

## Questions and Answers for the Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy & Essential Skills Projects Call for Proposals

Opening date: September 10, 2009  
Closing Date: September 25, 2009

Thank you for your questions. Similar questions have been grouped under headings. Answers are referenced to appropriate sections of the Call for Proposal Guidelines and/or the Proposal Application.

### ***Assessment Tools***

**Q 1.** Would the following assessment tools be considered appropriate for measuring learning progress?

- CAMERA
- CABS by LLEO

**A 1.** According to section 5.2 projects must commit to measuring learner skill gain with assessment tools with a record of success in measuring learning progress. Proponents must determine the suitability of the assessment tools they are proposing to use.

### ***Partnerships***

**Q 2.** Is there a limit on the number of submissions from one organization for the Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy & Essential Skills Projects CFP? Since partnerships are emphasized, some agencies that cover a large geographical area could be involved in more than one initiative.

**A 2.** There is no limit on the number of submissions from one organization, provided that each submission meets the Mandatory Requirements as listed in section 5.0.

**Q 3.** How many projects will be funded? Will regional, community size and employment sector factors be taken into consideration in the decision making process?

**A 3.** The number of projects will be determined by the number of submissions that meet the mandatory criteria (Section 5.0) and the quality of those submissions against the evaluation criteria (Section 6.0 ) of the Call for Proposals.

**Q 4.** Given the short timelines of this CFP are we to assume that this is aimed at already existing providers of essential skill programs? Can other community service agencies who provide the similar services apply? Must a literacy provider be included in all projects? How would true partnerships be able to be developed in such a short timeline?

**A 4.** Current providers of essential skills training through the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program have been invited to participate, along with other service providers and organizations. A current provider of LBS program does not have to be included in the project partnership. One of the organizations in the partnership must currently be under contract with MTCU to deliver an Employment Ontario program or service, including, but not limited to the Literacy and Basic Skills Program. Section 5.1 details the partnership requirements.

**Q 5.** What are acceptable partnerships for **Workplace** Literacy and Essential Skills projects? Can employment agencies in the community bid for a project? Must there always be an employer involved?

**A 5.** Section 5.1 details the partnership requirements. It is a mandatory requirement that the partnerships for Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills projects include an employer. At least ONE partner for both Workplace and Community Workforce projects must currently be under contract with MTCU to deliver an Employment Ontario program or service.

**Q 6.** Can a college qualify as an employer? There may be employee groups the within a college that colleges would like to engage/train?

**A 6.** Public colleges receive funding from the government of Ontario and therefore may not qualify as an employer. Their workforce (staff) hiring/training/upgrading costs are covered through this revenue stream. Private colleges may qualify as an employer if the proposal submitted meets the mandatory requirements in section 5.0.

**Q 7.** Can Job Connect be considered an employer?

**A 7.** No. Organizations that deliver the Job Connect program receive provincial funding for the delivery of Job Connect services. Their operating funding must cover such costs as staff hiring training/upgrading.

**Q 8.** Are internal partnerships AU/Job Connect/ Apprenticeship acceptable? Must there be an external partner as well?

**A 8.** All partnerships must meet the mandatory requirements for the CFP. Partnerships must include relevant combinations of stakeholders see 5.1.

**Q 9.** What are acceptable partnerships for the **Community** Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills Projects? Must there always be an employer involved? Can a project between an action centre for laid off workers and literacy providers qualify? Would there still need to be a specific employer identified as a partner?

**A 9.** All Community Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills project MUST include a partnership. Partnership requirements are found in section 5.1. An employer does not need to be part of the partnership for community workforce projects. However, at least one member of the partnership must be currently under contract with MTCU to provide an Employment Ontario program or service. Action Centres are acceptable partners provided the other conditions are met.

**Q 10.** If we are proposing providing a community workforce project, do we need to set specific targets for employers?

**A 10.** Section H. Commitment to Outcomes/Results of the Call for Proposal Application outlines the required commitments that all proponents/projects must make.

**Q 11.** Can you clarify whether or not a proposal for Literacy and Essential Skills Training and/or Community Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills training will be accepted without a partnership agreement?

**A 11.** Section 5.0 details the mandatory proposal requirements. Projects must be submitted in partnership. Only those proposals that meet all the mandatory requirements will be considered by the Ministry.

**Q 12.** Given the short time frame for submissions, would new service providers be required to have all necessary documentation (i.e. signed partnership agreements) by September 25, 2009?

**A 12.** YES. As noted in A 6 (above), letters of agreement between partners must be included in the proposal submission (see 5.1), and one partner must currently be under contract with MTCU to deliver on Employment Ontario program or service.

**Q 13.** Can we partner with an employers' organization (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trade, sector councils), to identify types of workplaces we will work with and to utilize the first months of the project to identify individual employers for workplace literacy training?

**A 13.** Section 5.1 – No. The Technical Requirements section of the Call for proposals outlines the mandatory requirements. Also: Section J (Operating Budget Request) of the Call for Proposal Application requires the employer to identify the Employer Resource Contribution Amount. The partnership must identify and include a specific employer/workplace in the proposal. The type of developmental work identified here could be done in preparation for a potential later Call For Proposals in March 2010.

