



RENEWING COMMUNITIES:

California Pathways from Prison to Postsecondary Education

RFP Issue Date: November 9, 2015

Notice of Intent to Apply: January 11, 2016

RFP Due Date: February 1, 2016 at 5:00 pm

Submit notice of intent to apply and proposals to: laura@theopportunityinstitute.org

Table of Contents

I. Overview.....	3
Eligibility	3
II. Background on the Renewing Communities Initiative.....	5
III. Project Scope and Requirements	6
IV. Initiative Funding	11
V. Application Requirements	12
Cover Page.....	12
Proposal Narrative	12
Budget and Budget Narrative	13
Proposal Attachments	14
Statements from Partners.....	14
Budget Form.....	14
Workplan and Objectives.....	14
VI. Selection Criteria	15
VII. Application Instructions.....	16
Appendix.....	17
Form A: Information Required on Cover Page	17
Form B: Proposed Budget	18
Form C: Workplan and Objectives	20
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	21
Eligibility	21
Project Scope and Requirements	22
Budget	24

I. Overview

The Opportunity Institute, on behalf of the Renewing Communities Initiative, is accepting applications for higher education programs targeting currently and formerly incarcerated students in California. Renewing Communities is funded by a number of philanthropic foundations; this Request for Proposals (RFP) will fund prison-based, jail-based, and community-based college programs for criminal justice-involved students. Over three years, a total of more than \$5 million will be available. Funds in the amount of \$1,750,000 are currently available for one year of funding, but additional funds may be confirmed before applicants are selected for award. It is anticipated that at least six to ten sites will be funded; budgets for the sites may vary widely. The grant period will be one year. Renewed contracts with equal or greater funding in years two and three are expected but not guaranteed.

This funding initiative aims to expand and improve college pathways for criminal justice-involved students. It adheres to the recommendations outlined in the report, *Degrees of Freedom: Expanding College Opportunities for Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Californians*, published in February 2015 by the Stanford Criminal Justice Center at Stanford Law School and the Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy at UC Berkeley School of Law. This report should be consulted in the process of planning and preparing an application.

To accomplish the goal of expanding and improving college pathways for criminal justice-involved students, successful applicants will:

- Ensure high-quality academic programming and/or support structures that are responsive to the needs of criminal justice-involved students;
- Enable student success by prioritizing academic and non-academic support services, usually including college readiness courses, academic placement and counseling, financial and career counseling, soft skills development including persistence and resilience, connections to reentry services, and career counseling or guidance specific to those with criminal records;
- Build links from corrections to higher education, and foster collaboration among educational institutions, correctional agencies, and/or reentry organizations;
- Demonstrate long-term sustainability and capacity for scalability and bring matching public resources; and
- Commit to engaging in program evaluation and a learning community with other grantees.

Eligibility

Applications will be accepted from:

1. **California Institutions of Higher Education** accredited by the Western Association of School and Colleges, including public California community colleges or districts, public four-year colleges and universities, and private colleges and universities with 501(c)(3) status; and

2. **Community-Based Organizations** with 501(c)(3) status that are primarily dedicated to providing post-secondary education.

Applicants can propose to build a new program or expand and enhance an existing program.

Deadline: Applications will be accepted until February 1, 2016 at 5:00 pm. A non-binding Notice of Intent to Apply should be filed by January 11, 2016 at 5:00 pm.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): FAQs related to this RFP are included at the end of this RFP.

Contact Information: Please direct all questions pertaining to this RFP by Friday, December 4, 2015 to laura@theopportunityinstitute.org. Updated FAQs will be posted in response to the questions on The Opportunity Institute website (<http://theopportunityinstitute.org/>). Questions will also be addressed in a webinar on Friday morning, December 11, 2015.

II. Background on the Renewing Communities Initiative

The Renewing Communities Initiative in California is part of a larger effort to improve access to college education for criminal justice-involved students across the country, and to bring the criminal justice and higher education systems together to work towards common goals. The Pathways from Prison to Postsecondary Education Project – led by the Vera Institute for Justice with funding from five national foundations – has funded prison-based college programs in Michigan, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Renewing Communities expands upon the Pathways Project and brings the initiative to California.

Renewing Communities, which was initiated in early 2014, advances the Pathways strategy by building a bridge between California’s higher education and criminal justice systems for the benefit of criminal justice-involved individuals and their greater communities statewide.

The goals of the Renewing Communities Initiative are to:

1. Develop and foster high-quality programs that will expand higher education opportunities for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals;
2. Create partnerships between custodial institutions, local education institutions, criminal justice agencies, and community-based organizations;
3. Support educators and educational institutions in their use of best practices to achieve academic success for currently and formerly incarcerated students in California; and
4. Create a sustainable model for long-term positive systemic change and program expansion that does not rely solely on private funding.

