Adult Education and Literacy Act (AELA)

Pursuant to § 22-10-104, C.R.S.

Application Webinar – October 30, 2023

- Introduction

- Application Key Elements

- Application Submission and Review
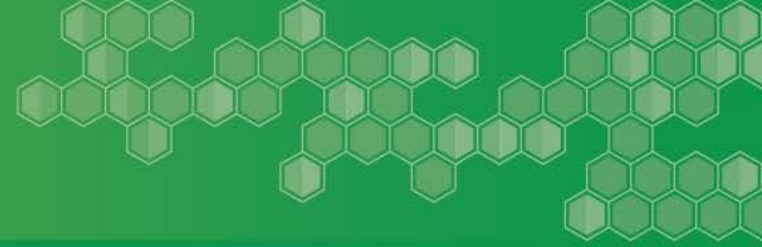
- Timeline

- Questions

Disclaimer

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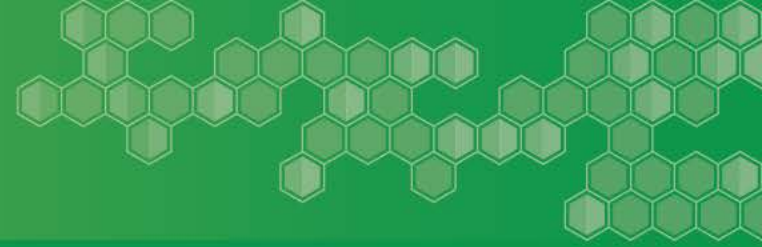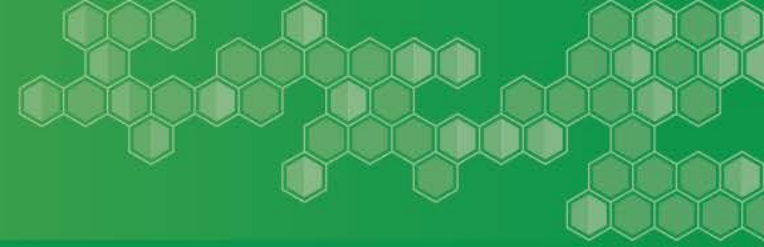
Introduction

- The webinar is being recorded

- Webinar recording will be posted to the Adult Education Initiatives Office (AEI) [Prospective Grantees webpage](#) by Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2023

- All application materials and the timeline are available on the AEI [Prospective Grantees webpage](#)

- Questions and answers provided during this webinar will be added to the [FAQ Google Sheet](#) as soon as possible
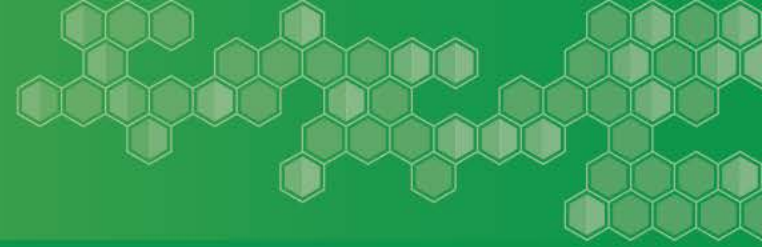
Application Key Elements

- As required by state statute (§ 22-10-104, C.R.S.) and State Board of Education Rules (1 CCR 301-98), the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Office of Adult Education Initiatives (AEI) is conducting a competitive Request for Applications (RFA) process to award 18 months of funding to eligible workforce development partnerships and education attainment partnerships.

- Request for Applications pages 4 - 5

- The purpose of the Adult Education and Literacy Act (AELA) is to implement and improve adult education, literacy and training activities within Colorado, thereby leading to better employment outcomes that enable more low-income, low-literacy adults to ultimately achieve economic self-sufficiency and leading to an adult population that is better prepared to support the educational attainment of the next generation and actively participate as citizens in a democratic society.

- Eligible applicants are adult education providers that are part of an education attainment partnership or a workforce development partnership.

- Adult education providers are one of the following entities that the department recognizes as providing appropriate and effective adult education and literacy programs (C.R.S. §22-10-103(1.5)):

  - A secondary or postsecondary, public or private, nonprofit educational entity, including but not limited to a school district, charter school, board of cooperative services, state institution of higher education, local district college, and area technical college;

  - A community-based nonprofit agency or organization;

- An Indian tribe or nation;

- A library;

- A literacy council or other literacy institute;

- A business or business association that provides adult education and literacy programs either on site or off site;

- A volunteer literacy organization;

- A local work force board, as defined in section 8-83-203, that oversees a work force development program described in the "Colorado Career Advancement Act", part 2 of article 83 of title 8;

- A one-stop partner, as described in section 8-83-216, under the "Colorado Career Advancement Act", part 2 of article 83 of title 8; or

- A consortium of entities described above.

NOTE: Public or private non-profit agencies must submit proof of nonprofit status (from the Internal Revenue Service) and evidence of financial stability (most recent one years' annual report and audit).

- A **workforce development partnership** means a collaboration that assists adults in attaining basic literacy, digital literacy and numeracy skills leading to additional skill acquisition, postsecondary credentials, and employment. (C.R.S. §22-10-103(11)(a)).

- At a minimum, a workforce development partnership must include at least:
  1) one adult education provider,
  2) one workforce development provider.

- A **workforce development provider** includes, but need not be limited to (C.R.S. §22-10-103(11)(c)):
  - A work force development program described in the "Colorado Career Advancement Act", part 2 of article 83 of title 8, C.R.S.; and
  - A program that is supported by the state work force development council created in article 46.3 of title 24, C.R.S.

- An **education attainment partnership** means a collaboration that assists adults in attaining basic literacy, digital literacy, and numeracy skills that lead to additional skill acquisition and may lead to postsecondary credentials and employment. At a minimum, an education attainment partnership must consist of at least one adult education provider that is not listed in subsection (1.5)(a) of this section that partners with at least one elementary or secondary school or school district, a public or private institution of higher education, a local district college, or an area technical college.

- Required partners
  1. At least one **P – 16** educational institution or district/system, for example:
     - One elementary and/or secondary school
     - A school district
     - A charter school
     - A charter management organization
     - A board of cooperative services (BOCES)
     - One institution of higher education
     - One community college
     - One area technical college

  2. At least one **non-P – 16** adult education provider, for example:
     - A community-based nonprofit agency or organization
     - An Indian tribe or nation
     - A library
     - A literacy council or other literacy institute
     - A business or business association that provides adult education and literacy programs
     - A volunteer literacy organization
     - A local work force board
     - A one-stop partner

- Examples that would **<u>meet</u>** the Education Attainment Partnership Criteria

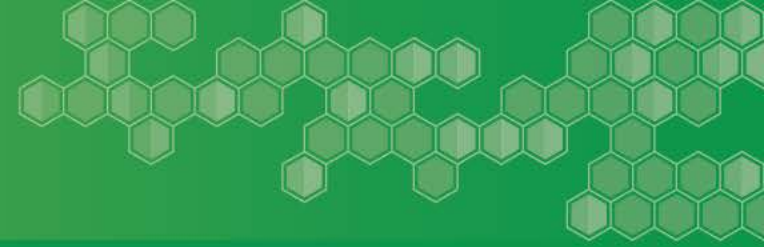| P – 16 Organization	Non-P – 16 Organization
School District	Local Library System
Community College	Indian Tribe
One High School	Local Workforce Center

- Examples that would **NOT meet** the Education Attainment Partnership Criteria

P – 16 Organization	Non-P – 16 Organization
Two School Districts	
One Elementary School and the same School District that the Elementary School is Within	
	A Non-Profit and a Local Business Association
	A Library and a Volunteer Literacy Organization

- SB23-007 makes available approximately $1,819,288 for the remainder of the 2023-24 fiscal year as well as an additional $1,852,124 for 2024-25.

- Because of the timing of the release of these funds, CDE anticipates awarding grants of approximately $3,671,412 for the remainder of the 2023-24 fiscal year and through the 2024-25 fiscal year.

- This award will have a grant period of January 1, 2024-June 30, 2025. Grant funds cannot be obligated nor spent prior to CDE's approval of the grantee's 18-month budget.

- CDE anticipates awarding grants for an 18-month period. Funding in subsequent years for grantees is contingent upon continued appropriations, grantees meeting all grant, fiscal and reporting requirements, and State Board of Education approval (C.R.S. §§22-10-104(1)(c) & 22-10-105(1)(a)).
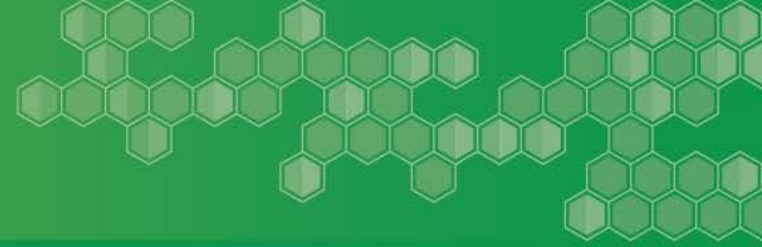
- A grant under the program shall use the funds **for one or more** of the following services (as outlined in (C.R.S. 22-10-103(1)):
  - adult basic education (below the ninth-grade level),
  - adult education leading to a high school equivalency credential,
  - English as a second language instruction, or
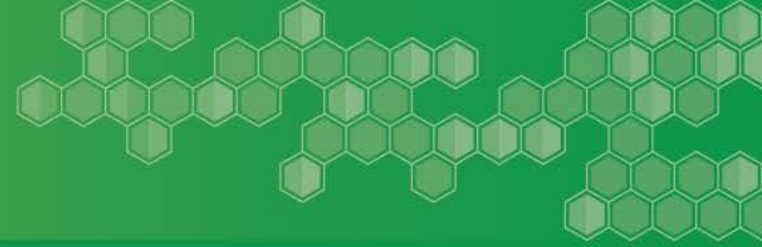 - integrated basic education, digital literacy and skills training

- Adult education providers must provide "appropriate and effective" adult education and literacy programs (§22-10-103(1.5), C.R.S).

- To the extent practical, adult education providers and partners should focus use of these funds on programs that prepare individuals for training leading to occupations that have the potential to pay a livable wage.
  - The "Livable wage" amounts will come from the annual Colorado Talent Pipeline Report
  - 2022 Talent Pipeline Report, page 15, lists two earning tiers for Top Jobs identified in the report:
    - Tier 1 – hourly earnings at $34.49 or higher; a level that supports two adults—one working—and one child.
    - Tier 2 – hourly earnings at $19.16 or higher; a level that supports a family of one adult.

- Funds **<u>must</u>** be used to provide services to eligible adults who:
  - are at least seventeen years of age;
  - are not enrolled in a public or private secondary school; and
    - lack a high school diploma or its equivalent; or
    - are in need of English language instruction; or
    - lack sufficient mastery of the basic literacy, digital literacy and numeracy skills necessary to enable people to function effectively in the workplace. (§ 22-10-103(3)(c)(III), C.R.S.).

- All costs must:
  - be necessary and reasonable, allocable and allowable;
  - focus on programs that prepare individuals for education and training leading to occupations that have the potential to pay a self-sufficient wage, to the extent practical;
  - conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in the award;
  - if grantees are applying policies and procedures across the organization, this must also include all activities within the AELA grant program;
  - be accorded consistent treatment;
  - be determined in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP);
  - not be included in another grant;
  - ensure amount charged for a purchase paid from the AELA grant includes credits; and
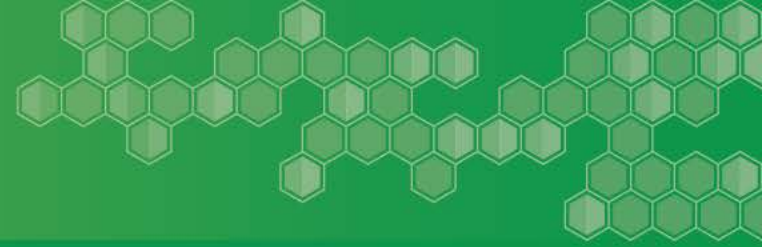 - be adequately documented and reported.

- Administrative costs may not exceed 10% of the total award.

- Administrative costs are costs that do not directly involve a learner, but instead support the program delivery and development activities.

- No cost related to an AELA cost objective may be used for/expensed to any other federally funded award
  - AELA funds may not be used as matching funds for the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) grant

- Pursuant to 1 CCR 301-98, Rule 2.03.8, funds for the AELA program must supplement and not supplant any funding currently being used on workforce preparation activities.

- Any program activity required by State Board of Education rules may not be paid with these funds.

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

- State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) may also be available to Adult Education and Literacy Programs.

- Terminate June 30, 2025. Future grant cycles will not include this funding opportunity.

- Federal Funds are reimbursement based.
  - Must submit at least quarterly.

- Federal Funds also require a higher level of review and monitoring.

- Grant recipients shall report to CDE information related to the performance outcomes outlined in the grant applications.

- Pursuant to C.R.S. §22-10-105(1)(c)(I), grant recipients also must submit information describing the following:

  - the number of adult students who participated in each of the types of programs and services provided;

  - demographic information of each eligible adult enrolled in an adult education and literacy program, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, native language, zip code, and income;

  - the number of students who are making progress toward the goals of the adult education and literacy program that were specified in the grant application and the literacy skills gained.

- In order to meet the requirements outlined in § 22-10-104 and 22-10-105, C.R.S., AEI created a menu of options for establishing goals and reporting on the effectiveness of each program that receives a grant ([23-24 AELA Outcomes and Progress Measures Excel](#)).
  - The menu provides 14 types of performance outcomes with associated progress measures that align to the purposes of the grant.
  - Only performance outcomes are required to be reported to AEI.
  - Progress measures are available as an optional measure for grantees to track locally and are not considered in the evaluation of grantee performance.
  - Grantees will report toward these goals at a minimum quarterly, and this progress will be shared with the legislatively mandated Adult Workforce Development Partnership Advisory Board (AWDP).

- All performance outcomes and associated progress measures are available to all AELA grantees.

2023-24 AELA Grant Menu of Performance Outcomes and Progress Measures	
Performance Outcome	**Progress Measures (Optional; not counted by AEI)**
Post-test Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Gain	- Post-testing - Scale Score Increase
Secondary Equivalent Credential Attainment or Secondary Credential Attainment	- Passing an Official Practice Test - HSE Subtest Score Increase - Passing an HSE Subtest - Transcript or Report Card Progress - Secondary - Passing a Practice Test in one HSE subject and taking the corresponding HSE Subtest

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure
Post-secondary Entrance	• Taking an Admissions Tour • Completing an Academic/Career Interest Inventory • Completing an Enrollment Application • Applying for State or Federal Financial Aid • Passing an Entrance Exam or Demonstrating Readiness Requirements
Post-secondary Credential Attainment	• Transcript or Report Card Progress - Post-secondary • Earning Stackable Credentials or Certificates Leading to a Degree or Industry-Recognized Credential • Passing a Credential Exam
Military Entrance	• Passing Score on the ASVAB

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure
Obtaining Employment or Employment in an In-demand Sector or Industry	• Taking an employer tour • Completing an academic/career interest inventory • Enrolling in a state-sponsored employment system • Completing a workforce preparation workshop • Completing a job application or interview • Attending a job fair • Completing workplace skills training/certification • Completing pre-employment requirements (completing background check, getting fingerprinted, obtaining vaccination records, etc.)
Earning a Livable Wage or Leaving Public Assistance	• Taking an employer tour • Completing an academic/career interest inventory • Enrolling in a state-sponsored employment system • Completing a workforce preparation workshops • Completing a job application or interview • Attending a job fair • Completing workplace skills training/certification

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure
Work-Based Learning Completion: • Completion of one year of an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship • Completion of On-the-job Training (OJT) • Completion of a paid internship or work study	• Completing a work readiness certification • Completing a work portfolio or capstone project • Completing and unpaid internship • Entering into a work-based learning program
Digital Literacy • Complete 3 Northstar Certificates	N/A
Financial Literacy • Complete any 3 Financial Literacy progress measures	Opening a bank account Applying for a credit card or loan Reviewing credit score Opening an investment or retirement account Attending a tax workshop, meeting with a tax professional, or filing taxes Developing a household or personal budget Attending a financial literacy workshop

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure
Entrepreneurship: • Start a business	• Developing a business plan • Obtaining a federal tax ID • Securing business funding • Opening a business bank account • Creating a webpage and/or marketing materials • Obtaining business insurance • Meeting with small business development center • Becoming an online seller (Etsy, eBay, Amazon, etc.)
Civic Engagement: • Obtain a Green Card • Obtain US citizenship • Obtain a driver's license • Vote in any congressional, state, or local election	• Applying for a green card • Taking a citizenship test • Taking a driver's license exam • Registering to vote • Organizing or participating in neighborhood meetings, clean ups, or cultural festivals • Volunteering • Attending city council meetings or giving testimony at public hearings • Participating in meetings or forums to discuss community issues

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure

2 Generation Strategies
• Complete any 3 2-Gen progress measures
	• Increasing Involvement in Children's Education
	    • Helping more frequently with school
	    • Increasing contact with children's teachers
	    • Increasing involvement in children's school activities
	• Increasing Involvement in Children's Literacy Activities
	    • Reading to children
	    • Visiting a library or obtaining a library card
	    • Purchasing books or magazines or checking out resources from a library
	• Family Wellness
	    • Identifying family values
	    • Developing a family wellness plan

Performance Outcome	Progress Measure
Wrap-Around Services: • Completion of wrap-around service survey and attestation demonstrating alleviation of barrier by obtaining wrap-around services (Non-Educational Services 1-7 only).	• Orientation and Enrollment into partnering programs • Creating an email address • Obtaining a personal phone, tablet, or laptop • Obtaining personal or home internet access

- Applicants will set achievement rates for the percent of adult learners served who attain performance outcomes.

- To support programs in setting both committed and aspirational goals, applicants will set an achievement rate target for outcomes at a higher (aspirational) and lower (committed) threshold annually

- These targets, established by the applicant, will be used in determining the effectiveness of each program that receives a grant as well as to determine whether the grant recipient is making sufficient progress toward achieving the goals of the adult education and literacy program that were specified in the grant application (§ 22-10-104(1)(c), C.R.S.).
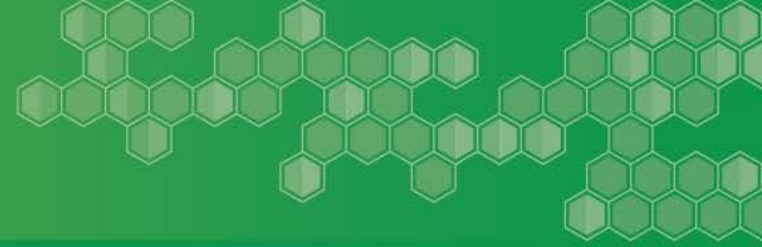
- Grant recipients are required to use the state-administered LiteracyPro LACES adult education reporting system. The following resources are required to access and use LACES:
  - CPU: 1.0 GHz or greater
  - Memory (RAM): 512 MB or greater
  - Hard disk space: 250 MB free
  - Operating System: Windows 10, Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP SP2, Windows Media Center Edition 2005, Windows 2000
  - Internet connection: Broadband such as DSL, CABLE, or Wireless (see below); T1 or better
  - Browser: Internet Explorer 6.0 +, Google Chrome, or Firefox
  - Minimum download speed: 784 kbps
  - Minimum upload speed: 384 kbps
  - Minimum Bandwidth: The main factor in determining performance of the application is available bandwidth, which is related to the actual (vs. rated) speed of internet connection, measured at the desktop during periods when one will normally access the system. This requirement is to ensure the best possible performance.

- Additional Software: Adobe Acrobat Reader and/or Microsoft Excel/Excel Reader is needed for reporting.

- CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored.

- PII will be collected through the LiteracyPro LACES data management system and a secure file sharing program (currently Syncplicity).

- All PII collected will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with CDE's privacy and security policies and procedures.

- All data included in legislative reports will be reported in the aggregate.
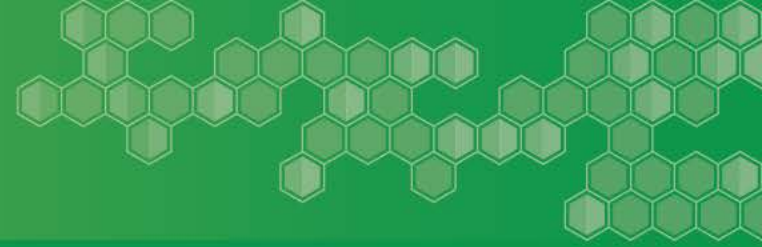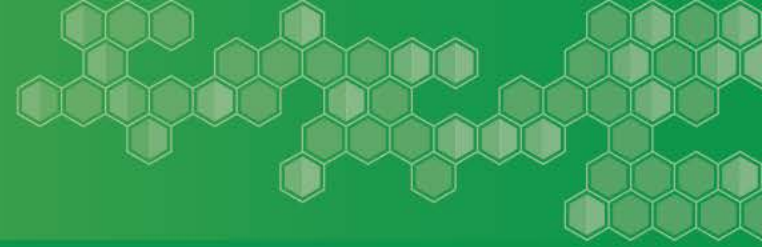
Application Submission and Review

- Electronic copies of application materials must be uploaded and submitted to [SmartSheets](#) by Friday, November 17, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. MT.

- Faxes will not be accepted.

- Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

- Once submitted, applicants will receive an email confirmation from automation@app.smartsheets.com.
  - If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within two business days of the deadline, please email CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.

- **Part 1: Application Completeness Review**
  - CDE AEI staff will check each application to ensure that the application conformed to the required format and that all required elements were included.

- **Part 2: Reviewer Application Evaluation**
  - Reviewers with education and workforce experience are solicited from all parts of the state and serve on a volunteer basis.
  - Review teams are established.
  - CDE Grants Program Administration Office (GPA) holds a reviewer training webinar.
  - Reviewers receive 4 – 6 applications each and independently scores them.
  - Each review team meets to discuss and finalize the scores and comments.
  - CDE meets with each review team to discuss the application scores and reviewer comments.
  - CGA compiles the scores and feedback forms from each review team. Reviewer scores are ranked.
    - Note: This is a competitive process. In order for an application to be recommended for funding, it must receive at least 90 points out of the 128 possible points (70%), and all required elements must be addressed.
    - CDE will recommend grantees and grantee funding levels to the State Board based on the reviewer scores.

- CDE expects the State Board of Education to vote on the approval of AELA grantees at the January 2024 meeting.

- There is no guarantee that submitting an application will result in funding or funding at the requested level.

- All award decisions are final.

- Applicants that do not meet the qualifications may reapply for future grant opportunities.

- The total narrative (Part E, Sections A-D) of the application cannot exceed 15 pages. Please see below for the required elements of the application. Note: Applications with narratives that exceed 15 pages will not be reviewed.
- All pages must be standard letter size, 8-1/2" x 11" using 12-point font and single-spaced with 1-inch margins and numbered pages.
- If the grant application is approved, funding will not be awarded until all signatures are in place.
  - Please attempt to obtain all signatures before submitting the application.
  - The signatures on the contact pages and the assurances may be original, electronic or with attached email approval.

- Applicants applying as a consortium (a coalition of organizations) must abide to the following:
  - Applications must *identify one adult education provider that will act as the lead agency for the consortium*. The lead agency shall submit a single application on behalf of the consortium of adult education providers that outlines a plan to provide adult education and literacy activities throughout the service area, explaining the roles and responsibilities of each member agency.
    - The lead agency serves as the applicant agency of record, the legally recognized fiscal agent for the grant project, and the single point of contact for CDE. The lead agency is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all aspects of the grant (e.g., project plan, grant project monitoring and data reporting, and fiscal management).
  - All consortium members are subject to the terms and conditions of the grant award and state policies.

The format outlined must be followed in order to assure consistent application of the evaluation criteria.

The following items must be submitted via Smartsheet:

- Part A: Applicant Information
- Part B: Workforce Development Partnership Signature Page
- Part C: Education Attainment Partnership Signature Page
- Part D: Financial Management Survey
- Part E: Application Narrative
- 23-24 AELA Budget Workbook
- AELA Documents and Signed Assurances
    - 23-24 AELA Locations and Partner List
    - 23-24 AELA Accessible Design Assurance
    - 23-24 AELA Assessment Assurance
    - 23-24 AELA Attendance Assurance
    - 23-24 AELA Local Data Assurance
    - 23-24 AELA Distance Education Assurance (if applicable)
    - 23-24 AELA General Program Assurance
    - 23-24 AELA Program Income Assurance

Application Narrative and Scoring Rubric

- The full instructions to complete the application narrative are found on pages 23 and 24 of the RFA.

- Sections of a complete Application Narrative

  Section A: Learner Demographics and Applicant Experience

  Section B: Proposed Adult Education and Literacy Program

  *Section C: Partnerships

  *Section D: Budgeting and Financials

Item	Considered in Scoring?	Part of 15 Page Limit?
Part A: Applicant Information ([Online application form](#))	No	No
Part B: Workforce Development Partnership Signature Page OR Part C: Education Attainment Partnership Signature Page	Yes	No
Part D: Financial Management Risk Survey	Yes	No
*Proof of Non-Profit Status from the Internal Revenue Service and evidence of financial stability (most recent one year's annual reports and audits)	No	No
Part E, sections A - C: Learner Demographics and Applicant Experience, Proposed Adult Education and Literacy Program, Partnerships, and Budgeting and Financials narrative.	Yes	Yes
Part E, section D: Budget Workbook	Yes	No
Program Assurances	No	No

Section A: Learner Demographics and Applicant Experience	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) Narrative provides a description of the applicant's experience running adult education programs, recruiting and retaining adult learners, and ensuring equity in recruitment. High quality responses will provide an overview of previous experience in adult education programs, describe equitable recruitment strategies used with diverse student populations, include evidence demonstrating retention rates and retention strategies that address barriers to participation.	0	3	6	9	
2) Narrative provides information concerning the percentage of eligible adults expected to be enrolled in the adult education and literacy programs funded by the grant who are members of minority groups. High quality responses will provide both the minority populations to be served and a description of the applicant's experience ensuring outcomes for diverse populations.	0	1	2	3	

- Additional scoring criteria on pages 27 & 28
- Section A of the application narrative is worth a total of 36 points.

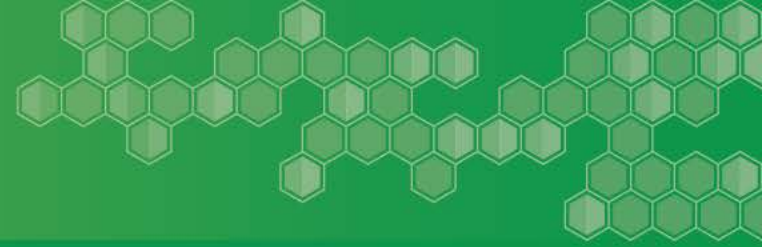| Section B: Proposed Instructional Program, Professional Development and Evaluation	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) Narrative provides a description of the instructional program that the applicant plans to implement using the grant money including the opening date, schedule, etc. High quality responses will provide evidence, data, and/or rationale for the program chosen.	0	4	8	12	

- Section B of the application narrative is worth a total of 48 points

Section C: Partnership	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) Narrative provides a description demonstrating the applicant is a member of an active workforce development partnership or an education attainment partnership and a description of services and responsibilities of each of the partnership members. a. The information contained in the relevant Partnership Signature Page (either "Part IB: Workforce Development Partnership Signature Page" or "Part IC: Education Attainment Partnership Signature Page") is complete and matches the narrative description provided.	0	10	15	20	

- Section C of the application narrative is worth a total of 20 points

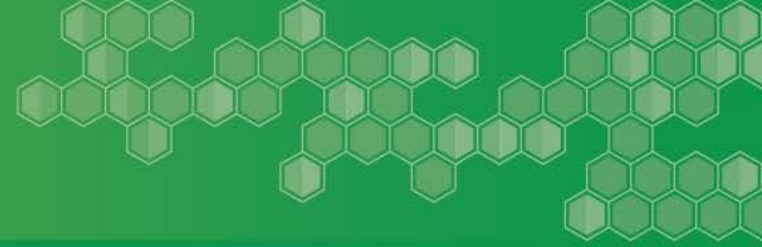| Section D: Budgeting and Financials	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) The application includes a completed "23-24 AELA Budget Template" with sufficient detail.	0	4	8	12	

- The required Risk Management Survey is also included in the scoring of section D.
- Section D of the application narrative is worth a total of 24 points

Timeline

- **Release Date**: Monday, Oct. 23, 2023

- **Technical Assistance Webinar**: Monday, Oct. 30, 2023, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. MT

- **Technical Assistance Webinar Recording posted on Prospective Grantees webpage**: Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2023

- **Applications Due**: Friday, Nov. 17, 2023, by 11:59 p.m. MT

- **Anticipated Notification of Preliminary Award Status:** Monday, Dec. 4, 2023

- **Anticipated State Board of Education Vote:** January 2024

Questions

Grant Application Q&A

- [Submit questions about the grant application](#) to the AEI Office

- [View responses to questions about the grant application](#) submitted to the AEI Office

Other contacts:

AEI@cde.state.co.us

CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us