



**Consolidated Adult Education and Family Literacy Services
FY21 Competitive Grant Application
Technical Assistance Questions & Answers**

Questions and answers in gray were on the previous version.

Questions and answers in yellow are questions added.

Application

Determination of Eligibility and Demonstrated Effectiveness

- 1. Question: I own an employment consulting small business. However, I have a Virginia business license and NOT Maryland. I mostly operate my business from home. Does my residency and business location disqualify me from the opportunities?**

Answer: To be eligible to apply for this grant, the business must in Maryland.

- 2. Question: For “Number who gained or retained employment” what do we enter? We do not have the capability to accurately report this data. Is it sufficient to enter “N/A”?**

Answer: If you do not have exact data, you may report an approximation or estimate.

- 3. Question: In the section of the chart with employment, attained HS credential and transitioned to PS Ed/training, do we use the total NRS fundable participants for “Number of participants”?**

Answer: Yes. Use the same number as the Grand Total from the chart above it, which would be the total NRS fundable participants.

4. For applicants that have had previous funding, can they use current FY 20 data in addition to FY17, FY18 and FY19.

Answer: Use data from FY17, FY18, and FY19 only since current FY20 data is incomplete and therefore not accurate.

5. Demonstrated Efficiency Table – bottom table. There was no table 5 in FY17 -Which federal tables are to be used to complete?

Answer: Programs will need to use data from other sources. This can be from college systems, internal tracking, or other databases. Programs can also submit approximations or estimates for this data if needed.

6. Regarding the chart on pg. 5 of the AELS Application document:

Since there is no point value associated with this chart, how will this chart be used to determine funding, and is this information programs will have to formally track moving forward if awarded funding? We have not historically formally tracked employment data, nor do we track individuals who have transitioned to post-secondary programs outside our institution. Please advise.

Answer: This chart is not used to determine funding. This chart is used for the sole purpose of determining whether or not a program is eligible to move forward in the process and be reviewed by the grant application reviewers. You should use approximations or estimates based on your knowledge of your program and student population.

Post-Secondary transitions and employment data are part of WIOA's common outcome measures for all core programs. The Maryland Department of Labor strives to capture this information through data matching as much as possible. However, it is still good practice for local programs to track this data locally, especially post-secondary transitions data.

7. For second Demonstrated Effectiveness chart, are programs to use their collected data or does LABOR have that data available? In the past, LABOR would populate this and send it to programs.

Answer: You are required to populate this chart with data you have collected or you may use approximations or estimates based on your knowledge of your program and student population. NRS Tables 4 and 5 can be used to help you populate this data. However, there is no Table 5 for FY17, so you will need to use other data sources or approximations for that year.

8. The grant application contains a “Demonstrated Effectiveness” chart that asks about students who gained or retained employment. It was my understanding that Dept. of Labor did a data match on employment records of students after program exit that would populate NRS table 5. Is this the case? If so, where could one access this data?

Answer: Refer to question 7.

9. Question: For the page 5 table, the employment reporting portion, in the number of participants box are you asking for all participants or just the one with 12 hours or more?

Answer: The definition of participants in the second table is the same as in the first table, which follows the NRS definition. Participants are defined as having a valid pre-test and at least 12 hours of instruction.

Class Schedule

10. Question: Should i-Pathways be included on the Class Schedule?

Answer: Maryland i-Pathways distance learning should not be included. However, hybrid or blended classes would be included.

11. Question: In the overview doc, there’s a note that MD Labor will continue to support GED® Fast-Track classes. Can you give me more specifics about the parameters/expectations around these?

Answer: GED Fast-Track classes are designed to move higher level students quickly through a specific topic or topics to obtain the skills and knowledge required for students to successfully pass those subject areas. Programs should consider their available resources of staff, space, and materials to provide the appropriate instruction. These classes are supported even though they may fall outside the suggested parameters for class duration and intensity found in the Assessment Policy and on page 17 of the Overview.

Intake Schedule

12. Question: Are there more specific guidelines/expectations around in-take frequency?

Answer: On page 17 of the Overview it states: “Classes should be offered year round with no more than 30 days between sessions and should offer flexible scheduling to include day, evening, and weekend classes unless there is a viable reason why this is not feasible.” Therefore, your program should determine how frequently you can reasonably support your registrations and orientations with your available resources and meet the expectation stated above.

Considerations

13. Question: Should IELCE/IET activities be included in Consideration 8 or only in the IELCE/IET application?

Answer: IELCE/IET activities should only be included in the IELCE/IET application.

