RFP #GC15-013
2015-2022 NYS Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools

Questions and Answers

Program Design

1. Must a P-TECH program be for six years? Will this grant fund a program designed so that a student may complete all high school and AAS degree requirements in five years or even in four years?
   The NYS P-TECH Program is designed as a six year program to allow the students targeted by this grant the time and opportunity to complete their Regents high school diploma, their AAS degree, and workplace learning. If students accelerate through the program in four or five years, that is acceptable; however, every student participating in the NYS P-TECH Program must be given the full six years to complete the program.

2. So long as a cohort receives instruction at the same location, can that location change in different years of the program? For instance, is it permissible to provide instruction in Year 1 at a district high school, Years 2 and 3 at a BOCES technical center, Years 4 and 5 at a college campus and Year 6 at a common work site?
   The location of instruction may change but the cohort must remain together at each location.

3. Some of the local programs with degrees related to STEM areas are AS, AA, or AOS. Would those degrees also be eligible?
   Yes. Students will earn an Associate of Applied Science degree or the two-year degree that is the industry standard for the targeted jobs in a high-tech field.

4. I know that the RFP for the NYS Pathways in Technology Early High School (P-TECH) grant requires an AAS degree, but it also indicates that the two-year degree that is the industry standard for the targeted jobs is also acceptable. I am wondering if, specifically, an Associate of Science or A.S. degree is acceptable as well?
   Yes. See Answer 3.

5. What is meant by a "2+2+2" or a "4+2" program? We are not familiar with that terminology.
   A 4+2 program is the traditional high school program wherein students complete their high school requirements from the freshman year through the senior year at their home school district, graduate, and then continue on to a two-year degree program at an institution of higher education. A 2+2+2 program is one where students remain in their home school districts for their freshman and sophomore years, attend a CTE program at their BOCES full or part-time during their junior and senior years, graduate from high school, and then continue to a two-year degree program at an institution of higher education. NYS P-TECH is an integrated six year program with early introduction of college courses no later than 10th grade and should NOT be divided into two year components, e.g. two years of high school, two years of CTE and college course and two years to complete college courses.

6. We understand that students in this program need to begin on the first day of 9th grade. Can that portion occur at the high school building (at least during the first semester) as long as it is developed with the program and partners in mind?
   NYS P-TECH students must attend school at a single location on the first day of 9th grade. That location may be a high school building; however, for those projects which include multiple schools districts, all NYS P-TECH students must come together at one location. When students are recruited from multiple districts, they may not remain in their home districts even if only for one semester of 9th grade.

7. The RFP (on page 7) mentions that students must be taught at one location beginning in 9th grade. Is it okay if students are taught at a school district and a college campus? Or do students have to receive all instruction/activities, etc. at one location?
   All students, whether from one school district or multiple school districts, must all come together on the first day of their NYS P-TECH Program at the same location for the beginning of their secondary education. The high school instructional program should be delivered to each cohort in a single, common location to ensure consistent, rigorous instruction that is infused with the targeted career pathways and offers a college-going, professional environment throughout the school day. Students will go to appropriate locations (business/employer partner's worksites and/or the college partner's campus) for workplace learning and college coursework

when their programs of study require, but the majority of their high school coursework* should be done in one location where the teachers, staff, and leaders are all focused on the goals of the NYS P-TECH model. This may be a stand-alone school or a school- within-a school model but NOT a multiple high school model.

*Some high school requirements may be met through dual credit college courses taken either at the NYS P-TECH high school or the college campus.

8. We'd like to have two school districts and a BOCES partner. Programming would be taught on all of the school district campuses and at the partner college; is that okay? To further explain – all students would start their learning at one school district campus, but then once they decide on which of five programs (AAS degrees) to pursue, they would go to the district campus that offers that program; is that okay? Our thought is that each school district has different equipment and facilities, which would make them more or less appropriate to host students pursuing different degrees – so if we could determine students' P-TECH location based on the AAS they are pursuing, it would make a stronger program and experience for students.
No, students must begin on day one at the same location. See Answer 7.

9. Can students continue to take some high school courses in their home district, while also starting P-TECH programming? For instance, I see that in existing P-TECH programs 9th and 10th grade students often spend part of their day (typically the morning) in their home district for some high school courses, then go to the P-TECH school for classes and activities in the afternoon. Is that still allowed?
No. For multiple-district applications, students may not take high school courses in their home district. All students must receive instruction at a common location beginning on day one of 9th grade.

10. Since we will be looking to developing new courses particular to key "college knowledge," will this mean the population taking these courses will be more or less segregated from the rest of the school population?
NYS P-TECH students will be a cohort unto themselves, either as a school-within-a-school or a stand-alone school model that offers integrated curriculum beginning in 9th grade. For school-within-a-school models, students may participate in certain electives and/or extracurricular activities with other students and leverage the resources of the larger

school, but the NYS P-TECH program must have a distinct identity and serve a targeted cohort for the core program.

11. Page7 (second to last bullet) refers to "offering multiple pathways." What might that entail?
Multiple pathways means a NYS P-TECH project may offer more than one AAS degree program for more than one career pathway.

12. There's a reference to "students with varying levels of academic achievement in 8th grade." We see the data from grade 8 as a way to encourage and place students in the new program. Does this mean something else or something in addition to that?
The NYS P-TECH Program is focused on disadvantaged students and those who exhibit a risk factor that would indicate they would not attend college without the supports of NYS P-TECH. Schools should not use an academic screen to select students, though they can consider student interest.

13. Can you target serving the at-risk students characterized on page 44 of the application but also ultimately serve other students as well? Is there a required percentage of the population served that must fall into the target populations described?
All students participating in the NYS P-TECH Program should be identified using the following criteria:
   - **At-risk for not successfully completing high school or not enrolling in or succeeding in college;**
   - **Belong to populations that have historically not had access to or success in higher education;**
   - **Do not have the financial resources to fully fund an Associate degree without tuition assistance; and**
   - **Are in attendance in a school district with Focus status as most recently determined by NYSED at the following link: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEADesignations.html**

14. Page 13, item 3 states, "intensive, individualized academic support…" Might that also include computer learning programs? Can funds be used for those if it does?
Computer learning programs may be used as part of intensive, individualized academic support, and funds may be used for such a purchase.

15. Same section "within an extended academic year or school day" leads us to believe that evenings, Saturdays, and summers are all allowable. True?
Yes.

16. Page 45 #3 addresses "how extended learning time (a target of 90 hours of additional instruction) is provided…" Is this 90 hours over the course of all six years the students are in the program (i.e. 15 hours per year) or is it each year?
An additional 90 hours of instruction should be included in each program year except the first Planning Year (2015-2016).

17. Does every student need to complete an internship, workplace visit and apprenticeship? Or are those just among the experiences business partners could offer? If a student does one of those activities, does that fulfill the grant program requirement?
Students do not need to complete an internship AND workplace visits AND an apprenticeship; however, every student must be assigned a career mentor and participate in workplace visits and other work based learning activities. Additionally, the NYS P-TECH program should also include opportunities for actual work in the designated industry. Depending on the industry, design of the program, and opportunities at partner businesses, this may take the form of paid internships, for-credit work-based learning in an approved program, or formal apprenticeships.

18. Can programs offer an optional summer session or extended day to complete degree requirements if more than 64 credits are needed?
NYS P-TECH students must be able to complete all of the requirements for the Regents high school diploma, workplace learning opportunities, and the AAS degree within the six years of the program. Extended days or summer sessions can be utilized for the completion of these requirements within the six years; however, per SUNY standards and the design of the NYS P-TECH Program, no two-year degree should exceed 64 credits.

19. Can we spread out the college learning to five semesters or more, as long as it doesn't include summer or intersession periods? We would like to spread out the college courses to help ensure students can also complete their high school courses, and particularly since these are students at-risk, we think spreading out the college courses would help ensure student success.

See Answer 18. Additionally, by starting college coursework no later than 10th grade, students will have the opportunity to spread their course work over five years and potentially six if college coursework begins in the 9th grade.

