**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFA SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFA NUMBER AND TITLE:** | 202204057 - Statewide Expansion of Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) Programming Grant Funding FY 2022 Application |
| **RFA ISSUED BY:** | Department of Education |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | April 28, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | April 29, 2022 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | May 12, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C | Would a university, such as the University of Maine at Presque Isle, be an eligible Community-Based Organization under this grant opportunity to take the lead and serve as the fiscal agent if we partner with area high schools who have JMG programming within their high schools/CTE programs? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, this would be an allowable situation. In addition, there is no requirement that the partnering high schools/CTE programs have existing JMG programming. |

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| **2** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section D | Can an applicant submit multiple applications for programming in different regions/catchment areas? (for example, could the applicant apply to host a regional ELO coordinator in conjunction with several SAUs in one county and, in a separate application, apply to host a different regional ELO coordinator in conjunction with several SAUs in a second county?) |
| **Answer** |
| The RFA does not make this an impossibility. However, the DOE will include consideration of whether this single organization can effectively utilize and manage multiple grants in determining whether multiple awards will be granted. |

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| **3** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Is this school credit something that would be made available by the specific school they attend? Are all schools participating?  |
| **Answer** |
| As a local-control state, each individual school will be awarding credit based on their district protocols and policies. All schools do not have ELO Coordinators in Maine |

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| **4** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 7 Section D.1.a Page 19 Appendix Dand Page 5Section C.2.a |  If we have a program that includes students outside of purely 16 – 21 years of age (for example, our Youth Mentor Program is for young adults 15 – 24 years old), could this funding be used to support the programs overall, or would it need to be directed to those who are between 16-21 only? |
| **Answer** |
| The funding can be used to expand existing programs that include additional ages, but grantees must supply the required data and metrics, which in some cases must only be metrics for the targeted age range. Metrics that do not show significant value may result in the grantee not receiving a second year of funding. Eligibility to Submit Applications includes a focus in-school youth ages 16-21. |

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| **5** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 7Section D.3  | In thinking about stipends, are these payments obligated to be paid to youth 16-21 only, or can they also be available to folks who may be supporting youth in that age range? For example, if we have a tutor working with a 17-year-old on homework, could part of this funding be used to compensate the tutor for their time? |
| **Answer** |
| Funding may be used to support the employment of staff dedicated to developing and managing ELO programs. Staff hired using grant funds must become well-versed in ELO Programming and if so, it is acceptable to include stipends for instructional and other staff as part of the budget outline in your application. |

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| **6** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C Page 7Section D.3  | I see that this program folds both career exploration and educational support together. Some of our programs definitely carry both of these focus areas, while other programs are more focused in one area of the other (for example, the tutor program being more in the educational space). We were curious if this opportunity is meant to fund programs achieving and balancing those focus areas across those two areas, or if it’s okay if some programs have a larger lean in one direction versus another? |
| **Answer** |
| Any programs meeting the requirements as listed in Section C are eligible to apply. Those programs that more strongly meet the requirements as laid out in the application will receive higher scores. Staff hired using grant funds must become well-versed in ELO Programming and if so, it is acceptable to include stipends for instructional and other staff as part of the budget outline in your application. |

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| **7** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C  | I am wondering if a CBO *must* go through our local SAU to apply.  In other words, may the CBO be the primary applicant?  We have a current program that we are working to scale; this funding fits that plan perfectly.  We partner with the schools, but the programs do not come out of the schools.  |
| **Answer** |
| There is no requirement that programs receiving funding be initiated, organized, or implemented by a public school. The requirement for CBOs is, rather, that they are partnering with districts in the development of these programs. As long as the targeted population is reached, it is acceptable for the program to be run through the CBO itself. |

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| **8** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 1  | When is the webinar? |
| **Answer** |
| There is no required informational session or webinar for this RFA. All questions are being submitted electronically and answers posted in a Q and A summary made available at least one week before proposal due date. |

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| **9** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C | Can Adult Education be counted for students and partnership?  |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, if the students are between the ages of 16-21 and they are in a credit bearing situation in a publicly funded SAU district committed to initiating or expanding ELO programming. |

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| **10** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 1 | When will districts hear back about awards? |
| **Answer** |
| Proposals are due May 12, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time, with intentions of award notifications being sent two-three weeks following. |

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| **11** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 18Section 7  | Can we include Bath Tech as a regional approach as we serve students from other communities that will benefit from certain activities? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, if you have partner agreements for this purpose whereupon the sending schools will award credit for ELO activity. Points will be awarded to proposals seeking to incorporate a regional approach to serve more than one high school in a region. |

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| **12** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 9Section C.2.d | Does the 15-page limit include attachments? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes - Attachments are included in the 15-page total. |

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| **13** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 7Section D.2 | Could our Director of Finance and I speak with you about what would be entailed in managing the grant were we to receive one? |
| **Answer** |
| Program must demonstrate fiscal capacity, including ability to manage large grants, and/or partner with an organization to assist in managing grant funding. |

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| **14** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 4Section C Page 5Section A  | For the purposes of this RFA, would the Maine State Department of Education (DOE) consider this consortium (known as The Recording Club and led by The Studio Portland) to be defined as either a CBO or Career and Technical Education Center and therefore eligible for grant funding under this program? |
| **Answer** |
| A CBO is defined as a public or private non-profit organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and serve local community needs, such as providing educational or supportive services. ELO Programs can be sponsored by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) if the CBO is willing to act as an ELO intermediary. |

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| **15** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 4 Section APage 5Section C  | Must the non-profit partner serve as the primary applicant, or may the LLC leading the programming serve as lead applicant with a letter of support provided from the partnering CBO that has demonstrated qualifications in large grant management and intends to support in this capacity? |
| **Answer** |
| A CBO is defined as a public or private non-profit organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and serve local community needs, such as providing educational or supportive services. ELO Programs can be sponsored by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) if the CBO is willing to act as an ELO intermediary. |

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| **16** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 14Section 1 | RFA Application "Part 1 – Eligibility and Proposed ELO Program Information" requests the applicant to provide "number of students ages 16-21." Could the DOE kindly confirm whether the applicant may provide an illustrative or target number of students in this age range in cases where the programming is new or seeking to expand? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, this can be an illustrative or target number of students in the age range of 16-21. |

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| **17** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section D and E  | Could the DOE kindly clarify and/or provide as addendum the intended content for Appendix D? Additionally, will this clarification or additional content further elaborate on the preferred budget ceiling for applicants, given that the RFA specifies that awards may range from $5,000 - $250,000? For example, if the costs of desired program scale-up are anticipated to exceed $250,000 over the 2-year period, by what criteria should the applicant determine what percentage of costs (up to the award ceiling of $250,000) to request under this RFA? |
| **Answer** |
| Awards will range from $5,000 to $250,000 over two (2) years. The total costs cannot exceed $250,000 over two years. Applicants will be awarded the funding for an initial 12-month period, with the second round of funding provided for another year pending progress towards Performance Metrics (Appendix D). |

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| **18** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 11Section A. Part 3 Page 16Part 3. Question 2 | Do you anticipate sustainability of ELO funding past the two-year grant application? |
| **Answer** |
| Awards will range from $5,000 to $250,000 over two (2) years if the metrics are met. A plan for a sustainable program is a key part to the application. |

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| **19** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 17 Part 4. Question 2. b | Should we include the cost of personnel benefits and salary under personnel costs? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, a detailed budget narrative by applicant allows for this. |

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| **20** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| General | Is it required to give core credits as part of this grant in addition to elective credits? |
| **Answer** |
| No, it is not required. Wherever credits are mentioned in this RFA it is a general reference that includes both elective and core credit. |

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| **21** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 17Section 4. Question 2. b | The budget form does not seem to allow for subcontracts or consultants, but the RFA encourages partnerships and collaborations. How does MDOE prefer to see those partnerships formalized and funded? |
| **Answer** |
| The detailed budget narrative allows the applicant to explain the planned expenditures of grant funds and includes personnel costs where applicants list all staff positions by title including the roles and responsibilities and indicate the percentage of each person’s time devoted to the project, the amount of each person’s salary and benefits funded by the grant, and the total personnel costs for the period of performance. |

