

State of Oregon



OREGON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM STATE YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE FOR LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS

Request for Grant Applications (RFA)

HECC Reference # 21-120

Date of Issue:	February 10, 2022
Application Due Date:	March 8, 2022, 11:59pm
Award Announcement:	March 29, 2022

For questions, clarifications, or if you need this material in a different format, please contact the

Oregon Youth Employment Program @ oyep@hecc.oregon.gov

1. INTRODUCTION

The State of Oregon, acting by and through the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (“HECC”), is issuing this Request for Applications (RFA) for the Oregon Youth Employment Program (“OYEP”), a program administered by the Office of Workforce Investments (“OWI”).

Approximately \$6.02 million in funds has been committed by HECC to the Local Workforce Development Boards (“LWDB”) for this effort. It is intended that half of this amount will be distributed to the LWDB’s according to the workforce formula, and up to half will be distributed through the results of this discretionary RFA. The amounts of the Grants to each LWDB, will include the formula driven portion of the funds, and may include a portion of the discretionary funds depending on the results of this RFA.

Applications should present innovative and creative strategies that enhance a youth’s ability to move into self-sustaining employment, resulting in an upwardly mobile career path with higher earnings potential. Applicants should include strategies that reflect effective integration of services with other partner agencies, and proactive strategies to involve employers in design of service strategies and implementation of the program.

The allowable cost period for these grants will be January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 unless otherwise agreed upon. There is no guarantee that an Applicant will receive a grant or receive reimbursement of any funds incurred prior to the execution of a grant agreement. Any expenses incurred by an Applicant prior to the execution of a grant agreements is at the sole risk of the Applicant.

HECC is issuing this RFA pursuant to its authority under. ORS 350.075 and ORS 660.353-ORS 660.354.

2. RFA AND GRANT SCHEDULE

The table below represents a tentative schedule of events for this RFA. All times are listed in Pacific Time. All dates listed are subject to change. “N/A” denotes that event is not applicable to this RFA.

Description	Date	Time
Application Due Prior to	March 8, 2022	11:59pm
Notice of Award (approximate)	March 29, 2022	
Issuance of Grant Agreement (approximate)	April 11, 2022	

3. OVERVIEW

The OYEP, which is both funded and managed by the state, is a paid work experience, skills training and career development program that utilizes the “LWDB’s” structure to implement.

The focus of this iteration will be on underserved/underrepresented populations, and training experiences and opportunities that support the imperatives of this program.

Workforce training is a component of the programming with the aim to help close employment gaps, particularly for those underserved and underrepresented communities, by providing young Oregonians with valuable work experience that promotes the development of essential employability skills.

The purpose of the OYEP is to:

- Provide equitable and inclusive opportunity and access to meaningful experiences for youth;
- To elevate collaborative impact within communities and their populations,
- To develop youth and young adults (14-24) through skills training, work experience, career development and youth development.

4. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Individuals within a community and communities within a larger society need the ability to shape their own present and future, and the OYEP believes that workforce development and education are fundamental aspects of Oregon's ability to thrive. Equity is both the means to success and an end that benefits us all. Equity requires the intentional examination of systemic policies and practices that, even if they have the appearance of fairness, may in effect serve to marginalize some and perpetuate disparities. The data is clear that Oregon demographics have been changing to provide rich diversity in race, ethnicity, and language. Working toward equity requires an understanding of historical contexts and the active investment in changing social structures and practice over time to ensure that youth from all communities have the opportunities and support to realize their full potential.

Creating a culture of equity requires monitoring, encouragement, resources, data, and opportunity. The OYEP applies HECC's [Equity Lens](#) to all aspects of its programming.

5. GENERAL APPLICANT GUIDELINES

Eligible applicants shall be current LWDBs in Oregon.

OYEP Application Form:

All applicants are to complete the OYEP application form. (see Attachment A) This application is where applicants are to identify the communities to be served, the training and supportive services that will be offered to youth participants, in-demand sectors to be served, as well as an area to complete a section of short & long answer narratives.

Community Engagement Plan must be included with Application:

For the purposes of this RFA, Community Engagement Plan is defined as: A plan that details how the local board and its program providers will partner with and engage their community, including

through relationships with trusted messengers for underserved/underrepresented, and rural communities, to advance the imperatives of the OYEP.

All applicants are to submit a Community Engagement Plan. This may be completed as part of the OYEP application or may be provided in a document separately that clearly addresses all information below. Applicants may use their current local plan so long as it meets the criteria listed.