20. The RFP states college learning must begin in 10th grade and all learning must be over four semesters. Does that mean students would have to take all four semesters in a row beginning in 10th grade? Or could they take one semester of course-work in grade 10, then one semester in grades 11-13? In other words, can they do the learning in four semesters but not have those semesters be necessarily in sequence?
See Answer 19.

21. The RFP (pg. 57) mentions that credit-bearing college course work should be introduced no later than 10th grade. Can we offer an introductory credit-bearing college course in 10th grade, then wait on further college courses until students get to grades 12-14?
See Answers 18 and 19. Students should continue taking college course work throughout grades 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

22. We find students are more motivated on summer course work if they get college credit, and we would like to offer an introductory credit-bearing college course over the summer for incoming 10th graders (that orients students to the college, gives them some basic skills, etc.). Is that okay? If it's not allowed because it is credit-bearing, could we offer the course with no credits, and those students who wanted to receive the college credit could choose to pay for it themselves?
Students may take college credit course work during the summer so long as it is cost-free to the student/family.

23. Is the Lead Applicant required to provide five additional professional development days annually or five total days over the seven-year grant period?
Five additional professional development days must be offered over the seven-year grant period. This is the responsibility of the Lead Implementation Partner.

Funding

24. Page 48 of the RFP states: "Applicants should take into account that, as high school students, NYS P-TECH students will NOT be eligible for TAP or Pell funding." Does that mean that P-TECH students would be eligible for TAP or Pell beginning in their 5th year of the program?
   NYS P-TECH students remain on their high school register for all six years of the program, and as such, they are not eligible for TAP or Pell.

25. Are there limitations to the usage of grant funds for transportation? May we budget money to bus students daily between their home school districts to the common instructional location? May we budget funds for individual students to travel to work sites for mentoring, internships, etc.? Can funds be used for group field trips?
   NYS P-TECH grant funds may be used for transportation for students for daily travel between their home districts and the common instructional location, travel to work sites for mentoring and internships, and travel for field trips. There is no specific limitation on funds used for this purpose, but all expenditures must be in compliance with applicable State laws and regulations and NYSED's Fiscal Guidelines and should be reasonable and appropriate to cover program expenses. All budgets will be subject to review and modification in the grant-making process.

26. Is transportation of students from P-TECH campus to the higher-education partner campus an allowable expense under this grant?
   See Answer 25.

27. Page 5 #2 refers to "higher education partners…are authorized by law to set a reduced rate of tuition," etc. Just in case they need to know specifics, who authorizes? Under what law?

   Chapter 61of the Laws of 2015
   http://open.nysenate.gov/legislation/bill/S4612B-2015

   "PROVIDED FURTHER THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF LAW TO THE CONTRARY, HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS PARTICIPATING IN A P-TECH PROGRAM, OR THE ENTITY/ENTITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING TUITION AT THE INSTITUTION, SHALL BE AUTHORIZED TO SET A REDUCED RATE OF TUITION AND/OR FEES, OR TO WAIVE TUITION AND/OR FEES ENTIRELY, FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SUCH P-TECH PROGRAM WITH NO REDUCTION IN OTHER STATE, LOCAL OR OTHER SUPPORT FOR SUCH STUDENTS EARNING COLLEGE CREDIT THAT SUCH HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNER WOULD OTHERWISE BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE."

28. Are higher education partners encouraged or REQUIRED to waive or reduce tuition costs to no more than existing "college in high school rates"?
Higher education partners are encouraged to waive or reduce tuition costs to no more than the existing college in the high school rates, and the degree must be cost-free to students and their families.

29. Will carryover be allowed if there are any unspent grant funds in any given project year?
It is possible that 2015-22 NYS P-TECH projects will be allowed to carry over unspent funds from one grant year to the next; however, requests to carryover funds will be evaluated on an individual basis and contingent upon the grantees' progress, performance, and program needs.

30. Under allowable expenditures in the RFP (page 17) it states that workshop and planning meetings are appropriate expenditures. Does this include salary and benefits for college faculty and high school teachers attending those planning meetings?
Yes.