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| **22** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 15Section 2. Question 3  | Is the training offering referenced for students or staff/faculty? |
| **Answer** |
| New training delivery can apply to both students and/or staff and faculty. |

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| **23** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 19Appendix D | Appendix D - Paid work experiences completed without credit attainment attached. Is this estimate related to the total number of students assisted in attaining a paid position by an ELO Coordinator but opting not to receive credit for the paid position?  |
| **Answer** |
| There are choices in the metrics that allows for each to be quantified from the total participant number. One for Paid work experiences completed without credit attainment attached and one for paid work experiences completed for credit through ELO. |

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| **24** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 19Appendix D | Appendix D - Number of disadvantaged youth (ages 16-21) served. Is this estimate related to the number of disadvantaged youth receiving credit through ELO programming or the total disadvantaged youth receiving assistance from the ELO coordinator? |
| **Answer** |
| This refers to total number of disadvantaged youth total. There is no distinction for this metric. |

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| **25** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 4Section A | We have a question regarding the funding source for RFA 202204057. Is this considered a Federal grant, or state grant? |
| **Answer** |
| Federal - The funding for these grants is provided through Maine’s American Rescue Plan (ARP) allocation as part of Governor Mills’ Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP). |

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| **26** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C | Does a Community-Based Organization (CBO) applying for funding under this program need to be a credit-bearing institution to participate? |
| **Answer** |
| To be considered for Grant funding under this application process, Applicants must be a publicly funded SAU district committed to initiating or expanding ELO programming or a Community-Based Organization (CBO) or Career and Technical Education Center willing to act as an ELO intermediary. The CBO doesn’t have to be credit bearing institution but is encouraged to partner with one. |

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| **27** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 3DefinitionsPage 6Section B | Does the funding directly support Extended Learning Opportunities for students, or just connecting students to work placements with other employers (i.e. could our organization host and pay for a student’s Extended Learning Opportunity with this funding)? |
| **Answer** |
| If the CBO is willing to act as an intermediary agency. An Intermediary Agency can be a CBO willing to be in direct connection with publicly funded educational organizations. An Intermediary Agency works directly with the Maine ELO Program for final registration actions. |

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| **28** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 5Section C  | The entity spearheading the ELO is Waynflete School which is an independent school in Portland, ME. Based on the grant’s description of terms, it seems that Waynflete might be eligible to apply for the grant as a Community-Based Organization. If not, we could make the application as a consortium that would include several public schools. |
| **Answer** |
| To be considered for Grant funding under this application process, Applicants must:Be a publicly funded SAU district committed to initiating or expanding ELO programming or a Community-Based Organization (CBO) or Career and Technical Education Center willing to act as an ELO intermediary. Focus on one or more of the following communities: In-school youth ages 16-21 or Rural communities. Propose to develop and/or expand ELO programming. Program must include direct connections to employers willing and able to hire and / or mentor students and provide them with supervision (connecting students to paid work experiences is a key component of this grant funding). |

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| **29** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 6Section B  | Please advise on whether or not a civics education and engagement focus for an ELO is a good fit with the goals of this grant. The Question: Do we fit the goals of this grant? |
| **Answer** |
| Allowable ELO Program grant activities include activities that create or enhance credit bearing ELO activity and community-based career exploration, with or without compensation. |

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| **30** | **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Page 6Section B  | The credit-bearing ELO would be a combination of in-person, in school workshops, cross school interactions among peers, and deeper learning supported by the JMG/ELO Learning Management System. The Question: Does this proposal summary sound like something that would be considered? |
| **Answer** |
| Allowable ELO Program grant activities include activities that create or enhance credit bearing ELO activity and community-based career exploration, with or without compensation. Allowable activities can include but are not limited to: Training and partnership development, generating awareness of ELOs, Delivery of ELO programming, providing supports to improve equitability and accessibility in ELOs. |