



UPDATED APPLICATION GUIDELINES

County College Career and Technical Education Program Expansion Grants

**Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act
P.L. 2018, c. 119**

Issued by the

Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

Updated September 10, 2021

These updated Guidelines are designed to provide guidance for the completion of grant applications released by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) to county colleges as they plan to apply for grants pursuant to the second solicitation of the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act, L. 2018, c. 119. The Regulations implementing the Bond Act at N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1 et seq. have been adopted by the Secretary without change, and the adoption was published in the New Jersey Register on April 6, 2020 at 52 N.J.R. 694(a). These updated Guidelines have been modified, amended, and changed to align with the application to be released September 10, 2021. **County colleges must use these updated Guidelines and the adopted regulations to prepare grant applications for submission. Only a grant agreement from OSHE with approved legislative funding constitutes an agreement by OSHE to fund the project.**

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**County College Career and Technical Education Program Expansion
Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act**

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UPDATED APPLICATION GUIDELINES

County College Career and Technical Education Program Expansion Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act

The New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (“OSHE”) is issuing these Guidelines to provide information about the grant program to increase career and technical education (“CTE”) program capacity in county colleges as authorized by the [Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act, P.L. 2018, c. 119](#) (“Bond Act”).

This document provides guidance to county colleges as they prepare to apply for grants pursuant to the Bond Act. Implementing regulations have been adopted at [N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1 et seq.](#) **The final application which corresponds with these Guidelines will be released via OSHE's website on September 10, 2021.**

1. GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Description of Grant Program

On November 6, 2018, voters approved a general obligation bond issuance of \$50 million for county college CTE grants in association with the Bond Act, which Governor Murphy signed on August 27, 2018.

One purpose of the [Bond Act](#) is to provide New Jersey county colleges with financial resources to increase capacity to offer CTE programs. Accordingly, funds from the Bond Act will be used to provide county colleges with matching grants to construct and/or expand classrooms, laboratories, libraries, computer facilities, and other academic structures to increase CTE program capacity, which will provide direct benefits to students. Through the implementation of this provision of the Bond Act, the proposed Guidelines will advance important state goals, including the promotion of industry clusters, increased growth in employment opportunities, and expanded access to high-quality educational opportunity for all New Jersey residents.

1.2 Definitions

The following words and terms shall have the following meanings when used in this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. Additional definitions that apply to this chapter can be found at P.L. 2018, c. 119, § 2.

“Act” means the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act, P.L. 2018, c. 119.

“Activities” means apprenticeships, co-ops, and other experiential learning opportunities.

“Bonds” means the bonds authorized to be issued under the Act.

“Career and technical education program” or “CTE program” means a program that offers a sequence of courses that provide students with the coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions. A career and technical education program provides technical skill proficiency, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree.

“Construct” and “construction” means the planning, erecting, altering, repairing, purchasing, improving, developing, constructing, reconstructing, extending, rehabilitating, renovating, upgrading, demolishing, installing, and equipping of education buildings at county colleges.

“Construction ready” means the extent to which the planning and design work have been completed and construction is able to begin, and the degree to which a project shall be completed expeditiously once begun. An evaluation of whether a project is construction ready shall include the status of the design work, project site readiness, zoning, and permitting approvals, as well as the anticipated time frame during which the project will be completed, and the pacing of related construction.

“Cost” means the expenses incurred in connection with: the acquisition by purchase, lease, or otherwise, the development, and the construction of any project authorized by the Act; the acquisition by purchase, lease, or otherwise, and the development of any real or personal property for use in connection with a project authorized by the Act, including any rights of interest therein; the execution of any agreements and franchises deemed by the Commissioner of Education or the Secretary of Higher Education to be necessary or useful and convenient in connection with any project; the procurement or provision of engineering, architectural design, surveying, inspection, planning, legal, financial, or other professional services, estimates, studies, reports, or advice; and feasibility studies.

“County college” means an entity established pursuant to Chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

“Day” means 1) business day when the period specified is less than seven days and 2) calendar day when the period specified is seven days or more.

