suggested edits to award application

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Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 2:27 PM

To: Innovation Awards (CA DOF)

Cc: Lande Ajose [lajose@californiacompetes.org]

Attachments: CalCompets edits to Item ~1.docx (343 KB)

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft application. Overall it looks on target, doing a good job of making it clear that these are prizes for what a college does, not money to fund something the college would like to do.

Our most significant suggestion is to add a question that asks applicants about the risks and tradeoffs that may be involved in the policies they are implementing. This invites a full and honest description of the innovation rather than just hype. We have included that new question in the attached track-edits Word version of the application. In addition, we have moved the cost-analysis section to a separate question rather than it being embedded, and we have made a few other conforming and language suggestions.

Please let us know if you have any questions for us, or if we can be helpful in any way.

-Bob and Lande

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ADDENDUM 1 TO ITEM C

AWARDS FOR INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

This year, Governor Brown and the California Legislature allocated $50 million to recognize innovative and ambitious efforts to improve higher education. The Awards for Innovation in Higher Education will reward institutions and partnerships that are working differently to achieve at least one of the following priorities, as articulated in the Budget Act of 2014:

- Significantly increase the number of bachelor's degrees awarded.
- Allow students to complete bachelor's degrees within four years after beginning higher education.
- Ease transfer through the state's education system by better recognizing learning that occurs across the state's education segments and elsewhere.

The state's future depends on a well-functioning, sustainable higher education system. That system needs stable funding—which is why the state has provided steady increases in resources in recent years—as well as new strategies to better coordinate efforts across institutions and achieve more with existing dollars.

When applying for these awards, applicants can highlight their new approaches to policies, practices, and systems that are intended to increase the number of degrees they award, make the process more timely and efficient, or do both. The awards will recognize institutions that have initiated creative changes that can be replicated by other institutions and scaled broadly. Campuses may undertake a variety of new efforts, such as:

- Strengthening and streamlining pathways between K-12 schools, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and others.
- Implementing more effective approaches to remedial education.
- Designing new instructional strategies or delivery methods that will improve student learning and increase the rate at which students complete courses.
- Expanding the capacity of "bottleneck" courses that students need to complete to graduate but often cannot access due to existing enrollment constraints, including creative uses of technology.
- Forming cohorts or special classes to improve students' college-going skills and increase retention.
- Providing more opportunities for students to earn credit toward their degrees for knowledge and skills gained outside of traditional classrooms, such as on the job, in the military, or through independent study.
- Encouraging student behaviors demonstrated to lead to more successful outcomes.
- Using technology to improve the sharing of information across institutions or segments to improve student success.
- Rethinking instructor workload, instructional methods (pedagogy), and course offerings to focus human resources in ways that meet the needs of students.
- Implementing ~~smarter~~ business and operational practices to reduce institutional costs.
- Better managing existing space and developing creative alternatives to address facility needs.

By completing an application pursuant to the following instructions, individual campuses or groups of institutions are nominating themselves for an award. The Director of Finance has convened the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education to select awardees and determine award amounts. The instructions ask for information that will help the committee understand what the campuses

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are doing to better use their available resources to improve degree completion, why they are making those changes, and what they hope to achieve.

Eligibility

The innovation awards recognize the long pipeline that contributes to increasing the number of bachelor's degrees awarded and reducing the time it takes students to graduate. Award applications must be coordinated and submitted by a representative of a UC campus, a CSU campus, or a community college, with the concurrence of the chief executive officer of that institution. California community colleges are strongly encouraged to apply for an award. Any other UC campus, CSU campus, or community college, as well as any K-12 local education agency or private institution of higher education, may participate in the application. The coordinating institution will be responsible for distributing funds included in an award to any participants in the application, as well as submitting required reports evaluating the effectiveness of the changes described in the application.

General Instructions

The specific application instructions that follow describe a cover page and 10 items for which a narrative response is required. To facilitate comparisons across applications, please begin your response to each item on a separate page and adhere to the stated page limits, using a 12-point font and at least 1-inch page margins on 8.5" x 11" paper. Please number each page and list the name of the coordinating institution in the page header. The instructions indicate where supporting materials may be provided in labeled appendices. Please be advised, however, that applications will be evaluated primarily on the strength of the narrative responses. Applications that are incomplete or fail to follow these instructions will be penalized in the evaluation process.

