



# 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grants Program: Frequently Asked Questions

## Criteria and Eligibility

### **Is there more information regarding the intent of this funding?**

The intent of the funding overall is to broadly support programs that increase the supply of nurses being trained in community colleges in California. We used the HealthImpact report referenced in the Application Guidelines to define grant program priorities to ensure awards reflect the current state of the field. The best source of additional information is the report, which was developed by thought leaders from the health field in California and with contributions from hundreds of additional leaders in healthcare and nursing education, practice, and policy. You can download the report [here](#).

### **If our project fits within the grant program's purpose but does not align with the priorities, can it still be considered for funding?**

No. Projects must align with both the *purpose* of the grant program and *at least one* of the funding *priorities* listed in the Application Guidelines.

### **If our project aligns with the grant program's purpose and at least one of the priorities but uses strategies other than those in HealthImpact's 2016 [Nursing Education Plan White Paper and Recommendations for California](#), will it still be considered for funding?**

Yes. While the funding priorities are based on white paper recommendations, strategies are not limited to those presented in the report.



**Is this grant program applicable only for nursing or can it be applied towards other allied health fields, such as Medical Assistant (MA) or Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs?**

Since the intent of the funding and criteria require that projects facilitate, coordinate with, or complement efforts to educate and train nurses through California community colleges, allied health education programs themselves will not be considered. However, projects that propose to create pathways from allied health tracks to nursing degrees would be considered for funding.

**For Criteria, Priority #5, “Promote academic progression for registered nurses to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing or higher degree” -- is it allowable for community colleges to collaborate with public and/or private universities to meet this criteria?**

Yes. Community colleges may collaborate with public and/or private universities to meet this criteria. As with any partnership in a proposed project, a clear rationale for the applicant’s selected partners should be included in the application. Given the growing number of students attending California community colleges who struggle with food and housing insecurity and the percentage of students who are low income and eligible for financial aid, please consider addressing in your application the cost of attending your partnering universities and how students’ costs are addressed by the project, if at all.

**Regarding Priority #4, which regions of California have documented shortages?**

If your project addresses this priority, we ask that you provide a reliable source of information and data that substantiates the case for the need to increase the supply of nurses within the project scope. One data source for nursing shortages is the University of California San Francisco’s Healthforce Center’s 2018 publication authored by Joanne Spetz. This report, titled [\*Regional Forecasts of the Registered Nurse Workforce in California\*](#), cites nursing shortages in the San Francisco Bay Area, Central Valley, and Central Coast. HealthImpact’s website also has a number of reports that document the nursing supply and demand by region. You may reference these or any other credible sources of data to make your case.

**Priority #4 references virtual and remote learning. Are you not considering grants to improve other modalities for simulation?**

Virtual and remote learning are some examples of how programs may deliver education to students, particularly during the ongoing pandemic and inability to conduct typical in-person classes. Other modalities are also eligible.



**The criteria include a list of attributes for competitive proposals. Are these requirements?**

No. These are not requirements, but any and all of these attributes may strengthen the competitiveness of a proposed project.

**How do we demonstrate our organization's capacity to successfully implement the project?**

We would like to know more about the likelihood of success for the proposed project. Perhaps your organization has successfully initiated projects similar in scope or size or serves a unique role in the field. Other examples may be leadership support and evidenced demand for project services. Be sure to include all relevant groundwork to date and specific accomplishments that contribute to the likelihood of success of the proposed project.

**Does a collaborative partnership include working with departments or divisions within a single entity, such as a community college?**

Yes, collaborative partnerships within a single entity count. All partnerships included in the project should make sense given the scope of the work and contribute in some way to project objectives.

**Can collaborative partnerships include local healthcare systems (hospitals)?**

Yes. All partnerships included in the project should make sense given the scope of the work and contribute in some way to project objectives.

**Does the leveraging of resources include in-kind services (e.g. staff time, office space)?**

Yes. In-kind services should be included in the budget and explained in the budget narrative.

**One of the attributes of a competitive proposal is scalability. What is meant by "scalability"?**

This refers to projects that have the potential to be replicated elsewhere or to grow in size and scope. For example, a proposed project in 2019 by Riverside City College was funded to provide technical assistance and other resources to community colleges interested in replicating their successful associate degree and bachelor's degree concurrent enrollment program.



**Do applicants need to be a community college or related entity?**

No. Other entities can apply for a grant as long as they meet the eligibility requirements and propose a project that aligns with the grant program's purpose to facilitate, coordinate with, or complement efforts to educate and train nurses through California community colleges and that meets at least one of the priorities listed in the Application Guidelines. Eligible applicants must be a public governmental entity or have valid tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Organizations or projects with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor are eligible for funding.

**Are for-profit private colleges with nursing programs eligible for funding?**

No. Grants are restricted to entities with 501(c)3 tax-exemption status and public governmental agencies.

**Are organizations or projects with fiscal sponsors eligible for funding?**

Yes. The same eligibility requirements apply to fiscal sponsors, such as having valid non-exempt status with the IRS.

**Are fiscally sponsored programs and direct programs of the Foundation for California Community Colleges eligible to apply for funding?**

Yes. Such programs are eligible for funding and subject to the same criteria of this funding opportunity.

