



# **I-BEST DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION ALLOCATION APPLICATION**

## ***2026-29 ALLOCATION GUIDELINES***

Workforce Education Department  
Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges  
PO Box 42495  
Olympia, WA 98504  
[SBCTC.edu](https://www.sbctc.edu)

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges reserves the right to make changes to this document due to, but not limited to, federal, state, or local legislation or policy changes.

## Deadlines and Milestones

Milestone	Dates (subject to change)
Applications available in OGMS	March 19, 2026
Applications due in OGMS	April 23, 2026
Allocations begins	July 1, 2026
Interim reports due	July 31, 2027, 2028
Final report due	July 31, 2029

## Program Contacts

### Program Oversight Questions

Nicole Daughtry  
Policy Associate  
[ndaughtry@sbctc.edu](mailto:ndaughtry@sbctc.edu)  
(360) 704-4368

### Fiscal Policy Questions

Denise Costello  
Associate Director, Fiscal Management  
[dcostello@sbctc.edu](mailto:dcostello@sbctc.edu)  
360-704-4344

### Budget and Fiscal Questions

Melanie Kielich  
Fiscal Grant Administrator  
[mkielich@sbctc.edu](mailto:mkielich@sbctc.edu)  
360-704-3971

### OGMS Questions

Kari Kauffman  
Program Coordinator  
[kkauffman@sbctc.edu](mailto:kkauffman@sbctc.edu)  
360-704-1021

# Table of Contents

Deadlines and Milestones.....	2
Program Contacts .....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Application Guidelines.....	4
Who May Apply .....	4
Purpose of Funding.....	4
Use of Funding .....	4
Application Process .....	4
How to Apply .....	4
Application Approval Criteria .....	5
Budget Guidance .....	7
Budget Categories.....	7
Grant Terms & Information .....	8
Funding Information.....	8
Reporting .....	9
Modifications to Approved Applications .....	9
Allowable Costs .....	9
Monitoring.....	9
Publicity and Publications.....	9
Records Retention .....	10
Termination .....	10

# Application Guidelines

## Who May Apply

The 2026-29 Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-Best) Development and Expansion Allocation is open to all 34 Washington State Community and Technical Colleges. This is a competitive application and funding will be allocated to colleges based on outlined criteria.

## Purpose of Funding

The purpose of the 2026-29 I-BEST Development and Expansion Allocation is to increase I-BEST enrollments system-wide by 120 full-time equivalent students (FTES) annually over the next three years (3-yr. total 360 FTES) through development, implementation, and expansion of new and existing Professional Technical, Professional Technical Expansion, and Academic I-BEST programs in Washington State Community and Technical College System. SBCTC will award funding annually for all three years of the funding cycle (FY27 through FY29) to selected colleges. SBCTC anticipates conducting another RFA for the next three-year funding cycle (FY29 through FY32) at which time all colleges will be invited to apply again. Colleges selected for the first funding cycle must reapply if they wish to be considered to receive funding for additional I-BEST expansion.

## Use of Funding

Funding is to be used for I-BEST expansion, and may include the following:

- The development, implementation, and scaling of new and existing Professional Technical, Professional Technical Expansion, and Academic I-BEST programs in Washington State Community and Technical College System.
- Increasing access to I-BEST programming for underrepresented populations in high-demand occupations or academic transfer degree pathways.
- Team teaching training and faculty planning and development.
- Development of integrated/contextualized basic skills and content area outcomes.
- Recruitment and navigational support to students.
- Faculty salary and benefits.
- Activities related to research, data collection, and effective educational practice that include diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies.

# Application Process

## How to Apply

- By accessing the 2026-29 I-BEST Development and Expansion Allocation application through the Online Grant Management System ([OGMS](#))
- Your college [OGMS security contact](#) can give you permission to the allocation application.

## Application Approval Criteria

This is a competitive funding process. Applications must meet the following minimum criteria to be considered:

- Target a strategic increase in I-BEST enrollments (FTES) through development, implementation, and expansion of new and existing Professional Technical, Professional Technical Expansion, and/or Academic I-BEST programs targeting underrepresented populations,
- Detail a sustainability plan to maintain programming expanded or implemented under the allocation once funding has ended,
- Demonstrate innovative practices that accelerate student transition and completion,
- Have measurable outcomes that identify evidence/data that will be tracked and analyzed,
- Detail how the program understands and applies practices that advance racial equity, inclusion, and diversity,
- Insure all I-BEST faculty are trained in integrated outcomes and team teaching, and
- Comply with fiscal guidelines.

## Scoring Rubric

Application questions and scoring criteria are as follows:

1A: Describe the I-BEST development, implementation, and scaling pathways to be supported with allocated funds. How will it support the implementation of the college-wide guided pathways initiative? How will the program apply practices that advance racial equity, diversity, inclusion and access for underrepresented populations? What is the area of focus, target population, and number of increased FTES to be served annually (allocations are based on \$6,250/FTES)?

