

## TCC RFP Conference Call Questions and Answers

1. Is it possible for programs to connect with another program (CBO) as well as a college to apply for the pilot project? For example, a program that is already doing a transition to college might connect up to another program in sort of a mentoring role?

*Yes, definitely.*

2. On page 4 of the “program guidelines” section, career counseling and support states that this component is 25 hours a week or did you mean per cycle?

*That should have read that there be at least 25 hours dedicated to the counseling function/position each week. This doesn't mean 25 hours of face-to-face counseling per week, but allows time for outreach to and coordination of other support services in the community and college as well.*

3. Does the project allow for science preparation activities for students who need high school level science before enrolling in health occupations preparation on a college level? All of the sys in ME- auto by 5 years- you need to take a high school refresher science course- the prep in math and English, whoever is entering health prep field needs to take some sort of college prep science course before taking a college science - when I look at the NMEF curriculum it still has just the components of the trans programs and the piece that isn't really discussed is science.

*This is more pertinent for states like Maine where adult education has some high school courses. The online component that NELRC will provide will most likely be health science focused- though it won't count toward any prerequisite. We wouldn't want to have programs replicate what we are providing, but if your program provides high school science courses that satisfy the college prerequisites, then we would look at how the online can complement this rather than replace it.*

4. Are programs expected to meet a “critical mass” of student numbers or other expectations given how few projects will be funded (i.e. with only 6 pilots, will 1 be chosen from each state? Will there be a mix of pilots that cover urban and rural programs?)

*Our aim is to have an urban/ rural mix and to have a program in each state. However we are not obligated to do this and, ultimately, the selection will depend on the quality of the proposals we receive.*

5. Should we be looking further than our own program? Can a federation of adult education programs join with a college partner to submit an RFP?

*If you can make the case for a broader regional program and the budget can support it, then that would be fine.*

6. When reading through all of the information regarding the TCC guidelines, it sounds like initially, at least, that the focus is solely on the pursuit of high-growth occupations in the healthcare field. As I read further, however, I saw that one of the expected outcomes of the RFP is to move 8 out of 30 students, per cycle, to the healthcare field. Please provide additional information as to the exact focus and expectations of the RFP. Is it only healthcare?

*This pilot is focused on strengthening career pathways. Since it can be very difficult, even in urban settings, to find 15 people a cycle who are interested and equipped for single-sector programs, we wanted to see how we could support programs to provide multiple career tracks, starting with health care. Those students who do not select this career path initially, will be working on career and educational planning throughout the semester using the Integrating Career Awareness curriculum guide. The goal is that all students leave the program with career goal (regardless of whether it is health-related).*

7. When you speak about collaborating colleges, do the Nellie Mae Foundation and/or the NELRC have any recommendations as to which colleges may already have relationships with healthcare employers and therefore, ones they would prefer collaboration be made with?

*No, we've left that research to you at the local level.*

8. A footnote on page 4 of the Program Guidelines explanation refers to the fact that "students entering the program will already have a GED, Academic Diploma or traditional HS diploma and have been out of school for at least 5 years." Does the 5 year requirement refer to "traditional schooling" or does it include alternative educational programs such as what is being offered by Notre Dame Education Center (ABE, HS Diploma Programs, ESOL, etc.)?

*No, the five year requirement does not apply to students with GEDs or other alternative high school diplomas. We are targeting "nontraditional learners" defined by a number of factors, two of which we underscore in the eligibility requirements:*

- 1) *students with a nontraditional diploma (e.g. GED, ADP, etc.) regardless of when they received the diploma - last year, or 10 years ago*
- 2) *students with a traditional high school diploma who have been out of school for 5 years or more.*

9. What about foreign students who received their degree in their home country and do not have access to it?

*We wouldn't suggest that you turn someone away categorically. What we want to avoid is finding out at the end of 15 weeks that someone is a lot further away from college, due to credential issues, or other issues. So the scenario you describe should be taken case by case. You would want to start right at the beginning helping someone try to access their diploma, or consider alternatives (like GED or Ability to Benefit Test, etc.) so that they can resolve it and be college-ready as soon as possible. Similarly, for undocumented students, start discussing the cost of out-of-state tuition and financial aid ineligibility from the very beginning, to assess whether the timing is right for them to enter the transition program or not. We want to help students take that step but also anticipate barriers that could have been seen before the pilot.*

10. There's a requirement of a minimum of 2 weeks of non-instructional time for planning and evaluation, per cycle. Will the NELRC be providing guidelines for the planning and evaluation segments or are the partners responsible for designing the guidelines subject to the NELRC approval?

