



StepUP READY Grant Overview



INTRODUCTION

The most effective college readiness efforts come as a result of strong partnerships between higher education and public education. Collaboration between K-12 and higher education institutions continually demonstrates positive outcomes. In supporting Utah's 66% by 2020 goal, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) invites grant applications from partnerships between school districts/local education authorities (LEAs) and Utah not-for-profit higher education institutions engaged in efforts to increase the number of Utah's public high school students who graduate college-ready and enroll in a post-secondary institution.

USHE will make a total of \$500,000 of state appropriated funds available for grants up to \$50,000 for collaborative work between school districts/LEAs and Utah not-for-profit higher education institutions.

All grants require a robust partnership between the LEAs and the not-for profit higher education institution to ensure effective and intentional efforts surrounding college preparation, enrollment, and first-year transition. The application begins with the submission of a Intent to Apply form. USHE will then solicit applications from among those applicants. After submission, all full applications will engage in a two month "discussion period" with USHE to align grant goals, objectives, and outcomes.

GRANT OVERVIEW

- \$500,000 of state appropriated monies available*
- Grants may be up to \$50,000**
- All grantees agree to enter into a data-use agreement with USHE
- Grants require a 50% match
- Proposal review to be completed by a committee appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education
- K-16 Alliances are eligible to apply
- Renewal invitations may be extended based on performance outcomes

* If funds are granted to a higher education institution, they will be sent directly to the institutional budget office. Institutional policy may require coordination with your Office of Sponsored Projects.

**Additional funds up to \$25,000 per grant will be available through the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG). These additional funds will be available to LEAs and USHE institutions whose programs focus on under-represented students. This may include first-generation, low-income, or other under-represented students, including women in STEM.

GRANT TIMELINE

July 2, 2015	Extended Intent to Apply notice due (mandatory)
July 27, 2015	Grantees notified with invitations to apply & full RFP available
August 12, 2015	Technical Assistance call (mandatory)
September 9, 2015	Application due
October 2015	Consultation period
November 6, 2015	Selection announcement
Dec-Jan 2016	Grantees sign grant agreement
January 2016	Grant monies released
Jan-Dec 2016	Implementation
June 2016	First Interim Report due
January 2017	Second Interim Report due
April 2017	Data Analysis and Final Report

DATA USE AGREEMENTS

Grantees agree to enter into a data use agreement with USHE, with the understanding that results and outcomes will be compared to similar groups and control groups, using longitudinal data available under federal and state statutory requirements. Only aggregate data will be released for reporting purposes: no identifiable student data will be shared. Districts agree to participate in USHE High School Feedback reports, which will show districts and individual schools how many of their graduating seniors enroll within USHE, where they attend, their first-year performance, need for remediation, and other outcome data.

Data may also be used for additional analysis, identification of “Projects of Promise,” and dissemination of best practices to better serve students. All activities will be within federal and state statutory requirements. Data will not be sold to private third parties.

GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the data agreement, grantees agree to:

- Submit three reports: two interim and one final report with data analysis;
- Participate in an annual grantee sharing meeting;
- Acknowledge StepUP READY and USHE on any reports or printed materials created as a result of this grant;
- Explore and identify ways to sustain your programs/initiatives beyond the one year of grant funding.

FUNDING LEVEL

Grants of up to \$50,000* are available and require a 50% match. This match may come in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or a combination of both. This may be in the form of salaries/benefits, travel, training, office supplies, materials, etc. Funds may be used only for items submitted in the approved budget. Grants may not be used for grant oversight or for full-time permanent personnel, but may be used to hire students or those engaged in direct service, keeping in mind that these are one-time awards. Overhead or “F &A” costs may not be used as match, and an institution may not claim F & A or overhead on the grant.

Grants will be awarded for one year of funding; especially successful grantees may be asked to re-apply for additional year(s) of funding, but grantees should not submit proposals that exceed the grant timeline above.

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INTENT TO APPLY DUE JUNE 25, 2015.

