiatives to share teaching space, increase clinical training opportunities, and create dual roles for nurse clinicians in teaching and clinical care.

The concept is to create a partnership between Maryland schools of nursing and hospitals, capitalizing on the synergies between these two types of institutions. Consortia may include as many hospitals and schools as deemed an efficient combination of resources. The short-term objective of the consortia is to provide increased resources, including faculty, to Maryland nursing programs for the upcoming school year beginning in Summer/Fall, 2009. The long-term objective is to create affiliations between institutions with nursing

programs and hospitals based on a model similar to the graduate education model employed for training physicians.

Initial awards will be made to those applicants able to significantly increase nursing enrollments and graduates over the next three to five years as a result of shared resources. Fully executed contracts between hospitals and educational institutions should guarantee the flow of funds to support the activities to be carried out by the hospitals and educational institutions. Included in the application must be a statement that the proposed initiative will not negatively impact other nursing programs or hospitals (e.g., the new partnership will not terminate existing agreements with other schools for clinical sites). Proposals must include a detailed description of shared resources, and explicit information on the goals, roles, and expected outcomes of all institutions involved in the project. The budget included in the proposal should reflect any financial contribution or contribution in kind from each of the consortia partners.

Funding may be used for various types of joint initiatives. This includes, but is not limited to, funding for joint appointments to free qualified clinicians to spend more time teaching and to establish teaching and learning facilities. Note, however, that funding will not be available to construct or renovate facilities.

2. **Initiatives to Increase Maryland's Nursing Faculty:** NSP II funding will be available for individual or consortia of Maryland institutions with graduate nursing programs to implement sustainable strategies to increase the supply of nursing faculty required to expand nursing programs in the State. This includes strategies to (a) increase enrollments in graduate nursing programs to prepare nursing faculty and (b) enhance or create graduate nursing programs to prepare nursing faculty.

Funding will be available to increase: (1) the promotion of nursing faculty careers in Maryland, (2) student recruitment to Maryland's graduate nursing programs, and (3) enrollments in graduate nursing programs leading to careers as nursing faculty in Maryland.

Funding also may be provided to expand graduate nursing programs in Maryland and increase the number of nursing faculty they produce by creating additional graduate courses, certificates, and accelerated graduate programs to prepare nursing faculty. Funding may be used to develop curricula that more efficiently integrate undergraduate and graduate study to reduce time to graduation, and implement other promising strategies to increase the output of qualified nursing faculty. These may include, but are not limited to, the development of online graduate courses and programs, an innovative Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) to Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree, one-year MSN degrees, and a fast-track MSN degree for healthcare providers with related graduate degrees and experience.

Proposals will be selected based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate that the proposal will significantly increase the supply of nursing faculty needed by Maryland institutions to expand enrollments in their nursing programs. Priority will be given to graduate-level nursing programs that will produce nursing faculty as expeditiously as possible.

3. **Initiatives to Increase Nursing Student Retention and Success:** NSP funding will be available for individual or consortia of Maryland institutions with nursing degree programs to implement sustainable student retention and success strategies to significantly increase graduation rates and expand the supply of bedside nurses in Maryland. This may include, but is not limited to, strategies to provide pre-admission testing, pre-admission advisement on course selection, free “Transition Courses” or “Application Courses,” mentoring (especially clinical mentoring), tutoring, on-line testing and remediation, a consultant to identify effective strategies for working with diverse student populations, and the redesign of the nursing curricula. Proposals must show an objective method of evaluating the causes of less than optimal retention, and activities should address the causes identified.

Proposals will be selected based on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate that the proposal will significantly increase student retention, the graduation rates of their nursing programs, and ultimately the number of nursing graduates available to work in Maryland hospitals.

4. **Initiatives to Increase the Pipeline for Nursing Faculty:** NSP II funding will be available to develop innovative programs that significantly increase the proportion of students entering community colleges who transition into a baccalaureate degree program immediately after completion of community college. The goal of these initiatives will be to retain students in the educational system where they can complete their baccalaureate degree within 4 years or less.

Eighty percent of those receiving an ADN do not currently go on to obtain additional higher education that would qualify them to become faculty members in the future. Guaranteeing a sufficiently robust pool of applicants for graduate education that will prepare nursing faculty for the future requires a larger pool of nurses with a BSN or higher. This program is seeking strategies for creating special pathways that would fast-track qualified students entering nursing education through community colleges to successfully complete a BSN or MSN. Creative proposals that fast-track professional nursing education and serve a broad range of needs of students, working adults, non-traditional students and others are encouraged.

These funds are intended for community colleges and baccalaureate nursing programs to collaborate in an effort to streamline the educational process to facilitate the students’ transition between institutions. Awards will support innovative educational strategies to expedite receipt of BSN degrees for students entering nursing education in community colleges to the RN to BSN or RN to MSN programs. Funding may be provided for the redesign of pre-licensure education across associate and baccalaureate programs.

