



The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Request for Proposals

Healthcare Career Summer Bridge Program Grants

Deadline: November 27, 2024

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) is soliciting proposals from Kentucky's public universities, the 16 Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) campuses and the member institutions of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities (AIKCU) for seed grants of up to \$65,000 to support summer bridge programs focused on exposing high school students to healthcare career and their related postsecondary education opportunities. These funds should be used for 2025 summer bridge program development or support for existing programs that meet the criteria.

I. Background

CPE established an ambitious goal to raise the percentage of adults with a postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by the year 2030. Achieving this goal is critical if Kentucky hopes to remain economically competitive with surrounding states and attract more high-skill, high-wage employers. The Council's 2016-21 Strategic Agenda establishes three broad goals: 1) increasing access to a postsecondary credential or degree; 2) increasing student success by raising college completion rates and ensuring graduates are prepared for life and work; and 3) increasing the impact of postsecondary institutions on Kentucky's economy and communities through basic and applied research, outreach, and public service.

One critical area of focus is the healthcare sector, which faces significant workforce shortages. With the increasing demand for healthcare professionals, particularly in specialized fields such as nursing, allied health, and medical technology, it is vital to expose students to healthcare career pathways early. Introducing high school students to healthcare careers can not only inspire future healthcare workers but also address Kentucky's growing healthcare workforce needs.

To meet this challenge, CPE is offering grants to develop or expand healthcare-focused summer bridge programs. These programs aim to provide high school students with hands-on exposure to various healthcare careers, foster interest in healthcare professions, and equip students with the academic, social, and career-readiness skills needed to succeed in postsecondary healthcare programs. By investing in these summer bridge programs, CPE seeks to create a pipeline of future healthcare professionals, reduce workforce shortages, and contribute to the overall economic development of the state.

II. Funding Opportunity

CPE is offering grants of up to \$65,000 to support the development or expansion of summer bridge programs focused on healthcare career exposure for high school students. These grants are available to public four-year institutions, private non-profit institutions, and Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) campuses. The funding aims to create opportunities for students to explore healthcare careers, gain hands-on experience, and develop the skills needed to pursue postsecondary education in healthcare fields.

III. Program Outcomes

Proposals should address the elements outlined above and demonstrate how the program will strategically meet the following outcomes:

- 1. Increased Student Awareness and Interest in Healthcare Careers:** Participating students will develop a greater awareness of various healthcare careers, such as nursing, medical technology, and allied health professions, through hands-on activities, shadowing opportunities, and career workshops. Students will demonstrate an increased interest in pursuing a healthcare-related career by the end of the program.
- 2. Increased Student Confidence in Pursuing Postsecondary Education:** Students will develop greater confidence in their ability to succeed in postsecondary education, supported by mentoring, academic guidance, and exposure to healthcare career opportunities.
- 3. Improved Understanding of Postsecondary Healthcare Pathways:** Students will gain a clearer understanding of the educational pathways required for healthcare careers, including degree programs, certifications, and training options at community colleges or four-year institutions. Students will work with an advisor to complete personalized postsecondary education plans during the program.
- 4. Diverse Student Participation:** The program will actively engage students from underrepresented or underserved populations, such as those from low-income backgrounds, racial/ethnic minorities, or first-generation college students.
- 5. Strengthened Community and Healthcare Partnerships:** The program will establish or strengthen partnerships with local healthcare providers and institutions, offering students opportunities for job shadowing, guest speakers, and hands-on workshops.

IV. Elements of Institutional Proposals

Campuses are invited to submit proposals to develop or support a healthcare exposure summer bridge program. The proposal, not to exceed three pages, shall demonstrate a commitment to postsecondary education readiness and healthcare workforce development. The following elements should be included:

1. **Program Development Plan:** This section should provide a detailed description of the program's structure and development. Outline the specific activities that will be offered to students, such as hands-on healthcare career exploration, mentoring by professionals, academic skill-building workshops, and field experiences at healthcare facilities. Include a clear timeline of activities, key milestones, and the roles of involved staff and partners. The plan should also describe how the program will be tailored to meet the needs of high school students, particularly those from underrepresented populations, and how it will prepare them for healthcare careers and postsecondary education.
2. **Budget Proposal:** A detailed budget proposal is essential to ensure the efficient use of grant funds. This section should include a comprehensive breakdown of how the \$65,000 grant will be allocated. Be specific about costs related to personnel, materials and supplies, transportation, facility use, and student incentives. Each budget item should be justified, demonstrating its necessity in achieving the program's objectives. If additional funds from other sources will be used, these should also be outlined, along with how they complement the use of grant funds.
3. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Successful proposals will demonstrate strong partnerships with local healthcare providers, local high schools, and community organizations. This section should describe the role of each partner in program development and delivery. Include letters of commitment or support from these partners, showing their involvement in providing hands-on experiences, mentorship opportunities, or other resources. Collaborative efforts should aim to enhance the program's offerings and provide students with real-world insights into healthcare professions.
4. **Outreach and Recruitment Strategy:** Proposals must include a well-defined outreach and recruitment strategy to attract high school students, particularly from underrepresented and underserved populations. This section should describe how the program will be promoted to target schools and communities, including the methods and materials used for outreach (e.g., social media, school visits, community events). Clearly outline the recruitment process, selection criteria, and how diversity and inclusion goals will be prioritized in the selection of participants.
5. **Program Sustainability Plan:** This section should explain how the summer bridge program will continue beyond the initial grant funding period. Describe plans to secure additional funding or resources, as well as potential long-term partnerships that can support the program in future years. Institutions should also

highlight how the program will integrate with existing educational or workforce development initiatives to ensure its sustainability. Consideration should be given to expanding or scaling the program based on successful outcomes.

