

**Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnerships (IMSP): Illinois Science, Technology, Engineering
and Mathematics (STEM) Network (I-STEM Network) Request for Proposals**

**Frequently Asked Questions
With Responses**

Q. How will the I-STEM Network be funded?

- A. The I-STEM Network is funded through the Illinois Mathematics and Science Partnership (IMSP) to a single grantee at the rate of \$1.0 million per year for 3 years. A total of \$3.0 million in total funds are available over the three year grant period contingent on sufficient funding and satisfactory progress by the grantee.

Q. Following the submission of proposals, how long before awarding takes place?

- A. The proposals are due to ISBE in Springfield by November 3, 2014 as described in the RFP. Awarding of funding to the proposing eligible partnership will follow the submission of scores by external readers. No specific date can be set as approval requires several steps.

Q. How many partnerships are required in the proposed network?

- A. The RFP requires the creation of one lead partnership.

Q. What constitutes a partnership?

- A. In the I-STEM Network, the partnership must include, at minimum:

An institute of higher education (IHE);
A high-need local education agency (LEA);
A Regional Office of Education (ROE)/Intermediate Service Center (ISC); and
A business/industry, nonprofit or for-profit organization
Multiple IHEs, LEAs, ROEs/ISCs and BINS are allowable in accordance with federal legislation but not necessary.

Q. How can you meet the requirement for Equitable Participation of Private Schools?

- A. All private schools within the boundaries of the high-need LEA **partner** must be consulted during the planning process as well as implementation. If there is more than one high-need LEA partner, private schools within those boundaries must be consulted as well. If the private school is not interested in participating, they must indicate such in writing. Please see Attachment 12 in the I-STEM Network RFP Forms for further details.

Q. How many contact hours with teacher participants are required each year of the grant?

- A. Traditionally, the summer workshops covered the required 80 contact hours with teacher participants while the institutes were 16 hours during the school year. For this partnership, the participants will be presenting in the summer to the R-WIPs so their 80 contact hours must be scheduled before they present. Plan on delivering 80 contact hours to these participants from Jan-

May, 2015 with follow ups during the late summer and fall. There is no requirement for the exact structuring of the workshops or institutes.

Q. Can more than one LEA be named in a partnership or do we designate just one?

A. Only one high-need LEA is required in the partnership. If, more than one LEA as a partner, MSP requires Equitable Participation for all non-public schools within the boundaries of all designated LEA(s).

Q. Do all participants have to be employed by the high-need LEA partner?

A. No, you can have participants from schools/districts that are not in the designated High-need LEA. However, it is expected that all teachers participating in the I-STEM Network commit to Attachment 2, items 8 – 14 (as applicable by teaching assignment).

Q. Are there training costs for the NGSX and Intel Math?

A. There are costs associated with Intel Math and NGSX. Please contact Dr. Brian Reiser at reiser@northwestern.edu for NGSX budget estimates and Aubrey Neihaus at aneihaus@math.arizona.edu for Intel Math budget estimates.

Q. Will the first cohort include both Math and Science teachers in the same year?

A. The term “Cohort teachers” refers to the teacher participants of the R-WIPs and more specifics about these participants will be described by that RFP when released. The teacher participants for the I-STEM Lead Partnership are called Area Teacher Leaders (ATLs). Yes, ATLs must include both math and science teachers (9 each).

Q. Are you expecting classroom teachers to be the ATLs?

A. The skills and attributes of the ATL as well as a recruitment plan should be present in the proposal. It was not otherwise defined in the current RFP.

Q. Did I catch the timeframe correctly that the fiscal grant will be identified after the R-WIPs are due?

A. The Lead Partnership may not be identified by the time the subsequent regional RFP is due. As a result, interested partnerships can decide what RFP to respond to or can respond to both RFPs.

Q. Do you anticipate that the R-WIPs will be separate entities in each area/region; one for NGSX and one for Intel Math?

A. Yes, the intent is to have at least one math and one science R-WIP in each Area except in CPS and Area I where there can be at least two sciences and two math R-WIPs. More information about the specifics will be released in the subsequent RFP.

Q. Is the funding for the R-WIPs separate from the I-STEM leadership grants?

A. Funding for the subsequent RFP will be addressed within that RFP.

- Q. What is required with regard to piloting the ISBE model curricula in Years 2-3?**
- A. Please propose your ideas for implementation in response to this RFP.
- Q. Are the R-WIPs expected to be funded out of the \$2 million available in years 2 & 3 or is there additional money available for the 9 R-WIPs?**
- A. There are additional funds available that will be outlined in the subsequent RFP.
- Q. So the R-WIP decisions on applying will have to be made before the Lead partnership knows if it has been selected, correct?**
- A. The Lead Partnership may not be identified by the time the subsequent regional RFP is due. As a result, interested partnerships can decide what RFP to respond to or can respond to both RFPs.
- Q. Will the R-WIPs have the same partnership makeup requirements as the Lead partnership has for the I-STEM Network?**
- A. Yes, in accordance with federal legislation the eligible applicants for a partnership in the subsequent RFP will reflect those of the current RFP.
- Q. If IHEs are included as part of a lead partnership proposal, and then selected, does this preclude them from also applying for the forthcoming R-WIP RFP?**
- A. No.
- Q. How do people know if they are better suited to applying for the R-WIPs rather than as a lead partnership?**
- A. Please determine that with your team as you read and discuss the RFPs.
- Q. How much time is necessary to fully utilize what is currently available in NGSX and Intel Math?**
- A. Please contact Dr. Brian Reiser at reiser@northwestern.edu for NGSX and Aubrey Neihaus at aneihaus@math.arizona.edu for Intel Math questions relating to what is possible with the systems.
- Q. Is there an equivalent and appropriate course to Intel Math for teachers of Grades 9-12?**
- A. Please contact Aubrey Neihaus at aneihaus@math.arizona.edu for Intel Math questions relating to what is possible with that system.
- Q. How big can a cohort for Intel Math be?**
- A. The term “Cohort teachers” refers to the teacher participants of the R-WIPs and more specifics about these participants will be described by that RFP when released. The teacher participants for the I-STEM Lead Partnership are called Area Teacher Leaders (ATLs). Please contact Aubrey Neihaus at aneihaus@math.arizona.edu for Intel Math questions relating to what is possible with that system.

Q. The Fiscal agent must be an ROE with demonstrated ability to run a state-wide project, does ISBE already have a list of those ROEs it considers to be capable of this?

A. ISBE does not have such a list.

Q. Does ISBE have a preference for the grade levels from which Math and Science ATLs are drawn?

A. The ATLs are K-12 science and math educators. The skills and attributes of the ATLs as well as a recruitment plan should be present in the proposal. It was not otherwise defined in the current RFP.

Q. What is the role of the High Needs LEA in the Lead Partnership?

A. The high-needs LEA will have a much more active role in the R-WIPs. For this I-STEM Lead Partnership, there are three main roles of the high needs LEA:

1. The LEA will satisfy the federal requirements for the partnership
2. The LEA will have at least one ATL as a participant
3. The LEA will provide district perspective, experience and context to the full partnership when working to meet the deliverables of the I-STEM RFP.

Q. The RFP seems to indicate several different evaluation components, in addition to federal reporting requirements, including a formative and summative component for the Partnership Network as well as a project monitoring component including site visits for each R-WIP. Is this the correct interpretation?

A. Please consult the RFP for evaluation requirements. Partnerships may propose methods for achieving those requirements.

Q. Will each R-WIP be required to conduct evaluation activities in addition to the site visits conducted as part of the Network Partnership evaluation, and if so, how will these be structured--contracting with an external 3rd party evaluator of their choosing, working with a single evaluator across all R-WIPs selected by ISBE, contracting with the evaluator of the Network Partnership, or something else?

A. Evaluation information for the R-WIPs will be available in the subsequent RFP.

Q. The evaluator for the Network Partnership expected or allowed to provide technical assistance to the individual R-WIPs concerning their evaluation activities? Can the evaluation design for the Network Partnership assume that the R-WIPs selected will participate in data collection activities for the evaluation of the Network Partnership?

A. Evaluation information for the R-WIPs will be available in the subsequent RFP.

Q. Do you all want the ATLs to have gone through the Intel Math 80 hour course before they teach it as Math Educator Instructors?

A. ISBE is requiring Intel Math to be implemented with the math ATL. The math ATL will undergo 40 hours of Intel Math (1/2 of the course) and the 4 day facilitator training required by Intel Math. As indicated in Appendix F, this training must occur in the Fall 2014-May 2015 milestone.

Q. If IHEs are included as part of a lead partnership proposal, and then selected, does this preclude them from also applying for the forthcoming R-WIP RFP? Some clarity about conflicts-of-interest and application eligibility for both the current and forthcoming RFPs would be welcome, as it will influence our proposal design.

A. If an IHE is awarded the Lead Partnership in the I-STEM Network, that does not preclude the IHE from receiving a WIP in the subsequent RFP.

Q. Can ISBE serve as the fiscal agent for this proposal if our high-needs partner is CPS? Can CPS serve as the fiscal agent in lieu of an ROE/ISC (as I believe has been done in the past)? Do we need to secure an additional ROE/ISC partner to be the fiscal agent for this, and then include CPS as the high-needs LEA?

A. ISBE cannot serve as the ROE for CPS in the I-STEM Network due to conflict of interest as well as capacity issues. As a result, CPS does not need an ROE/ISC partner for the I-STEM Network. However, the recommendation was that partnerships consider selecting an ROE/ISC to serve as a fiscal agent.