

Updated: 3/28/23

SBCTC considers answers in this Questions and Answers (Q&A) document to be the only official source for answers related to this funding source, aside from the Program Guidelines. Questions (Q) and answers (A) are presented in reverse order, showing the most recently-received questions at the top of the document. This is so that colleges may check back frequently during the application process and easily see new Q&As. Questions and answers from last year that are still relevant this year are included below. This document will be updated through Tuesday, March 28, 2023.

Q28: Since we are applying as a Center of Excellence, we are representing programs offered across the 34 community colleges. How do we communicate that in the application?

A28: Below is one way that this could be communicated in the application. Applicants are also encouraged to elaborate about the specific instructional programs at participating colleges elsewhere in the proposal where it makes sense to the proposal narrative.

1.1 Instructional Program Title (if applicable): (75 characters)

[Name the instructional area]. Exact program titles vary across colleges.

1.2 Program CIP and EPC/ctcLink PLANCODE: (300 characters)

[Provide a list of program CIPs and PLANCODES and provide more detail about the scope of instructional areas addressed by the proposal, space permitting]

Q27: My college is applying as an individual college for this funding. We were just asked to sign on as a consortium member of a project that will be submitted by a Center of Excellence. Is that allowable?

A27: Yes, this is allowable. Please see detailed guidance under the “Who May Apply” section of the program guidelines. You’ll see guidance about the review panel being cautious about awarding funding for multiple projects to one institution. SBCTC staff offers this commentary as an example of how the review committee may assess this particular situation: If (a) the college’s application is focused on a an instructional area unrelated to the subject of the consortium applications, and (b) the college is not part of other consortium proposals, and (c) the college is not the Center’s host (fiscal agent), then it seems that being signed on as a participant in a proposal from a Center of Excellence may be a low-risk situation, in terms of the review committee ensuring that funds are not concentrated at one institution.

Q26: For a consortium application, does each college need to sign a copy of the 23-24 Workforce Development Assurances form that is attached in OGMS, as well as their individual letters?

A26: For consortium applications, the lead college (fiscal agent) signs and submits the assurances, and then each participating college submits individual letters of support that include a statement of commitment to the project and brief outline of the individual college’s role/responsibilities.

Q25: Does equipment over \$5,000 go in the capital outlay budget line and equipment below that in goods and services? Relatedly, for the second page of the budget document, do you want all equipment listed or just capital equipment worth \$5,000 or more?

A25: Items with a per unit cost of \$5000 or more go in the equipment line. Items under \$5,000 per unit cost go in goods and services. Then, on the second worksheet, you need only put the equipment items (\$5000+ per unit).

Q24: If funded, who owns the curriculum that ends up being developed with these funds?

A24: The Open Licensing Policy prevails regarding copyright and licensing, per page 9 of the program guidelines and SBCTC's Copyright and Open Licensing Policy: [SBCTC Copyright and Open Licensing Policy](#) (see "works created using a SBCTC-sponsored grant").

Q23: [With regard to developing micro-credentials] Where can we review curriculum been previously developed to ensure there's no duplication of efforts?

A23: At this time, SBCTC does not maintain an inventory of micro-credentials being offered by colleges. If the credentials you're developing are likely to already be part of a full professional-technical program, you could look through the prof-tech program inventory for current program offerings ([located here](#)). Importantly, please note that doing so may require support by a subject matter expert in order to make sense of the data. If you need support, please use the contacts on this webpage: <https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/professional-technical/>.

If you want to find out if other colleges are offering certain non-credit or industry-recognized credentials, you could ask the question on the CONTED and VTC listservs. Instructions on how to subscribe to and send messages on listservs is here: <https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/it-support/mailman-lists/>).

Finally, you could review the open educational resources in Open Washington Hub to see if there are resources you can use. <https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/open-washington>

Q22: Can a project focus on Basic Education for Adults (BEaA) courses, BEaA faculty development, and/or developing transition services/supports for basic skills and English language students? The activities would help students prepare for professional-technical programs; the funding would be expended in the area of basic skills and transitions.

