

## Answers to questions asked about the Allied Health – Direct Care RFP

The Allied Health – Direct Care RFP was released on August 10, 2015. A bidder's call was held on August 20, 2015. The following questions were raised during the call, our responses follow. In addition, we've provided answers to general questions asked at prior RFP releases which you may find helpful.

Q: Who owns any curriculum developed with grant dollars?

A: Curriculum that is completely new, or significantly altered for the purposes of this grant will be retained by the Mass Department of Higher Education.

Q: How can stipends be used? Could it be given to a team of faculty members? What are the rules around using funds to pay for release time for faculty who are developing materials supporting work done in direct relation to the project funded by the RFP?

A: While the RFP states that faculty cannot be paid to teach a course in the project, it is permissible to provide a stipend to faculty members that develop a course that is part of the project. The general guideline is that funding is meant to supplement existing resources not supplant them. The funding must not be used to replace the ongoing costs of the institution.

Q. Can stipends be used for students?

A. Stipends cannot be used by students to pay tuition. However, as an example, in the past we have allowed for a group of students to receive stipends for participation in such activities as orientation seminars, surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

Q: Why aren't Community Health Worker career paths being covered in this RFP?

A: This round of funding is focused on Direct Care Workers. Direct care jobs, for our purposes, are defined as certified nurse assistants, medical assistants, home makers, personal care and home health aides, and Licensed Practical Nurses.

Q: Can you update the link for the Iowa Career Map for Direct Care Workers?

A: The full address is: <https://www.idph.state.ia.us/directcare/Pathways.aspx>

Q: Why wasn't the PHCAST Career Map referenced in the RFP? *(For reference: PHCAST stands for the Personal and Home Care Aide State Training. The purpose of PHCAST is: To define core competencies across direct care workers; To develop a training as a base for further development of competency standardization; and to ensure that direct care workers have acquired skills that would be transportable to any job market in the nation. PHCAST is made possible by a 2010 Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant).*

A: We wanted to share best practices from around the country in order to give potential applicants a broader sample of what is being done at a national level. Coupled with that, we realized that PHCAST could be referenced within a proposal and therefore should not be explicitly referenced in the RFP.

Q. Can more than one proposal be submitted?

A. Yes. However, we expect to award four or possibly five grants and are likely to spread them around both geographically and cover a variety of the topics. Therefore, it is unlikely that two awards will go to one applicant since our preference is to distribute the funds more broadly.

Q. Do you need to register on COMM-BUYS?

A. No. The direct link that was supplied for this RFP takes you to a web page with a choice of either registering or simply clicking "Proceed" to access the information.

Q. Are travel expenses restricted to within Massachusetts?

A. Yes.

Q. Can a proposal address more than one priority area (in the same proposal)?

A. Yes. The proposal would be considered but would need to cover at least one of the areas very clearly.

Q. Can the grant funds be used for the purchase of equipment?

A. Yes, but the percent of the grant funds spent on equipment should be appropriate to the rest of the budget and any equipment and/or technology purchases must be necessary to implement your proposal.

Q. What is the allowed amount for indirect costs?

A. Indirect costs should be limited to no more than 10% of the budget.

Q. Are there any restrictions on the length of other materials that can be attached?

A. There may be appendices to include such items as letters of support and evaluation criteria but as the description under Project Proposal explains, they should be kept to a minimum.

Q. Can the funding dollars be used just for development?

A. Yes. But we would want to understand the planned implementation of the project with existing resources and how it would be sustained going forward.

Q: We are looking at designing a large project that has a significant number of partners and spans multiple regions. The cost of our project might be more than the maximum award. Is it possible that a larger award would be considered? Also, can an institution have more than one partner?

A: This grant is heavily focused on collaboration of multiple institutions across regions or the whole state and multiple partnerships are encouraged. Requests for higher award amounts will be considered for larger 'consortium-based' proposals based on the merits of the application, the size and scope of the project, the vision for regional and/or statewide systems change, and the number of partners.

Consideration for larger award amounts will be given to proposals based upon:

- Partnerships that include 2 or more education institutions
- Significant partnership with employers, employer representatives, or employer collaboratives
- Significant partnership with Workforce Investment Boards/Regional Employment Boards
- Partnerships that include 1 or more Community Based Organization (where appropriate) to provide services such as: Case management, ABE, ESOL, college/workforce readiness, etc.

Q. Are matching funds required (as shown on the Form 1 Template)?

A. No. Broadly, we look for and encourage collaboration with industry partners as we find the greatest learning comes with these kinds of partnerships. If you anticipate having matching or in-kind funds to pay for parts of the grant proposal, please list them and explain in the narrative.