Preference will be given to innovative programs that create special pathways that fast-track qualified students entering nursing education through community colleges to successfully complete their BSN or MSN. Funds may be used for partial support of existing faculty for curriculum development and planning, in-state travel, and development of distance learning.

5. **Initiatives to Increase Capacity Statewide:** NSP II funding will be available to develop innovative programs that have a statewide impact on the capacity to train nurses or nursing faculty. These programs may include, but are not limited to, providing training in the use of

simulation equipment that is available to nursing faculty statewide, providing new faculty orientation sessions on a statewide basis, the development of standardized web-based preceptor training, the development of a standardized retention model.

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS—GENERAL INFORMATION

The proposal application guidelines follow. These guidelines are intended to provide a structured format to facilitate the evaluation process. Additional information may be requested during the review process to clarify specific programmatic or budgetary issues.

Proposals that are not selected for this funding phase of NSP II may be revised and resubmitted for the next funding phase.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Format

- The proposal narrative must be limited to a maximum of 15 single-spaced pages.
- Pages must have one-inch margins.
- Pages must be 8 ½ by 11 inches in size.
- Proposals' narrative pages must be numbered.
- Appendix material must only include relevant information. (The appendices are not counted in the 15-page proposal limit.)
- One signed original proposal and eight paper copies must be submitted to MHEC.

Proposals for all Competitive Institutional Grants must include the seven sections identified below. Detailed instructions are provided for each section.

- I. Cover Sheet
- II. Abstract
- III. Table of Contents
- IV. Proposal Narrative
- V. Budget and Cost Effectiveness
- VI. Memorandum of Understanding, if applicable
- VII. Assurances

I. Cover Sheet (use form in **Appendix A**; required but no points)

II. Abstract (required but no points)

The abstract should be clearly written for an educated but general audience. It should indicate what strategies the project will undertake and how these strategies address the project goals. The abstract should be 250 words or fewer. This abstract may be reproduced as is or edited for inclusion in press releases and other publications describing the grant program.

III. Table of Contents (required but no points)

IV. Proposal Narrative

A. Overview of the proposed initiative (required but no points)

- Briefly explain your proposal plan and how it will increase the number of registered nurses graduating from Maryland nursing programs with a commitment to work as bedside nurses in Maryland hospitals.
- If your application involves the recruitment and/or education of additional nursing faculty, show the connection between the increased number of faculty and an increased number of nursing students and graduates.
- Provide current baseline data for each nursing program to be impacted by the proposal. Utilize data reported annually to the Maryland Board of Nursing and/or the National League of Nursing whenever possible. Data should include but not be limited to:
 - o Number of nursing enrollments of each nursing program in FY 2008,
 - o Number of graduates and graduation rate for each nursing program in FY 2008,
 - o Passage rate of graduates of each nursing program on any required nursing licensing exams in FY 2008, and
 - o Number and type of full-time and part-time nursing faculty in FY 2008.

B. Project Goals and Objectives (15 points)

- Clearly articulate the specific aims of your proposal in measurable terms and indicate the time frame for achievement of goals and objectives in the near and longer term.
- Describe what will be achieved for whom and by whom.
- Goals and Objectives must be concrete and quantifiable.
- Specify anticipated outcomes by project end date.
- The Goals and Objectives must relate to the goals of NSP II and not the professional development of the individual nurse or nursing student.
- Note: Project objectives must be specific, measurable (reference quantifiable data), achievable (clearly possible and plausible), results-oriented (have clear outcomes), and time-bound (have deadlines).

C. Scope of the Proposed Initiative (Plan of Operation) (30 points)

- Provide a detailed description of the proposed initiative (e.g., for initiatives to increase nursing faculty, specify the number of additional nursing faculty to be added and how they will be identified or developed, describe program enhancements, and delineate expected increases in enrollments and graduations).
- Include clear role descriptions for all participating partners.
- Provide a timeframe for implementation of all elements.
- Provide a plan for sustainability following NSP funding.
- Identify whether funding also will be sought for NSP II Statewide Initiatives to provide fellowships and scholarships/living expenses grants to your eligible nursing students and faculty. If applicable, describe: (1) the number, type, and amount of awards sought under NSP II Statewide Initiatives and (2) the importance of these awards to the goals and objectives of the proposed Competitive Institutional Grant.

- Include the following chart of scheduled student enrollments and completions (see Appendix D for form – chart required but may be included as an appendix)

SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSED NURSING PROGRAMS – PROJECTED NURSING ENROLLMENTS & COMPLETIONS

Instructions: For each nursing program proposed to be funded through NSP II, provide the following information in the table below: (1) name of nursing program, (2) the academic years in which students will be enrolled, (3) the number of students projected to be enrolled each semester, and (4) the completion dates of each student cohort and the number of students projected to complete. Use a separate sheet for each nursing program proposed to be funded.