III. Project Scope and Requirements

The following table presents the requirements for programs based in state prisons, county jails, and the community. Many requirements apply to all three program types, but some are unique to a particular context. Descriptions of each of these requirements follow in the next section. Further details can be found in the referenced pages of *Degrees of Freedom: Expanding College Opportunities for Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Californians* and in the FAQs at the end of this RFP.

	Prison	Jail	Community	<i>Degrees of Freedom</i>
Program Components				
Provision of credit-bearing college courses that build to credentials and degrees	✓	✓ ¹	✗	pp.58-59
Structured support to keep students on a pathway to credentials and degrees	✗	✗	✓	p.61-62
In-person course delivery only	✗	✓	✓	p.58
In-person course delivery and/or interactive distance education ²	✓	✗	✗	p.58
Plan for providing academic and non-academic support services	✓	✓	✓	pp.61-62
Assessment and a plan for college readiness courses where needed	✓	✓	✓	p.59
Plan for developing soft skills	✓	✓	✓	pp.59-60
Staffing				
Program director and support staff	✓	✓	✓	p.63
Plan for professional development	✓	✓	✓	p.63
Partnerships				
Commitment from relevant educational, correctional, reentry, and/or social service partners	✓	✓	✓	pp.66-67
Responsiveness to students' needs when reentering the community	✓	✓	✓	pp.61-63
On-ramps from corrections to education	✓	✓	✓	pp.66-67
Capacity and Sustainability				
Matching resources available from public sources	✓	✓	✓	p.64
Plan for long-term sustainability and scalability	✓	✓	✓	p.64-65
Engagement in Initiative				
Commitment to participate in evaluation	✓	✓	✓	p.64
Commitment to participate in learning community with other grantees	✓	✓	✓	p.68

¹ Jail-based programs may propose in-custody education that is not credit-bearing, so long as there is a link to continued high-quality education in the community. See the FAQs for further clarification.

² Distance education is strongly discouraged and will require a compelling showing of need.

Further Description of Program Requirements

Program Components	
Provision of credit-bearing college courses that build to credentials and degrees	Strong programs provide meaningful credits that build toward specific credentials, whether those are career technical certificates, Associate's degrees, Bachelor's degrees, or beyond. The emphasis of Renewing Communities is on building avenues to social mobility through higher education. All proposals must demonstrate a pathway to a degree or credential. As a general rule, programs that offer isolated career training or CTE certificates, without stackable credentials or demonstrated opportunities for greater educational achievement, will not be funded. Any proposal seeking funding for CTE programs must show the viability of that pathway and career for people with prior convictions. Stackable credentials account for the challenges faced by criminal justice-involved students by allowing students to stop and start as needed, while laying the groundwork for these same students to return to school, complete their studies and transfer for additional degrees. Recognizing that students may need to transfer to a new college in order to persist through to credential completion, programs should incorporate transferable courses whenever possible. Both academic and career-oriented programs should be cognizant of employment barriers that students with criminal records may face and design programs accordingly.
Structured support for students to keep them on a pathway to credentials and degrees	Although programs for formerly incarcerated students will generally not directly provide academic courses and credit, such programs need to provide structured support that will keep participating students on a pathway to a high-quality credential or degree. This support includes academic and non-academic support services and the development of soft skills.
In-person course delivery and/or interactive distance education	In-person, classroom-based instruction fosters interaction and analytical discussion among teachers and students and helps improve outcomes for underprepared and educationally disadvantaged students. Proposals for prison-based programs should provide in-person courses wherever possible. Applicants proposing alternatives to in-person programs are required to demonstrate why in-person course delivery is not feasible in their circumstances. If distance courses and programs are necessary, real-time interaction between teachers and students through on-line platforms, on-site individual tutoring sessions to supplement distance course delivery, and/or other evidence-based mechanisms must be provided.
Plan for providing academic and non-academic support services	Support services are vital to student success. Important academic support services include academic counseling, tutoring, and soft skills development. Other types of support services that successful programs incorporate include career, admissions, and financial counseling that is sensitive to the unique needs of currently and formerly incarcerated students. Jail programs should additionally plan for assisting students in continuing their education post release. Some of these services are best provided by qualified college staff; whereas others such as tutoring may be provided by trained peer tutors.

Assessment and a plan for college readiness courses where necessary	Accurately determining whether a student is ready to begin a given credential program upholds high-quality academic standards, minimizes student frustration, and uses funds efficiently. For students who are underprepared, a robust and effective college readiness component that allows them to maintain momentum and move quickly to college-level work is vital to success. Short intensive readiness programs are especially relevant in jail contexts, where students have access to programs for briefer periods of time.
Plan for developing soft skills	Soft skills – like persistence, resilience, self-confidence, and effective communication – are essential to success both in college and the labor market. Programs should incorporate soft skills development. Strategies may include bridge courses for new students, cultivation of student leadership in classrooms, incorporation of study skills and life skills into college readiness courses, cohort or peer mentoring models, and social-psychological interventions (i.e., brief exercises that address students’ thoughts and feelings about education, including their schooling histories and beliefs about their own capabilities).

Staffing	
Program director and support staff	Programs need committed and experienced program directors as well as support staff at the college or community-based organization. Staff must have sufficient time allocated to ensure successful operation and to build sustainability so the program survives turnover in leadership and moves toward institutionalization, where possible. Program directors manage staff, including instructors and office-based administrative support personnel, to ensure continuity of knowledge and service. They interface with other departments within the college to guarantee students have access to academic and non-academic support services. They also navigate important relationships with corrections leadership to ensure the success of their programs. These directors can also serve as vital gatekeepers, ensuring high standards for the quality of teaching and student achievement.
Plan for professional development	Program faculty and staff benefit both from initial training and from ongoing professional development, catered toward the specific challenges of teaching and supporting students in a correctional environment or criminal justice-involved students in the community. By continuously refining procedures and instructional practices, programs can avoid or mitigate conflicts with criminal justice agencies and better promote student success. Programs should support professional learning communities among their instructors that will provide opportunities to share strategies and address common challenges. The Opportunity Institute will provide some opportunities for professional development during the course of the initiative.

Partnerships

Commitment from relevant educational, correctional, reentry, and/or social service partners

Strong proposals will include relationships between relevant educational, correctional, reentry, and/or social services partners (e.g., state prison, county jail, Sheriff's Department, Probation or Parole, local reentry, and/or government organizations). Figure 18 on page 67 of *Degrees of Freedom* presents examples of responsibilities of various potential partners. Although formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) are not required in applications, they may be illustrative of these relationships. Formal MOUs will be required as part of the contract process for applicants awarded funding.

Required and Recommended Partners: All programs should include at least one institution of higher education. Prison programs should additionally include as a partner at least one California state prison. Jail programs should include at least one county jail facility in California and are strongly encouraged to include the local probation department. Community programs should consider collaboration with the sheriff, jail, probation and/or parole. All programs should consider collaborations with reentry and social service organizations.

Responsiveness to students' needs when reentering the community

Currently and formerly incarcerated students face unique challenges in pursuing their educational and career goals because of their criminal justice involvement. In particular, achieving reentry stability – for example, finding stable housing and employment and learning financial literacy – is often a formidable challenge. The lack of such stability can compromise academic achievement. All programs should identify the reentry needs anticipated to be faced by participant students, how those needs will be addressed, and how those needs might affect or interfere with students' educational goals. On-campus college programs in particular should be aware of the resources available and connect students to community-based or local government agencies providing social and legal services.

On-ramps from corrections to education

All programs should build on-ramps from corrections to education. Prison and jail programs can build on-ramps with education institutions while students are still in custody, supporting students' ability to continue their studies post-release. They can develop the vital college readiness skills and college awareness that many incarcerated students lack. Programs for formerly incarcerated students in the community should coordinate with local agencies, such as probation or parole offices, to cultivate awareness of college opportunities among potential students and criminal justice stakeholders.

In addressing how they will build these on-ramps, applicants are encouraged to work with their local criminal justice partners and think creatively about criminal justice opportunities such as diversion or early release for education.

Capacity and Sustainability	
Matching resources available from public sources	Greater consideration will be given to applicants who provide evidence of matching public resources greater than 25% of the total budget. Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate that the percentage of their total budget coming from public match will increase over the three years. See the FAQs for further details on the resource match requirement.
Plan for long-term sustainability and scalability	Proposals should provide evidence of a plan for the long-term sustainability of the program. Sustainability may be fostered through diversifying funding streams, designating authority to establish standards and monitor program quality, and by seeking both college and institutional support. Proposals should also address how they might address longer-term scalability and/or replicability demonstrating how the size of the program could increase over time and/or serve as a model for other jurisdictions.
Engagement in Initiative	
Commitment to participate in evaluation	Applicants must commit to participating in a program evaluation that will be conducted by The Opportunity Institute and the Vera Institute of Justice. Strong applicants will demonstrate their ability to collect relevant data (e.g., recidivism rates, and academic data including the number of students who earn credentials, enroll in and complete courses, receive academic counseling, and complete orientation). Grant recipients will be required to submit progress reports. The exact contours of the data to be collected will be negotiated with successful awardees.
Commitment to participate in learning community with other grantees	All partners must commit to participate in statewide Renewing Communities meetings with other grantees and to become members of a learning community to share expertise and experiences on the development of their programs, as well as to share resources, tools, and strategies.

IV. Initiative Funding

Grant Amount: The total grant budget for this Request for Proposals (RFP) during year one is \$1,750,000 but additional funds may be confirmed by the application deadline. More than \$5 million will be available during the three years of the Initiative. Applications will be accepted for prison-based, jail-based, and community-based programs for currently and formerly incarcerated students. We anticipate funding at least six to ten sites and aim to fund proposals across the spectrum of prison-, jail-, and community-based programs. The grant period will be one year. Renewed contracts with equal or greater funding in years two and three are expected but not guaranteed.

Funds are available to each applicant based on the application and proposed budget. The grant award size will vary as projects may serve varying numbers of students and project models will differ. Applicants must submit a budget form and demonstrate the cost effectiveness of their budget proposal in the required budget narrative.

Non-Allowable Activities and Costs: Proposed budgets for the use of grant funds will be reviewed as part of the application process. Items deemed non-allowable, excessive, or inappropriate will be removed and the budget adjusted accordingly. Budgets that include non-allowable, excessive, or inappropriate items will receive a lower score. Generally, all expenditures must contribute to student success. See the FAQs for additional detail on non-allowable expenses.

V. Application Requirements

Proposals must include the following components:

Cover Page

Applicants must include a cover page including the point of contact, the project category, and a project abstract of maximum 150 words (see Form A in the Appendix).

Proposal Narrative

The project proposal narrative (not to exceed 15 double-spaced pages, 12 point font size) should address the following elements:

- a. *Statement of Need*: How will this grant benefit your community? In responding to this question, please address the size, demographics, and needs of the targeted student population (provide supporting data where available). What portion of the target population will the proposed program have the capacity to serve?
- b. *Project Description*: State the proposed solution to address the issue described in the statement of need. Describe the planned program components, including academic and support services, assessment, soft skills, and the plans for serving those with a need for college readiness and addressing reentry needs. Indicate the number of students that will be served during the grant period and how that number will change over the three-year period. Address the course sequence for programs offered in prisons and jail. California Community Colleges should describe how the program will work within the larger context of the district within which the college lies. If alternatives to incarceration are included in the program, address them here. The project description should also identify the applicant's primary objectives (ideally no more than five). These objectives should be listed in the project description with detail provided in the workplan and objectives form (Form C in the Appendix).
- c. *Challenges and Strategies*: Identify anticipated challenges at the individual student participant level and the program level, as well as strategies to address them. Applicants are encouraged to review *Degrees of Freedom*, with particular attention to the challenges and strategies for success identified in the relevant section of Part III: Current Landscape. Campus-based programs should address the challenge of oversubscribed courses and other challenges to degree attainment that are not unique to formerly incarcerated students but will affect them. For California Community Colleges seeking to provide classes and credits outside the district boundaries, describe how the relationship with the host district will be managed and what the contours of the agreement between the districts will be. A letter from the host district, or an explanation of why such a letter is not needed, is required.
- d. *Key Staff*: Briefly describe your staffing plan, including the roles, responsibilities, and background of key personnel. Address the issues set out in Section III above. Include a short bio for each key staff member specifying his/her qualifications to implement the proposed program. Include a plan to respond to key staff turnover during the three-year term. Describe plans for professional

development. (Professional development opportunities will be provided by The Opportunity Institute but applicants are encouraged to discuss other options and avenues for development and training, particularly for staff new to working within correctional institutions and with criminal justice-involved individuals.)

- e. *Cross-Agency Partnerships*: Identify existing or planned cross-agency partnerships. Who are the key actors and agencies involved in these efforts? List their names or job titles and institutional affiliations. Describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner for the proposed program. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined in terms of specific tasks, services, and/or support they will provide. We strongly encourage participation across multiple agencies. Refer to Section III above for description of required and recommended partners.
- f. *Experience with Criminal Justice-Involved Students*: Describe any prior experience of the organization, staff, or partners working with criminal justice-involved students. Identify the services provided and roles of partners.
- g. *Capacity to Participate in Evaluation*: Describe the capacity to collect relevant data (e.g., recidivism rates; academic data including the number of students who earn credentials, enroll in and complete courses, receive academic counseling, and complete orientation; and other pertinent data to this initiative), including any existing data tracking systems for both partners and applicant if relevant.
- h. *Sustainability*: Address the long-term challenges the program will face, as well as a plan for sustainability, including scalability, after the end of the three-year period.

Budget and Budget Narrative

Applicants must submit a budget (Form B in the Appendix) and a budget narrative. The narrative should describe the major expenditures under each category within the budget, including all expenses categorized as “other” on the budget worksheet, and should identify the job titles or individuals who will be funded along with their expected percent effort. The narrative must also describe the matching resources.

Applicants are encouraged to plan and budget for travel expenses associated with professional development that will be provided by The Opportunity Institute and others. Awardees will be requested to send at least one key staff member to at least two full-day trainings each year in Sacramento, the Bay Area, or Los Angeles. Additional trainings are likely and it may be helpful for additional staff members to attend; budgets should reflect these expenses.

If the funds would be awarded to another entity (for example, if the applicant is a California Community College and the funds will be awarded to the district, not to the college directly), describe the plan for transferring the funds from the receiving entity to the applicant, and clarify whether and to what degree the receiving entity will apply overhead or take a percentage of the award, if any.

For prison- and jail-based programs, the budget narrative should address whether the applicant or the higher education partner intends to collect apportionment for instructional salaries or to otherwise utilize apportionment (to the extent relevant to the applicant and to the proposal).

If other sources of funding are expected, identify the other sources and their amounts, and describe how the Renewing Communities funds will be used in relation to the other funds.

The budget narrative must include a description of costs that student participants will be expected to carry, including the cost of tuition, fees, and books, if applicable.

The budget narrative must include a section documenting how the budget is expected to change in years two and three, including whether the percentage of matching public resources will increase beyond 25%.

Proposal Attachments

Statements from Partners

Applications must include signed statements from all partners indicating their commitment to the proposed program and confirming their anticipated roles and responsibilities. If a portion of the match comes from a partner, the statement must confirm the partner's commitment to contribute the matching resources. If the applicant is a California Community College proposing a program in another district, a letter from the host district must be submitted along with a plan to obtain an MOU.

Budget Form

The budget template (Form B in the Appendix) must be completed and signed by the individual within the applicant's organization with responsibility for financial reporting. Applicants do not need to fill in the blanks on this form; a replica can be created in excel or word. Budgets must be submitted for partners if the applicant plans to transfer or sub-contract RFP funds to the partner agency. The matching funds section should be filled out by the applicant entity only.

Workplan and Objectives

Please include a completed workplan for the proposed project (see Form C in the Appendix). This workplan requires identification of the program's objectives, specific grant activities, outcomes, timelines, and responsible individuals over the three years of the initiative. Applicants need not fill in the blanks on this exact form; a replica can be created in excel or word.

Objectives should identify the goals the program seeks to achieve, as listed in the project description. Applicants should list one objective per sheet and use only one page for each objective. Objectives must be itemized and should be linked to measurable outcomes.

Grant activities are the tasks and basic steps that need to be completed in order to achieve the particular objective. Outline each major grant activity or task necessary for the objective.

Measurable outcomes should link to the objectives and grant activities. Outcomes can be qualitative, quantitative, or both.

Timelines should refer to completion dates for the grant activities of the project. The timeline can include a planning period of a maximum of three months if necessary. Instruction and support services should begin no later than Fall 2016.

Identify the individuals and agencies responsible for completing these activities, either by name or by job title. Partners from other entities should be included if relevant.

VI. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be carefully reviewed and evaluated by a selection committee that includes practitioners and policymakers with expertise in higher education and criminal justice. Proposals will be scored on the following five components with the weight indicated below assigned to each respective component:

1. Proposal Narrative (45%)

- Statement of Need (5%)
- Project Description (20%)
- Challenges and Strategies (10%)
- Experience with Criminal-Justice Involved Students (5%)
- Capacity to Participate in Evaluation and Plan for Sustainability (5%)

2. Staffing and Partnerships (10%)

3. Budget and Budget Narrative (20%)

4. Workplan and Objectives (15%)

5. Overall Approach and Feasibility (10%)

Other criteria that may be considered in the selection process include:

- Diversity in program models & targeted students
- Geographic distribution
- Urban, suburban, and/or rural distribution
- Program size
- Incorporation of alternatives to incarceration
- Mixture of expanded existing programs and new programs

VII. Application Instructions

RFP Issue Date: November 9, 2015

Notice of Intent to Apply Deadline: January 11, 2016 at 5:00 pm

A Notice of Intent to Apply should be submitted by email to laura@theopportunityinstitute.org. The Notice should specify (1) the name of the applicant and the applicant's higher education partner(s) if the applicant is not a higher education institution, (2) the county, and (3) whether the proposal will be primarily prison-based, jail-based, or community/campus-based.

Application Deadline: February 1, 2016 at 5:00 pm

Submission Instructions:

Applications should be submitted in PDF format by email to laura@theopportunityinstitute.org

Link to additional Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Other Information:

Please visit the Renewing Communities section of The Opportunity Institute website (<http://theopportunityinstitute.org/>). We strongly recommend that applicants check the site regularly for updates to the FAQs and other relevant information.

Please submit any questions in writing to laura@theopportunityinstitute.org by Friday, December 4, 2015 at 5:00 pm. Updated FAQs will be posted in response to the questions. Questions will also be addressed in a webinar on Friday morning, December 11, 2015.

Appendix

Form A: Information Required on Cover Page

Applicant: _____

Name of Representative Submitting Application: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Contact Person for Application (if different from above): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Primary Category: __Prison-Based Program __Jail-Based Program __Community-Based Program

County: _____

Educational Institution: _____

Correctional Institution (if applicable): _____

Proposed number of students served annually: _____

Requested grant amount: _____

Total budget: _____

Amount and percentage of public match: _____

Proposal Abstract (maximum 150 words):

Form B: Proposed Budget

Applicant Name: _____

Budget

Cash Expenses

Amount

Salaries (list individual personnel by name or job title and the amount)

Job Title \$ _____

Fringe benefits \$ _____

Subcontracts³ (list each subcontract recipient and the amount)

Recipient \$ _____

Travel and professional development \$ _____

Supplies \$ _____

Other (list each expense and the amount)

Expense \$ _____

Indirect costs \$ _____

Total Cash Expenses \$ _____

Expenses covered with public matching funds

Amount

In-Kind (yes/no)

Description \$ _____

Total Matching Funds \$ _____

TOTAL BUDGET (cash expenses + public matching funds) \$ _____

³ Each partner receiving a subcontract must submit its own budget and budget narrative addressing the cash expenses for the full amount of the subcontract. Only the applicant should complete the section on matching expenses above; subcontractors should only complete the “cash expenses” section.

If your project has other sources of funds, please list them here:

Source and Description	\$ _____
Source and Description	\$ _____
Source and Description	\$ _____
Source and Description	\$ _____

Authorizing Signature

This budget has been reviewed and approved by the following individual responsible for financial reporting:

Name/Title: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Date: _____

Form C: Workplan and Objectives

Please include one page for each identified objective.

Objective:			
Activities	Outcomes	Timeline	Responsible Person(s)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Eligibility

Can private non-profit colleges apply?

Private non-profit colleges may apply. Costs that will be borne by students and not covered by the applicant, such as tuition, must be described in the budget narrative. Tuition can be donated but in-kind donations such as tuition that exceed one-third of the total public match will not be given weight in the selection process.

Can private for-profit colleges apply?

No, for-profit colleges cannot apply.

Can multiple education institutions jointly submit an application?

Yes, multiple education institutions can apply together but one institution should be identified and serve as the lead applicant for all communication and accountability purposes. Also, the proposal should clearly delineate specific roles and responsibilities of each partner institution.

Can organizations other than institutions of higher education apply?

Yes, organizations with 501(c)(3) status are eligible to apply. These organizations must partner with an accredited institution of higher education and must be primarily dedicated to providing college education to currently or formerly incarcerated students.

Who do you mean by “currently incarcerated” students?

For the purposes of this RFP, “currently incarcerated” students includes adults incarcerated in state, federal, or county correctional facilities in California. It does not include individuals incarcerated in juvenile facilities.

Who do you mean by “formerly incarcerated” students?

For the purposes of this RFP, “formerly incarcerated” students includes anyone who is currently being supervised by adult probation or parole or who has a prior conviction record. For example, students who have served only a probation term may be considered “formerly incarcerated.” However, students who have an arrest record but do not have a prior conviction record will not be considered “formerly incarcerated” for purposes of this RFP.

What is included in the category of “higher education” programs?

Eligible higher education programs include credit-bearing academic programs and may also include certain career technical education (CTE) programs. Proposals for CTE programs must provide evidence that the proposed program contributes to a viable career pathway for their students. As a general rule, programs that offer isolated career training or CTE certificates, without stackable credentials or demonstrated opportunities for greater educational achievement, will not be funded.

Do proposed programs have to focus exclusively on currently and/or formerly incarcerated populations?

Proposed programs under this RFP must serve exclusively currently and/or formerly incarcerated students. Funding will only be awarded for program components serving exclusively this population of students. However, these proposed programs may be part of a larger initiative at the college, university, or community-based organization that serves a broader range of students.

Can existing programs apply?