A22: Workforce Development projects must directly support professional-technical instructional programs. It is allowable for projects to include activities in BEaA and transition services/supports, but only when the core of the project focuses on supporting professional-technical instruction.

Q21: How should consortium projects handle the budget and equipment list template? Does there need to be one budget for each participating college?

A21: Please use the “Consortium Only – FY24 Workforce Development Budget and Equipment List” Excel template, which is located for download from the “Grant Info” section of OGMS (link to Grant Info is directly below the “Feedback” button). Inside the template, please copy and paste the budget table for each college participating in the consortium, and then sum up the totals for all colleges for each budget category in a primary budget table. Do the same with the equipment list. Thank you for attending to this level of detail.

Q20: In reviewing the Workforce Development Funds [program guidelines](#) (and Q11 of [Q&A](#)), we noticed that there is no longer a requirement that the program be approved through SBCTC prior to application. This allows for proposals for non-credit pathways, as well as programs currently in-development that will go through the Prof/Tech Program Approval Process as part of the grant timeline. Is this interpretation correct?

A20: Yes, this interpretation is correct, with the following important conditions:

First: For professional-technical credit programs in development, a Notice of Intent must be submitted by the Workforce Development Fund application deadline of March 30, 2023.

From the Program Guidelines, page 7, under item 2.B:

Note: For projects that target specific professional-technical program(s), each program must either be on your current professional-technical program inventory or a Notice of Intent has been submitted no later than the proposal deadline.

Second: For non-credit pathways, Q11, below, emphasizes that pathways should be focused on continued alignment of education and training programs with current industry practice and employee recruitment needs. Personal enrichment or leisure learning programs are not eligible for Workforce Development Funds.

Q19: Regarding the guidelines stating that these funds are for one-time projects: We heard this funding is not intended to build on existing projects, however, we seriously need more time and funding for the [FY23 project currently underway] to be fully developed and aligned. Could a currently-funded project apply for next year’s funds?

A19: The guidelines explain that this funding is to support one-time projects. There is no specific language about continuations from year-to-year. SBCTC recommends examining the need for the funding: Is funding necessary to *complete* a [one-time] project? Or, is funding necessary to *sustain* a program, project or initiative (i.e., the program, project, or initiative cannot be sustained without ongoing support from this fund)? If the former, SBCTC advises that there’s space in the guidelines and Appendix A rubric to apply for a second year *in order to complete a project*. The review committee will use Appendix A to evaluate the project’s statement of need, timeline, milestones, etc. The review committee will be informed of the same guidance that SBCTC providing here, and about the current progress and accomplishments of projects that are seeking a second year of funding.

Q18: Who needs to be the signatory for letters up support from colleges for a consortium application? I would presume the more presidents signing off the better, right?

A18: For a consortium proposal, SBCTC does not specify who must be the signatory of letters of support. That said, signatories should be able to represent the college's commitment to supporting the project, indicating that someone who is in a leadership or executive role who can reinforce the college's commitment will be important to have as signatory. We've seen these letters signed by presidents, vice presidents of instruction, and, instructional deans with direct responsibility for the instructional program that's the subject of the proposal. The review committee will be looking for indicators of leadership support, so a president's signature is the ultimate.

Q17: Have the purpose and criteria changed year over year?

A17: The purpose of this funding is the same as with the FY23 application. There is one change to the review criteria (shown in Appendix A): We've added the budget as an element to be evaluated by the review committee. This is being done based on feedback from past reviewers who felt their reviews would be more robust if they could assess how well the budget aligned to the proposed activities and outcomes of the project.

Q16: Can used equipment be purchased with FY24 Workforce Development Funds? This question assumes that the equipment is in good-to-excellent working condition.