*Both. The TCC Action Plan details the timeline and expectations for planning. As far as evaluation, we'll be letting funded programs know what kind of data they will be required to collect and be providing templates. But, presumably, there will also be activities that aren't on the Action Plan that partnerships will develop on their own.*

11. What's the expectation in a partnering situation with the 10k? Is it about creating those career pathways?

*It's planning money (\$10k over 4 months). The partnership can determine how it can best be used to best leverage the leadership and staff time needed among multiple stakeholders to develop a program. For answers to the second part of the question, see the TCC Action Plan for timeline and details about what will be expected at the various stages of planning.*

12. It's difficult to get some of the information from colleges about the academic programs and requirements so close to the end of the year and into the summer.

*We do recognize there is a lot of up front data to gather- the key word is "preliminary". We're asking for preliminary budgets and design. We understand that we can't ask you for your final vision until you have some chance to plan. But at the same time, we need enough information to assess the strength of the proposal - has the need been established, how well is the preliminary design thought out, and is the career pathway viable (for example). If the stakeholders are invested and engaged in then they will make the information available.*

13. Question on budget- guidance on allowable costs?

*The funding is pretty flexible, but if the budget came in with something that didn't seem a sound use of funding, and the rest of the proposal was strong otherwise, we would address this with the program.*

14. Are the original Nellie Mae college transition programs at a disadvantage for funding? Basically, we are wondering if this grant is geared towards new transition programs.

*The RFP is geared towards programs that have a foundation already in providing some college transition components and are ready to apply the career pathways elements we've outlined. The college transition programs that have been funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation in the past are at neither an advantage or disadvantage.*

15. Can the Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE/ESOL Classroom curriculum be used outside of the college transition program?

*Yes, definitely. It is designed to be used at all levels and is available to any program regardless of participation in this pilot.*

16. We have a relationship with NHCTC and the biomedical program. Would biotech career count? From NH Career Tech website: The Biotechnology Career Pathway focuses on preparing students to thrive in a world where biotechnology impacts society, the environment, and personal health and safety.

*Biotech would not count as allied health or nursing careers.*

17. Proposal is 10 pages - single spaced?

*Yes, 12 pt font, standard margins.*

18. Under guidelines, page 3, "dean" can be the department head if college is small?

*For the academic side would be academic dean etc- we recognized that the dean would be a few steps removed- it would be great to have the dean and the dept head depending on where your access is.*

19. Regarding educational and career counseling/support service - says minimum is 25 hours per week - is this correct?

*The 25 hours/week refers to the amount of time that a counselor should be available to the TCC program, it is not the number of direct hours with student, but includes time needed to coordinate services for students in the community and*

*at the college, as well as planning workshops, and providing group and individual sessions with students.*

20. Is 25 hours just talking about educational and career support service? I see some things that I do and some things that a counselor does.

*We would just want to be sure that there is solid support for students as needed as well as time for coordinating services and activities as described above. We understand that in ABE people are fulfilling many functions, but our preference is towards building positions where staff are able to develop expertise, capacity, and specialization in their role. In this case, for example, we'd want to be sure that the person providing counseling could devote some time to building their own knowledge and skills in career planning - harder to do the more roles and fragmented hours the person has.*

21. We currently have transition activities- we would love to expand and integrate with someone who could integrate all these programs together – could you see someone doing these functions- some level of integration to build a full position for stability?

*As in question #20, we are in favor of blending funding in order to build staff capacity and stability. At the same time, we would look carefully at the allocation of resources and want to be sure that a counselor's time was not spread too thinly over too many programs or students within your organization.*

22. Can students test out of computing skills?

*Yes. We would want you to describe your process for assessing/testing out.*

23. Can the 8+ students be in transition programs in a different location but do the health course online, e.g., maybe several college transitions programs sharing the model?

*Yes, definitely, as long as the rest of the curriculum that the students were studying at the various sites was also consistent with the guidelines.*

24. We have two centers working with the same one college, both with a different model with transition and the college. One is an ABE provider and the other is heavily for ESL students entering healthcare. We're trying to figure putting that all together in one project since it's the same college or degree programs.

*We encourage creative collaborations and partnerships that can best help a diversity of adult learners access college and career pathways.*

25. Is the online course available any time- or are they getting on the web at a certain time and interacting?

*The course will be asynchronous. We're trying to provide as much flexibility for students as possible, and we're asking how you will help/provide students with flexible and convenient access to high speed internet, if they don't have it in their homes.*

26. Coming into a transition program, should students have an 8<sup>th</sup> grade math level? We probably wouldn't have had any students in our current transition program, if we did that. We find that students come in really, really low. For most of them, they haven't used it in a long time, so after a few weeks of the real basic math it all starts coming back.

*Based on those leanings in the New England ABE-to-College Transition project, we'd expect programs to be somewhat flexible, case-by-case, as you describe. At the same time, you would have to figure out what's realistic so that you don't set up students for failure. You'd want to develop a really good sense of the student and their capabilities, and the reason for the poor assessment.*

27. Is a community college eligible to serve as the lead agency with adult learning centers as partners? (Our college serves a large geographic area, and it would be logistically difficult for one of the centers to coordinate activities. We currently have a successful transition to college program for adult learners and work in collaboration with all of the county's adult learning centers to provide instruction as well as recruitment and outreach activities.)

*The college is eligible to serve as the lead agency only if they house an ABE program there.*

28. What specifically will grant funding cover?

*We'll be looking at proposals that adhere well to the guidelines and make a strong case for the services, needs of the students, and the development of a partnership. We'll be looking at preliminary/provisional budgets and recognize that this budget is likely to be revised as a result of the planning stage. We'll be looking to see wise/realistic allocation of resources. There aren't really categories of allowable and unallowable expenses. If we see a strong proposal with a budget that doesn't make sense, then we will discuss it with the applicant.*

29. Is it expected that the instruction will take place in an adult learning center or at a college?

*That depends entirely on the partnership, what makes sense in your program design, and the resources available. We're happy to consider any creative ways the resources can be used and shared.*

30. Are you saying then that the transitions model could be either a program between ABE and entering college or can they actually be enrolled at the college?

*When we say “in between” we mean they have finished their HS credentialing- they are still preparing to enter college, e.g. to take the Accuplacer, apply for financial aid, explore academic and career options. In addition to academic preparation the transition time is used to prepare students for college expectations and college culture (whether at the college or ABE program). They may also be earning college credit and/or dually enrolled in the college and transition program. The more that a partnership can immerse students in college from the beginning the better.*

31. In terms of entry level into this program- assessment tools- are we using our own or are there some developed by NELRC that should be used?

*Partnerships should determine together what assessments should be used to align the college transition program to preparation for college placement testing and college level work. In the past, ABE-to-College Transition programs have used a combination of things - the TABE, Accuplacer, and program-made assessments. We will be asking later in the planning phase for a description of the assessments you have chosen and/or developed.*

32. What kind of financial commitment is expected from the lead agency?

*NMEF dose not require a match at this stage, but it is important for your budget to reflect what it will actually cost your partnership to provide these programs. An increased financial commitment from the lead and/or partnering organizations may be required over time if the funding is continued.*

33. Should local workforce boards be a partner?

*We didn't make it a requirement because the role of the boards varies so much from region to region. But we certainly recommend WIB involvement in the partnership, where attainable, if not at the outset, then over time.*

34. Pg. 1 of “Program Guidelines” states in the “Roles of Partners” section, “The partnering college will engage employer participation in the partnership to support student transition and facilitate linkages between the ABE/Transition program and the employer(s).” We’re not clear what these “linkages” would be. In our case, our students are nursing home workers (members of our union) already. Some of the nursing home employers will be engaged in this project in different ways (some on-site classes; help with curriculum ideas; financial contributions to the Fund; etc.). Beyond this, what kind of “linkages” are envisioned for this project?

*Since this project does not target incumbent workers specifically, we expect that not all programs will have existing relationships with employers. Given that the initial focus is on the postsecondary ed piece, we've put the onus on the college, initially, to have developed relationships with employers. If a program providing the transitions services already has a relationship with an employer that's great. For transition students who are from the community we would hope to see the program develop relationships with employers to provide things like job shadowing or internships, whatever they can to help expose students to the specific occupations and health care settings. Employer partnerships could also serve to provide employment at the pre-certification level for students who are looking for jobs.*

35. Pg. 6 of "Program Guidelines" states in the "Target Outcomes" section that "75% of the students are prepared to place into at least one college level course. Our current "Transition" program goal is to get students ready to be accepted into the "Bridges" program to complete their developmental education work (non credit). However, in the first semester of the "Bridges" program, all students take a customized, 3 credit class called "IDS 105" or "College Success." This class includes study skills, reading textbooks, and other things like this, but also includes some initial healthcare career exploration things. Can this count as the "college level" course that you mention in the RFP?

*Yes.*

36. In the "Target Outcomes" section, it mentions "job placement." Our students are all employed as healthcare workers already, and a degree is several years away. So, in the MOU that is mentioned here, I'm not clear that job placement fits our context...unless you're looking for a discussion of help with job placement for when they finish their degree down the line. Please clarify.

*In a setting like yours that is focused on incumbent workers' advancement, then those would be the outcomes that we would be looking for over the long term. For students who are not coming from the field, we would be looking ultimately for outcomes related to job placement in their fields of choice. Most likely, a college transition program is going to lose some connection to the students when they go to college, but we hope that if the partnership with the college is strong that tracking students will improve.*

37. Our current Transition program goes for 2 semesters...we've gone back and forth with this, but have pretty much decided that the vast majority of our students need both semesters. This project talks about a "minimum of 14 weeks"...if we wanted to run it longer, is this ok?

*This round, we are only piloting a shorter-term model (single-semester model) and not year-long programs.*

38. The RFP introduction states that the purpose is to “pilot programs that enable adult learners (ESOL, Adult Diploma and GED program graduates, and adults with HS diplomas who have been out of school for at least 5 years) to enroll and succeed in college ...etc.” Would you please clarify whether proposals should focus on services to be provided in ABE classes or for graduates who have completed ABE programs and are ready to move on and make the transition to programs at the College, health careers, in particular.

*For this pilot we are targeting students who have already completed their high school credentials. We are not integrating college preparation into existing GED or advanced ESOL classes. We're looking for students to really be eligible and be ready to enroll in college after a half year. See the definition of non traditional student in answer #8. This most likely means that you would need to recruit students from the community as well as from your GED/ESOL programs.*

39. Do we need to only enroll people who will be ready to enroll in 14 weeks, or can we enroll people who may do a second semester?

*We're aiming for students to be ready to transition to college after a semester in the college transition program, and that's how you should aim your intake and assessment process. But, if someone needs to repeat the program in order to be successful, then they should stay. This is a pilot, so we will all be learning as we go along what is realistic and effective.*

40. Does this grant suggest a role for ABE partners above and beyond the referral of students to post-graduate opportunities? In other words, will this grant support transitional or career specific activity for adults who are currently enrolled in ABE programs?

*We're picturing a fairly substantive role for the ABE program beyond simply referring students to college. We imagine that the ABE program would be doing a fair amount of the college preparation work. The college partner may also be delivering some of the college preparation, but at the very least the curriculum and assessments would be developed in collaboration with the college, regardless of who delivers them and where. Partnership is the key feature here.*

*No the grant does not support transition or career specific activities for adults who are currently enrolled in ABE programs, except insofar as these are limited activities to promote recruitment into a stand alone transition program funded through this pilot. See also #38.*

41. Is the expectation that students are placing into dev level or credit courses?

*We recognize that many students will still place into developmental education courses- our hope is for the highest level of developmental ed. We also put in the guidelines that even if someone places into developmental ed, that they also be*

*enrolled in a college level course that fulfills some of their general education, prerequisites, or major requirements. This, again, is where the college's role in looking at practices and policies that support student progress comes in.*

42. For budget planning purposes, could you define intensity of the professional development activities that will be required as part of this grant?

*We can't say precisely, yet. It will depend on the selected programs and what the needs are for staff development and support. One sure requirement will be that at least 2 staff attend the Effective Transitions conference in Providence, RI (mentioned in the RFP). <http://www.collegetransition.org/>. We will probably try to tack a meeting onto that conference to avoid additional travel. We will also try to use phone and web conferencing as much as possible. On top of this, it's unlikely that we'd have more than one more full day face-to-face meeting during the planning phase.*

43. Does the college level reading and writing requirements have to be done in a Transitions Program or can they be integrated into an ABE program, GED level Language Arts class?

*See # 38.*

44. Can the ABE program be the bridge to employers while the student is in the ABE program? We currently already offer internships with employers in the health and human services field and it is part of our 20 hour ABE program. Can the College Career Services or academic programs department become the bridge after we transition the student to college level work?

*Absolutely, yes. We wrote the RFP the way we did because we expect that for many programs the employer bridge is not established yet. We put some of initial onus onto the college and suggested over time the roles for employers (see Guidelines, pg. 1).*

45. If we already provide ABE classes, career counseling, a career pathway class, a transitions class and have started to create the Health and Human services Distance Learning piece, can this grant be used to continue those efforts and increase capacity?

*If your college preparation is an overlay to your existing ABE/ESOL classes, then that's not the model we're working with in this pilot. If you're talking about adding to an existing stand-alone college transition component, then that would be allowable, as long as "increasing capacity" means increasing the number of student serves to fulfill target outcomes of this project.*

46. When we partner with college staff in various departments, is the \$80k supposed to go to coordination in terms of paying college staff? Can it be a stipend based or salary based or is that something the college would come up for in kind?

*All of the above is allowed. How the budget is designed - stipend, vs. portion of salary is entirely up to the partnership to determine. Although, at this point, a match is not required from the college, since we're looking at institution change and building inroads to college, then the more resources the college can commit to the program (in kind or in cash) the better.*

47. In terms of tutorial services/resources within the school, if students needed extra support services once they get in the college, who provides these?

*This is for the partnership to determine. Naturally, once they get to college some supports are already available to them, but adult learners don't always take advantage of them, so we'd look for some potential solutions to this in your design. For example, does the college transition counselor follow students to college, or does the college provide the support? Your partnership should look at whether adult learners need more resources or support to stay in college and pursue the chosen career pathway? What more might they need and how should it be provided?*

48. Are Maine programs who have been past recipients of Nellie Mae Transition to College grants and are now receiving state funding for transition to college activities eligible to apply?

*Yes, but, naturally, you couldn't count the same students twice. So as long as you can make the case that there are 30 additional students in your community whom you could recruit each year, then you'd be eligible.*

49. So in our grant proposal we should be mentioning if there are any other resources?

*Although a match is not required at this point, it would be good for your budget to represent what it will actually cost you to run the program, including in-kind, cash, and cost-sharing (e.g. in the case of blending funding, sharing positions with other grant programs).*

50. The healthcare programs here in Maine and NH have wait lists. If students are enrolled in college and fulfilling pre-requisites while waiting to enter nursing/allied health program, will that count as "success"?

*The p6 footnote talks about guidelines specifically- prerequisites are certainly courses that move a student along their chosen career pathway, so they would definitely suffice, if they bear college credit. If someone places in developmental*

*level, we would hope that they could also take a credit course as well that advances their goals. We would be looking to this partnership to design program features that better support adult learners to achieve their goals.*

*We're very aware of the waiting lists for many programs and it's not within the scope of your program to work towards building the college's capacity to increase these offerings. But we would be expecting you to describe, along with the career pathway, how truly accessible the program(s) are that you are targeting given the demand and waiting lists.*

51. What is Nellie Mae's definition of allied health careers?

*We're using the broadest definition of the term. Most important is that a partnership identifies a high rate of job vacancy or employment growth for a career pathway or set of pathways in the health care field (settings will vary). The partnership also needs to, demonstrate that the potential earnings are family sustaining, and that the training programs are available and accessible. The term 'allied health' is generally used to identify a cluster of health professions and covers as many as 100 occupational titles, no including physicians and nurses. Allied Healthcare generally fall under two broad categories - technicians (assistants) and therapists/technologists. In the Occupational Outlook Handbook these occupations generally fall under "Health Technologists and Technicians" category.*

*See:*

*<http://www.explorehealthcareers.org/en/Field.1.aspx>*

*<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/14598.html>*

52. What about medical billing, coding, records, etc.

*We would consider an application if the proposal demonstrates a high rate of job vacancy or employment growth for a career pathway or set of pathways in the health care field (settings will vary). The partnership also needs to, demonstrate that the potential earnings are family sustaining, and that the training programs are available and accessible.*

*We will be looking for proposals that identify pathways to advancement over time. That is, we would be concerned about training/certificate programs that did not ultimately articulate with opportunities for advancement. If the initial position your program is aiming for does not pay particularly well, is it a good position that an adult learner can **move from** (use as step towards advancing education and career) or get **stuck in**? We will be looking at maps that show the entire range of options, both long and short term.*

53. Would a certificate in gerontology be an acceptable aim for a program in this pilot?

*Yes, but see question above for more details.*

54. I note in the questions and responses that people receiving high school credentials from alternative programs such as GED or ADP can participate in the transition program without waiting 5 years after receiving the credential.

I am checking the possibility of participation by people who have received a diploma through Vermont's High School Completion Program. Vermont Adult Learning is responsible for this statewide program in which dropouts 16 - 21 receive a diploma from their high school after completing an individual graduation plan agreed to by the participant, the adult learning center's HSCP plan manager, and the high school.

It seems that these graduates do meet the criterion of completing a credential through an alternative program such as GED and ADP. Vermont's AEL system's materials describe 3 options for obtaining a high school credential: GED, ADP and HSCP.

*Yes, the High School Completion Program fits the definition of alternative diploma program, so those students are eligible immediately.*

55. In our ABE program we have some students who have received their HS credential and stay in the program to continue to improve their skills for the Accuplacer. These students would fit the Transitions model and therefore be able to utilize the curriculum and pathways you propose. However, could students in an ABE program who are very close to passing their GED, have an interest in the health field and they are preparing for college, be able to utilize the health distance learning curriculum before separation?

*Yes, there isn't any reason why a student or two nearing GED completion couldn't take the online piece. The question will be whether or not to count this student in your TCC enrollment, or whether to just let them "audit". I think probably the latter, unless they are participating in all aspects of the program simultaneous to completing their GED (if they had that much time to devote) and if you felt pretty confident they'd have their GED by the end of the cycle.*

56. Given the US Department of Labor's and the MA states Department of Labor's occupational definitions and categories, Health and Human Services is often intertwined. For example, one can be a nurse in a nursing home or a hospital. What are your specific guidelines for the healthcare fields and pathways this project should pursue? Can a combination of the two areas be offered to allow students to have choices?

*See #51-53*

57. Our college has an ABE department and a separate Transitions Program in Developmental Education. The Transitions program wants to take the lead in the grant application process and develop a proposal with some involvement from the ABE department. Is there a minimum amount of collaboration and partnership expected from the ABE partner?

*According to the guidelines, the ABE department should be the lead. The guidelines specify that the lead must provide ABE as a primary service, I don't think that could be said of the CT program coming from Dev Ed department. How the money is divided is entirely up to the partnership, and the lead doesn't have to get the lion's share. But we do want to empower the ABE provider in this process of engaging colleges and think that recognizing the ABE as the lead is a step in this direction.*

58. We have at least two career pathways maps that we are putting together as samples for this grant proposal - one is for community college programs and one is for University of Maine at Augusta programs. This sample doesn't reflect the amount of career pathways options actually available to students. Should all the career pathways be put together now and included as attachments in the proposals or will two samples suffice?

*I think that two would suffice, for now. But the more that you can show the intersections between the various routes the better. For example - if prerequisites overlap for a number of potential routes, then I would suggest putting that all on one map to show that a student might take those courses and go in a number of different directions. Or, if a certification in X articulates with a degree later on in Y, then I'd try to integrate that on one map.*

59. If a cycle is a minimum of 14 weeks of instruction, plus 2 weeks of planning and evaluation do you envision 2 cycles per year?

*Yes. We're looking at outcomes of enrolling 30 students per year, 15 per cycle as the minimum.*

60. Referring to the section on schedule and intensity of services, does the 14 weeks of instruction include the on-line NELRC instruction and other items mentioned in this section, or are they in addition to the 14 weeks?

*The assumption is that the face to face and online material would all be covered within 14-16 weeks.*

61. Is a week of instruction considered a 40 hour week or is the number of hours each week flexible to any degree?

*The funding doesn't support 40 hours of instruction a week, and we're not asking for that, although the guidelines do require a level of intensity than is greater in many ABE programs. The exact schedule and division of program hours is up to the grant applicant to determine, based on their experience providing educational services to adults (often working adults) in their communities.*

62. Could you outline simply how a week would be divided to meet all the hourly course and support requirements?

*First of all, there is an error in the breakdown of the required hours and a corrected version will be posted in an update to these notes. But the exact breakdown and schedule is really up to the program to determine (see #61)*

63. The program overall appears fairly intense and would require someone to be out of work or on leave from work in order to attend. Is that correct? Can it be done nights and weekends, or in a longer cycle with fewer hours per week?

*See 61 & 62.*

64. Given the staffing requirements identified under Section G and the funding level, do you envision this program as an overlay to an already existing one?

*The funding is to support a standalone program and not an overlay or add-on to an existing program. You can't use students funded by another grant to satisfy the requirements of this grant, that is, you can't count them twice. But, certainly, you may blend funding to support positions (i.e. sharing a counselor with another program).*

65. All proposals must involve a partnership with at least one post-secondary institution. Our College has been approached by several potential partners, and is also exploring submission of a proposal with our College as lead applicant. Are there any guidelines or restrictions about the number of proposals a post-secondary institution can be involved with, as lead or partner?

*No, but you'd want to be thoughtful about how to use the colleges resources and do the work collaboratively and efficiently so that the college staff weren't doing the same work twice. The postsecondary institution can't be the lead on this unless they have an ABE/transitions program on campus.*

66. Can the funding support pre-college or developmental level ESL classes within a college or community based setting as part of the academic readiness component? Are there a minimum number of college credits that the students in the transitional program should earn?

*Yes, the funding can be used for pre-college ESOL as long as the material outlined in the curriculum outline is also integrated, and the level of students in the program are assessed to be nearly ready for college level work. There is no requirement that college credits will be earned during the transition component, but if they can be, that's great.*

67. We could focus our selection of students to draw on those adults who now have some connection to healthcare i.e. incumbents at the CNA level or in another job - or look more broadly. We would like to know: "Is the intent of the RFP to recruit people for health careers or is the intent to involve people in a career exploration model with the goal of students selecting any pathway, healthcare being among the choices?"

*Both - the project is not exclusively geared towards incumbents, but we would expect that programs might draw from the health care workforce, as well as from the community and your own ABE programs.*

*The pilot focuses on career pathways in general and on recruiting some set of people into health care careers while helping the others identify career goals and develop educational and career plans. It can be hard to recruit 15 people who all are on the same career path and equally ready, so this is why the pilot is set up this way. Everybody may be using the Integrating Career Awareness curriculum, but people who haven't identified a career path yet, may be working more intensively with that, while those who are headed to health cares are working on the online course.*

68. We are a labor/management training fund -- partnership between 1199SEIU and multiple healthcare employers. We don't provide ABE services directly, but contract for them from various providers that we partner with for our members. In the proposal it states that eligible applications must provide ABE, ESOL, GED or Diploma classes as a primary educational service...does that mean we need to offer these programs ourselves, or that we are 'purchasing' these programs from other providers that we partner with?

*It would mean that the partner with whom you contract should be the lead agency in the partnership.*

69. We have begun designing a college pathway out of our ABE ESOL programs. Do we have to have a partner identified by the deadline, or is it possible to say that there is one of two?

*The RFP doesn't prohibit you from having both colleges involved as long as there are the resources for it, but you do need to identify at least one and submit letter of commitment from them with the proposal.*

70. You ask us to include a record of outcomes in our proposal, but given that we're at a planning stage, how can we give outcomes for a specific pathway that we're designing but have not implemented yet?

*Please provide 2007 outcomes for services you do provide, e.g. if you provide some college transition components, provide those outcomes. If you haven't tracked these outcomes, then provide outcomes for your ABE/ESOL program, e.g., enrollment, learning gains, retention, etc. Give us as clear a picture as possible about your program's past performance in delivering whatever services you provide.*

71. You ask for proposals to be submitted electronically. What about attachments with signatures, e.g., letters of support. How should we submit them?

*Please submit all attachments electronically, including signed support and commitment letters and keep the signed originals on file.*

72. Looking at the pathway exemplar from Oregon we don't see a starting point for incumbent workers. Are they eligible for participation in this program? If so are there any special requirements regarding their involvement?

*Yes, incumbent workers are eligible. There are no special requirements outside of those already stated regarding high school credential, and other criteria for readiness that you will establish. We're not specifically targeting incumbent workers, but that is a good place to go looking for students. You're welcome to include entrance and exit points for incumbent workers in your pathway design and road map.*

*If you are targeting incumbent workers then as you are developing the program you'd want to work with employers to build in supports for their employees participating in the program (e.g., scheduling, paid release time, career coaching, tuition reimbursement, etc). These features are not required at this point, but are certainly supports that we'd like to see a partnership build over time.*

73. Is there a minimum number of pathways which an applicant must have to be considered...is there a max or even a suggested number?

*No there isn't a minimum number. The more options and flexibility the partnership can provide the better. Ideally, a pathway will include a number of connecting/articulating intermediate steps with multiple entry and exit points, so that someone could enter the field with a certificate and continue working towards an associate's, or move from associate's to bachelor's degree. We'd be less inclined to a pathway where there were no credentialing or advancement steps available between entrance to college and a 4-year nursing degree.*

74. Can a student test of the computer skills portion of the program?

*Yes, but we would want to know how you assess their computer skills.*

75. Is the 14 week College Transition experience required for all students? We are thinking especially of folks who have been successful with a few college courses and are interested in getting involved with the program and for whom mentoring or a more intensive college course load might be more appropriate?

*We are targeting people have not had access to college and who will need additional supports to persist and succeed. The category of students that you describe is not the one that we are targeting in this pilot, although case-by-case you may find reason to make occasional exceptions. If someone has been successful with a few college courses but needs additional support, we'd suggest that the college partner work towards identifying the needs of this group and providing additional supports. But it doesn't make sense to send that student back to a pre-college type of program.*

76. Is there a specific format you are seeking for the budget proposal which will accompany the narrative?

*No (also see #13).*

77. Does "support for on-line classes" refer specifically to the course being developed by NELRC or is it a generic reference to any on-line course a student might pursue?

*It's a specific reference to the course that we'll develop. But if your program design does entail some additional online work, then let us know how you will carry it out.*

78. How many hours will the online course be?

*We can't give exact hours for the course yet. It is self paced, so to a large part will depend on each student's ability to move through the material. At the same time, given that students have limited time available for their studies, and there are a number of classroom-based instruction components to the TCC program, we wouldn't expect it to be more than 2-4 hours per week.*

79. We can have 10 pages in addition to the attachments like the proposal cover page, budget, and narrative, correct? We don't count these pages as part of our ten pages so we should begin our ten pages by answering on page 7. Ib "the community you serve, etc." through page 9.

*Correct. Whatever documents are listed as attachments in the list at the end of the RFP are not counted towards the 10 pages allowed for the proposal narrative.*

80. The required weekly hours for each instructional component do not add up to the total hours per week and number of weeks per cycle that are required, what are the actual requirements?

*The minimum number of instructional hours is 6 per week (excluding the online course). Beyond this, please treat the breakdown of component hours as guidelines rather than strict requirements. When reading proposals we will be looking for program designs that provide students with the most intensive and comprehensive instruction and support possible within the limits of the budget and the constraints on learners' schedules.*