1B: What is the plan for sustainability of the program(s) after the three-years of allocated funds are exhausted? (40pts)

Standard	Criteria
<b>Does not meet expectations</b> 0-20 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not clearly describe I-BEST pathway development, implementation, or expansion and/or application is confusing and unclear</li> <li>• Application does not describe practices or strategies to advance racial equity, diversity, inclusion or access</li> <li>• No or little existing plan to train faculty and staff</li> <li>• Application does not provide a viable plan for sustainability</li> <li>• No or little evidence of college's ability to carry out the proposal</li> </ul>
<b>Meets expectations</b> 21-30 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application has a plan to implement or expand approved I-BEST pathway(s)</li> <li>• Application identifies strategies that will advance racial equity, diversity, inclusion and access</li> <li>• Plan identified for training faculty and staff</li> <li>• Application has a sustainability plan</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application provides adequate evidence of organization's ability to carry out proposal</li> </ul>
<b>Exceeds Expectations 31-40 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application clearly describes development, implementation, and/or scaling of I-BEST approved pathway(s), outcomes integration, contextualization of basic and developmental education content, and target populations</li> <li>Application provides specific practices that will advance racial equity, diversity, inclusion and access</li> <li>Well-defined plan for training of faculty and staff</li> <li>Application details clear plan for sustainability of programming post three-year allocation</li> <li>Application provides clear evidence of organization's ability to carry out the proposal</li> </ul>

1C: Detail the implementation timeline and the actionable items for each stage of execution for the three-year duration of funding (20pts)

Standard	Criteria
<b>Does not meet expectations 0-5 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application does not identify a timeline</li> <li>Timeline is not compatible with the scope of work</li> <li>Actionable items do not match plan</li> <li>Stages of execution are not defined</li> </ul>
<b>Meets expectations 6-13 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application has a timeline</li> <li>Timeline is realistic for scope of work</li> <li>Actionable items match the plan</li> <li>Stages of execution are defined</li> </ul>
<b>Exceeds Expectations 14-20 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-defined and detailed timeline</li> <li>Timeline is specific and realistic for scope of work</li> <li>Actionable items clearly link to the plan and are realistic</li> <li>Stages of execution are detailed and well defined</li> </ul>

1D: What data will be tracked, analyzed, and used as the basis for assessment of the project? What will be the means of tracking progress and evidence of meeting proposed FTE targets annually? Which department(s) will be responsible for data collection, tracking and analysis? (20pts)

Standard	Criteria
<b>Does not meet expectations 0-5 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data to be tracked is not identified</li> <li>No department identified for data collection</li> <li>No evidence of analysis in the assessment</li> <li>No means of collecting or tracking data</li> </ul>
<b>Meets expectations 6-13 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data to be tracked is identified</li> <li>Minimal program analysis and assessment</li> <li>Department identified for data collection</li> <li>Evidence that data will be collected and tracked</li> </ul>

<p><b>Exceeds Expectations</b> 14-20 pts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data to be tracked is clearly identified</li> <li>• 1-2 Department collaboration identified for data collection with roles clearly defined</li> <li>• Clear evidence that the program has analyzed and assessed their program to determine their plan of implementation Application has a clear plan for collection and tracking of data for assessment</li> </ul>
--	---

## Budget Guidance

### Budget Categories

The following is an overview of each budget category.

Expenses charged to the grant must be in accordance with the budget approved by the awarding agency. The Project Director should maintain records sufficient to identify project expenses in relation to the approved budget.

### Salaries, Wages, and Benefits

Salaries, wages, and benefits associated with staff directly involved in grant activities and paid in full or in part from this grant.

In your budget narrative, please be sure to include all positions to be funded by the grant, percentages of effort/FTEF, salary, and/or hourly wage information, benefits, and a brief description of duties by position as they relate to the grant. Please refer to Appendix A for guidance on determining the FTE/FTEF percentages and salary/wage allocations.

Please put each employee position on a new line of text.

#### Examples:

- Career Services Counselor: 50% FTE = Salary: \$25,000, Benefits: \$11,250. Advises CTE students, provides in-class career exploration activities, and serves as a liaison between program leads and business/industry partners.
- 10 faculty stipends at \$1,000 each for curriculum development = \$10,000
- Disability Specialist: 0.40 FTE = Salary: \$24,000, Benefits: \$12,000. Provides recruitment, retention, counseling, and other support services for disabled CTE students.
- CTE Faculty for 40 hours at \$35/hour = Salary: \$1,400 total, Benefits: \$560. Participation in an industry-based professional development experience.

### Goods and Services

**Goods:** Items with an individual acquisition cost of less than \$10,000 or a useful life of less than one year necessary to carry out grant activities.

**Examples:** tools, computers, office supplies, postage, printing

**Services:** Services of a routine nature necessary for carrying out grant activities.

**Examples:** *interpreter services, interagency agreements (contracts between two or more state agencies)*

The cost of any items purchased that will not be used exclusively for grant purposes must be split amongst other funding sources.

**Note:** Interagency agreements (contracts between two or more public entities) are considered services and should be budgeted and invoiced in the “goods and services” category.

## Building Rental & Utilization

For the building rental or utilization of space in support of program activities. Building rental and costs must be calculated at or below fair market value (FMV). Please verify that they are at or below FMV in your budget narrative.