Nursing Program	Academic Year 20__ - 20__			Academic Year 20__ - 20__			Academic Year 20__ - 20__			Academic Year 20__ - 20__			Academic Year 20__ - 20__		
	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer
Enrollments															
Completions															

D. Management Plan (15 points)

- Describe each participating partner/institution’s roles and responsibilities as well as the benefits to be gained from any proposed collaboration.
- Provide a work plan that lists major management actions and assigns responsibilities to key staff personnel. It should be clear what each project staff person does. Project duties should be clearly linked to the budget, as well as management and activity plans.
- Provide a clear organizational structure and milestones for accomplishing the proposed management actions.
- Describe the time commitment of the project director and other key personnel. It should be clear that the project director will have sufficient time to dedicate to the project. (This may provide an opportunity to utilize in-kind services.)
- Recruitment is a key element in project success and as such must be carefully planned. Retaining participants in a program that takes place over a number of years can also be a problem. A good management plan will address both of these issues. The management plan should articulate participants’ incentives for being participants and strategies being used to retain participants.
- Provide one-page résumés of key personnel in the appendices.

Note: Administrative costs are to be kept to a minimum. Therefore, this may be an opportunity to demonstrate in the management plan the utilization of in-kind services for the administration of the project.

The management plan will be evaluated on (1) its adequacy to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget; (2) the extent to which program management is clearly defined (who will do what, when, and where); (3) the extent to

which the plan maximizes the effectiveness of the project; and (4) the extent to which existing staff and in-kind services support the initiative.

While some staff may be hired once the grant is secured, there is a strong preference for identifying staff—especially key staff—before the application is made. If any staff members (such as a project manager or coordinator) are to be hired after the grant is secured, the person’s name and resume should be submitted to the MHEC within eight weeks of the grant award. Projects should not be delayed because of personnel vacancies.

E. Project Evaluation (20 points)

- Detail how the success of the proposed initiative will be objectively measured.
- Use quantifiable outcome measures tied to the goals and objectives of the proposed project.
- Identify how data will be collected and reported as well as the measurement techniques to be employed during the evaluation process. To the extent possible, utilize data reported annually to the Maryland Board of Nursing and your accrediting agency (e.g., the National League of Nursing).

Note: Successful applicants must agree to provide a standard set of data to be specified for the evaluation of the program. Where possible, the required data elements are specified in the Request for Applications.

Annual reports will be required of each funded project and will include a narrative, performance data, and financial information. Data to be reported will include but not be limited to the following information for nursing programs impacted by the initiative: enrollments, graduates, graduation rates, and passage rates on any required nursing licensing exams. Also included will be the current employment status for nurses and nursing faculty who directly benefited from NSP II funding.

As with other multi-year grants, continued funding is dependent upon outcomes.

V. **Budget and Cost Effectiveness** (use budget form in **Appendix B**; 20 points)

- A. Complete the budget form provided as Appendix B. In this budget summary, show all planned expenditures for the project. Identify the following:

Column 1	“NSP II Funds Requested” is the amount of the grant being requested.
Column 2	“Any Matching Funds” will be both cash and in-kind contributions from the applicant who will serve as the fiscal agent if the grant is awarded.
Column 3	“Other Funds” shows funds or in-kind contributions committed to this project by partners, cooperating organizations or others.

Annual and final financial reports have a similar format but must clearly distinguish between approved expenditures and actual expenditures.

B. Budget Guidelines

- Proposals must include a detailed budget for each year for which funds are requested, as well as a total budget for the entire project.
- Budgets should identify in-kind contributions and matching funds, if applicable.
- Funds may be used for salaries, technology, supplies, instructional equipment, in-state travel, and other direct expenses essential to the conduct of the initiative.
- A 3% annual increase in salaries and direct costs is allowed to offset inflation.
- The budget requested should reflect any offsets to expenses such as increased revenue from increased tuition and fees from additional nursing students.
- Up to eight percent (8%) of the funds requested from the grant program to cover the cost of the project may be claimed for indirect cost recovery.

C. Ineligible Costs

Applicants may *not* expend funds for the following purposes:

- Student stipends and scholarships (scholarship and living expenses grants and fellowships are available through State Initiatives funded through NSP II);
- Entertaining (excludes light fare for faculty recruitment sessions, professional development sessions, etc.);
- Non-instructional equipment (these are not equipment grants);
- Travel to out-of-state professional conferences, unless it is demonstrated that attendance at a meeting will directly and significantly advance the project;
- Construction and renovation of facilities; or equipping new facilities, and
- Backfill for salaries of students.

D. Budget Narrative

- Prepare a budget narrative to accompany the budget and provide a justification for requested funds. (See **Appendix C** for a sample budget narrative.)
- In the budget narrative, explain the rationale for each line of the budget summary, both for grant expenditures and matching funds. This narrative, which will be organized by the corresponding line item on the budget summary, must show how the amounts indicated were determined.
- In the budget and budget narrative, clearly link all costs to the project activities detailed in the Plan of Operation. All activities must be accounted for in the budget and budget narrative.
- Provide evidence of institutional commitment to the project, including the amount of staff time dedicated to the project and in-kind contributions.
- Included in the budget narrative must be a statement that any NSP II funds will augment and not supplant funding or other resources already committed by the institution.
- Demonstrate a budget transition towards self-sufficiency.