A complete application package may be submitted to the Director of Finance either by email or through a hard copy that is hand-delivered or mailed. The application must be **received** no later than January 9, 2015, at 5:00 pm to be considered for an award. Please adhere to the following instructions related to application delivery:

- *Email Delivery:* Applications may be emailed to innovationawards@dof.ca.gov. Applicants should submit two emails. The first email should include the cover page and application narrative as an attachment in Portable Document Format (PDF), with a subject line using the following convention: "Application: [Coordinating Institution Name] – Cover Page and Narrative." The second email should include the appendices accompanying the application as attachments, with a subject line using the following convention: "Application: [Coordinating Institution Name] – Appendices." Note: if a campus is coordinating multiple applications, please assign an application number in the subject line.

  The applicant is responsible for ensuring receipt of both emails and of all attachments.

- *Hand Delivery or Mail:* Applications may be hand-delivered or mailed to the following address:

  California Department of Finance
  Education Systems Unit—Innovation Awards
  7th Floor
  915 L Street
  Sacramento, CA 95814

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Please allow sufficient time for mail delivery. Applications must be received (not postmarked) by the deadline.

All submitted applications will be made available publicly before the next committee meeting, when staff will present award recommendations for the committee's consideration and approval.

Award Selection

Award recommendations will be made primarily on the strength of efforts that are already underway. **The application is not a grant proposal. Therefore, an applicant should not propose new activities that will be performed only if selected for an award.** After award decisions are made by the committee in the spring of 2015, awardees will be asked to submit a plan specifying how they intend to use their awards. While the expenditures do not have to be directly aligned with the changes described in the application, the plan will need to show how funds will be used for one-time purposes related to the priorities of this program as listed in the introduction above. Those plans must be approved by the committee before the Director of Finance releases award funds to the coordinating institution.

The application contains the following four sections: Context, Innovations, Sustainability, and Evaluation. Staff will rank submitted applications based on the following order of priorities, giving more weight to the top priority and less to the subsequent priorities:

1. Innovations section: top priority
2. Sustainability section: second priority
3. Context section: third priority
4. Evaluation section : fourth priority

In addition to recommending to the committee which applications should receive awards, staff will recommend award amounts, based on the relative strength of the applications. Staff intends to recommend to the committee that no award be less than $2.5 million. Based on the number of applications received and their rankings, staff may recommend tiers of award levels. The committee will make all final decisions on awardees and award amounts.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the application instructions, please email innovationawards@dof.ca.gov or call (916) 445-0328.

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COVER PAGE

Please include all of the following in a cover page to your application:

- **Contact Information**

  Please include the following information:

  Coordinating Institution—*Identify the UC campus, CSU campus, or community college that is coordinating the application.*
  Contact Person's Name and Title—*The contact person must be a representative of the coordinating institution and will serve as the single point of contact for the Department of Finance.*
  Contact Person's Email Address
  Contact Person's Phone Number
  Contact Person's Mailing Address

- **List of Participants**

  Please list all entities participating in the application. In addition, please include letters from the chief executive officers of each of these entities indicating support for the application in an appendix labeled Appendix A.

- **Application Abstract**

  Please provide a brief abstract of your application (250 words or less) that describes the key changes you have initiated since January 10, 2014. This abstract will be used to describe and reference your application in summary documents.

- **Assurance and Signature**

  Please replicate the following assurance, followed by the signature of the chief executive officer.

  "I assure that I have read and support this application for an award. I understand that if this application is chosen for an award, my institution will be required to submit a plan for the use of the funds for approval by the Committee on Awards for Innovation in Higher Education and, as the fiscal agent, will be responsible for distributing funds to any other participating entities. I also understand that if this application is selected for an award, my institution will be required to submit reports to the Director of Finance by January 1, 2018 and by January 1, 2020 evaluating the effectiveness of the changes described in this application."

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APPLICATION ITEMS

Context

1. Please describe specific programmatic or institutional goals set by the participants in this application and how achieving these goals ultimately will increase the number of bachelor's degrees awarded, allow students to complete bachelor's degrees within four years, and/or ease transfer. Please describe when and how these goals were developed and how they are used on an ongoing basis. *(1 page maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate clear, well-established goals that are aligned with the Innovation Award program's priorities and used to guide changes to policies, practices, and/or systems.

2. Please provide a statistical profile of the students you serve and an analysis of the factors that ~~impact~~ affect the ability of your students to earn bachelor's degrees, graduate within four years, and/or transfer. Please note which factors you believe can be ~~impacted~~ influenced by changes to policies, practices, or systems. *(1 page maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate a thoughtful analysis, based on credible evidence, of the factors that impede students' progress and the applicant's role in addressing those factors.