Existing programs can apply but the application must be limited to the expenses necessary to enhance their current offerings or add capacity.

Can a community college propose a program outside its district boundary?

Yes. However, a MOU between the applicant college and the host district should be included with the application. If an MOU cannot be obtained, a letter from the host district should accompany the application. If a letter is submitted, it should outline the contours of the agreement between the districts and include a timeline for the completed MOU.

Project Scope and Requirements

Do all courses offered have to be transferable?

Transferability of courses should be a priority for a high-quality program.

Can we provide career-technical education (CTE)?

Applicants that provide career-technical education may be funded, but these applicants must provide evidence that the proposed CTE program contributes to a viable career pathway for their students. They should also demonstrate that the CTE program lays the groundwork for a student to continue on the pathway to further academic credentials should the student desire to do so. A strong CTE program might include stackable credits, standards-based academics with a career-relevant, sequenced curriculum following industry-themed pathways that are aligned to high-need, high-growth, or emerging regional economic sectors, and/or articulated pathways to postsecondary education aligned with regional economies. All programs must be housed within the higher education context. Programs housed within probation or parole will generally not be funded. Apprenticeship programs will not be funded.

Can we provide distance education?

Distance education is strongly discouraged. Proposals including an element of distance education must make a compelling showing of need. Any distance education provided must be high-quality, interactive education. Correspondence education will not be funded.

Are we required to serve a particular number of people?

No particular capacity is required. Successful applicants will present a feasible plan for effectively serving as many students as they can serve well, with a plan for growth and/or replication.

Do we have to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with our partners?

It is not necessary to have a formal MOU at the time of application. A formal letter of commitment signed by the partners is acceptable. A MOU will be required as part of the contract process for applicants that are awarded funding.

The requirements include connecting students with reentry and social services. Who must provide these services?

These services do not have to be provided directly by the educational institution or applicant, though applicants should demonstrate their awareness of the reentry needs anticipated by their participant students and a plan for addressing them. Programs can connect students with these services through partnerships with local agencies and community-based organizations. Some examples of relevant services include: providing bus passes or other transportation support, housing assistance, employment placement services, and expungement services to clear criminal records.

Do prison-based programs, especially those serving students without an imminent release date, need to have formal agreements with reentry organizations?

Prison programs should help students plan for continuing their education upon release to the greatest extent possible. This may take a different form for prison-based programs compared to jail-based programs and community-based programs, as students in prison may not be released to the community in which the prison is located and because participating students may be serving lengthy prison sentences. However, because nearly all incarcerated students will eventually be released, prison-based programs should address how they will partner with relevant organizations and help students plan for release to the extent possible.

Do we have to provide credit-bearing courses if the program is jail-based?

Jail-based programs may offer college readiness courses alone as long as there is a bridge for students to continue into credit-bearing college courses in the community after release. Jail-based programs are encouraged to creatively build on-ramps from the jail to a local higher education institution. This may take the form of intensive short-term classes, readiness courses, or other preparatory classes provided by a higher education partner that link jail inmates with the higher education institution. A partner support program at the higher education institution is strongly encouraged.

Can we provide noncredit college readiness/developmental/remedial courses?

All applicants may – and are encouraged to – include college readiness as a pathway into a credit-bearing college program. Prison-based programs cannot offer only college readiness courses; they must also include a credit-bearing component. Applicants should all include a plan for the provision of student readiness courses for those students who do not assess into the academic classes being offered.

For a community-based organization applicant proposing a program in prison or jail, may the applicant teach the courses of instruction, or must the courses be delivered by a college or university partner?

Either the community-based organization or the educational institution can deliver the courses, as long as the courses are high-quality and students receive course credit from an accredited institution of higher education. It is acceptable for community-based organization applicants to

offer the support and wrap-around services while partnering with an education institution that provides the coursework.

Does a program for formerly incarcerated students have to provide academic programming or restrict the academic courses that students can take?

A program for formerly incarcerated students need not itself provide academic courses, but it must provide services and support for participating students enrolled in the college or university. Through the provision of counseling services and other supports and services, the program must direct students onto a high-quality academic pathway. See earlier FAQ for CTE pathways.

When do we need to begin delivering services/instruction to students?

There is a maximum three-month planning phase allowable under the grant. We expect instruction and support services for students to begin fully no later than Fall 2016, and we encourage programs to begin serving students as soon as effectively possible.

For prison- or jail-based programs, do we have to identify particular faculty who will teach in the prison or jail?

Faculty must be identified only if they will be part of the key staff for the program, providing services or support other than teaching. Although faculty who will be teaching need not be identified, applicants should address their plan for selecting and working with faculty who will teach inside the prison or jail. In addition, applicants should also specify the sequence of courses that will be provided over the three-year term of the initiative.