Note: The proposal's budget and cost-effectiveness will be evaluated on the extent to which:

- the budget is adequate to support the project;
- the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives and design;

- the budget shows self-sufficiency by the end of the project;
- offsets to expenses, such as increased revenue related to increased enrollment, are reflected in the budget request;
- there is adequacy of support—including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources—from the partners; and
- administrative costs are kept to a minimum.

There is no minimum or maximum budget for Competitive Institutional Grants; however, the budget request must be justifiable in terms of the scope of the proposed activities and the number of additional nursing faculty and students to be educated. MHEC on behalf of HSCRC will negotiate the size of budgets as required by the resources available.

VI. Memorandum of Understanding, if applicable (no points)

- For proposals involving consortia of nursing schools and/or hospitals, submit a copy of a fully executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the separate institutions whose cooperation is essential to the success of the proposed initiative.
- Specify the roles and responsibilities of the parties and include approval of the submitted budget and acknowledgment of the use of any resources real or in-kind pledged to the initiative.

VII. Assurances (use form in **Appendix E**; required but no points)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A technical assistance meeting will be held to afford potential applicants pre-submission assistance. Topics will include a program overview, an overview of this RFA, and discussion of the RFA requirements.

The technical assistance meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. If you plan to attend, please register by e-mail with Mary O’Connor at moconnor@mhec.state.md.us by 4 p.m., November 5, 2008. See Summary Timetable for location.

If in writing the proposal you have questions about the proposal format or require other assistance, contact the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Project directors are also encouraged to contact the MHEC whenever they have questions about grant implementation or management.

Mary O’Connor
 NSP II Coordinator
 Maryland Higher Education Commission
moconnor@mhec.state.md.us
 (410) 260-4585

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

- Applications must be received by the deadline.
- Applications must include all requisite information.

- Applicants will be sent notification that their proposal has been received and assigned a proposal number.
- A panel of qualified reviewers will read each proposal according to the criteria summarized below and explained above in “Proposal Format.” Every proposal is read by at least five reviewers. Every effort is made to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. Reviewers may be from Maryland or from other states and will have suitable qualifications to review the proposals.
- Panelists have an opportunity (and are encouraged) to add comments, and the comments will be shared with the applicant when the review process is complete.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The review panel established by HSCRC and MHEC will review all applications and make recommendations regarding the selection of proposals that best meet established goals for this program. Each proposal will be evaluated based on the criteria described in the proposal narrative section and summarized below. The rating given for each criterion (see below) will serve as a significant, but not the only, aspect of the judgment made by the review panel. State priorities, support of diversity, and regional needs will also be taken into consideration. The review panel convenes after each member has read the proposals individually. At this meeting, the panel comes to consensus on the projects that should be recommended for funding. The panel also makes recommendations on the level of funding and adjustments that the project staff might make to improve the project. The recommendations of the review panel will be presented to the HSCRC, who will make the final determination.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Project Goals and Objectives	15
Management Plan	15
Scope of Proposed Initiative (Plan of Operation)	30
Project Evaluation	20
Budget and Cost Effectiveness	<u>20</u>
Total	100

NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

A grant award will be issued after approval of awards and acceptance of the negotiated grant award amount by the project director and MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC. Preliminary notification of awards will be made on or about April 9, 2009, by phone or e-mail. Written grant awards notification will follow shortly thereafter.

Projects may not begin until they have been approved by MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC; the project director has completed budget negotiations; and the budget has been approved by MHEC, in collaboration with HSCRC.

Appendices

APPLICATION COVER SHEET**Nurse Support Program II Phase 4 – Competitive Institutional Grants**

Lead Applicant Institution/Organization: _____

Title of Project: _____

Partnership Members: _____

Type of Competitive Grant Initiative: (Check (√) all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiative to Expand Maryland's Nursing Capacity through Shared Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiative to Increase Maryland's Nursing Faculty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiative to Increase Nursing Student Retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiative to Increase the Future Pipeline for Nursing Faculty

Projected Outcomes: (Identify below the number of additional nursing enrollments, graduates and/or faculty projected as a result of the proposed initiative.)

	Projected Increase (# of Additional)
Nursing Enrollments	
Nursing Graduates	
Nursing Faculty	
Other (please specify)	

Funds Requested: _____ Value of Match Provided (Funds, In-Kind, etc.): _____

Project Duration: _____ Project Director(s): _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Mailing Address: _____
_____Grants Office Contact, Name & Title (post award):

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

Finance or Business Office Contact, Name & Title: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

Certification by Authorizing Official:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____