“Education buildings” means buildings, structures, and facilities required for the operation of county colleges.

“Grant” means a grant of moneys from the Securing Our Children’s Future Fund approved by the Secretary for a project.

“Grant agreement” means the grant agreement between the county college and Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, which sets forth the terms and conditions of the grant, amount of the grant, and disbursement schedule.

“Matching funds” means funds that are allocated by the county college for a specific project for which grants funds are used, which are equal to at least 25 percent of the total cost of such project and which are generated from institutional resources, other grants, institutional borrowings, or other sources as permitted in the grant approval process. Notwithstanding anything in this definition to the contrary, funds from State government sources may not be used to satisfy the matching requirement at N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.3(c).

“Project” means the establishment and construction of education buildings and the expansion and construction of additional facilities at, and the acquisition and installation of additional or upgraded equipment for, existing or new education buildings, or parts thereof, at county colleges for the purpose of increasing academic capacity to expand or offer new career and technical education programs that shall include, but not be limited to, classrooms, laboratories, computer facilities, and other academic buildings and all property appurtenant thereto, but shall not include dormitories, administrative buildings, athletic facilities, or other revenue-producing facilities.

“School district” means a local or regional school district, a county special services school district, a county vocational school district, and a district under partial or full State intervention pursuant to P.L. 1987, c. 399 (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-34 et seq.).

“Secretary” means the Secretary of Higher Education appointed pursuant to section 2 of P.L. 2009, c. 308 (N.J.S.A. 18A:3B-47).

“Stackable credentials program” means a program established for the purpose of supporting industry-recognized, short-term credentials and certificates that count toward a higher-level certificate or degree so that individuals may advance in employment and training over the course of their careers.

1.3 Summary of Key Considerations

Grant Objective	Expansion of CTE program capacity
Eligible Entities	New Jersey county colleges as defined by chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.
Eligible Facilities	Education buildings owned or leased by county colleges, as limited by N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.6(c)4 .
Eligible Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovation of existing square footage to increase program enrollment; • New construction of a building addition or standalone building to increase program enrollment; • Physical plant upgrades needed to support the conversion of existing space to support CTE programs or a building addition that increases CTE program enrollment; • The purchase and installation of furniture and equipment, including technology, in new or renovated spaces; • Site improvements related to CTE program expansion; • Demolition of non-instructional buildings or portions of buildings to accommodate new construction that increases the number of student seats in CTE programs.
Ineligible Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building system upgrades unrelated to CTE program expansion; • Building additions in which the total proposed net square footage of CTE classrooms, including adjacent support spaces serving the classroom, is less than 75 percent of the total net square footage of proposed construction; • Demolition that results in a net loss of instructional space for CTE programs; • Improvements to leased buildings, except when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The lessor is a public entity, such as a school district or the State of New Jersey; ○ The term of the lease agreement is for a minimum of 20 years, with an end date no earlier than June 30, 2044; and ○ The county college is authorized to make the capital improvements represented in the grant agreement. • Site improvements not directly related to CTE program expansion.
Total Grant Allocation	<p>\$50,000,000</p> <p>The Fall 2021 cycle is the second cycle of competitive grants to be offered under the Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act; the Fall 2021 cycle allocates \$23,542,004 in grants.</p>
Funding Distribution	Maximum award is \$4,000,000; awards will be distributed based on the eligibility and priority criteria as outlined in the Bond Act and as proposed at 51 N.J.R. 1838(a). Consideration will also be shown for regional distribution and equity.
State Share	75% of the total cost of the project up to a maximum of \$4,000,000 per application

1.4 Eligibility

The county college CTE project grants are open to all New Jersey county colleges that operate Education Buildings as defined under the [Bond Act](#). The grant program does not include those entities that do not meet the definition of “county college” under the Bond Act. County colleges that received grant awards during the first round of Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act funding are ineligible for a second grant award. Applications from these institutions will not be considered.