The Community Engagement Plan needs to demonstrate a commitment to serving underrepresented populations, which may include, but not be limited to:

- Communities of color;
- Rural communities;
- Communities that have faced generational poverty; or
- Other communities that have been historically underrepresented in youth employment provided the applicant provides information documenting such underrepresentation;

The Community Engagement Plan is to document the process that will be used to identify, partner with, and provide grant funds to organizations with direct experience serving underserved/underrepresented communities.

General Applicant Terms:

- HECC may require clarification to understand any of the applicant's scored criteria. Any necessary clarifications or modifications will be made before executing any award and may become part of the final Agreement.
- Submission of an Application does not constitute an agreement between the HECC and applicant, nor does it secure or imply that applicant will be selected for discretionary funds.
- All costs associated with applicant's submission of an application are the sole responsibility of the applicant and shall not be borne by HECC or the State of Oregon.
- Successful applicants may be required to maintain appropriate levels of Workers Compensation, General Liability, and Automobile Liability insurance.
- By applying, applicant accepts all of the terms and conditions of this RFA. No funds will be released prior to all program conditions being met and funding agreements executed.

6. GRANT AGREEMENT & FUNDING INFORMATION

- HECC anticipates to award nine (9) Grant Agreements.
- HECC reserves the right to reopen the RFA as necessary.

Funding Priorities:

The OYEP seeks to prioritize the investment of state resources in the areas or through the organizations listed below:

- To provide funding for projects that apply the HECC Equity Framework in the

development of their project plan and apply the framework during implementation.

- To provide funding to organizations that establish and build relationships with trusted partners for underserved/underrepresented communities as part of the OYEP plan.
- To provide funding to projects that build reciprocal relationships between participant youth and the communities they are serving (i.e. building social capital, contributing to community-based solutions, etc.).
- To provide funding that fosters career development of youth participants by prioritizing opportunities to acquire job-ready credentials within the project requirements.

Grant Funding Information

Grant funding for the OYEP to LWDB's s will be in two parts.

- Formula Funds are based on HECC's workforce formula but will require response to this RFA.
- Discretionary Allocation funds will be awarded based upon the results following an application review. (Section 7, 'Submission Criteria for All Applications' for more information.)

The type of funds for both Formula and Discretionary awards shall be distributed by a percentage allocation.

- The initial allocation of funds will be 50% of the total grant award. The remaining 50% of the allocation may be requested when two measures have been met: When a minimum percentage of the amount allocated has been spent, and participation reporting requirement are reached.
 - Once 75% of the initial allocation (50%) has been spent, and reporting requirements are reached, an additional 25% of the total allocation may be requested.
 - Once 75% of the 75% total award allocation has been spent, and reporting requirements are reached, the remaining 25% may be requested.

Reporting Requirements

All applicants will be required to provide quarterly progress reports, as well as final report(s) to HECC. Final report(s) components will be described in detail in the Grant Agreements which will include the data required in statute, which includes but is not limited to:

- First and last names and date of birth for all participants;
- The race and ethnicity of program participants;
- Whether program participants come from urban or rural areas;
- The self-attested family income of program participants;
- The number of participants in the program;
- The number of participants that complete the program;
- The cost of internships and other work experiences provided;
- The academic credit earned by participants;

- The number of certificates for passing approved high school equivalency tests such as the General Educational Development (GED®) test earned by participants; and
- Any other characteristic of program participants that the commission determines by rule would be useful in evaluating the success of the program.

Participants

Grant recipients may engage in outreach to or solicit participation from youth participants from underserved/underrepresented communities that may include, but not be limited to, communities of color; rural communities; communities that have faced generational poverty; or other communities that have been historically underrepresented in youth employment provided the applicant provides information documenting such underrepresentation. Grant recipients shall be prohibited from denying services to individual program participants on the basis of lack of association with the listed categories above. Program participants shall be between 14 and 24 years of age.

Participant Compensation:

Program participants shall be compensated in the following manner:

- At least Oregon minimum wage by region according to the current rules regarding Oregon minimum wage established by the Bureau of Labor & Industries; or
- As per OAR 715-102-0020, if a grantee is prohibited by state or federal law from the payment of wages, such as an AmeriCorps program, an allowance or stipend, or a combination of an allowance or stipend and postsecondary education and training monetary award, such that the total monetary value of the allowance or stipend and the total monetary value of any other postsecondary education monetary award or institutional credit hour award received by the participant or on behalf of the participant, when totaled and divided by the total hours served in the program, is equal to or exceeds the monetary value of minimum wage as described in the bullet point above.