BUDGET SUMMARY

Nurse Support Program II – Competitive Institutional Grants

Lead Institution & Project Title: _____

	SOURCE OF FUNDS		
	COLUMN 1 NSP II FUNDS REQUESTED*	COLUMN 2 INSTITUTION'S MATCH OF FUNDS	COLUMN 3 OTHER FUNDS**
A. Salaries & Wages Professional Personnel List each by name and title			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
Other Personnel (list by job category & note # of each)			
5.			
6.			
Total Salaries and Wages			
B. Fringe Benefits			
C. Travel			
D. Participant Support Costs (specify)			
Total Participant Costs			
E. Other Costs			
1. Materials and Supplies			
2. Consultant Services			
3. Computer Services			
4. Other (specify)			
Total Other Costs			
F. Total Direct Costs (A through E)			
G. Indirect Costs (cannot exceed 8% of F)			
H. Total (F & G)			

*Include all grant-funded expenses, including for sub-contracts, in this column. Identify cooperating organizations, agencies, institutions, etc., and funds requested for them (through project sub-contracts) on separate page(s); use the column 1 format for each. ** If any of these cooperating parties, or another agency, is committing funds for this project, indicate the specific breakdown and explanation of such funds for each on a separate sheet, while putting the totals for appropriate categories here in column 3 and summarizing the match in the budget narrative.

SAMPLE BUDGET NARRATIVE

Nurse Support Program II – Competitive Institutional Grants

Lead Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

(These partial examples are provided only to demonstrate the format requested for the budget narrative. Provide as many sheets of paper as needed to provide justification for each line of the budget summary, as outlined in the RFA.)

A. Salaries & Wages

Professional Personnel:

- a. Column 1: Dr. Jill Smith, the project director, will spend 10% of her time in project activities during the academic year. Maryland State University requests only the amount it will cost the university to pay an adjunct to replace Dr. Smith in one course. Request = \$4,900

Column 2: The university will contribute the difference between the \$4,900 requested and 10% of Dr. Smith's 10-month annual salary as in-kind cost share valued at \$3,100.
Match = \$3,100

Other Personnel:

- a. Administrative Assistant (1): Request = $\$12.00/\text{hour} \times 5 \text{ hours/week} \times 78 \text{ weeks} = \$4,680$
(Assistant's time not included as an indirect cost; time is scheduled for grant work)
Column 2: Assistant's fringe benefits contributed as match:
 $5 \text{ hrs/wk} \times 78 \text{ weeks} \times 33\% \text{ benefits rate} \times \$12/\text{hr.} = \$1,560$

B. Fringe Benefits

1. Fringe benefits for the project manager's spring semester release time are calculated at 33%
Request = $\$12,250 \times .335 = \$4,103.75$

C. Travel

Travel for project director to partner hospital for six management committee meetings
Request = $\$0.485 \text{ cents per mile} \times 10 \text{ trips} \times 60 \text{ miles/trip} = \291

D. Participant Support Costs

1. Stipends:
2 faculty members develop on-line courses @ \$2,500 each per course
Request = $\$2,500 \times 2 \text{ faculty} \times 6 \text{ courses} = \$30,000$

E. Other Costs

Other: Snacks for 2 faculty recruitment seminars
Request = $\$5/\text{participant} \times 5 \text{ seminars} \times 50 \text{ participants/seminar} = \$1,250$
Supplies for project director \$250
Printing faculty recruitment brochures \$1,200

ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby affirms and certifies that it will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) and the State of Maryland as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Nurse Support Program II funds in this project. Also, the Applicant affirms and certifies that:

1. It possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; e.g., an official act of the applicant's governing body has been duly adopted or passed, authorizing filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the application and to provide such additional information as may be required.
2. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) prohibiting employment discrimination where discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefiting from the grant-aided activity.
3. It will enter into formalized agreement(s) with the local hospitals in the area(s) of proposed service, as well as with other members of the collaborative, where applicable.
4. It will expend funds to supplement new and/or existing programs and not use these funds to supplant non-grant funds.
5. It will participate in any statewide needs assessment program or other evaluation program as required by the HSCRC.
6. It will give the HSCRC, the Maryland Higher Education Commission as the Grant Administrator, and/or the Legislative Auditor, through any authorized representative, the right of access to, and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant.
7. It will comply with all requirements imposed by the HSCRC concerning special requirements of law and other administrative requirements.

Institution

Signature of Authorized Institutional Authority

Name and Title, Printed

Date

GRANT MANAGEMENT

1. FISCAL PROCEDURES

All funds under this program must be assigned to a specific account. If an institution receives more than one grant award, separate accounts must be established for each. Expenditures in excess of approved budget amounts will be the responsibility of the recipient institution.

2. POST-AWARD CHANGES

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any change to the scope or objectives of the approved project. This includes any changes resulting in additions or deletions of staff and consultants related to or resulting in a need for budget reallocation. The grant recipient must obtain prior written approval from MHEC (working in collaboration with HSCRC) to, specifically:

1. Continue the project during any continuous period of more than three (3) months without the active direction of an approved project director;
2. Replace the project director (or any other persons named and expressly identified as a key project person in the proposal) **or** to permit any such person to devote substantially less effort to the project than was anticipated when the grant was awarded; or
3. Make budget changes exceeding \$1,000 or 10% in any category, whichever is greater.