1.5 Eligibility Criteria

The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed project will meet the application criteria as outlined in the [Bond Act](#):

1. The applicant is a county college as defined in chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes;
2. A net increase in the number of students in CTE programs and academic opportunity by offering new career and technical programs, or expanding existing programs;
3. A focus on new student seats for CTE programs that prepare students for high demand, technically skilled careers; and
4. The county college application shall demonstrate that it addresses the objectives of this grant program, as outlined in [N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.6\(b\)](#).

1.6 Priority Criteria

Pursuant to the Bond Act, the following will be considered priority criteria for receiving a CTE project grant:

- The county college’s stackable credential program(s);
- The county college’s partnership(s) with county vocational school district(s) for the provision of career and technical education programs;
- The county college’s partnership(s) with employers with the intent to provide technical education and training for current or potential employees.

1.7 Important Dates

Pursuant to the [Bond Act](#), section 4f, a comprehensive list of projects eligible for grant funding must be presented to the New Jersey State Legislature for approval. Therefore, applications must be submitted within a fixed time period for OSHE review and approval.

Applications will *not* be accepted before or after the application period. Additional allocations are not anticipated and there will be no accommodations if a county college misses the submission deadline.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the originally-anticipated timeframe for the application process has been revised.

Release of Grant Application:	September 10, 2021
Technical Assistance Session 1:	September 24, 2021
Applicant Question Period Begins:	October 11, 2021
Applicant Question Period Ends:	November 8, 2021

OSHE Response Deadline:	December 8, 2021
Technical Assistance Session 2:	January, 2021 (specific date TBD)
Grant Application Submission Deadline:	February 14, 2022

2. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All applications must be consistent with the criteria described above to be considered for grant funding.

All requirements must be met, or the application will be deemed ineligible.

2.1 Number of Permissible Applications

County colleges may submit one grant application that includes all eligible educational buildings. Multiple applications will not be considered. Applications should be submitted per county college, not per campus; if there is an interest in submitting proposals for more than one project, please prepare separate budgets for each project or phase so that, if necessary, a portion of the project could be approved with the availability of funds.

2.2 Application Format

Grant applications must be submitted online utilizing OSHE’s Qualtrics application, which can be found here: <https://nj.gov/highereducation/socf/>

2.3 Application Deadline

The application submission deadline is 4:00 P.M., Eastern Daylight Time on February 14, 2022. OSHE administers discretionary grant programs in strict conformance with procedures designed to ensure accountability and integrity in the use of public funds. Therefore, late applications will not be accepted.

3. APPLICATION COMPONENTS

3.1 General Considerations

To apply for a county college CTE grant, applicants must prepare and submit a complete application as described in this section. The application will consist of a narrative and supporting documents, and requirements will vary based on the proposed scope of work. **A checklist of application components is provided in Appendix A.** Before preparing an application, potential applicants are advised to carefully review Section 1, Grant Program Overview, of this document to ensure the proposed projects align with the State’s goals, the grant program and the specific requirements to be addressed.

3.2 Certification of Eligibility

To submit a grant application, the applicant must confirm the application meets the eligibility requirements set forth in Section 1, Grant Program Overview, of this document. The application will only be eligible for grant consideration if the applicant can certify all requirements are met.

3.3 Institution Resolution

Each application must be accompanied by an approved resolution from the institution's governing board, demonstrating support and financial commitment to the project if approved. If applicable, a copy of lease or memorandum of understanding with lessor must also be provided.

3.4 Executive Summary

Each applicant is required to provide a brief, overall description of the project in 200 words or less. This Executive Summary should state in a concise manner the purpose of the project, as well as provide the location of the proposed project site, total cost and indicate the type of project proposed. What is being bought, built, expanded or enhanced? The institution should prepare and present a set of clear goals and a mission for the proposed project demonstrating the need and expected outcomes. This will be used as an identifier for the institution's project; it does not need to explain the benefits the project will provide. Section 3.5, "Scope and Sequence of Proposed Project" is your opportunity to "Pitch" your project. This is where you will go into detail on how your project meets the objectives and satisfies the requirements of the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act, especially the priority criteria as outlined in the Regulations.