Allowable Uses for Grant Funds:

Applicants shall provide a budget estimate for formula and discretionary funding that details the following allowable costs:

- Program Costs: Program Personnel Costs/Wages, Participant Wages, Employer Costs for Taxes/Fringe, Transportation, Supplies/Materials, Program Participants' Support Services Costs, Personal Protective Equipment, Equipment, Training and Certification costs, etc.
- Administrative Costs: Expenditures incurred by grantees in the performance of administrative functions necessary in carrying out activities under the grant agreement. Acknowledging the funds for the resulting grant agreements derive from state funds as opposed to federal funds, administrative costs to administer them should be lower.
 - Administrative Costs will generally be limited to a rate of 10 percent. HECC reserves the right to negotiate, in its sole discretion, higher Administrative Cost rates if a successful applicant can justify why a higher rate is necessary.

7. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submissions shall be sent electronically to oyep@hecc.oregon.gov

Submissions received after the Due Date stated in Section 2, RFA and Grant Schedule may not be accepted.

Submissions should be submitted in the format of:

- Attachment A: OYEP Grant Application & Project Plan,
- OYEP Program Budget (for formula and discretionary funds),
- Community Engagement Plan (if not included as part of Application), and
- Attachment B: Application Certification Sheet.

LWDBs are to submit one request for OYEP funds. The submission will be evaluated for both formula and discretionary funds that are available.

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The successful applicants will be selected based on demonstrated abilities, a sound proposal/application, collaboration and partnerships, and cost-effective service delivery.

Evaluation of applications are based on the criteria in this RFA. In appropriate circumstances, HECC reserves the right to partially fund applications in discrete portions or phases. If HECC chooses to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. Funded applications through this RFA does not guarantee future funding. When or if additional funding becomes available, HECC reserves the right to issue additional awards under this RFA through the remainder of the biennium. These awards will not require further competition. Any additional selections will be made in accordance with the terms of this RFA and HECC. HECC will review agreements and awards annually.

HECC at any point reserves the right to reopen the RFA as necessary or may solicit programs if it is in the best interest of HECC.

The application will be scored and weighted as follows:

2022-23 OYEP REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS		
Rating Definitions		
Rating Definitions (4pts)	Description	Definition
0	No Answer	o Response field is left blank or is a non-answer and/or unrelated answer
1	INADEQUATE Response does not address the question's requirements	o Response provides little or no required information o Response demonstrates that the Applicant has limited or no understanding of the requirements addressed by the question, or about the topic o Response does not demonstrate that the Applicant possesses some capacity, expertise, and/or strengths to meet the expectations addressed in the question
2	INCOMPLETE Response meets some requirements specified in the directions	o Response provides some required information o Response demonstrates that the Applicant has some understanding of the requirements addressed by the question, or about the topic o Response demonstrates that the Applicant possesses some capacity, expertise, and/or strengths to meet the expectations addressed in the question
3	ADEQUATE Response meets most requirements specific in the directions	o Response provides most required information o Response demonstrates that the Applicant understands the requirements addressed by the question, or about the topic o Response demonstrates that the Applicant possesses sufficient capacity, expertise, and/or strengths to meet the expectations addressed in the question
4	EXCELLENT Responses meets all requirements specified in the directions	o Response provides all required information in a thorough manner and uses specific examples o Response demonstrates that the Applicant has a complete understanding of the requirements addressed by the question, or about the topic o Response demonstrates that the Applicant possesses capacity, expertise, and/or strengths to meet or exceed expectations address in question

The following scoring sheet will be used to grade and weight the application questions:

Evaluation Score Sheet QYEP REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS Year: 2022-2023				
Applicant Name:		0		
Evaluator Name:		0		
Date of Review:				
A. Application Sections: I,II,III (4pts) <small>Reviewed by HECC staff</small>		Submitted <small>0/4/4</small>	Comments/Justification for Rating <small>(If rating cell is ORANGE, comments required for ratings required; comments required for scores below a 4)</small>	
Are sections I, II and III completed? Indicate yes/no for each Ready Application submitted Other evaluation activities Letter to be issued later Invoice and purchase services table filled out Are financial capability skills and questions answered?				<small>(In section A of evaluation sheet if any of these RQ application is not complete, and must be revised PRIOR to any awards being made. Evaluators may continue to score parts B, C and D.)</small>
B. Narrative Section: IV (40pts)		Max Points <small>(60 out of 100)</small>	Rating <small>(0-6)</small>	Score <small>(60 out of 100)</small>
Q1 - State the need and problem in the local area that the LWDC is trying to address. Be specific and use qualitative/quantitative data, research, assessments, and community engagement where possible.		4		0.00
Q2 - Describe how the project plan will help the problem or need. Provide information on how the LWDC came up with the course of action and how data, research, assessments, community engagement, etc. informed that course of action.		4		0.00
Q3 - Describe how the project plan once up and running will be evaluated to determine if goals are being met.		4		0.00
Q4 - Detail spending plan for funds (Formula and discretionary) Q5 - Describe the board/staff capacity to implement the project plan, including past success implementing similar projects. Cite outcomes data from prior projects where possible.		4		0.00
Q6 - Describe how you have applied the HECC Equity Framework in the development of your project plan, and how you will apply the Framework during implementation. Q7 - Describe how the project plan will foster career development of youth participants by prioritizing opportunities to acquire job-ready credentials with project requirements.		4		0.00
Q8 - Describe how the project will build reciprocal relationships between participant youth and the communities they are serving (i.e. building social capital, contributing/engaging youth into community-based solutions, etc.)		4		0.00
Q9 - Describe how the LWDC will also work with and will continue to build new relationships between trusted partners for underserved/underrepresented communities.		4		0.00
Q10 - Please describe how the Other Services listed in section IV will be provided to participants: (if no list any other/additional services that will be provided)		4		0.00
		Subtotal		0.00
C. Community Engagement Plan (12 pts)		Max Points <small>(60 out of 100)</small>	Rating <small>(0-6)</small>	Score <small>(60 out of 100)</small>
Community Engagement Plan		12		0.00
		Subtotal		0.00
D. Sector Section: VII (12pts)		Max Points <small>(60 out of 100)</small>	Rating <small>(0-6)</small>	Score <small>(60 out of 100)</small>
Sector, part d parts and training identified		12		0.00
		Subtotal		0.00
E. Budget (4pts) <small>Reviewed by HECC staff</small>		Submitted <small>0/4/4</small>	Comments/Justification for Rating <small>(If rating cell is ORANGE, comments required for ratings required; comments required for scores below a 4)</small>	
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy Is proposed project fundable with formula funds? (according to budget provided) If no, in comments section note how much discretionary funds are needed to fund proposed project(s).				
Do we discretionary budget show how additional projects would be funded? If no, in comments section note what are discretionary funds to be used for.				
		TOTAL SCORE		0
		MAX Points:		64
Application Strengths:				
Areas of Concern:				

Grant funds will be awarded based on:

Formula Allocation: To be awarded formula funds, applicants must submit a complete and timely application. If the HECC staff finds the application to be incomplete, staff will work with each applicant to ensure a completed application.

Discretionary Funding: Applicants will receive discretionary funds based on their application's score. Funding amounts will vary pending on the score awarded for each applicant, the scope of the proposed projects, available funding and what is in the best interest of the state as determined by HECC. The HECC staff encourage applicants to propose scalable projects, as discretionary funding amounts may vary.

9. PUBLIC RECORDS

- All information and records submitted to the HECC are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Law, ORS 192.311 to 192.478. If Applicant believes that any information or records it submits to the HECC may be a trade secret under ORS 192.345(2), or otherwise is exempt from disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law, Applicant must identify such information with particularity and include the following statement:
 - “This data is exempt from disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law pursuant to ORS chapter 192[], and is not to be disclosed except in accordance with the Oregon Public Records Law, ORS 192.311 through 192.478.”
 - If Applicant fails to identify with particularity the portions of such information that Applicant believes are exempt from disclosure, Applicant is deemed to waive any future claim of non-disclosure of that information.

10. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this RFA, capitalized words will refer to the following definitions.

Capitalized terms not specifically defined in this document are defined in OAR 125-246-0110.

- “**Administrative Costs**” means expenditures incurred by direct recipients, local grant recipients, local fiscal agents, or local grant subrecipients in the performance of administrative functions and in carrying out activities under the grant direct provision of services.

Such costs include both personnel and non-personnel costs and both direct and indirect costs. Administrative costs are generally limited to 10% but the HECC reserves the right to negotiate higher rates at its sole discretion.
- “**Applicant**” means an entity that submits an Application in response to this Request for Applications.
- “**Application**” means a written response to this Request for Applications.
- “**Community Engagement Plan**” means detailing how the local board and its program providers will partner with and engage their community, including through relationships

with trusted messengers for underserved/underrepresented, and rural communities, to advance the imperatives of the OYEP. (See additional requirements in General Application Guidelines Section of this RFA).

LWDB may use their current local plan which they have in place, and, if needed, highlight/expand how their plan meets requirements set in rule for OYEP. (If a local plan is used, the LWDB will need to submit it with their application, and specify what areas/sections of their plan meet the requirements set in rule).