14. Question: Consideration 13: English Language Acquisition and Civics Education Instructions: Provide data that supports that the local area in which the eligible provider is located has a demonstrated need for additional English Language acquisition programs and civic education programs. What is meant by “additional”?

Answer: There is an assumption that there are already services being provided in your jurisdiction that offer English Language acquisition and civic education. You are asked to demonstrate that there are not sufficient resources and services currently provided in your local area and there is a need for “additional” English Language acquisition and civics education.

15. Considerations 8 and 9 – is “single set of learning objectives” defined as “program goals”? Please define/clarify.

Answer: No, they are not the same. To develop a single set of learning objectives, programs will need to identify the key skills needed in each IET component and design a syllabus that integrates these.

16. Questions in consideration 8 - do they apply specifically to IELCE or to ALL instruction in general, including ABE and ESL?

Answer: In Consideration 8, IET applies to ABE and ESL, but not IELCE. To request IELCE/IET funding, see the IELCE/IET application.

17. Question: Does the State of Maryland have a report of data and statistics on workforce development within the state?

Answer: Maryland publishes a WIOA State Plan that includes both data and narrative reports on the state of Workforce Development in Maryland. You can find these reports at <http://labor.maryland.gov/wdplan/>. Other data on Maryland’s workforce can be found at the Office of Workforce Information and Performance (OWIP) website at <http://labor.maryland.gov/lmi/>.

18. Question: Need additional clarity on the following questions:

Describe how your program will offer flexible schedules and coordinate support services to enable learners, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to achieve learning goals. Consider federal, State, and local support services. This seems very similar to consideration 2, question 2.

Answer: Consideration 2, question 2 refers to your program's ability to collaborate with agencies outside your program. This question refers to your program's ability to meet the needs of all learners, including individuals with disabilities and other special needs, **within** your program.

19. Describe proposed instructional activities and strategies that will support learners in acquiring the skills needed to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Specifically, "Responsibilities of citizenship", is this being defined as being a good community member? Voting?

Answer: Responsibilities of citizenship refers to being a good community member which would also include voting. The rights and responsibilities of citizenship can be found on the Official Website of the Department of Homeland Security at <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/citizenship-rights-and-responsibilities>.

Submission Requirements

20. Question: Do the pages of the application due on 3/2/20 need signatures or are they only required on the final submissions?

Answer: The application requires signatures, except for the budget pages.

21. Question: Can family literacy activities be proposed after the RFP period?

Answer: Family literacy activities for the FY21 grant period must be proposed with the grant application by the due date of March 2.

22. Question: Are assurances required with the application?

Answer: Yes. All assurances must be signed in blue ink and included in your application submission.

23. Please verify that we don't need to submit supporting documents (i.e., rosters, program flyers, sign-in sheets, etc.)

Answer: In an effort to simplify the application process, the only supporting documents you are required to submit are the resumes for key personnel.

Formatting

24. Unused table and documents (e.g., family literacy memo) if not being used, can these be deleted/eliminated from application documents or completed with N/A?

Answer: You may delete any forms or tables that you do not need.

25. Formatting – Since most boxes do not expand when reaching end of box, we assume there's a word limit. How should we address, in a limited space provided, the inclusion of resources and quoting of sources and research required to back up and provide substantive information about program activities?

Answer: The text box limit is based on a word count limit we determined to be appropriate for each prompt. You are expected to be concise in your response. The response should provide all necessary information to fully answer the prompt in the space provided.

26. Is there a total page limit for the narratives?

Answer: There is no total page limit for the narrative. The amount of narrative you will submit is limited by the size of the preset text boxes.

27. Question: Is there a total page number limit to the application? Reflecting on FY18 application and the max # of 35 pages for the narrative.

Answer: Refer to question 26.

28. Question: Can we add charts or graphs to illustrate data points or analysis that might be required for a consideration?

Answer: All questions should be answered only within the text boxes and/or charts that are provided.

29. Question: Which is preferred? In-text citations or footnote citations?

Answer: Your method of citation is based on your preference.

30. Question: Should we just provide basic APA citations (author, year), provide links/websites as references, or both?

Answer: Your citations can be provided in whatever format you prefer. MD Labor has no preference

31. Question: I do realize that the request is to have single-spacing, but does this include spacing between paragraphs? Or, is double spacing preferred between paragraphs?)

Answer: You should double-space between paragraphs if you are not indenting. You can indent within the text box by using Ctrl + Tab in which case you can single space between paragraphs.