3.5 Scope and Sequence of Proposed Project

A. Project Description

In full detail, each specific component of the proposed project should be outlined, summarizing mission, goals, scope, sequence, need, impact and cost. The applicant should provide an overview of the current status of the location(s) or facility (or facilities) that the proposed project would affect, detailing its current uses, capacity and justification of why this location or facility is eligible for consideration for funding under the [Bond Act](#).

This overview should be a descriptive narrative that provides:

- The location of the proposed project site, total cost and categorization of the nature of the project as new construction, expansion or renovation of current facilities, new or updated equipment, etc.;
- The details of the work involved to complete the projects, including but not limited to, construction/demolition, purchase of property, procurement of equipment, etc.;
- The amount of time that the institution anticipates it will need to complete the project, from start to finish;
- An anticipated timeline and a phased implementation supported by contractor quotes and estimates;
- A plan for service interruption during project implementation to ensure the ability of the current vocational programs to continue to operate without reducing capacity;
- An explanation of whether the project is being completed in collaboration with partnering vocational school districts or employers, and whether these partnerships allow for increased scope and impact of the proposed project.

B. Selection Criteria Narrative

Applicants must also address the Eligibility Criteria and Priority Criteria outlined in Section 1.4 and 1.5 of these Guidelines.

The applicant should describe the stackable credentials programs that will be improved or created as a result of the implementation of the project. This should include all programs offered by the institutions which are applicable, the depth of the program content/exposure to on-the-job training, and the number of students currently enrolled in these programs in relationship to their overall student population.

The applicant should provide justification as to how the proposed project addresses needs of the vocational program(s) that will be directly impacted by it, including increases in capacity, the direct benefit to students, and the forecasted economic impact of the expanded capacity of the program.

In addition, the application should highlight the benefits of the proposed project to the campus, specifically in relationship to the following questions in a descriptive narrative format:

1. How will the capacity of the county college to offer stackable credential programs be increased?
2. How will the proposed project support the preparation of students for high demand, technically skilled careers?
3. How does the proposal align with the labor market demands or economic development goals as set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.6(a)2?
4. How does the county college demonstrate that it has an existing partnership or will be entering into a partnership with a county vocational school district and/or an employer or industry partner to provide technical education and training for current or potential employees?

If the institution is submitting an application in collaboration with the partnering vocational school district or employers, these partners should be explicitly identified. These collaborations are encouraged, especially if it allows for increased scope and impact of the proposed project.

3.6 Architectural Plans and Quotes

The applicant should provide any planning documents related to construction or procurement of equipment, including but not limited to blueprints, ecological evaluations, equipment quotes, etc. as to demonstrate that the project is “construction ready” as defined in [N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.2](#).

3.7 Cost and Cost Effectiveness

Provide the specific costs related to the project and an analysis of the cost versus the impact of the proposed project, demonstrating the return on investment for the State, county college, and students and employers impacted. Institutions must provide details on useful life of any project, including equipment as determined either by reference to the Internal Revenue Service’s Class Life Asset Depreciation Range System set forth in Revenue Procedure 87-56, as amended supplemented, or superseded, or by appraisal of any independent engineering or accounting firm, as appropriate. Applicants should also indicate whether or not the implementation of the project will help resolve or curb deferred maintenance needs.

Please include information regarding if this proposal is submitted in collaboration with a career technical education program or in combination with other capacity building initiatives. If the project is being completed in collaboration with partners that are sharing in the cost of the project, please include these details as well.

Applications should be submitted per county college, not per campus; if there is an interest in submitting an application for more than one campus, please prepare separate budgets for each campus so that if necessary a portion of the application could be approved with the availability of funds.

3.8 Source(s) of Matching Funds

The applicant must certify the availability and source of the matching funds required to receive a CTE grant pursuant to the [Bond Act](#). Matching funds must equal at least 25 percent of the total cost of such project and be generated from institutional resources, other grants, institutional borrowings, or other sources as permitted in the grant approval process. Funds from State government sources may not be used to satisfy the matching requirement in [N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.3\(c\)](#).

