



On approximately November 2, 2015, The Opportunity Institute, in partnership with the Stanford Criminal Justice Center and the Vera Institute of Justice, intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) as part of the Renewing Communities Initiative in California. The RFP will fund innovative programs that increase college opportunities and successes for formerly and currently incarcerated Californians. Funded programs can be primarily on a college campus supporting formerly incarcerated students, primarily in a local jail, primarily in a state prison, or working both inside and outside, but all applications must demonstrate on-ramps and links from corrections to education. It is expected that funding will be made available to pilot programs for three years, with one-year renewable contracts.

Applicants must be accredited higher education institutions or 501(c)(3) organizations working with accredited institutions of higher education. Successful proposals will identify a need and an aligned solution in their community; applicants can propose to develop a new program or expand and enhance existing programs. Applicants must demonstrate partnerships between higher education and criminal justice stakeholders such as the Probation Department and the Sheriff's Department, and proposals must demonstrate concrete connections to reentry services and supports through either the direct provision of services or strong partnerships with reentry service providers. Applicants are encouraged to explore innovative criminal justice partnerships such as those that incorporate diversion or early release for education, respond to Proposition 47, or target a particular age, gender or demographic. Applicants will be encouraged to submit proposals that incorporate the recommendations of best practices identified in [*Degrees of Freedom*](#).

We expect to distribute at least \$5 million over three years; there will be no minimum or maximum amount awarded per proposal. RFP funds will be limited to no more than 75% of each proposal's total budget. The remaining 25% must be contributed by public funds, 1/3 of which can be in-kind such as tuition waivers or book vouchers. The remainder can include cash, repurposed or dedicated spending, or dedicated staffing, among other things. The match can come from multiple public sources, including the criminal justice partner(s), the institution of higher education, AB 109 funding, and/or AB 86 funding. Preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate a match greater than 25% and applicants are encouraged to increase the public percentage of the budget over the course of the three years. Proposals will be due on February 1, 2016 with funding available by April and full implementation expected by the beginning of fall semester, 2016.

Please forward this notice widely within California. If you did not receive it directly and would like to be on the notification list when the RFP is released, please email Laura Van Tassel at laura@theopportunityinstitute.org.

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