



California College Promise Innovation Grant Program Planning Grant Proposal Guidelines

The 2016-2017 state budget includes funding for several initiatives focused on college readiness, access and success. These initiatives can help increase the number of California residents earning bachelor's degrees in the coming years. It is estimated the state needs 1.1 million additional bachelor degrees by 2030, given the changes in our economy. College Futures Foundation is dedicated to partnering with educational institutions to improve policies and practices, as well as assisting the K-12 and higher education systems to work together in ways that better support student success. We are particularly focused on closing the college readiness and bachelor degree attainment gaps for low-income students from groups historically under-represented in college success.

One of the higher education initiatives this year is the California College Promise Innovation Grant Program (described in [AB1741](#)). College Futures Foundation will support selected community college districts that intend to apply for these state resources with planning grants. The California College Promise program and planning grant details are described below.

A. California College Promise Innovation Grant Program

The California College Promise Innovation Grants will be distributed on a competitive basis to community college districts through the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The funds will support the establishment or expansion of a College Promise program that includes:

- “(1) Partnering with one or more school districts to establish an Early Commitment to College Program that is consistent with the intent of Article 6.3 (commencing with Section 54710) of Chapter 9 of Part 29 of Division 4 of Title 2 to provide K–12 students and families assistance that includes, but is not limited to, learning about college opportunities, visiting campuses, taking and completing college preparatory courses, and applying for college and financial aid.
- (2) Partnering with one or more school districts to support and improve high school student preparation for college and reduce postsecondary remediation through practices that may include, but are not limited to, small learning communities, concurrent enrollment, and other evidence-based practices.
- (3) Utilizing evidence-based placement and student assessment indicators at the community college district that include multiple measures of student performance, including grades in high school courses, overall grade point averages, results from common assessments, and input from counselors.
- (4) Providing students who are enrolled at the community college district with access to courses, including, but not limited to, priority registration, and allowing them to register

for a full academic year of courses at once, in order to keep them on track to graduate, transfer to a public postsecondary university, or earn a career technical education certificate in California.

(5) Providing outreach to students who are enrolled at a community college within the community college district regarding the Associate Degrees for Transfer and the California Community College Transfer Entitlement Cal Grant program.”

B. College Futures Foundation Planning Grants

College Futures Foundation (“College Futures” or the “Foundation”) will provide mini planning grants to a selected group of community college districts that intend to apply for these state resources.¹ The mini grants will support community college districts to develop strategies, with their partners, for increasing student success that could be supported by an award of state College Promise funds and to develop strong applications for submission.

During the planning phase, in addition to mini grants, selected colleges will have access to technical assistance that includes:

- Leveraging lessons learned and evidence from effective practices in each of the four areas referenced above
- Thought partnership about how the state funds can be leveraged to support the team’s vision and student success
- Thought partnership about programmatic or operational challenges relevant to the team’s goals
- Support in considering how proposed new activities intersect with other campus initiatives
- Facilitation of discussions among key stakeholders working together to develop proposals

College Futures will prioritize proposals from colleges who are pursuing or intend to pursue strategies that focus on:

- **Successful transitions:** Organizational and instructional strategies that ensure student readiness and effective transitions within structured academic pathways, particularly from high school to college, and from community college to four-year colleges and universities.
- **Accelerated remediation:** Partnerships with high schools to: 1) align expectations and reduce the need for remediation; and 2) move students quickly into credit-bearing courses so as to reduce the time and cost involved in achieving degrees.

¹ Through a separate set of proposal guidelines, College Futures also is inviting proposals from community college campuses preparing to apply for funds through the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education Program ([AB1602](#)).

- **Increasing transfer rates:** Strategies that intentionally seek to: 1) increase the number and percentage of students earning an Associate Degree for Transfer, and 2) smooth the transition to four-year institutions.
- **Tracking student progress and outcomes:** The collection and analysis of data by race and gender to inform efforts to improve time to degree and reduce attainment gaps.

C. Grant Request

If you are interested in submitting a proposal for a planning grant, please contact College Futures Foundation consultant Amy Dominguez-Arms at amydarms@gmail.com. We will schedule conversations with interested college districts to learn more about your plans. The following step could be a request for a concept paper or for a full proposal. Section D below details the information that would be requested for a planning grant proposal.

Proposals will be accepted between October 24 – November 10, 2016. Once we receive your proposal, we may follow up with further questions. Decisions on the planning grants to be awarded will be communicated between November 7 – 18, 2016.

D. Proposal Guidelines

Once a proposal has been invited, the following outline provides suggestions to help you write the proposal narrative. It is not necessary to adhere to this outline or to include all of, or only, these items in your proposal narrative. Rather, these suggestions are provided to help you understand how we will assess the proposal and clarify which information Foundation staff finds to be most useful. Please limit your proposal narrative to no more than 5 pages. Clarity and concision is of greatest importance.

1. Organizational Rationale & Background

- Discuss the capacity of the lead entity and other key partners to develop and, if they receive an award, implement the proposed plan. If appropriate, describe what the lead entity and other key partners are planning to commit in terms of resources towards the planning process.
- Please discuss how the parameters for the California College Promise Program align with your current organizational goals and/or aspirations.
- Describe the partnership(s) you have or are planning to develop with school districts, CSU and/or UC campuses. Please provide background on related partnerships, including their origin, purpose, nature of mutual commitments, accomplishments and any other relevant background.

2. Planning Process Overview

Provide a description of what you are seeking to do and accomplish with the requested mini planning grant funds, including:

- Describe your initial ideas for allocating the new state resources and how these ideas either build on proven practices in the field or stem from a sound rationale for a new

approach. (The initial ideas presented in this proposal certainly may be refined and/or amended during the planning period.)

- Discuss how your proposed approach will affect institutional practices within high schools and colleges in ways that increase the number and percentage of low-income students who graduate ready for college-level courses and the number and percentage who are ready for transfer to a four-year university after not more than three years in a community college. If you are planning to focus attention on any particular sub-population(s) as a result of your data, please describe.
- Describe your initial ideas on how you will assess the proposed approach to ascertain its impact on students; please describe the data you plan to track by student race and gender.
- Who will be involved in the planning process towards the development of the plan that would be the basis for the California College Promise grant application.
- What will be the areas of focus during the planning process and what do you aim to accomplish by the end of the planning period?
- Approximately 2-4 hours of custom technical assistance may be available during the grant period. Technical assistance will be provided by [Education First](#), the [Center for Urban Education](#) and others based on the needs described. If applicable, please specify key questions, challenges or technical assistance needs that you would like help to address.
- Discuss how the plans developed during this period might be utilized if your application is not selected for state funding.
- Describe the specific data and/or indicators you plan to collect and analyze as part of the planning process.

3. Project Management and Timeline

- Describe the proposed staffing for the project, identifying project personnel and any consultants or advisors who would be involved with the project. Include brief biographies of the key staff who will lead program implementation.
- Provide the timeline for completing the planning process.

4. Project Budget Narrative

- Indicate the total planning budget and the specific amount of that total requested from the Foundation. Please note that as the planning grants are intended to support colleges' planning process, indirect costs will not be included in the grant.