3.9 Partnership Forms

Provide a completed partnership form for all partners who will be working in collaboration on the project. Applicants must demonstrate that the institution has an existing partnership, or will be entering into a partnership, with a county vocational school district and/or an employer or industry partner to provide technical education and training for current or potential employees (N.J.A.C. 9A:19-1.4(a)1(iv)).

3.10 Long Range Facilities Plan

Provide a digital copy of the county college's most recent long range facilities plan.

3.11 Deferred Maintenance Plans

If the institution has a Deferred Maintenance plan that is separate from the Long Range Facilities Plan or State Funded Facilities and Maintenance plans, please provide a digital copy of the county college's plans.

3.12 State Funded Facilities and Maintenance

The applicant should provide a narrative demonstrating the institution's commitment over the past ten years to appropriate maintenance of facilities previously funded by State of New Jersey grant programs. Provide a digital copy of the county college's State Funded Facilities and Maintenance plans.

4. APPLICATION REVIEW AND AWARD INFORMATION

4.1 Incomplete Submissions

Due to the volume of applications, OSHE is unable to provide a preliminary review for completeness prior to the close of the application period. Submission of an incomplete application may disqualify the institution for funding consideration.

4.2 Eligibility Review

OSHE reserves the right to reject any application not in conformance with the requirements of the grant program. Only those applications that adhere to the project eligibility guidelines described in Section 1 of these guidelines and fulfill all submission requirements outlined in Section 3 may be awarded grants.

4.3 Grant Funding

CTE grants will be funded 75% up to a maximum of \$4,000,000 per application.

5. GRANT AWARD ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

5.1 Notice of Award & Grant Agreement Offer Letter

If a proposed project is approved for funding by OSHE and an appropriation of sufficient funds for such project is made, pursuant to the [Bond Act](#), a grant agreement offer letter will be issued for the county college's acceptance. After the grant agreement is fully executed, project funding will commence. Please note that costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant agreement will not be reimbursed. The effective date of the grant agreement will be the date on which projects are approved by the Legislature.

5.2 Updates to Application Guidelines

OSHE reserves the right to modify these Guidelines prior to the close of the application period. Institutions will be notified directly of any further updates.

5.3 Questions

Questions may be submitted from October 11, 2021 through 4:00 P.M., on November 8, 2021 via email to FinanceDocs@OSHE.nj.gov. Additional information regarding submission of questions will be provided in the Guidelines. Phone calls/faxes will not be accepted. Answers and addenda, if any, to questions regarding the Solicitation will be posted at (link to OSHE SOCF page) no later than December 8, 2021.

Communications with representatives of the State by the institution or the institution's representatives concerning this Solicitation are not permitted during the term of the submission and evaluation process, except as specified above.

County colleges should submit one grant application that includes all eligible educational buildings.

Certification of Eligibility (Section 3.2)

- Checklist of eligibility requirements

County College Resolution (Section 3.3)

- Governing Board Resolution
- For Leased Facilities: Copy of lease or memorandum of understanding with lessor; lease should specify the lease term and end date.

Executive Summary (Section 3.4)

- Project Name
- Project location
- Total Project Cost
- Type of Project
- Project Goals
- Project Mission

Scope and Sequence of Proposed Project (Section 3.5 A and B)

- Project Category
- Work Involved
- Anticipated Timeline
- Phased Implementation Timeline with Quotes and Estimates
- Service Interruption Plan
- Partnerships
- Selection Criteria Narrative

Architectural Plans and Quotes (Section 3.6)

- Planning Documents
- Procurement Documents

Cost and Cost Effectiveness (Section 3.7)

- Project Cost
- Cost Analysis (Sources of Funds Template)

Source(s) of Matching Funds (Section 3.8)

- List of matching funds sources

Partnership Forms (Section 3.9)

- Partnership forms for each collaborator on project

Long Range Facilities Plan (Section 3.10)

- Digital copy of county college's Long Range Facilities Plan

Deferred Maintenance Plans (Section 3.11)

- Digital copy of county college's plans for deferred maintenance

State Funded Facilities and Maintenance (Section 3.12)

- Digital copy of the county college's state funded facilities and maintenance plans