31. Page 18 of the RFP mentions mini-grants to members of the partnership not being allowed; can you give an example of what this means?
A sub-grant occurs when the applicant delegates programmatic decision making or responsibility for achieving program goals to a partner or other third party. The Lead Applicant/Fiscal Agent is fully responsible for compliance with program requirements and achievement of program objectives.

32. Can we give a set dollar amount to the college and partner school districts to help cover the cost of their staff participating in planning meetings? Is that considered a service contract, and allowed?
Yes.

MWBE

33. When completing the MWBE Goal Calculation Worksheet do we place the salaries and fringe benefits for partner organizations on line 2 and 3? (We have typically pulled these numbers directly from the FS-10 or Budget Summary).
Yes, lines 2-4 should include any project salaries and fringe benefits of the lead applicant AND members of the partnership.

34. Do MOU's with partners need to contain an itemization of estimated costs by category or is the information on the Resource and Expenditure Plan sufficient? (Do you need some kind of formal verification for salary and benefit costs for partner organizations for MWBE purposes)
MOUs do not need to contain an itemization of estimated costs. The information provided in the Resource and Expenditure Plan is sufficient. Including a breakdown of salary and benefit costs for partner organizations within the appropriate sections of the budget narrative and FS-10 is sufficient for M/WBE purposes.

35. Will it be possible to request a waiver that will allow us to make M/WBE commitments initially just for the first year's M/WBE requirement and then work out the M/WBE details annually thereafter? The year one planning period will give us time to better identify and assess M/WBE firms to ensure full compliance annually.
At this time, in this situation, the submission of the utilization plan is being deferred. Please complete the M/WBE documentation based upon your program's proposed Year 1 budget, and submit a letter indicating that, while details may change year by year, your program is committed to continued M/WBE compliance for the full grant period.

Mentorships

36. Do mentorships need to be one-on-one or can one mentor meet with a small group (3 or 4) students?
Mentorships can be one-on-one or one to small group.

37. Is there a minimum expected time commitment for mentorships?
There is no minimum expected time commitment for mentorships.

38. Do mentorships need to start in 9th grade?
Yes.

39. Are mentors required to meet with students individually during their entire P-TECH experience (all years)? Or, can a mentor meet with groups of students in grade 9 and 10, then start mentoring students individually beginning in grade 11?
Mentors can meet either individually or with small groups of students during the program. Career mentoring will take different forms as the students progress through the six year program. Individual partnerships

are encouraged to develop a mentor program based on local experience, employer partner capacity and best practices.

MOUs

40. Can we modify the MOU form (other than inserting information for the Lead Applicant and partners) or do we need to use the exact MOU form in the RFP? **Applicants must use the MOU form provided in the RFP. Additional partner responsibilities may be added, but responsibilities cannot be removed as partners are expected to meet all the responsibilities listed at a minimum.**

41. Page 6 states, "A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that has been signed by all members of the partnership must be included. Applications that do not include a MOU signed by all partners will not be reviewed for consideration." May a completed MOU be submitted to NYSED that includes a separate signature page at the end for each education and business/employer partner? All education and business/employer partner names would appear in the body of the MOU. This format would be in lieu of a MOU with all signatures ganged together at the end of the document.
A completed MOU may include separate signature pages but all partners must submit a signature page.

42. Page 6 in paragraph about the MOU says it "should contain articulation language that ensures that the higher education credits earned in the program are transcripted and acceptable toward the AAS degree…." Elaborate, please.
Articulation language should identify that the college credits earned through the NYS P-TECH Program will be acceptable toward the applicable AAS degree(s).

43. We are planning to allow all of our local BOCES component school districts to send students to our proposed P-TECH for a fee (like they would pay to send a student to BOCES for CTE programming). In that case, do all of the components need to sign the MOU? Or just those which are involved with the planning, or have specific responsibilities?
All BOCES component districts that intend to send students to participate in the NYS P-TECH Program must sign the MOU in addition to the Higher Education Partner(s) and all Business/Employer Partner(s).