Positions

32. Question: Regarding: the Transition Specialist position. We do not have one currently but would like to hire one. It appears that that position is not able to be funded through the grant? I'm curious, since DLLR does trainings and work groups for that position, if that may change.

Answer: The Transition Specialist/Career Coach or other similar position is not a required position for this grant. However, you may fund this position with your available funds.

Funding

33. Question: In reference to the chart on Pg. 15 of the AELS overview. It states that the funding is July 1 2020 – June 30 2023. My question is - are the funds in each county line supposed to cover the whole 3 year time frame, or are these funds projected to be allocated new each year during the time frame in a renewal process?

Answer: This is based on projected funds available for FY 21. The projected amounts may change in future years and will be published at the appropriate time. Keep in mind there is the potential for the funding for any jurisdiction to be divided up among the providers awarded funding within that jurisdiction.

34. Question: In reference to the Estimated Funds Available by Jurisdiction chart: As a program, we are not allowed to request any additional funds that exceed that amounts listed in the chart for each funding line? For the Family Literacy and Institutional lines, how are programs selected on the "basis of their availability to deliver the services" if there isn't any funding already provided?

Answer: Applicants can ask for additional funds that exceed the amounts listed. The amounts listed are provided as a guide. The jurisdictional funding for Family Literacy and Local Institutionalized isn't provided because not every jurisdiction will apply for those funding lines. Funding will be determined based on the number of applicants and the need in those jurisdictions. You are encouraged to ask for funding that is reasonable for your population, need, and program structure.

35. Question: Overview page 15- Is the State Literacy Works funding the actual final amount or 50% as it was in FY 18? Is there still a hold harmless guarantee?

Answer: The amount for each jurisdiction was determined based on the percentage of the state total in FY19 of the number of students served of that population and based on the percentage of those in need pulled from the American Community Survey. There is no hold harmless guarantee.

36. Is this funding stream available to vendors who have been approved and are seeking funding to operationalize an adult high school?

Answer: A vendor may separately run both an adult high school and an AEFLA funded adult education program. However, AEFLA funds may only be used to support Title II adult education programming. Title II adult education programming includes serving learners who may be at NRS levels ABE 1-6. The Title II adult education population would be separate and distinct from the adult high school population. Therefore, AEFLA funding may not be used to support an adult high school.

37. On page 15 of the AELS Overview document, it lists a “CE” line of \$475,000. What are CE funds?

Answer: CE stands for Correctional Education. Those funds are reserved for only the Office of Correctional Education. To serve students in the corrections system, you would apply for Local Institutionalized funds.

Budget

38. Question: Please verify that salaries can cross budget lines.

Answer: Yes, salaries can cross budget lines. You will need to fill out the last worksheet in the budget workbook titled “Salaries multiple funding lines”.

39. Question: On the funding lines (AGE, LW, and NEDP) are there any administrative expenditures that are exempt from the 5% administrative cost cap? In previous grants the MIS salary, benefits, and PD under LW and AGE did not count towards the admin cost cap.

Answer: The same rules apply. The MIS salary and benefits and your professional development activities do not count towards the 5% administrative cap only for the AGE and the LW funding lines.

IET

40. Question: Does participation in an industry sponsored pre apprenticeship qualify as an IET?

Answer: This would depend on how the proposed IET is structured.

WIOA requires a three-part strategy for Integrated Education and Training that includes adult education and literacy, workforce preparation and workforce training which must be delivered concurrently and contextually. It further requires that the components be proportionally balanced and have a common set of learning objectives. Significant collaboration between the training provider and the adult education program is essential in order to ensure that all requirements are met.

41. Question: Do we still have to propose IET activities if we are not applying for IELCE funds?

Answer: Yes, MD Labor requires that all programs provide participants access to IET programming.

Professional Development

42. Question: Is the requirement for professional development (for advisors/assessors) now 10 hours?

Answer: Yes, all instructional staff, including NEDP advisors/assessors, are required to complete a minimum of 10 hours of professional development during FY21.

43. Can you clarify when the professional development plan is due?

Answer: As stated on page 23 of the Overview "The Professional Development Plan must be submitted within 60 days following notification of grant award".

44. Question: Are there any pieces of the PD Plan that you want submitted with the Grant Application on March 2? It looks as though the plan is due 45 days after notice of grant award. Is that all sections?

Answer: Your entire PD Plan will be due 45 days after the Notice of Grant Award. For most programs the number and types of PD activities will be determined by the program's funding. Therefore, you won't submit your PD Plan until you have your funding. The PD Plan is provided so you can 1) start gathering the information needed to determine what PD

activities you will provide, 2) start developing a tentative PD plan, 3) use that information to respond to Consideration 9.

