English Literacy and Civics Education

Announcement of Fund Availability and Request for Proposal Overview

Fiscal Year 2010

Submission Deadline
May 15, 2009

Ohio Board of Regents
30 E. Broad Street, 36th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Background

Ohio Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) is a program within the Division of Academic Affairs and System Integration under the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents. With the recent transfer of ABLE and the Adult Workforce Education (AWE) programs from the Ohio Department of Education to the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, work is underway to align educational services to assist adult learners in their completion of education and employment goals.

Census data (2000) indicate that almost 528,782 (6.2%) Ohioans 18 and over speak a non-English language at home. Of these Ohioans, approximately 17.8% are classified as linguistically isolated which means:

“no person aged 14 or over
- speaks only English at home, or
- speaks another language at home and speaks English ‘very well’."

(Language Use and English-Speaking Ability: 2000, Census 2000 brief)

When individuals cannot speak English or cannot speak English well, their ability to work, to attend school, and to receive emergency services are greatly affected. Not only does this affect their lives but it could affect the lives of those around them.

English literacy instruction and civics education helps to address these issues. As immigrants and refugees become better citizens by understanding English and the right and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, they can efficiently navigate the service systems in the United States.

To address the issues above, the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents (the Chancellor) announces the availability of federal funds for the provision of English literacy and civics education services (EL/Civics). These funds are authorized to serve adults to provide two components beyond English Language acquisition: citizenship education and civic participation education.

For the purposes of this program, citizenship education includes teaching immigrants the basic skills needed to pass the Citizenship Test. And, civic participation education includes teaching immigrants how to be active community members and why they should be active by providing a comprehensive understanding of U.S. culture, government and educational systems.
Fund Availability and Grant Period

Subject to confirmation and receipt of the federal grant award for Adult Education and Family Literacy, Title II, Workforce Investment Act (PL 105-220), Fiscal Year 2010 funds are planned for use during the July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010 project period. The estimated amount to be awarded is $792,864. Grantees will be selected based upon factors identified in the application including past effectiveness in providing adult literacy services, cost efficiencies, service levels and other criteria.

The Chancellor will endeavor to award grants to provide English literacy and civics education services in every Ohio Economic Development Region (EDR). In the case of regions and/or counties without competitive proposals or if the Chancellor determines an application(s) for an area is not fundable, the Chancellor reserves the right to reissue the RFP for a particular service area.

Selected applicants shall comply with the Ohio Performance Accountability System (OPAS) Manual as updated annually; the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; all state and federal assurances; and the Application Guidelines.

Interested applicants may acquaint themselves with the Ohio ABLE System by going to www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include local education agencies and public and private nonprofit agencies including community-based organizations of demonstrated effectiveness, volunteer literacy organizations of demonstrated effectiveness, institutions of higher education, libraries, public housing authorities, and other nonprofit agencies with the ability to provide literacy education services to adults and families. Community-based organizations and nonprofit institutions include non-profit faith-based organizations.

Private nonprofit applicants must have secured tax exempt status as authorized by Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and certified by the Internal Revenue Service. This requirement applies at the direct award level and any potential sub-contract level for the provision of direct instructional services.

Eligible Students

Applicants shall be willing to serve all eligible students. Pursuant to Title II of the Workforce Investment Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, eligible students are those individuals who live or work in Ohio and who:

- have attained 16 years of age;
• are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law (18 in Ohio); and who
  o lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individual to function effectively in society;
  o do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
  o unable to speak, read or write the English language.

*See the ABLE Student Eligibility Policy ([www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps](http://www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps)).

**Nondiscrimination Policy**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the applicant shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, age, and/or national origin in its adult education and literacy programs, activities, employment or admission policies and practices. All grantees must meet assurances that address serving adults with special needs, including learning disabilities.

**Definition of Services and Service Area**

Successful applicants will provide instructional services year round. Services must be of sufficient intensity and duration to achieve substantial learning gains as described by the Core Indicators of Performance. Fiscal agents shall provide services only in the counties for which they have been approved. (State requirement)

Adult education providers shall not charge students for instructional or other services covered by state and federal adult education funds.

Applicants must specify how they will design and deliver an English literacy and civics education program that will result in student attainment of specified student performance goals.

All programs must provide a program of instruction designed to assist individuals of limited English proficiency to achieve competence in the English language. Instruction is geared to adults who want to become more fluent in English, pass U.S. citizenship tests and participate in civics activities.

Students will be provided education in English language and civics education to expand their lifelong learning opportunities thereby enabling them to pursue their responsibilities as workers, family members and citizens.

ABLE funds may not be used to provide instruction in other languages.
Performance Measures

A program’s effectiveness will be determined annually by evaluating the success of its students in achieving Core Indicators of Performance. The Core Indicators of Performance (CIP) Minimum Performance Levels are negotiated by the Chancellor with the U.S. Office of Vocational and Adult Education in conjunction with the National Reporting System (NRS) on an annual basis. Performance measures for FY 2010 have not yet been negotiated. Applicants should use the CIP measures for FY 2009 as a basis for their proposal with the understanding that these measures may be different in FY 2010.

Helpful links include:

Ohio’s Core Indicators of Performance [www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps](http://www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps)

Technology and Reporting Requirements

The Applicant agency is responsible for providing technical support to the adult education program as needed to ensure security of information, computer access for staff and students and for state and federal grant requirements.

Computer equipment purchased with grant funds must meet minimum technology standards. These can be found in the Guidance Document, Appendix E. Applicants must have at least one site with technology and connectivity to offer curriculum and related learning products available on the Internet.

Applicants offering distance education must meet state guidelines as described in the grant, and must be approved by the state to offer this component.

The applicant shall adhere to all grant data collection and reporting requirements as described in the Assurances and Ohio’s Performance Accountability System Manual. Reporting requirements for approved programs will include Quarterly and Annual Performance Reports and other reports as needed. The Chancellor will provide software, forms and instructions for each report. Approval of plans and budget for selected projects beyond this grant year will be contingent upon, but not limited to, the submission of complete, timely and accurate reports.

The applicant shall have a designated computer for reporting through ABLELink. See Appendix C of the Guidance Document for Technology Requirements.
Fiscal

Grantees will be selected based upon factors identified in the application including past effectiveness in providing adult literacy services, cost efficiencies, service levels and other criteria. If federal legislation is reauthorized, a competitive grant process may be conducted to determine new grantees.

Subject to confirmation and receipt of the federal grant award for AEFLA, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act and state General Revenue Fund appropriations, an estimated $792,864 will be awarded. Applicants should consider the state’s average cost per student ($548), funds available from other sources, and services to be offered when requesting funding amounts. Successful applicants will be required to submit revised budget worksheets and other related forms after funding levels are determined by state and federal fund sources.

Funds received under this grant shall be used to supplement and not supplant funds already available to the applicant from other sources for purposes authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy grant program.

The grantee will repay any funds that have been finally determined through federal or state audit resolution processes to have been questioned costs or disallowed costs or otherwise not properly accounted for, and further agrees to pay any collection fees that may subsequently be imposed by the federal and/or state government.

The applicant shall retain all records of financial transactions and accounts relating to this grant for a period of five years and shall make such records available for inspection and audit by the Chancellor’s ABLE staff members or an authorized representative of the Chancellor.

A maximum of 10 percent of the total allocation may be used for administrative purposes. (State requirement)

Examples of some administrative costs include:

- Director’s salary including benefits
- Fiscal salary, benefits, services
- Rent
- Administrative operational costs
- Custodial or security services
- Professional development
Facilities

Fiscal agents shall ensure that:

- All instructional facilities and services shall be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- All facilities shall have appropriate exterior and interior signage clearly identifying the adult education programs. (State Requirement)
- All students have a safe, age-appropriate and student-friendly learning environment that is in good condition and properly maintained and has adequate space and equipment. Students shall not be required or permitted to receive grant-funded services in buildings or surroundings that are dangerous, unsanitary or hazardous to the student’s health and safety. Adult education centers should be in locations that are easily accessible and have adequate parking and/or access to public transportation. If it is determined through a site visit that a facility does not meet requirements, the fiscal agent may be asked to relocate the service to a more appropriate location or correct deficiencies. (State Requirement)

Additional information can be found in the Indicators of Program Quality at www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps.

Bidders’ Videoconference

The RFPs will be discussed during a “Bidders’ Videoconference.” The Bidders’ Videoconference provides an opportunity to review and discuss the RFPs, as well as provide proposing agencies and organizations the chance to ask questions about the RFPs and process.

Additional information about the RFPs, as well as information on how to register for the Bidders’ Videoconference can be found at www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps.

Preparing and Submitting the Application

The Chancellor asks agencies interested in applying for EL/Civics funding to complete and submit an Intent to Apply as well as the Request for Grant Readers forms (both documents can be found at www.uso.edu/network/workforce/rfps.) These documents are due at the Ohio Board of Regents by May 1, 2009. All Applicants are required to submit the name and contact information for at least one potential grant reader. The tentative dates for the grant reading activity to take place in Columbus, Ohio, are May 26, 2009 (EL/Civics Grant) and May 28, 2009 and May 29, 2009 (ABLE Instructional Grant).
Applications must be typed and double-spaced, with 12-point in Times New Roman or Arial and one-inch margins.

The submitted application will consist of the following section:

- Part A: General Information
- Part B: Enrollment Trends and Projections
- Part C: Needs Assessment
- Part D: Program Capacity and Effectiveness
- Part E: Program Design
- Part F: Budget Narrative and Budget Grid
- Part G: Program Personnel
- Part H: Instructional Sites
- Part I: Assurances
- Addendum A: Data Forms
- Addendum B: Job Descriptions
- Addendum C: Map of Sites

Use the Grant Checklist to ensure you have completed all required sections of the application.

**Application Deadline**
For grant reading purposes, please submit an original and three copies of the complete application must be received by the Chancellor’s staff at 30 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio, 43215, by **5:00 p.m. May 15, 2009**. No faxed, emailed applications or those applications on disk will be accepted.

**This is a competitive grant application process; therefore, no late applications will be accepted or considered.**

If you do not receive email notification of receipt of your application materials within three days of submission, please contact Sharon Brannon at SBrannon@regents.state.oh.us or at 614-466-5015.

**Process for Proposal Review**

Proposals will be evaluated by a review panel selected by the State ABLE Program using an established point-rating system. Review of proposals will be based on the completion of the requested information in the narrative as well as completion of required forms. The Chancellor reserves the right to disqualify incomplete applications as well as request additional information.

The respondent/grantee agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws in the conduct of the work hereunder.
The Chancellor reserves the right to fund any proposal in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to require new proposals from interested parties, to reject any or all proposals responding to this RFP, or to re-issue the RFP if it is determined that it is in the best interests of the State of Ohio. Issuing this RFP does not bind the State to making an award. The Chancellor’s staff administers the RFP. The Chancellor reserves the right to adjust the dates for this RFP for whatever reasons are deemed appropriate.

All costs incurred in preparation of a proposal shall be borne by the applicant institutions including lead applicants and collaborating partners. Proposal preparation costs are not recoverable under an award. The State of Ohio shall not contribute in any way to recovering the costs of proposal preparation.

The funding decisions of the Chancellor are final. All lead applicants will be notified in writing whether their proposal(s) meet the requirements specified in the RFP and, therefore, whether their proposals will be submitted to the Chancellor for funding consideration. Lead applicants also will be notified of the outcome of their application(s) at the conclusion of the review process.

The respondent understands that the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the respondent in submittal preparation. To the best of the Chancellor’s knowledge, the information provided is accurate. However, the Chancellor does not warrant such accuracy, and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying proposal. The Chancellor retains the right to modify or withdrawal this solicitation at any. By submitting a proposal, responders expressly agree to these terms.