

RFA #17-18

Early Care and Education Professional Development Organizations (OCDEL)

Q&A

	RFA Section	Question	Answer
1		What work/policies has PDE and OCDEL put in place to facilitate articulation since currently most IHEs do not accept credits, particularly in the major, from community colleges or other institutions and require student to retake the course?	For support in expanding articulation agreements with IHEs not initially identified as partners in the application, Applicants should review www.patrac.org for Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee policies and Pennsylvania Department of Education (“PDE”) responsibilities in supporting articulation agreements. If statewide policy issues arise, OCDEL may serve as a conduit between the PDO and PDE.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
2		Given the current lack of articulation agreements between IHEs, what support will OCDEL provide to the grantee to establish articulation agreements?	Refer to the response to Q.1.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
3		What is the plan to fund PD for practitioners who already have a BA/BS or MA/MS	Funding for practitioners who already have a BA/BS or MA/MS in early care and education is not within the scope of this RFA. For these practitioners, free market ECE PD will continue to be available through the PD Registry system.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
4		Will OCDEL fund non-credit bearing professional development?	No, non-credit-bearing professional development is not within the scope of this RFA. OCDEL will continue to support basic health and safety and equity building PD for Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) compliance.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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5		If OCDEL will fund non-credit bearing professional development, what will be the organizational structure/mechanism for doing so?	Refer to the response to Q.4.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
6		What requirements will the practitioner have to meet in order to be eligible to participate in state-funded credit bearing course work? (tenure, working at a particular STAR level site, be full time, etc.)	The initial criteria is that the practitioner is employed in a Pennsylvania early care and education program. As participation in the project grows, the Department may define additional prioritization for participation as necessary.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
7		Is OCDEL funding the SAPC credential?	Yes, if the SAPC is credit-bearing. This RFA is only for credit bearing opportunities. Community-based PD is not within the scope of this RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
8		Will IHEs be required to enter their course offerings, funded by this RFA, in the PD Registry?	Courses funded by this RFA must be entered into the PD Registry, but the PDO partners may decide which party will be responsible for entry.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
9		How many practitioners are working in ECE by ELRC Region?	Determining the number of practitioners (including their degree attainment) by ELRC regions is a task that selected Applicants will complete as part of their Project Plans. See Part III, Section III-6.B.2 of the RFA (p.20).
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
10		How many practitioners, by ELRC region, have a CDA?	Refer to the response to Q.9.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
11		How many practitioners, by ECE PDO Region, have an AA/AS/AAS?	Refer to the response to Q.9.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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12		How many practitioners are there by ECE PDO Region?	Refer to Appendix C of the RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
13		How many practitioners, by ECE PDO Region, have a CDA?	Refer to the response to Q.9.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
14		How many practitioners, by ECE PDO Region, have a BA/BS?	Refer to the response to Q.9.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
15		How many practitioners, by ECE PDO Region, have a MA/MS?	Refer to the response to Q.9.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
16		Can you be more specific about the requirements and work of the ECE PDOs? Will they be similar to the Regional Keys or Early Learning Resource Centers? Or is this something completely different with separate responsibilities?	The ECE PDOs and ELRCs have separate responsibilities. Please refer to RFA 17-18 to review the requirements and work of the ECE PDO. An overview is provided in Part I, Section I-3 of the RFA. Appendix D describes the Early Learning Resource Centers.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
17		The Corporate Reference Questionnaire and the Key Personnel Questionnaire note evaluation of the Applicant based on CCW lead agency deliverables (timely payment to providers, accurate eligibility determinations). Should those be replaced with Questionnaires relevant to this scope of work?	Refer to the revised Appendices G and H provided with this Addendum 2. Applicants should utilize the revised Appendices G and H when submitting their applications.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
18		What is the definition of stackable PD?	“Stackable PD” is part of a sequence of credits and credentials that can be accumulated over time, resulting in knowledge which builds up an individual's qualifications and helps them to move along a career pathway.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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19		Is the intent for the ECE PDO to arrange credit for existing PQAS PD?	This is not an RFA requirement. Arranging credit for existing PQAS PD could be one example of a strategy to support practitioners within a region, but it is up to Applicants to determine how best to accomplish the project described in this RFA.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
20		For the purposes of the RFA, are stackable and portable credentials solely defined as those aligned with Appendix B (CDA, PK-4 Certification, AA/AS, BA/BS) or is OCDEL interested in the development of additional stackable and portable credentials?	Yes, for purposes of this RFA, stackable and portable credentials are those aligned with Appendix B. Development of additional stackable and portable credentials that fit into Appendix B and articulate towards a degree may be supported under this RFA
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
21		Does this RFA include funds to cover existing needs-based PD?	No.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
22		Does this RFA include the provision of onsite coaching?	Onsite coaching may be considered within the scope of the RFA if it is part of a credit awarding program.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
23		Does this RFA include the provision of SACC TA and SAC ASQ?	No.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
24		Does this RFA include the provision of Child Care Health Consultation?	No.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
25		Will the statewide SAPC continue to be offered?	Refer to the response to Q.7.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
26		Does this work cover ancillary supports to students to support degree completion - career advising, costs for transportation/childcare/technology?	Ancillary supports to students to support degree completion may be considered within

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	RFA Section	Question	Answer
			the scope of the RFA, if the Applicant provides documentation of need as outlined in Section Part III, Section III-6.F of the RFA (p.21).
27		Does this work cover ancillary supports to students- developmental or remedial coursework?	Refer to the response to Q.26.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
28		Does this work cover ancillary supports to students- induction, observation, coaching?	Refer to the response to Q.26.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
29		If an organization applies for more than one region, is there an opportunity to demonstrate cross-regional cost saving opportunities within the RFA process?	No, Applicants must submit separate applications for each region, and the Department will evaluate each region independently; refer to Part II, Section II-4, Evaluation Criteria. After final evaluation of the applications, the Commonwealth may, in its sole discretion, request integrated solutions. Refer to Part I, Section I-6, Method of Award
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
30		Is coursework development covered as a "Set Aside" or "Operations" line item?	Coursework development will be included in "Set Aside." Please note that "Set Aside" costs may not be included in the Budget Submittal (see Part IV, Section IV-A); rather, the selected Applicant(s) will submit those costs to OCDEL with the completion of the Project Plan. As described in Part III, Section III-6.B, the Project Plan is submitted post-award , between the grant agreement effective date and September 15, 2019.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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31		Are supplemental attachments allowed in order to provide examples of items referenced in the narrative.	Yes. Refer to Part I, Section I-14.B, Proposal Format.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
32		Are you allowed to create extra tabs i.e. Tab 12: Appendices?	No. Applicants should include any information not pertinent to a Tab as an Appendix. Refer to Part I, Section I-14.B, Proposal Format.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
33		Do the paper copies of the submission need to be bound?	Yes, paper copies must be bound. Staples constitute appropriate binding, but paperclips do not.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
34		One of the submission requirements is for the applicant to “submit two complete and exact copies of the entire application (Technical and Budget Submittals, along with all requested documents) on a Flash drive in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format”. Does PDF format satisfy this requirement?	Yes, PDF is a Microsoft Office-compatible format.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
35		One of the submission requirements is for the applicant to “submit two complete and exact copies of the entire application (Technical and Budget Submittals, along with all requested documents) on a Flash drive in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format”. It also requires that the electronic copy be a mirror image of the paper copy and any spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel. Is the expectation that a complete and exact copy be submitted in PDF that includes the technical and cost submittals; and the applicant also includes a copy of the cost submittal in excel? Or should the technical be in Word, attachments to the technical be separate files in the format they were created in, and the cost submittal be in Excel?	All documents must be submitted in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format, which includes, but is not limited to, Word, Excel, or PDF. The cost submittal must be in Excel format.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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36		How are flash drives requested; one copy on two flash drives? And how would sealed questionnaires be included on the flash drive?	One flash drive per complete copy of the submittal. The Corporate and Essential Personnel Reference Questionnaires should not be included on the flash drive; rather, they must be included in the original hard copy submittal.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
37		Are 6 sealed envelopes in response to each of the Reference questionnaires required for each paper copy of the application?	Refer to the response to Q.36. Applicants are should only include the original, sealed Questionnaires with the original hard copy submittal. Applicants should not submit multiple copies of the Questionnaires.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
38		Can the application be bound and/or stapled? Single spaces or double spaced?	Refer to the response to Q.33. Applications should be single-spaced.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
39		Could you provide examples of what constitutes non-DHS clients in reference to the corporate Reference Questionnaires? Are Program Providers considered non-DHS?	Applicants should request references from entities that have knowledge of the applicant's capacity to complete similar work. Such references may include, but are not limited to, current professional development systems leaders, program providers, entities with whom the applicant has a business relationship, IHEs, or business partners.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
40	Part IV and Appendix K-Budget Submittal	Are any of the funds for this project Federal? If so, please provide the CFDA# and the funding details for % Federal, % State, and/or % other.	Yes, this project is supported by CCDF funds. The CFDA is 93.575. The funds are 100% Federal. This information will be provided to successful applicants as part of their grant agreements.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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41	Part IV and Appendix K-Budget Submittal	Is it the expectation that the funds for the <i>Overall Allocation</i> including <i>Operations</i> and <i>Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> be fully spent during the 2019-20 fiscal year or will the funds be split over the course of the initial two-year agreement? Will additional funds be available for the 2020-21 fiscal year for either <i>Operations</i> and/or <i>Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> ?	The amounts listed in Appendix C ECE PDO Regional Allocation Plan Table are annual amounts. Selected Applicants must fully expend Operations funds annually. The Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework will be prorated in the initial year of the grant based on the Selected Applicant's approved Project Plan. Selected Applicants must fully expend Set Aside Funds for grant years 2-5. The regional <i>Set-Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> allocations may be modified based on the success of each PDO in utilization to ensure full expenditure.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
42	Part IV and Appendix K-Budget Submittal	Are there recommended guidelines (percentages) for the allocation of the <i>Set-Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> funds for: Course development, course implementation, developing articulation agreements, and providing access to coursework?	Refer to the response to Q.30. This information is not necessary for submitting an application. For purposes of the application, Applicants must submit cost submittals based on Operations only . Post-award, OCDEL will provide the Selected Applicant(s) with additional guidance regarding the Set-Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
43	Part IV and Appendix K-Budget Submittal	If the applicant has current staff (i.e. CDA instructors or IHE instructors) who provide credit-bearing CDA or IHE instruction in Early Childhood Education, will the instructors be include in the <i>Operations-Personnel</i> budget for the applicant or be included in a budget plan for the allocation of the <i>Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> Funds? (See also III-4 Personnel)	Each Applicant must determine the allocation of such individuals' salaries and benefits and based on that staff member's duties related to the project. Depending on the staff member's duties, salaries and benefits may fall entirely under Operations or Set-Aside, or may be divided between both.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer

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44	III-3B References and III-4 References	Does the applicant need to submit 6 copies (individually sealed) or each Corporate Reference Questionnaire and each Essential Personnel Reference Questionnaire? Can the contacts for both the Corporate Reference Questionnaire and the Essential Personnel Reference Questionnaire complete one original reference and photocopy it (to provide additional copies if needed) prior to individually sealing the references for submission?	Refer to the responses to Q.36 and Q.37.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
45	III-6 Work Plan	In fiscal year 2019-20, will any professional development organizations be providing non-credit, needs-based professional development aligned with the Keystone STARS Standards? In the description of the Work Plan, should the applicant fully describe how non-credit needs-based professional development and non-CDA credentials (i.e. Director Credential) will shift toward credential and credit-bearing work? Will some of the funds allocated for <i>Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework</i> be used to support this transition from non-credit, needs-based professional development and non-CDA credential work for 2019-20 fiscal year?	Non-credit, needs-based professional development is not within the scope of this RFA. Yes. As part of their Needs Assessment and the Project Plan, Selected Applicants will develop a budget for the Set Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework funds. Based on the approved plan, funds may be used to support the transition to credit-bearing CDA credential work.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
46		Will the PD Registry remain as is?	The PD Registry, while potentially impacted by ongoing enhancements, will remain as it is.
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
47		Would the new ECE PDO be responsible for the maintenance of the registry?	Maintenance of the PD Registry will remain the responsibility of the PA Key. PDOs and IHEs will interact with the PD Registry, but

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	RFA Section	Question	Answer
			degree and credential verification will be done at the PA Key.
48		Will PQAS trainers continue to deliver PD?	Non-credit bearing PD is not within the scope of this RFA. PQAS-approved trainers will continue to be able to use the PD Registry and independent entities.
49		IF PQAS continues, who will certify trainers?	PQAS trainer certification will remain unchanged from the current process and is not within the scope of this RFA.
50		What is the source of the federal funds? What is the CFDA number?	Refer to the response to Q.40.
51		Under the specific requirements it says, <i>coordinate federal, state, and local funding beyond Child Care Development Fund (“CCDF”) dollars to support equitable access to education by the ECE workforce.</i> What are the amounts of the varying funding that we are being asked to be coordinate? What does “coordinate” mean? Will the funding streams come through to use to distribute?	Each selected Applicant will conduct a Needs Assessment and create a regional Project Plan. Through that process and in partnership with IHE’s the PDO will identify other opportunities by coordinating with local Workforce Investment Boards; drawing down Perkins; or accessing local philanthropy.
52		Under section II-5, C, Applicant Responsibility, it states that the Commonwealth will review the Applicant’s previous three (3) years’ financial statements; however, under section III-5, Financial Capabilities, it says to provide (in and appendix) your company’s financial statements for the past two (2) fiscal years. What should we actually be providing? Two or three?	Three years of financial statements.
53	Part IV and Appendix K-Budget Submittal	Do applicants submit two cost submittals: one for the Operations and one for the Set-Aside for Credential and Credit Bearing Coursework funds, or do they submit one combined cost submittal?	Refer to the responses to Q.30 and Q.42. <u>Applicants should not submit a budget for the Set-Aside for Credential or Credit</u>

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			<u>Bearing Coursework as part of their applications.</u> This budget will be completed <u>post-award.</u>
	RFA Section	Question	Answer
54		Our understanding is that the ELRCs are not eligible to apply to this RFA. Is that correct?	No, ELRCs are not precluded. Refer to Part I, Section II-1 and Part III, Section III-1.B. regarding Applicant eligibility.