6. **Program Evaluation Plan:** A robust evaluation plan is critical to assess the program's effectiveness and impact. This section should detail the methods and tools that will be used to measure success, including pre- and post-program surveys, student feedback, and tracking student progress in healthcare education pathways. Describe the specific metrics that will be used to evaluate student outcomes, such as increased knowledge of healthcare careers, interest in pursuing healthcare education, and enrollment in postsecondary programs. The evaluation plan should also outline how data will be collected, analyzed, and reported, as well as any plans for continuous improvement based on the findings.

IV. Allowable Expenses

Below is a list of allowable activities that grant dollars will fund:

- **Personnel Compensation:** Funds may be used to compensate staff involved in the planning and delivery of the summer bridge program, including program directors, coordinators, healthcare professionals, instructors, and support staff. Compensation must be directly related to the program and not part of regular institutional salaries.
- **Student Lodging and Meals:** Grant funds can cover the cost of student lodging and meals during program activities, particularly for residential programs or programs that require students to stay overnight for hands-on healthcare experiences or field trips.
- **Transportation Costs:** The grant can be used to cover transportation expenses for students to attend program activities, such as visits to healthcare facilities, hospitals, clinics, or academic institutions. This includes costs for buses, vans, or other necessary transportation arrangements.
- **Supplies and Materials:** Funds may be used to purchase any educational materials, supplies, or equipment necessary for the healthcare-related workshops and hands-on activities. This could include medical simulation kits, lab supplies, workbooks, or other instructional resources.
- **Facilities Rental:** Grant funds can be used to cover the rental of facilities required for program activities, such as classrooms, laboratories, or simulation centers, where healthcare career exploration and skills training will take place.
- **Educational Experiences:** Funds may be used to support educational field trips that offer students hands-on exposure to healthcare careers. These trips must have an educational component tied to the goals of the summer bridge program.
- **Other Direct Costs:** Additional costs necessary for program implementation (subject to approval).
- **Indirect Costs:** Not permitted under this RFP.

V. Funding Restrictions

Contractor will not use grant funds for payments to executives, administrators nor can the contractor use funds to reimburse themselves for grants to students or expenses incurred prior to the effective date of this contract.

Contractor may not use funds for administrative overhead costs often referred to as indirect costs. Indirect costs will not be allowed.

Gift cards or cash equivalent gifts or incentives are not permitted. Incentives such as bookstore stipends, scholarships, or direct student expenses are allowable.

VI. Submission of Proposals

- A. CPE staff will host a half-hour virtual session on Thursday, November 7, at 12:00 p.m. ET, to discuss this opportunity and address any questions about submitting a proposal. Please register for the virtual event at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8zR63IWzQBe7meIKTRyRyw
- B. The session will be recorded and archived, and an FAQ document will be posted following the session.
- C. Applicants must submit one complete electronic version of the proposal.
- D. Proposals should be no more than three pages in length, excluding the budget. This document should be written no smaller than single spaced, 12-point font, and 1" margins.
- E. Proposals must be received by **4:30 p.m. ET on Wednesday, November 27, 2024**, by the following designee:
CPE Workforce & Economic Initiatives Unit
cpeworkforce@ky.gov
Identify your submission with "Healthcare Career Summer Bridge Program Grant Application" on the subject line of the email.

VII. Evaluation of Proposals

Council staff will evaluate proposals based on alignment to project goals and submission requirements. Following receipt of each proposal, CPE staff will evaluate and approve the proposal or reach out to program staff via email regarding any revisions that may be necessary. The number of grants awarded is contingent upon the limited funding available. The Council reserves the right, once an initial selection has been made, to negotiate the final terms of the agreement.

VIII. Award Notification

The number of grants awarded is contingent upon the limited funding available. Institutions will be notified via email on December 6, 2024, regarding the status of their proposal. The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals in whole or in part and to negotiate any or all aspects of a proposal. The Council bears no responsibility for any costs incurred while preparing any proposal.

IX. Additional Requirements

All recipients of this funding will be required to identify the following:

- at least one financial point of contact who will ensure that reports and reimbursement invoices are submitted according to CPE policy and timelines.
- at least one programmatic point of contact who will oversee the implementation of the Summer Bridge program and ensure that final reports are satisfactorily completed and submitted on time.

X. Reporting Schedule

Grant awardees will be required to submit a final program report detailing the structure, activities, and outcomes of the summer bridge program, including a roster of students that participated, key healthcare partnerships, and feedback on students' healthcare career interests. The report must include pre- and post-program outcome data, an itemized budget report, and a summary of the program's sustainability plan for future implementation.

CPE will also track participating students' postsecondary enrollment and academic progress, particularly in healthcare fields, therefore, CPE will require student IDs to be submitted to CPE's KPEDS system.

Final project report shall be submitted to CPE no later than **August 15, 2025**.

Additional updates may be requested by CPE.

XI. Other Terms and Conditions

This is a reimbursement grant and any unexpended funds remaining after the expiration of the agreement will be forfeited by the institution. Reimbursement invoice requirements will be disseminated upon award.

Indirect costs will not be funded.

The anticipated effective date of contracts resulting from this RFP is December 20, 2024, through August 15, 2025.