POST-AWARD CHANGES

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any change to the scope or objectives of the approved project. This includes:

1. Any changes resulting in additions or deletions of staff and consultants: i.e. to replace the project coordinator (or any other persons named and expressly identified as a key project person in the RFP) or to permit any such person to devote substantially less effort to the project than was anticipated when the grant was awarded.
2. Budgetary changes of any kind: i.e. to move \$1,000.00 of dedicated funds in the Materials & Supplies category to the Consultants category.
3. If project activity dates change significantly after the application submission, you must submit a revised calendar of activity dates as well.

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval from USHE, preferably via email. **If prior written approval is not obtained, the grant recipient/institution may be responsible for reimbursing any funding allocated to non-approved staff, consultants, materials and supplies, etc.**

GRANT APPLICATION OBJECTIVES—to be cited in Intent to Apply & grant application

Grantees must choose at least one of the following objectives, which are grouped into four categories of college-readiness: preparation, enrollment, transition, and professional development.

Preparation

1. Increase number of students who achieve ACT college-readiness benchmarks through targeted interventions and support.
 - a. This is assumed to include correct placement in math and English as a result of the junior-year ACT exam.
 - b. Schools to increase the numbers of students meeting these benchmarks by senior year.
 - c. Current ACT benchmarks:
 - i. ENGLISH 18
 - ii. MATH 22
 - iii. READING 22
 - iv. SCIENCE 23
2. Increase number of students completing concurrent English 1010 and/or Math 1030/1040/1050 with a grade of "B" or higher.
3. Increase the number of students taking STEM-related courses in senior year.
 - a. Increase the percentage of students taking 4 years of math and/or 4 years of lab-based science.
4. Increase the percentage of students taking AP/IB/CE courses in grades 11 and 12.
5. Increase the number of students who apply for the Regents' or New Century Scholarships or who achieve Utah Scholars distinction.
 - a. Applicants may target this to focus on students who will qualify for the Base Award, or increase the number of students qualifying for the UESP (Utah Educational Savings Plan) match.
 - b. Districts and schools may avail themselves of the "transcript mapping" available through the Regents' Scholarship staff.
6. Increase the number of students who receive targeted information about college readiness through the Utah Scholars Program in 8th and 10th grade. This may be achieved by:
 - a. Adding the Utah Scholars Initiative (USI) to your district;
 - b. Expanding the number of Utah Scholars partner schools in your district;
 - c. Adding USI 10th grade outreach;
 - d. Mailing USI college-ready packets to the homes of all 11th graders.
7. A percentage of targeted students create a high school graduation plan by end of 8th grade that outlines courses for next four years to enable students to meet college goals.
8. Deepen elementary students' understanding of college opportunities.
9. Increase parental engagement related to college preparation and attainment.
10. Increase students' reading proficiency through a targeted reading intervention and motivational messaging.

Enrollment

1. Increase number of first-generation high school seniors who apply to one or more colleges/universities.
 - a. This may be achieved by participating in Utah College Application Week.

2. Implement or expand college advisors available in the district high schools through the Utah College Advising Corps.
3. Increase the number of high school seniors to complete the FAFSA, working in partnership with UHEAA (the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority).
4. Decrease summer “melt,” the phenomenon of students who are accepted to college but never complete the necessary steps to enroll, and thus do not attend college.

Transition

1. Create or expand the number of support or outreach services for low-income, first-generation, and under-represented students, beginning in high school and extending through the first year of college.
2. Impact students’ tenacity through motivational speaker messaging and follow up programs.
3. Engage under-represented students in intentional summer programming to ease transition (note: this refers to “bridge” programs, not orientation or first-year experience).
4. Increase the number of first-year students from a particular high school or district to complete at least 30 credit hours.

Professional Development

1. Improve school counselors’ knowledge base and skill set in college readiness through participation in the Collaborative Counselor Training Initiative (CCTI).
 - a. The CCTI course is offered through the University of Utah and Utah State University.
 - b. Proof of course completion will be required.
2. Engage teachers and administrators in college readiness training.
 - a. This may be achieved through participation in the Collaborative Counselor Training Initiative.
3. Increase the number of counselors participating in the annual USHE Counselor Conference **and** follow-up district-wide training seminars with higher education partners, such as UHEAA, the USHE Office of Outreach and Access, and the higher education institutions.