- **“Equity”** means in education and workforce programming is the notion that each and every learner, participant, and worker will receive the necessary resources they need individually to thrive in Oregon’s schools, training programs, and worksites no matter what their national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, differently abled, first language, or other distinguishing characteristic.
- **“Individual Development Plan” (“IDP”)** means a co-developed plan that discusses and identifies an individual’s essential employability skill development and growth, and creates their individual educational and career goals.
- **“On-the-Job Training” (“OJT”)** is provided by an employer to a paid participant engaged in productive work and enrolled the OYEP program. An OJT provides knowledge or skills essential to the performance of the job.
- **“Participant Compensation”** Program participants shall be compensated in the following manner:
 - At least Oregon minimum wage by region according to the current rules regarding Oregon minimum wage established by the Bureau of Labor & Industries; OR
 - As per OAR 715-102-0020, if a grantee is prohibited by state or federal law from the payment of wages, such as an AmeriCorps program, an allowance or stipend, or a combination of an allowance or stipend and postsecondary education and training monetary award, such that the total monetary value of the allowance or stipend and the total monetary value of any other postsecondary education monetary award or institutional credit hour award received by the participant or on behalf of the participant, when totaled and divided by the total hours served in the program, is equal to or exceeds the monetary value of minimum wage as described in the bullet point above.

Participant Wages are allowable under direct program costs.

Minimum wage increases on July 1, 2022, and a rate chart can be found at: <https://www.oregon.gov/boli/WHD/OMW/Pages/Minimum-Wage-Rate-Summary.aspx>.

- **“Program Costs”** means direct costs to the program that include:
 - Personnel Costs/Wages,
 - Participant Wages,
 - Employer Costs for Taxes/Fringe,
 - Transportation,
 - Supplies/Materials,
 - Support Services Costs,
 - Personal Protective Equipment,

- Equipment,
 - Training and Certification costs, and
 - Other direct program costs.
- **“Reporting”** All applicants will be required to provide quarterly progress reports, as well as final report(s) to the HECC. Final report(s) components will be described in detail in the Grant Agreements which will include the data required in statute.

Note: LWDBs may use iTrac or another data collection system on their end, but will be required to submit quarterly and year end Excel spreadsheets to the HECC.

- **“Rural /Non-Urban Community”** “Rural” is defined as those geographic areas that are not included within the Urban Growth Boundaries in parts of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties as used in Oregon’s Bureau of Labor and Industries minimum wage calculations.

For more information, please visit <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/library/urban-growth-boundary/lookup>.

- **“Time/Duration of five weeks”** means the five-week duration is the calculation determined as the minimum hours needed in order to satisfy individual OYEP grant requirements. Programs, or projects, must meet the minimum hours through frequent and consistent work experience.

Five weeks has been converted to 200 hours with the following calculation: 5 weeks: 5 days per week, x 5 weeks = 25 days. 25 days x 8 hours per day = 200 hours.

Projects/programs for each individual must provide a minimum of 200 hours of frequent and consistent work experience.

Youth participants can be active during the entire allowable cost period. The minimum is 200 hours, which can be spaced between 5 weeks and 20+ weeks as needed by the individual participant and project/plan needs

- **“Underserved / Underrepresented”** means for the State of Oregon as a whole (not education-specifically), a 2021 definition of historically and currently underserved communities includes Oregonians who are: Native Americans, members of Oregon’s nine federally recognized tribes, American Indians, Alaska Natives; Black, Africans, African Americans; Latino/a/x, Hispanic; Asian, Pacific Islanders; Arab/Middle Eastern/North Africans; immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers; undocumented persons, DACA recipients, “Dreamers”; linguistically diverse; people with disabilities; LGBTQ+; aging/older adults; economically disadvantaged; farmworkers, and migrant workers.

(Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan: A Roadmap to Racial Equity and Belonging for the State of Oregon, September, 2021, Office of the Governor, page 7.

https://www.oregon.gov/das/Docs/DEI_Action_Plan_2021.pdf.)

- **“Work Based Learning / Work Experience”** Work-based learning is structured learning in the workplace or simulated environment that provides opportunities for sustained interactions with industry or community professionals that foster in-depth firsthand experience of the expectations and application of knowledge and skills required in a given career field.

Work Experience/Work Based Learning should be within the sectors identified as priority by the LWDB. This experience may be short term, min of 200 hours or may be longer than 200 hours.

Examples of Work Experience (*note all activities must be paid*)

- Internship Training
- Registered Apprenticeship
- Pre-Apprenticeship Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Occupational Skills Training

11. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: OYEP Grant Application & Project Plan
- Attachment B: Application Certification Sheet