



Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
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Jesse H. Ruiz
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

DATE: May 27, 2011

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D. 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) Project

General Information

Eligible Applicants: Public community colleges and universities that offer an agricultural program of study are eligible to apply. For purposes of eligibility, an "agricultural program of study" is one that offers a series of courses in agriculture, foods or natural resources that may be transferred to other universities or enables a student to pursue either a minor or major concentration in one of those areas of study.

Grant Award: One grant will be awarded for FY 2012, and the final grant amount will depend upon the objectives addressed in the approved proposal and the total appropriation for the program. In FY 2011, one grant was awarded for a total of \$1,121,200. In FY 2012, the amount awarded will be up to \$1,131,200.

Grant Period: The initial grant period will begin no sooner than August 1, 2011, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until July 31, 2012. It is the intention of the Illinois State Board of Education to fund this grant for a five-year period. Funding in the subsequent years will be subject to a continuation application process, contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the program and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Application Deadline: Mail seven copies of the complete application, two bearing original signatures, to Harley Hepner, Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, E-240, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, to ensure receipt no later than June 30, 2011, at 5 p.m. No fax copies will be accepted. Applications may also be delivered by hand to the following locations.

Springfield Office
Information Center
1st Floor
100 North First Street

Chicago Office
Reception Area - attn: Shannon Bronson
Suite 14-300
100 West Randolph Street

Resources: It is recommended that applicants consult the following resource documents when completing their proposals.

1. *The Strategic Plan for Illinois Agricultural Education – Opportunities for ALL Students through Quality Agricultural Education* http://isbe.net/career/pdf/ag_ed_plan.pdf

Background and Program Specifications

Section 2-3.80 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2-3.80] establishes the Agricultural Education Program to ensure the provision of agricultural education in the curriculum of the public schools, prekindergarten through adult. Under the law, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is to establish and maintain an agricultural education program such that the state has an adequate supply of trained and skilled individuals, representative of racial and ethnic groups, for the agriculture industry.

As part of its responsibilities for agricultural education, ISBE in coordination with the Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education (ICAE) and the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education (ILCAE), must:

1. develop a curriculum and strategy for the purpose of establishing a source of trained and qualified individuals in agriculture;
2. promote a strategy for articulating Illinois' program in agricultural education throughout the public school system; and
3. offer a consumer education outreach strategy regarding the importance of agricultural education in Illinois.

In order to meet these objectives, ISBE has established the Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) Project to facilitate and coordinate agricultural education programs offered in public elementary and secondary schools in Illinois. The FCAE project to be funded under this RFP must include activities and services designed to meet the following goals:

1. implementation of agricultural education initiatives as part of career and technical education through the use of a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff, including designation of a director, who are located in identified regions of the state that at least include representation in each of the five districts established by the Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers (see http://isbe.net/career/pdf/iavat_dist_map.pdf);
2. review of existing or development of new curriculum and assessments, ensuring alignment to the Illinois State Goals for Learning (see <http://www.isbe.net/ils/Default.htm>):
 - agricultural education curriculum and assessments must be evaluated, revised, as needed, and disseminated to programs and teachers in prekindergarten through grade 12, as applicable; and
 - inservice training must be provided to assist teachers with planning, developing and implementing the materials using currently available technology;
3. coordination of statewide consumer education outreach initiatives with a focus on agriculture and designed to increase literacy in and awareness of agriculture at all grade levels;
4. coordination of a statewide system of professional development and provision of on-site technical assistance for agricultural education teachers at all grade levels;
5. coordination of the identification, compilation and dissemination of information and resources, to include data collection from agricultural education programs and maintenance of the agriculture website found at www.ilaged.org; and
6. coordination of efforts among the business community and educators to improve agricultural education.

Currently, agricultural education reaches nearly 500,000 students and 30,000 teachers in prekindergarten through postsecondary settings. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will provide professional field staff to implement activities and initiatives to accomplish the goals stated above. Examples of the types of activities and services provided in the past to meet the goals of the FCAE project include:

- attending and facilitating agricultural education-related meetings (staff, advisory, project, professional, section/district, etc.);
- training educators on current professional development and technology-related topics;

- developing and updating agricultural education curriculum, assessments and classroom resources for agricultural topics at all educational levels;
- coordinating and implementing initiatives of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), such as the incorporation of the Illinois Learning Standards, including the common core standards for English language arts and mathematics, into curriculum;
- informing audiences about careers in agricultural education at various events;
- using professional field staff to conduct on-site program improvement visits;
- assisting established programs to expand and developing new programs with diverse students in urban and rural areas;
- developing professional relationships at the local level with school board members, administrators, counselors, and teachers;
- coordinating consumer outreach initiatives about agricultural literacy and awareness through venues such as education forums, exhibits, and similar agriculture industry events;
- collecting annual data surveys at all levels of agricultural education; and
- operating and maintaining the agricultural education website to keep it up to date.

The successful applicant must have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff, through either employment or subcontract, to provide the activities and services required under this RFP. The minimum staffing required includes a project coordinator, program advisors, and administrative assistant. Additionally, the applicant must present evidence of the institution's financial stability, to at least include financial statements.

Fiscal Information

The final amount to be awarded will depend upon the objectives addressed in the approved proposal and the total appropriation for the project. In FY 2011, one grant was awarded for this project for a total of \$1,121,200. In FY 2012, the amount to be awarded for the FCAE project will be up to \$1,131,200, depending upon the appropriation of state funds.

Funding received under this grant must not duplicate or supplant local or other state funds for similar activities. Documentation of the use of all funds and accurate record-keeping is required.

Allowable expenditures include those that support improvement of instructional services and payment to other governmental agencies. For descriptions of the budget summary lines and expense categories, including function and object code explanations, please refer to Appendix A. Funds may not be used for promotional materials. Indirect costs related to this grant cannot exceed 2.6 percent of the total grant. Any out-of-state travel must be approved by ISBE 30 days in advance. No new funds will be allocated after June 30, 2012.

Quarterly expenditure reports will be required (see item 15 of the "Certifications and Assurances, and Standard Terms of the Grant", Attachment 9). Further information about the use of grant funds may be found in the "State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures" handbook referenced on page 1 of this RFP.

Funding of this project is contingent upon a sufficient state appropriation (see item 8 of the "Certifications and Assurances, and Standard Terms of the Grant", Attachment 9).

Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. **Each applicant is required to submit seven copies of the entire proposal, two of which must bear the original signatures of the official legally authorized to submit the proposal.** Proposals will be considered ineligible if not submitted in the format consistent with the requirements of this RFP. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

- ___ **1. Applicant Information Page (Attachment 1):** Complete and include as the cover page for your proposal.
- ___ **2. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 2):** Briefly describe the overall objectives and activities of the project.
- ___ **3. Project Proposal Narrative (Attachment 3):** Provide a narrative description of the entire project and its activities.
- ___ **4. Goals and Objectives (Attachment 4, Goals 1-6):** Please complete a separate page(s) for each goal of the project (see page 2, “Background and Program Specifications”).
- ___ **5. Field Staff Structure (Attachment 5):** Please provide the information requested.
- ___ **6. Financial Capacity of the Institution (Attachment 6):** Please provide the information requested.
- ___ **7. Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 7):** Must be completed and submitted on the form provided and signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal. The payment schedule should be based on the projected date of expenditures. Salaries and fringe benefits should be requested in equal intervals on the schedule. Supplies, equipment, contracted services and professional development should be requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated.
- ___ **8. Budget Breakdown (Attachment 8):** Must include specific descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the cells on the Budget Summary. Must include subcontract information, if applicable (see item 7 of the document titled “Certification and Assurances, and Standard Terms of the Grant,” Attachment 9).
- ___ **9. Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 9):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification form attached. This must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.
- ___ **10. Program-Specific Terms of the Grant (Attachments 10):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification form attached. This must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.

Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

A committee selected by ISBE will evaluate proposals in comparison with other proposals received by the Illinois State Board of Education, based upon the criteria below. Final determination for selection will be made by the State Superintendent of Education and will be based upon recommendations resulting from the proposal review process. The completeness and detail of the plan will be taken into consideration in the evaluation as well as timelines for proposed activities. ISBE reserves the right to clarify various aspects of the proposal with the recipient before final determinations are made.

1. Quality of the Plan (80 points)

- a. The proposed professional development and technical assistance activities appear likely to accomplish the purposes and objectives set forth under “Background and Program Specifications”. The approaches selected are comprehensive in scope and will provide effective and relevant professional development and technical assistance activities.
- b. The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the agriculture, food and natural resource industry, generally, and of agricultural education in prekindergarten through adult, specifically. The services and activities that are proposed will be accessible to teachers and others throughout the State.
- c. Sufficient evidence is presented of the applicant’s capabilities to review, modify, and develop, as needed, agricultural education curriculum and other instructional resources designed to improve and enhance the quality of agricultural education programs. Understanding of the relationship of agricultural education to the Illinois State Goals for Learning is evident.
- d. Skills related to website management are clearly articulated and adequate for maintaining and updating, as needed, the State Board of Education’s agricultural education website.
- e. The qualifications of staff and any proposed subcontractors demonstrate extensive experience in delivering the services and activities proposed. The applicant has presented convincing evidence of its ability to manage large-scale programs on a statewide or comparable basis.
- f. The evaluation strategies are likely to gauge the effectiveness of the services provided and measure the impact that the activities will have on agricultural education statewide, while yielding sufficient data that can be used to improve agricultural education through the project.
- g. The applicant proposes innovative use of existing resources, leveraging a variety of state and local resources in delivering and coordinating its activities and work.

2. Cost-Effectiveness (20 points)

The proposal represents a cost-effective use of state resources, as evidenced by the amounts requested for the proposed activities in relation to the numbers to be served and the services to be provided, and sufficient evidence is presented of the applicant’s financial stability.

Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer comments by contacting the division responsible for issuing the RFP. (See “Contact Person” under “General Information”.)

Budget Category Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the budget summary lines which will be helpful when completing the budget so expenses are categorized properly. Use the function codes in bold type. First determine which function code category (row) applies:

2210 “Improvement of Instruction Services” Activities which are designed primarily for assisting instructional staff in planning, developing, and evaluating the instructional process outside of classroom instruction. Other activities that apply may include: internships outside of classroom instruction, pre-service teacher resources and activities, scholarships, professional development activities, and topical luncheon seminars. This includes the following:

2213 “Instructional Staff Training Services” Activities designed to contribute to the professional competence of the instructional staff including workshops, demonstrations, school visits, courses for college credit, sabbatical leaves, and travel leaves.

4000 “Payments to Other Governmental Units (In-State)” Payments to in-state LEAs, generally for tuition, transportation, and all other services rendered to pupils residing in the paying LEA. Where a non-operating district pays an operating district for the education of pupils, the non-operating district records such payments here. Flow-through funds - where payment is received by an LEA and a portion is transferred to one or more other LEAs - use with object 720. (Expenditures in this function are not counted in state expenditure totals.) This includes the following:

4010 “Payments for Regular Programs” Payments made to LEAs, generally for tuition, services, and transportation related to regular education programs.

4030 “Payments for Adult/Continuing Education Programs” Payments made to LEAs, generally for tuition, services, and transportation related to adult/continuing education programs.

4040 “Payments for Vocational Education Programs” Payments made to LEAs, generally for tuition, services, and transportation related to vocational education programs.

4070 “Payments for Community College Programs” Payments made to community colleges for the cost of tuition or services provided by the college.

4090 “Other Payments to In-State Governmental Units” Other payments made to in-state governmental units not classified under preceding functions (e.g., payments to Educational Service Centers, Educational Service Regions, and the State Board of Education).

Next determine the specific object code sub-category (column) that appropriately describes the expenditure within a particular function code. Use the object codes in bold type. Some object codes may be available in some function code categories and not in others.

100 “Salaries” Amounts paid to permanent, temporary or substitute employees on the payroll of the LEA. This includes gross salary for personal services rendered while on the payroll of the LEA.

110 “Regular Salaries” Full-time, part-time, and prorated portions of the costs for work performed by employees of the LEA who are considered to be in positions of a permanent nature.

120 “Temporary Salaries” Full-time, part-time and prorated portions of the costs for work performed by employees of the LEA who are hired on a temporary or substitute basis to perform work in temporary positions.