IELCE/IET

45. Question: In FY 20, my jurisdiction received \$80,000 for IELCE/IET. The estimated available funds for FY 21 are \$25,000 which is a decrease of \$55,000. Is this correct?

Answer: The funds available for IELCE is the amount of money that would be distributed if all jurisdictions applied and received IELCE funds. However, the funds distributed may change depending on the number of programs that apply for and are awarded IELCE funds. Programs may ask for the amount of funding they think is necessary. However, there is no guarantee requests will be met.

46. Question: What is the formula used to determine funding for the FY 21 Competitive Grant Application and for the IELCE/IET Grant Application?

Answer: Funding is based on available funds, jurisdictional need (partly determined by data from the American Community Survey) and the number of organizations in that jurisdiction who will be awarded funding.

47. Question: Was prior performance considered in the determination of funding for IELCE/IET?

Answer: No, prior performance was not considered in the determination of funding for IELCE/IET.

48. Question: If not all jurisdictions apply for IELCE/IET funds, will they be redistributed to other areas?

Answer: The total IELCE/IET funds will be divided among the jurisdictions that apply for and meet the criteria for IELCE/IET funding. Funding is based on need and proposed services the program will be providing.

49. For IELCE-IET, is there a list of NRS reportable certificates?

Answer: To our knowledge, no list of NRS reportable certificates has been made available.

50. Question: Should IELCE/IET activities be included in Consideration 8 or only in the IELCE/IET application?

Answer: IELCE/IET activities should only be included in the IELCE/IET application.

51. IELCE application, table in page 9. What data is expected? Number or type of entry level positions, certifications? Number of estimated positions available county-wide (labor indicators)? Type of positions? Need clarification on expectations of data requested.

Answer: This question applies to the IET (s) chosen by the program. Occupational sector= what field is the IET in (healthcare, skilled trades etc.)? Entry-level position= after completing this IET course, what level position of employment does this person qualify for? Initial industry certifications = what credential if any, will the learner gain by the end of the IET course? Degree options in pathway = if the learner chooses to continue his/her education in this field, what credentials, degrees or employment growth can this learner expect to be able to access?

52. I'm wondering if it would be possible to see a sample IELCE/IET program and budget (maybe a genericized version of a grantee that is using this funding the way you'd like to see it being used).

Answer: We do not have a sample IELCE/IET program and budget. Use the guidelines and detailed explanations in the IELCE/IET application to determine the structure and design appropriate for your program and student population. You are encouraged to use the budget examples and budget examples explanations to assist you in developing your IELCE/IET budget.

53. I want to enhance my program at the Harford County Detention Center by offering them Forklift training, Food Handler and OSHA 10-Hour Construction to the inmates. All three will provide a certificate and possible employment in the field. Will this qualify for the IET? If so, then I need to complete that part of the grant, right?

Answer: Unless you are planning to offer the IELCE/IET WIOA 243 Program, which is specifically for ESL learners, you do not need to complete the IELCE/IET application. IETs can be offered to both ABE and ESL learners apart from the WIOA 243 funding line. In addition, while programs may offer the OSHA 10 and ServSafe courses, according to OCTAE, OSHA 10 and ServSafe certifications cannot be reported in the NRS tables as a credential attainment measure (Program Memorandum OCTAE 19-2).

54. Question: Would it be possible to provide an example of a class schedule for the IELCE/IET section. An example for each tab on the Excel sheet would be great covering an example for IET Bridge only, Co-enrolled, and Integrated if possible.

Answer: We will not be providing examples of the class schedule for the IELCE/IET section. You are encouraged to complete the chart, according to your specific program needs and your ESL student population.

NEDP

55. Question: In looking at the available funds by jurisdiction for the new grant, I noticed there is no set-aside money for NEDP. Is the money to continue NEDP programming to then come from ASE and Literacy Works lines? As a school system, I will write for AGE funding, but with the drop in available funding for Anne Arundel County, the ASE and LW funds will be harder to come by. I am assuming that the overall funds available are for each year of the three years listed.

Answer: The estimated total NEDP funds available for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, based on projected funds for the period, is as follows:

NEDP Federal (Total) - \$312,985

NEDP State (Total) - \$273,734

The estimated NEDP funds available for the period is not broken down by jurisdiction because

NEDP is not offered by all adult education providers in the region.

