

Frequently Asked Questions: Regional Education Partnership Grant

INTRODUCTION

Each child's education and path to a career starts with the family. Over time, though, each child's path will include early education and K-12 education, possibly higher education and community organizations. Every step on that path offers new opportunities for the child. However, some children may face obstacles or even barriers due to misalignment, lack of coordination or gaps in services among a region's education, workforce and community organizations.

In order to ensure each child is challenged, prepared and empowered, everyone must work together. Collaboration will enable our children to gain the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, start a meaningful career and contribute to the economic vitality of Ohio. Fortunately, many communities have achieved this through Regional Education Partnerships.

Regional Education Partnerships are critical collaboratives that bring together the leaders of early learning, primary, and post-secondary education, social services, business, nonprofit and community organizations to strengthen the education pathway for all children in their community. With an eye to ensuring all students attain a high-value credential or postsecondary degree that leads to gainful employment, these partnerships focus on a region's specific needs.

Backbone Organization

At the center of the Regional Education Partnerships is a backbone organization that acts as a managing partner to coordinate and lead the partnership's work on a daily basis. This organization may be a new entity or an existing one with deep roots in the community. How a backbone organization operates looks different depending on local contexts and assets, but its functions are fairly consistent across the state. These functions typically include:

- Engaging partners and the community,
- Acting as the fiscal agent,
- Managing staffing,
- Communicating across stakeholders,
- Fundraising and organizational development,
- Providing data support, and
- Convening networks.

This grant is meant to fund these backbone organizations and pilot the expanding or enhancing of these partnerships. The authorization of this grant is included in Ohio House Bill 169 "to pilot pre-kindergarten to postsecondary regional partnerships connecting education and the workforce. The Department shall distribute grants to support regional collaboration pilot programs among early learning, primary and secondary school, postsecondary institution, and workforce partners that align educational resources with regional in-demand jobs and workforce skills. A portion of this set-aside shall be used to support career development opportunities."¹

GENERAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Who is eligible to apply for this grant opportunity?

¹ [Ohio House Bill 169](#)

Eligible applicants must have experience in developing or expanding regional education partnerships, have experience working among early learning, primary and secondary school, postsecondary institution and workforce partners to align educational resources with regional in-demand jobs and workforce skills. They must demonstrate relevant expertise in co-designing, developing, managing, communicating and overseeing a large infrastructure that supports programming related to Ohio's educational system across the educational spectrum. Eligible applicants must identify as one of the below organization types:

- Non-profit organizations (501c3 status)
- Colleges and universities
- Ohio Technical Centers

What is the maximum amount of money an awardee can receive?

Emerging Partnerships - eligible for \$200,000
Established Partnerships - eligible for \$150,000

What is needed to apply?

All application information, including application template, [can be found here](#).

Technical Review Checklist:

- ⇒ **Organizational Information:** Complete sections 1-4 of the narrative, including all the necessary information:
 1. Applicant organization, Regional Education Partnerships Grant name (if applicable) and which tier (Enhancing or Expanding) your organizations partnership identifies as;
 2. Mailing address including city, state and zip code;
 3. Application contact including position, phone number and email address; and
 4. Grant manager including phone number and email address.
- ⇒ **Target Service Area and Key Partners:** A detailed description of the regions service area and structure of the partnership, including roles and responsibilities of participating organizations. Identification of which counties will be served by the partnership and evidence of an agreement with the noted areas who will be served by the partnership, likely in the form of a letter of support. Evidence must be included from the following types of organizations:
 1. Early Learning Organization,
 2. Primary School & Secondary School(s),
 3. Postsecondary Education Institution, and
 4. Workforce Development Organization.
- ⇒ **Budget Worksheet**
 1. Complete the budget worksheet, template attached.
- ⇒ **Signed Grant Assurances**
 1. Complete the grant assurances, template attached.

Quality Review Checklist:

- ⇒ **Executive Summary (5 points)** Provide a summary that gives the reader a vision of the proposed partnership plan. Summarize the amount of funding requested, introduce the proposed timeline and explain how your past experience(s) will aid you in the success of this project. Include your high-level justification for your identified tier of "Emerging Partnership" or "Established Partnership". This section may be posted for public viewing on the Department's website.

- ⇒ **Partnership Operations Plan (20 points)** Detail the plans of the partnership to ensure increases in students attaining a high-value credential or postsecondary degree that lead to gainful employment. Include information related to the required sections of the partnership plan.
- ⇒ **Priority Support Plan (20 points)** - Complete item 8 of the narrative. The plan should outline the priorities and related supports to meet the academic and workforce needs of the region. Specifically, the application must address the needs to accelerate learning in math and literacy, while focusing on the workforce development and career opportunities.
- ⇒ **Timeline (10 points)** – Complete item 9 of the narrative, detailing the significant dates and deadlines for creating and implementing the proposed partnership plan. Applicants will be evaluated on the practicality of the timeline.
- ⇒ **Experience (15 points)** – Complete item 10 of the narrative, detailing experience in engaging a broad set of community organizations and voices from early childhood to K-12 leaders, higher education partners, local government, business, and philanthropy, leading partners to jointly identify problems and solutions that students may face on their education pathway.
- ⇒ **Budget Narrative (10 points)** - Complete item 11 of the narrative, detailing why the amount of funds being requested is necessary to fund the plan. Applicants will be evaluated on the realistic nature of their budget and the alignment of their budget narrative to their plan shared throughout the application.
- ⇒ **BONUS (up to 8 points)** – Complete the Matching Funds section of the Budget Narrative. Include the amounts of committed funds and funding partners. Include narrative on how the matching funds will be used to enhance the Partnership Plan, including sustainability of the partnership and complete the related budget worksheet for those funds.

What is the timeline for these funds being awarded, allocated and drawn down?

Funds will be awarded by March 22, 2022 and must be drawn down by June 2024.

What if I don't have an Individual Retrieval Number (IRN)?

Find information about how to apply for an IRN on the [Grants Administration](#) webpage under General Information.

When is the application deadline?

Applications are due to CareerConnections@education.ohio.gov by 5:00p on March 10, 2022.

How can these funds be used? What are allowable and non-allowable uses?

This grant may be used to purchase materials and services that enable the grantee to address their identified plans. Examples of permitted uses include the following:

Permitted uses include:

- Staffing expenses and professional development
- Membership into national networks focus on increasing educational attainment

- Facility rental for Regional Educational Partnership activities and/or virtual tools to host partnership activities
- Strategic planning facilitators and/or project management support
- Development of communication materials
- Services and programming for students
- Professional learning opportunities for educators, employers, and other community members
- Data analytics and data sharing
- Limited technology or software needs. No more than 5% of the requested funds may be used.
- Other uses as identified by the applicant and approved by the Department as supporting the enhancement or expansion of the Regional Educational Partnership.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list. If there is doubt about whether an expenditure is appropriate, please contact the manager of the grant at careerconnections@education.ohio.gov.

Are ESC's eligible to apply to this grant opportunity?

Yes, ESC's are eligible to apply.

Any questions not addressed can be directed to at careerconnections@education.ohio.gov