130 “Overtime Salaries” Amounts paid to employees of the LEA in permanent or temporary positions for work performed in addition to the normal work period for which the employee is compensated under Regular Salaries or Temporary Salaries above.

200 “Employee Benefits” Amounts paid by the LEA on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are over and above. Such payments are fringe benefits, and while not paid directly to the employees, nevertheless are a part of the cost (to the applicable functional areas). These types of costs are not considered a cost to the board of education function and should not all be charged to one area. These costs apply to the same function number as the cost of the applicable salary.

300 “Purchased Services” Amounts paid for personal services rendered by personnel who are not on the payroll of the LEA, and other services which the LEA may purchase. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided in order to obtain the desired results. Other items may include: contracted interns or classroom aides, contracted student stipends, contracted job shadowing experience, student tuition waivers, contracted webpage or promotional development, attending or sponsoring professional development activities, scholarships, internet services, contracted part-time coordinator, speakers for seminars, and educational tours.

311 “Professional Services - Administrative” Services provided in support of various policy-making and managerial activities of the LEA. Included would be management consulting activities oriented to general governance, business and financial management of the LEA, and school management support activities.

314 “Professional Services - Instructional” Services provided in support of instructional programs or activities. Included would be counseling and guidance services, library and media support services, curriculum improvement services, and any other contracted services related to the enhancement of the teaching or instructional process.

325 “Rentals” Expenditures for leasing or renting supplies, land, buildings, and equipment for both temporary and long-range use of the LEA. This includes bus and other vehicle rental when operated by the LEA, lease of data processing equipment, lease-purchase arrangements, and similar rental agreements. Costs for single agreements covering equipment as well as operators are not included here, but are considered elsewhere under Purchased Services (see Transportation, Printing and Binding, Public Utility Services, Repairs and Maintenance Services).

332 *“Travel”* Expenditures for transportation, meals, hotel, and other expenses associated with traveling or business for the LEA. Payments for “Per Diem” in lieu of reimbursements for subsistence (room and board) also are charged here

333 *“Food Related Expenditures”* catering services or other food purchases.

340 *“Communication”* Services provided by persons or businesses to assist in transmitting and receiving messages or information. This category includes telephone and telegraph services as well as postage machine rental and postage.

360 *“Printing and Binding”* Expenditures for job printing and binding, usually according to specifications of the LEA. This includes the design and printing of forms and posters as well as printing and binding of LEA publications. Preprinted standard forms are not charged here, but are recorded under Supplies and materials.

400 “Supplies and Materials” Amounts paid for material items of an expendable nature that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated in use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances. Other items that may apply include: teacher resources lab materials, teaching materials, items to use during professional development activities, informational displays and materials, and office supplies.

500 “Capital Outlay”: Expenditures for the acquisition of fixed assets or additions to fixed assets. This includes equipment (initial purchase, replacement or additional) and structural purchases such as buildings (construction, remodeling or additions), improvements other than buildings, and other capital outlay.

530 Buildings and Building Improvements - Expenditures for acquiring buildings and additions, either existing or to be constructed. Included are expenditures for installment or lease payments (except interest) that have a terminal date and result in the acquisition of buildings, except payments to public building authorities or similar agencies. Expenditures for major, permanent, structural alterations and the initial or additional installation of heating and ventilating systems, electrical systems, plumbing systems, fire protection systems, and other service systems in existing buildings are also included.

540 Site Improvements & Infrastructure - Expenditures for the initial and additional improvement of sites and adjacent ways after acquisition by the district, consisting of work such as grading, landscaping, seeding, and planting of shrubs and trees; constructing new sidewalks, roadways, retaining walls, sewers and storm drains; installing hydrants; initial surfacing and soil treatment of athletic fields and tennis courts; furnishing and initial installment of fixed playground apparatus, flagpoles, gateways, fences, and underground storage tanks that are not parts of building service systems; and demolition work. Special assessments against the district for capital improvements such as streets, curbs, and drains are also recorded here.

550 Capitalized Equipment - Any instrument, machine, apparatus, or set of articles that equals or exceeds the capitalization threshold (\$500 per item).

This information may be viewed through the following links: [Function Codes](#) (pg. 51), [Object Codes](#) (pg. 70)