A16: Yes, Workforce Development Funds may be used to procure used equipment, provided that all of the college's procurement policy and procedure is followed, just as with any other equipment. Per the Workforce Development Program Guidelines, page 5, if equipment is requested as part of the proposal, the application must include the required equipment list as an attachment to the proposal. You'll see that template in the OGMS application under "Grant Info" on the far right side of the menu, right under "Feedback."

Q15: Does development of the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BS in CS) qualify for Workforce Development Funds consideration?

A15: No, development of the BS in CS is not eligible for these funds in FY24. Workforce Development Funds are intended to support and further professional-technical instruction.

Q14: Should we wait for access to the "Amazon" funds to request support for curriculum development and collaboration with another CTC, let alone access to shared state equipment like physical servers or software/cloud computing licenses? [Citation: "[Amazon gift signals confidence in community colleges](#)"]

A14: SBCTC's Workforce Education Department believes that this funding source is better aligned to development of a BS in CS. At this time, our department does not have additional information available about the scope and timeline for how these funds may be made available to the system. More

information about Bachelor of Science (BS) degree programs is located at:

<https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/bachelors-degrees/bachelor-of-science/>

Q13: We would like to know whether a proposal for start-up expenses and program development would fall under the following criteria from page 4 of the program guidelines:

- “Create, support, or streamline local workforce and economic development initiatives; and/or
- Support and expand workforce development partnerships among employers, education and training providers, and workers.”

We are partners with the City of [city name] Office of Economic Development, the [city name] Chamber of Commerce, [city name] School District, and the Employment Security Department. With these partners we are looking to expand our college Jobs Connections Site/Career Center to become a better resource for our local business community and current and prospect students. We would also like to develop a Life Skills education component for our WorkFirst and BFET students. Would a proposal for startup expenses and program development fall under this category?

A13: Workforce Development Funds are intended to support the continued alignment of education and training programs with current industry practice and employee recruitment needs (Program Guidelines, page 4). The distinguishing factor we want to point to is *the support of education and training programs*. In other words, proposals must demonstrate how the project will support professional-technical instructional programs. SBCTC is not able to determine from the information provided in the question whether the Job Connections/Career Center concept would be aligned to this.

Second, Workforce Development Funds are for one-time projects (Program Guidelines, page 4). A proposal for a Job Connections/Career Center would need to demonstrate that the college and its partners will be able to sustain its operations in the future. SBCTC also would need to understand how the site was previously funded and why the Workforce Development Funds are necessary at this point in time (although we note that the question specifies the need is to expand services).

As for developing a life skills education component for WorkFirst and BFET students, SBCTC would need more information about what the goals and outcomes of such an effort would be, as they related to the intent of the funding to support professional-technical instructional programs, in order to answer.

Q12: Is there a special request to access this grant is required in addition to general OGMS?

A12: Yes. Your OGMS security contact must give you permission for each application, each year. This application is called, “2023-24 Workforce Development Funds.”

Q11: Is continuing education eligible for this funding opportunity?

A11: Continuing education programs that are for personal enrichment or leisure learning are not eligible for Workforce Development Funds.

A non-credit/continuing education/self-support credential, micro-pathway, or program may be eligible for this funding provided it meets the intent of the funding, as described on page 4 and elsewhere in the Program Guidelines. The distinguishing factor we want to point to is *the continued alignment of education and training programs with current industry practice and employee recruitment needs* (Program Guidelines, page 4). In other words, proposals should seek to address the changing expectations (of employers, students, or both) in regards to professional-technical instruction, be it non-credit or credit-based.

Q10: Is there a requirement for enrollment growth or enrollment monitoring.

A10: No. No student FTES or enrollment targets are attached to this funding.

Q9: If a community college has more than one program or department that wants to apply for funding, is only one allowed to apply?

A9: A college may submit only one application as an individual institution or as the lead institution of a consortium (Program Guidelines, page 5). Please work with college leadership to determine which project to prioritize. Please note that a single proposals may encompass multiple instructional programs, provided that there is a cohesive, overarching project that ties them together. Alternatively, the college could also consult with a [Center of Excellence \(COE\)](#) to find out if one of its ideas fits with any project concepts being developed by the COE.