### ***Timelines and Allowable Costs***

**Q 14.** Could we please get clarification on the application timelines? On page 3, item 2.0 states that the purpose of this application is to fund a project to be delivered from October 2009 to March 2011 and also that the Ministry anticipates another Call for Proposals in March 2010. Is this application to include the numbers of clients and outcomes for the 17 month period to March 2011, including a 17 month budget? Will the anticipated Call for Proposals in March 2010 be for additional, new, different projects? Or is the 2010-11 portion of the current project subject to the anticipated March 2010 Call for Proposals?

**A 14.** The current CFP covers the time period from October 2009 to March 31, 2011. Proposals for the current CFP may include projects up to that time limit, but may also include projects of a shorter duration. All proposals require

identification of the number of participants, outcome commitments and an operating budget request for the anticipated time period of the proposed project, to a maximum of March 31, 2011.

Projects that are approved through this CFP start in this fiscal year and continue into next fiscal year **would not** have to re-submit in March 2010 for the same project. At this point the Ministry anticipates a subsequent call for new projects in March 2010.

**Q 15.** What costs are eligible under project funding? Can you provide clarification on funding ranges? Is this a build upon model?

**A 15.** Eligible costs are detailed in section 4.0. The categories of funding are direct operating expenditures, indirect expenditures and training support allowance. Successful proponents may leverage resources from within their partnership. The funding ranges are correlated to ranges in the number of people a project proposes to serve. In addition, they enable proponents to propose differences in funding based on such things as planned services to a particularly challenging learner profile or that achieve particularly ambitious learner progress and outcomes.

### ***Others***

**Q 16.** What is the limit to the number of participants in the projects? Can we serve as many ES levels as we wish to accommodate in the program?

**A 16.** There is no upper or lower limit to the number of participants in the projects. Refer to section 4.0 for Project Funding.

**Q 17.** Can an individual be enrolled in a credit course at the same time that s/he is in the essential skills program?

**A 17.** There is no stipulation to exclude participants from learning in different types of programs at the same time.

**Q 18.** Will proponents be required to return funds if they are unable to serve the anticipated number of learners?

**A 18.** According to 6.0 there is a commitment to a level of service activity and outcomes relative to a proposed target group and services. There will be regular reporting requirements. MTCU will monitor the progress of each project, and determine the most effective course of action for projects that are not meeting their contracted commitments, including service activity. TCU will do this in consultation with the project partnership. At the end of a project, as per MTCU's audit practices, unspent funding will be returned to the Ministry. These requirements will be clarified and documented during the contracting process for successful proponents.

**Q 19.** Is this to be a sustainable project after the funding is finished?

**A 19.** This CFP does not include a commitment to continue funding of any project past the final date of March 31, 2011.

**Q 20.** Does the reference to social engagement of people in their communities include encouraging volunteerism?

**A 20.** Yes.

**Q 21.** Does “embedded in technical skills training (3.3) include/mean Basic Computer Skills Training?

**A 21.** Yes, it may include but is not limited to Basic Computer Skills Training.

**Q 22.** While participating in Workplace Literacy Training would participants still be eligible to collect E.I.? Has MTCU made arrangements for E.I. supports to continue and how will this work?

**A 22.** E. I. supports can continue as long as the participant goes through an Employment Ontario service provider to indicate that they are a participant of a funded Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy & Essential Skills Projects project. The request will be forwarded to the regional Employment Training Consultant (ETC) assigned to that provider who will be able to enter the information through the feepayer program.

**Q 23.** Can you expand on what is meant by “wrap around supports” (1.2 and 2.2)?

**A 23.** Wrap around supports refers to services made available to project participants which assist them in achieving their learning goals. Wrap-around supports could include access to or delivery of services such as financial counselling, mentoring and advocacy and other community services (such as housing, settlement services, legal aid, short-term childcare)

**Q 24.** How detailed should the proposal be? Is there a length limit? Should the entire proposal remain in the application form?

**A 24.** The submission must be completed using the proposal application. Sufficient information must be provided to ensure that mandatory requirements (5.0) and evaluation criteria (6.0) are met. The length of the proposal is not taken into consideration in the evaluation and proponents should exercise judgement in developing their proposals.

**Q 25.** Must there be a delivery component in all proposals? Will a proposal which focuses on developing community and/or institutional capacity be considered?

**A 25.** Yes there must be a delivery component. See section 3.3 for services expected and 6.0 for evaluation criteria. All proposals must meet the mandatory requirements of the CFP.

**Q 26.** Can you provide clarification on the intent of establishing better links between Apprenticeship and Essential Skills?

**A 26.** This objective refers to the need for literacy and essential skills training for apprentices to support their success in the in-school portion of their apprenticeship. While apprentices may be highly successful in the on- the- job component of their apprenticeship, passing the terms of in-school training is required for completion of an apprenticeship and eligibility to challenge the certificate of qualification exams.

**Q 27.** When does the project start?

**A 27.** Projects start when contracts are signed with MTCU see section 10.1 Negotiation of Agreement.