When you say a “program director” is required, does that person have to work exclusively on this initiative?

No, the program director does not have to be exclusively working on this initiative, but he or she must spend a significant amount of time focused on this work to ensure its effective launch and successful implementation.

What are the reporting requirements?

Successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly reports to The Opportunity Institute. Information such as the number of students served, the number of students assessed, and implementation progress reporting will be included. The Opportunity Institute will also conduct regular check-ins with the selected sites, both in person and by phone.

Budget

How much funding will each recipient receive?

The amount of each award will vary by number of students served, location, program intervention, potential for growth, and other factors.

When will funds be distributed?

The funds will be distributed in late Spring 2016 following successful contract negotiations between the awardee and The Opportunity Institute.

What are non-allowable expenses?

Non-allowable expenses include cash transfers directly to students and subsidized housing for students. Expenses can include technology for student participants (tablets, e-readers, etc.) but funding will not be provided for students to keep the technology permanently.

Is it acceptable to budget for student assistants?

Yes, including paid students assistants or mentors in your budget is acceptable. All budget items will be evaluated for reasonableness and quality as part of the review process.

Can grant funds be used to offer training for faculty or staff who are entering and/or teaching in a prison or jail?

Most, if not all, correctional facility partners will require that faculty or staff receive training before entering; either the facility or the academic institution can propose to cover the cost. If additional training is deemed necessary, the cost of that additional training should be reflected in the budget and the rationale should be addressed in the budget narrative.

Are currently and formerly incarcerated students eligible for financial aid awards?

Applicants are encouraged to work with the financial aid counselors at their higher education institution to determine the financial eligibility for program students. In general, students incarcerated in both prison and jail and formerly incarcerated students are eligible for BOG Enrollment Fee Waivers at California Community Colleges, and they may be eligible for other types of financial aid. Prison students are not currently eligible for Federal Pell Grants although jail students are eligible. Applicants should consult Appendix C: College Admission and Financial Aid Overview for Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Students in *Degrees of Freedom* or the Financial Aid Office of the college or university applicant or partner for further information on financial aid eligibility. Federal financial aid cannot count as a matching resource. Financial aid in the forms of loans cannot count as a matching resource.

Who can supply the public matching resources?

For all programs, the matching resources must come from a local or state public source but need not come entirely from the applicant entity. It is encouraged that the match demonstrate commitment from both criminal justice and education stakeholders. Possible sources of the match include funding from California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (including Equity funds, SSSP funds), the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, local government grants, AB 109 funds, AB 86/AB 104 funds, or other sources. For example, a portion of the cash match could be a dedicated employee in the County probation department, who will receive training from the education institution and who will be a point of contact for the proposed project.

Matching resources from private and federal public sources will not count towards the match requirement in evaluating proposals but are encouraged.

Does the matching have to be one-to-one?

No, the matching resources do not have to be one-to-one. The public match must comprise a minimum of 25% of the total project budget. In-kind matches can constitute no more than one-third of the total public match.

Applications with a greater portion of their budget covered by the public match and applications that increase the proportion of the budget provided by public sources over the three-year period will receive greater weight in the selection process.

What constitutes an in-kind match?

The public match may include up to one-third in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions could include dedicated space in the prison, jail, or education institution; tuition and fee waivers (including BOG Enrollment Fee Waivers); materials and supplies provided by the prison, jail, or education institution; or computer or IT support and materials provided by the prison, jail, or education institution.

The remaining amount of the public match must be cash or repurposed spending such as dedicated staffing. Staffing cannot be counted as a match if the contribution would be within the person's normal job duties. For example, a financial aid counselor who provides assistance to all students, whether formerly incarcerated or not, could not be considered part of the match for the portion of the time the person spends counseling formerly incarcerated students. However, a career counselor who develops expertise in the challenges faced by formerly incarcerated students and dedicates a significant portion of his or her time to the applicant's program could have that portion of his or her salary count.

When do the public match resources need to be available?

It is acceptable if the cash portion of the public match is not available to the applicant until July 1, 2016 or the start of the applicant's next fiscal year.

Is there a limit on the Indirect Cost Rate?

No application containing an indirect cost rate greater than 10% will be permitted, and applicants are encouraged to submit applications with the lowest indirect cost rate possible.

I had heard this was a three-year program. Why does the grant period cover only one year?

Renewing Communities is a three-year initiative, and we expect contracts to be renewed at the end of the one-year grant term. Renewal is not guaranteed and will be subject in part to performance and implementation reviews conducted during year one.