Higher Education Coordinating Commission
Request for Applications:
27-001-RFA Oregon Conservation Corps 2027-29

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Questions & Answers 1

1. **Is there a template for the reports?**

   Yes. A reporting template is included in the grant posting. It contains multiple tabs and can be accessed through the Executive Director's Office → Administrative Services → Grant and Contract Opportunities.https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/pages/grants-contracts.aspx

2. **Is there a question-and-answer deadline?**

   Yes. Questions are due to HECC by February 17, 2027. An updated QnA document will be posted by Monday February 22, 2027, but no additional posts will be made after that date.

3. **How about paying for turnout gear and uniforms?**

   Yes, this is allowable. Many types of gear are allowable and can leave the program when participants exit, including boots, hard hats, and some tools. Items like fire-resistant shirts and chainsaw chaps are typically remain owned by the program rather than the participant.

4. **Are the technical assistance providers' contact details available?**

   Yes, Technical Assistant provider contact information is posted in an addendum to the RFA on the HECC website.

5. **Should tribes apply for both the set aside and competitive grants?**

   Yes. Tribes receive set aside funds but are encouraged to also apply competitively to access additional funding.

6. **Is there a benefit to applying early?**

   No. Applications are not reviewed until after the deadline; early submissions can be replaced if needed before the deadline.

7. **Is a fuels reduction crew required in every application?**

   Yes. All applications must include a fuels reduction crew.

8. **Who determines if an area counts as Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)?**

   Applicants may rely on local fire departments, the Oregon Department of Forestry, or the State Fire Marshal for confirmation.

9. **Are additional licenses (e.g., BOLI farm/forest labor contractor license) required?**

   Possibly. Some applicants may need these licenses depending on their activities. There are exceptions (e.g., schools). Here is a link to more information about BOLI and the RFA includes more information about insurance and licenses.

10. **Are there weights or minimum ratios for number of youth served vs. grant size?**

    No. Ratios are not weighted due to equity concerns for smaller or tribal organizations. Youth served and hours trained are reviewed generally, not scored by ratio.

11. **Is there a minimum or maximum number of personnel?**

    No. But reviewers may question budgets with disproportionate staffing. Typical ratios are one crew lead per 4–5 youth.

12. **Can students be hired as assistants?**

    Yes. Students and youth aged 16–26 can be employed.

13. **Does a crew leader need specific qualifications?**

    Qualifications are determined by the organization. They should reflect the type of work (e.g., fire, youth leadership). The state does not mandate specific credentials.

14. **Where can we find information on BOLI requirements?**

    This link was provided during the training.
    https://www.oregon.gov/boli/employers/pages/farm-forest-labor-contractors.aspx

15. **Can OCC fund shared transportation such as a van or shuttle?**

    Yes. Transportation is an allowable cost, including rental vans, contracted shuttles, gas cards, and mileage reimbursement.

16. **Does vehicle purchase fall under the 10% equipment cap?**

    Yes. Vehicle purchases are considered equipment. Mileage or maintenance would fall under transportation instead.

17. **Can participants conduct GIS analysis, drone mapping, etc.?**

    Yes, as long as they are properly supervised and safety requirements are met.

18. **Must specific treatment sites be identified in the application?**

    General areas must be identified using the CWPP tool, but **specific** site-by-site selections can occur after awards are made.

19. **Who can identify treatment sites—can a fire district do it?**

    Yes. Partners such as local fire districts can help identify valid treatment areas.

20. **Can OCC funds support interns or individual placements (e.g., at ODF)?**

    Yes. As long as core grant requirements are met (fuels reduction, fire-adapted community activities, and workforce training), individual placements are allowable.

Technical Assistance Provider – Specific Questions

21. **There's a pre-application info session today—should TAs attend?**

    Yes. Attendance or viewing the recording afterward is recommended.

22. **Is using AI allowed?**

    AI may be used for notetaking or assistance, but not for generating content or writing application materials.

23. **What tasks should TAs expect to support applicants with?**

    TAs may help applicants understand the CWPP planning tool, review drafts for completeness, ensure multi-part questions are fully addressed, and provide general guidance. They should not write applications for the programs.

24. **Do you have samples of successful grants from the past that we could review?**

    Yes, but they may require redaction. The procurement team will confirm before sharing.

Questions & Answers 2

25. Can applicants apply for both the Planning grant and Program grant?

Yes, technically they can, however they should apply for a program application if they hope to be operating a program within the biennium.

26. Can organizations recruit youth from neighboring counties to provide them with training opportunities? Would that negatively impact scoring?

Yes, this is correct. Participants may live in neighboring counties or even outside of state. All treatments must take place in Oregon and all grantees should be Oregon-based.

27. In working on proposals in the past, I understand that many RFA solicitations permit applicants to include an executive summary at the beginning of their application responses. Would applicants be permitted to submit a one-page executive summary to introduce the proposed project and provide reviewers with a high-level overview of the application?

Applicants are allowed to include an executive summary. Most of what would be included in an executive summary could be responded in section 2.2. of the application. The defined scoring rubric will still be what is used to assign points.