Q8: Can you please give an example for each Emergent Need vs. Economic Development?

A8: The following examples are from projects funded in FY23. These are provided as examples only, and not intended to indicate specific programs or approaches that are more favorable than others, nor to assess the effectiveness of the projects in meeting their goals and desired outcomes.

Economic Development Example (note, this category is called “Economic Demand” in OGMS):

Whatcom Community College (WCC) proposes to respond to behavioral health (BH) workforce needs brought to the forefront by local industry partners Catholic Community Services Recovery Centers, Compass Health, Pioneer Human Services, Unity Care Northwest, Cascade Medical Advantage, and WCC’s BH program advisory committee and economic development partners Northwest Workforce Council (NWC) and the Port of Bellingham. In response the high demand for BH professionals, this project will address urgent workforce shortages and remedy skills gaps identified by industry and economic development partners.

In order to increase the BH workforce and improve educational equity for BH students, the project will increase student access, retention, success, and completion. The project will increase access for underrepresented students to the Substance Use Disorder Professional (SUDP) degree by offering a hybrid Integrated Basic Education Skills & Training (I-BEST) pathway and offering community-based outreach events at community partner sites. Further, the project will develop curricular resources in alignment with industry priorities, including case studies focused on implicit bias and representation of BIPOC clients.

This project will strengthen the BH workforce pathway by developing the new Bachelor of Applied Science in Social Work (BASSW) degree that will lead to increased wages and BH workforce retention. The project will develop the BASSW degree with community partner oversight, by developing practicum sites, curricular resources, and course curriculum. These efforts will increase the BH workforce, support retention of BH

professionals in the community and in-turn, increase access to BH care that will have sustained impact on the economic health of the community.

Emergent Need Example (“...” indicates content was excerpted for brevity):

Changing and emerging industry needs are driving a new and updated curriculum in Highline College’s Business Technology (BSTEC) department.

Traditional business technology instruction prepares students to work in brick and mortar offices. Covid-19, combined with advances in technology, has changed the skill set required for success. Administrative skills such as desktop technology (MS Office), and information organization using local databases and hard copy filing systems are being supplanted by cloud-based, virtual technology. Covid-19 and the great migration to remote work has accelerated and emphasized the need for virtual technology skills. As we emerge from the pandemic, it is clear that the shift to remote work is here to stay; the role of the office administrator has changed.

The shift to remote work means office administrators need a revised skill set to support remote work...Highline’s BSTEC Advisory Committee unanimously recommended the college utilize cloud-based applications such as Google Suite in addition to MS Office. Employers expect administrative professionals to be proficient in managing communication, information, and resources virtually using tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, Google Meet, WebEx, Adobe Connect, GoTo, and other cloud-based applications.

This grant will help the BSTEC department develop new and innovative curriculum to support these applications. Using openly-licensed materials, we will implement two new classes.... The college also has an opportunity to deliver instruction using the hybrid-flexible (Hyflex) instructional mode, which was developed during the pandemic. This instructional mode uses the same technology we will be teaching our students; the industry expects graduate to be proficient in this technology...

BSTEC students will need enhanced preparation and foundational support to prepare them for this higher-level curriculum. A robust “on ramp” to BSTEC with wrap-around IBEST support services and digital literacy skills will improve transition rates of ABE students into the BSTEC pathway, as well as retention and completion toward higher wage-earning jobs and more advanced degrees...[descriptions of proposed new courses to provide this on-ramp follow].

Q7: Regarding the project timeline: Our project will have longer impacts beyond the funding year; is this information helpful?

A7: SBCTC recommends that proposals focus on what will be accomplished by June 30, 2024, as the funding is limited to that time period. The review committee will be looking at the practicality of proposal given the 1-year timeframe. That being said, it is certainly of value that the project has a lasting positive impact beyond the 1-year timeframe. If you are able to address that in various parts of the application and timeline, that is allowable and encouraged.

Q6: Would program expansion to support a high demand industry need be an appropriate cost for these funds?

A6: Yes, provided that the needs to do so and the expected outcomes are in alignment with the funding intent, as described in the Program Guidelines.

Q5: Would redesigning existing online courses be applicable to these funds?

A5: Yes, provided that the needs to do so and the expected outcomes are in alignment with the funding intent, as described in the Program Guidelines.

Q4: Regarding consortia applications: Are there specific insights that will prioritize applications, such as specific regions or industries?

A4: No, we don't have evaluation criteria that prioritize funding recommendations based on geography or priority industry. For consortia applications, please do pay close attention to presenting evidence in letter(s) of assurance/support and in the proposal that there is a high level of commitment by all partners and clarity about their roles and responsibilities.

Q3: Can you please provide examples of consortia projects from the past?

A3: FY19, MechaWA Phase 3 Expansion: Funding amount: \$387,473. Type of Proposal: Economic Demand. This project was a consortium led by the Center of Excellence for Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing in partnership with Bates Technical College, Big Bend Community College, Edmonds College, and Wenatchee Valley College. Synopsis excerpted from proposal:

Beginning in spring 2015, the Center of Excellence (COE) in Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing convened aerospace manufacturing companies and CTCs offering mechatronics-related courses across Washington State with the aim of building a career pathway to support the emerging need for a workforce skilled in mechatronics. Known as MechaWA, the consortium worked to identify a model that could support standardized learning outcomes using online assessments that test for competencies in the repair and maintenance of advanced manufacturing equipment that uses robotics, hydraulics & pneumatics, programmable logic controllers, and complex electronic and mechanical systems.

A FY16 Workforce Development grant of under \$84,000 moved the plan forward by training faculty/staff at five colleges to teach curriculum using new equipment and to deliver and assess students using the unified competency standards. This work included Everett Community College (EvCC), Shoreline Community College, North Seattle College, Lake Washington Technical Institute, and Centralia Community College.

The COE and EvCC then leveraged the FY16 foundational work to win nearly \$3.9 million through the Department of Labor TechHire initiative to develop new, mechatronics specific, 2-year degree pathways and related certificates using the modularized curriculum and standardized assessment at EvCC, North Seattle, Shoreline, South Seattle, and Renton Technical colleges.

The goal of this request is to build on the expertise of the COE to bring a foundational capacity to the remaining (Phase 3) colleges identified by industry as critical to ramping-up Washington State's capacity to build a mechatronics workforce and to improve existing training to address emerging skill-gaps in geographically significant areas.

The FY19 Workforce Development grant funding will be used to:

- 1. Identify competency gaps in existing advanced manufacturing education and career training programs at participating schools*
- 2. Add curricular components to meet skill gaps*
- 3. Stack credentials to quickly train people to secure middle- and high-paying careers in mechatronics*
- 4. Provide mechatronics-specific equipment to expand lab capacity to facilitate student learning toward competencies in areas including robotics, pneumatics, and hydraulics*

5. Train program faculty/staff to teach using new equipment and to deliver and assess students using unified competency standards

Q2: If we're submitting an economic development proposal, do we need signoff from our regional Workforce Development Council? I understand it would be helpful, but I don't see any mention if there's any requirement.

A2: Per page 6 of the Program Guidelines, letter(s) of support and confirmation of the need of the proposal are required as follows:

- “Economic Development Proposals: Letter(s) of support and confirmation of need of the proposal from any of following: industry partner (labor union, employer, or groups of workers and/or employers), local Economic Development Council, and/or local Workforce Development Council.”

Q1: What would you say would be projects that would not necessarily be as competitive?

A1: SBCTC is not able to posit what kinds of proposals would not be competitive. Please refer to the Program Guidelines, especially page 4 and Appendix A: Review Criteria Worksheet, for detailed information about the intent of the funding and how proposals will be evaluated.