**Example:** *Rental of space at WorkSource for One-Stop activities*

## Travel

Expenditures for transportation, meals, hotel, and other expenses associated with traveling related to allowable grant activities. Reimbursement for travel costs must be within OFM travel rates and regulations which can be found in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual ([SAAM](#)), [Chapter 10.90](#). Please note, when the grant recipient (the college or CBO) reimburses travel under this grant using state funds, the same OFM travel rates and regulations must be applied.

**Example:** *\$100 in mileage reimbursements for travel to off-campus meetings*

## Contracts

Professional or technical services provided by a consultant (contractor) to accomplish a specific study, project, task, or other work statement. Rules that apply to the grant recipient (the college) under this grant must also be applied to the contractor.

Note: Interagency agreements (contracts between two or more public entities) are considered services and should be budgeted and invoiced in the “goods and services” category.

**Example:** *200 hours of translation services from Company XXX for a contract total of \$5,000*

# Grant Terms & Information

## Funding Information

For applications approved, funding is determined based on proposed and approved annual FTES (annual FTES x \$6,250 = annual allocation). SBCTC will allocate these funds annually to approved colleges in FY27, FY28, and FY29.

If your college will use these funds as match for your BEDA Master or IELCE grant, please follow BEDA Master & IELCE Fiscal Guidelines. If your college will not use these funds as match, follow state and local college funding rules.

## Reporting

Selected colleges must complete interim reports in FY27 and FY28 (see dates on page 2) detailing credits earned, credentials completed, Student Achievement Initiative points generated, number of students served and FTES generated. Final reports are due no later than July 31, 2029. All reports will be made on the provided report template and uploaded to approved applications in OGMS.

## Modifications to Approved Applications

Once an application has been approved, any modifications or changes can be submitted for approval by adding an addenda to the original OGMS application and submitting it for approval. If your institution is unable to utilize the funds by the end of the grant period, please submit an addenda and notify the Policy Associate, and the Associate Director, Fiscal Management as soon as possible.

## Allowable Costs

All expenditures submitted for reimbursement under this grant must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient administration of the I-Best program.

The following state and federal regulations must be followed:

### Applicable Washington State Regulations

The State Administrative and Accounting Manual ([SAAM](#)) must be followed.

## Monitoring

SBCTC may schedule monitoring visits during and after the grant period to evaluate the fiscal progress and performance of the program and provide technical assistance. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure regulatory and contractual compliance on the part of grant recipients. To ensure compliance with grant requirements and to ensure that financial records support program expenditures, SBCTC staff will schedule on-site visits.

## Publicity and Publications

The college must submit to SBCTC all advertising and publicity matters relating to this grant in which the State of Washington, state seal or logo is mentioned or used or language is used from which a connection with the State of Washington may, be inferred or implied. The college shall not publish or use such advertising and publicity matters without the prior written consent of SBCTC.

All digital content created or funded by SBCTC, or produced by grant funds managed by SBCTC, is released under the [Creative Commons Attribution](#) license. This allows the system's colleges to realize the educational value of the substantial investments of state and federal governments and foundations in digital software, educational resources and knowledge. The open licensing policy supports the Innovation goals of the Board's Strategic Direction to use "technology, collaboration and innovation to meet the demands of the economy and improve student success."

## Records Retention

Financial management systems shall reflect accurate, current, and complete disclosure of all cost expenses for grant activities. Grant recipients must maintain books and records, supported by source documentation, that sufficiently and properly reflect the source of funds and all costs expended for program purposes. These records and financial statements are subject to inspection, review, reproduction, and/or audit by SBCTC or its designee for at least six years after the dispersal of funds, the termination or expiration of the contract, or the resolution of litigation or audits related to the program, whichever is latest. Additional information on records retention may be found in Chapter 7 of the [SBCTC Policy Manual](#).

## Termination

This grant may be terminated by the SBCTC upon giving notice in writing to the grant recipient at least thirty (30) days in advance of the date of termination. If the grant is terminated for any reason, all reports and data gathered by grant recipient prior to termination shall at the option of the SBCTC, become the property of the SBCTC. If termination shall occur pursuant to this section, reimbursement to grant recipient shall be made on the basis of work performed prior to the effective date of termination as mutually agreed upon by both parties. Determination of final adjustments, either payments or refunds, shall also be mutually agreed upon by both parties.

## Termination for Cause

If for any reason, the grant recipient violates any terms and conditions of the program, SBCTC will give the grant recipient notice of such failure or violation. Grant recipient will be given the opportunity to correct the violation or failure within thirty (30) days. If failure or violation is not corrected, this grant may be terminated immediately by written notice from SBCTC.

## Savings

In the event funding from state, federal, or other sources is withdrawn, reduced, or limited in any way after the effective date of this contract and prior to normal completion, the SBCTC may terminate the grant under the "Termination" clause, without the thirty-day notice requirement, subject to renegotiation at the SBCTC's discretion under those new funding limitations and conditions.



[CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), unless otherwise noted.

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges