# Request for Applications:
## EmpowerVetEd Grant Program Round Two

EmpowerVetEd: Supporting Military in Educator Prep Programs

**August 2024**

**Ohio** Department of Education & Workforce

# EmpowerVetEd: Supporting Military in Educator Prep Programs

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

### August 2024

## PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) is partnering with the Department of Veterans Services to issue this competitive Request for Applications (RFA). This grant opportunity is for institutions of higher education to provide financial incentives and assistance to eligible military individuals, as defined in section 3319.285 of the Revised Code, to enroll in and complete an educator preparation program approved under section 3333.048 of the Revised Code. This project will be funded under FY 2024 and FY 2025 appropriations (HB 33, 135th GA Section 265.120(B)).

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applications may be submitted by Ohio's Institutions of higher education that have Chancellor of Higher Education approved educator preparation programs.

## ANTICIPATED AWARDS

A total of $2,000,000 will be awarded through a competitive review of eligible applications. Institutions of higher education (IHEs) are encouraged to apply. The total number of awards under the EmpowerVetEd: Supporting Military in Educator Prep Programs Grant will depend on the amount of each award. Regional preference may be given to ensure statewide access to funds for military eligible individuals throughout the footprint of Ohio.

There is no minimum or maximum award; we expect that funding request amounts will vary based on the individual characteristics of each application.

The overall funding amount available of $2,000,000 would yield an average of approximately $100,000 if allocated evenly across 20 institutions of higher education supporting 5 educators. Therefore, most application requests should fall within or below the range of $100,000 to $150,000. If an individual applicant believes circumstances merit additional funding above this range, please present the rationale and justification in the application, and make the desired request.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES AND PROJECT TERMS

Each application must include a proposed budget (see application requirements below). Funds awarded under the program are to be expended on eligible costs only. Eligible costs must be directly tied to the development and/or the implementation of the project activities and may include, personnel, travel and equipment where appropriate. Other eligible expenses include but are not limited to the following: scholarship funds (see details below), Incentive funds (see below), vendors for graphics or other materials, communications, website building, printing or creating materials and meeting spaces, and mileage. Indirect costs in support of the project may not exceed 8%.

## OBLIGATION

While the grant project activities may begin on the date the grant is awarded, all funds must be encumbered by the end of the project June 30, 2027 and expended by September 30, 2027.

## ENTITLEMENT

The award will be distributed in one installment. The award amount will be available to expend upon notification of award.

## SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

Selected colleges and universities will use the dollars designated to scholarships to recruit, enroll, and retain eligible military individuals in educator preparation programs.

Eligible scholarship costs are instructional and general fees, book vouchers, and meal plans. However, there must be a notification on the student's tuition bill indicating this use. General fees are defined as those assessed uniformly to all students and those that do not allow for waiver to be offered to any student(s). For example, technology fees and parking fees are uniformly assessed, but a fee charged to students to provide health care coverage would not be uniformly assessed if students can opt out, and therefore would not be considered a general fee. A list of reported and approved institutional general fee amounts are found at Tuition & Financial Aid | The Ohio Department of Higher Education

## INCENTIVE FUNDS

Selected colleges and universities will use the dollars designated to provide additional support to eligible military individuals in educator preparation programs. Eligible incentive costs are living expenses, childcare, technology, transportation, parking, hot spots, and in-home Wi-Fi.

Eligible military individual requirements as defined in section 3319.285 of the Revised Code are listed below:

(1) "Eligible military individual" includes any of the following:
(a) An active-duty member of any branch of the Unites States armed forces
(b) A veteran of any branch of the Unites States armed forces who separated from service with an honorable discharge
(c) A member of the national guard or a member of a reserve component of the United States armed forces
(d) A spouse of a member or veteran described in division (A)(1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section

Student eligibility requirements are listed below:

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student in a selected Chancellor approved educator preparation program.
- Student must meet with a faculty member and participate in institution-specific programming, as assigned by the institution, to ensure program compliance.

Scholarship and Incentive funds cannot exceed more than $20,000 annually and $60,000 total per educator.

## PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Proposals are due no later than September 30, 2024. They must be submitted in the following manner:

A. One electronic PDF file sent to [ohiomvep@education.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiomvep@education.ohio.gov)

B. Applicants are responsible for timely submission of proposals. Applications become property of DEW and are subject to public record laws of the state. Applications containing all the required elements will receive careful consideration but cannot be guaranteed funding. Accepted applications will be evaluated by DEW. Decisions will be based upon the quality of the application in addressing the RFA criteria and its required elements. The schedule below may be revised by DEW due to circumstances and any changes will be communicated to the applicants via e-mail.

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|---|---|
| Request for applications (RFA) Release Date: | Aug 1, 2024 |
| Q & A Call: | Aug 15, 2024 |
| Application Deadline: | Sept 30, 2024 |
| Application Review Begins: | Oct 1, 2024 |
| Notification of Awarded Applications: | Nov 1, 2024 |

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Direct questions to [ohiomvep@education.ohio.gov](mailto:ohiomvep@education.ohio.gov)

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

### A. Format of application as a whole

Please see below for page allocations and directions for each section of the proposal. Please clearly label each of the following sections within the application submission. Only complete applications will be accepted for review.

1. **Cover Letter (one page):** Institution name; IRN; identify the primary contact, financial aid representative, veteran services representative, and authorized signatory by name, title, address, phone number, and email address.

2. **Project Rationale (5 pages max):** Briefly outline the project with its intended goals. Provide an overview of the marketing strategy to reach the targeted population. The rationale should include how the proposed project will incentivize and retain eligible individuals in their Educator Preparation Programs. Include research that supports the implementation of the proposed project and if appropriate provide a summary of local, state, or national data that supports or justifies the project.

    a. **Needs assessment:** Provide evidence through employment data and/or letters indicating the need for additional educators from superintendents and/or principals.

    b. **Recruitment plan:** Include plans to offer and support specific initiatives, to incentivize eligible military individuals and their spouses to enroll in an Educator Preparation Program.

    c. **Retention plan:** Include academic and non-academic supports such as mentorship, cohort models, bridge programs, and financial support to ensure candidate success in completing the program and obtaining an Ohio educator license. The retention plan should also encompass both short-term and long-term provisions to minimize disruption in graduation timelines for military students who may need to depart for military training or deployment.

3. **Project Narrative (5 pages max):** Provide a detailed plan of action and timeline for the project activities, milestones, outcomes, and deliverables. Provide anticipated increases in enrollment over the next two years. The narrative should give a clear indication of how and when the planning will occur; include key decisions that will be made based on data and root-cause analyses and processes. The narrative must also include a description of disseminating and communicating any lessons learned from the project.

Dissemination and communication of the project outcomes and deliverables must include but are not limited to reaching out to other Ohio IHEs, districts and/or schools.

4. **Project Metrics:** Include the baseline data reported in the Project Rationale and Project Narrative. Describe how the project will impact these data points and how the data will be monitored and reported semi-annually. A brief description should include what anticipated changes will occur in these data points that would demonstrate progress in reaching the project's goals. Include dates for reporting this data.

5. **Project Schedule:** Provide a Gantt chart or project schedule that outlines the key project tasks and activities and the estimated timeline for each task and activity. The project schedule or Gantt chart may also indicate the person or team responsible for implementing and completing each task or activity. The project schedule or Gantt chart should include the fiscal reporting and completion dates for the grant. All funds must be encumbered by the end of the project June 30, 2027, and expended by September 30, 2027.

6. **Partnerships:** Include a description of partners or partnership organizations or stakeholders that will assist with the implementation of the project. Describe the rationale for these partnerships and how they will be used to inform and/or implement the project. Letters of support from these partners should be included in an appendix to this proposal. Provide a brief, signed letter stating what each partner commits to do as part of this project (include these letters in the proposal's Appendix section). If no partners or partnership organizations are part of this project, provide a justification for why partners and partnerships are not necessary.

7. **Budget Table (Budget Grid):** Complete a budget grid outlining the project budget and attach it to this proposal. Grant recipients will be required to submit their estimated budget for approval in the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP).

8. **Budget Narrative (5 pages max):** The budget narrative will provide the estimated annual and total budget and average per-student scholarship amount. Each student is not required to receive the same scholarship amount, but the budget narrative should explain the rationale for the funding request. List each budgeted item covered by the grant, including incentive cost and line-item cost for each item. Describe and justify the amounts for each budget line item. Describe the timing of expenditures in relation to the project timeline or Gantt chart included in the application.

9. **Personnel:** List the personnel assigned to this project. Provide an explanation of the role of each project member and identify a project lead with their contact information. Provide signed letters from each member assigned to this project that acknowledge their role in the implementation of the project activities.

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## COMPREHENSIVE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The grant funding will be managed in the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP). The CCIP is a grants application and verification system that includes the Funding Application. One of the steps Grantees must complete before receiving grant funds is to submit a budget for approval in the CCIP system. A completed project budget must be submitted and approved by the designated CCIP Fiscal Representee and the CCIP Authorized Representative and approved by the Department in CCIP prior to conducting any grant activities.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Education and Workforce will monitor each project for which an award is granted to ensure that there is fiscal accountability and operating progress, and that the desired outcomes are achieved. Regular reports will be required from all awardees through a standard reporting template or system and awardees may be asked to attend an annual meeting in a virtual format to share their work and accomplishments to date with DEW and their college and university colleagues. DEW may request additional documentation up to three years after project completion to review the investments' impacts.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated using the following scoring rubric for each applicant seeking funding.

| EmpowerVetEd: Supporting Military in Educator Prep Programs (Grant Rubric) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Institution:** | | **Requested Amount:** | | |
| **Criteria** | **Description** | **Total Possible Points** | **Response Point Ranges** | **Reviewer Points** |
| **Cover Letter** | Provide: Institution name; IRN; identify the primary contact, financial aid representative, veteran services representative, and authorized signatory by name, title, address, phone number, and email address. | 5 | **Strong (5):** Identified institution, primary contact, financial aid and veteran services representative, and authorized signatory by name, title, email, address and phone number<br><br>**Good (3-4):** Identified some contacts and provided all contact information<br><br>**Marginal (1-2):** Identified some contacts, missing contact information<br><br>**Weak (0):** No cover letter | |
| **Project Rationale** | Provide: a rationale for the project outlining a marketing strategy to engage the targeted population effectively; incentivizing and retaining eligible individuals in Educator Prep Programs, supported by research/data. Includes needs for assessment demonstrating demand for educators, and a recruitment and retention plan. | 25 | **Strong (20-25):** Clearly articulates intended goals, provides relevant data and research and persuasively outlines how the proposal will incentivize and retain eligible military individuals in Educator Prep Programs; includes detailed retention plan with academic and non-academic supports that ensure program completion and obtaining educator license; clearly outlines short and long-term provision for students on military leave<br><br>**Good (13-19):** Clearly states the intended goals and puts forward a model to address it but lacks supporting data or research; includes detailed retention plan but lacks specific academic and non-academic supports as well as specific short and long term provision<br><br>**Marginal (6-12):** Describes a goal and a proposal aimed at meeting that goal, but has weaknesses in the proposal related to data, marketing, incentivizing, retention, or need; retention plan lacks details, doesn't include supports or provisions<br><br>**Weak (0-5):** Does not demonstrate evidence that the proposal addresses a specific goal or that model is likely to achieve desired goal | |

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| **Project Narrative** | Provide: a detailed plan of action and timeline for the project activities, milestones, outcomes and deliverables; anticipated increases in enrollment of eligible military individuals over the next two years; a plan for disseminating and communicating any lessons learned from the project. | 15 | **Strong (12-15):** Has detailed plan of action and timeline with high levels or specificity on activities, milestones, outcomes and deliverables; includes key decisions based on data and root-cause analyses and processes, provides plan for disseminating and communicating any lessons learned from the project | |
| | | | **Good (8-11):** Has detailed plan of action and timeline but lacks specificity as to activities, milestones, outcomes and deliverables; or lacks a plan for disseminating/communicating lessons learned | |
| | | | **Marginal (4-7):** Plan or timeline lacks details, doesn't include key decisions or plan for communicating lessons learned | |
| | | | **Weak (0-3):** Does not include detailed plan or timeline | |
| **Project Metrics** | Provide: baseline data reported in the project rationale and narrative; how the project will impact these data points; and how the data will be monitored and reported semi-annually. | 10 | **Strong (7-10):** Provides clear baseline data, describes in detail how project will impact data and how data will be monitored and reported semi-annually | |
| | | | **Good (4-6):** Provides baseline data but lacks clarity as to how project will impact data and/or how data will be monitored and reported | |
| | | | **Marginal (2-3):** Lacks clear baseline data and understanding of project's impact; does not specify how data will be monitored or reported | |
| | | | **Weak (0-1):** Does not provide appropriate baseline data, description of how project will impact data or plan for data monitoring and reporting | |
| **Partnerships** | Provide: a description of partners or partnership organizations, the rationale for these partnerships, and how they will be used to inform and/or implement the project; and signed letters stating partner commitment. If no partners or partnerships are a part of this project, provide justification for why partners and partnerships are not necessary. | 20 | **Strong (16-20):** Has identified partners, developed effective partnership strategies, aligned strategies with intended outcomes and includes signed letters of support | |
| | | | **Good (11-15):** Identifies partners but lacks details as to strategies and/or rational for partnerships OR provided justification for no partnerships | |
| | | | **Marginal (6-10):** Recognizes a need to partner with other organizations but lacks formal partnerships and/or strategies OR Weak justification for no partnerships | |
| | | | **Weak (0-5):** Does not provide a partnership plan | |

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| Provisions | Provide: short-term and long-term provisions to minimize disruption in graduation timelines for military students who may need to depart for military training or deployment. | 10 | **Strong (7-10):** Provides specific short-term and long-term plans to support military students through periods of leave due to deployment or training | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | **Good (4-6):** Provides a plan to support military students through periods of leave | |
| | | | **Marginal (2-3):** Identifies one or more strategies for supporting military students during periods of leave | |
| | | | **Weak (0-1):** Does not demonstrate provisions during periods of leave | |
| Personnel | Provide: a list of project personnel, including project lead with contact information; an explanation of the role of each project member; and signed letters from each member assigned to project. | 10 | **Strong (7-10):** Provides personnel details for everyone assigned to the project, including project lead, signed letters, position descriptions, responsibilities and requirements | |
| | | | **Good (4-6):** Provides personnel plan but lacks details as to position descriptions or responsibilities | |
| | | | **Marginal (2-3):** Personnel plan omits project lead or other key staff details | |
| | | | **Weak (0-1):** Does not provide personnel information for the project | |
| Budget Narrative | Provide: the estimated annual and total budget and average per-student scholarship amount including, incentive cost and line-item cost for each item with descriptions and justifications of the item and amount. | 5 | **Strong (5):** Budget narrative provides clear descriptions and justifications for all line items; includes timing of expenditures in relation to project timeline or Gantt chart | |
| | | | **Good (3-4):** Budget narrative provides descriptions and justifications for all line items; includes timing of expenditures in relation to project timeline or Gantt chart | |
| | | | **Marginal (1-2):** Budget narrative is missing elements or does not provide a justification of requested funds | |
| | | | **Weak (0):** Does not provide a budget | |
| Budget Table | Provide: a budget table outlining the project budget | 5 | **Strong (5):** Close alignment with project narrative, budget table is realistic, funds are accurately calculated throughout table | |
| | | | **Good (3-4):** Budget table is realistic, funds are accurately calculated throughout table | |
| | | | **Marginal (1-2):** Budget table is not realistic, funds are not accurately calculated | |
| | | | **Weak (0):** Budget table not provided | |

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| Project Table/Gantt | Provide: Gantt chart or project schedule outline the key project tasks, activities, and estimated timeline for each task and activity. The project schedule or Gantt chart may also indicate the person or team responsible for implementing and completing each task or activity. Include the fiscal reporting and completion dates for the grant. | 5 | **Strong (5):** Close alignment with project narrative, personnel clearly listed with roles and activities, steps listed clearly, timeline is clear and attainable |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | **Good (3-4):** Steps listed clearly, timeline is clear and attainable |  |
|  |  |  | **Marginal (1-2):** Does not list project steps clearly and timeline is unattainable |  |
|  |  |  | **Weak (0):** No evidence |  |
|  | *Total possible points* | 110 |  | 0 |

**Comments**

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