Higher Education Coordinating Commission
RFA 27-002: Oregon Youth Corps 2027-2029

Title: RFA 27-002 Info-Session Presentation
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Single Point of Contact: Lisa Kelly-Harriman
Phone: 503-979-5839
Email: lisa.m.kelly-harriman@hecc.oregon.gov

Questions & Answers

1. **Where are the physical locations of the Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs)?**

   TAP, Gena Sharkey, shared that her company is on the Oregon Coast in Coos Bay.
   TAP, Outsource Execs, LLC, shared that their company have East and West Coast offices.
   TAP, Susan Taylor, shared that she is located in Sisters, Oregon.

2. **Will the TAPs be reviewing the completed grants to recommend for awards as well?**

   The TAPs will not be part of the award process.

3. **Which counties are not currently served by Oregon Youth Corps?**

   Clatsop County, Columbia County, Yamhill County and Morrow County

4. **When looking at the agriculture spectrum, is there a specific segment of the industry that is looking for focus on? Livestock? Crop Management? Soil Systems? Etc.?**

   More than 1 youth stated an interest in getting support with pathways to entering and experiencing exposure to any segment of the agriculture industry. However, livestock and crop management were segments OYC has heard from industry leaders and FFA that there is a need. Additionally, if an applicant is proposing a project in agriculture, it would be wise to consult with their **Local Workforce Development Board** to ascertain which agricultural related jobs and segments are in highest demand in their proposed service area.

5. **Are programs allowed to provide more than minimum wage to their participants?**

   Yes, this is allowable.

6. **Is there a target/preferred or known average "cost-per-participant", derived from the entire proposed budget compared to number of participants served?**

   There is no preferred target average cost per participant, whether for OJT or SLE grant projects. However, cost benefit is always something to consider and ultimately, as long as the “participant compensation” requirements are met as stated below, that is what is required.

   Program participants where wages are required must 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.

Minimum wage rate chart can be found at:
https://www.oregon.gov/boli/workers/Pages/minimum-wage.aspx

7. **NOTE: This was not a question, but in the Zoom chat during this RFA info session, attendees representing multiple potential applicants were suggesting to one another to submit collaborative or joint applications. Below is Oregon Youth Corps stance on this application approach.**

   It is allowable for multiple applicants to apply for funding together under joint application(s). Oregon Youth Corps (OYC) asks that the relationship, roles and collaboration approach is communicated as clearly as possible in the application so grant application evaluators and the OYC program is able to understand as clearly and plainly as possible the proposal specifics in the application.

8. **Program duration: We understand that SLE requires at least three months and OJT at least five weeks. Must these periods be continuous and completed by each participant? Could SLE operate part-time over three months and OJT operate as a summer-only program? Are minimum weekly or total participant hours required?**

   Please note that the specific project and activity terms, such as experience hours to be provided to each youth participant, will be negotiated should you receive an intent to award after this RFA application period has closed. For the purpose of the application, please closely review Section 3.3 Point and Score Calculations Pages 10 and 11 (which align with Attachment A: Application Form) and answer all questions in the application form as best as possible. If the application does not clearly state requirements such as what you listed above, then your score will be impacted regarding your response to those specific requirements. Scoring is only based on what is outlined in the questions in the Attachment A: Application Form.

   Per current 2025 – 2027 active OYC Community Stewardship Corps grant agreements SLE programs have typically required a minimum of 3 months, which is calculated at roughly 480 hours total over a two year period, while OJT programs have typically required a minimum of 200 hours over a two year period. As stated in the Info Session, for the purpose of the RFA, it is best to propose projects and related narratives without concerns over calculated experience hours as this can be discussed and negotiated post intent-to-award.

9. **Does the HECC offer any resources or support for recruiting program participants, if awarded?**

   The OYC grant administrator would be the primary support resource to the awarded applicant. Additionally, grantees will be invited into an Oregon Youth Works Community of Practice, which provides shared learning and networking opportunities with other providers.

10. **Have program participants ever quit before? How might that possibly impact funding reimbursement?**

    Yes – especially because the intent of these programs is to ensure at least 75% of youth participants enrolled are considered at-risk or disadvantaged per HECC's definition, it is expected that participants may need to "quit". This should not impact funding, but should this happen, your grant administrator will always be available to support your program.