3. Please describe key policies, practices, and/or systems in place prior to January 10, 2014, that were initiated to achieve the goals identified in Item 1. Please describe the impact of these policies, practices, or systems, to date, and provide evidence of that impact. *(2 pages maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix B, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate a record of actions that are innovative, effective, and aligned to the applicant's goals.

Innovations

4. Please describe key changes to policies, practices, and/or systems that you have initiated since January 10, 2014 that are intended to achieve the goals identified in Item 1. Please explain why you think the changes you have initiated will achieve those goals. ~~Additionally, please discuss how these changes will impact the average cost to award a bachelor's degree, considering costs borne by the state, the application participants, and students, as well as the magnitude of that impact.~~ You may present evidence, such as research or outcomes of similar changes made at other institutions, to support your claim. *(~~3~~6 pages maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix C, limited to 1~~2~~0 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate a coherent set of innovative and replicable changes guided by the goals described in Item 1 and linked to the challenges described in Item 2 that can be expected to have a significant impact ~~and to reduce the costs to award a bachelor's degree based on credible evidence presented by the applicant~~.

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5. Please describe any changes to policies, practices, and/or systems you will implement after January 9, 2015, which are not yet in place that are intended to achieve the goals identified in Item 1, as well as the expected timeline for implementing those changes and the expected impact of those changes. Please include evidence of your commitment to these future changes. Please list only those changes that you plan to implement regardless of whether or not you win an award. *(2 pages maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix D, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate the applicant's intent to continue to make changes and evaluate actions pursuant to a clear long-term vision guided by the goals described in Item 1 and consistent with the changes described in Item 4.

6. Please discuss how these past and future changes will affect the average cost to award a bachelor's degree, considering costs borne by the state, the application participants, and students, as well as the magnitude of that effect. *(3 pages maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix E, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate changes guided by the goals described in Item 1 and linked to the challenges described in Item 2 that can be expected to reduce the costs to award a bachelor's degree based on credible evidence presented by the applicant.

7. Please describe any risks or tradeoffs involved in the strategies you are implementing, and how you intend to monitor and mitigate them.

   A strong application will acknowledge that innovations may involve known tradeoffs or unintended consequences. (For example, restricting double majors may speed graduation and reduce the cost of the degree, but a known tradeoff is that the graduating senior does not have the benefit of the learning from the additional courses).

Sustainability

~~6.~~8. Please describe your key strengths and assets for sustaining the changes you are making and, ultimately, achieving the goals identified in this application. Please address leadership, institutional commitment, and existing relationships among the application participants. *(2 pages maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix ~~E~~F, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate a sustained record of leadership, shared vision and focus among the application participants, and long-term institutional commitment formalized in documented agreements.

~~7.~~9. Please describe how you have engaged stakeholders (such as students, faculty, other education agencies or institutions, community members, and business leaders) in setting the goals described in Item 1, analyzing the factors that make it difficult for students to achieve the goals, and implementing strategies to address those factors. *(1 page maximum. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix ~~F~~G, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

   A strong application will demonstrate engagement with and support of stakeholders that is sufficiently broad and deep to sustain the changes described in the plan in the event of changes in institutional leadership.

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8.10. Please describe how the changes described in this application will be sustained within your existing financial resources. *(1 page maximum.)*

A strong application will demonstrate that the applicant will implement and sustain the changes described in the application without new funds from the state or students.

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Evaluation

~~9.~~11. Please describe how you will evaluate—both quantitatively and qualitatively—whether the changes described in your response to Item 4 will achieve the goals identified in your response to Item 1, including at least three specific quantitative measures you will monitor regularly. Your response should include both measures that can be observed and used to gauge progress in the near term (fewer than four years) and measures that will reflect progress over the long term (four years or more), and should address issues raised in your answer to Item 7. *(1 page maximum.)*

A strong application will demonstrate a thoughtful, systematic approach to evaluating progress toward each identified goal, using quantitative measures that reasonably evaluate progress toward those goals and qualitative judgments.

~~10.~~12. Please list your target outcomes for each academic year through 2018-19 for the measures identified in your response to Item 9, taking into account the changes described in this application. Please provide the most recent baseline measures for each target outcome for each application participant and identify which academic year that data reflects. You may use a table to reflect this data. Please also provide a narrative that explains how you chose your targets, including assumptions used and evidence you have to support those assumptions. Please identify your data source or provide enough information about how the data is generated to allow other entities to replicate the measures. *(2 pages maximum, including any table produced. You may include additional supporting materials in an appendix labeled Appendix HG, limited to 10 pages maximum.)*

A strong application will demonstrate a thoughtful approach to setting ambitious targets informed by a realistic assessment of data.

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