56. Question: On the cover page, there are lines for NEDP state and NEDP federal, but there is no amount for NEDP on the sheet titled Estimated Funds Available by Jurisdiction: July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. There are also budget pages in the budget workbook for NEDP funds but no corresponding dollars reflected on the estimated funds graph.

Answer: Refer to Question #55.

57. Question: In the past couple of years we have written expenses for (name of state trainer) as the NEDP state trainer into our grant. Since this is a competitive year, how should I handle that? Should I still write in (state trainer's) estimated wages and expenses since we pay her here?

Answer: Projected expenditures for all proposed grant activities, including NEDP staff salaries, should be included in the appropriate budget funding lines.

58. Question: In the next grant year, will students be able to attend an ASE class and be enrolled in NEDP at the same time? This will enable there to be remediation for clients who are unable to complete diagnostics and assessment without some assistance.

Answer: Learners who are enrolled in NEDP will not be able to attend ABE/ESL/ASE classes during the FY21 program year. However, they will be able to participate in tutoring sessions provided by the local program or other community based organizations.

59. Question: The NEDP budget workbook is missing the narrative sheet for WIOA NEDP. Can we copy the state NEDP narrative page and add it to the budget?

Answer: This was an error. Copy the state NEDP narrative page.

60. Labor does not financially support marketing for NEDP, is a consideration made per site and would Labor consider including NEDP with GED advertising?

Answer: There's no specific funding set aside for marketing NEDP services beyond the funding that will be awarded to each NEDP local provider.

61. Will the NEDP program be offered in any other language to support ESL learners especially since the GED exam can be taken in multiple languages with the exception of RLA?

Answer: NEDP is offered only in English.

62. How much state funding is allotted for NEDP programming (or a county break down if you have it)?

Answer: The funding by jurisdiction will be determined based on the number of programs that apply for NEDP funding and the need. You are encouraged to request the amount of funding appropriate for the resources needed and your client population.

Miscellaneous

63. Question: How can I access the webinar?

Answer: The webinar instructions are available at <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/gedmd/aerfp.shtml>

64. Question: Timeline- According to the timeline, the LWDB will receive applications to review on March 9. Will MD DOL send those applications to the LWDB or are the local programs responsible to submit directly to their local LWDB? Our LWDB meets quarterly and their next meeting is on 2/25/20 which is before the date they would receive the application. Also, do they review the entire application or just Consideration #4?

Answer: MD Labor sends the applications to the LWDB. We have a process in place to ensure the applications are reviewed in a timely manner. The LWDB will receive the entire application, except for the budget pages.

65. Question: Overview page 21 – “Administrator’s Data Review”- are we going back to quarterly reporting since there are four dates shown?

Answer: No, we are not going back to quarterly narrative reporting. Those dates serve as a guide for program administrators to review and analyze their data with their key staff to determine what adjustments your program may need to make.

66. Question: Will applications serving less than 300 learners be considered?

Answer: Yes, applications serving less than 300 learners will be considered.

67. If proposing a program that will be new to this jurisdiction but is already in place elsewhere, can we use national data from the existing programs in other jurisdictions?

Answer: You may use any data available relevant to your geographic and/or demographic needs.

68. I am trying to find out if there is a template needed for the intent to submit for this grant. If so where do I find the template and if not what information needs to be in the intent to submit letter.

Answer: The Notice of Intent to Apply Form can be found in the Overview document on page 27.

69. Question: Will MD Labor be providing infrastructure costs to support the Title II contribution to the local resource sharing agreements?

Answer: MD Labor began the practice of using state administrative funds in July 2017 and continued that practice for the full three years of the last competitive grant cycle. This was intended to help ensure that the grant award funds were used for instructional purposes, to the extent possible, while helping local Title II partners comply with the WIOA requirement to provide infrastructure costs. Beginning July 1, 2020, local Title II partners will be required to negotiate infrastructure costs with the Title I partner and will need to use funds in the grant award amount to support the associated costs. The Office of Adult Education & Literacy Services will provide additional technical support to help guide partners through the process, as necessary.

70. Question: Once we define an acronym, do we have to define it again when used in all subsequent sections?

Answer: Once you have defined an acronym, you can use that acronym throughout your grant application.

71. Question: We are interested in applying for this opportunity, but are wondering if we are required to collect SSN for all program participants?

Answer: As part of the student intake process, students are asked to provide their Social Security Number. There are procedures in place to assign an alternate ID number if the student does not provide a SSN, which is acceptable. However, please be aware that part of the state's annual reporting includes wage and employment data, which is obtained through a data match. Not having SSNs hampers the state's ability to accurately demonstrate program effectiveness and meet wage and employment goals.