Grantees must also request written approval to extend the expiration date of the grant if additional time beyond the established termination date is required to ensure adequate completion of the approved activity within the funds already made available. A single extension, which shall not exceed six (6) months, may be made for this purpose and must be requested ***no less than 1 month prior*** to the originally established expiration date. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. The fact that unobligated funds may remain at the expiration of the grant is not in itself sufficient justification for an extension. The plan must adhere to the previously approved objectives of the project.

3. PROGRAM CLOSEOUT, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION

Closeout: Each grant shall be closed out as promptly as feasible after expiration or termination. In closing out the grant, the following shall be observed:

The grant recipient shall immediately refund or otherwise dispose of any unobligated balance of cash advanced to the grant recipient, in accordance with instruction from MHEC working in collaboration with HSCRC.

- The grant recipient shall submit all financial, performance, evaluation, and other reports required by the terms of the grant within 90 days of the date of expiration or termination.
- The closeout of a grant does not affect the retention period for State and/or federal rights of access to grant records.

Suspension: When a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a grant, MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, may suspend the grant in whole or in part, upon reasonable notice to the grant recipient. The notice of suspension will state the reasons for the suspension, any corrective action required of the grant recipient, and the effective date.

Suspensions shall remain in effect until the grant recipient has taken action satisfactory to MHEC and HSCRC, or given evidence satisfactory to MHEC and HSCRC, that such corrective action will be taken or until MHEC/HSCRC terminates the grant.

Termination: MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, may terminate any grant in whole or in part at any time before the date of expiration, whenever MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, determines that the grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of the grant. MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, shall promptly notify the grant recipient in writing of the termination and the reasons for the termination, together with the effective date.

The grant recipient may terminate the grant in whole or in part upon written notification to MHEC and HSCRC, setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial terminations, the portion to be terminated. However, if, in the case of a partial termination, MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, determines that the remaining portion of the grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made, MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, may terminate the grant in its entirety.

Closeout of a grant does not affect the right of MHEC, acting in collaboration with HSCRC, to disallow costs and recover funds on the basis of a later audit or review, nor does closeout affect the grantee's obligation to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions.

4. RECORDS

A grant recipient shall retain the following records for a period of five (5) years after the completion of the project:

- records of significant project experience and results;
- records that fully show amount of funds under the grant, how the funds were used, total cost of projects, *all costs provided from other sources*, and other records to facilitate an effective audit;
- records to show the grant recipient's compliance with program requirements; and
- participant data (e.g., number of students participating in retention activities; number of new faculty members, etc.).

5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

MHEC and HSCRC staff may conduct site visits, undertake telephone interviews, or request written materials for this purpose.

Formal annual and final reports will also be required from all grantees. At the end of the grant, both a financial and a narrative report will be due to the Commission. Final reports should address the items described below under "The Financial Report" and "Narrative Reports."

PREPARING FOR REPORTING

Project directors should maintain records indicating when and where activities took place, who participated in each activity by name, and how funds were expended, as well as what the total project cost is. In addition, project directors should maintain evidence that demonstrates whether activity and project goals are being met.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The annual report must include:

- a roster of participants
- a chart of project activities that have occurred
- a budget that shows how much of the grant has been spent and how much remains in each line item of the original accepted budget proposal
- responses to the other questions posed on the annual report form
- evidence that sufficient progress is being made on the project to warrant continuation.

FINAL REPORTS

- Final reports must be submitted. Failure to submit a final report will make the project director ineligible to apply for future grants.
- Final reports have a financial report section and a narrative report section (see below for details).
- The final report includes evaluation of the grant. This evaluation will include the accepted evaluation plan components from the proposal. Included with the report shall be any evaluation report completed for the grant.
- Final reports should include the same participant and activity charts requested for the annual report but report the information for the full term of the grant (not just the final year of the grant).
- The final report includes a budget form and a budget narrative.

THE FINANCIAL REPORT should be structured like the approved budget, with both a budget summary and a budget narrative. It must be signed by a financial officer at the institution serving as the fiscal agent. Grantees should keep records indicating how funds are expended, the total cost of project activities, the share of the cost provided from other sources (in-kind or otherwise), and any other relevant records to facilitate an effective audit; such records should be held for five (5) years after the grant ends. Any unspent grant funds should be returned with the financial report.

NARRATIVE REPORTS include the results of the evaluation plan outlined in the project proposal and document the project outcomes. These reports will:

- include an executive summary;
- address the goals of the project, explaining how project activities addressed those goals and to what extent the project was successful in meeting those goals;
- include performance data (enrollments, graduates, etc.);
- note where or how the project activities might have been improved.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND DISCLAIMER

An acknowledgment of the HSCRC must appear in any publication of materials based on or developed under this project in the following manner:

“The activity that is the subject of this [*type of publication* (e.g., book, report, film)]

was produced with the assistance of a Nurse Support Program II grant under the auspices of the Health Services Cost Review Commission.”

Materials, except those published in academic journals, must also contain the following disclaimer:

“Opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Health Services Cost Review Commission, and no official endorsement should be inferred.”