**Can a lead applicant also be listed as a partner/sub-grantee on another application?**

Unfortunately, lead applicants cannot be listed as a partner/sub-grantee on another application.

**Is this grant opportunity available to nursing programs that are noncredit?**

Programs must be credit bearing to be eligible for NEIF grants.



## Award Information

### **What is the average grant size (i.e. how much should we request)? What is the maximum ask amount?**

Grants are made from endowment earnings, which vary from year to year. For the current funding cycle, we intend to award one or more grants totaling up to \$522,000. Applicants are advised to request an amount that makes sense for the project's scope of work.

### **How many grants will be awarded?**

The number of grants awarded will depend upon the quality and competitiveness of proposals received, including the amount of funding requested by applicants.

### **Can funds be awarded for a pilot project or only for evidence-based strategies?**

Pilot projects are eligible for funding even if strategies utilized are not evidence-based. However, the proposal must provide a clear rationale for the design of the pilot and evidence of organizational or agency capacity to successfully implement the project.

### **Can community colleges apply for startup funding to support new or expand nursing programs?**

Yes. This is allowable if the program aligns with at least one of the funding priorities.

### **Will capacity building projects be considered for funding?**

Yes. Capacity building projects will be considered. Ensure that the increased capacity you hope to achieve will clearly position your organization to advance the purpose and at least one of the priorities of the grant opportunity.

### **Can funds be used to increase student retention and graduation rates?**

Yes. Increasing student retention and graduation rates can be an intended result of the proposed project. The project must also fit within the funding purpose and at least one priority.



### **Are you anticipating additional future funding to scale programs?**

Earnings from an endowment fund grants, and those earnings vary each year. Based on recent investment performance, we anticipate that funding will continue to be available for future grantmaking cycles at approximately the same levels. A proposal to scale an existing program would be an eligible project to apply for funding.

### **Can we apply for continued funding for a project that received prior funding to continue the great work of the project?**

Yes. Projects that have received funding in the past are eligible to apply for additional funding. Current grantees may apply for additional funding if the new upcoming grant cycle does not overlap with the existing grant cycle.

## **How Funds May be Used**

### **What costs are allowable in the budget?**

Budget items must directly support proposed activities for projects to achieve objectives consistent with the Nursing Education Investment Grants Program purpose and priorities. Indirect costs are allowable to 15% of direct costs. Equipment purchases or scholarships do not, by themselves, constitute a project eligible for funding but are eligible as one element of a larger project to address funding priorities. If you include equipment or scholarships, these should be clearly justified as a part of the project's design. Grants should supplement existing funds, not supplant existing activities or funding. The Foundation for California Community Colleges may, at its sole discretion, exclude certain budget items from consideration or limit their amount in relation to an overall budget in a grant award.

### **Can funds be used for student scholarships or leadership awards?**

Funds are for projects that fit within the priorities described in the Application Guidelines. A portion of funds can be used for scholarships or awards as strategies within a broader project plan that meets guideline requirements, but all funds cannot be used in this way. If part of your project includes scholarships, describe criteria for selection and controls to prevent misuse of funds by other parties.

### **Are stipends for student internships allowable?**

Yes. This is allowable as part of a larger project design that meets the criteria and the priorities.



**Can funds be used for purchasing educational tools, resources or capital projects?**

Funds are for projects that fit within the priorities described in the Application Guidelines. Tools, materials, and construction may be allowable expenses but must be accompanied by a programmatic rationale as to how it fits within the priorities.

**Is travel out of state an allowable cost?**

Yes. As with all budget elements, you will need to link any travel to the project's intended objectives.

**If a proposal is submitted with a budget you do not agree with, will you suggest a modified budget?**

Yes. If we consider changing the budget, we will contact the applicant to discuss an adjusted project plan and adjusted objectives consistent with the modified budget.

## Application Form

**Do the character limits in the Submittable application include spaces?**

Yes. Character limits include spaces.

**With regard to the project design, the application requests that we provide information about strategies, activities, staff roles, and a general timeline for the proposed project. Can you give advice about how detailed this section should be?**

Your response to this section of the application is essential in helping us to understand what you are trying to achieve and how you are going to achieve it, who is involved, and when significant activities will occur. We are looking for an overview of the project but with sufficient detail to understand how it will be implemented. Your proposal may benefit from a rationale for the strategies you plan to employ. In addition, the separate Work Plan should provide more detailed information about your proposed activities, timeline, evaluation measures, and outcomes.

## Other Questions

**We have two projects that fit within the guidelines. Can we submit a proposal for each?**

No. Only one proposal per applicant may be submitted.



**Can a community college district, which has several colleges, have multiple applications from the colleges within the district?**

It is possible for multiple applications from within a community college district to be submitted and considered for funding, but only one proposal per applicant may be submitted. Both community college districts and community colleges meet the applicant eligibility criteria, so either entity can apply for funding and submit an application.

**Will feedback be provided on applications not awarded funding?**

The Foundation for California Community Colleges does not formally provide feedback on unfunded submissions. Upon request, feedback may be provided, depending on the volume of submissions received and staff resources available.

**Our organization applied for funding last year but did not receive an award. Can we reapply this year? Can we get feedback about our previous submission?**

Yes. Your organization can reapply for funding. At this time, we are unable to answer specific questions about past submissions but are available to answer more general questions about the grant program and the current grant opportunity.