Coursework

44. What health career programs would be eligible for our students to take?
Eligible health career programs would include those for which the degree programs do not exceed 64 credits and can be completed in four academic semesters of normal registration. Degree programs which do not meet this requirement include but are not limited to: Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapy Assistant, Massage Therapy, and Dental Hygiene.

It is important to note that some allied health programs are not suitable for NYS P-TECH due to additional licensure/certification/accreditation requirements or restrictions on clinical placements. If you are considering proposing programs in the allied health field, please confirm with your partnering institution of higher education that these restrictions do not apply to the proposed program(s).

Business Partners

45. Can you explain what "first in line" means for business partners? Does that mean they are required to interview P-TECH graduates but not necessarily hire them?
"First in line for a job" means that students will be considered preferred, eligible applicants for available jobs that are consistent with the NYS P-TECH program they completed and aligned with the skills map developed for the program. The NYS P-TECH Program is driven by regional employers identifying those jobs for which they need or will need a well-trained workforce.

46. The RFP states that business partners must place students "who successfully complete the program first in line for a job." Can you explain what that means?
See Answer 45.

47. If our business partner is a local Chamber of Commerce, is it okay if mentors come from its member businesses (vs. the chamber itself)?
Mentors should come from the member businesses as they are expected to be the employers in the partnership.

48. We have a local public university that has businesses on campus and routinely takes interns. Could they count as a regional business partner? (We are using a different college to provide the college course-work, so this university would just serve as a regional business partner.)

The Business/Employer Partner must be a regional New York State employer, a consortium of employers from the same sector, and/or industry entity/association that requires highly skilled employees which will utilize the knowledge and skills obtained from the secondary and postsecondary programs proposed under the application and agrees to place students who successfully complete the program first in line for a job.

49. Can one of the business partners in a consortium revisit the question of participation in the program during the initial planning year?
No, all P-TECH partners should be prepared to meet the stated commitments and should not revisit their participation. With that said, if one of multiple business partners is unable to meet its commitments, the NYS P-TECH partnership must continue to include at least one business partner that has signed the MOU and is prepared to meet the stated commitments.

50. Can additional business partners be added to a consortium during the planning year or at any time thereafter?
Yes, but all new business partners must sign the MOU.

Sustainability

51. Page 16 of the RFP mentions a sustainability plan. Should we address that someplace in the program narrative? Or is that just general information for program planning?
Sustainability may be addressed in the program narrative, but reviewers will specifically review the budget materials to consider the likelihood of long-term sustainability of the program.

52. Is the expectation that the full program will continue beyond the seven-year grant period without the support of new grant funds?
Yes.

Other

53. Page 5 of the RFP states that school districts "must maintain a demonstration of full implementation of an approved APPR plan…" Do districts need to

demonstrate this for the grant application? If so, what kind of documentation are you looking for?
No APPR documentation is required with the application.

54. When you use the term school leader, do you mean an administrator such as a principal or an AP?
Yes.

55. Should we be using the 2014-15 or 2015-16 list to determine if we have districts involved with Focus Status? If we should be using the 2015-16 list, when do you anticipate posting that list on the NYSED website?
You should use the 2015-16 list at:
http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEADesignations.html.

Application Submission

56. Can we hand-deliver applications? If yes, is there a deadline time on July 15?
Yes, applications may be hand delivered on July 15, 2015 no later than 4:45 PM.

57. If we hand-deliver our application, what is the SED contact name and phone number to give to the security guard at the building entrance?
For those projects hand delivering applications, please have security contact Amy Cox at 518-473-3769 or Kymberly Warren at 518-486-5202.

58. Can we include an electronic version of all documents in PDF format, instead of Word?
While the preferred format for electronic submission is Word, application documents in the PDF format will be accepted.

59. Page 2 of the RFP notes that an electronic version of the application needs to be submitted, containing all application and M/WBE documents in Word. Does that include the FS-10?
Yes.

60. Will attachments (such as resumes, scope and sequence, job descriptions, etc.) be allowed beyond the 10-page narrative limit?
Yes.

61. Is the abstract included in the 10-page limit of the proposal narrative?
No. The abstract can be a separate document no more than one page.