All media announcements and public information pertaining to activities funded by this grant program should acknowledge support of the Nurse Support Program II Grant Program under the auspices of the Health Services Cost Review Commission.

At such time as any article resulting from work under this grant is published in a professional journal or publication, two reprints of the publication should be sent to MHEC and HSCRC, clearly labeled with appropriate identifying information.

Nurse Support Program II Abstracts – Phase 3 Funded Projects

NSP II-09-101

Allegany College of Maryland

Creating Qualified Bedside Nurses in Western Maryland to Serve the Entire State

Project Director: Ms. Fran Leibfreid

Affiliates: Western Maryland Health System and Garrett Memorial Hospital

Allegany College plans to establish a new on-site RN program in Garrett County with the help of Garrett Memorial Hospital. They will work in concert to hire additional faculty, ensure sufficient classroom space and clinical rotations for 20 new nursing students every two years.

The College also plans to double its evening nursing RN program by hiring new faculty and maximizing existing space and resources.

A Retention and Success Coordinator will be hired in order to increase the retention rate by 3% every year of the project over current baseline data. The Coordinator will provide group tutoring sessions, clinical tutoring, and campus and clinical laboratory experiences.

NSP II-09-103

University of Maryland

A Doctor of Nursing Practice Program Using Online and Blended Teaching Methods: An Initiative to Increase Maryland's Nursing Faculty

Project Director: Dr. Patricia Morton

Affiliates: None

The purpose of this project is to convert the current face-to-face, in-class Doctor of Nursing Practice program to an online and blended (online and face-to-face) learning format with flexible scheduling. This will allow nurses with inflexible work schedules and those who reside in rural parts of Maryland to attend the program, thus significantly increasing the number of faculty and ultimately the number of bedside nurses for the State.

The current DNP curriculum will be revised to support greater independence for adult learners with diverse learning styles. Flexible scheduling will be instituted. New faculty will be hired to accommodate the anticipated increase of 145 to 220 new DNP students over the five-year grant period.

NSP II-09-104

University of Maryland

Nursing Faculty for Maryland

Project Director: Dr. Louise Jenkins

Affiliates: None

The School of Nursing plans to increase the number of nurses prepared to become faculty by reconfiguring the courses in the Teaching in Nursing and health Professions Certificate Program

so that it can be completed in two semesters. The project personnel will also develop and implement a targeted marketing plan to recruit 300 graduate nursing students and non-academic clinicians and nurses into the program over three years. A new faculty member will be hired to accommodate the increase in students.

Nurse Support Program II Abstracts – Phase 3 Unfunded Project

NSP II-09-102

Carroll Community College

Project to Increase Nursing Graduates (PING) in Carroll County

Project Director: Ms. Nancy Perry

Affiliates: Carroll Hospital Center

This program proposes to increase the annual number of student enrollments in the nursing program from 72 to 108 over the course of five years. This would be accomplished by adding a Spring program start, thus maximizing the current facilities and equipment. Affiliation with Carroll Hospital Center will allow mutually beneficial sharing of space, equipment, students and faculty.

To teach these additional students, six new faculty members and a Simulation Specialist will be hired. The program also looks to improve retention of enrolled students. The Spring start date will allow those students who must repeat a class to repeat it immediately, rather than waiting a year.

STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

NSP II funds Statewide Initiatives that are administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) on behalf of the Hospital Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) to individual students and faculty using application processes. This maximizes access and participation by all eligible applicants throughout the State and minimizes the administrative burden placed on individual institutions with nursing programs in Maryland. This process also provides uniformity in the amount and type of financial support provided to nursing students and faculty throughout the State.

NSP II funding is available for (1) Graduate Nursing Scholarship and Living Expenses Grants for students to complete the graduate education necessary to become nursing faculty at Maryland institutions of higher education, (2) fellowships for new nursing faculty hired by Maryland institutions to expand enrollments in their nursing programs, (3) Workforce Shortage Student Assistance Grants for students enrolled in registered nursing programs at Maryland institutions, and (4) Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program, which helps nursing faculty repay their student loans.

An overview of each of these Statewide Initiatives is provided below. Detailed information and applications for Statewide Initiatives is available on the Maryland Higher Education Commission's website at www.mhec.state.md.us.

1. **Graduate Nursing Faculty Scholarship and Living Expenses Grants:** NSP II funding is available through the Graduate Nursing Scholarship and Living Expenses Grants for eligible students who are sponsored by Maryland higher education institutions to complete the graduate education necessary to become qualified nursing faculty at their institutions. All Maryland colleges, universities, and community colleges offering nursing degree programs may sponsor students for this grant. These sponsors must provide students with mentors, and work to incorporate the students into campus faculty culture and provide career counseling and assistance with placement within the State.

Awards: The maximum total award per graduate student is \$26,000 for tuition and fees and \$50,000 for living expenses. Each year, full-time students may receive scholarships of up to \$13,000 and \$25,000 for living expenses. The awards will be pro-rated for part-time students enrolled in fewer than 9 credit hours per semester.

