

Higher Education Coordinating Commission Racial Equity Impact Work

2023-25 Agency Request Budget



HECC Team

- Ben Cannon, Executive Director
- Ramona Rodamaker, Deputy Director
- Rudyane Rivera-Lindstrom, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Tom Riel, Director of Operations

Program Overview

- **Oregon Youth Employment Program (OYEP)**
 - OYEP Director - Doug Denning
- **Oregon Opportunity Grant Program (OOG)**
 - OOG Manager - Erin Rau
- **Oregon Promise (OP)**
 - OP Manager - Erin Rau
- **Public University Summer Bridge Programs (Strong Start)**
 - Strong Start - Jim Pinkard

Oregon Youth Employment Program (OYEP)

- OYEP serves youth and young adults (14-24), providing equitable and inclusive opportunities and access to meaningful work experiences, skills training and career development. While OYEP is a stand-alone program it is also a part of the larger Oregon Youth Works portfolio within the Office of Workforce Investments.

Level of Engagement - OYEP

- OYEP engages regularly with individual service providers through grant administration, rulemaking, and conversations at G2G. Also, through the local workforce boards Community Engagement Plans.
- Recent/Future shifts include much more Tribal engagement at an individual Tribe level and the development of a citizen advisory board.

23-25 ARB - OYEP

- For 23-25 OYEP has a Legislative Concept to combine 3 programs (OYEP, Oregon Youth Corp, and Oregon Conservation Corp) under one program with one board. This was done based on feedback from all partners. While each of the 3 programs has slightly different requirements, there is a need to streamline efforts for grantees who may receive funds from more than one program.

23-25 ARB - OYEP (continued)

- For 23-25, OYEP is requesting \$12 million to continue and expand the wildfire risk reduction initiative that was started in 2021. This funding will allow crews to reduce wildfire fuel levels in urban areas on an ongoing basis. The expansion of the program is to purposefully include tribal areas into the fuel reduction plans.

Resource Allocation - OYEP

- Through statutory language, administrative rules, and policies within the Request for Application, OYEP's funding decisions are designed to serve identified priority populations.
- Data is gathered on a quarterly basis and on an annual basis, the data is used to prioritize investments where gaps are found.

Oregon Opportunity Grant Program (OOG)

- The OOG is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program for college students. This grant provides funding to more than 40,000 Oregon resident students each year.
- OOG is awarded to low-income Oregon residents who are pursuing their first associates or bachelor's degree at an eligible institution. Award amounts are based on a student's financial need, the type of institution the student attends, and FAFSA/ORSAA submission date.

Oregon Promise (OP)

- OP is a state grant that helps to cover tuition costs at any Oregon community college for recent high school graduates and GED[®] test graduates.

Level of Engagement - OOG & OP

- HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) has advisory meetings that include Oregon Tribes, college access networks, financial aid officials, high school counselors, and student associations. The meetings provide space for community feedback and information sharing.

23-25 ARB - OOG

For 23-25 OOG is looking to:

- Increase base funding to expand current awards.
- Tier award amounts based on need and sector costs.
- Make strategic awards geared toward students near completion to incentivize student success.

23-25 ARB - OP

For 23-25 OP is looking to:

- Remove accelerated learning credit discount.
- Increase eligibility to any eligible Oregon postsecondary institution, including four-year colleges and universities.

Resource Allocation OOG & OP

- There are equity challenges and increasing affordability gaps associated with student financial aid. The current OOG statutory language prioritizes funding to low-income students. OP recipients tend to be representative of their high school graduating class, though they are somewhat more likely to be women and Hispanic/Latinx. More than half of OP recipient students are lower-income.

Public University Summer Bridge Program (Strong Start)

- The Strong Start Program is an enhanced summer bridge initiative that focuses on serving underrepresented students during a summer orientation with continuing, wrap-around services provided throughout the academic year.

Level of Engagement - Strong Start

- The Strong Start program was initiated by public universities. HECC was made aware of this initiative after the bill supporting it passed. These funds are considered a “pass-through” and it is HECC’s understanding that any outreach is done by the public universities. HECC is gathering the outcomes of these programs and will be able to report equity impacts and make recommendation in future years.

23-25 ARB - Strong Start

- For 23-25 HECC is asking for a continuation of this funding in the amount of \$20 million.

Resource Allocation - Strong Start

Of the students enrolled for the first cohort:

- 59% were BIPOC
- 40% were Pell eligible
- 79% were from Oregon

Data Analysis - HECC

- Each program pulls from different data sets.
- HECC regularly disaggregates reports by race/ethnicity, gender and to a certain extent by income background, rural/urban background, and first-generation status
- The HECC is seeking to advance data analysis through the incorporation of data justice. Through data justice, the HECC will have a more comprehensive and nuanced data set in which to inform budgetary and policy decisions. Data justice will allow the HECC to see the intersectionality of characteristics that are essential for many groups.

Accountability to Community Partners

- Thanks to the RCJ drop-in times and resources, at the HECC, the new uniform standards for accountability include:
 - The implementation of the Equity Impact Protocol that allows staff to weigh the impacts of policy decisions and mitigate harm.
 - Each HECC Office has an Equity Action Plan that embeds outreach for continuous community involvement.
 - The HECC adoption of the equity goals that align to the Strategic Roadmap,
 - And regular input and oversight from the Commission that holds us accountable to our roadmap.

Evaluation

- HECC leadership approached this engagement process in a new, improved, and deeper way. Alignment of the process and setting clear expectations was strengthened.
- New Equity Impact Protocol along with new POP template, and office equity plan template were created.
- Barriers included time constraints and lack of alignment. In many cases we were meeting new partners and getting initial feedback.
- HECC engagement process has become more aligned across offices and intentional, but trust building with new partners was not achieved given the short time frame.
- Feedback and collaboration from our partners have been productive and positive.

Questions for the Racial Justice Council

- What can we continue to improve on?
- In thinking through accountability, are there new approaches that we could incorporate?
- What questions or guidance does the Council have for us?



Thank you!