ARKANSAS COLLEGE AND CAREER COACH PROGRAM

GRANT GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

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Invitation to Applicants, Grant Information, and Narrative Instructions

Overview Information:
Arkansas College and Career Coach Program: Notice inviting applications for continuing and new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2022.

Dates:
- Applications Available: Friday, February 10, 2023. Application materials are available at ADE Division of Career and Technical Education Special Populations (arkansas.gov)

- Question and Answer Begins: Monday, February 13, 2023

- Grant Technical Assistance Webinars for New Applicants: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 (9:00am – 10:30am)

- Grant Technical Assistance Webinar for Renewal Applicants: Thursday, February 16, 2023 (11:00am – 12:00pm)

- Question and Answer Period Ends **for Returning Applicants Only**: Friday, March 17, 2023 (after this date the only allowable questions will relate to technical issues with accessing grant materials and submissions)

- Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: Friday, March 31, 2023 (must be submitted through the Grant Application Submission Portal)

- Deadline for Interagency Review: Friday, April 14, 2022

- Notification of Grant Awards: Friday, April 21, 2022

- Grant Recipient must accept award and sign MOU: Friday, May 5, 2023

- Grant Recipient will receive fully executed MOU: Wednesday, May 31, 2023

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The College and Career Coach Program is designed to motivate and support Arkansas students and adults to achieve their college and career planning goals. Career Coaches allowed to serve students in the 5th – 12th grade. The Arkansas College and Career Coaches program provide assistance and information for academic tutoring, career counseling, mentoring, and financial guidance resources. They also provide other supports necessary for postsecondary education/training access, retention, and success.

Structure of Program: The College and Career Coaches are co-located at an institution of higher education, education cooperative, or non-profit organization. They provide their services directly to students in middle and high school through their on-campus placement.

Qualifications of Career Coach: Individuals, who hold at least a bachelor's degree and Facilitating Career Development (FCD) credential, may be employed as a Career Coach. If the desired individual does not hold a CDF credential, they may be employed under the condition of completing the Facilitating Career Development course within one year of employment.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Funding Period: Up to 12 months (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) for Returning Applicants

All funding amounts requested in grant applications are contingent upon the availability and appropriation of funds.

II. Applicant Information

Eligible Applicant: The institution of higher education, education cooperative, or non-profit organization should submit one grant request to include all desired school districts to be served. The applicant will be considered the host site and is responsible for local administrative and financial management, in partnership with the school district administration, of the Career Coach program. The host site responsibilities include the following:

- Submit the grant on behalf of their entity and participating school districts.
- Serve as the grant recipient.
- Lead the hiring process in partnership with participating school districts.
- Employ the Career Coaches
- Identify and assign an existing employee to serve as the supervisor of the Career Coaches and liaison between the host site and DCTE.
- Monitor all expenditures and ensure funds spent are for the direct and sole benefit of the grant
- Prepare and submit reimbursement requests to DCTE

III. Submission Information

1. Submission Dates and Times:

   Applications Available: Friday, February 10. Application materials are available at

   https://dcte.ade.arkansas.gov/Page/CareerCoachProgram.

   ### IV. Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: Friday, March 31, 2023, by 4:00pm

   We will not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

2. Required Documents:

   - Grant Program Identification Form (Signatures)

   - Proposal Narrative

   - Grant Amendment Request Form

   - Budget Form

   - Letters of Support (each participating school district, host site, and business/community partner)

3. Submission Method:
   - Applications for grants must be submitted electronically under this program. Submission must be sent through the Grant Application Submission Portal. For questions (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery, or whether you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please contact our office at 501-683-4432 during the hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm.

   Electronic Submission of Applications.
   - Applications received electronically are date and time-stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the electronic system no later than 4:00 p.m. on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received (that is, date and time stamped by the electronic system) after 4:00 p.m., on the application deadline date. We do not consider

an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. We will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the electronic system after 4:00 p.m. on the application deadline date.

- o The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through the electronic system.

- You will not receive additional point value because your application is submitted electronically, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.
    - o You must submit all documents electronically, including letters of support.
    - o You must upload any narrative sections and all attachments to your application in a .PDF (Portable Document) read-only, non-modifiable format. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable .PDF or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.
    - o Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- You will receive an automatic notification of receipt after you electronically submit your application. This notification indicates receipt by the electronic system, not receipt by the Department. The Department will then retrieve your application and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your application and has assigned your application a processing number.

    - o We may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the System:
If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through the electronic system, please contact our office. You must obtain a response in regard to your issue and must keep a record of it.

- If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the system, we will grant you an extension until 4:00 p.m. the following business day. This will enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery.

    - o If you submit an application after 4:00 p.m. on the application deadline date, please contact our office and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with the system. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the electric submission system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:00 p.m., on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.
    - o Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the electronic system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register or submit your application to the electronic system before the application deadline date and time, or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the electronic system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement:
You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the electronic submission system because:

o   You do not have access to the Internet; or
o   You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the electronic submission system.

Request for Exception to Submit Application by Electronic Format
- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day falls on a State/Federal holiday, the next business day), please mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevent you from using the Internet to submit your application.
- If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.
- Address and mail, email, or fax your statement to Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray, Senior Associate Director, Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education, Office of Special Programs, #3 Capitol Mall; Little Rock, AR 72201

Submission of Paper Applications by Mail:
If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original, two copies of your application, and an electronic copy saved as a PDF document on a compact disk/USB flash drive, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Career and Technical Education
#3 Capitol Mall, Suite 403
Little Rock, AR 72201
Attention: Dr. Sonja Wright McMurray, Senior Associate Director for DCTE

Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery:
If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must mail the original, two copies of your application, and an electronic copy saved as a PDF document on a compact disk/USB flash drive, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Career and Technical Education
#3 Capitol Mall, Suite 403
Little Rock, AR 72201
Attention: Dr. Sonja Wright McMurray, Senior Associate Director for DCTE

The Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., except Saturdays, Sundays, and State/Federal holidays.

4.   Content and Format of Application Submission:
- Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative to no more than 25 pages. **(The page count begins on page 8. After adding information into the response boxes under each section within the Narrative section, an applicant's final page count should not exceed 25 pages).** Partial pages will count as a full page toward the page limit. For the purpose of determining compliance with the page limit, each page on which there are words will be counted as one full page. Applicants must use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Single space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman and Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

- The page limits do not apply to the required Title Page, Table of Contents, Letters of Support, or Budget Form. If you include any attachments or appendices, these items will be counted as part of the narrative, for purposes of the page limit requirement. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria, which also includes the budget narrative.

Applications will not be accepted if they do not meet the page limits.

5. Other Submission Information (Special Accommodations):
Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact our office. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

6. Review and Selection Process:
A panel of non-Federal readers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria and the competitive preference priorities, pursuant to Act 1285 of the 2013 General Legislative Session, Act 960 of the 2015 General Legislative Session, Act 128 of the 2017 General Legislative Session, Act 633 of the 2021 General Legislative Session. Readers will be trained by the Department and given guidance on how to evaluate applications in a method that is both uniform and rigorous. The individual scores of the readers will be added and the sum divided by the number of readers to determine the reader score received in the review process. The Senior Associate Director, along with the Director for the Division of Career Technical Education, makes new grants in rank order based on the total scores of the reader scores awarded to each application. If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total score, the Senior Associate Director for DCTE, along with the Director of DCTE will choose among the tied applications to serve geographical areas and/or student populations with the most need to be served by an Arkansas College and Career Coach Program. The Senior Associate Director will not approve a new grant to an applicant if the applicant's prior project involved the fraudulent use of program funds.

We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Senior Associate Director may consider the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Senior Associate Director may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit timely performance reports or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

IV. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we will send a Grant Award Notification (GAN) via email. We also may notify you informally. If your application is not evaluated or is not selected for funding, we will notify you via email. Emails will be sent to the email address listed on the application under "Contact Person".

2. <u>Reporting</u>:
- If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements.
- At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Senior Associate Director for DCTE.

The following information supplements the information provided in the "Notice Inviting Applicants":

<u>V.</u> **INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVE SECTION AND APPLICATION**

Before preparing the *Program Narrative*, applicants should review the Notice and Career Coach Manual for specific guidelines and requirements. Note that applications will be evaluated according to the specific selection criteria specified in the regulations, which are included in this package.

The *Program Narrative* should provide, in detail, the information that addresses the selection criteria. The maximum possible score for each category of the selection criteria is indicated in parentheses.

You must limit the *Program Narrative* to 25 pages, <u>single-spaced in 12-point font or larger</u>. The narrative should be written concisely. Only the required information should be submitted. If appendices or other supplemental materials (other than the Letters of Support) are included, they will count as part of the 25-page limit. Please refer to the notice (see Content and Form of Application Submission) for additional application submission requirements.

Provide responses to each of the following selection criteria in the following order:

A.	<u>Need</u>	(20 points)
B.	<u>Performance Measures</u>	(10 points)
C.	<u>Plan of Operation</u>	(35 points)
D.	<u>Applicant and Community Support</u>	(20 points)
E.	<u>Budget and cost-effectiveness</u> (34 CFR 645.31(f))	(15 points)
	Total Maximum Score for Selection Criteria	100 points

All applicants are encouraged to review the Grant Application Rubric prior to completing the Narrative section. By doing so, applicants increase the likelihood of receiving maximum points for each section.

<u>VI.</u> **Formatting**

<u>Single space all text</u> in the program narrative, <u>except</u> titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions, and all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. Applicants may use one of the following fonts: *Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New* or *Arial*, <u>only</u>. Applications submitted in any other font (including *Times Roman* and *Arial Narrow*) will not be accepted. Applicants must use a size 12 font or larger.

Each page must have a footer with the applicant's name and the page number.

The <u>Program Narrative</u> will include a discussion of the selection criteria. The total page limit for the project narrative portion of the application for the FY 2021 Arkansas College and Career Coach competition is 25 pages.

The page limit does not apply to:

- Grant Applicant Identification Form
- Title Page
- Table of Contents

- Letters of Support
- Timeline Form
- Budget Form

The notice contains specific instructions on page limits.

Application Narrative Section

In the Program Narrative, the applicant should address the selection criteria in the order delineated (A - E) because this is the order in which the Technical Review Form is organized. Sections A – C (found on pages 8 – 9) with responses should be printed and submitted as the New Program Application. Additional required application materials are available at ADE Division of Career and Technical Education Special Populations (arkansas.gov). All application materials must be submitted through the Grant Application Submission Portal.

The following guidance may assist you in addressing each of the selection criteria and includes an application *(Page count begins on this page. After entering responses in the response boxes, the final document should not exceed 25 pages)*:

High Priority: For this grant competition, applicants must pay particular attention in sections A – I to addressing the needs and providing services to students from special populations. The applicant's response must include providing directed college and career planning services for students with disabilities and **at least two more** of the following:

1. Learners from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults
2. English Learners (EL)
3. Homeless Individuals
4. Learners preparing for non-traditional careers
5. Youth who are in, or Aged Out of the Foster Care System
6. Youth with Parents on Active Duty in the Armed Forces
7. Single Parents, including single pregnant women

Applicants should include in their response the percentage of the selected population and achievement gaps and/or barriers that exist.

In-depth explanation to validate the selection of each special population category.
Click or tap here to enter text.

(A) **Need:** Applicant must include justification for each county, school district, or target school (if applicable) identified in the application. The intent of the Arkansas College and Career Coach Program is to provide a comprehensive career guidance system to middle and high school students, who are most in need of this support. Grant applicants should clearly demonstrate the need for the Arkansas College and Career Coach Program in their service areas. Applicants should discuss any barriers and deficits preventing their students from adequately preparing for postsecondary and/or training beyond high school. In their response, the applicant should include **at least three** of the following barriers:

1. Income level of the target area and/or population of students
2. Unemployment rate of the target area and/or population of adults
3. Educational attainment of target and/or population of adults
4. College-going rate of the target area and/or population of students
5. Technical skill attainment gaps between target population and workforce
6. Access to career planning and preparation resources and experiences
7. School counselor-to-student ratio for target schools

In-depth explanation to validate the selection of each barrier.
Click or tap here to enter text.

(B)   <u>**Performance Measures:**</u> All awarded programs will be evaluated on their success in affecting the college and career readiness culture and performance in their school district and community. Applicants must communicate the local program's overall plan to address improving college and career readiness in their assigned school districts, especially with regard to the following <u>**six**</u> (6) key performance goals:

1. Increase the high school graduation rates
2. Increase the number of industry-recognized certifications earned
3. Increase in work-based learning experiences
4. Increase the ACT score and reduce the remediation rates
5. Increase the applications for Financial Aid and Scholarships earned
6. Increase postsecondary placement (college attendance rate; enrollment in two- and four-year institutions, technical certificate programs, military, and workforce)

In-depth explanation to outline how the applicant will address improving each of the six (6) key performance goals.
Click or tap here to enter text.

(C)   <u>**Plan of Operation**</u>: This part of the application should provide information on who (include career coach to students in grades 9-12 ratio), what, when, and how the project will provide services. Applicants must also provide information on how it will ensure that sufficient resources are available to serve the proposed number of target schools and students effectively and efficiently.

The information provided in this section of the application will be assessed based on the quality of the applicant's responsibility for addressing the identified needs as related to the identified issues outlined in the Need section. All of the proposed services and activities should be clearly aligned with the identified needs of the participants to be served in the targeted areas and proposed target schools with inclusion and consideration of the Performance Measures. In addition, applicants must clearly outline the following <u>**five**</u> components:

1. Marketing of the program to students, faculty, staff, and community.

2. Programs, services, and activities for students *(must address each identified performance measure in the Need section; include strategies to impact Performance Measures; and include a timeline for delivery of services).*

3. Plan to ensure effective and efficient administration of the project including but not limited to financial management, student record management, and personnel management.

4. Plan to use resources and personnel to achieve objectives and to coordinate the Arkansas College and Career Coach with other college and career planning programs located within the college, school district, and community. *(If your career coach-to-student ratio will exceed the recommended 1:500, you must include how you will leverage other resources and personnel to streamline your services and create a more acceptable student-to-career coach ratio.)*

5. Include parents and guardians in the college and career planning process

In-depth explanation of the plan to implement the program with consideration of the Need and Performance Measures sections.
Click or tap here to enter text.

(D) **Applicant and Community Support**: Applicants should not submit floor plans in the application—this information can be described or summarized as a narrative, list, or chart. If submitted, these items will count towards the 25-page limit. Applicants must provide through letters of support tangible commitments and resources to be provided by the applicant, school districts, and community partners. The applicant must include letters of support from the host site (institution of higher education, education service cooperative, or non-profit organization), participating school districts, and at least one business/industry and community partner. Please submit letters of support through the Grant Application Submission Portal. Letters must meet the following guidelines:

> *Each school district included in the grant application must provide a letter of support on official letterhead outlining their willingness to support the project administratively and financially. This must include a contribution of at least 50% of the Career Coach's salary and benefits or a shared portion of the 50% match in partnership with other participating school districts. Applications not including letters of support with specified administrative and financial support from their desired school districts will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. The school district may provide multiple letters of support; however, the district superintendent must sign at least one letter.*

> *The host site must provide a letter of support on official letterhead outlining their willingness to support the project administratively and financially, which must include financial contributions to support costs associated with the Career Coach's travel, supplies, and communication. Applications not including letters of support with specified administrative and financial support from the host site will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. The host site may provide multiple letters of support; however, the college president or chancellor must sign at least one letter.*

> *If the applicant is not from a two- or four-year institution, they must provide a letter of support from a two- or four-year institution. The letter must be an official letter, signed by the President/Chancellor, and include specific services and/or resources committed.*

> *Letter from the business/industry and community partner must be on official letterhead, signed by an authorizing official, and include specific services and/or resources committed.*

(E) **Budget and Cost Effectiveness**: Applicants should include costs that are related to the [approved] activities proposed in the Plan of Operation section. All costs should be necessary to accomplish the proposed project activities, reasonable and allowable, as discussed in the Arkansas College and Career Coach Manual. Applicants must submit a complete budget form. Applicants should include in the budget form funds available from school districts, host site, Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education (DCTE), and any other available funding sources. *The budget request along with narrative explanations must be submitted on the provided Budget Form.* The **total** maximum allowable amounts and categories for funding requests from the DCTE are as follows:

> **Career Coach Salary and Benefits (minimum of 25,750 and a $32,000 maximum per full-time Career Coach position)** – Cost shall include ½ of salary and benefits for the Career Coach position only. The number of positions is based on a 1:500 per high school student (grades 9 – 12).

> **Career Exploration Camps ($1,500 maximum per Career Coach position)** –Allowable categories are outlined in the budget form. Expenses for recruitment materials may not exceed more than 25% of the total budget.

Arkansas College Application Campaign ($1,500 maximum per Career Coach position) – This may include costs to assist students to prepare for the ACT and attend college visits. Allowable categories are outlined in the budget form. Expenses for supplies shall not exceed more than 25% of the total budget.

Computers and Technology ($2,000 maximum per Career Coach position) – Only made to support new positions or to replace equipment that has met or exceeded the retirement/replacement limit, as determined by your organization. Documentation supporting the cost and organization replacement policy must accompany grant submission and will **not** count against the required page limit, as long as the additional documentation does not exceed **five** pages. Any pages beyond five will count towards the 25-page limit.

VII. **Career Coach and Supervisor Travel ($1,500 maximum per Career Coach and Supervisor position; only for Arkansas Division of Career and Technical Education (DCTE) sponsored and/or approved activities)**

Requests for Career Exploration Camps and Arkansas College Application Campaign must be specified in the budget*.*

Budgets must include expected contributions from school districts and the host sites. Applications not including contributions from school districts and host sites will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.

If you are submitting a renewal request, you will only need to address budget changes on the grant renewal form.