Awards for the scholarship is not based on need, however, awards for the Living Expenses Grant (LEG) require the applicants to submit their most recent Maryland State tax return and W-2 forms. If applicants are awarded a LEG, then any other type of stipend, salary supplement and/or other form of assistance for living expenses may be deducted from the grant award.

Eligibility: Individuals must be accepted by a Maryland higher education institution into: (1) a Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) program or (2) another graduate-level nursing program required to prepare individuals to be nursing faculty. Audited courses cannot be used to reach the minimum credit hours required.

Obligations: Students receiving the scholarship must commit to completing the required graduate program within a maximum of two years for full-time students and working as nursing faculty at Maryland institutions upon program completion.

They must sign a promissory note affirming that they will serve as nurse faculty at a Maryland school of nursing as follows:

- Work two years as a full-time nurse faculty member for each year an award was received as a full-time student; or
- Work one and one-half years as a full-time nurse faculty member for each year the award was received as a part-time student.

Application Process: To apply, a graduate student must complete and submit required documents to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. These include, but are not limited to:

- A complete application for a Graduate Nursing Faculty Scholarship and Living Expenses Grant.
- Documentation of sponsorship by a Maryland higher education institution offering nursing degree programs.
- A signed promissory note and repayment obligation in the event of the student's failure to meet service requirements.
- A Federal Tax Return and W-2 from the previous year if applying for the Living Expenses Grant.

Applications will be accepted throughout the year and awards will be made as funding allows.

2. **New Nursing Faculty Fellowships:** NSP II funding provides New Nursing Faculty Fellowships to faculty hired to expand Maryland's nursing programs. Maryland institutions with nursing degree programs may nominate an unlimited number of newly hired full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members for fellowships. Full-time clinical-track faculty who have a long-term contract and will be serving as nursing faculty also may be eligible. These fellowships will assist Maryland nursing programs in recruiting and retaining new nursing faculty to produce the additional nursing graduates required by Maryland's hospitals.

Awards: Funding will be provided to higher education institutions for distribution to their recipients of the New Nursing Faculty Fellowships. The maximum amount of the fellowships will be \$20,000, with \$10,000 distributed the first year and \$5,000 in each of the next two years, assuming continuous employment in good standing. The fellowships may be used to supplement salaries or assist new nursing faculty with professional expenses, such as professional development, loan repayment, and other relevant expenses. These funds must not replace any portion of the nursing faculty fellow's regular salary.

Eligibility: To be eligible, nominees for the New Nursing Faculty Fellowship must have obtained full-time tenured or tenure-track employment during the preceding school year at Maryland higher education institutions for the purpose of expanding enrollments in their nursing programs.

Nomination Process: By August 31 each year, Maryland schools of nursing must submit to the Maryland Higher Education Commission all required documents. This includes, but is not limited to:

- A current curriculum vitae for each faculty being nominated for the New Nursing Faculty Fellowship Program;
- Verification of the date of hire or a statement certifying intention to hire the person;
- Anticipated title and discipline(s);
- Job functions to be performed by the nominated faculty;
- A narrative that substantiates that each nominated faculty position: (1) will increase the enrollment capacity of the institution's nursing programs and (2) was historically the type of position that was difficult to fill.

The number of annual awards will be dependent upon the number of nominations and the availability of funding. Priority will be given to new nursing faculty for positions that historically have been difficult to fill.

3. **Workforce Shortage Student Assistance Grant Program:** This program is for undergraduate students who plan to work in a specific career/occupational program, including nursing.

Awards: Award amounts are set at the statutory minimum and are based on the type of institution and the student's enrollment status, and vary from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per year.

Service Obligation: Applicants must sign a promissory note agreeing to work for one year as a nurse for each year of assistance.

Eligibility: Current high school seniors, full-time and part-time degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in an eligible accredited Maryland postsecondary institution may apply.

Application Process: Complete and file the Workforce Shortage Student Assistance Grant application and provide official transcripts from all institutions attended. To be considered based on need, students must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the application year. The FAFSA is not required; however, it will be used to determine the order in which students will be awarded. Nursing majors are required to provide proof of acceptance into a nursing program.

4. **Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP):** This repayment program is for Maryland residents who provide public service to low income, underserved residents in Maryland State or local government or nonprofit agencies. NSP II funds will support those who are serving as nursing faculty.

Awards: Awards will be determined by an applicant's overall reported educational debt at the time of application. Award funds are distributed annually over a three year period as long as the recipient remains eligible and provides the required documentation.

Eligibility: Applicants must have earned nursing degrees from colleges in Maryland and be employed as a faculty member in a Maryland school of nursing. The applicants must have

educational loans from a university, government or commercial source that was used to pay college expenses. The loan may not be in default. The applicant's annual gross salary cannot exceed \$75,000. If married, the applicant's annual gross salary cannot exceed \$75,000, and the combined salaries cannot exceed \$160,000.

Application Process: Nursing faculty applicants will be ranked according to graduation date and then application date. Priority is given to individuals who have graduated from an institution of higher education in the last three years.